

MEANS, MOTIVE, AND OPPORTUNITY

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John 6:25-29

John 6:25 And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

John 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

John 6:27 Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

John 6:28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

John 6:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

It seems that charisma and notoriety was as effective an attraction to people in the days of Jesus as it is today. If we look back in Chapter 6 of John we find the same people our text is talking about chasing Jesus all over the area trying to catch up with him. They knew instinctively where the handouts came from. As it turns out, humanity hasn't changed much during the past 2,000 years. Humans still find themselves drawn by a crowd, excited by somebody who has that power of attraction that showmen have nowadays, attracted to where something unique is going on, interested in any kind of free stuff, and ready to make a little effort to travel to see what's going on or to get more free stuff if they have gotten some already.

As people always are, this crowd was curious and superstitious. They couldn't figure out how and when Jesus had gotten to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. They apparently were speculating that somehow he had managed to get over there although they had not seen him get in a boat...things looked very suspicious! Maybe this Jesus guy used magic to transport Himself across the sea; or maybe He was beamed down to another place by a starship. Whatever had happened, this crowd wanted to know more about the guy who had given them a hearty meal and made it happen using just five loaves of bread and a handful of fish!

Be that as it may, we notice that the crowd had hunted him down by being persistent and getting boats by which to go over the sea. People usually find a way to satisfy their curiosity and to get to an event if they want to go badly enough. Hold a county fair or a magic show in town and people who want to come see it will find a way. You can send out a notice that people can come to a certain place and get free stuff and they will also find a way to get there. Where there is a will there is the means to accomplish it.

So this is our first point:

I. People Have the Means to Seek Out Jesus Christ

- ❖ There Are Our Own Faculties (See **Acts 17:23-27** & **Romans 1:18-20**)
- ❖ There Are Our Possessions (Discuss the use of our media devices, cars, roadways, feet, etc. which are used to seek a lot of things.
- ❖ There Is Help From Others (where did the ship or ships come from which they took to go over?)
- ❖ There Is a Plethora of Material On Earth About Jesus (a standing witness)
- ❖ So, people have the means to seek out Christ. It is also certain that these people also had a reason (motive) to look Jesus up. We might have thought that it was showmanship that would have attracted them. After all, Jesus had accomplished quite a miraculous thing to feed 5,000 with 5 loaves of bread and a couple of fish! This would have ranked among the great wonders of the age. But you will note that Jesus plainly tells them in our text that he knows it is not because of the miracles that he did that they are seeking him out again, but rather because they got enough bread to fill themselves up.

II. So People May Have a Motive For Seeking Out Jesus Christ. It's too bad that the folks in our text were driven by the wrong motives, but if there had been a spiritual thought in their heads they could have found a number of important motives for seeking Him out.

- ❖ So we want to think about those motives:
 - There Are Some Very Obvious Motives:
 - Today Is All You Have (**Luke 12:18-20**, the rich man plans for a future that does not exist; "Today if ye will hear his voice..." **Heb. 3:15**)
 - Eternity Is Coming (**Jude 1:14-15** And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."; **Rev 1:7** Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.
 - You Are Dying (**Hebrews 9:27** "...it is appointed unto men once to die...."; **Ecc 8:8** *There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.*
 - God Is Angry At Sin and Sinners (**Psa 7:11** God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry *with the wicked* every day; **Rom 1:18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;
 - Jesus Christ Has Created a Route of Peace For You to Get To God

- Motives that I did not List Which Are Not Spiritual at All Can Successfully Produce Convincing Action (these people did a lot of pursuing from the motive of curiosity and a desire to get another meal).
 - I want to note first though, that as Jesus has plainly indicated in our text motives can be dead wrong. The main character about what motivated this crowd was the fact that it was a man-made motive.
 - Man-made motives are extremely low-rate – what are some of those man-made motives?
 - Seeking Jesus because there is a big stir (curiosity and recreation oriented) (See **Luke 12:1** - In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another...
 - ◆ (Note what he did when the crowd became extremely huge; “...began to say to His disciples.”)
 - Seeking Jesus because all your social associates are doing it (acceptance oriented);
 - Seeking Jesus because there are carnal needs or wants to be had (playing the religion card); We have to give this crowd in our text in **John 6** credit for taking the opportunity to seek out Jesus even if the motive was low-rate. The carnal spirit doesn't need nor know how to use spiritual incentive, but lusts of the flesh will draw men who don't have an ounce of spiritual life about them. And it will draw them to a spiritual focal point if fleshly gratification can be found there. (Some people regularly fleece churches like the woman we heard about on the news a few years ago who was arrested for running a scam on churches in middle TN until some suspicious church folks began to wonder about her coming back again and again and notified the police)
 - “I love my church” signs
 - The folks in our text had just been involved in something very self-satisfying. Apparently most of them were really given incentive by a full belly. Easy street is a good street to live on. This was almost like the historical promise from God of a land that flowed with milk and honey...it was flowing with bread and fishes! Why waste an opportunity to get in on the bottom floor...to be in line for the next handout...maybe Jesus was going to set up a soup kitchen every time a crowd gathered!! Whatever gave them incentive, they can be commended for seizing **the opportunity** to seek Him out!

And That Reminds Us That:

III. People Have an **Opportunity** For Seeking Jesus Christ – and like this crowd, that opportunity is still open today

- ❖ There is just now a stay of divine execution of judgment
- ❖ There is just now life in your body
- ❖ There is just now time and freedom (of movement and inquiry)

IV. Notice That Contrary to Popular Gospel Efforts, Jesus Did Not Encourage The Kind of Seeking Done By These People (vv. 26-27)

- ❖ **John 6:26** Jesus answered them and said, **Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.**
- ❖ **John 6:27** **Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.**

V. Notice that People With Wrong Motives for Seeking Jesus Will Stop When Truth Comes Out, or the Very Preaching of the Truth Will Make Them True Disciples: See **John 6:37, 44, 65, 66**

- ❖ **John 6:37** **All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.**
- ❖ **John 6:44** **No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.**
- ❖ **John 6:65** **And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.**
- ❖ **John 6:66** **From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.**

VI. Conclusion: Despite sufficient means, some driving motive, and abundant opportunity, some people will not use their means to seek Jesus, will seek him for the wrong motive or reject the opportunity to do it at all.