

Jesus & The Cult of Celebrity

John 6 (reading: 6:22-71)

Children's Message: Do you know this person?

[A series of photos of famous people and people in our church is shown]

What does it mean to know someone?

Fame: Many people know about you.

Relationship: People know you for who you personally.

How do you know Jesus?

The Cult of Celebrity (v.1-15)

Canucks bandwagon.

Jesus feeds the 5000.

The people want to make him king.

Jesus runs away from them.

People just want something from Jesus - to make him a celebrity.

True Identity (v.16-21)

The problem with Celebrity is you project an image and are not yourself.

Pick a celebrity - actor, musician, politician

People want celebrities to be who they want them to be.

The disciples go back across the lake without Jesus who want to be alone.

It gets dark and then stormy.

Jesus walks to them on the water and they freak out.

Jesus says - "It is I."

In Greek he says, "Ego Eimi" - "I am, I am"

This is the answer God gave to Moses when asked his name.

Jesus is revealing who he really is without the celebrity.

Reality & Illusion (v.22-65)

Image is everything - PR firms, advertisements, media - illusion

Jesus never plays the celebrity game

22-26 The crowd finds Jesus again and he confronts them.

26-27 He notes that they follow him because he fed them bread.

They follow him because he gives them what they want - like manna.

He says they should want what God wants.

28 The crowd asks, "What does God want then?"

29 Jesus says, "Believe in the one God has sent."

30-31 They ask for more signs - more bread - more of what they want.

They want him to be like Moses and give a sign - like manna.

32-33 Jesus says, that bread wasn't from Moses but God.

34 The people say, then give it to us.

They still don't get it.

35-40 Jesus then begins to talk about who he really is.

"Ego Eimi, the bread of life."

Jesus uses the divine phrase revealing his nature.

41-42 People now struggle to believe.

"Isn't he Joseph's son?"

They cannot and will not believe he is who he claims to be.

That he is from God, that he is the bread of life.

He is just one of them - or so they think.

43-51 Jesus explains and deepens the analogy.

He is the bread of life that gives "eternal life" not temporal bread.

"Eternal Life" of "Zoe Aionion."

Chronos means chronological passage of time we live in.

Aion is transcendent time, the vitality of life.

It is not about the length of life

but about the very essence and character of life.

52 The People wonder how they could engage in eating flesh and blood

This is abhorrent and bizarre to them.

They misunderstand

but also miss the symbolism of the passover lamb.

They miss the rite in which they are reunited with God.

In partaking of Jesus' life they may know God.

53-59 Jesus presses their own assumptions

and insists in the eating and drink of himself.

This is an obvious turn towards the sacrament of Communion.

60 Even the disciples, not the crowd begin to worry about the implications.

"This is an impossible teaching" they say.

61-65 Knowing this Jesus tips his hand to let them see.

What if you saw me returning to the place I came from?

He challenges them with his divine identity.

In other words, will you accept me for who I am

and not who you imagine me to be?

Jesus purposely disabuses people of their illusions of him.

He also indicates that there is more at stake than what can be seen.

That there is a call from the Father and an enabling.

The Fork in the Road (v.66-71)

Christianity isn't easy.

It always presents a choice every day and every moment.

It makes us do a gut check a lot.

To look inside so we can live on the outside.

66 People start to ditch.

67 Jesus turns to the 12 and asks where they are at.

68 Simon's remarkable admittance

Who else is there? vs. meaningless absurd life.

You have the words of zoe aionion

We believe you are the Holy one of God.

We believe.

70 Jesus has also chosen them.

The mutuality of relationship between Jesus and his disciples.

You cannot follow and not know him personally.

71 Even so, there is Judas.

Questions:

Why do you follow Jesus?

Why are you here?

How do you get to know Jesus?

Or lead people directly to prayer.