

What a difference a day makes, right?

No, I am not speaking of the difference between Monday and Tuesday when Aaron Rodgers was not in camp and then in camp. Though the majority of the Packers fans was very excited that he did show up.

I am speaking of the difference between Jesus and the crowd that occurred in a span of less than 24 hours.

The text from last week and this week is back-to-back days. If you were not here last week or do not remember; let me quickly catch you up.

Jesus fed the 5,000. The crowd was excited. They wanted to capture him and proclaim him KING. Jesus sneaks away and even walks on the water to get away from the crowd. He wants to get out of their reach.

It did not work. Today, we hear the words that they tracked him down, rather quickly. When they catch up to him; Jesus seems to go on the offensive.

He speaks bluntly to them that all of you really do not have a real interest in who I am and what I am about. Instead, you just tracked me down because I fed you and you are hoping for another free meal and you do not even realize it was about actual bread in your belly.

I am sure that did not sit well with them. I would think that many individuals in churches across our nation would not like it if Jesus came in and said, ‘You know, I think you just come into this space to chit-chat it up with your friends and have a cup of coffee and it’s not really about me.

Now, even though they may be somewhat offended, they do ask Jesus a question. They say in essence, Okay Jesus, how are we suppose to do what God wants of us.

Jesus looks at them and says, if you really want to know; here it is: “Sign on with the One that God has sent. That kind of a commitment gets you in on God’s works.”

The crowd then back pedals and says, “you are going to have to show us a sign, so we can see it and believe you”

There are many times that I believe we miss the irony that is in Scripture. This passage is a perfect example.

They continue to press Jesus:

Jesus, when we really see what is up with you, then you can count on us. We will sign up. We are waiting Jesus, show us. You do know that Moses fed our ancestors with bread in the desert; right? It says so in Scripture. It says, “He gave them bread from heaven to eat.”

Do they not remember that Jesus did this for them, just yesterday?

What a difference a day makes, right? That is what I led the sermon off with. Yesterday, the crowd was blown away with the miracle and was ready to proclaim him king. Today, they are already bored with Jesus and want another sign.

Jesus answers them in a manner that they are not expecting. He shared with them that Moses giving bread is not the real significance. The real significance is that God is offering you the real bread, right now, in me.

They get excited. Oooohhh. Give that to us right now. Jesus, most likely, shakes his head and goes, you really do not get it, do you. I am the bread. If you will simply align with me; you will never hunger or thirst again.

Now, our reading ends and we are left in suspense and we do not get the rest of the story until we explore the bread theme a little more over the next few weeks.

full.

If Jesus came to us today in the 21st century instead of the 1st century; what might he think and how would it play out for us?

The crowd back then wanted bread and they wanted their bellies full.

In our society, we have some slick marketing going on. It entices us to want and to have our desires met. The ads promise us fulfillment and happiness if we just buy _____. What is the buy that comes to your mind? The ads may be telling us that the answer to our relentless hunger will be in our next purchase. If you just snag this automobile. If you just grab that one piece of clothing off the rack. Maybe if you finally get the right scotch or maybe individuals who come up to our beautiful area; if you visit just the right resort; all will be good.

If Jesus was here he would step in and go, I am the thing that will fill your hunger. I am the thing that will fulfil your hunger. What we need is the bread of life. Thankfully, we have access to the bread of life.

One of the aspects that I love about the Lutheran tradition is that we have the opportunity to participate in the Sacrament of Communion each Sunday; if we so choose and we at Bay View provide that opportunity.

I love the words of John Buchanan when he states, “In the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, we are reminded not only of our physical hunger but our deeper hunger for wholeness, for redemption, for the bread of life.

As a faith community, we come together and we confess our hunger. We lay it out on the line that we trust in Jesus Christ.

We have faith in the love of God through the incarnate. Speaking of faith, with us being in the Gospel of John, do you know that faith is in the Gospel 98 times and every single time, it is the verb and never the noun. Now that is something to think about and chew upon. In addition to that, 74 of those 98 times, it is where Jesus invites people to come and have active trust in him.

So, in a few minutes, we will come and eat bread and drink wine. When we do this act, God meets us in their own unconditional love; the bread of life. He is the bread. A concept that those following him were unable to grasp at that time.

God’s grace and love extended to you.

Amen.