*Village*

*Pastor John Johnson*

*John 6:25-59*

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**“Is Jesus On Your Menu?”**

On January 1, 1962, the Beatles were invited to audition in London for Decca Records

-for an hour, they played 15 different songs—“She Loves You”, “Please, Please Me”--and then waited anxiously for a decision.

-to be associated with the Decca record label would have been huge

-but eventually—Decca passed

-as they put it—“*We don’t like your boys’ sound. Groups are out; four piece groups with guitars are finished”—Dick Rowe, talent scout, Decca*

It was a bad decision—but then—bad decisions happen all the time—and for lots of reasons

-such as—we think we know more than we do—as in Decca’s case

-in their new book, Decisive: How to Make Better Choices in Life and Work, Chip and Dan Heath note our tendency to—

-abandon or regret career choices – more than half of teachers quit their jobs in the first four years

-pastors or churches regret their decision to choose one another–which explains why the average tenure of an evangelical pastor is between 2 and 3 years

-most decisions in the corporate world to merge failed to create any value for shareholders

-all too often—we start relationships we should have never entered into

-99% of wire fox terrier owners live with great regret (my stat)

*“When it comes to making decisions, it’s clear that our brains are flawed instruments”*

-with respect to choices, we don’t tend to have a great track record

-we can make a decision for all the wrong reasons

*-and this can be the case with God*

-in John 6, Jesus is conversing with a crowd

-people who had become fans, admirers of Jesus

-but Jesus is not enamored with admirers, enthusiasts

-He does not water down the gospel to fill seats

-entertain to draw a crowd

*-for there is no more important decision in life than to decide to follow Christ*

-in fact—it is more than a decision—it is a commitment

-He knew people can make a decision for Him for all the wrong reasons

-here are five reasons people should not choose to follow Jesus—that are still applicable today

*1–THE IMPULSE OF THE MOMENT*

-some of us make a spontaneous decision for Jesus based purely upon feelings, upon impulse

-but Jesus will not let this crowd get caught up in the moment–make a decision that is impetuous, thoughtless, madcap

-this crowd had experienced the miracle of five loaves feeding 5000

-heard rumors that Jesus had walked on water

-they had become fans overnight—wanted Jesus to be their king–*read verses 14-15*

-this is not the first time the crowd chased after Jesus

-Mark 1:35ff uses similar language—after Jesus had healed in Capernaum—they lit “hunted down” to bring Him back

-so Jesus fled—before they could carry out their plans

*-sometimes popularity can be just as dangerous as hostility[[1]](#endnote-1)*

-in this case—the crowd jumped to conclusions based upon the information right in front of them

-saw in Jesus the militant Messiah they had been waiting for—without considering the information just offstage

-information that underscored that this was not Jesus’ main purpose—THIS IS NOT WHO HE IS

-so Jesus removed Himself—as He sometimes does with us—until we learn to accept Him on *His terms*—as He defines Himself

-here’s a second reason—

*2–PERSONAL NEEDS*

-some of us make a decision for Jesus based upon the temporal wishes Jesus can meet

*-the crowd wanted a Jesus who promised benefits rather called for sacrifice*

-so they pursued Jesus—He was their health and wealth Messiah–*read verses 24-25*

-on the surface, they expressed curiosity, interest

-when did You arrive?—a cover for—“Why did You leave us?”

-with yesterday’s miracle still digesting in their bellies—they wanted more—they were addicted

-but Jesus breaks all the rules of evangelism—and actually goes out of His way to offend, even alienate them–*read verse 26*

-hard to imagine Luis Palau at a festival saying—*I know why you are here—it’s the action sports, the fireworks, the music*

*-so until your motives are operating at a godly level, please leave!!*

-Jesus knew that behind their pursuit of Him—it was all self-serving

-they were focused on a king of their own construction

*-someone who would provide for their world— not rule their world*

-implement policies of their own—not His

-inspire—but not interfere with their lives

APPLICATION–sometimes it is good we ask ourselves—why are we following Jesus?

-does it go beyond our own immediate—and all too temporal needs?

-I really need a loan, a job, a raise, some healing, a spouse

-sometimes a preacher’s prayer—O Lord, do an amazing work—is cover language for—please make me look good

-Jesus made it clear that if there was to be any decision—it must be based upon something more substantial than personal wants–*read verse 27*

-you’re focused only on a King who gives—a health and wealth Jesus

-a meal ticket Messiah—a wonder Chef—a supernatural health care Provider

-rather—*work*—go hard after the food that lasts

-aim higher—after a God who is most interested in providing spiritual, eternal needs

-get beyond the immediate, the temporal—food for your stomach to food for your souls

-here’s something else—

*3–RELIGIOUS PERFORMANCE*

-some of us make a decision for Jesus based upon what we believe we can bring to the table—make sure we have done enough

-the crowd heard Jesus talk about working for the food that lasts

-they wanted Jesus to clarify His performance expectations—what this work looks like

-obeying the Sabbath, ritual washings, tithing?

-if they are going to decide for Jesus, they want to know what it is they need to do–*read verse 28*

-we ask this question as well—what does He expect of me? What can I add? What can I do to impress others?

-but Jesus made it clear that deciding for Him is not based upon achievement, approval, law keeping, performance

-following Him is not about putting law over love, guilt over grace–*read verse 29*

-here’s the main work—and it is the only one—for those who choose to come after Jesus—BELIEVE

-belief that is more than intellectual assent

-belief that amounts to commitment, to trust

-trust that His will is perfect—that His power is enough

-that His ways are wise—that He is more than sufficient

-that we do not need to add anything else—fill any gaps

-it may sound simple—but it takes a lifetime to learn how to trust, believe

-some of us are finding it really hard work

*4–SIGNS AND WONDERS*

-some make their decision for Jesus based upon *His* performance

-do something deserving—amaze me!

-we will decide for Jesus based upon something He must still do–if He heals me, provides for a job, does a miracle–*read verses 30-31*

-have you noticed the shift—from wanting to make an impulsive decision based upon what Jesus did—the conversation has caused them to ask for more?

-He’s seems to be posturing Himself to be Someone from heaven—and that requires more miracles

-caused them to start comparing—Moses fed more than 5000—and he did it for 40 years

-You only fed one time

-give us a “bigger than Moses” size miracle

-after a closer look—Jesus (on His own) was not enough

-just as He is not for many people today

-there is a “moreism” heresy afoot

-but Jesus will not perform to get people to make a decision

-would not yield to the tempter in the wilderness to do something amazing for the crowds

*-Jesus knew the excitement generated by miracles does not readily convert into a life–changing faith*

-they attract crowds but do not lead to repentance

-so after most miracles—He actually commanded people to keep it secret

-a decision for Him cannot be based upon such things

*5–EASE AND COMFORT*

-some make their decision for Christ based upon promises that He does not require much

-that He does not ask for much more than a casual relationship—there when we need Him

-a God who simply requires we pray the right prayer

-like an insurance agent—Jesus is our coverage provider

-going further than a nominal adherence is optional

-but this is not the decision Jesus calls for

-it is not a call to pray a prayer—it is a summons to go down a narrow road with all of its challenges

-it is a decision to lose our lives—go after Him–*read verses 35-36*

-even more shocking—He called them to eat Him–*read verses 53-56*

-if you want to make a decision for Jesus—you must be all in!

-total abandonment

-to decide for Jesus is to choose to enter into such a profound intimacy that metaphoric language is necessary

*-literal description is no longer functional*

-there is something in our relationship with God that calls for something radical, scandalous—requires profound depth

pt–to decide for Jesus is not to keep Him at a distance—it is to consume Him as we would food

-masticate, chew, assimilate, internalize, and metabolize Him

-such that He gets into our gut, our nerve endings, our reflexes, our bloodstream—such that He ultimately flows out of us into acts of love and holiness, healing, evangelism, and justice[[2]](#endnote-2)

-and we find the gain of eternal life–verse 54

CONCLUSION

As the conversation wore on, the crowd thinned out

-they questioned, they challenged, they grumbled, they argued, and then—they left–*read verse 66*

-by some of our standards, this sermon was a monumental failure

-He obviously did not market Himself to the masses

-they missed this—that trading everything for all that He offers was the best decision they could ever make

When I first decided for Jesus—it was for all of the wrong reasons

-I was in 7th grade—it was a Baptist church

-the preacher pressed hard

-my sister went forward—I did not want to be left behind

-it was a decision—but not a commitment

-it took me four more years until I got it

-have you made a decision—or a commitment?

1. Craddock, 51 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Peterson, Eat this Book, 18 [↑](#endnote-ref-2)