

Fil-Am Community Church
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IS JESUS ENOUGH?

Good morning! Let me ask you a very profound question this morning. Given a choice, would you rather eat in a sit-down restaurant or a buffet restaurant? In short, if I gave you \$20, would you go to Manila Oriental or Blue Pearl Buffet? It's not really a profound question, right? The answer is obvious. We would choose buffet because we want to taste everything that's on the menu. At a sit-down restaurant, sometimes you find out you have to order extra rice or extra dish. It's just not enough for us.

You see, our decision to go to a restaurant would depend on many enoughts. Am I hungry enough? Does the restaurant serve enough portions? Do they have enough choices on the menu to satisfy me? Do I have enough money?

This idea of enough, honestly, matters to many of us. When you think about it, if you're inviting people over to a holiday meal, for example, you wonder, will I have enough food? Did I prepare enough dishes? And I know some of our people who bring food to serve after service, they ask, "Did we cook enough food?" And in this church, I believe, yes, there's enough. You just have to make sure you go in line early.

But, enough of that. This morning, we're concluding our series on "Not a Fan". We've been talking about what it means to be a follower of Jesus. We said that a follower is someone who is not just on the sidelines like a fan in a stadium comfortably sitting on a bench while holding a cold Coke and a hot hamburger; but he is someone who is able to give up all these comforts and actively participate in the game no matter how bruising it may be. So, in this series, we have tried to instill the notion that a true disciple is someone who follows Jesus completely, not casually. A true disciple is someone who is committed totally and completely. All this is spelled out for us by Jesus in Luke 9:23, "*If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow*

me.”

When we started this series, we talked about a scene in John chapter 6. Great crowds were traveling with Jesus. By now, He was at the height of His popularity. Word had spread about miraculous healings and inspirational teaching. So huge crowds had gathered to cheer Him on. We're told that there were about 5,000 men. But that was just the men. Likely the crowd was in excess of 15,000. After a full day, Jesus knew the people were getting hungry, and so He turned to his disciples and asked what all these people would do for food. 15,000 is a lot of mouths to feed.

One of the disciples, Philip, told Jesus that even if they had eight months' wages it wouldn't be enough money to buy bread for everyone to have a bite. From Philip's perspective, this wasn't their problem; and even if it was, there really wasn't anything they could do. Another disciple, Andrew, noticed a boy in the crowd that had five loaves of bread and two small fish. He brings him to Jesus but sounding rather sarcastic, he wonders aloud whether that would be enough.

But Jesus had a big surprise for them. He took the boy's sack lunch and he fed the entire crowd. The Bible tells us that even after everyone had their fill there was still plenty of food left over.

Now, please get your Bibles and turn with me to John 6 beginning verse 25. Follow along as I read these verses. (Read John 6:25-35)

So, after dinner the crowd decides to camp out for the night so they can be with Jesus the next day. They are committed fans. But the next morning the crowd wakes up and they're hungry again. Ready for a little breakfast. They look around for Jesus, a.k.a. their meal ticket, but he's nowhere to be found. Eventually they figure out that Jesus and his disciples had crossed over to the other side of the lake. Instead of going home, they make the trip to the other side of the lake to be with Jesus. The crowd seems to have no higher priority than being with Jesus.

Maybe these are more than just fans after all.

By the time they catch up to Jesus they're starving. They've missed the chance to order breakfast and they are ready to find out what's on the lunch menu.

But Jesus has decided to shut down the all-you-can-eat buffet. He's not handing out any more free samples. In verses 26-27 Jesus says to the crowd: *"I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill."*

And Jesus decides to have the DTR talk with this crowd. He knows that these people are not going to all the trouble and sacrifice because they are following him, but because they are following the food. How would they respond when the drive-thru window closed?

In verse 35, Jesus offers himself, *"I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."* But the question is, would that be enough for them? Which brings us to the first point of our message this morning.

1) When Jesus is the Only Thing on the Menu, You Find Out if He's the One You were Really Hungry for.

When there are no other options, that's when you find out if Jesus is enough. I'd like to share with you a few stories of people I know over the years who have gone from fan to follower. I've changed the names and tweaked the scenarios but these are people who found out what it meant that Jesus was the bread of life.

Ferdie and Frieda were a couple whose marriage was in trouble. They have a son and they looked like a normal family. But behind the scenes their marriage was in trouble. Frieda many times had threatened to leave Ferdie because of his marital indiscretions and alcoholism. Ferdie, meanwhile, complained about her jealous attitude and being too strict. One night, Frieda, crying and obviously in a state of fear called that Ferdie threatened to kill her.

Good that Ferdie didn't make good of the threat. Later on, they became open to counseling. Through the process they came to know Jesus and the forgiveness he offers. They applied it in their lives and forgave each other. Eventually, their marriage was repaired and then became faithful attenders in church. To signify their intention to follow Jesus, they expressed their desire to be baptized.

Sergei was a Russian teenage boy who grew up not believing in God. His parents were

atheists and naturally he didn't go to church. All he wanted to do was to finish his studies well and hopefully land a prestigious position in the communist government. Until he met our group which was doing missions in their city. He was hired as an interpreter and over the weeks became fascinated with the story of Jesus which was all new to him. And one hot afternoon he came to me in the hostel where we were staying and said that he would like to commit his life to Jesus. He just worried about his parents because he knew they would be angry with him, even ostracize him. I pointed out that following Jesus meant giving up even those people or things that are most dear to him. That afternoon, he decided to become a follower of Jesus despite the cost. He is now in the US actively involved in his church.

Now, this third person is someone whose identity I don't have to hide. It's OK with her to share her testimony. This is my sister Mary Ellen in California. We call her May. Several years ago, my sister May bought a second-hand BMW. She was very proud of it. She affectionately called it her "Bimmer". And she took care of it like it was her own pet, making sure that it was clean and shiny always. She claimed that she bought it because she wanted to use a reliable car in going to church.

Well, the car didn't turn out to be reliable at all. It broke down many times and she had to shell out a lot of money to get it fixed. Actually, she could have disposed of it but she didn't because of the glamour it brought her.

In the end, because she was paying too much for the car, she defaulted in her mortgage payments. Until she was subpoenaed to appear in court.

Only then she decided to sell the car. Months went by, however, and no one bought the car yet. One day, she came to me and with tears in her eyes asked me to pray for her. She said that she already asked God for forgiveness because of her idolizing the car but wasn't sure whether God would help her.

Then, a few days later, she called and excitedly said that on the day before she was to appear in court, someone took a look at her car and bought it there and then. And now she didn't have to appear in court anymore as she already had the money to pay for her arrears. God took care of her situation after teaching her a lesson. After that, she decided

to drive a smaller car like the Dodge Neon. But most importantly, she decided to become a committed follower of Jesus.

There are plenty of stories I could tell you – a daughter is diagnosed with cancer, parents get divorced, the addiction seems unbeatable, a future seems overwhelming, a relationship falls apart...and something happens. Suddenly having a little bit of religion isn't enough. Suddenly the spectacle, the fish and loaves, the Sunday service doesn't cut it. And in those moments, those times that Jesus is the only thing left on the menu, they find out that He's exactly what they need. He becomes more than a guy wearing a blue sash – he becomes the only hope.

So here in John 6, the crowd has to decide if Jesus is enough. Are they hanging around for the perks, or is it really about the relationship? Do you remember what happened? The fans turn and go home. And here's what we read at the end of the chapter in John 6:66: *"From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him."*

And, in the long run, that's what will happen. Scripture tells us that wide is the road that leads to destruction.

In the end, whether we like it or not, most people just won't accept Christ's invitation. They like the idea of heaven. They like the miracles. They like the bread. They like the free show. They like the chance to be around a lot of people. They like the excitement. But when Jesus wipes all that off the table and offers Himself, they aren't interested. After we read in John 6 that many of his followers had left, Jesus turns to his twelve disciples and asks in verse 67: *"You do not want to leave too, do you?"*

I don't know how he said that. I don't know if he was frustrated or angry. My guess is he spoke with a tone of disappointment and sadness as it became clear why so many were following Him. And even though He was God...that must have broken His heart.

How would it feel if you started to date someone, and you took them to the movies for the first date? You paid for the popcorn, the drinks, all the snacks. You paid for the tickets. And after the date, you ask them out again. They say yes. So you take them somewhere nicer this time. Maybe a nice restaurant. You let them order anything they want off the menu, and when the bill finally comes, you pick it up and pay. And with each

date, you have more and more fun with this person, and you feel a real connection.

And just when you think things are going to get really serious, you ask them out on a special date. They agree, and you pick them up. You surprise them by taking them to the park. You go on a walk, and you talk. You stop to sit at a bench, and you pour out your heart to this person, telling them how much you care about them, how much you want to help make them happy and fulfill them. And just as you finish pouring out all of your affection for them, they look at you and ask, “Is this the date? When are we going to go do something?” And pretty soon, you realize they were just hanging around for the things you’d get them. For the movie tickets. For the nights of free meals and entertainment. Wouldn’t that break your heart?

I can imagine that might be how Jesus felt. So He asks his disciples, the men He’s grown closest to, whether or not they’ll leave. Would His most devoted disciples turn out to be fans who weren’t willing to stick around when the teaching got tough? Was this group more focused on the crowds Jesus attracted than on His message of life? Would they abandon Jesus? In John 6:68-69, we read their response: *Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”*

Which leads us my second point this morning.

2) When You Really Know Jesus as Lord, You Don’t Want to Leave Him.

Peter’s answer sums it up. “To whom shall we go?” That one question seems to ask thousands of questions. Who could lead us like you could? Who could teach us with wisdom like yours? Who could possibly bring us closer to God? Why would we ever want to leave the Messiah? Who else is worth following compared to you? How could we ever find someone else like you?

See, fans will bail on Jesus when His teaching gets difficult. When He asks them to sacrifice, when He asks them to take up their cross, when He asks them to die to themselves, fans take off. And I don’t think they do that just because they prefer comfort. Because if they knew, I’m convinced their actions would reflect that knowledge. If they were guaranteed a ticket to heaven, if they had full assurance that Jesus was the Son of

God, if they could be completely and one hundred percent positive that following Jesus would lead to an eternity of bliss and worship and joy in the presence of the Lord, I'm confident they would stick with it. Who wouldn't, right?

If all of us believed and knew with every ounce of our being, we'd have a much easier time swallowing some of the tougher portions of Scripture.

The problem is some of us are not fully convinced of what lies ahead and so we can't make a decision about the present. Some of us wish that God would make some of these things tangible to us so that making a decision would be easy.

We wish God would write it in the sky. We wish He'd give us a vision. We wish He'd speak audibly to us. We wish He'd send an angel or give us some kind of unmistakable sign that He is alive and in charge and Jesus is His son.

But life's not like that, is it? And it wasn't like that for the disciples, either. Sure they were able to witness the miracles. But eventually, they had to choose to know and believe that Jesus was the Messiah. Choosing to know and believe is a choice we have to make, just like the disciples made. Because if we would believe with the same fire and passion that the disciples had, I think our lives would look completely different.

In the end, it comes down to whether Jesus is enough for you. And it comes down to whether or not you'll choose to move from being a fan to being a follower.

[Video]

3) We Don't Know the Day, But We Know His Name.

It's true, we don't know the day Christ will return. We don't know when health might fail or finances might plummet or when we'll die. And we never will. But even though we don't know the day, we know His name.

I know none of us want to be declared fans on judgment day. And I know we aren't offered the guarantee that we always want, but Jesus does offer a guarantee. Jesus guarantees that if you put your trust in Him, He will never fail you. He guarantees that if you stake your life on His message of truth, He will stake His life on your eternity in Heaven. Jesus guarantees that if you put your trust and hope in Him, He'll guide you to

an eternity with God the Father. We don't know the day, but we know His name. And as Scripture tells us, by his name alone, men are saved.

But you have to decide. Are you a fan or are you a follower of Jesus? Because all of those guarantees are for the followers who refuse to leave His side, the followers who ask, "To whom shall we go. You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One sent from God."