

THE NEXT DAY

“The next day the crowd that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake realized that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone.” (John 6:22)

On the day before Jesus fed the multitudes with 5 small barley loaves and 2 small fish (Jn. 6:9). As a point of interest, other than the resurrection, this is the only miracle of Jesus recorded in all four Gospels. There was plenty of food the day before and they “all had enough to eat” (Jn. 6:12). In fact, they gathered 12 baskets full of food from the fragments that were left over.

The “next day”, however, the “crowd” was hungry again and in a serious search for Jesus. Most have had the experience of eating so much that you naively think you will never be hungry again. The “next day”, however, you realize you were wrong. You may even be more hungry the “next day” than you were the day before.

When Jesus realized that the fickle crowd wanted to “come and make Him king by force” He withdrew again to a mountain by Himself (Jn. 6:15). Before doing so, however: **“Immediately Jesus make the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of Him to the other side” (Matt. 14:22).**

When the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor His disciples were there, they got into boats and went searching for Him (Jn. 6:24). Since they were in a “remote place” it is logical to assume that on the “next day” they hadn’t eaten. It is also logical to assume that it was not easy to find Jesus. When they did find Him He was several miles away in Capernaum. When Jesus saw the same crowd He said to them: **“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.” (John 6:26)**

By now, of course, the 12 baskets full of fragments were already growing stale. Nor would they have been sufficient to feed the multitudes anyhow. That’s when Jesus said: **“Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.” (John 6:27)**

Someone has quipped that “hunger is a good sauce”. Even stale bread tastes good if you are hungry enough. These people were obviously hungry, that’s one reason why they went to so much trouble to find Jesus. The problem was, they were only craving temporary fulfillment. Earthy food not only spoils, but it never provides lasting satisfaction.

Paul wrote: **“Everything is permissible for me -but I will not be mastered by anything. Food for the stomach and the stomach for food -but God will destroy them both.” (1 Cor 6:12, 13)** He then proceeded to apply this principle to sexual immorality. **“The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.” (1 Cor 6:13-14)**

The sexual union in the context of marriage provides perpetual enjoyment. Outside of marriage the “next day”, or the “morning after” there is no satisfaction. Instead there is anxiety and fear. The temporary pleasure the night before now haunts the mind with guilt and shame, fears of venereal disease, and fears of an unwanted pregnancy.

The “next day” is a simple way to measure the value of decisions made today. In this regard, there is no “buyer’s regret” for those who receive Jesus Christ as Lord. Jesus said it like this: **“I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” (John 6:50-51)**

Truly, the “Bread of Life” is sweeter as the days to by!