

Jesus: looking for a little quiet time, Matthew 14:13-36

The fact is, oddly, that Jesus talked little about himself. Though he defended himself and his actions to the Jewish leaders, and explained his purpose and being to the disciples, he actually spent very little time promoting himself. Rather, he promoted his father's kingdom and prepared himself for his role as redeemer and sacrifice for the world's sin. Crowds followed him, his visits were anticipated by villages and entire regions, but he did not go in search for crowds. What stands out in the gospels is how much Jesus sought a little time alone, time to reflect and time to be with his father. Yet even that time was interrupted by the needs and demands of others.

What we notice first in this passage: two great miracles

- Feeding the 5,000 (probably more like 10-15,000, including women and children), with just 5 small loaves and 2 fish.
 - Parallel in Mark 6, Luke 9, and John 6: _____
 - A miracle of the first order. _____
 - Taught and talked about in every Sunday school class in the universe. _____
- Jesus walks on the water.
 - The disciples, on the lake at night, were being battered by a strong wind. _____
 - A lesson in the contrary nature of faith, as Peter's fear weakens his faith. _____
 - And again, taught and discussed universally. _____

What we most always overlook: Jesus twice sought time by himself

- V.13: after hearing the news of John the Baptist, Jesus *withdrew from there in a boat, to a lonely place by himself, and when the multitudes heard of this, they followed him on foot from the cities.*
 - From the Greek: *a lonely place according to a private or isolated spot:* _____
 - Yet the multitudes would not leave him alone. _____
- V.23: again, after speaking to and feeding the multitude, *he went up to the mountain by himself to pray.*
 - This time he was afforded a little time alone. _____

What we see, what we don't see.

The dual nature of Jesus, and his often overlooked human side.

- The influence of his popularized image.
 - Always understanding and sweet. _____
 - Available to our whims. _____
- Forgetting, or avoiding, the scriptural record.
 - John 6:15, he indicates that Jesus was avoiding the untimely process of the crowds trying to make him king. _____
 - Throughout the Gospel accounts, Jesus spent many evenings isolated in his thought and prayer, yet, in compassion, he couldn't turn anyone away. _____

Focusing on his human side

- He actually had human needs.
 - Physical: food, sleep, shelter, clothing. _____
 - Emotional/spiritual. _____
- Human self-ness.
 - Physical separation from the Father. _____
 - Competing needs for fellowship and isolation. _____
 - Competition between his need to "be" and his desire to serve and fulfill his mission. _____
- The pain of his ultimate victory.
 - It meant sacrificing his life. _____
 - His isolation at the cross. _____
 - His reward was the redemption of creation and his reunion with the Father. _____

Introvert/extrovert. We often misunderstand these characterizations of human nature in thinking that the introvert cannot stand to be around others, and the extrovert cannot stand to be alone. Yet in truth, one is revitalized by alone time and can better interact with others, and the other is revitalized by intimacy and fellowship and can better tolerate his isolation. Most of us fall somewhere between the two extremes, yet Jesus at times seemed overwhelmed by both existing fully in him. He desired isolation from the crowds for rest, prayer, and meditation, yet he desired to share himself with them. How natural for the God/Man, and yet how painful.