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## *Devotion for February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022*

*Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God,  
that you believe in Him whom He has sent."*

*- John 6:29*

**"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."** So wrote Charles Dickens as he began his epoch novel, "A Tale of Two Cities." The same could well have been written about the Lord Jesus throughout the course of John chapter six. Other than a brief spike on Palm Sunday, His worldly popularity reached its apex on a day recalled in that chapter. It all happened beside the Sea of Galilee when the Lord fed a crowd of over 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two small fish.

It was the very next day that things began to turn against Jesus, though. At first the crowd discerned that Jesus had now gone to the other side of the lake, again by some sort of miraculous conveyance. He had in fact walked halfway across the body of water through a storm, gotten into the boat, and ensured the safety of His disciples through the night.

When the crowd found Him, they asked, "Rabbi, when did You come here?" It was then that He said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you." (John 6:26-27a)

How short-sighted they were in that they wanted so little from the One with so much to offer. How short-sighted are we at times when we approach our God who desires nothing more than to give us the full benefit of what He has worked for, starting with a confident belief in the One whom He has sent. That,

dear friend in Christ, is what your God wants for you, that you would believe in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen for your forgiveness and life.

To the end of gifting you thusly, He who is the bread of life offers Himself in, with, and under the bread and wine of the Holy Communion. This Sacrament truly is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet and here on a Friday as you read this devotion, you stand on the doorstep of receiving that taste.

So before you do anything else today, mark the time of the Divine Service that you will be attending this week in bold. Make it the first thing that you do this week. For by this Service God is your God. In this Service He will accomplish His good work in and through you. And the work of God is this, that you believe in the One whom He has sent. Praise be the Holy Name of Jesus forever. Amen.

*God's blessings,  
Rev. Kevin Loughran, Senior Pastor  
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