

Did Jesus Use Carnal Methods To Attract Crowds?

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Many religious groups use a variety of carnal appeals to draw people to their assemblies. For instance, there are suppers and ice cream socials, ball games and entertainment events, etc. When asked to justify these activities they will commonly refer to the episodes where Jesus fed the multitudes. Some have said, "If you first feed a man's body, then you'll have a chance to feed his soul." Let's see if their reference to Jesus' activities will really support their practices.

There were two separate instances in which Jesus miraculously fed huge crowds of people with small quantities of food. One time there were 5000 men, plus women and children (Mt. 14:15-21; Mk. 6:30-44; Lk. 9:10-17; Jn. 6:1-14). On another occasion there were 4000 men, plus women and children (Mt. 15:32-38; Mk. 8:1-9).

In both instances, the people had followed Jesus to hear His marvelous teaching and to see His amazing miracles. There had never been a promise of food to draw them. In fact, both episodes show the people following long distances and for a long time before they were offered food. For example, in Matthew 15:32 we read: "Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way." Do you see it? The people were not lured to follow by an offer of food. The food came **AFTERWARDS**, as an act of compassion. The people had **NOT** come in anticipation of being fed.

We have one reference where Jesus suspected that the people did, indeed, come with a desire of receiving food (Jn. 6:22ff). On that occasion He **DID NOT** feed them!

Those who would use the example of Jesus feeding the multitudes to justify their carnal practices today are simply wrong!