



International Bible Lesson
International Bible Study Commentary
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Follow God or Follow the Crowd
John 6:15-24

When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone (John 6:15—KJV).

So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone (John 6:15—NASB).

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself (John 6:15—NRSV).

When the devil tempted Jesus in the wilderness, he offered Jesus a kingship over all the nations on earth, but of course Jesus would need to bow under the devil's authority. After Jesus healed every disease of those who came to Him, and after He had fed about 5000 people using only 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish, crowds of people wanted to make Jesus their king. Jesus could do everything their religious and political leaders could not or would not do. Jesus could miraculously meet everyone's physical needs, so Jesus may have been tempted to allow the crowd to raise an army and by force make Him king. However, Jesus knew that He had come to do the will of His Heavenly Father rather than follow the crowd. Jesus came to meet people's eternal needs: people's need to live forever free from sin in the presence of their loving God. Jesus knew that the kingdom of which He was already King was not of this world. Jesus knew that He had to teach people the truth about God rather than be made a king of this world in opposition to his Heavenly Father. Jesus knew that He came to suffer and die on a cross to glorify God and then rise from the dead so He could give the Holy Spirit to His

followers. We do not know what Jesus prayed to His Father on the mountain, but He probably prayed for the continued strength and wisdom to do His Father's will unto death—a strength and wisdom His Father gave Him.

Thinking Further

1. Why do you think the crowd wanted to use force to make Jesus king?
2. Why do you think Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself?
3. Do you think the disciples right or wrong to leave Jesus and start across the sea to Capernaum by themselves? Why or why not?
4. What may have the disciples learned after they had gone three or four miles?
5. Why do you think the crowd left for Capernaum to look for Jesus?