

WHAT IF JESUS CAME TO OUR TOWN?

Everyone was talking about it. They heard that Jesus had raised a man by the name of Lazarus from the dead. The family of Lazarus was hosting a dinner in honor of Jesus. The crowd was beginning to build. They didn't just come to see Jesus. They wanted to see Lazarus too.

Then Jesus began the most important journey of His earthly life. Knowing what was ahead for Him, He started out for Jerusalem. We could imagine what it might have felt like standing at the side of the road, catching a glimpse of Jesus as He rode by. You hoped this would be your hero. You believed that since He raised Lazarus from the dead that He would also come and free you from your enemies, your struggles, your pain. However the greatest need wasn't deliverance from Rome, but the greatest need was deliverance from sin. Within one short week the vast majority of these people would no longer be praising His name in public. Some might be shouting His name, but they might be shouting it as they also yelled out "Crucify Him!"

What if Jesus rode into Cherokee County? What if we all knew for sure that the man coming to town was the one they called Jesus? What if we had heard the stories about Him healing sick people, making enough food to feed thousands of people out of just someone's lunch, and even the hard to believe rumor of Him raising someone from the dead? And to top it off, what if we had heard that this Jesus claimed to be the Son of God? Would you show up to see Him ride down US 74? You don't know? To be honest with you, I don't know if I would either. But, of those who would show up, I am sure you could fit them into one of three categories.

1. The spectators. They enjoy a good show, especially when there might be a crowd gathering. They have no real faith or any kind of interest in this Jesus. You will find them wherever the crowd is.

2. The curious. The curious are neither committed nor opposed. They are not necessarily looking for truth, but just what feels right for the moment.

3. The believers. These are the people who truly love Jesus.

After the "parade" is over what happens to these three groups? The spectators will say they had a really fun day. The curious may join Jesus' new fan club in town. The believers? They will go on worshiping Jesus, just like they did before.

According to the Bible, Jesus does not recognize a spectator or a curious person, because later in the week they may be yelling "Crucify Him!" Jesus recognizes believers.

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