

**Pastor Mollie's Sermon**  
**January 19, 2020**  
**John 1:35-42**

There are certain things in life that you just can't describe with words.  
You just have to experience it.

I mean, you can try.

You can tell someone how awesome it is and show pictures,  
but eventually you say, you just gotta go and see it.

Like the Northern Lights.

Grand Canyon

The Great Barrier Reef

Redwood National State Park

You just have to experience it to really understand.

This is how I feel about the experience I had, a few years ago when I went to the Martin Luther Exhibit at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

To see the pulpit Martin Luther last preached in.

To see letters he wrote expressing God's love is for everyone...

His book he left for his daughter of his most beloved sermons....

Sure, it's beautiful in pictures, but in real life, it is so much more.

It did something to me. To my heart. To my how I identify as a Lutheran, as a pastor, as a follower of Jesus.

And a picture, even a video, though I took plenty of each... they are just not enough.

You have to be there.

Today Jesus tells his first potential followers to "come and see."

Come and see.

I can tell you what I'm going to do, what this will be like,

but it's better if you come along with me and see it for yourselves.

You have to experience it to really understand.

Come and see.

The scene is set here quite nicely.

We've moved out of Matthew's Gospel and into John's Gospel this week, just for today.

And we come across John the Baptizer with his followers.

I invite you to open your Bibles and read along with me as we spend time in the text today.

Verse 29: *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and declared: Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

John was a Rabbi.

He was doing some interesting stuff and despite being kind of a crazy guy,  
he had people trying to learn from him.

So John is hanging out and sees Jesus out walking and shouts to anyone in hearing distance -

LOOK. That guy, that one right there, is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

And guess what else?

When I baptized him, which he said had to happen, the Spirit came out of the sky and the voice of God told us that this is the son of God.

I was there. I saw it happen.

Now if you are standing there, listening to John, your rabbi, tell you that this other guy is the real deal, what would you do?

If your job as a disciple, is to learn at the feet of your rabbi and he points out this other rabbi as the son of God -

what would you do?

We'd start to wonder.

Maybe we should stop being with this guy, and go with this Jesus guy.

I mean, even our own rabbi says this Jesus is the Son of God.

No. NO. That's risky. I don't know.

We don't have enough information.

Verse 35-36: *The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, Look here is the Lamb of God!"*

LOOK YOU GUYS THAT IS THE LAMB OF GOD.

John is so awesome here. And so out of character.

For a Rabbi, you don't tell your disciples to go follow someone else.

That's not what you do.

You teach your disciples the things you believe about scripture and send them off to do the same.

So to look at his people and say hey you guys go with that guy...

that's almost unheard of.

So two of his disciples go and follow Jesus as he walks on.

Verse 38a: *When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?"*

These are the first words Jesus speaks in John's Gospel.

What are you looking for?

The better translation of the original Greek would be "What are you seeking?"

Whew.

Jesus does not pull any punches here does he?

He doesn't say "what do you want?"

He doesn't say "what can I do for you?"

He says "What are you seeking?"

This is not a surface-level question.

What is it, at your core, that you need?

We ask this question of ourselves on occasion.

When we seek wholeness, purpose, or meaning in our lives, we are asking ourselves this same question.

It's HEALTHY to ask ourselves this question.

What am I doing?

What is my life about?

What am I seeking?

Also, I love that Jesus begins his time as a teacher not with the right answer or doctrine or rules and regulations, but with a question.

A question.

Verse 38b: *They said to him - Rabbi (meaning teacher) where are you staying?"*

Notice, they call Jesus Rabbi here.

He hasn't given permission, or any kind of test to pass, or hoops to jump through,

They just call him teacher.

This is what they want. They want to learn from him. They want to follow him.  
And so they ask: Where can we find you Jesus? Where are you staying?

Verse 39a: *Jesus said to them, "Come and see."*

Three little words.

But they tell us so much about what we can expect from Jesus.

They tell us so much about what it means to follow Jesus.

We can't just talk about it.

We can't just hear about it.

We have to come and see.

Jesus tells these guys, if you want to know what I'm about - you have to come and see.

**Audrey West**, Prof at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Chicago puts it THIS way....

*If you want to know the word made flesh, come and see Jesus. If you want to know what love is like, come and see Jesus. If you want to experience God's glory, to be filled with bread that never perishes, to quench your thirst with living water, to be born again, to abide in love, to behold the light of the world, to experience the way, the truth, and the life, to enter into life everlasting, . . . if you want to know God, come and see Jesus.*

This is OUR invitation!

Not only are we called as Jesus Followers... but these three words make up our identity as Followers of Christ.

It doesn't get much clearer than this!

Come and See.

Jesus reminds us today that no matter what we are seeking - be it wholeness or purpose or meaning -

The only place we'll really find it, is by being with Jesus.

Verse 40-42: *One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. Andrew first found his brother and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said "You are Simon, son of John. You are to be called Peter."*

Andrew goes to his brother and says, OH my gosh Simon you'll never believe this but we found the ONE.

You have to come and see.

Come and see.

Andrew can't keep this to himself?

Before he does anything else, follows Jesus out of the city, or to the next thing - he goes and tells his brother.

Come and see Simon.

Come and see is something that spreads.

Again, we experience this all the time.

We see a tv show we love and we tell someone, oh my gosh you just have to watch This new Netflix series, Grey's anatomy, the new season of the bachelor...

*Or we discover a new song and send the link to friends on social media.*

We are wired for come and see.

This is why when we hear a personal story about how someone has experienced God we find it so incredibly powerful and moving.

And this is why inviting people to church matters.

Come and see.  
Week after week, we DO come and see.  
We gather together and get a glimpse of God.  
That's what happens.  
That's what you feel when your heart connects to something you've seen or heard.  
So we need to go out and tell people  
We have been called.  
We have been claimed.  
We have been told to come and see.  
We go out and tell others to come and see.  
The story of these disciples is OUR STORY. .  
Come and see what I am doing.  
Come and see what it means that you are loved.  
Come and see how far I'll go to show you.  
Come and see.  
AMEN.