

Sermon for 15.1.17

What are you looking for?

These are the first words spoken by Jesus in John's gospel.

The words are a question that he addresses to his first two followers who are following him because their own teacher John the Baptist has identified him as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

"What are you looking for" is the question that calls his followers into a personal space to think, to ponder, reflect, and identify what is important in life.

It is a question that is asked of followers of Christ over and over again in life's journey in every age.

In personal terms we may find that our answer changes with the different growth stages in our lives.

For instance if I had reflected on this question when I was very young, say around 14, I would have answered, *tickets to a Beatles concert!*

In later years my answer would have been something like, "What I am looking for is health *and happiness for my family*".

Yesterday when I was finishing this sermon, my answer was: *to be in you. To be open to you my Lord and Saviour.*

Each answer speaks about my focus in life at the time.

There is nothing wrong with any of them.

They actually help me to follow my time line with acceptance, interest and understanding.

The first two followers of Jesus answer his question with their own question? *Where are you staying?* They ask him.

And then in three words Jesus beckons them to join him and be a part of his mission that was about to unfold before them. *Come and see* he says.

The word *Come* implies an invitation and the word *see* in this context means more than simply to look.

St John here as elsewhere, uses a whole variety of different words in Greek for what we translate by the simple word, "see".

The word "See" in this passage means to look and to understand, or in today's terminology *to get it*.

To see beyond the obvious and into the kernel of what is happening or more simply *to get the point*.

This is how Jesus invites all his followers in every age to live in him.

To come and see for themselves – to see beyond the obvious, into a deeper reality.

Andrew is a good example of someone who *gets it*. He spends only one afternoon with Jesus, (the gospel tells us) and he goes and tells his brother Simon, “We have found the messiah, the anointed one.” And he leads his brother Simon Peter to him.

As the gospel story details, it will, however be a long journey for his followers.

The ones who are with him in the flesh and the ones who read about him in the gospels.

We will all see his way in the world unfold before us; his prayerful steadfast love of God, his love for us, the miraculous healings, the way to engage with all kinds of people, the suffering, the torturous death, the glorious resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

It is a long journey that has suffering and blossoming not just for the local community but for the whole world.

Jesus early followers and his followers of every age are part of this journey for where he is, his followers are going to be also.

For all of us it is a process of realisation, repentance and transformation into being enabled to see a deeper reality that is beyond the imprisonment of our own self focus – and into a life of love for God and love for each other .

And all this for the single purpose of witnessing to all who don't know him, by our very lives, the deep reality that Jesus Christ is in all life experience as our steadfast companion and lover.

So may I encourage you to sit quietly in your prayerful reflection time and hear Jesus asking you, “What are you looking for?”

Then take some time to reflect and engage with Christ in prayer.

Then hear him invite you to walk with him and to “Come and See.”

The Lord be with you.

