

Seek and abide

John 1:29-42

Jan 15, 2017

- Jesus comes to us in the everyday of our lives; there are signs if we will see.
- Jesus sees us and invites us to 'come and see', to abide with him.
- He takes away our sin by ending the separation between God, and us, and in the reconnection, gives us a new identity.

There was a spiritual teacher who had three visitors knocking on the door seeking wisdom. He met them at the door and asked them, "Who sent you, did others tell you to come or did you find me yourself?" The first one replied, "I heard about you from others so I came to find out if they were speaking the truth." He was sent away. The second one said, "I found you all by myself, I don't need others to direct me." He was sent away. The third replied, "I had heard about you from others and something deep within me desired to stay with you and learn from you." The door opened and they went inside.

In today's reading John the Baptist points his followers to Jesus, calling him 'Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.' Two of John's followers become Jesus' followers, and they bring others with them.

The 'Lamb of God' imagery sees Jesus as gentle and innocent, willing to suffer death in order to bring us life. It's NOT about being a 'scapegoat' because some tyrant God needed payment for our terrible deeds. This Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world by showing us the way to God, by reconciling us with the one who has known us since before we were born. Following Jesus through life and death to life again, brings us into the way we are born to live, in harmony with the Spirit of life, part of the flock.

When they approach Jesus he asks them a question, "What do you seek?"

We are all blessed with divine restlessness; it turns us into seekers. Augustine said, 'our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you.' We are born out of the great love of God and when our spiritual umbilical cords are cut, we yearn to reconnect, we need to find the source of life from our own seeking. So we are restless, seeking something but we don't always know what that something is until we stumble on it, or someone points it out to us. Even those of us who have been following Jesus for most or all of our lives still wander away and don't notice, like stray lambs, and then need to be found and brought back home. So, what do you seek? In John's gospel the disciples simply say, 'Rabbi' – teacher. We seek someone who will lead us into knowing, who will lead us into life, who will lead us into peace and somewhere that feels like home. They ask where Jesus is staying and he offers an invitation, "Come and see." He opens the door for a new life.

In the gospel story, before Andrew follows Jesus he goes to get his brother Simon. He tells him, 'We have seen the Messiah, the anointed, the one we have been restless for so long to encounter.' Andrew has to share the discovery with his brother. How urgent are we in sharing the faith we have found? When Jesus meets Simon he sees him, as John the Baptist saw and recognised Jesus. He sees him for who he is and says, "You are Simon, you will be Cephas.": I see who you are and I know who you are becoming; Cephas, Peter, the Rock. We are not left squirming in the mud of our own attempts at satisfying the restlessness with all manner of addictions and crazy desires. Jesus reaches out to us and draws us into the fullness of life and we are changed. We have a new identity as followers of Jesus, and the adventure begins, all over again, time and time again, for the rest of our lives and beyond as long as we stay with Jesus. Abide with him.

Questions to ponder:

- Who points you to Jesus? – What do you read, feel, taste, see or hear that draws you into a deeper relationship with God?
- What restlessness in you needs to find a home, peace, freedom?
- In what way are you changed, or renamed by being a follower of Jesus, and how do you share that story with others?

blessings on the way,

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