

Come and see

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[0 : 00] Thanks, Mark. Thank you as well for having me back again. It's a joy to be with you again! to look again at John's Gospel. So do keep that reading that we had in John chapter 1 open! in front of you. And we'll delve into that in a moment.

Come and see. Come and see this new movie, adverts might tell us. Or come and see these sofas that we have for sale, other adverts might tell us. Come and see my new house.

Come and see my new dog. Come and meet my friends. Come and see them. There's lots of times in life where we're invited to come and see. Before I moved down to live in Hove a few years ago to work for Bishop Hannington Church over there, I was invited to come down and see, see the church, see if this is somewhere I want to live, somewhere where I want to be a part of and work.

Come and see. When I then moved into Hove, I was told about what some people thought was the best ice cream in Hove, a shop on the seafront called Morocco's. And they invited me to come and see after a Sunday service. Come and see if this is the best ice cream in Hove. And it's certainly pretty good. And when I was then exploring to go and study, I was encouraged to go and see, go and see a college in North London. Go and see if this is somewhere I want to sign myself up for, to go and study for three years. Come and see. See, going to see things is often very helpful.

It helps us to know, is this something we want to be part of? Do we want to start this something new? Do we want to buy this new car, this new sofa? Is this movie really that good? Come and see. And here in our passage this morning, Jesus invites two people to come and see, to come and see him.

[2 : 43] And we're going to get there in a moment. But firstly, let's just remind ourselves where we've got to in John's Gospel. We started a series in John's Gospel two weeks ago, looked at those first 18 verses, and we were left going, wow. The Word was God in the beginning. The Word is God. The Word's come down.

God in the flesh has come down to earth. The one who's come to bring light and life to the world is dwelling in his dwelling in his creation. We go, wow. And last week, we saw John the Baptist, who doesn't point to himself, but he points to Jesus, the one who's come down. The Messiah, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. And it all feels really exciting.

And then we get to verses 35 to 42. And I have to confess, when I read it on Tuesday, I didn't feel quite so excited. But as I've been looking at it over the last few days, and hopefully as we look at it this morning, we'll see, actually, I think it's even more exciting. Because this Jesus who's been introduced to us, he comes and he changes individual lives as they come and see who he is. And I think it's truly stunning. And hopefully we will come away thinking that too. So the first point that I've got for us this morning is, come and see. Come and see. Come and see Jesus. There's lots and lots of seeing language in these verses. Just have to look at verse 36, which says, when he saw, that's John, when he saw

Jesus passing by, he says, look, the Lamb saw, look. This is John, again, pointing away from himself and to Jesus. And he says to the people that are with him, to his, John's disciples, he says, look, look, the Lamb.

Look, it's him. He's passing by. And as he points to Jesus, as he points him out to these two disciples, we see in verse 37 that they immediately go and follow Jesus. They followed Jesus. There's no delay, it seems. They hear this testimony about Jesus. Look, it's the Lamb. And they go and follow.

[5 : 41] And as Jesus realizes that they are following him, Jesus turns around and it says in verse 38, we see what Jesus asks him. He says, what do you want? They said, Rabbi, which means teacher, where are you staying?

Where are you staying? That's the question they ask for him. In other words, their intention in following him is to go where he goes, to follow where he stays. They've heard this is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

They've heard that this is the Messiah. They've believed John's testimony. And so now they want to follow him and see if this is really true. Follow Jesus, where he goes.

Even to where he goes. Even to where his home is. It's not that they hear that this is God come down and so are like, perform us a sign.

Show us some wonderful sign in the stars or heal someone. Show us that you're God. Show us a sign in the stars or you're God.

[7 : 33] Show us a sign in the stars or you're God. Jesus says, come and you will see. This is astonishing to me.

Astonishing that the one who was with God in the beginning, in fact is God, should turn around to two ordinary guys and say, come and see.

Come, see where I'm saying. Come, follow me. A few weeks ago, I got to go to this place, the Royal Pavilion, just down the road.

And as I went around it with a friend who was coming down to Bryson for the day, I was very excited to go around because the last time I went, I was a lot younger, and all I could remember was the kitchen.

I don't know why that stood out to me, but it really did. It's probably something to do with food. But this time, the thing that stood out to me was going into the room and seeing the bed where Queen Victoria had slept when she visited Brighton.

[8 : 52] I was in the room where Queen Victoria herself had slept. I found that astonishing. These two disciples are seeing where Jesus, the one who's made the world, the creator of the world, where he laid his head, I think that's even more astonishing.

Come and you will see. See God who's come down. See the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He is here, and he invites ordinary people, sinners, people like you and me, people like us, to see him.

And I wonder what they saw. Like we're not told the details. We're not told what they saw.

We're not told what Jesus said to him when they went to the place where Jesus was staying. But my mind went back to verse 14 of chapter 1.

I'm going to read it. Verse 14. The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

[10 : 18] We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

That verse says that Jesus made his dwelling amongst us. He came to live amongst us. And these disciples, they get to see where Jesus was dwelling.

He came to live amongst us. On the earth. That verse says that we've seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son.

And so as these two disciples get to see Jesus, to see where he was dwelling, they surely got to see his glory.

This is God. This is the perfect, blameless Lamb of God standing amongst them. They get to see, they get to see, come and see God come down.

[11 : 19] They get to come and see the grace of God shown to them. That's what that verse says. He's for grace and truth. Grace in inviting sinners to come and see God, to follow him.

They get to come and see the truth made known to them. That God was now here and he invites people to come and follow him.

And so by spending time with Jesus, by spending time seeing him, their lives are changed.

As they see the glory of the one and only Son, full of grace and truth. We're going to see in a moment how they keep following him and the response that they have.

He really is someone worth following. And we, as Christian people, are followers of this Jesus too.

[12 : 33] And we're invited by him to come and see him, to come and spend time with him too.

John wrote this gospel with a purpose in mind.

And we hear what that purpose is in the end of John's gospel. John chapter 20, verse 30.

Says Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book, but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name.

These things in John's gospel are written so that we may believe, and that we believe is to keep on believing, not just believe for the first time, but keep on believing as we get to keep spending time with Jesus, as we keep coming to his word and seeing him.

In other words, it's through reading words of scripture that we get to see Jesus. And we can keep believing, keep seeing the one.

[14:05] who's come to save us. We come to see so that we can come to believe and to keep believing in him.

I'm a big fan of Great British Bake Off. I love it when that comes on, on the telly, around end of August, September time.

But I remember being really skeptical when it was first coming on the TV. I heard people talking about it, and I thought, how can a baking competition be any good?

And I eventually decided, maybe I should go and see it, go and check it out. And actually, it turned out to me to be pretty good, it seems.

Loved it. I was hooked. And I've watched it every year since. And before I first watched it, I was, I could bake flapjacks and brownies and quite enjoyed that and was very content with that.

[15:16] But as I've watched it more and more, I've got to see them bake these most spectacular cakes, breads, pastries. And it's really inspired me.

And the more I watch Great British Bake Off, the more I want to bake. The more we spend time with Jesus in his words, the more excited we should be to keep following him.

The more we come and see Jesus, the more we can keep going on, believing and following him.

Come and see him in his words. So how are we making time to see Jesus in our lives? Are we digging into his words each day, coming to see him expectantly?

One way in which I think as a church we can really see Jesus is as we come to communion services, I think they're a great visible reminder to us of Jesus.

[16:48] As we get to see the bread, as we get to take, and as we get to eat, it reminds us of what Jesus has done. His body broken for us on the cross.

As we get to see the wine, such a great visible reminder to us of Jesus who shed his blood for us. We get to come and see together Jesus.

They are symbols, those bread and wine, but they are so visible pictures that Jesus has given to us to help us to see him.

And it's great to see that communion is actually happening tonight. I didn't know that when I was first preparing this, but it works well.

So do come along tonight if you can. It will be great to see Jesus together in that way, to help us to keep believing, to keep coming to see him.

[17:58] But maybe you're here this morning and you're not sure if you believe. You're not sure about Jesus. You're not sure if he's really worth following.

Jesus invites these two disciples to come and see. And he's still inviting people today to come and see him.

Such a gracious invitation from God in the flesh to come, to come see him. Come see him, the Lamb of God who's died to take away our sin.

So I'd encourage you to keep exploring, to keep looking at the Bible. Read through John's Gospel. Keep seeing Jesus. Maybe ask someone you know who's a Christian here if you could read the Bible with them to help you.

[19:10] Come and see, Jesus says. See it's me. See it's me who saved you. See it's me who's died for you. See it's me who's raised a new life for you.

Come and see, Jesus. And secondly, go and tell. Come and see, go and tell.

So, these two disciples, we get one of their names in verse 40. His name's Andrew.

And he's so clearly had his life changed by seeing Jesus. Verse 40 says, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus.

And the first thing Andrew did was to go and find his brother Simon and tell him we have found the Messiah, that is the Christ. His response is to go and tell.

[20:15] I haven't travelled much, certainly not very far in my life so far, until about a year ago, the furthest north I'd been was Cambridge.

And I was quite proud of that in some ways. But last summer, I got to go a lot further up to the Lake District. I got to stay in a place called Keswick.

And wow, it was beautiful. It was amazing. I saw some amazing scenes. I should have put a picture up on the slide to show you how amazing I think it is.

I just had to go wow at them. I was like, wow, like God's made that. That's amazing. And so I then had to go and tell others.

I messaged friends, say, did you know how great the Lake District is? And they were like, yeah, we did. I posted pictures on social media.

[21 : 18] I was just very excited. And I went back home and told everyone I met how wonderful the Lake District is. And I'm even going back this summer with more people.

It's great. Andrew, one of these disciples, he sees Jesus. He sees the glory of the one and only Son who made His dwelling among us.

He was invited to come and see Him. And surely he went, wow, this is Him. This is Jesus. This is the Messiah.

This is the one who's come to save us. And so He just has to go and tell other people. And He begins with His brother Simon.

John, at the beginning of this passage, he had to tell others too. He told others excitedly, look, the Lamb. Look, it's Him.

[22 : 20] Go follow Him. And this is what followers of Jesus should instinctively do. Go and tell others, we have found Him, so let's, of course, we go and tell others.

it's the normal way of people coming to find Jesus.

We are all probably, if we went around and asked each other, we are all probably in this room because somebody has told us about Jesus. Our parents, our friends, someone we've heard on the TV, someone who's handed us a leaflet, someone who's preached a sermon to us, we're here because we've been told about Jesus.

That's what's happened to Andrew. He was told by John and now his brother Simon has been told by Andrew. We have found Him.

and it's great, I think, to see and sense the excitement in this. We have found the Messiah. It's an exciting thing.

[23 : 39] And so is this our response? When we see Jesus, when we hear a sermon on a Sunday and we hear about Jesus, is this our response?

Do we want to go and tell others? I know that that's not what I often go and think.

Often leave church and think, well, what's for lunch? Or what do I need to get ready for work tomorrow? I've lost count of the number of times I've sat in church and heard of someone like this that says, go and tell others and very quickly I've forgotten or I've had good intentions thinking, oh yeah, I'm seeing so and so on Wednesday.

I must tell them. Tell them about this. It's exciting. It's crucial that I tell them and then find I've completely blown it.

Missed the opportunity. I've been encouraged looking in this passage and I think there's encouraging things in this for us to help us be equipped to go and tell people about Jesus.

[25 : 05] The first thing that I was encouraged by is this thought, to tell someone your personal testimony. meaning. Andrew says, we have found the Messiah.

We've seen him with our own eyes. We've heard him. We've seen his glory. It's Jesus. So come and see him for yourself.

He's changed our lives. Come and see if he might do the same for you. Personal stories of how Jesus has come to change our lives around, showing it's not my work but his to save me.

I think are really important. I've been reading a little bit from someone who was a bishop about a hundred or so years ago in Liverpool.

His name's JC Ryle and he said this really helpful thing on this passage. He says thousands humanly speaking would listen to a word from a friend who will not listen to a sermon.

[26 : 18] Every believer ought to be a home missionary, a missionary to their family, their children, their neighbors, their friends.

Surely if we find nothing to say to others about Jesus we may doubt whether we are savingly acquainted with him ourselves. He's right.

If we have met Jesus we'll want to tell them about him. And he says we're a home missionary. I don't meet many people who are not yet Christians whose first thought is to go and listen to a sermon.

I don't think many would want to do that straight away. But if they're a trusted friend or family member they will listen to us. They will listen to us and if they know us well and hear our testimony hear how Jesus has worked in our lives it just might make sense to them.

[27 : 29] It just might be the beginning of them coming to find Jesus for themselves. And that's what Andrew did here. That's how he led his brother to the Lord Jesus.

So I wonder who has God placed in your life that you can go and share with them your story about how Jesus has worked in your life.

second encouragement from this is we're just a bringer. So Andrew brings his brother to Jesus. It's not Andrew who saves his brother's life. He just brings him along. Verse 42 it says and he brought him to Jesus. It's not Andrew who changes his brother's life.

we'll see in a moment that is definitely Jesus. If we think it all depends on ourselves and even if we know it doesn't maybe we feel like it does somehow we'll struggle to go and tell Jesus that's a lot of pressure to put on ourselves.

[28 : 53] But if we remember that all we do is just bring them to Jesus show them Jesus then I think we can do that. Tell them our testimony and then maybe ask them do you want to read the Bible with me?

Do you want to see Jesus in his word? Come and see Jesus with me. Bring someone along to an evangelistic event.

It was great to hear about a curry evening that happened a few weeks ago. Come and eat curry with me and hear about Jesus. Bring them along. Or come to church with me.

Come along. Hear about Jesus and his word. See other people who Jesus is at work in. We're just a bringer. And final encouragement.

It's Jesus' work to change people. It's not mine. back in the passage, verse 42. He brought him to Jesus.

[30 : 02] Jesus looked at him and said, you are Simon, son of John. You will be called Cephas, which when translated is Peter.

It says Jesus looked at Simon. And that word looked is a word for an intense stare. Jesus is looking at Simon.

And if Jesus is looking at Simon, he can see not just Simon on the outside, he can see Simon on the inside. He knows the sin in Simon's life.

He knows all about Simon. Simon. sin. But that doesn't mean Jesus gives up. Jesus changes lives. He's the lamb who's come to take away sin. He's the lamb who's come because we sin. Because there is evil in our hearts.

[31 : 11] and so as we stand before Jesus and he looks at us yet he loves us. He's the blameless lamb of God who's come to take away our sin.

And so he keeps going with Simon. He looks at him and he says, you are Simon, son of John.

That's who you are, but you will be called Cephas, which one translated is Peter.

Jesus gives Simon a new name. It changes his life. The name Peter, it means rock.

Jesus was going to use Peter as an instrument to build his church. Peter now has a new purpose to live for Jesus.

This was the beginning of his work. to make a new community of people from all over the world. To save people.

[32 : 17] It's not Andrew's work, it's not John's work, it's not Peter's work to change lives. It's not my work, it's not Mark's work, it's not Phil's work, it's not our work to change people's lives, it's Jesus who changes people's lives.

Maybe you're here this morning, you've been brought along to church, or maybe you're watching online. Someone's told you about Jesus, told you about church, and you're just kind of tuning in, just seeing what it's about.

Let me tell you, Jesus can change your life too. He does here. and we're in a room full of people who Jesus has changed their lives.

It's a work that he's done. Jesus looks at you and he sees the wrong that you do, but nonetheless loves you. He's died for you.

You can call on him today. You can tell him you're sorry for your sin and ask him to forgive you and tell him I want to follow you today.

[33 : 38] He can save you. When we come and see something, be it a job, a university, a new car, the finest ice cream in Brighton, we'll get an idea of whether this is something we can buy in tea.

Whether this is a place we want to go and move to, whether this is an ice cream shop we want to come back to and tell our friends. Come and see, and then go and follow, and go and tell.

And so surely if we can do that with things like ice cream and university and jobs, we can do that with Jesus. Jesus who's changed our lives, Jesus who takes away our sin, Jesus the Lamb of God. So come and see Jesus, keep seeing Jesus, keep reading about Jesus, keep coming to church, keep hearing about Jesus, Jesus, then go and tell.

Go and tell of him. It's so exciting what he does to change our lives. Let's go and tell and pray that he might change other people's lives too.

[35 : 10] Let's pray now. Father, we thank you so much for your words.

We thank you that you have revealed yourself to us in Jesus. We thank you that we can come and we can see him in his word and it helps us to believe and to keep on believing.

We pray that we would make sure that we spend time seeing more of Jesus. But we pray to you that you would help us to be like Andrew in this passage and to go and tell of him, the one who changes lives.

Thank you that he does and thank you that he will. Please use us for your glory we pray. Amen.

