



Meeting Jesus

January 20, 2008

Focus Scripture John 1:29–42

Additional Scriptures
Isaiah 49:1–7
Psalm 40:1–11
1 Corinthians 1:1–9

Loving God, thank you for pouring out your bountiful Spirit on all your children. Empower us to rejoice in the changes that come when we meet Jesus, our saviour.
Amen.

The Spirit brings change. When Andrew and Peter meet Jesus, the Messiah, their lives change. They choose a new direction, the path of discipleship. God's Spirit continues to form faithful servants who bring God's way of justice and peace to the world. As we listen to the witness of those who have been called by God's Spirit, we encounter our own Spirit-led call.

Focus Scripture: John 1:29–42

In this text we read how the writer of John's gospel relates the story of Jesus' baptism. It is reported by John the Baptizer, and reflects his testimony that Jesus is the Messiah sent by God. Jesus is the "one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit" (verse 33).

John the Baptizer makes the remarkable announcement that Jesus is the "Lamb of God," the one who "will take away the sin of the world." This may have been a reference to certain places in the Hebrew Scriptures where animal sacrifice is indicated as a "sin offering."

The gospel writer uses several other names for Jesus in these verses. Each reveals something of Jesus' identity and mission. "Son of God" designates Jesus' close relationship with God. "Rabbi" is a Hebrew title of respect meaning "teacher," indicating Jesus' role as a teacher of God's way. "Messiah" is a Hebrew word meaning "the anointed one." The Hebrew prophets spoke of God's anointed one as the righteous ruler who would usher in a reign of justice and peace.

After John the Baptizer's powerful testimony, two of John's disciples respond to Jesus' invitation to "come and see." They follow Jesus and stay with him. Andrew, one of these disciples, identifies Jesus as the Messiah. Andrew invites his brother Simon to also "come and see" God's anointed one. Both Simon and Andrew leave their fishing behind, changing direction to follow Jesus.

Jesus changes Simon's name to Cephas (Peter), a sign of the great changes to come in Peter's life as he chooses to follow Jesus. Indeed, Peter is named in lists of Jesus' twelve apostles and becomes a key leader in the early church.

Andrew also is named as one of the Twelve. Tradition holds that Andrew preached the gospel in Scythia. It is thought that he was martyred in Achaia.

The mission of God's chosen servant is described in **Isaiah 49:1–7**. This faithful servant reveals God's faithfulness. Through the efforts of this servant, God's restoration will be brought to the world. Those to whom the servant is sent are invited to "come and see" God's glory.

God's saving work is praised by the psalmist in **Psalms 40:1–11**. God has pulled the psalmist and the nation out of the deepest of pits in the past. There is no doubt that God will do the same again. The emphasis in this psalm is not on what the psalmist will do, but on what God will do to save God's people.

In **1 Corinthians 1:1–9**, Paul reminds the Corinthians that God has called them to be saints in community with Christ. It is God who gives grace and peace. It is God who enriches, strengthens, and gives spiritual gifts. It is God who is faithful. It is God who will count them as blameless at the "day of our Lord Jesus Christ." When we meet Jesus and join the community of disciples, we can expect life-giving change.



The Holy Spirit continues to reveal God's very self to humankind. The Spirit continues to bring people to life-changing encounters with Jesus. When we meet the Christ, we can expect our viewpoint and our direction in life to change. What might Jesus be calling the church today to come and see? What life-giving changes might we expect as we follow?

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