

Second Sunday after Epiphany

WHERE IS THE MESSIAH? HERE!

John 1:29-42

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Analysis by Paige G. Evers

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' 31 I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel." 32 And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God." 35 The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, 36 and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" 37 The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. 38 When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" 39 He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. 40 One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed). 42 He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas"

(which is translated Peter).

DIAGNOSIS: The Ones Who Are Searching

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem) : *Here are Messiahs to Try Out*

Did any of your friends or family receive membership in the “Messiah of the Month Club” as a Christmas gift? Did you? One month, a gym club membership will get you back to your ideal weight and life will be better. The next month, a vacation to a sunny island will ease your stress. The following month, you’ll get a promotion at work and your financial worries will disappear. There are a lot of false messiahs out there. Which one are you following (v. 37)? Which one are you looking for (v. 38)?

Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) : *There’s One that Looks Better*

Searching after and following a false messiah is a futile quest because our hearts will never be satisfied. What happens when you do reach that weight goal? When your perfect vacation finally takes place? When you get to the next rung on the career ladder? Not only are you not fulfilled, but your sin doesn’t go away. It remains. So you begin your search for a messiah all over again.

Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) : *There Is the One Who Sees My Sin*

When we seek after false messiahs and pour our love into anything or anyone other than Jesus Christ, we are lost. Only Jesus, the Son of God, “takes away the sin of the world” (v. 29). When we are so busy following other messiahs that we fail to see the crucified and risen Jesus, let alone trust in him, our situation is hopeless. Our perfect figure, our vacation tan,

and our professional attire cannot hide our sin. When we search in vain for forgiveness, God's wrath will find us instead.

PROGNOSIS: The One Who Takes Away the Sin of the World

Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution) : *Here is the Lamb of God*

John's testimony proclaims the good news that the true Messiah has come. "Here is the Lamb of God" (v. 29), John declares when Jesus walks by. "Look, here is the Lamb of God" (v. 36), John says again the next day. The real Messiah is here. How does John know? He saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on Jesus (v. 32), just as God promised (v. 33). This is the Word made flesh living among us (1:14), who suffered the full burden of being human when he died on the cross for us. Jesus came to take away our sin, baptize us with the Holy Spirit (v. 33) and form us as children of God.

Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution) : *Here is the Irresistible One*

Here is Jesus, and he is irresistible. The two disciples that heard John declare, "Here is the Lamb of God!" couldn't help but follow him (v. 37). Jesus asked, "What are you looking for?" (v. 38), and they asked where he was staying. Their desire to be with Jesus was met by his invitation to "come and see" (v. 39). The disciples came away from their time with Jesus trusting in him as the Messiah (v. 41). He alone could free them from their sin. In him, their hearts were satisfied. When we put the gym, the vacation, and the job in their proper places and trust in the Lamb of God for forgiveness and life, we can stop searching. Our hearts will be satisfied as the disciples' were.

Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution) : *Here is the One I Want to Tell You About*

Here is Jesus, the Lamb of God. His irresistible invitation to follow him extends to all, through us. After abiding with Jesus, Andrew went to find his brother and share the good news that "We have found the Messiah" (v. 41). But Andrew didn't stop there. He brought Simon to Jesus (v. 42), whom he then named "Peter" or "rock." The other lessons for the day echo the theme of God calling servants to share the good news. The letter to the Corinthians begins, "Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 1:1). In today's Old Testament reading, Isaiah declares on behalf of Israel, "The Lord called me...And he said to me, 'You are my servant Israel, in whom I will be glorified'" (Isaiah 49:1, 3). Jesus' first followers glorified God by passing on John's proclamation, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (v. 29). When we share this good news with those who are searching, we become apostles as well. We don't need to join the "Messiah of the Month Club" because God has already acted to save us through his Son, the true Messiah. We are followers of the Lamb of God. His forgiveness and love last much longer than a month. They last for eternity.