

Pastor Matthew Ude
January 26th, 2020
Third Sunday of Epiphany

Jesus Calls Us To Greater Things

John 1:29-42a ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! 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 is preferred before me, for He was before me.'" ³¹ "I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water." ³² And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him." ³³ "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'" ³⁴ "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God." ³⁵ Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. ³⁶ And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour). ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John *speak*, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). ⁴² And he brought him to Jesus.

Does everyone here know the book, Green eggs and ham? It's the best of the Dr. Seuss books. In this book Sam tries to convince this other guy, to eat green eggs and ham. This other guy isn't willing to try it at all. So Sam tries many different things, in a boat, with a

goat, in the rain, on a train, in a box with a fox. No matter what Sam tries this other guy won't touch them.

Our text today reminded me of this book because here we have Jesus saying "Come and you will see." Jesus is calling us to try something that doesn't look very appealing. After all its 10am when the disciples follow Jesus and they stay with him all day. That is nearly eight hours sitting listening to a guy preach. Anyone here think that sounds like a fun way to spend the day? Eating green eggs sounds much more appealing than sitting and listening to a sermon all day.

However Jesus has something that Sam in our book here did not. Jesus has the power of God.

Sam uses tricks and eventually simply wears this other guy down. But Jesus uses the power of God to move us away from the things of this earth that we are so attached to, to come and find the things of heaven and of God.

The Father Draws John

In our text John the Baptist is is very honest about how he came to Jesus. Look at verse 33 again:

John 1:33 ³³ "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

It was not John who found Jesus. It was God who revealed to John who the Messiah was.

Now look at verse 41:

John 1:41 ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah " (which is translated, the Christ).

Here Andrew claims “we have found the Christ.” But Andrew did not find the Christ. It was revealed to him through John the Baptist, to whom it was revealed by God. Neither John nor Andrew, nor us either would have known Him, unless it was first revealed to us by the power of God.

John 6:44 ⁴⁴ "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him;

We would not know Him without that power of God, because like the green eggs in our book. He looks unappealing to us. He doesn't look like something we would want.

In fact this is exactly what Nathanael says later in this chapter, “can anything good come out of Nazareth.” Nathanael looks at Christ and says, “That is not who I want as my Messiah.”

So each one of us would be right there with Nathanael, constantly saying, "No, No, No I don't want that." Except the Father by His power has drawn us to follow Christ.

Our text lays this out very clearly for us. That even though Christ at first doesn't look that appealing to us, nevertheless once He has drawn us in, what we find in Christ is so much better than what we had before.

John the Baptist loses his whole life but gains the Lamb of God

One of the things I always talk about whenever I do marriage classes is, “What are you willing to give up for the sake of your marriage?” Marriage is such a wonderful and precious gift from God that we ought to be willing to give up just about anything for the sake of our spouse. Unfortunately the truth is that we are rarely willing to give up even the smallest thing. Even something so small as a golf match or a night out with my friends. This is the heart of almost all marriage problems. He wants this and she wants that and neither are willing to give up what they want.

John the Baptist is not giving up a little thing for Jesus but everything. John the Baptist had nothing except his ministry. He lived in the desert. He eat wild locusts. He wore a

garment made from camel hair. He was a homeless vagabond. But he was a popular and famous homeless vagabond. People came from all around to hear him and be baptized by him.

But now here comes Christ, and God has asked John the Baptist to direct all those crowds of people to stop following John and instead follow Christ. He is supposed to give up the only thing that he has for Christ sake.

That looks as unappealing as green eggs, right? Not something we would want to do. And yet what does God promise in return? "The Lamb of God who carries away the sins of the World."

Jesus also calls us also to let go of the things of this world.

Matthew 16:25-26 ²⁵ "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Not very appealing. But Christ isn't saying we can't own a house. He is simply saying don't hold on to those things as more important than Me. If it comes to a choice between our house and Christ, recognize how much more precious Christ is than that house.

And Christ is so much more precious than that house, because he is the "Lamb of God who carries away the sin of the world."

Come and you will see He says to the disciples. Come and you will see He says to us. We might think a nice house, our life, other things of this world, are more important than Christ. But when Christ pulls us to himself what do we find?

Matthew 11:28-30 ²⁸ "Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ "For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light."

We find that the weight of our sins, the burden of our guilt is taken away in Christ. We can go to bed at night and sleep without fear, for we have peace with God.

“He is preferred before me” John says He is not only preferred before John but preferred before all things.

We have found the Christ, the Messiah, not that we have found Him but that He found us and He has revealed himself to us. And we have tasted of the gifts that he has to offer and we have found that His promises are not the boring disgusting food that we imagined them to be, but instead the sweet nectar of life. The Lamb who carries away the sin of the World.

Psalm 34:8-9 ⁸ Oh, taste and see that the LORD *is* good; Blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in Him! ⁹ Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! *There is* no want to those who fear Him.