

Isaiah 49:1-7

Psalm 40:1-11

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

John 1:29-42

## Sermon January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### *Look! There Is Jesus!*

When tragedy hits our community like a pandemic, like a natural disaster, like a war, like a mass shooting, we ask “Where are you Jesus? Where is the Lamb of God who takes away the suffering in our world?”

In the cold dark winter, as we find ourselves struggling with anxiety and depression, we ask “Where are you Jesus? Where is the Lamb of God who takes away the suffering in our world?”

In the midst of our grief, as we sit in our rocking chair, staring at the picture of our loved one who has died, we ask “Where are you Jesus? Where is the Lamb of God who takes away the suffering in our world?”

In the aftermath of a breakup of a relationship, as we deal with the emotional turmoil, the loneliness, we ask “Where are you Jesus? Where is the Lamb of God who takes away the suffering in our world?”

In the face of inflation, as we see more and more people in our community needing assistance with food, clothing, and shelter, we ask “Where are you Jesus? Where is the Lamb of God who takes away the suffering in our world?”

In the darkness we call drug addiction, as we bury more and more of our children, grandchildren from drug overdoses we ask “Where are you Jesus? Where is the Lamb of God who takes away the suffering in our world?”

In a world where the climate is changing. In a world where we see this change impacting our most vulnerable people, we ask “Where are you Jesus? Where is the Lamb of God who takes away the suffering in our world?”

In our gospel, John’s disciples too are dealing with trauma, struggle, suffering as they live under the current Empire. This is why they have chosen to follow John and support his movement for change. They too are awaiting the messiah. Asking “Where are you Jesus? Where is the Lamb of God who takes away the suffering in our world?”

Well, in response to their plea, in response to our pleas, John points to where Jesus is. Showing his disciples, showing us, that Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the suffering in our world, is present

John's disciples then go over to Jesus, and ask if they can follow Jesus. Jesus spends the day with them. Then Andrew, one of the disciples, goes and tells his brother Simon that Jesus. The Lamb of God who takes away the suffering in our world is here. Is present

As Jesus' disciples, we too are invited to point to where Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the suffering in our world, is present. As people face tragedy, mental unwellness, grief, heart break, economic stress, addiction, climate change, injustice.

Like John, like Andrew we are invited to point out to people where Jesus is at work in their lives, forgiving, healing, redeeming them from their suffering

Like Isaiah states, we are to be a light to the nations.

We are invited to walk with people as they suffer from mental unwellness. Helping them see this light shining in the midst of their darkness

We are invited to walk with people as they suffer from grief. Helping them see the power of the resurrection.

We are invited to walk with people as they deal with the emotional turmoil, loneliness from a breakup. Helping them see God's promise of forgiveness and reconciliation for all people

We are invited to walk with people as they deal with poverty. Helping them see where Christ is at work through the church feeding them. Clothing them. Sheltering them.

We are invited to walk with people as they deal with addiction. Helping them see that through the church, Christ is there offering to heal them from their shame. Inviting them into a support group like Narcotics Anonymous

We are invited to walk with people as they deal with the impacts of a changing climate. Helping them see that Christ is at work through the church to address these impacts, as well, that Christ will come again to redeem all of creation.

Wherever we are, we are invited to point out where Jesus is at work forgiving, healing, and redeeming us

And like Andrew, like Simon, we are also invited to listen to others as they point out to us where Jesus is at work in our lives, forgiving, healing, and redeeming us from our suffering.

Who in your life has acted as a John, as an Andrew, helping you see where Jesus is at work in your life when you face the cold dark winter?

Who has helped you see the light of Christ as you suffered from mental unwellness?

Who has helped you see the power of the resurrection in the midst of your grief?

Who has helped you cling to God's promise of forgiveness and reconciliation for all as you suffered from a broken heart?

Who has helped you get access to food when you were hungry?

Who has helped you heal from your shame when you suffered from addiction?

Who has helped you experience redemption and restoration of life when you have been impacted by climate change?

Who has helped you see that Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the suffering in the world is present. Standing beside you. Walking with you. Forgiving you. Healing you. Redeeming you?

Let us pray, loving God, in the face of suffering, help us see and point out where your Son is at work in our lives and in the lives of those people we encounter. Forgiving us, healing us, redeeming us. **Amen.**

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