

The Second Sunday after Epiphany

Text: John 1:29-42a

²⁹The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ ³¹I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”³²Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. ³³I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.”³⁵The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. ³⁶When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God!” ³⁷When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. ³⁸Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, “What do you want?” They said, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?” ³⁹“Come,” he replied, “and you will see.” So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. ⁴¹The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ). ⁴²And he brought him to Jesus.

The Revelation of Jesus as the Lamb of God

Epiphany is the season of the church year when we look at how Jesus was revealed as the Son of God, our Savior. It began with the star, which revealed that the King of the Jews was born. During this season of the church year, we remember many of Jesus’ miracles. The season ends with Jesus’ transfiguration when His glory was revealed to Peter, James, and John.

However, this season also reminds us of the way that Jesus is generally revealed as our Savior. That is through the word of God. The Wise Men would have never found the baby Jesus if they didn’t stop in Jerusalem and hear the prophecy that the Savior would be born in Bethlehem. Jesus’ miracles always took place within the context of His preaching. And on the Mount of Transfiguration, the disciples heard God the Father’s voice, “Listen to Him.” Jesus is revealed as the Lamb of God when people reveal Him as our Savior.

I. As Christians, we rejoice that He has been revealed as our Savior.

John was pointed to Jesus as his Savior. He was a relative of Jesus. However, we don’t know if they had ever met before this time. John grew up in Judea, and Jesus grew up in Nazareth. John knew that He was the forerunner of the Messiah. He was sent to prepare the way. He also knew that the Savior would be revealed to him. That happened when Jesus was baptized. The Holy Spirit descended from heaven like a dove. That was the sign which John had been given. He listened to God’s Word, and knew that Jesus was the promised Savior.

Andrew also came to know that Jesus was his Savior. He had become a disciple of John the Baptist. That meant that He was a student of John’s. When John said, “*Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,*” Andrew listened. He got up, and he started to follow Jesus. Jesus asked him what he wanted. He simply wanted to know where Jesus was staying. He wanted to listen to

Jesus. He spent the entire day listening to what Jesus said. When He did so, He also came to believe that Jesus was the Lamb of God who took away his sins.

Christ has also been revealed to us as our Savior. In today's service and every worship service we are reminded that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away our sins. He is the Son of God. That is why we gather here each week to be strengthened in our faith that Jesus is our Savior. When we listen to God's Word we are like John and like Andrew. That word is what reveals Jesus as our Savior to us.

It points us to Jesus as the Lamb of God. Luther once said, **"This is the foundation of our faith, that we know where our sins have been laid. There are only two places where they could be: either around your neck or on Christ, the Lamb of God. If they are on your back, you're lost; but if they are on Christ, you are free and saved. Now take which ever one you will."** [Biblische Geschichte p. 28] We have come to know Jesus Christ as our Savior. We rejoice that we are free from all of our sins. He bore them all on the cross. We rejoice that He has set us free from the guilt and punishment of sin. He is the Lamb who has taken away all of our sins.

II. As Christians we cannot help but bear witness that Jesus is our Savior.

That was what John the Baptist was called to do. He was called to prepare the way for the coming Savior. When the Savior came, He bore witness that Jesus was the Son of God. The crowds that were following him were directed to Jesus.

Andrew also bore witness. The first thing that he did after listening to Jesus was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah." Of the 12 disciples Andrew is my personal favorite, because he is most like us. We don't read of any great sermons he preached. We don't read of any miracles that he did. He did little things. In our text he brought his brother Simon to Jesus. Later on when Jesus was looking for a way to feed 5,000 people, he brought a boy to Jesus who had 5 small barley loaves and two small fish. A little later, some Greeks wanted to see Jesus, and he brought them to Jesus.

All that Andrew ever did was to bring a few people to Jesus, but look at what happened when Andrew did that. His brother Peter became the greatest of the Apostles. Jesus used that boy's small lunch to feed the 5,000. When the Greeks came to Jesus, the Father glorified our Savior, with a voice from heaven that said, *"I have glorified [my name] and I will glorify it again."* Andrew was always bringing people to Jesus, and Jesus did great things through His witness.

Today God uses the witness of both people like John the Baptist and Andrew. We need pastors, missionaries, and teachers, who are called to preach like John. It says in Romans 10, *"How shall they hear without a preacher?"* It is important that we have pastors who preach God's word and administer the sacraments, missionaries who bring God's Word to new places, and teachers who build us up in God's word. Through the work of these people God builds our faith in Christ.

We also need people like Andrew. At this point Andrew wasn't an apostle yet. He was like all of us. He came to know Jesus as his Savior, and he wanted to share that good news with his brother. God blesses our personal witness mightily yet today. He doesn't want us all to become pastors and

teachers. He wants to use each one of us in our callings in life to share the good news of Christ. There are people that God places in each of our lives who need that good news. Some of them are living in despair. Others are struggling with temptation. Some are living in guilt. God gives us opportunities when we can share the good news of Jesus with them. The most important people of all, however, with whom God wants us to share the good news, are our children. One of the greatest works that I believe that a Christian can do, is to struggle to get the kids ready for church and to bring them to church even when the parents don't get much out of the service because they are minding their children. We teach them to pray, and show them how precious our faith is to us. One of our older members told me this week that he stills prays the nighttime prayer that his mother taught him as a child every night. We might not think that we are doing anything special when we bring a person here and there to Jesus. Andrew never imaged what Jesus would do when he brought Simon or the boy with the bread and fish, but Jesus did great miracles every time that Andrew brought someone to Him, and He still does the same today.

This text has one of my favorite verses, "*Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.*" The whole story is about the revelation of Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away our sins. It shows that we come to know Jesus as our Savior through God's word. When we listen to it, we can shout with Andrew, "We have found the Messiah!"

But that Word never stops with us. It goes out from us as we support the work of our Lord's church with our offerings to support pastors and missionaries, but especially when we also bear witness to those around us that Jesus is their Savior too.

May God's word give us that faith in Him and may His Spirit open our mouths to point others to Christ, the Lamb of God.

Amen

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