|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| John 1:35-42 | Jesus Questions – “What are you looking for?” | Pinelands – 9am – 09/02/2025  Thornton – 10:30am – 09/02/2025 |

**We often ask God questions…** *(Why? How? When?)*

Some are pretty shallow, Others are really deep,

Some have easy answers, Others are really tough.

**However in Scripture… God often asks us questions.**

In fact… Jesus often does not answer questions directly.

*(Did you know of the 300 odd questions Jesus was asked… He answered only 3*

*According to most interpretations, three key questions Jesus directly answered in*

*the Gospels are: "Who do you say that I am?" (Mark 8:29),*

*"Which is the greatest commandment?" (Mark 12:28-31),*

*and "Do you love me?" (John 21:16). …)*

***Over the next few weeks we will looking at…***

***some of the Questions that Jesus asks us.***

**For Today…** ***“What are you looking for?”***

**Significantly…** This is Jesus’ first question in the gospels…

**IS…** ***“WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?”***

**TWO things to notice** and bare in mind about this passage…

1. **John** identifies Jesus as **‘the lamb of God’…**

and a few verses earlier…he claims Jesus is The **SON of GOD**

1. *One of the disciples is not named…*

Some scholars suggest that this is intentional…

And invites us (the reader) into the narrative…

Therefore making this personal to each of us.

***“WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?”***

**The Story…** 2 of JOHN’s disciples follow Jesus…

who turns to them and asks…

***“WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?”***

***Not:*** - How can I help you? - Where do you come from?

- Who are you? - Why are you following me?

**BUT…** ***“WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?”***

As I share with people both those in and outside the Church…

I am amazed at how many people fell that they…

*Haven’t found what they are looking for.*

We are constantly seeking for something more…

beyond ourselves… **That will…**

make us happier, give lives more meaning

deepen our sense of significance

**Jesus asks…** ***“WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?”***

***A direct question with MANY FACETS…***

1. Jesus urges them to *listen to their hearts*
2. Challenge to *discover their deepest desires*
3. Invited them *to ask for what they wanted.*

***FIRSTLY* – Jesus urges us to listen to our hearts.**

What does that mean for us… *To listen to our hearts.*

Remember that in scripture…

Heart = metaphor for - center of our lives

- core of our personalities

- innermost beings

Many try to avoid this aspect of life… *we make excuses*

- NO time…too busy,

- Cannot trust our hearts – *(Too touchy feely)*

- Do not know how to go about it

- Too painful

The problem is when we ignore the call of our hearts…

**We miss…** Intimate and significant relationships

- with God and others

Experiencing life to the full

Allow Jesus’ question, ***“WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?”…***

**TO LEAD YOU** deeper into your heart

**It will not be easy,** It will take time and effort…

You will need… Silence and Space…

Some Introspection and reflection

**JESUS…** Urges us to **Listen To Our Hearts**

This brings us to the ***SECOND FACET*** of the question…

**To discover what you desire most….**

**This too is difficult…** One reason why it is so hard to know

What we most desire is because…

*We have* ***so many DESIRES***

Some are really **Superficial…**

* wanting a new car
* a new house, or the latest gadget

Others are **Much Deeper…**

* single person wanting a partner
* childless couple wanting a baby
* wanting a cure from an ongoing illness
* escape an abusive relationship

Then we have ***ASPIRATIONS…*** Things we have no control over…

* World Peace
* End to global poverty

***So how can we discover what we MOST DEEPLY DESIRE?***

One of the ways is to go through the exercise of…

Writing down what you would like…

***others to say*** about you at your funeral…

*(be free, let your imagination flow)*

**Note**: what you want ***said about you***

*(Writing your own Obituary)*

**Some questions to help…**

Would you like to be remembered as someone who…

* *Loved deeply* **or** *was self-centered and selfish*
* *Honest* **or** *deceitful*
* *Generous* **or** *tight-fisted*
* *Responded in compassion* **or** *never cared*
* *Loved life and cherished every moment* **or**

*Complained constantly*.

**REMEMBER** these questions are **NOT** about **how you are living** now

***BUT***… are to help you discover…

what you **DESIRE MOST** for your life.

**Having…** Listened to our **Hearts**

***And…*** Discovered our **Deepest Desires**

***THE THIRD FACET*** of this question invites us to…

**Ask for what we want.**

I have struggled with this aspect of asking for what I want…

After all **are we not** supposed to put that aside…

and *do what God wants us to do.*

**Jesus taught us to pray…** *“Your will be done, on earth as*

*It is in heaven”*

**BUT…** there is a strong connection between…

**what** ***God wants and what we want.***

***Our desires and God’s will.***

*Here is an illustration to help…*

A couple getting married… Write their own vows…

At the wedding ceremony the groom says…

*“You are my heart’s desire and delight, and I love you with*

*all my being. From this moment on you must understand*

*that my desires and wants are paramount. Until death parts*

*us your happiness consists in your submitting yourself to*

*my will with total dedication and with no thought for your*

*own.”*

*How do you think the bride would respond?*  ***NOT…***

**Many people believe that GOD is like that bridegroom…**

Demanding we align ourselves with his Agenda…

Without understanding our Desires, Needs and Wants.

Yet our Gospel story reveals a different picture of God…

**In Jesus’ question…** ***“WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?”***

Expresses his interest in our desires

God is interested in what we want and what we desire…

**The things that really matter to us…**

**Not the** superficial, shallow stuff…

***BUT…*** the deeper desires that have ***kingdom significance***

When we bring our desires before God… **in the open…**

He will help us sort out the ***healthy*** and the ***unhealthy*** ones.

**Just a short note on the difference…**

***Unhealthy desires…***

* make our world *smaller and isolate* us from each other
* *pull us away from God* and enslave us
* *tempt us* into destructive attachments

***Healthy desires…***

* *expand our world* and draw us together
* *connect us* and draw us closer to God in life-giving ways
* *invite us to share God’s dream* for the world

When we follow those healthy desires…

We discover life in new and exciting ways – *abundant life*

***“WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?”***

Jesus is clearly aware…

of the powerful role our desires play in our lives.

Think about it for a moment…

***Our desires…*** - *shape* who we become

- *Influence* our decisions

- *give us energy* to pursue our dreams and goals

In positive and negative ways.

There is no doubt that our desires can…

**Give us life or destroy us…** ***The choice is ours.***

**It is no wonder that Jesus…**

Invites us to ***Listen to our Hearts,***

***Discover our Desires***

**And *Bring them into the light of God’s presence.***

**As the Psalmist writes…**

*“Trust in the LORD and do good;*

*live in the land and be safe.*

*Seek your happiness in the LORD,*

*and he will give you your heart's desire.*

*Give yourself to the LORD; trust in him, and he will help you;*

*he will make your righteousness shine like the noonday sun.”*

*(Psalm 37:3-6)*

**John 1:35-42 The First Disciples of Jesus**

The next day John was standing there again with two of his disciples, when he saw Jesus walking by. “There is the Lamb of God!” he said.

The two disciples heard him say this and went with Jesus. Jesus turned, saw them following him, and asked, “What are you looking for?”

They answered, “Where do you live, Rabbi?” (This word means “Teacher.”)

“Come and see,” he answered. (It was then about four o'clock in the afternoon.) So they went with him and saw where he lived, and spent the rest of that day with him.

One of them was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. At once he found his brother Simon and told him, “We have found the Messiah.” (This word means “Christ.”) Then he took Simon to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, “Your name is Simon son of John, but you will be called Cephas.” (This is the same as Peter and means “a rock.”)