

## “Come and See!”

† **The Lamb of God** (vv.29-34)

† **The Messiah** (vv.35-41)

In the name of Jesus, God’s Lamb and our Messiah, dear disciples of our Lord:

On Wednesday this past week we laid to rest my dear friend and brother, Pastor Loren Steele. I miss him even more than I thought I would. I miss talking with him about his experience as a first generation believer who remembered the staunch unbelief of his first twenty-five years. I miss his stories about reaching people with the Gospel. But now I’m hearing those stories from the other side, told by the Chinese Christians who sang a beautiful benediction, then fought back tears as they returned to their seats. I’ve seen and experienced much love between God’s people and His called servants. But it’s multiplied a million times in people who did not know Jesus Christ at all before Pastor Steele said, “**Come and See!**” I am begging my Lord Jesus for every person in this room to “**Come and See!**” Jesus if you have not seen Him with the eyes of faith already. And if you have, I pray that just once, if not many, many times in your life, you might have the awesome privilege to personally lead someone to Jesus. Their life will never be the same. And as our Minnesota District President Larry Cross pointed out, God’s work through Loren Steele so changed our synod and souls on distant shores that the world will never be the same. To be God’s instrument for such eternal blessings each of us needs to learn to say, “**Come and See!**”

† **The Lamb of God** (vv.29-34)

At first John the Baptist could not see Jesus for who He was. John knew Jesus only as his cousin from Nazareth, but it took a sign from God to show **The Lamb of God**. John admitted, “***I 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.’***” Don’t let the Pentecostals and Charismatics confuse baptism for you by twisting these words. The Greek word baptizein, which literally means “to wash,” is sometimes used by the Holy Spirit in a figurative sense for a *miraculous outpouring* as the Twelve Apostles experienced on Pentecost. But to say that John is here speaking of “water baptism” as something different from “Spirit baptism” is a misinterpretation because the Lord’s Apostle Paul clearly tells us that there is “***one Lord, one faith, one baptism...***” (Ephesians 4:5), not two baptisms. Whenever the water is applied according to Christ’s institution “***in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit***” (Matthew 28:19), the Holy Spirit is right there with all His gifts and graces, beginning with the forgiveness of sins. (Acts 22:16) In fact, the only people in Acts who were “rebaptized” were the ones who did not actually receive Christian baptism in the first place because they said, “***We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.***” (Acts 19:2) The Holy Spirit and the water always go together in the “***one baptism***” which Christ-instituted for His Christian Church on earth.

When John baptized Jesus, they were standing in the water. John remembers, “***I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him.***” That’s how John knew enough to say to his own disciples when he *saw Jesus coming toward him...*, “***Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!***” Good Jewish boys from Galilee like John’s own disciples, Andrew and most likely John the Gospel-writer, would what their teacher John the Baptist meant. 1500 years earlier in Leviticus 16, the LORD God had commanded Moses to take a goat on the great Day of Atonement and ceremonially lay the sins of the people on its head. Then one of the Levites was to lead it out into the desert. The people could literally watch the scapegoat carrying away their sins. Jesus, **The Lamb of God**, would

perform a better sacrifice that would not need to be repeated year after year. Just once Jesus would sacrifice Himself and carry away the sins of the world with His own cross to make us at one with God.

We all need God's help to fully appreciate **The Lamb of God**. Pastor's Steele's first convert, Li Ping told me at the funeral, that she translated his Bible classes for nearly two years and still did not believe that she needed **The Lamb of God** to take her sins away. Only God the Holy Spirit can convince any of us of this truth. Our problem is that we picture ourselves as the most important person in our lives as if everything revolves around us. Listen to yourself if someone tries to tell you about a problem. How quickly do you jump in to tell your story instead of really listening? Worse yet, the picture in our mind's eye of God is even smaller than our neighbor's. And yet we owe to our perfect and holy God perfect fear, love and trust above all things. With the Father and the Holy Spirit, Jesus is God. John had it right, *"This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'"* He could see Jesus as the big picture for our lives. But our sinful pride blinds us to the holy, awesome majesty of God which deserves our humble thanks and praise. And the only way we will ever escape from this darkness is for those whose eyes the Holy Spirit has already opened to tell us, then tell us again and again, **"Come and See! The Lamb of God.** He shed His blood to wash away our sinful pride and to give us the humble hearts that truly appreciate the many promises that brought Jesus to be...

### ✠ **The Messiah (vv.35-41)**

John had to say it again the next day to his disciples. *When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"* A few minutes later *Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" "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. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.*

**Messiah** is the Hebrew translation of the Greek word **Christ**, both of which mean "the Anointed One," promised by God for centuries through the Jewish prophets. Finally He stood in the Jordan River with John the Baptist and was *"anointed with the Holy Spirit and power."* (Acts 10:38) From that moment Jesus began His three-year ministry that ultimately led Him to the cross to suffer and die for our sins, and from there to the glory of the resurrection and ascension to God's right hand. **The Messiah** God sent is our Brother, God's own Son, the Savior of everyone who admits his sin and believes in Jesus as the one and only, ultimate and awesome **Messiah**. All we need is a brother like Andrew to say, **"Come and See!"**

Or sometimes it takes a girlfriend. As a young man, Loren Steele dated one girl after another, six of whom turned out to be Christians. Turned off by his stubborn unbelief, they all told him to "get lost." Number seven was also a Christian, but she told him about Jesus. Charlene basically said to her future husband, **"Come and See!"** And when he did, God the Holy Spirit tore the scales off his eyes so that he could see Jesus as his own **Messiah, The Lamb of God** who took away his sins with the sins of the entire world. His "yondering" years as a lumberjack, wilderness guide, spy for the U.S. government during the Vietnam War, teacher and free-lance artist had all left him empty. When Christ filled his heart, Loren at age 36 asked himself, "If I really believe the Bible is true, why am I not sharing it with the world?"

Dear friends, do you believe the Bible is true? Do you believe Jesus is **The Lamb of God** who has taken away your sins with the sins of the world? Has the Holy Spirit removed the scales of sin and unbelief from your eyes so that you can see Jesus as God's very own, the one and only – **The Messiah**? Then why aren't you sharing Him with the world? Why aren't you inviting everyone you meet to **"Come and See!"** Your fellow workers, classmates, friends and relatives have blood bought souls thirsting for the love of God in Christ Jesus. If none will stop and talk, do what Li Ping and Loren Steele did in the U of M Union. Spill some sticky pop on the floor. When someone steps in it, you'll have eye contact. Then, like Li Ping, they can tell how their Christian friend got a hook in them and caught them like a fish

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New Life Evangelical Lutheran Church  
180 County Rd F - Shoreview, MN 55126

for Jesus Christ. And the beauty of it is that every “fish” you catch for Jesus will finally live! Just learn to say, **“Come and See!”** Amen.