

# Christ, The Lamb of God

- John 1:35-42

## Suggested Questions from the Text

Read through the passage from Sunday. These questions are designed to help you consider the text as you read.

### **John 1:35-37 – Behold the Lamb of God!**

- What do you understand by 'Lamb of God'? How can we make this term relatable to our friends and family?
- How can we be tempted to give up, after our first attempts at sharing good news fails?

### **John 1:38-39 – What are you seeking?**

- If you had the opportunity like the disciples to ask Jesus a question, what would you ask?
- How accurately does our prayer life reflect our desire to know Jesus more?

### **John 1:40-42 – We have found the Messiah!**

- When have you seen God move in 'ordinary moments'? How can we risk missing these moments to transform lives?
- How can we be encouraged to share the good news we have heard? Who are our 'Simons' that we need to invite?

## Sermon Overview (Christ, The Lamb of God)

John has written this Gospel, and has given Jesus a far bigger introduction than the readers would have expected. Far from describing the man from Nazareth – a man many of the readers would have known – John takes them back to before the beginning of creation, and increases this vision of Jesus beyond what they had seen. Then we meet John the Baptist (JTB), and hear him describe Jesus as the Lamb of God. JTB drew a crowd, with many baptised by him – but he would point them away from himself, and towards the Messiah who would come – Jesus.

### Behold the Lamb of God!

This is the second time in this Gospel we hear JTB describe Jesus as the Lamb of God. JTB spoke about who Jesus is, and this led to some of his disciples following Jesus instead. There is no indication that this following happened after the first time JTB meets Jesus, but now. In church, we may be accustomed to this phrase and description, but it is not a phrase that is really understood in today's culture. For the Jews hearing JTB's exclamation, this would mean far more. They would know the stories of the Passover lamb, and the sacrifice provided to replace Isaac; they would understand the daily sacrifices in the temple, and the commands given for the sacrifice – the scape goat – who could take away the sins of the Jewish nation; they would know the words of Isaiah who spoke of a saviour who would come like a lamb led to the slaughter.

After all JTB had said of the one to come – here we see the title of the 'Lamb of God' again. As we have previously seen, this would ring familiar to many in the Jewish community, but also totally alien in how JTB appears to be using it. What kind of lamb would God provide? How can this Lamb be like any of these lambs in Jewish traditions? Yet there was something in this they latched their faith and hope to and followed. They knew it meant rescue, redemption, atonement, forgiveness - even if they didn't yet see how.

### We have Found the Messiah.

For Andrew, it wasn't enough just for him to get to know Jesus. Andrew's instinct with excitement is to bring his brother to be near too. Andrew was the first of all the disciples to speak about the Messiah to those he knew. When Andrew told Simon he had found the Messiah, what did Andrew mean, and what would Simon understand? Andrew would have heard from JTB about the coming Messiah. They would have heard in the synagogues of the chosen and anointed one. Israel hoped for a warrior king, a wise king, a fair king – and this is the one who has been expected – who would rescue Israel, sort out God's people, and rule on David's throne again.

Considering how many followers of Jesus of Jesus there are in the world today, this moment can seem so ordinary. However, this moment changed everything. Had JTB not pointed to Jesus; had Andrew not followed; had Andrew not gone to his brother Simon – what would their lives have been like? Considering all they saw – without this moment, they would not have witnessed any of it. This is the story of every Christian – a moment that starts in very ordinary circumstances: in a community centre, over a curry, at a kid's party; that becomes a moment that changes their life forever.

### Come and See!

The most crucial turning point, the most important invitation, was from Jesus: "Come and See". Those words not only altered the plot of this story, allowing them to follow him, but it changed their lives with what they discovered when they carried on. As they continued their walk with Jesus, they could learn far more about this man – the perfect, blameless sacrifice sent by God. Three years later, they would see even clearer how this man, Jesus, would be the Lamb of God – who would suffer and die for the sins of the world before he is glorified.

Talk of sin, judgement and sacrifice may be daunting, but we cannot shy away from these subjects as Christians – because we believe there is good news. Jesus, the innocent Lamb of God, took the punishment you and I don't deserve so that you could receive the mercy you don't deserve.