

Come and See

Introduction

This is a great week to be at the BARN. I love being with kids and this was an incredible week. One of the reasons I love being with kids is that kids ask the darndest questions.

And they ask great questions about God.

I was with a 2nd grader this week and on day one the question during devotions was: "How does God show me who He is?" I could see that he was troubled by the question. He said "That's a hard question." "It's for a higher level." "I think that is a question for the Levites or the Asherite tribe." These were tribes of older kids. So we just talked and I began to ask him what kinds of questions he has. And he asked:

How can God hear everyone's prayers all at once?

Great question – Is it time for games yet?

A couple of years ago I led HS devos during day camp and I tried to make it a very open time and I told the kids that they could ask any question they'd like. Immediately a student raised her hand and said:

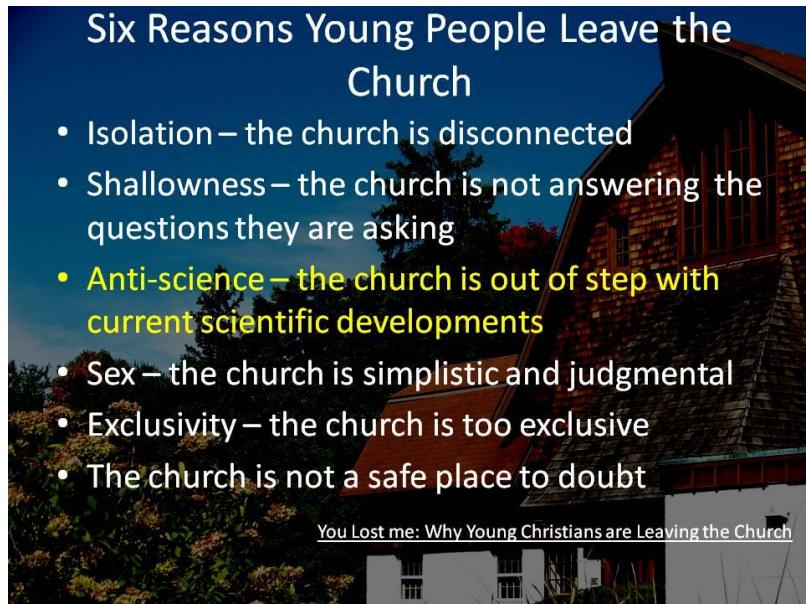
What about the dinosaurs?

Now the really interesting thing about that question is that this young woman was raised by very intelligent, very devoted followers of Jesus. She



was home schooled. But somehow, she had never felt safe asking that question – or perhaps had never gotten a satisfactory answer. How is it that this was never addressed?

Science questions are among the biggest for many of our young people because the media and sometimes we in the church think that science and following Jesus are incompatible. George Barna reports that the perception that “the church is out of step on scientific developments and debate”.is one of the leading causes of young people leaving the church.



Recently I was talking with one of our kids after he came back from Peru who said that he wanted to share his faith more at school. I had made the statement that as Christians we do not have to be afraid of any questions that science asks. God made the universe. Science is trying to find out how He made it? But he asked – but doesn’t the Bible teach that the world was made in 7 days? We obviously haven’t done a good job of teaching our kids the broad range of interpretations that dedicated Bible believing Christians have on some of these questions.

Finders / Seekers

Being afraid of asking great questions can affect us in a couple ways. For those of us who have found Jesus, I’ll call us the “finders.” I know that it is really God who found us. But for “finders” it can make us afraid to share our faith because, like that HS student we think we have some pretty bogus

answers to certain questions. And then there are those big questions about God that we don't know the answer to.

For those of us who are just exploring the whole "Following Jesus" thing – Let's call us the Seekers – unanswered questions of science or the Bible can keep us from pursuing Jesus.

Our Text Today

In our text today we're going to see how finders and seekers handled their questions about Jesus. So let's dig in.

Let's pray

John 1:29-46

Open your Bibles with me to John 1:29-46. If you don't have a Bible, it will be on the screen in back of me. The context of our text today is that just before this, John the Baptist had been asked who he was: The Christ? Elijah? No, he said. I am a voice crying in the wilderness preparing the way for the Lord.

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Alex Disciple #1 What are you talking about John? How can a man take away the sins of the world?

30 This is he of whom I said, After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.

Jack Disciple #2 Whoa John. Jesus was born after you You told us that yourself. How can he be before you?

31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.

David Disciple #3 Just wait a minute John, you baptized us to wash away our sins how does baptizing us reveal who Jesus is? And who is Jesus any way?

32 And John bore witness: I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a

dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. 34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.

[Jack L. Disciple #4 My head is spinning. What is this baptism with the Holy Spirit? And how dare you call any man The Son of God? What is going on here?](#)

35 The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, 36 and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, Behold, the Lamb of God! 37 The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. 38 Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, What are you seeking? And they said to him,

[Alex Disciple #1 Rabbi!](#)

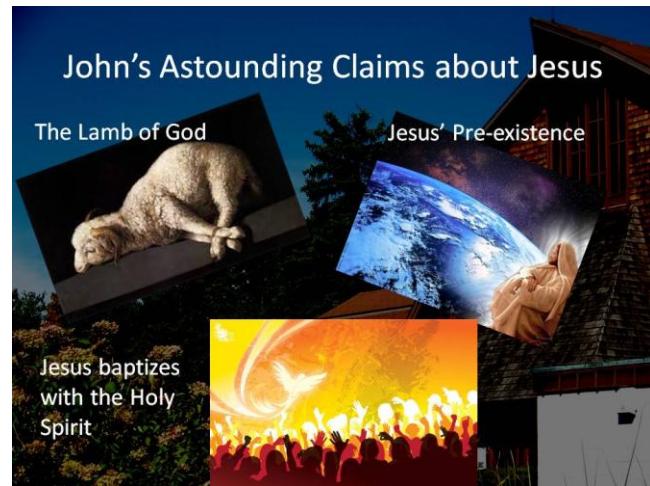
[Jack Disciple #2 Teacher, where are you staying?](#)

39 He said to them, Come and you will see. So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

[Exegesis Text](#)

In this part of the passage we have the Seekers. Followers of John who wanted to now follow Jesus. On the surface it appears as if Jesus is asked a pretty simple question – where are you staying. But the apostle John who is telling this story sets us up with having John the Baptist make some amazing claims about Jesus.

- Jesus a man is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins – unheard of to a Jew
- Jesus a man pre-existed before John the Baptist – unheard of for a Jew



- Jesus will immerse us in the Holy Spirit – no man had ever done that before

So these bold and mysterious claims that these seekers didn't have answers for were rattling around in their heads when Jesus turns and asks

What are you seeking?

These seekers knew that they had a lot of questions but “Do I ask them now?” They knew that this was going to take time and that words alone were not going to answer their questions. They needed to get to know Jesus. So they asked:

Where are you staying?

And Jesus responded

Come and you will see

Immediately after this text in John's gospel, Philip who had already found Jesus – he was a Finder - was also faced with a hard question. He wanted to tell his friend Nathaniel about Jesus and look what he says

Nathanael - we have found the Messiah – the one Moses and the prophets wrote about. Jesus of Nazareth.

And Nathanael responded: “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”

Now on the surface, Nathaniel sounds just prejudiced. But Nathaniel was a good Bible believing Jew and – Moses and the prophets didn't say anything about the Messiah coming from Nazareth. Philip didn't have an answer to that yet – how can the Messiah come from Nazareth? That is an important question for one who wants to be faithful to the scriptures. Jesus did not fit into Nathaniel's interpretation of the Bible. But Philip had learned from Jesus what to do when faced with questions about Jesus that he couldn't

answer. – Come and See. “Nathanael – I know that you have good questions – so do I – but Come and See. Get to know Jesus. You will see.”

Application for Finders

Let’s look at how this applies to those of us who are like Philip and are “finders”.

As followers of Jesus we don’t need to be afraid of any question – if Jesus is truly the Truth – all truth is found in him. As we invite people to become followers of Jesus we don’t need to have answers to all of their questions – but we do need to encourage them to come and see – to begin to experience Jesus. Dan mentioned this last week when he encouraged us to invite people into our homes.

And Dan compared that to going into the ocean after watching Shark Week on the Discovery Channel. One of our biggest fears is that our life isn’t together enough to invite people in to see Jesus living in me. Our church isn’t together enough to invite people in to see Jesus. We don’t even have a pastor.



I believe that it isn’t when the church has it all together that we reflect the true power of God. It is seeing Jesus moving among a people where children have cancer / where tragedy strikes in our midst / where we are struggling to make ends meet but still trusting God to provide / where we openly express our doubts in the face of trials.

Also, we are not to do this alone. This whole sermon series is about Making Jesus known through the unity / community of the body. Not all of us can answer the scientific questions like a Mike Scudder or the theological questions like a John Rankin. And we do need to address peoples questions. But we don't need to do it alone. Introduce them to people that have thought these things through. You spend time with those who know how to answer these questions.

Some of you have been doing this all week with Market Place. Two of you went to a tag sale and invited a new family on our block to Come and See and she did. One of you met a woman on the play ground on Thursday afternoon and invited her to Thursday's nights event and she came Friday and enrolled her kids.

Now admittedly – inviting someone to a great fun safe place to drop your kids off on a summer day sounds like an easier sell than inviting someone to come and see Jesus in our midst. But is it really?

If Jesus really is all that He says He is, if all the words of those day camp songs are true – Jesus is inviting us into a life of purpose, a life of joyful service, a life of healing and wholeness. Most of our friends and neighbors don't have that.

Application for Seekers

What about those of us who we are calling Seekers? Still exploring whether or not you should become a follower of Jesus. Follow the lead of our two seekers in our text and don't wait until all of your questions are answered. We don't do that in other relationships. Did any of you who are privileged to be married have all of your questions answered before you got married? Why do that with God? Jesus invites us to come and see.

And the primary place where Jesus lives today is in the church – not in the building – not in any particular organization of followers of Jesus but in the lives of those who are getting to know and enjoy Jesus.

For those who are seeking answers about Jesus, find a place where others are enjoying and getting to know Jesus. The BARN is one such place. 40 years ago, Barbara and I put our stake in the ground here and said this was going to be our church home. We are a community that is getting to enjoy Jesus and we still have a lot of unanswered questions. Is it a perfect place? Absolutely not. But as we saw this week in day camp, this place pulsates with the presence of Jesus. There are so many people deeply in love with Jesus here – people who give up a week of vacation to serve Him – people who collapse each night – so exhausted but so filled with joy from having the opportunity to see Jesus formed in the lives of children and young people. The BARN isn't the only place where this happens. There are a number of such communities in the Valley – but you have to “Come and See.”

Conclusion

Are you a finder or a seeker? We come to Jesus without having all of our questions answered. But we can find answers to some of these questions as we walk together. Hear Jesus' invitation to “Come and See”