

Introduction

Exposition

(35) The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. (36) When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"

- Recap on the "Lamb of God" as a warrior, judge figure, not a substitutionary atonement figure
- Enter into what is happening here:
 - John has put in all this hard work, has heard God speaking to him, has been used of God, has gathered this group of disciples around him
 - having disciples must be very affirming - having folk join you in considering some activity that you are engaged in is incredibly encouraging!
 - but he points them away from himself, deliberately pointing them to Jesus!
- Incredible self-giving, self-sacrifice here!
 - I wonder how we might put ourselves in John's feet...
 - not certain of this, but how do we feel as a congregation sending away from among our best people?
 - when things are hard here, are we tempted to grudge Gerard and Sarah being in China, Amanda being in Nepal, James being in Glasgow, and that's just the folk I know of!!
- John would have faced just the same temptation to grudge his disciples going to Jesus!
 - but even so he chose to point them to Jesus, actively encouraging them to orient their lives round Him, not John

(37) When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus.

- John's recommendation is a good one - worth following!

(38) Turning 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.

(40) Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus.

(41) The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ).

- Here's this theme of pointing others to Jesus again!
 - first it was John, now it is Andrew!
- Note, again we have here a declaration of hope - *We have found the Messiah rather than of settled certainty*
- And this point gives us a clue as to how Andrew and John pointed others to Jesus:
 - they didn't have all the answers!
 - indeed, they had very few of the answers! They might have had some of the titles right, but loaded with contemporary Jewish expectations, rather than God's full plan
 - they'd be proved wrong, or misguided, many times over the coming years...
 - but they spoke of who they knew Jesus to be at that point
 - John speaks of the Lamb of God, having - as we saw last week - only a very partial picture of what that term implied
 - Andrew speaks of the Messiah, but that expectation would have been largely of a triumphant human king who rescued his people from the Romans - not of a suffering divine servant who defeated not the legions of Rome but the legions of Hell, who supplanted not Caesar's authority but Satan's over sinners!
- They spoke of what they knew, and said "Don't concentrate on what I know, just

go and look at Jesus for yourself!"

(42) And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).

- Jesus knows us and will use us...
 - (weaknesses and failures and all...)

(43) The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."

- Call is to follow Jesus

(44) Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida.

(45) Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote - Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

- Here we go again!
 - this is getting repetitive!!

(46) "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip.

- Not "trust me" or "this is all that I've found out" but "Come and see"...
 - surely this is a model, or at least a big part of the model, we should adopt when confronted with cynicism?
 - you're going to think I spend my whole life in the pub.... last week at TLUG got to talking about religion, and one person was quite cynical - religion is just a political tool of control...
 - in that kind of situation we are faced with a choice: shut up, argue directly with their theory, or speak about Jesus...
 - reflecting on that experience afterwards, and this passage, I suspect I should have been asking whether the Jesus we find in the Scriptures manipulated followers for political power...

(47) When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false." (48) "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you." (49) Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel." (50) Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that." (51) He then added, "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

- Again, evidence that Jesus knows our hearts:
 - he sees here not just the beginning of faith...
 - but also the potential for a much deeper faith in all who will follow him
 - as we follow Jesus, fix attention on him, we will be drawn deeper in discipleship
 - are we still growing?

Application

- Two words of application or conclusion:
 - **First** is that Jesus welcomes those who come to him, and grows faith in them
 - doesn't want baby, but growing, Christians
 - **Second**, there is the challenge to follow the example of many in this passage and introduce people to Jesus
 - to speak about him, not about church, or about church activities;