

“I can do way more than you want”

John 1:35-51

When you go to a restaurant they hand you a menu and say, “what do you want?”

When you go to a retail shop the clerk asks, “what are you looking for today?”

When you go to sign up for a class, the instructor says, “what are you interested in?”

So, as we begin 2014 ... you’ve come to church, “what do you want from God today?”

It’s the first question Jesus asked in the Gospel of John.

A. What do you want from God?

A key principle of being successful in human relationships is to put other people’s need’s ahead of your own. When Jesus first met people in the Gospel of John He approached them “invitationally.”

“What do you want?”

“Come and see ...”

John 1:35-51 (NLT)

³⁵ The following day John was again standing with two of his disciples.

³⁶ As Jesus walked by, John looked at him and declared, “Look! There is the Lamb of God!”

³⁷ When John’s two disciples heard this, they followed Jesus.

³⁸ Jesus looked around and saw them following. “What do you want?” he asked them. They replied, “Rabbi” (which means “Teacher”), “where are you staying?”

³⁹ “Come and see,” he said. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon when they went with him to the place where he was staying, and they remained with him the rest of the day.

- John the Baptist made a great introduction for Jesus ... “Look! The Lamb of God!” [A lamb was considered a sacrificial animal.]
- Two of John’s followers dumped John and followed Jesus instead.
- Jesus asked ... “what do you want?”
 - Money? Fame? Success? Health? Peace of Mind? What?
 - Their answer: “we want to be with You, Jesus.”
 - Key idea: Jesus doesn’t get you to your destination ... Jesus IS the destination.
- “Come and see ...” This is our church theme this year! Investigate for yourself the claims of Jesus, see Him as He revealed Himself, and follow Him.

B. Life-change comes from following Christ.

What do you think changes people? Guilt? Punishment? Passion? In these next verses we are introduced to a man Simon, who would change the world, but first, he had to be changed ... how?

⁴⁰ Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of these men who heard what John said and then followed Jesus.

⁴¹ Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means "Christ").

⁴² Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus. Looking intently at Simon, Jesus said, "Your name is Simon, son of John—but you will be called Cephas" (which means "Peter").

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Come, follow me."

Andrew, Simon (becoming Peter), and Philip were all met Jesus. They were changed when they FOLLOWED Jesus. I invite you to follow the Lord this year and see how He might change you.

The name change was prophetic ... Simon Peter would become the rock (cephas) of the church.

C. You can move from skeptic to disciple.

Look at Philip's journey: skeptic >> investigator >> encounter >> follower.

⁴⁴ Philip was from Bethsaida, Andrew and Peter's hometown.

⁴⁵ Philip went to look for Nathanael and told him, "We have found the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth."

⁴⁶ "Nazareth!" exclaimed Nathanael. "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" "Come and see for yourself," Philip replied.

⁴⁷ As they approached, Jesus said, "Now here is a genuine son of Israel—a man of complete integrity."

⁴⁸ "How do you know about me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus replied, "I could see you under the fig tree before Philip found you."

⁴⁹ Then Nathanael exclaimed, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God—the King of Israel!"

⁵⁰ Jesus asked him, "Do you believe this just because I told you I had seen you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this."

"You all" will see greater things than this!

D. The truth is ... Jesus is the “stairway to heaven.”

⁵¹ Then he said, “I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and the angels of God going up and down on the Son of Man, the one who is the stairway between heaven and earth.”

This is an AMAZING claim of Jesus! “I am the stairway to heaven.” The movement of angels indicates God is at work ... and that work depends upon Jesus.

Whatever you want from God, you’re aiming too low, God wants to do much more.

A closing prayer ... “Dear God, help us to see You clearly and understand the impact you want to make in our lives. We have aimed too low for too long, so inspire us to trust You for more, more of You and Your leadership. In 2014, make us followers. We want You to be the stairway to God’s best in my life. In Jesus’ name, amen.”