

John 18:1-10, "I am who you are looking for."

Big shopping day coming up ... Black Friday. People will be looking for deals, looking for this, looking for that.

What are you looking for? While everyone enjoys receiving gifts or playing with a new toy, can we admit that these gifts don't satisfy life's deepest longings? In fact, many of your friends have it wrong when it comes to what they are looking for in life. It's not WHAT they are looking for ... because things don't last ... but rather, WHO they are looking for. Relationships matter most. And the key benefit of being a Christian is having a personal relationship with Jesus.

So, let me encourage you to know WHO you are looking for ...

A. Are you looking for a dependable leader?

John 18:1-3, After saying these things, Jesus crossed the Kidron Valley with his disciples and entered a grove of olive trees.

² Judas, the betrayer, knew this place, because Jesus had often gone there with his disciples.

³ The leading priests and Pharisees had given Judas a contingent of Roman soldiers and Temple guards to accompany him. Now with blazing torches, lanterns, and weapons, they arrived at the olive grove.

- Jesus was gladly followed. He has natural, and supernatural leadership.
- Jesus routinely and dependably spend time with His disciples ... was wasn't an "ivory tower" leader.

B. Are you looking for someone knowledgeable and direct?

John 18:4, Jesus fully realized all that was going to happen to him, so he stepped forward to meet them. "Who are you looking for?" he asked.

- Jesus knew His future and stepped toward it.
- MAIN POINT: Who are you looking for in life?

C. Are you looking for the God of the Universe?

John 18:5-6, "Jesus the Nazarene," they replied. "I AM he," Jesus said. (Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.)

⁶As Jesus said "I AM he," they all drew back and fell to the ground!

- Jesus was human, "the Nazarene."
- Jesus was divine, "I AM."
- Jesus was God with skin on, His spoken word caused physical reaction. See John John 1:3-4, "God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. ⁴ The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone."

D. Are you looking for someone interested in your personal welfare?

John 18:7-9, Once more he asked them, "Who are you looking for?" And again they replied, "Jesus the Nazarene."

⁸"I told you that I AM he," Jesus said. "And since I am the one you want, let these others go."

⁹He did this to fulfill his own statement: "I did not lose a single one of those you have given me."

- "Let these others go ..." Jesus wanted the best for His followers.
- "not a single one ..." Jesus wants the best for *every* disciple.

E. Are you looking for someone with disciplined emotion and passionate vision?

John 18:10-11, Then Simon Peter drew a sword and slashed off the right ear of Malchus, the high priest's slave.

¹¹But Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Shall I not drink from the cup of suffering the Father has given me?"

- Peter assumed emotion and violence would solve his immediate problem.
- Jesus disciplined His emotion and put His purpose and vision ahead of His immediate situation.

F. Are you looking for someone who deep humility?

John 18:12, So the soldiers, their commanding officer, and the Temple guards arrested Jesus and tied him up.

- Here is how Jesus responded to Peter's sword play, from Matthew 26:52-53, "Put away your sword," Jesus told him. "Those who use the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³ Don't you realize that I could ask my Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and he would send them instantly?"
- The man who had 1000's of angels at-the-ready allowed Himself to be tied up and led away. Humility. Discipline. Looking beyond the *now* to purpose and passion. That's Jesus!

A closing prayer ... "Dear God, You have built us to long for deep relationships and to crave what really matters. Help us to be thankful this Holiday season for the people in our lives. We know that a deeper relationship with Jesus makes all the difference and ask You to draw us closer to You. In Jesus' name, amen."