

**February 25, 2007 – First Sunday of Lent**  
**The Life Question: What Are You Looking For?**  
**John 1:35-42 NLT**

[Click here for the notes that were in the bulletin.](#)

The following day, John was again standing with two of his disciples. 36 As Jesus walked by, John looked at him and then declared, "Look! There is the Lamb of God!" 37 Then John's two disciples turned and followed Jesus.

38 Jesus looked around and saw them following. "What do you want?" he asked them. (New Century Version – "What Are You Looking For?")

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, and they stayed there the rest of the day.

40 Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of these men who had heard what John said and then followed Jesus. 41 The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother, Simon, and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means the Christ).

42 Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus. Looking intently at Simon, Jesus said, "You are Simon, the son of John--but you will be called Cephas" (which means Peter ).

**The mission of John the Baptizer was to point people to Jesus.** Do you know that we are given that same mission by Jesus Himself? In Matt 28:19-20 (NLT) Jesus gave us what is commonly called the "Great Commission": "Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

John the Baptist was with two of his disciples (learners, those who have attached themselves to a particular teacher). One of the men is Andrew, the other is probably John who is writing this gospel account. As Jesus walked by, John said, "Look! There is the Lamb of God!" This probably means "the Lamb belonging to God" or "the Lamb provided by God." It is a reference to the Passover Lamb. It means that Jesus is the acceptable sacrifice provided by God to forgive the sin of the world. Since faith in Jesus is the only way to be forgiven, the only way to know God and the only way to receive Eternal Life, and since we have been entrusted with this message, we, like John the Baptist must point people to Jesus.

It is easy to determine when something is aflame. It ignites other material. Any fire that does not spread will eventually go out. A church without evangelism is a contradiction in terms, just as a fire that does not burn is a contradiction.

[Christian Theology in Plain Language, p. 162.](#)

“A church without evangelism is a contradiction in terms.” Today is Alpha Sunday. Why do we talk so much about Alpha and even have a Sunday set aside for Alpha? Because it is the main way in which we evangelize at our church. It is one way, and an effective way of pointing people to Jesus.

Church growth many times is nothing more than Christians moving from one church to another, rather than people from the surrounding communities finding life in Christ and becoming part of the church. Alpha has helped us do the latter.

The late Sam Shoemaker, an Episcopalian bishop, summed up the situation this way: "In the Great Commission the Lord has called us to be--like Peter--fishers of men. We've turned the commission around so that we have become merely keepers of the aquarium. Occasionally I take some fish out of your fishbowl and put them into mine, and you do the same with my bowl. But we're all tending the same fish."

[Em Griffin, \*The Mindchangers\*, Tyndale House, 1976, p. 151.](#)

When John pointed to Jesus as the Lamb provided by God, two of his disciples who were with him knew what was expected of them and so, turned from following John the Baptist and went to permanently follow Jesus (the tense used indicates a once-and-for-all action). There were many teachers in the time of Christ and all of them had their following. The teachers of those days could attract people to follow them and their learners or disciples would attach themselves to the teacher. It is a sign of the greatness, and humility of John the Baptist to let his disciples go and be detached from him so they could follow Someone Greater.

As the two disciples followed Jesus, He looked at them and asked a question He asks all of us and a question that at some point we all ask ourselves. Jesus asks them and every human being, **"What do you want?"** or "What Are You Looking For?" What is it that you are seeking to find in life? Alpha is "an opportunity to explore the meaning of life." Everyone at some point explores the question, "What is the meaning of life." People are trying to get somewhere or are looking for something in life.

Listen to two questions. One, if you get to where you're going, will you be where you want to be? Two, if you find what you're looking for, what else will you need to make you happy? Let those questions tumble around in your mind for a moment. If you get to where you're going, will you be where you want to be? If you find what you're looking for, what else will you need to make you happy? (will what get what you seek or what the world tells you to seek, will you be fulfilled or will you need something else?). Who are we? Why are we here? What is the meaning of life? Perhaps there is someone here today asking those questions.

Let me tell you what we learn in Alpha. We learn that Christ taught and, therefore, Christianity believes that: We are created by God, but sin separated us from God. Jesus came to give His life as the punishment for sin so that anyone who believes in Him can be reconciled to God, and have Eternal Life. Then the life we live we live by faith in the

Son of God empowered by His Holy Spirit. We were created to know God, enjoy God, serve God and be with God forever. Life is without meaning and purpose until we enter into a relationship with God through faith in Jesus. Jesus asks, “what do you want? What Are You Looking For?” He asks this of people who are empty and unfulfilled. Jesus asks, “what do you want? What Are You Looking For?” of people who know something is missing from their life. Jesus asks, “what do you want? What Are You Looking For?” and Alpha sets out to answer that question. People want to know that there is Someone who will love them unconditionally, and will make their life significant. That Someone is God and we can have a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. And so, we seek through Alpha to point people to Jesus.

When Jesus asked Andrew and John, “what do you want?” They replied, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher). They were saying we need a teacher, and we want to hear what you have to say. What can Jesus teach us? They also asked, "where are you staying?" They wanted to be with Jesus. When they asked, where are you staying?" Jesus said to them, "Come and see." That was more than an invitation to see where Jesus was lodging. It was an invitation to visit with Him.

After spending the evening with Jesus they knew they had found the Messiah and in his excitement Andrew could not keep that Good News to himself. The next day, the very first thing Andrew does is find his brother Simon, who Jesus re-named and we know better as Peter. Andrew tells his brother, "We have found the Messiah." Andrew brought his brother to the Savior, Jesus, an act of which Temple says “perhaps it is as great a service to the Church as ever any man did.” **Each time we meet Andrew in this Gospel he is bring someone to Jesus** (In 6:8-9 Andrew brought a young boy with five barley loaves and two fish to Jesus. In 12:20-22 Some Greeks who had come to Jerusalem to attend the Passover paid a visit to Philip. They said, "Sir, we want to meet Jesus." Philip told Andrew about it, and they went together to Jesus.). When we have found the Messiah, we need to share that good news with others. Alpha is an easy way to do that. It is a very non-threatening, and fun way of doing that. Just come to a dinner and bring a guest, and we who volunteer at Alpha will do the rest.

The *Times-Reporter* of New Philadelphia, Ohio, reported in September, 1985 a celebration of a New Orleans municipal pool. The party around the pool was held to celebrate the first summer in memory without a drowning at the New Orleans city pool. In honor of the occasion, 200 people gathered, including 100 certified lifeguards. As the party was breaking up and the four lifeguards on duty began to clear the pool, they found a fully dressed body in the deep end. They tried to revive Jerome Moody, 31, but it was too late. He had drowned surrounded by lifeguards celebrating their successful season. [\*Times-Reporter\*, September 1985.](#)

There are people drowning all around us, and we can help them. We can point them to a Savior. How tragic for people to perish while surrounded by “lifeguards.” The Bible says, John 3:16 (NLT) "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." It says, “God so loved the world” do you?

Take out the bulletin insert. Let's pray. Ask God to put someone on your heart. Then be an Andrew and invite the one God puts on your heart to come with you to Alpha.