

COME AND SEE
April 10, 2011 –6th Sunday of Lent – John 12: 20-26
The Church of the Covenant

“Sir, we would see Jesus”, (John 12: 21) is the King James Bible version of our scripture lesson for today that is inscribed on many Presbyterian pulpits. And I think it points to the fact that when people gather to hear the Word of God proclaimed they don’t just want a Bible lecture, they don’t just want to be entertained, they don’t just want to hear some oration, no, people have come to SEE Jesus. That inscription is our reminder that people gather to “see” and re-experience the Living Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. And that it is HE, the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we seek, and it is HE, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is to come and to do the work of transformation in our heart and in our life and in our soul. Not the preacher; you have come not to see Stu; you have come to see Jesus. *“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” (v.21)*

There are other things on some pulpits where I have preached. In some pulpits there are clocks embedded in the wood along with the statement, *“Sir, we would see Jesus”*. I suppose that means, “We want to see Jesus but don’t take more than an hour to do so!” Some churches have clocks on the front side of the balcony; it faces only one person, the preacher. What does that say? Here we have a digital clock on the lectern side that only the elder can see; I don’t know what that says or means. Maybe that the digital clock is on the wrong side of the chancel area! I remember one church where an elder had an alarm wristwatch and he sat in the third row every Sunday and at 5 minutes of 12 the alarm would sound (beep-beep) and I knew if I said, “And in conclusion...” we would be on our way home by noon!

Our scripture for today is a great one. A group of Greeks come to some disciples and say, *“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” (John 12: 21)* Jesus has just entered into Jerusalem in triumph on Palm Sunday. He has created such a stir that not only Hebrews but also Greeks want to meet Him. People always want to meet Jesus, for to know Him is LIFE. Meeting Jesus is inherently transformational. Come to a service and “see” and meet Jesus and you are never the same. Come one way; leave another way. This is not the same as going to church. People can go to church and not meet Jesus. Just like people can listen to a sermon and not SEE Jesus. And Jesus has just performed one of His greatest miracles, the raising of Lazarus from the dead, and the whole of Jerusalem is buzzing about this, “Is this the predicted Messiah?” So many, many people are coming and inquiring, *“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”* And then an interesting thing happens –Phillip goes and tells Andrew, another disciple. And Andrew and Phillip go and tell Jesus about these Greeks. And Jesus responds, *“The hour has now come for the Son of Man to be glorified.” (John 12: 23)* It is a sign; it is a sign from God. When the Gentile world shows up seeking Jesus it is a sign that Jesus is to be offered up as a sacrifice; He is to go to the cross; He is to die; His shed blood is to wash the whole world clean; not just a part of it; He is the Lord of the Jews and the Greeks; He is the Lord of the Israelites and the Gentiles; He is to be Lord to every person on the face of this earth; one day every tongue will confess and every knee will bow; Jesus Christ is LORD of all.

And later in this same scripture story Jesus makes another statement. He declares: *“where I am, there shall my servant be also.” (John 12: 26)* Where Jesus is, people want to be. Where Jesus is SEEN at work, people come inquiring, *“Sir, we would see Jesus.”* Disciples who follow the Lord Jesus Christ with their life would not be any other place than where Jesus is. They would seek Him out; they would find Him. Once you meet the Master you don’t want to be any other place than with Him. *“Sir, we wish to see Jesus”* is the heartfelt prayer of every Christian who has ever seen and experienced and received and known the Lord Jesus Christ. Once you see Him, once you experience Him, there is nothing else in this life that even or ever comes close. May I say --**One has to be WHERE Jesus is in order to SEE Him.**

We Presbyterians are funny sometimes. Are you familiar with the Meyers-Briggs personality test? There is one axis on that test that shows and individual whether they are more of an EXTROVERT (getting their energy from talking with tons of people) or they are more of an INTROVERT (getting their energy from being alone). Churches are like people; there are Extrovert Churches and there are Introvert Churches. The Presbyterian Church is more and INTROVERT Church. Sometimes we are so low key that we are NO KEY. We dare not invite our friend, or our neighbor, or our co-worker, or our family member. We tend to like quiet times of prayer. We get excited when we read a good book. We tend to express our faith intellectually; we are more HEAD people over HEART people. We like Adult Ed and a worship service that is quieter. When the Word of God is being preached we tend to get ultra quiet, there is an intensity present, no one is moving, or saying anything, there isn't so much of a peep in the sanctuary (that is, until the elder's wristwatch alarm goes off!). Other denominations are more extrovertish; we're more introvertish. That's just who we are.

But may I say, that Phillip and Andrew are the first Presbyterians noted in scripture. A group of Greeks come up to Phillip saying they want to SEE Jesus and before Phillip takes them to see Jesus he has a church meeting. He goes and talks with Andrew. This is the first Presbyterian Church Meeting described in scripture. Talking about it, meeting about it, isn't the same as meeting Jesus. And then they together take the Greeks to go see Jesus. In another place in the Gospel of John there is more inquiry going on, and first Jesus says to Phillip "*Come and see*" (John 1: 39) and then Andrew says to some others "*Come and see*" and these early low key, introvertish Presbyterians bring folks to "*Come and see*" Jesus. The Apostle Peter comes to mind as an extrovertish early disciple. Phillip and Andrew, introverts. See, Presbyterians aren't absolved of bringing people to Jesus just because we are introverts. It is our job not to do a lot of talking; it is our job just to bring people closer to Jesus and to let Jesus do the talking, Jesus do the work of transformation, Jesus bring someone to faith. There is a POWER in invitation. There is a HOLY POWER in saying "*Come and see for yourself*". You don't have to argue. You don't have to explain. You don't have to drag anyone kicking and screaming into the Kingdom. You just have to say, "*Come and see.*" Come and see Jesus for yourself. Come and be where HE is. Make your own judgments. Let Jesus do the work; we just do the quiet, low key invitation. How Presbyterian is that?!?!?!?! To be sure we have to get over ourselves to be able to say, "*Come and see*" even to a best friend. But I will tell you this –if we do not highly value *what* we are inviting someone to attend we will not invite someone else to attend. If we do not highly value *who* we are inviting someone to meet we will not invite someone else to attend. I am assuming we highly value our friends, neighbors, relatives and co-workers. I am assuming as Christians we highly value our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. No postcard, no newsletter, no letter, no advertising substitutes for the power of personal invitation!

So why wouldn't you want to invite a dear friend to meet the Man who can give them life and new life and abundant life and eternal life? Do you not value your friend? Or do you not value Jesus?

I see my time is up. It's like the story of the preacher who got lost in his notes and he spoke aloud from the pulpit the words, "Where am I?" And someone shouted out, "You're at the conclusion!!!!" **In conclusion...**Henry Blackaby will be here this evening. I will guarantee you that Jesus is there. Many people will come inquiring, "*Sir, we would see Jesus.*" Where Jesus is, there will His servants be also. If we had the opportunity to meet the Master tonight where else would we be? I value the Lord Jesus. And I love and value you, whom I love, the members of this church, more than you will ever know. It is why I extend an invitation to you. It is why I am willing to put it on the line for you. It is why like Phillip and Andrew I say to you –COME AND SEE. Sir, we would see Jesus! And this evening, we shall. Amen.

~~~~~**By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, PA**  
**IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!**