

Where dwellest thou

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[0 : 00] especially words in verse 38. And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said unto them, What seek ye?

They said unto him, Rabbi, which is to say being interpreted, Master, where dwellest thou? And we know that the scriptures lay much emphasis on the calling of God to the gospel. And that they lay corresponding emphasis on the importance of this call to each individual. Hence, one of the things we are especially exhorted to do is to make our calling sure.

[1 : 31] Now, reading the scriptures, we see that the Lord in all ages used various means for calling sinners to himself.

But while the means varied, the call ultimately was unto Jesus.

It was a call to himself. As it is written, Come unto me, and I will give you rest.

Now, seeing that this is of such importance, and that we ought to be concerned therein, we find that men and women often have disturbing thoughts concerning their own call.

It is so easy to compare ourselves with others. It is so easy to say, Well, I am quite different from this one and quite different from that one.

[3 : 03] And of them, I am persuaded that they are called. And seeing, therefore, I am so different, the conclusion I come to is that I do not know at all the call of the Lord as they know it.

Now, the Lord in his compassion knew from the beginning that there would be such thoughts in the minds of men and women.

and he has made abundant provision for this. If we take but this chapter itself, the very opening chapter of this gospel, we find that the Lord used various means for calling his disciples to himself. He did not follow the same pattern in every case. It was the same, of course, in this, as we have indicated, that it was always a call to himself.

and the essence of that call or the essence of that call taking effect mightily and effectively is this, that it leads the heart to seek.

[4 : 50] it leads the heart to seek the Lord. When thou did say, says the psalmist, when thou did say, seek ye my face, then my heart replied, thy face, O Lord, I will seek.

Now, of these two disciples, we read that they heard John speak. They were disciples of John the Baptist.

And they heard him speak as he looked upon Jesus and said, and he said, that is, John said, behold the Lamb of God.

This is John's testimony. And on the basis of that testimony, these two disciples followed Jesus, the Lamb of God.

They followed him. And they followed him without making any noise about it. They followed him to learn more.

[6 : 24] They followed him because there was something which they wanted to ascertain. I don't know that it would have been very easy for themselves to explain why they followed.

But in any case, as we see them following Jesus, they are too, we might say, too shy to speak to him and too preoccupied with what they were doing to say anything about it to anyone else.

They follow him but he sees them. He turned loud and asked them, what seek you?

They said unto him, Rabbi, where dwellest thou? He turned round and said unto them, what seek ye?

Now that is a most important question for us all. It was for them and it is for everyone to whom the gospel of the grace of God comes.

[8 : 07] In passing, we might comment on the insignificant beginning of the spiritual life of these two disciples.

Insignificant in the sense that there were no fanfare. There was nothing to indicate what was fraud, aimless.

They are just like two shy children coming after a master not knowing very well. Why or what they should answer him when he would address them if he would take notice of them at all.

What seek he? It is of course taken for granted that whatever man does he does for a reason.

That man acts rationally but he simply doesn't do things not knowing anything about it.

[9 : 36] Led away as it were by instinct. This is one of the characteristics of man which distinguishes him from the characteristics that distinguish him from the lower creation.

When Jesus saw them following he knew there was a reason for it. Even if they themselves could not clearly state that reason.

But they were able to say this much at least where the dwellers dwellers themselves. Notice there is that indication of the rationality of our conduct.

That whatever we do we do for some reason or ever. We may first of all think of this as a question addressed to each one of ourselves as we in some sense or other profess to follow Jesus.

That is the meaning of our being here whether we know it or not. And when the Lord addresses us directly and pointedly what seek he it is good if we are able in some measure and to some degree to answer that question.

[11 : 26] Now then what do we seek? what seek he?

And each one of the words of this question can be emphasized in turn. What? What is it? what? What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What? Now we know that the interests of men are varied that some seek this and some seek that.

There is no unanimity among men as to what they seek. One pursues this another pursues that. but in the last analysis there are but two persons. We seek one of two things.

[12 : 31] We seek the creature or we seek the creator. There is no other possibility there is other alternative and this is true of all our activities.

In them we either seek the glory of the creature or the glory of the creator.

No he that searches the heart knows what we see. He doesn't ask us the question because he doesn't know but he asks the question that our own interests and our own search might be placed for us in the proper perspective.

Why? Now the answer of these two disciples is very much to the point.

It wasn't that they sought something. it wasn't that they were desirous of glory for themselves either directly or indirectly at this particular juncture.

[14 : 25] All they have to say in answer to that question is where dwellest thou?

And the thought of course behind that question is distinct enough. We want to know where thou dwellest.

And of course the intention is that they would come to him. They wanted to have more of his company.

They wanted to hear from him. They wanted him to explain certain difficulties to them. They wanted to be with them.

Well, dwellest though. This is what they wanted. Now the Lord says of all, as he said to the angel, to the women at the tomb on the morning of the resurrection, rather as the angel said to them, fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus who was crucified.

[16 : 06] I know that ye seek him, and because ye seek him, then fear not.

the earth may tremble, the heavens may pass away as a scroll, and be folded up as a garment, but this remains eternally true, unchanged and unchangeable, that those who seek Jesus need not hear him.

Why? The everlasting arms are underneath them.

They are protected by omnipotence. sons. They have a refuge in God himself.

He has undertaken in a sure word of promise to be a wall of fire drowned about them and the glory in their midst.

[17 : 39] but all others have reason to fear. It is not the dictator or the figment of a deceased imagination that the sinner should fear, that he should fear the one of God, that he should fear the fierceness of that anger.

It is but plain common sense that this should be so. But it is common sense that is exceedingly uncommon.

so we are left in this position. There is either reason to fear or there is no reason to fear. And our position in relation to these two is determined infallibly by what we seek.

What seek ye? And that what is turned to whom seek ye?

[19 : 28] that is the way in which the disciples answered it. Where dwells the in other words we seek thee that's what we see.

Now it might have been very difficult we repeat for them and to give logical reasons for the seeking and so it is in all ages so it is now there are those who seek Jesus and who seek him because the Lord has touched their heart and yet it is very difficult for them to put in logical form why or how they came to seek him and that is why we said at the beginning that there are so many even of those who truly and consistently seek him who often come to the conclusion that because their cases not like the case of so and so and that they do not seek truly at all we know that

God is not only the God of order but he is also the God of variety perhaps there is nothing more interesting in the works of God than their variety there is no sameness in God's work either in nature or in grace when you think that in a forest of innumerable trees no true leaves are identical each leaf has its own peculiar characteristic it's an individual it is something by itself and when we see the snow drops falling at first sight they all appear to be the same but it is a fact that no two of them are the same even when they come down thick and fast in thousands in millions no two are exactly the same each has its own shall we say its own distinctive characteristics and as that is so in nature it is the same in

Greece no two Christians are exactly the same no two persons are exactly the same and the devil takes advantage of our have given after sameness we would like to be exactly like so and so or how comforting it would be if we could compare favorably with this person or that person or the next person and what do we want when we think like that we want sameness we want the loss of individuality no there is nothing like that at all we say in the works of

God nothing like that at all so rather than be perturbed about our dissimilarities from other people let us pursue the matter as it ought to be pursued let us face this question squarely what seek ye and let us notice that this is not something that occurred in the experience of these men after they had followed the Lord for a long time it was the very beginning of their experience concerning him it is then he asked this question what seek ye what i did now is thye

[25 : 32] If his, O Lord, I will seek. Now is this true of ourselves in any measure at all?

For let us notice that the next word, seek, implies that one is willing to go to considerable inconvenience in order to obtain what one is seeking.

The slugger decides and has nothing. Do you remember when the shepherd went out to seek and to save the sheep?

He was willing to go to a good deal of trouble to do this. Do you remember when the woman lost the coin?

She was willing to go to a good deal of trouble. She lit a candle. She swept the house. Here she did everything that should be done in such circumstances to find what she had lost.

[26 : 53] And she found it. Now when a person really seeks, she is willing and of necessity must be willing to go to some trouble to find what she seeks.

hence, the first question that is to be determined here is, do we seek anything at all in relation to God and our soul?

how much trouble, how much trouble, in other words, are we prepared to go to in order to find these men followed Jesus and noticed this is the only thing that could be done at this time in those circumstances.

we know that afterwards they did a good deal more. But right now, all that could be done was to follow him.

To go where he was. To find him. To have fellowship with him. And so it is always those who seek Jesus who was crucified are willing to use the means which God has appointed for the end or to this end of finding him.

[28 : 47] And see how gracious his words are. He spoke to them saying what seek ye?

And immediately they replied he says to them come and see come and see it is always the same in his dealings with men.

in God's calling of his people it is always the same he says come and see come and see come and see there are certain things that cannot be explained there are certain things that can only be seen

be looked upon and you remember this is the very way in which John in his first epistle states his own experience he says that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you that your fellowship may be with us but truly our fellowship is with the father and with his son Jesus Christ come and see come and see and this is the same at least we are very very near to what the service had said long ago oh taste and see that God is good where dwellest them you remember how Job brings this point forcibly to more attention when he says all that I knew where I might find him then I would come to his place

I would fill my mouth with arguments I would plead with him and he would strengthen me and that is exactly what these two disciples say where can we find him where dwellest God now the Lord has made himself known in the gospel of his grace we know that God is to be found in Jesus Christ and nowhere else it is the dictate of madness to look for him anywhere else as the God of grace the God whom we need the God who is able to do in us and for us exceeding abundantly above what we can ask for this

[32 : 38] God is in Christ for here God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself not including their trespasses unto them come and see they found that he took notice of them sooner than they had anticipated insignificant and unimportant as they felt themselves to be coming after he took notice of them he invites them to what they want and he gives exceedingly exceeding abundance abundance what they could ask of them come and see and of course they came with him and they abode with him that night for it was about the tenth hour that is about four o'clock in the afternoon according to old time and they are old with and don't you think that they were amply rewarded and recompensed for coming for him for coming for coming after him but that was their own impression but that was their own judgment to to sit with him but for a moment to have communion with him for a split second is worth more infinitely more than all the trouble to which we can go in order to find him it is true of

Christ even here that when he says come and see and it is himself he reveals come and see that will say more than compensate for any and for all the trouble that anyone can do to find him that is true even here as it is true when he calls his church home to himself they will forget the instant they are brought into his presence they will forget the trouble the difficulty the persecution and everything else they suffered for his sake they will forget it in this sense that they will see that he was worthy more than worthy of all that could be suffered for his name say come and see they came and saw where he dwelt and they abhorred with now he set before us as the apple tree among the trees of the wood under whose shade the church sits down and partakes of his fruit and that is what we are called in the sure word of the gospel in his own word say come and see the way is over everything is ready and the

Lord sends out his glorious and sovereign invitation saying come come and see and if we don't come and see the hindrance is in ourselves not in God's provision nor in God's way it is that own eyes and blinded and cannot see it is we who stand in our own light for nothing could be more free than the word of the Lord saying come and see come and see myself come and be with me be with me here and here after and that is exactly what the gospel said before that is the blessing and the blessedness of the gospel of the grace of

God that it is his own word say come and see as was said on another occasion stand ye here and see the salvation of the Lord let us pray oh blessed one grant us to hear thy word and to respond there too may it be accompanied with power in our soul that we may behold what thou are that our heart may go out after thee more and more and that it shall be true of us that we seek Jesus of Nazareth who was the crucified but who is risen from the dead and is laid down on the right hand of the majesty in the heavens all authority and power being put under him and so to thy hand bless to us thy word and graciously forgive our sins in speaking and in here O Lord come over our provocations and bless what is thine all and graciously accept of us in Christ and thou shalt have the praise Amen Psalm 106 at the beginning

[40 : 34] Psalm 106 at the beginning give praise and thanks unto the Lord for bountiful is he his tender mercy doth endure unto eternity God's mighty works who can express or show for all his praise blessed are they that judgment keep and justly do always remember me Lord with that love which thou to thine dost bear with thy salvation O my God to visit me draw near that I thy chosen scoot may see and in their joy rejoice and may with thine inheritance triumph triumph with cheerful voice Psalm 106 the first four stanzas give praise and thanks unto the

Lord grim Dak ■ath Thank you.

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