

John 1:29-42

The Long bony finger of John the Baptist points to Jesus, the one he had just baptized, as he passed by, "Behold, the Lamb of God away takes away the sin of the world."

I still remember my preaching professor telling us students that we could not preach a great sermon every Sunday. He did say, however, every sermon, will do what John the Baptist does in our gospel for this day. It points us to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

There are lots of voices preaching and many fingers pointing to lots of things that promise lots of things, things that bring fulfillment to our hearts desire.

Behold the perfect diet that takes away all those unwanted pounds.

Behold the perfect investment that bring perfect financial security.

Behold the perfect TV that brings you all the channels and live streaming that will keep you entertained for hours on end.

Then it can get more serious as the bony finger of the law points and says, "Behold the perfect procedure that changes your God given gender."

But this morning, John the Baptist points his finger to the one we really need, "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

We are now in this season after Epiphany. It about revealing who This Jesus is, the one conceived in by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus was not born with a halo around His head making it easy for us identify without a doubt. For Jesus came like us in human flesh to be with us. The prophet Isaiah puts it, "He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him, and no beauty that we should desire Him." Is 53:2. The point is that the only way we will ever recognize our Lord for who He really is, is to tend to and listen to His teaching and preaching.

For the Magi or Wisemen it was the star that drew them to Jesus so they could worship Him as the King of the Jews. For John the Baptist it was the Holy Spirit descending upon Him and remaining on Him as the one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit.

Which means that in your baptism the Holy Spirit descended upon you and calls you, "Child of God." And finger of God the Father points to you declaring you dearly beloved. All of this is true for you because of the one whom John the Baptist points His bony finger toward, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

In the Old Testament Lambs were a big part in the spiritual life of Israel.

Passover Lamb whose blood was smeared onto the door frames of sinful men and women and boys and girls. On that fateful night in Egypt when the angel of Lord saw the blood and passed over that home without death visiting it that night. Sinners spared that Passover night.

There was daily sacrifice morning and evening that was to be eaten. The burnt offering of a roasted Lamb that made a pleasing aroma to the Lord. The peace offering of a Lamb that made peace with God. The sin Offering of a Lamb that atoned for the sin of the one who brought it to the Temple.

These Lambs had to be Young, male, and without blemish.

And then, the granddaddy of them all. The Day of Atonement. One Lamb slain for the sins of the nation of Israel. One for all. Then the High Priest who slew the Lamb would place blood on a second Lamb and pronounce the sins of all the people on the head of this one Lamb. This lamb would be known as the scape goat and would be led outside the walls of Jerusalem into the wilderness never to be seen again.

“Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” Jesus Christ, the one all these offerings point to. Young, male, without blemish. Whose shed blood in His suffering and death on the cross causes death to Passover the sinner. Whose sacrifice gives a pleasing aroma to the Father. Whose crucifixion brings peace between us God through the forgiveness of sins. Whose death brings an end to all sacrificing for sin and the only sacrificing is our praise and love to neighbor.

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. From the first sin of Adam of Eve to our sin to every sin before He comes again.

In a few minutes we will again lay claim to this forgiveness and peace and life we have as we sing, “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us. Grant us peace, grant us peace.”

Then we are sent to follow Him.

It is my desire that with God’s help we grow together in mission. I receive all kinds of programs that promise to grow congregations and to reach people outside our wall with fancy marketing and flashy flyers that would attract a would-be visitor.

But there is one way that is God gives us and it rather simple. We a cue from John the Baptist. “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the World.” He is the one I have been talking about. Why are you still hanging around me. Go and follow Him. And two of John’s disciple respond by following Jesus, at a distance. We do not how they followed before Jesus turned and asked, “What are you seeking?”

It is question that we would do well to consider. As we follow Jesus to the cross, to the grave, to His resurrection, we might encounter who are looking for things that Jesus did not come do.

like help us gain earthly prosperity, or political power, or even relief from all the problems that haunt us.

The tow disciples hardly pause to answer the question. "Rabbi, where are you staying?" Oh, John had prepared them well! In other words where are you abiding?

All they know is that they want to be with Jesus. They desire to get to know him. They desire to learn from Him.

Jesus says, "Come and see." He answers them and us too. It is his gracious invitation to come and see where the Lamb of God is remaining, And when you do you will find out what your really looking for.

Jesus whose promises as the Lamb of God, brings us back to God in relationship living in the hope of eternal life.