

Hinde Street Methodist Church

Sunday 19th January 2020 10.00am

Rev Peter Cornick

'Come and see.' John 1: 39

'Rabbi' (which translated means Teacher), 'where are you staying?'

³⁹ He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

The American artist, Ed Ruscha, composed books of photos in the 60s. The photos in each book, were all of the same location. His first book, 'Twenty Six Gasoline Stations', delivered what the title said – photos of twenty six petrol stations on Route 66. The concept might appear somewhat banal – but Ruscha was interested in the shapes; their position within the landscape, the style of the signs. He was interested in getting Americans to look objectively at locations they used everyday, and perhaps took for granted. By focusing the picture on one object, and repeating the object a number of times, he wanted people to really come and see.

My guide around Tate Modern, had invited us to look and see. To really look and see the art works rather than pass by quickly.

Apparently, in art galleries, the average time people look at a work is less than thirty seconds.

Two disciples ask Jesus, where he is staying. The disciples are asking Jesus, not only for a room for the night – it is 4 o'clock – but wish to 'remain' with him. To remain here, means, to abide, to stay. Does John, the gospel writer might mean, to remain in Christ. To be in Christ. It seems that, in simply asking where Jesus is staying, these two wish to spend time with Jesus. Talk to him. Gain something from his wisdom.

Jesus' answer? 'Come and see.' Come and see my everyday life. Notice what you might otherwise pass by. Look at the shapes I make – the text I use – who I associate with. Come and see.

Who do you see when you spend time with Jesus? In this time of prayer, what do you notice in those words you say; the shapes you experience – taste?

John the Baptist, invites people to come and see – the Lamb of God.

The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, 'Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'

It is not exactly clear what John the Baptist was saying. Who did he believe was the Lamb of God.

- Was it the Passover lamb. Later in the gospel, Jesus will be sacrificed, on or around the time of Passover. Is he a reminder of the time God brought the Israelites out of captivity – saved

them? But according to Jewish tradition, the Passover lamb was not for taking away sins. So this is not clear.

- Did John have in his mind, the lamb who is provided for Abraham to spare his son Isaac? Ready to sacrifice his son at God's command, at the last moment, God provides a ram in the bushes. A gruesome story, yes, but one which speaks of absolute trust in God. To Christian ears, it reminds us of Christ's sacrifice.
- Did John have in mind, the sacrificial lamb of Isaiah?

The disciples are called to come and see – come and see who Jesus really is. And perhaps, at first, it is not at all clear – ambiguous even. They need to spend time.

Perhaps, the message for us is, time spent in the company of Jesus, helps us to know the life he led and wishes for us to lead. Time spent in studying the scriptures; time spent in prayer; time spent in receiving bread and wine together.

When we remain in him, abide in him, when we come and see, we meet the lamb of God.