

Isaiah 49:1-7  
1 Corinthians 1:1-9  
John 1:29-42  
Psalm 40:1-12

There are four canonical Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, it was decided those four are all that is necessary for salvation. They had probably over 100 to choose from but these were the ones canonized. The first three Gospels are called “synoptic” because they are similar, in sync, with each other. ... and then there’s John. He’s different.

Our Gospel lesson this morning is from John and it’s in the first chapter – Jesus is just getting started. Matthew and Luke have Jesus’s birth, and angels, and Peace on Earth and good will to all! They’re great. John starts with this: in the beginning, the Word was with God, the Word is God, and all things were created through the Word. That Word became flesh, lived among us, and we testify to what we have seen and heard.

No angels, no trumpets, no shepherds, no big pronouncements about peace on earth. This tells me that John is not going to try to answer for the wars, famines, and all the rest of the world. Nope, John is going to be very personal in his approach to the God-made-man incarnation. From our lesson for today, John the Baptizer, says that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. (Not who is going to bring peace, etc, but to forgive sins – a very personal thing) John then testifies that he saw the Spirit descent and remain on Jesus. The next day, Jesus walks by, again, and John says something similar and this time, his two followers start following Jesus. After a while – I’d like to think it was half a day – Jesus stops, looks at them, and says, “What are you searching for?”

Yep, the first thing Jesus says in John’s Gospel is a question – what are you searching/seeking? I think there is an awkward silence with the two followers. They eventually asked him a question: Rabbi, where are you staying. Jesus said: come and see. And they did.

That’s the beginning – a question, responded with a question, and then they went and saw where he was staying and they stayed with him. Do you see how this Gospel is going to be different from the rest? Jesus asks questions and, in my experience, is still asking questions – what are you seeking?

It’s subtle, but, if you read carefully, you’ll see what is probably going on here. The two followers – his first – called him “teacher”. What are they seeking? To learn. They then asked him where he is staying. What are they seeking? Relationship and commitment to him. They then stayed with him.

As it was then, is now, and will be. Jesus asks us, you, what are you seeking? He’s looking for people who want to be taught and to make the commitment to follow, to stay, with him.

And then there's Peter. At times, it sounds like Peter is seeking to lead and not to be taught. He sometimes tells Jesus what to do and makes it clear when he disagrees with the Word Who Became Flesh. Ah Peter, what would we do without you.

One of the two followers ran off to find his brother, Peter. He brought Peter to Jesus. Jesus met him and renamed him – Cephas, or, the rock. (Or Rocky) It's where we get the English name, Peter. I hear Jesus saying that Peter is strong like a rock and that this movement is going to be built on him. Peter learned to be a student. First, however, he was the rock.

The Word Became Flesh.

Jesus lets his life speak. The ministry, the love and forgiveness of God, flows through him. Peter let his life speak. Peter, the fisherman, became a fisher of people. Likewise, for the next roughly two thousand years, people who call Jesus "teacher" have found their lives changed and God speaks through them. They are letting their life speak.

I see it here at All Angels. My Senior Warden, Reuben, lets his life speak. The way that he is leading and teaching our seminarian, Antonio; the way that Reuben leads his students in the way of Tai Chi, the way that Reuben leads the church and helps me, it's all a part of who he is. His life is speaking through his experience and his willingness to serve and lead. Our Music Director, David, is letting his life speak. The various reflection hymns you'll see in the bulletin – when it says DLS that means David has written it, or, is most likely tapping into the Spirit within and is playing for us what his Teacher is giving him. He's letting his life speak.

God is speaking through you in your life. The Word Made Flesh is present in us, in our history, our past experiences, and is helping us reflect his life and love in the world today. Jesus is here for the forgiveness of sins. It's for us, to rejoice and give thanks for God's grace, and also to share that love with others. Letting your life speak is following in the pattern of life by his followers. When you let your life speak, the Light of the World shines through you and we all become the light of the world. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.