

“What are you seeking?” John 1:29-42

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”

The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?” He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So, they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ). He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas” (which means Peter).

What are you seeking? What do you want? What do you long for? What do you dream about? Do you ask yourself these questions? Sometimes we do, and sometimes we answer them somewhat superficially.

It may seem to be an easy task to answer what you want, and what you dream about. Just think for a moment how would you end these sentences: “What I want is...”. “What I dream about is...”. “What I seek is...”.

What answers did you come up with? Some of the answers may be about our primary needs. Some may be about things that we simply like and enjoy. But some may point to something more significant, some deeper longings hidden behind them.

Then we need to ask – why do I want these things? Why do I long for them? What would they give to me? What would they change? What difference would they make? These are important questions for us to reflect on.

These are equally important questions for those who are not Christians, and for us, who are. For what we want, what we truly long for, what we are truly seeking and desiring in our hearts are the same things for all human beings.

Jesus too asked the same question to His first disciples, as John has recorded it. “The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” The two disciples heard him

say this, and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?”” They were caught off guard. They didn’t know what to say. If you were suddenly faced with the Son of God, with Jesus Christ, and He looked at you as you tried to approach Him and asked: “What are you seeking?” What would you say?

The truth is that all people are seeking the same things. We all have the same longings. It is not surprising. For we all were created by the same Creator and He has made all of us for a certain kind of life.

Surely, we can list these things that we are seeking, that we long for in different order, and we can use different words to describe them, but they point to the same reality for all people. What are those things that we are seeking, what all people are seeking and longing for?

We all want to be appreciated. We want to be significant. We want to be somebody, to have some worth. We also want to be good. In our own eyes and in the eyes of others. To have a good conscience.

We want to live in peace and security, meaning, we don’t want to worry about our life, about our future, about our daily bread, about lacking something. About being poor, about dying. We also want to belong. We want to be noticed and accepted.

We long to be loved. We long for meaning. For purpose. We want our lives to mean something, our activities to have some greater purpose, something that would fill us, our beings with joy and satisfaction. We all are seeking for these. All people do.

Where do we seek for these things? For these the most important things in our lives. Usually we don’t know where to seek for them. And thus we follow the example of this foolish and dark world.

We often believe that we can find these if we elevate ourselves, if we have more, have bigger name, a longer list of achievement, if we manage to tick all the boxes for success and happiness, whatever they are in any given time.

Often as we pursue these things, along the way we stump on others, we put others down, we sacrifice our relationships and people whom we love and who love us, we do things that we know are wrong, hoping that the end will justify the means.

The truth is that people invest their whole lives pursuing these things, most of the time without even realizing what drives them. What these longings are, this hunger, this thirst, this emptiness that screams to be filled, that demands more and more...

It was the famous Christian author C.S. Lewis who pointed to these longings saying that if we have them, then, probably, we were created to have them fulfilled. But what or who can fulfill them?

John the Baptist comes to help. He stretches his hand and points his finger to the ultimate answer. "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ... This is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit... This is the Son of God."

Okay, John. But how does Jesus fulfill our longings? How is He the answer to what we are seeking? What John the Baptist said and what John the Evangelist recorded explains to us God's ways of dealing with us.

When Jesus invades our lives and turns them upside down, when He sends His Holy Spirit, the Creator to bring us out of our death in sin, He creates us anew. He makes us a new creation, and He gives us new identity. A child of God.

In the case with Simon He even gives him a new name. "You will be called Peter." "You will no longer be who you were, you will be a new creation. You will have a new identity." The same He does with us. He gives us a new identity. And what a marvellous identity it is!

If you want to be significant, if you want to be truly someone, this is it. There is no greater honour, there is no higher status, there is no greater worth and significance than being a child of God the Father. How do we know this?

For Jesus showed how significant you are for Him. Your God and Creator sacrifices His life for you. Life for life. His for yours. So that only He could rescue you and to have you with Him. There is nothing in this world that surpasses the value that you have in the eyes of your Creator and Redeemer. Nothing...

We also want to be good. And if we are honest, the harder we try the clearer we see that we can't succeed. Our hearts are so twisted, the thoughts and desires they produce are shameful. We can't change them on our own. The Lamb of God is the only One who can help us.

He takes this burden from us. He invites: "Let's count all your sins and evils as mine, and I will wash your record clean. Transfer them to me, and I will transfer to you my holiness, my purity, my innocence and perfections. Let's make this exchange!"

Do you know when we receive this wonderful gift? When do we sing "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us and grant us your peace"? Yes... as we prepare for the Holy Communion. That is where it happens.

Thus, you are made good in the eyes of your Creator, before whom you will have to give an account when this life is over. And who does it? Not you, but Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. He takes all your sins away. He leaves you sinless and holy and good. Now you are good, you are pleasing to God the Father.

We also long for peace of mind and safety. No one can grant it more than the Son of God. To Him all authority is given in heaven and on earth. He is in charge of this

Universe. He is in control of everything that happens. And He has promised to you that no one and nothing will snatch you from the Father's hand. He assures you again and again that nothing in this world can separate you from the love of God that you have in Christ Jesus. What do we need to worry about if we belong to Him? What should we fear if He stands for us? Nothing and no one...

Meaning. Joy. Satisfaction. Yes, we all long for these, and we all know that it is more joyful to give than to receive. We are created to give, to give abundantly, to give generously, to give self-sacrificially. The more we are able to give, the more joy we are able to experience.

And now, when we don't need to fight and worry about our significance and worth, when we don't need to show off trying to be good on our own, when we don't need to be enslaved to the fears about our future, we are free to live for others.

We are free to live as givers. The Lamb of God, the Son of God, the Sender of the Holy Spirit opens this new life for us. Just receive it, embrace it, rejoice in it and live it out as fully as you can. For that is His gift to you. Be who you are created to be. Live as fully human. Be free and rejoice.

This is how Jesus is the answer to our deepest longing. We may not know it, but what we all are seeking is nothing else, no one else, but – Jesus. If only all people knew it and embraced this truth. Because with Jesus it is so much easier. As soon as we turn to Him, He invites us as He did His first disciples.

“Come and see, stay with me and experience it for yourself!” He is always ready for you. Always waiting. Always generous with His time. Always ready to quench your thirst. Always ready to provide what is missing in your heart, in your soul.

And once we taste that the Lord is so good, we can't do anything else, but the same thing that Jesus' first disciples did. We go to the people we care for and declare the Good News: “Hey, we have found the Messiah” (which means Christ).

We have found the answer. We have found the One who made us, we have found the One who fulfills all our longings. We have found the Lamb of God, the Son of God. Come and see and experience that the Lord is good.

Come and don't delay! Amen.