

Natalie W. Bell  
January 18, 2026

**Come and See**  
**John 1:29-42**

*The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, “**Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**”<sup>30</sup> This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’<sup>31</sup> I myself did not know him, but I came baptizing with water for this reason, **that he might be revealed to Israel.**”<sup>32</sup> And John testified, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.”<sup>33</sup> I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’<sup>34</sup> **And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Chosen One.**”<sup>[i]</sup>*

<sup>35</sup> *The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples,<sup>36</sup> and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, “**Look, here is the Lamb of God!**”<sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.<sup>38</sup> When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi” (which translated means Teacher), “where are you staying?”<sup>39</sup> **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.<sup>40</sup> One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother.<sup>41</sup> **He first found his brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah”** (which is translated Anointed<sup>[k]</sup>).<sup>42</sup> He brought Simon<sup>[l]</sup> to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas”<sup>[m]</sup> (which is translated Peter<sup>[n]</sup>).*

In 1989, Janie Tinklenberg, a Youth Pastor in Holland, Michigan made the first **WWJD (What Would Jesus Do) bracelet for her youth group**, to help remind kids to focus on Jesus, inspired by the book *In His Steps*. The bracelets become a massive cultural phenomenon and fashion trend in the mid-to-late 1990s, and people still refer to it today!

The idea is pretty simple---ask yourself,  
**What Would Jesus Do? And then, do that.**

*The Baptist Press*

There's something really powerful about that idea—  
***we SHOULD do what Jesus did....following in his footsteps.***

***This is similar to the 16<sup>th</sup> century poem attributed to St. Teresa of Avila,***

*“Christ has no body now on earth but yours,*

*No hands but yours, no feet but yours.*

*Yours are the eyes through which to look out Christ's compassion to the world,*

*Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good,*

*Yours are the hands with which he is to bless men now....”*

I love that poem.

***And Paul talks in 1 Corinthians 12***

about how ***WE are the body of Christ now***—the church.

We each have spiritual gifts, and a part to play in the greater body.

Some like hands, ears, eyes, or feet.

Each with a vital part, even those parts we might consider lesser.

***Rodger Nishioka tells the story of a distraught teen in the 90s,***

***who was wearing a WWJD bracelet, and was troubled by its message.***

He tried to explain the concept to her,

and she said understood ***and THAT was the problem!***

She said, “Yeah, but don't you see? I am not Jesus!

*I am fully human, but I am not fully divine.*

*I just don't think it's fair to even assume that I could imagine*

*what Jesus would do because I am not God!”*

He realized she had a fair point.

*Rodger Y. Nishioka, Feasting on the Word, Year A, Vol. 1, Pg. 262.*

***There IS a fundamental problem to be aware of when we think of WWJD.***

***We are largely selfish people.***

Left to our own devices, we want attention.

We generally focus on our own lives, and our own concerns.

This is why we tend to be very tribal, very divided in our world today.

We are concerned about OUR concerns—we think our way is THE way.

***We could really take a lesson from JOHN THE BAPTIST.***

Before Jesus was baptized by John,  
John was careful **to point people** to the one who would come after him,  
baptizing with the Spirit.  
And here in this passage, ***John again is pointing people to Jesus.***

***He knows that Jesus' mission is not about him, he is the forerunner, the one preparing the way for the Lord.***

He is part of a larger story, he is not THE story.  
So he always points to Jesus, not himself.  
John has his own disciples, he has a following—  
but he knows this is all about Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God!  
Preston Sharpe, *The Art of Preaching*, Year A, January 18, 2026, pg. 11.

***It's surprising, what John does for Jesus.***

***But it shouldn't be.***

For God is clear, throughout scripture, that ***faith is others-centered.***  
We focus on God, and that focus leads us to focus on others.  
Jesus said that the ***Greatest Commandment*** (Matt 22) was  
*to love God, and love our neighbors, as ourselves.*  
The two are connected.

***In fact, God chose a people, the people of Abraham, the people of Israel,***  
To be God's people—not because there was something holier about them.  
But that they might be ***ambassadors, and witnesses*** to the rest of the world  
about the One, Living God.

***In fact, all throughout the Bible, we see this surprising aspect of God--***  
***Always focusing on the outsiders,***  
the unlikely candidates for ministry and mission.  
God's purposes are focused on the ***OTHER---not ourselves.***

***And God is always going outside the boundaries of what WE think is the***  
***group, the people, the chosen ones—***  
so that God can reveal to us that Jesus came for ALL people.  
John 3:16 says that God so loved THE WORLD...  
Not just some of the world, not just our own corner of it, ***but ALL of the world.***  
The prophets emphasized this calling

to shine the light of God to all people, and all nations.

***Twice John refers to Jesus as the LAMB OF GOD in our passage today.***

In fact, in most religious art, John is depicted as pointing to a lamb.

And this idea of the *Agnus Dei, Jesus as the Lamb of God*, has inspired countless composers and works of music too.

Think of Handel, Bach, and so many more.

It comes from this passage, but also from prophecies, like Isaiah 53 about the suffering Servant.

***The defining characteristic of John's ministry is pointing to Jesus.***

Which SHOULD be the defining characteristic of ANY Christian life.

***Of OUR lives.***

***But why the Lamb of God?***

Well, there are three big references in scripture.

The first is the ***Passover Lamb***.

When God sent ***10 plagues*** to Pharaoh and the Egyptian people, to help free the Hebrew people from slavery,

The final plague, was the angel of death coming to kill all the firstborn sons of the Egyptians.

It was this plague that convinced Pharaoh to release the people.

To spare the Hebrew firstborn sons,

God's people were told to put the blood of a lamb on their doorposts—

***signaling the angel of death to 'pass over' that home.***

And that is exactly what happened.

***Later, when the people wandered in the desert for 40 years***

with God's guidance, they continued to slaughter lambs

in remembrance of the Exodus, and the Passover lamb that saved their lives.

They used this as a remembrance and celebration of ***liberation***.

***A second reference to the Lamb of God is***

***from the Jewish Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur.***

This is the highest holy day of worship,

and in ancient Israel it involved ***killing a lamb, and the priest taking the blood*** of the lamb into the Holy of Holies in the Temple, and making ***confession for all the sins of all the people***.

***This is where we get our prayers of confession today---***

it's not that we have committed every sin that we mention, but rather we are representatives of God's people, confessing on behalf of all of us, that we are fallen and broken.

***And of course, the Day of Atonement points to Jesus on the cross.***

***When Jesus was crucified,***

***it was the afternoon when the Passover lambs were being slain.***

And Jesus was dying—as the ***NEW Passover Lamb of God***—the ultimate sacrifice.

***NOT to appease an angry God,***

but rather to confirm the covenant of God with God's people, bringing us forgiveness and grace.

It also signified Jesus as the one bringing ***a new exodus and liberation*** for God's people, ***not just from sin, but also from death.***

***Some have also suggested that when Jesus came to be baptized by John***

in the Jordan River, a baptism of forgiveness of sins,

That he didn't have his OWN sin to confess,

but perhaps what he ***confessed in his heart was OUR sin,***

the sins of the world.

Philemon of Gaza, *Philemon of Gaza Meditates John's Gospel*, Ed. Daniel Bourguet, Burlington: People's Seminary Press, 2024). Referenced in Preston Sharpe's Art of Preaching, Jan 18, 2026.

***The third and final reference to the Lamb of God***

***is from the Apocryphal book of 1 Enoch 90.***

In that book, God's people are like sheep (an image found throughout scripture), and one of those sheep grows horns and is given a sword to fight off the enemies of the sheep.

This image is again seen in the ***Book of Revelation 5:6.***

Preston Sharpe, The Art of Preaching, Year A, January 18, 2026, pg. 11-13.

***The second time that John says "Look, here is the Lamb of God!"***

***He encourages his own disciples to follow Jesus!***

Talk about ***pointing away from himself!***

He lets go of his own ministry to focus on the mission of the Messiah.

*When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi”, “where are you staying?”*

*He said to them, “**Come and see.**”*

Come and see.

Some very powerful words for us today.

***Seeing is symbolic in John’s Gospel for understanding, and revelation.***

We are still in the season of Epiphany, which means revelation.

So come and see could be considered **a slogan** of this season of the church.

***We are told to Come and See Jesus,***

And we are encouraged to ***TELL OTHERS to COME AND SEE Him,***

Just as Andrew did when he met Jesus, and told his brother Simon. It says:

*He found his brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah”*

***Come and See is a reminder that faith is NOT ABOUT US.***

***It’s about finding and following Jesus.***

It’s about becoming true disciples of Jesus.

And ***remaining, or abiding*** in Him.

After Jesus invites them with Come and See, it says:

***They came and saw where he was staying,***

***and they REMAINED with him that day.***

That word remain means to ***stay, abide, to be connected*** to.

It’s the same word that John uses in ***John 15*** when he says that

we should be like branches connected to Jesus, the vine.

We are to abide in Jesus.

***Pastor Preston Sharpe says compare this to football fans.***

There are some casual fans, tailgaters, who come to enjoy the game,

When the team is winning.

Then there are those that ***stick with the team***, in good times and bad.

They are the ones who ***truly remain, or abide.***

***They are dedicated, and connected.***

That’s who ***WE are supposed to be***, as disciples of Jesus.

***When we Come to See Jesus, and remain in him,  
What happens to us?***

We are completely **TRANSFORMED!**

We receive **a new identity**, like Simon—who became Peter, Cephas, which means, the rock.

*Andrew brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said,  
“You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas (which is translated Peter<sup>[n]</sup>).*

***When we hear and follow the invitation to come and see,  
We trade in everything, for the opportunity to be connected to Jesus.  
And we too receive a new identity.***

It’s like we talked about last week when we celebrated the **baptism of Jesus**,  
And remembered our own baptism.

We are given a new name and identity by God: **Beloved Child of God**.  
Just as Jesus was named at his baptism: **Son of God, the Beloved**.

***So, how will we INVITE OTHERS to Come and See?***

Who can you invite—to church? To a conversation?  
To a story about what God has done in your life?

***And maybe we could consider WWJBD?***

**What Would John the Baptist Do?**

He would point **away** from himself, and **to** the Savior of the World.

***How will WE DO THE SAME?***

And for this invitation, all God’s people can say together, Amen.