

December Devotional – Come and See

Bible References – John 1:43-51, John 4:1-42, Luke 2:6-17

We live in a social media world. Sometimes we think that if we have a slick, modern website or engaging Facebook page that people will flock to our activities. While these things have their place, this approach overlooks a critical element – the power of invitation. In matters of the heart and particularly in matters of faith, there is no substitute for personal invitation.

We see this principle clearly illustrated in the Gospels. In John 1 we read the story of Philip responding to the call to follow Jesus. The first thing Philip does is to find his brother, Nathaniel, and tell him he has found the Messiah. Nathaniel initially rejects Philip's explanation because he does not believe Jesus has the appropriate pedigree. Philip's response to his brother's skepticism is an invitation to "Come and see". Nathaniel responds to the invitation, meets with Jesus, and soon is following Jesus himself.

A few chapters later in John we see Jesus having a conversation with a woman by a well in Samaria. The conversation so impresses the woman that she too comes to believe that Jesus could be the Messiah. She goes back into her town and tells the people there "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" Like Nathaniel, many people respond to the woman's invitation, come to listen to Jesus, and become followers themselves.

We are now entering the Christmas season. The culture around us is not yet completely hardened to the true meaning of Christmas. Christmas Eve services continue to be the most well attended of the year in many churches. The Christmas carol echoes the words of the angels to the shepherds in Luke 2.

"Come to Bethlehem and see, Him whose birth the angels sing . . ."

Can we find ways to invite others who do not yet know Jesus into our Christmas celebrations so that they might see Jesus? The best way might be to invite friends or neighbors to our Christmas Eve services at Grace Chapel. These services are some of the most beautiful of the year and are designed to be seeker friendly. Other more indirect options might be to invite a friend to share Christmas dinner with us, trim a Christmas tree or go Christmas caroling together, attend a Christmas concert that honors the Christmas story, or watch a Christmas movie that has a spiritual theme. The Christmas season points to Jesus in so many ways. Can we follow the example of the angels on that first Christmas night and invite people we know to "Come and see"?