

*Epiphany 2 -January 19, 2020*

Text: John 1:29-42a  
Theme: Come and See!

**We are in the season of Epiphany. I always ask the preschoolers what season we are in right now and they, without fail, say WINTER! Well yes, that is true. How do you get a preschooler to remember the word Epiphany? For that matter, how do get an adult to remember it? And of course, we can all say it, but what does it mean? Epiphaneia is the Greek word that means manifestation or appearance and the season was thus named because Christ appeared to us. The season of Epiphany is about people seeing and believing that Jesus is the Messiah. We start with the wise men every year on January 6<sup>th</sup> and then we hear about others who saw that he was the Messiah all throughout the season. He appeared to many at his baptism which we celebrated last week and this week we celebrate his appearance to the Apostles Andrew and Peter. Andrew is the first evangelist.**

**There are committees at the church on which people enjoy serving, and there are committees on which people serve because someone has to do the job. Around here, human care always seems to have plenty of help and the youth board seems to be full most of the time. Property has been the domain of the Golz family for at least two decades and I suspect longer than that. But when**

**we mention the Board of Evangelism, we hear a great many crickets. I have served three churches as their pastor and two others as a field worker and a vicar and in all five churches, the Board of Evangelism has been difficult to fill. Usually it is made up of a couple people who feel as though someone has to do it so they will put in their time. Or sometimes, it has one real go getter who is super excited about evangelism and everyone else retreats because they figure someone else is doing the dirty job now. It is this way because we don't really understand evangelism.**

**If we had developed a pill that would cure diabetes, how hard do you think it would be to spread the word that we had that? I remember my college days, when someone would throw a kegger, I don't recall them having to form a committee and devise a plan of door to door solicitation in order to achieve a healthy attendance. In fact, I remember there being an effort to keep it on the down low to keep the crowd manageable, not that I would have any personal experience in that matter of course. My point is that when you have really great news, it spreads like wildfire. It does not require a program and a sales team. It is only when you are trying to sell something that no one wants or needs that you need that plan and the team. Advertising agencies know that before you can get people to buy something, you have to convince them that**

**they want it and they need it. Once people are convinced of that, the product sells itself. Some of you remember when the microwave was first marketed for home use. Remember how many people would say they did not need or want a microwave? It seemed as though no one could imagine why they needed a \$500 appliance (\$4,000 in today's money) to take up room on their counters so that they could warm up coffee faster. Marketers and Advertising agencies had to convince us that we needed a microwave and once enough people bought one, and they became affordable, they flew off the shelves.**

**In our Gospel for today, Andrew did not need a sales team or a marketing plan. He just saw and heard Jesus and he knew that this was the Savior he wanted and needed and had been looking for his whole adult life. He marched straight over to his brother and told him all about this good news. That is all evangelism is. Evangelism is not a slick marketing plan and it does not require a team of highly skilled hucksters. You know that Jesus died on the cross and paid for your sins by suffering hell in your place. The only difference between you and a person who is unsaved is that they don't know it or they have forgotten it because they have been so blinded by the garbage of this world.**

**Where do you start? There are so many people who are spiritually dying or already dead! Some people think they have to put their regular lives on hold and board a plane for Borneo. Others think they have to put on their white shirts and blue ties and go from door to door. No, you start with you closest kin just like Andrew did. Jesus has appeared to you. He has made himself known through his Word, through Holy Baptism and through the Lord's Supper. He has physically entered into you. Simply go out today and find someone you know and love who does not know or who has forgotten and invite them to come here with you next week and hear the same thing you heard.**

**If they say no, pray for the Holy Spirit to move them and ask them again next week and the week after and the week after that. Would you risk offending them if they had diabetes and you had the cure? Then risk offending them if they're headed down the path for hell and you have their salvation. And don't stop with one, invite everyone you find. You will get turned down more than you get received but how much is a soul worth to you?**

**When the disciples asked Jesus where he was staying, he said to them, "Come and you will see." Jesus wasn't really concerned that they see his lodging place was he? He was saying, when you walk with him, you will see everything illuminated because he is**

**the light. His light enlightens our world so that we can see what is important and what does not really matter. We can see those who are hurting and need the Savior's love. We can see who is lost and needs to be rescued from their path of destruction. Walk closely with Jesus and you will come and see.**

**If the marketers of the microwave oven had given up when the first people said they didn't need one or want one, we would still all be warming our coffee in that little metal sauce pan that used to sit on the back of the stove and we would be waiting 55 minutes for our frozen dinners to cook in the conventional oven. Salvation is great deal more important than hot coffee and frozen dinners.**