

# Come & See

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[ 0 : 00 ] If you have your Bibles, I want you to turn to John chapter 1. John chapter 1. God has been nothing but good to us in recent days.

And for that I'm thankful. I missed you last week. I was watching online as long as I could. But I was sick.

And so I'm thankful for Jeff faithfully bringing God's word. I gave him two head of notice, I guess, Thursday.

I didn't feel good. And I said, man, you need to begin to prepare possibly. I'm going to try my best. And I figured, you know, if Michael Jordan can win the NBA championship with a flu, I'd be able to preach 30 minutes, you know.

Unless. There was a few unlessees there, and I had one of them. So anyway, you can't do it sometimes. You should have got two of these cards when you came in.

[ 1 : 10 ] I know everybody thinks I'm crazy, but that's all right. I've been thought, people have thought that about me before. One of them is for you to take home with you and become a prayer card for you.

And one of them is to lay before the Lord and ask God to bless your efforts as you pray for those dear folks. So I just want you to take a card in your hand, if you would.

And let's pray together. Lord Jesus, you have been mighty good to us.

And in that, you've stretched us beyond a comfort zone. And let us, dear God, to lead others beyond a comfort zone.

Lord, I'm thankful that as we look toward Easter, that we don't have to be at all concerned about a Lord and Savior that wasn't afraid to go out of his comfort zone on our behalf.

[ 2 : 20 ] So God, I pray that we'll live in response to that. That we'll follow your lead. And that you'll work and you'll move in our midst. In Jesus' precious name.

Amen. I believe we need to honor the Lord with all that we have. Especially on what I think is the greatest gospel day of the year. If you have other plans for Easter and can change them, change them.

Okay? If you've not made plans for Easter, don't overbook. Okay? The celebration of the resurrection of the Lord at Pickens First.

The timing of it in the life of this church seems prescribed to me. And I want to tell you what we're doing and what you, and want you to plan on being a very active part of making Easter this year one of the greatest days in your life and one of the greatest days in the life of this church.

Our Easter morning schedule will be as follows. At 8 o'clock, we'll have outside early worship in Legacy Square.

[ 3 : 28 ] It's not sunrise. The sun comes up late around here. It's 8 o'clock, early worship in Legacy Square. That will be an abbreviated time of worship. And then we'll leave from there and come to the fellowship hall and have breakfast together at 8.30.

And then Sunday school follows at 9.15. And then worship, resurrection, celebration services at 10.30. Now, I want to be clear about something.

My request is that you come as early as you possibly can and you stay all morning. Okay? I know for some of you, you've never seen 8 o'clock a.m. And so I understand that.

But I encourage you to be here for as much of that as you possibly can be. I say Sunday school for all ages and for everybody.

If you don't have a Sunday school class, you're just sticking your neck in or you don't stick your neck in far enough or whatever. There will be a place for you in the fellowship hall when we clean off the tables.

[ 4 : 30 ] We're going to make us a spot. And we're going to have a special time with those who don't already have a place to go for Sunday school. And let's just talk about the resurrection of the Lord together for that time.

But we're just going to have a good time together. And I want you to make plans for it. And I'm hoping that we'll have 300 in Sunday school that morning. And in between early worship and resurrection celebration, we ought to double that number, quite honestly. And we'll have a good time together in the Lord. Either way, it's going to be a great day. And how great it is when we are determined to do whatever we can to make it as great as possible. And so as we approach Easter, I am praying for a great day. And I want you to commit today to join me in that. To commit to pray that God would move and work in a mighty way. And to commit to do that. That card that you received is simply a prayer card. One is for you and one is to turn in.

[ 5 : 40 ] My hope, and I feel led to go this way, is to ask you to pray about inviting five people to Easter morning worship.

Five people. They can be people from all kinds of different circumstances. They can be people that are easy for you to invite. They can be people that are difficult for you to invite.

I have prayed over this hour. And I've asked God to lay people upon your heart. I'm going to give you permission while I preach to write. And not what I'm saying.

But to write names as God gives you those names. I've asked that he do that. That he makes it clear for us. And some of them you don't want to talk to.

Okay? I'll just tell you how God works. God puts people in your mind and you think, uh-uh.

Somebody else, Lord. Okay? Well, he put that in your mind for a reason.

[ 6 : 40 ] So you write that name down. Okay? What you're writing down is simply a prayer request at this point. Okay? Just a prayer request. You write that down. Now, to be honest with you, at the close of this service, I'm going to ask you, just duplicate everything you're doing.

And one of those cards I'm going to ask you to bring in place at this altar and lay it before the Lord. Face down. We're not going to go through those cards. We're not going to check those names. I'm not even going to call them people and ask them if you actually invited them. I'm not going to do that at all. It's just an opportunity for us to publicly say we're serious about God, wanting God to do powerful things in people's lives.

And we just lay this before you, Lord, this morning and ask you to work and move in us. God's been wonderful to us. And I don't know of a better time to celebrate that than at Easter Sunday.

And I will tell you that it is the easiest time that you have to invite somebody to something because sometimes they won't come to regular events, but they instead will come to special events.

[ 7 : 50 ] And we see people at Easter time that we'll never see again. Okay? And so why not give them that opportunity to be a part of that? This year, the theme beginning this week and throughout this Easter season is come and see.

And I'll tell you where that comes from. It comes from the Gospel of John. John always wrote about the impact that Christ has on people's lives.

And he writes out of the desire that he has for Christ to impact other people's lives. He states the purpose of writing the Gospel of John in John chapter 20, verse 30 through 31.

He closes out this book basically by saying, now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

That's his purpose for writing. And he makes it clear from the very start when he writes. Now, I want to be clear about something because sometimes people get confused. John the Baptist did not write the Gospel of John.

[ 9 : 04 ] John the Apostle wrote the Gospel. But John the Baptist is featured a lot, especially in the early pages of this Gospel. John the Baptist was set aside by God before he was born to prepare the way of the Lord.

And God was to use John to stoke the hearts of others to be ready when Christ came. And John the Baptist was so excited about Christ that even when he was in his own mother's womb and Christ was in the womb of Mary, John jumped for joy as Christ came into the room.

And he didn't slow down when he was born either, my friend. When he left the womb, John knew that his job in life was to prepare the way of the Lord. And he spent his life doing that. When Christ

came out of the desert, he came to John.

And John proclaimed, behold, the Lamb of God. In other words, what John was saying was, wake up, folks. Look, Christ, the one who will be God's once and for all sacrifice for our sins, has come. Don't you dare miss it. And I must tell you that I am with both Johns this morning on their message. With John the Baptist, I say, Jesus is here, thank God.

[10:19] Don't you dare miss him. And with the writer, I say, I do what I do so that you can believe in him and that you can have life in Christ's name. How do you respond when Christ moves?

When Christ comes by, I want you to notice this, folks. I want you to see how you respond when Christ walks by. It's found in John chapter 1, beginning in verse 35, and it says this.

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? And 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 10th hour. One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon, Peter's brother.

[11:28] 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. The next day, Jesus decided to go to the Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, follow me. Now, Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

And Philip found Nathanael and said to him, we found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

Nathanael said to him, can anything good come out of Nazareth? Philip said to him, come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, behold, an Israelite indeed in whom there is no deceit.

Nathanael said to him, how do you know me? Jesus answered him, before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. Nathanael answered him, Rabbi, you are the son of God.

[12:34] You are the king of Israel. And Jesus answered him, because you have said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You'll see greater things than these. And he said to him, truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending on the son of man.

That's a lot to read. But I want you to notice what happens when people come in contact with Jesus. John pointed people to Jesus. And Jesus said, come and see.

When Andrew saw what Christ was, he went and told and brought Peter, his brother, to Jesus. And then Philip meets Jesus and tells Nathanael.

Now listen, Nathanael is a naysayer. If you're praying about who God would have you to write down on that card, God's going to possibly give you a naysayer.

Somebody that don't want to have that conversation with you. And therefore, you don't really want to have a conversation with them about that. Nathanael was one of those.

[13:43] But Philip just said, come and see. And because he came, Nathanael was changed because of what Jesus knew about him.

Now, I don't know what happened under that tree. And I don't know what Nathanael was dealing with at the time. But Nathanael knew.

And Jesus knows. And Jesus met him where he was. Saw him for who he was. And made a life change in his heart.

Listen. Listen. You don't know where people sit. You don't know what their circumstances are. You don't know what matters are weighing upon their life.

And you don't know what God's doing in their life. You just bring them to Jesus. He'll take care of all those things. You just tell them to come and see. And watch them be changed because of the difference.

[ 14 : 42 ] It's as simple as come and see. That's all you have to say. We tend to talk about things that are most important to us.

We talk about newborns. Just last week, Bob and Taylor Hendricks were just blessed with a beautiful baby boy. A little over a week ago. And they shot out a picture of Garrett just as soon as they could.

They were proud and should be. And if like most, that sweet young'un is going to grow up and go to middle school and in a few years become a knucklehead.

Because I think we all are in middle school. Every time I see a middle school teacher, I say, bless you. You teach a school of terrorists. Notice parents don't say a whole lot during those years.

They just got to kind of grow quiet. And then a little bit of a daze. Then they find out that the church is having an event for their youth to be gone for a few days. They'll pay whatever ransom they have to pay to send that kid up the mountain with a pastor.

[ 15 : 47 ] And hope he don't get a night's rest. But man, when them babies are new, you just want folks to know. How about new cars?

When you get a new car, I love what Lou Holtz says. He says, if you want to be happy for an hour, eat a steak. If you want to be happy for a day, play golf.

If you want to be happy for a week, go on a cruise. Because going on a cruise is kind of like going to jail, but you have the opportunity to drown. You know? You want to be happy for a month?

Buy a car. You want to be happy for a year? Win the lottery. If you want to be happy for a lifetime, put your faith in Jesus Christ.

But I'm telling you, a man with a new car, that old boy is beaming. I mean, he's beaming. He acts like he made it himself, you know. He's riding around. Then it gets a dent in it.

[ 16 : 51 ] Our Kool-Aid gets spilled on the back seat. And they're going with that. But the payments just keep coming. They just keep coming. New cars.

How about new championships? Man, I'm telling you, nothing better than when your college team wins it all. Men out of shape, as bad as me, will say, we did this and we did that.

And we ain't even got up out of the recliner, you know. Some of them can't even spell championship. But they can buy a T-shirt. Proud of it. And then new relationships.

Man, we're proud of them. Some of the boys gets a good-looking girl on his arm and it's like his worth has come up. He wears it proud.

And then it wears off. And it shouldn't. And we must work to strengthen those relationships. And that's a sermon for another day. But, you know, our relationship with the Lord can get like that if we're not careful.

[ 17 : 52 ] Somebody gets saved and gets changed, they want other people to know about it. But nobody more proud than a new baptized Christian.

But before long, it may get old. We don't work out our salvation, as Scripture tells us. And we don't talk about it. And we don't share it with others. So I'm asking you, who do you need to share it with? Who needs an invite to be a part of a celebration of the resurrection of the Lord? Just an invite. Write that name down.

It's just between you and God. Abbreviate as you need to. Just so you can recognize it. But let's don't miss the opportunity to tell someone, just come and see.

Just come and see. I mean, you know, you never really know the difference that you can make. I thank God that somebody, I thank God that Andrew bothered to tell Peter.

[ 19 : 08 ] Folks, that's pretty significant for us. Okay? Because Andrew told Peter, the gospel spread, and the Spirit moved when Peter preached in the book of Acts.

You never know the impact. Psalm 34, verse 8 says, Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

Oh, but now some will doubt along the way. The resurrected Lord told them when they doubted. He said in Luke chapter 24, 38 and 39, Why are you troubled and why do doubts arise in your heart? See my hands and my feet, that it is myself. Touch me and see. And I'm telling you, just trust God with it.

Trust him. Tell others to just come and see. Work at it. Talk about it. Share it with others.

[ 20 : 14 ] Go to others and say, come and see. But in the meantime, just think about it. Write it down.

All I'm asking today is for you to commit to pray for five people. Just pray for five people.

And don't wait to do it. Melvin Carter was one that came after Christ and saw the difference that he made in his life and God gave him a burden to tell others about him.

And there was one particular boy that worked at a shoe store in Boston that he really had a burden for. And the young fella worked in a shoe store and Melvin went to share Christ with him and when he got to the shoe store, Melvin got nervous and he started pacing back and forth in front of that store and finally he got the wherewithal to walk in and when he walked in, he asked for the man he was looking for and he said, he's in the back.

And he walked in the back and standing up on that ladder was an 18-year-old young man sorting shoes at the shoe store. Melvin stood at the bottom of that ladder and told him, he had come to share Christ with him and that young man came down those steps and Melvin told him how he had been praying for him and he had been hoping and then invited him to come to Christ.

[ 21 : 58 ] And that day, that young man came to Christ and right there in the stock room of the shoe store, Dwight L. Moody gave his life to the Lord.

Not only was his life changed that day, but many others were changed because his life was changed. If you go to Boston in the Scully Square, in Boston, there's a plaque there and it says, D.L. Moody, Christian evangelist, friend of man, founder of the Newfield Schools, was converted to God in a shoe store on this site on April 21st, 1855.

D.L. Moody went on and started Sunday school classes to teach children about Christ. He held noon prayer meetings at the YMCA to lead folks to Christ. He became a traveling evangelist that traveled the world preaching.

He preached to more than 100 million people, over 130,000 he preached to on one day and he preached six sermons in one day, only a month before he died.

D.L. Moody preached and personally counseled a man named J. Wilbur Chapman. That got saved and became a preacher of the gospel.

[ 23 : 19 ] Under Chapman came another preacher. Worked under him a man named Billy Sunday. Billy Sunday went on to become a very powerful evangelist winning thousands to the Lord in the 1920s, in the 1930s in grassroots revivals that God was blessing in New England like nobody's business.

He also led businessmen's lunches in Charlotte that was instrumental. to inviting Mordecai Ham to Charlotte to preach and when Ham preached in Charlotte that year, a young man walked down the aisle and gave his life to Christ and that young man's name was Billy Graham.

You never know the difference that God can make through you just inviting somebody to attend an Easter resurrection celebration.

Whether it's an out-of-church member of a long time or someone who just needs to be encouraged along the way or somebody for some reason that God has laid upon your heart or somebody with hang-ups or somebody that looks like she's got it all together, I'm asking you, will you just commit to pray for five folks for Easter?

Lord, who would you have me just to pray about inviting? I want you to take that card in your hand and as we pray, I want you to write those names that God has laid upon your heart.

[ 25 : 19 ] Make yourself a copy so that you know who they are. nobody's going to check your answers, nobody's going to count your names.

I cheated, I got seven on mine. dear Lord, I ask today that you'll help us to just be obedient, to follow your will and away to lift up names before you, dear God, by first just writing them down and then after writing them down asking you to go ahead and prepare their heart for the opportunity to invite.

God, I pray right now that you'll help us to turn matters over to you that sometimes we may not feel too good about ourselves, dear God. Burdens that you lay upon us that we're not sure how to handle.

God, I pray that you'll give us a Holy Spirit confidence, oh God, to just write them down, give them to you and entrust them to you, oh God.

Lord, we're going to ask you to use us in coming days but right now, Father, we just ask that you'll just lay hearts on our hearts and that we'll just lay them before you, dear Father.

[ 27 : 16 ] Lord, I pray that you'll have your will in your way right now in our midst, dear God, that you'll do in us what only you can do, oh Father, I pray in Jesus' precious name.

Amen. I want to ask you to stand where you are. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.