



Discovering Jesus
John 1:35-39
January 20, 2019

Our new vision is Developing Disciples of Jesus. We are going to think about this process as a journey in four phases, the first of which is Discovering Jesus. When Jesus noticed two of John's disciples following him, he asked them, "What are you seeking?" Their answer expressed interest in him, so he invited them to "Come and see" (John 1:35-39). His offer still stands!

Video—Discovering Jesus

Several groups of people would benefit from discovering Jesus. The most obvious is those who really don't know much about him. But most all of us would benefit from rediscovering Jesus once in a while. You certainly never discover him fully anyway. Plus, it is good for us to go back and walk with someone else who is discovering Jesus for the first time. We'll likely discover him in new ways as we do so.

There are many resources and opportunities for discovering Jesus. If your parents brought you up in the Lord, you are blessed! Our children's ministry makes a special effort to help little ones discover Jesus. If you didn't discover him when you were young, you can still do so, through conversations, websites, blogs, videos, movies etc. There are books written for this very purpose. One of the best ways to discover Jesus is to start reading about him for yourself in the Bible. We won't understand it all, but a humble, prayerful and slow reading of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John can help us immensely in knowing who Jesus really was. Again a trusted and experienced follower of Jesus can help us a lot as we learn about him and learn more about how to learn about him.

What do we learn? In the beginning, we are seeking to discover what Jesus was like. What did he do? How did he feel about and interact with people? What did he teach? What does he want from us? What was his character? Just who is Jesus? As one older writer put it, he had to be either liar, lunatic, or lord. Who do you think Jesus is?

We also need to discover who Jesus was not. Unfortunately, many of the resources for learning about Jesus, such as people, the internet, and media, can be really helpful or really off base. Bias, special pleading, and immaturity can all cause a source to give us a less than accurate picture of Jesus. He was not a political leader or rebel-rouser. He was not a mere human spiritual teacher or advisor. He was not a hater nor a "sheep-petter." He was not secret police. Nor does he want to be drawn into your agenda to bolster it for you. These and many other distorted perspectives on Jesus can lead us in the wrong direction.

How can we tell when we or someone else is beginning to discover Jesus? My opinion is that it's a good sign when we start having some favorite stories or sayings and can draw some conclusions from these. Or if we can draw some generalizations from several of the things we have heard from him, that is progress. If you can say some things about Jesus that are fresh, different, and original, as opposed to the trite phrases you always hear, that is discovery. Another good sign is when your life begins to change and line up a little better with his. Another indicator is when you start to feel drawn to him (John 6:44; 12:32), convicted by him (John 16:7-11) or called by him (Acts 2:38-39; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14). Scripture teaches that God works on us and pulls us toward him. All these things suggest we are gaining a better grasp of who Jesus is.

In the days to come, we plan to begin a Discovering Jesus class (Sundays at 9:45 a.m.) to help those who are just getting started on the journey of discipleship. Anyone who wants to learn basic things about Jesus is welcome to attend, as well as folks who are further down the road but want to come to support a newer inquirer. Currently we plan to give all the adult classes a sample of this class beginning in March.

