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Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John

Session 2
“Come and See”:
Becoming Disciples

When Jesus invited His disciples to come with Him, what expectations did Jesus and the apostles have of each other? In Session 2, Dr. Sri explains that at the time of Jesus, a rabbi or master gathered disciples together to share in all aspects of the leader’s life, just as Jesus invited the apostles to share everything with Him: praying, serving the poor and suffering, fasting, interacting with others concerning faith issues, and especially in how He dealt with opponents of faith. St. Paul sums it up in 1 Corinthians 11:1, “Imitate me as I imitate Christ.” In present times, when others see us, do they see Jesus? It is so much more than following the “rules” of the Church, (that is only the beginning); it is also a matter of imitating our Master.

Biblically, in John 1:35-39, John the Baptist indicates to his followers Who Jesus is; all Jesus has to do is walk by, and the first two apostles, Andrew and John, follow Him. There is a holy essence in Jesus that draws the apostles to Him, and He turns to the apostles, asking them what they seek. When they asked Jesus where he was staying, they were asking Jesus if they could stay to be spiritually formed by Him. In John 15:4-5, the Greek word for “living” in Jesus is a deeper sense of “abiding” in Him, where He wants us to share in His very life. How can we abide in Jesus? Developing a daily interior prayer life becomes crucial; I want Jesus to abide in me and live through me. Mother Teresa daily prayed, “May every person who comes into contact with me see Jesus in me.”

A key aspect of discipleship is developing a sense of humility. We need to seek a true understanding of who we are, what we need to do for Jesus and others, and as we see our place, take it. Acknowledging our weaknesses accompanies recognition of our need for Jesus and His grace in our lives. Jesus states that without Him we can do nothing (John 15:5) as He holds us in existence from moment to moment. Obstacles to humility include pride, which insists we can accomplish life on our own to serve our own needs. Vanity involves my desire to be the center of attention, and to make a good impression. When I am envious of others, I

feel a sense of competition with them, and I resent their success. John the Baptist exemplified humility as he embraced fully his role to prepare the way for Jesus. In John 3:30, John predicts that we too share in his mission: “Jesus must increase, while I must decrease.”

The first Sign in the Gospel of John (of the Book of Signs, John Chapters 1-11) is Jesus’ first public ministry miracle at Cana. In John 2:4, Jesus responds to Mary’s request for help: “Woman, how does your concern involve Me? My hour has not yet come.” There is a perception of a situation at two different levels, Mary understands the couple has run out, so they need wine; while Jesus simultaneously realizes once He performs a miracle, His difficult ministry has begun, culminating in the agony of His death on the Cross. When Jesus called Mary “Woman”, (not a typical son-to-mother address at that time or now), Dr. Sri referenced Genesis 3:15, where the prophecy claims a woman will crush the head of the serpent and defeat the devil; Mary is that woman who becomes Mother to the Church, the front line of battle with Satan until the Final Judgment. At Cana, did Mary want Jesus to hold back from His ministry so she could keep Him close to her? In the prophecy Simeon revealed to Mary in Luke 2:28-32, she was told that Jesus would be opposed by many, culminating in both Jesus’ and Mary’s piercing by a sword; His public ministry would be fraught with difficulty and end in great pain. Mary willingly accepted her role to intercede to Jesus on our behalf; she sees our needs and understands our pain. As a model disciple, she asks Jesus to help us, and advises us to do as Jesus asks!



Mary, Untier of Knots
Johann Georg Melchior Schmidtner



The Wedding Feast at Cana
Paolo Veronese

In John 2:6-7, the Greek word for servants is diakonos, meaning “servants of the Lord,” not like household servants or slaves. Jesus had asked the servants to take the six large ritual purification water jars and fill them with fresh water, as Mary instructed them to do whatever Jesus asked. (Today she still encourages us to fulfill Jesus’ requests.) Jesus’ instructions initially did not make sense to them, but the servants obeyed precisely as Jesus requested, and they filled the jars. What did not seem logical from the initial onset, through their trusting obedience in Jesus, they were rewarded with the highest quality wine. It became the blessing of complying with what Jesus asked. We become disciples through our encounters with Jesus, as we do whatever He asks of us. What miracles result from our compliance?

