

## **“Come and See Transformed Human Relations”**

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**John 1:29–42 | Second Sunday after Epiphany | Human Relations Sunday**

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The season of Epiphany is about *seeing*—about God being made known, not in abstraction, but in flesh and blood, not in ideas alone, but in encounters, conversations, and relationships.

On this Human Relations Sunday, the Gospel does not give us a long teaching from Jesus. Instead, it presents a series of relationships that are quietly yet decisively transformed by a simple invitation: **“Come and see.”** The question before us today is this: **What kind of transformation happens to human relationships when people encounter Jesus Christ?** And what type of relationship centered on Christ-connectedness is required to become a disciple?

Before meeting Jesus, the first disciples already had other human relationships. Their connections with the community, family, and the world were familiar but not extensive. They identified as disciples of John the Baptist. They were brothers, partners, co-workers—fishermen familiar with teamwork, risk, patience, and trust. These relationships are valuable but limited by old patterns—focused on survival, livelihood, and inherited expectations. Their relationships are shaped by their

actions, not yet by who they are becoming. Transformation begins when these familiar relationships are challenged—not through force, but through witness. Here, a new relationship is established through a witness that liberates from old ways of living and perceiving the world. The new human connection possible through witness is not intended to manage people or control communities, families, or institutions. It is not designed to promote oneself or compete with others.

John the Baptist sees Jesus and says, “Look, here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” This is not casual language. It is a bold testimony. John identifies Jesus as the one on whom the Spirit remains, the one who existed before him, the one sent by God. But notice what John does **not** do. He does not cling to his disciples. He does not protect his influence. He does not compete with Jesus. Faithful witness does not secure power for itself—it releases people toward Christ. Human relationships begin to change the moment Jesus is named as Lord rather than merely admired as a teacher.

### **Two Questions That Change Everything**

When the two disciples follow Jesus, he turns and asks them the first recorded words of Jesus in John’s Gospel: **“What are you looking for?”** This is not a test. It is an invitation into honesty. Before Jesus defines discipleship, he asks about desire. Before he gives directions, he asks about longing. They respond with another

question: **“Rabbi, where are you staying?”** They are not asking for an address. They are asking for **presence**. Calling Jesus “Rabbi” signals more than respect—it signals readiness for formation, a willingness to order life under his way. And Jesus answers with the words that define discipleship: **“Come and see.”** Discipleship does not begin with us. It starts with an invitation beyond our control. As Jesus later says, “You did not choose me, but I chose you.” (John 15:16) To follow Christ is to respond to this call—to participate in Christ and in his mission to the world.

**Epiphany is Through Relationship and connectedness, and Epiphany is Not Spectacle.**

What do they “see” when they come? Not miracles. Not public power. Not political authority. They see where Jesus stays. They remain with him. They share time, space, and life. In John’s Gospel, God is revealed relationally. Epiphany happens when people stay long enough to be changed. This is crucial on Human Relations Sunday: God’s self-disclosure happens within relationships that are humble, vulnerable, and mutual. The disciples entered into a relationship. It provides a new orientation to life. Something profound occurs during this stay. The disciples enter what we might call **Christ-connectedness**—a new way of living in a constant relationship with Christ.

Paul describes this connection in rich images:

- *Clothed with Christ* (Galatians 3:27)
- *Members of Christ's body* (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12)
- *Adopted as sisters and brothers* (Romans 8:15)

John explains this relationship in other relational images:

- Branches connected to the vine (John 15:5)
- Remaining in Jesus' love (John 15:10)

This connectedness is not hierarchy—it is mutuality. Not domination—it is belonging. We matter to Christ. We are loved. We are claimed.

**What type of Transformed Relationships are depicted here? It represents a shift from 'Brothers' to 'Witnesses'.**

Andrew's encounter with Jesus immediately reshapes his human relationships. He goes to his brother Simon and says, "We have found the Messiah." He does not argue theology. He does not explain doctrine. He bears witness to the encounter. And when Simon meets Jesus, Jesus renames him. "You are Simon... you will be called Cephas." To be renamed by Jesus is to receive a new identity within a new relational world. Discipleship is not self-improvement. It is relational re-creation. **It is a transformation into a risky way of life.** This transformation does not lead to comfort or control. It demands a fundamental shift in one's values. In this changed

context, people no longer focus solely on livelihood, profit, or the pursuit of happiness through family, economic goals, and survival efforts. A transformed disciple does not conform to institutions for power or security. Instead, discipleship is a deliberate choice for a **way of life**—a life shaped by the Spirit, a life willing to take risks, a life oriented toward God’s mission of transforming the world. The Spirit who formed Jesus now forms the disciples. Relationships are no longer centered on survival or status, but on participation in God’s redemptive work.

**Is it still possible to maintain these human connections through Christ-Connectedness today? The invitation is still open.**

Can such a transformation happen today? Yes, but it is costly. We face economic pressures, family responsibilities, institutional demands, and the fear of instability. Yet Jesus still says: **“Come and see.”** Not “Come and be perfect.” Not “Come when you have everything figured out.” But come—and stay—and be changed. On this Human Relations Sunday, we are challenged to ask:

- What kind of relationships in our churches foster true discipleship?
- Do we cultivate presence or merely programs?
- Do we allow Christ to reshape our relationships—or do we add Christ to existing structures?

**Conclusion: Therefore, Come and See—Then Stay and Be Transformed**

Human Relations Sunday is not about surface harmony. It is about transformation rooted in Christ-connectedness. The invitation of Jesus— **“Come and see”**—still disrupts old identities, reshapes human relationships, and reorders lives. To come and see is to risk being changed. To follow is to enter relationships that form us in love, humility, and courage. May this Epiphany light reveal not only who Jesus is, but who we are becoming in relationship with him and with one another. And may we, like Andrew, say to the world—not only with words, but with lives transformed: **“We have found the Messiah.”** Amen.