# Sunday Sermon January 18, 2026

You just heard the story of Jesus calling His first disciples from the Gospel of John. It happens when two of John's disciples are curious about Jesus and begin to follow him. Jesus turns to them and asks "what are you looking for?" A good question to ponder then and now: "what are you looking for?" They answer: "Rabbi" "where are you staying?" And Jesus issues what I like to call "the great invitation:" He says: "Come and see…"

"Come and see…" I love that. I believe these are among the most powerful words that Jesus speaks, because they invite them, and us, into relationship with Him.

They were curious about God, and Rabbis were "God people." They were knowledgeable about scripture and the ways of God. But notice that when those first followers were curious, Jesus didn't just hand them the book, tell them to study and come back later for the test, Jesus invited them to get to know Him and his ways. "Come and see"

God isn't an idea or a theory written down on paper, God, in Jesus, is a living, breathing human being. So one would learn about God by following Him, and patterning their life on His, so as to become more like Him.

Jesus was inviting them to become apprentices. He was inviting them to learn a way of life rooted in love that would be manifest in compassion, justice, fellowship and peace. They were being invited to follow Jesus into a new life – the life of the Kingdom of God, here and now.

This life could not be distilled into a set of doctrines or ideas or even the Law. It was learned by patterning one's life on the Rabbi's life, so that you become more like Him. More compassionate, just, merciful, forgiving and loving. More "Christlike" in word and deed. The apprentice would act and sound like Jesus.

"Come and see." "Come and see." Become an apprentice. Pattern your life on mine, Jesus says, and experience life in the Kingdom and a transformed

world here and now. It's not about giving intellectual assent to a set of ideas. It's a way of life.

A story: When I was a boy, I wanted to be Bobby Orr. Bobby Orr was a professional hockey player. In fact, he was one of the greatest defensemen of all time. He revolutionized the game with his speed, unmatched skating skills, and scoring ability. Bobby won two Stanley Cups with the Bruins and still holds the record for most points and assists by a defenseman in a single season. He earned best defenseman eight consecutive seasons and three trophies for league MVP. He was one of the greatest players in NHL history, and when I was a boy I wanted to be HIM.

I vividly remember watching every Bruins and then Blackhawks game I could on our small black and white TV, watching his every move. I read sports magazines (remember magazines?) to learn everything I could: what stick and skates he used, what he ate, how he trained. One of the best Christmas presents I ever received was an official Bobby Orr jersey. I remember wearing it at the rink, "Bobby shoots and scores…"

And I dreamed of someday attending a hockey camp with him – not just seeing him on TV or reading about him – but sitting at the feet of the master. Imagine, being on the same rink. Having him put my hands into the right position on the stick. Showing me how to skate faster. Telling ME what he looks for to create scoring chances.

But alas, it was not to be. Distance and cost prevented a trip to Canada for camp. So I went on to seminary to become a priest, my dreams of the NHL fading away…

But my childhood obsession with Bobby Orr taught me something about discipleship. That it's about the deep desire to be like Jesus by imitating Him in every way possible, learning every move, and patterning my life on His. Though I was far from great, I think I became a better hockey player by trying to learn all I could from the best. And I am certain that I am better person when I follow Jesus in the Way of Love, even though I never do it perfectly.

“Come and see…” Jesus continues to issue the great invitation to each of us. Jesus invites us into the Way of Life he modeled and lived and died for – the Way of Love. Jesus continually calls us to live into our baptismal promises more deeply, seeking and serving Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourself, striving for justice and peace, respecting the dignity of every human being.

When we practice His way, we speak and act like Him and He lives on in our world through us, his disciples, his ambassadors. The word “Christian” means “little Christ.” Perhaps we should all wear jerseys with “Christian” printed on the back.

One of the many blessings of being part of the church here and now, and the church universal and through time, is that we are in communion with powerful examples of Christian living in the lives of the saints. The saints are those who patterned their lives on Christ’s life in ordinary and extraordinary ways in their time and place. They are models to be imitated.

When we ask what it means to e Christlike, to think, speak and act like Jesus, we can look to the saints through the generations, and saintly people we have known. They are living witnesses who heeded Christ’s call to “come and see,” who followed Him in the Way of Love in their time and place.

Monday/Tomorrow we will be remembering and honoring Dr. King, who followed Jesu in the Way of non-violent resistance even though it cost him his life. His work against hatred, discrimination and injustice was patterned on Jesus’ life and ministry. Historians tell us that Dr. King and his followers, in preparing to engage in non-violent resistance and acts of civil disobedience, would gather to sing, pray and worship, sometimes for three or four hours at a time. I would imagine that prayer included asking Jesus to help them be more like him.

We become more Christlike when we are inspired to speak and act as Dr. King and other prophets did.  We practice the Way modeled by Jesus in standing up for those being put down and cast aside.

“Come and see” is the great invitation, and it is being issued to you and me, today. May we model our life on His by answering the call follow Him in Way that leads to new and everlasting life and a better, more just and peaceful world.

Amen