

Sermon Discussion Questions & Follow-up Notes
January 28, 2024
Rev. Dr. Andrew Keuer

Sermon Texts for Epiphany 4: Genesis 3:1-9 and Mark 1:16-20
Title: “Where Are You?”
Series: Stay Curious

Core Observation of The Text

Self-knowledge and God-knowledge: The text from Genesis 3 shows that knowledge of self and God influence one another. This is why Satan’s words first attack self-knowledge and self-confidence (see Gen 3:1) and then knowledge of God (see Gen 3:4). God’s question to Adam, “where are you?” is starts him on the journey back to self-knowledge so that he can also trust more deeply God’s goodness.

The call: The “call” of Christ to the four disciples in Mark 1:16-20 is shockingly brief. We have no sense of why these disciples left everything and followed. Dietrich Bonhoeffer suggests that the brevity is intentional – because it brings to light that everything hinges on God’s Word and call. In this narrative, Christ’s word is powerful and creative, with a force that arises entirely of itself and depends upon nothing else. It is more powerful than ties based on kinship, livelihood and comforts.

Search and rescue: Both of these of these biblical texts highlight that God Himself comes to seek and find lost people. That is, God does much more than send help in the form of resources or supplies (though he does this!); he, more importantly, is present in a personal way to the lost.

Questions to Ponder

1. **God’s game:** Baseball or cricket? Soccer or football? What’s your favorite sport / game? Why?
2. **Questions:** The past four weeks we have looked at four questions that God gives us to consider –
 - How to begin again (Job 39; Mark 1:4-11)
 - How to resist temptation (Genesis 4:1-16; Mark 1:12-13)
 - How to be wise (Proverbs 30:1-9; Mark 1:14-15)
 - Where are you (Genesis 3:1-9; Mark 1:16-20)

Which of these questions has been most help for you to contemplate at the start of 2024?

3. **Gratitude:** Except in the most extreme circumstances of suffering, like that faced by Job in the Old Testament, this question stirs gratitude. See if you can name a few things that physically surround you each day, that are a source of thanksgiving and joy, when you acknowledge them as gifts from God?

4. **Movement:** Why do you think Mark 1:20 leaves us staring at Zebedee, who is left behind in the boat?

=====

Books or writings mentioned in the sermon:

*John Calvin’s Institutes of the Christian Religion is a famous summary of biblical teachings. Calvin begins the book with a discussion of how knowledge of self and knowledge of God are interdependent.

*Bonhoeffer's theology of Christ's call is expressed in most of his books and writings, and chapter 2 of *Cost of Discipleship*.