

John 1:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

Analysis

Jesus' first recorded words in John's Gospel are a question: 'What seek ye?' (Τι ζητετε;). This penetrating inquiry exposes motivation—why do you follow? The disciples' response, 'Rabbi, where dwellest thou?' shows desire for relationship, not just information. They want to know where Jesus abides, indicating desire for extended fellowship rather than brief encounter. Jesus' invitation 'Come and see' opens access to Himself—the first of many such invitations throughout John's Gospel.

Historical Context

The title 'Rabbi' (teacher) indicates respect, though Jesus transcends this category. The question of dwelling place reflects first-century discipleship patterns where students lived with their teacher. 'Come and see' became a repeated invitation in John (1:46, 11:34)—Christ invites investigation and relationship.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. If Jesus asked you 'What seek ye?' how would you honestly answer?
2. What does 'come and see' teach about how we should introduce others to Christ?

Interlinear Text

στραφείς	δὲ	ὁ	Ἰησοῦς	καὶ	θεασάμενος	αὐτοῖς
turned	Then	G3588	Jesus	and	saw	them
G4762	G1161		G2424	G2532	G2300	G846
ἀκολουθοῦντας	λέγεται	αὐτοῖς	τί	ζητεῖτε	οἱ	δὲ
following	(which is to say	them	What	seek ye	G3588	Then
G190	G3004	G846	G5101	G2212		G1161
εἶπον	αὐτοῖς	Ῥαββί	ὁ	λέγεται	ἐρμηνευόμενον,	
They said	them	Rabbi	G3739	(which is to say	being interpreted	
G2036	G846	G4461		G3004	G2059	
Διδάσκαλε	ποῦ	μένεις				
Master	where	dweldest thou				
G1320	G4226	G3306				

Additional Cross-References

John 3:2 (References Jesus): The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

John 18:7 (References Jesus): Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

John 1:49 (Parallel theme): Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

Psalms 27:4 (Parallel theme): One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

Proverbs 8:34 (Parallel theme): Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

John 3:26 (Parallel theme): And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

John 6:25 (Parallel theme): And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

John 18:4 (References Jesus): Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

Acts 10:29 (Parallel theme): Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

John 12:21 (References Jesus): The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.