

John Week 3

Day 1

The Scripture John 1:35-37. *"The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. 36 When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" 37 When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus."*

The Point - Following Jesus is the only response after learning who he is.

For the second day in a row, John the Baptist called Jesus, the Lamb of God. Jesus's status as the sacrificial Lamb sent to save mankind from separation from God wasn't just a lesson, but it was His identity. The fact that he calls him this a second time, shows that John the Baptist got the point and that he was to share Jesus's true identity with everyone who followed him.

The second thing we learn from John the Baptist's ministry was that he had a group of students he was teaching. For the first time in the book of John, we see the word disciple. In first century Israel a disciple was a life-student. It was someone who chooses to learn, follow teachings, and live their life according to their teacher's examples. In John 1 we learn that Andrew and likely John the gospel writer, were disciples of John the Baptist. We know that John the Baptist taught the gospel of repentance and renewal, and was a man of God. If someone was a disciple of John the Baptist, they were likely upstanding people who devoted their lives to a Godly purpose. John 1:35 tells us that this isn't enough. They truly needed an encounter with the Lamb of God. How many churches in America are teaching great values, but not pointing their congregation to the Lamb of God? It's important to never forget that we should point people to Jesus first.

The last thing we learn from these passages is that the two students when hearing that Jesus was the Lamb of God followed Jesus. The Holy Spirit moved and they responded. These disciples weren't looking for a quick wash in the Jordan River and to return to their daily lives. They weren't there to hear a good sermon and just apply it to their week. They were there in search of the Messiah, and God answered them, in a way that would forever change their lives and the world. God, through John the Baptist, led them to an encounter with the Lamb of God, and with three simple words, these two men became the first Christians: They. Followed. Jesus.

Questions

- 1) *Are your priorities in line with Jesus? Do you put him as the Lamb of God first?*
- 2) *Who are you teaching about Jesus? Are you teaching them about his sacrificial love first, and how to live second?*
- 3) *What steps in obedience do you need to take to follow Jesus?*

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for taking on the identity of the Lamb of God. Help me to always remember my first love in You, and help me to teach others of Your life, death, and resurrection. Holy Spirit, guide my heart to follow You.

Day 2

The Scripture *John 1:38-39* "Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?" **39** "Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon."

The Point: We should crave to be wherever Jesus is moving.

After following Jesus, the two disciples, who we later learn to be Andrew and John the gospel writer, have their first encounter with Jesus. We can learn a lot by their interaction with two questions and one response.

The first thing we learn is from Jesus. Jesus, as you will learn if you read the gospel enough, often taught those around Him and invited them to encounter God through the use of questions. It's under this context that we see the first words of Jesus in the gospel of John: "What do you want?" Or "What are you seeking?" We learned on Sunday the Greek word for seek or want is the word crave. Another way to ask is "What does your heart desire?" Jesus was probing John and Andrew to see if they were motivated by mere curiosity or a craving to know Him. Jesus asks this same question of us every day, "What are you seeking?" The question is an invitation to know the Creator of the Universe, how will you respond?

The next question we see is actually a question from the disciples, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" Two things are evident 1) At this point, John and Andrew do not fully know who Jesus is, and 2) They want to be wherever he is. John and Andrew call Jesus, Rabbi, which is part of his identity, but we know from both John the Baptist and later in the gospels, knowing Jesus, doesn't cut it. Literally earlier that day, the two disciples learned from who they believed to be a credible source (John the Baptist) that Jesus was the Lamb of God, yet here for whatever reason they call him Rabbi. It might be that they were skeptical, it might be that they were confused, it might simply be they thought that this was an appropriate honorific, but whatever the reason, it's clear at this time, that they missed the point. Later at the Last Supper, after three years of witnessing Jesus' ministry, we learn that John and the rest of the disciples, call Jesus Lord. We also learn that Judas is the only one still calling Him Rabbi. *Read Matthew 26:21-24.* After meeting Jesus, John and Andrew experienced a heart-felt encounter shifting their view of Jesus from teacher to Lord.

Fortunately for Andrew and John, the second part of their statement reveals their hearts as well. "Where are you staying?" They answered Jesus' question with another question,

to find out where he is. Essentially, their response to Jesus asking “What are you seeking” is a desire to be wherever He is. What an obedient response from the first followers of Christ, in both admitting that they don’t quite know what they are seeking, but also proclaiming that wherever Jesus is staying, that’s where they want to be. Oftentimes we ask ourselves what’s God’s calling in our lives when our question should be “Where is God moving?” Because wherever God is moving is where we need to be.

The last thing we read is a simple invitation from Jesus. “Come and you will see.” Jesus doesn’t tell them where he’s staying. He doesn’t tell them where He’s going. He doesn’t tell them everything will be ok. He doesn’t give them a “calling.” He gives them a command and a promise. The command is simple. Come. Come and follow Him, come know Him, come do life with Him, come learn from Him, and come work in God’s kingdom with Him. The second is a promise, you will see where He’s staying. It’s a promise that He will be with you, and it’s a promise that He will invite you into His Godly kingdom in heaven. The only thing you need to do is Come to Him.

Questions

- 1) *What are you craving? What is your heart’s desire? Write down anything you desire in life that isn’t Jesus and pray that He draws your heart closer to Him.*
- 2) *Do you want to be wherever God is moving? Write down the areas you see God moving and pray about going there.*
- 3) *Is Jesus your Rabbi (teacher) or your Lord? Have you surrendered to Him? Write down areas where you need to surrender to Jesus.*

Prayer: Dear God, thank you for the invitation to follow you. Holy Spirit lead my heart to Jesus. Fill my heart with a craving for you. Show me where God is moving around me and direct me there. I surrender any area of my life that I put before You. Amen.

Day 3

The Scripture *John 1:41-42 Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. 41 The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).*

The Point: Jesus gives us a new identity for His glory.

John 1:41-42 gives us an account of how another disciple, Peter, comes to follow Christ. For those of you new to Bible Study, Peter was a bold, outspoken disciple, a leader in the early Church in Jerusalem, a missionary, a miracle worker, an author of two letters inspired by the Holy Spirit, and a martyr. Before any of that though, he was Simon, a fisherman. In order to understand Peter's transformation, it's important to look at two things from John 1:41-42: 1) how he came to know Jesus and 2) Jesus's calling to him.

The first thing we learn about Peter is that he was introduced to Jesus through his brother, Andrew. In John 1:40 we learned that Jesus told Andrew to come and Andrew followed. Here in John 1:41, we learn the FIRST thing Andrew did was find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah." In a way, Andrew was the first evangelist. What we learned right off the bat was where Andrew's priorities were and who was important to him. We can't overlook the words "the first thing Andrew did," because it's important to know that after an encounter with Jesus, Andrew's first priority was making sure that the people he loved had an encounter with Jesus too. We are called to share the same urgency as Andrew to share the gospel to those we love.

The second thing we learn from this scripture is that Jesus gave Simon a new identity. He changed his name to Cephus (Aramaic for Peter) which means "rock." This name change signified a change in Peter's life. A change from a fisherman to a bold declarant of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Later on in Jesus' ministry, we learn why Jesus changed his name.

Matthew 16:15-18 says this: *"He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock^[b] I will build my church, and the gates of hell^[c] shall not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the*

kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Here, Jesus again tells Simon that he is changing his name to Peter claiming that on this rock he will build the church. He further promises Peter dominion over heaven and earth. What’s important in this passage is to realize that it wasn’t the man Peter held himself out to be that changed his name, rather it was what he proclaimed. Peter boldly proclaims that Jesus is Christ the son of the living God. It’s this proclamation, not the person who made it that is the rock that Jesus built his Church. Through the Father in heaven, Simon boldly announced the gospel, and Jesus incorporated Peter’s entire identity into the fact that Peter believed and said that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Questions

1) Who do you love that desperately needs an encounter with Jesus? Are you making it a priority to introduce them to Jesus?

2) In what ways has Jesus incorporated himself into your new Identity?

Prayer: Dear heavenly Father, I pray for the urgency to share your gospel with those close to me. I pray for the boldness to proclaim you as the Messiah and pray that you do a work in me to change me the same way you did in Peter. Amen

Day 4

The Scripture: *John 1:43-46 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." 46 Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."*

The Point: We can't give up on people who doubt Jesus

John 1:43-46 gives us another account of a different disciple, Phillip, who chose to follow Jesus. We immediately learn that Jesus expanded his ministry to Galilee and Bethsaida, a different fishing town on the lake. It's important to note that Jesus collected disciples from all walks of life and villages. The shift in location tells us that Phillip likely didn't know Andrew, John or Peter. We can also see that Jesus found Phillip, and told him to follow him. Jesus reached out to Phillip and Phillips obeyed. All of the gospel and all of Jesus' teaching can be summed up in two words: Follow. Me.

The next thing we learn about this encounter with Phillip is that he, like Andrew, immediately went and told someone, Nathaniel. We don't know who Nathaniel was to Phillip, but we know that he must have been important to him. We also see that Phillip directed Nathaniel to "Moses in the Law and also the prophets." Later we learn that Nathaniel was a scholar. It's important that Phillip shared the gospel to Nathaniel in a way that Nathaniel would understand. We often encounter people from different cultures, backgrounds, and education levels. The gospel is for everyone, it's important that we encourage people to follow Christ in a way they can understand.

Another huge takeaway from Phillip's evangelism is how he responds to Nathaniel's doubts. After Phillip tells Nathaniel, that he found the person who the Old Testament points to, Nathaniel meets Phillip with prejudice. Nazareth wasn't on the map, and if it was known for anything apparently it wasn't anything good. Clearly, Nathaniel boxed Jesus into what he thought the Messiah should be, and it didn't involve being raised in Nazareth by a carpenter. Phillip, however, responded the exact same way that Jesus responded when asked "where he was staying." He told Nathaniel "Come and see." Phillip easily could have argued with Nathaniel on an intellectual level about how he knew that Jesus was the Messiah, but instead invited Nathaniel to meet Jesus and get to truly know him

on a personal level. Whenever people confront us about Jesus, we must always remember that they don't need logic they need a savior.

Questions

- 1) In what ways are you following Jesus? What do you know about his life example and in what ways can you live it?
- 2) How can you better equip yourself to explain the gospel? Think of practical ways you can explain the gospel to people from other cultures.

Prayer: Dear God, lead my paths to you. Help me to better understand Jesus and follow his example to live on this earth. Guide my heart and words to better understand how to communicate with those around me so they might know Jesus.

Day 5

The Scripture *John 1:47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" 48 Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." 49 Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" 50 Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." 51 And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you,^[m] you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."*

The Point: Jesus is our ladder from earth to heaven.

The account of how Nathaniel came to follow Jesus is completely different from any of the other disciples and shows how Jesus revealed himself as mankind's path to God. Nathaniel after doubting Jesus due to what side of the tracks he came from approaches Jesus and before he can get a word in, Jesus confronts him with kindness. Jesus tells Nathaniel that he is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit. The name Israel kind of has a double meaning. It means "one who wrestles with God" and "God perseveres." On the other hand, the word deceit comes from the Hebrew word Jacob. We learn in Genesis that one of the Hebrew patriarchs (founding fathers) was a man Jacob who was known for his deceit. Jacob had an encounter with God where he wrestled God in human form, and God changed his name to Israel.

We also know that Nathaniel was likely praying and studying Scripture as the phrase "under a fig tree" was a common saying used to describe prayer and studying the Scriptures. What was Nathaniel studying under the fig tree? Given his response to Jesus, we may surmise that he was reading the account of Jacob struggling with God and human form. For Jesus to call him an Israelite in whom there is no Jacob would have caught Nathaniel so off guard if he was truly reading about Jacob's transformation to Israel. Nathaniel asks how Jesus knows him, and Jesus tells him that he saw him under the fig tree. I think Jesus is telling Nathaniel two things 1) I listened to your prayers under that fig tree, (and maybe answered them by calling him Israel with no deceit) and 2) You're reading about me (suggesting that he was God in human form who wrestled with Jacob. Nathaniel's response to Jesus revelation changed any prejudices he had about who he was and he proclaimed him the Son of God and King of Israel.

Jesus doubled down on his role in Jacob's life. He wasn't only the one to wrestle Jacob into submission and persevere in Jacob's life and transform Jacob into Israel, but he was the very ladder from heaven to earth with angels ascending and descending. What

an incredible picture Jesus painted for Nathaniel in saying I am the ladder from earth to heaven.

Questions

- 1) *Describe your encounter with Jesus.*
- 2) *How do you wrestle with God, in what ways do you need to surrender?*

Prayer: Dear God, thank you for the incredible pictures you've shown Nathaniel, both the picture of Jacob wrestling with Jesus as well as the picture of Jesus being the ladder into heaven. God I surrender all I have to You and Your Glory. Amen.