

**The WORD Became Flesh**  
**(Week 3)**  
**John 1:35-51**  
**“Come And See”**

**Introduction**

**Taste and see that The LORD is good. How happy is the person who takes refuge in Him!** **Psalms 34:8**

As John continues to call “witnesses” to give testimony to the true identity of Jesus, The Son of God, it is a natural progression to move from the witness of John The Baptist to the very first disciples of Christ. Unlike the other gospel writers, John never actually gives an exhaustive list of all the disciples names, but he does mention how some of them came to be followers of Christ. As John records the very first week of Christ’s earthly ministry, we now learn from his account that on the third day of that week the very first of the disciples began to follow after Jesus. And they do so because of the testimony of John The Baptist. Not many preachers these days would send their congregation away to follow another leader, but that is exactly what John The Baptist did. For you see, his concern was not for building a kingdom for himself, but rather, he wanted the world to know Christ. It is amazing what can happen, when the gospel is shared for the sole purpose of seeing a lost world come to Jesus!

This world doesn’t need more leaders with charisma or impressive pedigrees. What it needs is people willing to deny themselves and take up their cross to follow Jesus. Just two short days after John The Baptist has his encounter with the Pharisees, we see him release his disciples to follow The Lamb of God.

**The next day, John was standing with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, The Lamb of God!” The two disciples heard him say this and followed Jesus.** **John 1:35-37**

And so, this marked the fulfillment of John’s ministry intended to introduce the Lamb of God to the nation of Israel, as well as, the commencement of Jesus’ calling those to follow him and enter into the kingdom of heaven.

It is interesting to note that John only shares the name of one of those two disciples who left the Baptizer that day; Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. This is the first time that we can truly see a recurring pattern in John’s Gospel. The reason that he does not name the other disciple is because he never mentions his own name anywhere in this writing. So, we know that it is in fact, John, as well as Andrew, who left the Baptizer that day to follow Jesus. I like to think that it was from watching the selflessness of John the Baptist that prompted John the Disciple to omit his name from this writing. He had learned by the time he wrote this gospel that it most certainly was not about him.

It wasn’t always this way with John. For when he followed Jesus, he and his brother James were often concerned with who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. In fact, at one point they even sent their mother to Jesus to ask if her two sons could sit at Jesus’ right hand when His kingdom was established (**Matthew 20:20-28**)! This was obviously NOT one of John’s finer moments! But we should keep in mind that he was probably still in his teens at the time. Maturity in Christ goes a long way in the eradication of selfish ambition. The longer you walk with Him, the less impressed you become with self. Or as John The Baptist would come to say as all of his disciples would eventually go over to Jesus:

**He must increase, but I must decrease.**

**John 3:30**

This is the very essence of the Christian faith my friends, finding all that you need in Christ and nothing else. In this passage today, we will hear the phrase “come and see” repeated with emphasis. It is an invitation to come and experience Christ on a personal level and find that He is all that we need. *For the Seeker, Come and See, For the Social Outcast, Come and See, and For The Skeptic, Come and See!* Taste and see that The LORD is good!

**For The Seeker: Come and See (vs. 37-39)**

**The two disciples heard him say this and followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and noticed them following Him, He asked them, "What are you looking for?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which means "teacher"), "where are You staying?" "Come and you'll see." He replied. So they went and saw where He was staying, and they stayed with Him that day. It was about four in the afternoon. John 1:37-39**

As soon as Andrew and John heard their leader say, "Look, the Lamb of God!", that was all that it took. They immediately left the Baptizer and began to follow Jesus. For you see, as much as they loved John, he could not give them what they needed... Salvation. They had followed John's lead with fierce devotion, knowing that his message of "repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" was the truth. But just being "religious" is a far cry from salvation. Most people realize that they are sinners. The ones that do not are merely deceiving themselves. Andrew and John knew that they needed to be cleansed of their sins. Make no mistake. But knowing that you need cleansing is only a small part of the battle. Having your sins washed away, now that requires so much more! Listen to John The Baptist's proclamation from just one day earlier:

**"Look, The Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29b**

For you see, John and Andrew, both knew full well that they needed saving. What they needed was someone to point them to the Savior! And that is exactly what their leader did. Would to God that all the so called "spiritual leaders" of this day and age would stop preaching their prosperity and self-help nonsense and start directing sinners to The Son of God, so that they can have their sin taken away.

I love what Jesus asked these two men who are trailing behind Him! They are afraid to even say anything. He turns and asks them what they are seeking. He already knows, but He wants them to acknowledge it for themselves. They don't really even know where or how to begin to express their need. So instead, they ask Jesus where He is staying, as if that even mattered! I LOVE His answer:

**"Come and you'll see." John 1:39(a)**

It was a reply pregnant with meaning. For you see, these two men were seeking after something that they could not even find the words to describe. They just knew that they needed it. And they saw in Jesus the opportunity to find the answer. We call these kind of people today "seekers". They know that they need a spiritual dose of something, but are not exactly sure what it is. There are plenty of religions out there, but none of them can bring the joy and fulfillment of knowing Jesus. For this world certainly does not need more religion. It needs Jesus! So to those who are longing for something that will satisfy your thirsty soul, come to Jesus and SEE. He is the answer to all that you seek. Just ask Andrew and John. They spent just one day with Jesus, and they wanted to introduce Him to their loved ones, as soon as they possibly could. Taste and see that The LORD is good. Jesus is calling the seeker to **"Come and see"**.

**For The Social Outcast: Come and See (vs. 40-42)**

**Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard John and followed Him. He first found his brother Simon and told him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which is translated "the Christ"), and he brought Simon to Jesus. When Jesus saw him, He said, "You are Simon, son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which is translated "Peter"). John 1:40-42**

There is so much in this passage that it is hard to know exactly where to begin. But let us start by introducing Simon, the brother of Andrew. Simon, Andrew, James and John were all fishing partners, who worked for a man named Jonah (or John, Simon and Andrew's father). The biggest portion of Christ's disciples were fishermen. Andrew and Simon both lived in a small fishing village called "Bethsaida"

(meaning “house of hunting/fishing”). While Simon was very influential as a leader among those who knew him, he also had a lot of character flaws. He was loud, uneducated, foul-mouthed, pushy, impatient, and at times, even cowardly and impetuous. And what’s worse, he smelled like dead fish! In short, Simon was exactly the opposite of someone this world would choose to run a lemonade stand, much less a church!

But Andrew wanted his brother to experience what he had found in Christ. So Simon agreed to come and meet with Him. It is also worth mentioning that Simon didn’t just drop everything to follow Christ immediately after this first encounter. No, this would happen a bit later, when Jesus would preach a sermon from the bow of his boat. Luke tells us the whole story of Jesus’ leading Simon to a miraculous catch of fish, after they had fished all night and caught nothing (**Luke 5:1-11**). It was then that Simon Peter “saw” Jesus for Who He truly was. It was after that day that he would forsake everything to follow his LORD.

But it is here in their first meeting that we learn something wonderful about the power of Christ. Where this world saw a rough and undependable societal outcast, Jesus saw a rock that He could depend upon! Listen to His first words to Simon:

**“You are Simon, son of John. You will be called Cephas” (Peter). John 1:42**

*Cephas*, in the Aramaic, and Peter, *petros* in the Greek, both mean “rock”. Now Simon, in his own strength, was anything but a solid rock. He was quite the opposite. In fact, the best description of Simon would have been akin to what Jacob had once said of his son Reuben, “**he was as unstable as water**” (**Genesis 49:4**). But here is the wonderful truth: Jesus doesn’t choose to see you the way you *are*, but rather, as how you *will be*, when He does a work in you! Can I get a shout of “truth” here?

Do you remember the story of Gideon, when he was first called by God to lead in the book of Judges? Gideon was a cowardly man. In fact, when God found him, he was down in a hole (wine press) threshing wheat so that the Midianites wouldn’t discover him and steal his crops. And what did The LORD say to him?

**Then The Angel of The LORD appeared to him and said, “The LORD is with you, valiant warrior.” Judges 6:12**

Did you catch that?! God called him a valiant warrior, while he was hiding in a hole in the ground! How is that even possible? Because God doesn’t choose to think of us as how we *are*, but instead He sees what we *will become* through Him! That’s why Jesus chose Peter and said, it may be impossible to depend on you now, but I will make you a solid rock. Many will come to rely on your strength in the most difficult of times.

Now John would always refer to Simon as “Simon Peter” after that day. But a careful reading of the gospels will reveal that Christ only calls him “Simon” when he does something according to his fleshly nature. He calls Him Peter, when he gets it right. What an incredible spiritual truth. For you see, our old nature tends to come back and “bite us” every now and then. And like Peter, we make plenty of mistakes, but we must always remember not who we once were, but who Christ has called us to be. We must allow the Spirit to sanctify us until we reach our full potential. It’s easy to settle for our old nature, but God has called us to so much more. The book of *Revelation* tells us that when we get to heaven we will be given a new name (**Revelation 2:17**).

**“To the one who conquers, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name is inscribed that no one knows except the one who receives it.” Revelation 2:17b**

Now, I can only speak for myself here, but I want to live up to the new name that Christ has in store for me. The man that I was (or even that I am) is not close to being what He wants for me. This world may consider you to be a social outcast, with no redeeming qualities whatsoever. You may even think that of yourself. But Jesus doesn’t look at you that way. He sees your full potential, that can only be realized in Him. Do you feel unworthy today? Jesus has great things in store for you. If you want to become all that you were meant to be, surrender all that you are to Jesus’ power and control. **“Come and See”** what you can become in Christ.

**For the Skeptic: Come and See (vs. 43-51)**

**The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. He found Philip and told him, "Follow Me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the One Moses wrote about in The Law (and so did the prophets): Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth." "Can anything good come out of Nazareth", Nathanael asked him. "Come and see", Philip answered. Then Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him and said about him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Jesus answered. "Rabbi." Nathanael replied, "You are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel!" Jesus responded to him. "Do you believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this." Then He said, "Truly I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on The Son of Man."**  
**John 1:43-51**

Once again, there is a lot in this passage. Jesus Himself called Philip personally and, just as the other disciples did, Philip desperately wanted to bring those close to him to Jesus. He goes after Nathanael, who is called by his surname "Bartholomew" in the other gospels (Bartholomew means simply, son of Tolmai). Nathanael was by nature a skeptic. He had seen enough of this world to know that very little of it was good. He was a devout Jew, and more likely than not, he had been studying the Scriptures and praying, when Philip came to him under that fig tree. He may have very well thought that his prayers would go unanswered, but Jesus had heard them. And that was enough to make Nathanael a believer on the spot.

Nazareth was not known for its noble influence on the world. In fact, it was considered to be, as we would say in our day, "the wrong side of the tracks", as it were. This is why that Nathanael was so surprised to hear that God would call anyone from that backward place. But God uses the foolish things of this world to confound the wise (**1 Corinthians 1:27**). Once again, we hear the words, "**Come and see,**" in response to Nathanael's skepticism.

Jesus called Nathanael a "true Israelite with no guile". One wonders if He did this because Nathanael had actually been reading the story of Jacob while he was sitting under the fig tree. For you see, Jacob had been guile (deceit) personified, until he had wrestled with The Angel of The LORD and was forever changed. He became Israel, meaning "Struggles with God", and he had never walked the same since. Nathanael was, according to Jesus, a completely honest man, unlike his ancestor Jacob had been. And it was his blunt honesty that caused him to question if anything good could come from Nazareth. Jesus revealed to him in an instant that God could most certainly bring light from a dark place, much the same as He had transformed Jacob to Israel! That is what Christ does in all who will choose to "**come and see**".

Nathanael was convinced that Jesus was The Son of God, simply because He had known him before they had even met! Jesus once again returns to the story of Jacob. He tells Nathanael that he will come to see that Christ is "Jacob's ladder" from the patriarch's dream in **Genesis 28:1-22**. For you see, when Jacob had been forced to leave home because of the things that he had done, he did not realize that God was with him in the foreign land to which he fled. God showed him in a dream, the vision of a ladder connecting heaven to earth with angels ascending and descending upon it. This was God's way of proving to Jacob that He not only knew him, but that He would be with him wherever he went. Jesus told Nathanael that He, The Son of God, was the true ladder in Jacob's dream. Christ is our intermediary between God and man, and as such, He has brought God down to man. He is Emmanuel, God WITH us.

All of Nathanael's doubts and fears were erased in an instant, for he had seen that Christ The LORD not only knew him, but was with him. To the skeptic who has a hard time coming to faith, the message of Christ is, "**Come and see**". Jesus, is the ultimate destination of The Seeker. He is the acceptor and the purpose-giver of the Social Outcast, and He is the source of true faith for the Skeptic. He is **ALL** that you need. Just **Come and See**. **Taste and see that The LORD is good!**

And let all who have seen and believe say... TRUTH!!!