

John 1:35-45 ³⁵ Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶ and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "Come, and you will see." So they came and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John *speaking* and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah " (which translated means Christ). ⁴² He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas " (which is translated Peter). ⁴³ The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me." ⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of 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."

As we come to our text this morning we begin to see the transition from John to Jesus as John continues to point people away from himself and to the One he came to herald. Verse 35 begins with John walking with two of his disciples the next day.

The next day is the day after John has already made the declaration to the Jewish leaders that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, as we saw in verse 29. And so, as we come to verse 36 where we find Jesus passing by it is apparent that Jesus has been in the area for some time and continues to support the ministry of John.

John is not hiding the fact that Jesus is the one who must be sought after as the Messiah. And now that two of John's disciples or followers happen to be with him he once again makes it clear that he is not the one these people must be following. John points them to Jesus whom he describes once more as the Lamb of God.

As we saw last week this is a designation of one who is a sacrificial lamb, one who must stand in the place of others as his life is given for their sins. This was the function of the sacrificial system in Israel as the Lord gave Moses the commands concerning this system.

But it was not an animal which was ever designed to take away the sins of men. The animals were always to point to the Son of God who would come into this world and die in men's place. This is what the writer of Hebrews meant as he explained the function of animals in the sacrificial system in Israel.

Hebrews 10:1-4 ^{NAU} For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and* not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. ² Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? ³ But in those *sacrifices* there is a reminder of sins year by year. ⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

But it is not impossible for God to take away sins. And since Jesus is God in the flesh He and only He can do this for mankind. In fact, this was the message Jesus sent the Jews as he healed a man and at the same time claimed to be God who can take away sins.

Matthew 9:2-7 ² And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven." ³ And some of the scribes said to themselves, "This *fellow* blasphemes." ⁴ And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts? ⁵ "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, and walk '?" ⁶ "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins "-- then He said to the paralytic, "Get up, pick up your bed and go home." ⁷ And he got up and went home.

Now, when the teachers of the law said, "This man is blaspheming!," they were absolutely right in their appraisal if Jesus were a mere man. They knew only God can forgive sin. But they were blind to the fact that God was in their midst and He was not only healing people physically, but more importantly healing them spiritually as they embraced Him by faith.

This is the Lamb of God John was pointing out and these two disciples who were with him were pointed to the One they must now follow. And so, what do we find?

JOH 1:37 "When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus."

Now, someone might say that these two disciples were rather fickle. After all, John has obviously invested time into them and has cared for them. And now, at the first sign of a better teacher they abandon John. This simply isn't the case. John has never given them the impression that he wanted faithful followers to him. He wanted followers only until the Lamb of God was willing to take them.

And now, as their eyes are directed to Jesus, they know that John's ministry has been successful in delivering them to the One they've been looking for. And as we come to verse 38 you almost get the impression that they're not willing to actually approach the Lord but simply follow on His heels until He notices them, which Jesus does.

JOH 1:38 "Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?"

Now this question from the Lord was not one which was seeking for information. He knew what they wanted. He was the One who had chosen these two before the foundations of the earth. This question was for their benefit as they now seek the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. And their response is instructive.

Verse 38 ... "They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?"

At first glance we might think they were wondering if He had a place to stay and if He didn't they might offer theirs. But what they are actually asking is if they can spend time with Him wherever He is now living.

Remember, they have been looking for the Messiah as John the Baptist has been preaching that this Messiah was now in their midst. For many a Jew in that day this was a dream come true. Their deliverer and King was here to rescue them from Rome and this world.

They weren't going to let Jesus get away. They wanted to learn more about Him and test for themselves if this was in fact the promised One. They use the term Rabbi which normally designated one in authority, but in this case the word is used to

identify Jesus as a Teacher, and more specifically a teacher who handles the word of God.

And so, right from the start they agree that Jesus is no ordinary Rabbi since He was not associated with the Pharisees or the Sadducees. He was unique in that He didn't belong to any formal class of teacher. Remember, it was Jesus as a twelve year old boy who went into the temple and amazed the Rabbis with His understanding of the word of God.

But when Jesus turns around and sees them following Him He asks a very interesting question. "What do you want?" Not, "hi guys, how are doing?" Not, "can I help you?" No. "What do you want?" Actually, a better translation would be, "what do you seek?"

This is quite telling because it confronts them with the issue of, "what is it you are looking for from Me?" Why would you follow after Me? In other words, Jesus is requiring them to make an intelligent as well as spiritual choice based on the facts as revealed in the word of God which speaks of Him.

I can't tell you how many times I've been told by people over the years when I ask them why they came to Jesus, that "I came because I wanted a change in my life." Or, "I was told that Jesus loved me and had a wonderful plan for my life."

As to the first statement that, "I wanted a change in my life", my response has always been, Buddha can bring a change to your life. Getting married can bring a change to your life. Any number of things can bring a change to your life. But a changed life will not bring you eternal life.

"Jesus loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life." I've always wondered what that statement meant. I understand the first part. Jesus loves me. But as to the second part, He has a wonderful plan for my life. Does that mean He's going to make me a Doctor? Does that mean He's going to take all of my problems away and give me a wife with 2 children and a beautiful house with a picket fence and two cars in the garage?

Come on Drew. You know that means He has a plan to bring you into His presence to be with Him forever. Do I? If I've never heard the gospel preached in truth should it be assumed that I understand such Christian speak?

When I used to work in Christian radio I remember back in the late 1970's a live radio program that came out of somewhere in Massachusetts. It was a call in show where the host fielded questions and dealt with problems listeners were having.

And I'll never forget this one woman calling in. She was distressed and crying and looking for answers. She wanted to know God but she didn't know how to go about it. And here's what the host told her. He said, mam all's you have to do is ask Jesus into your heart. And that's all he said. Ask Jesus into your heart.

He mentioned nothing about her sin which separates her from God and creates this dilemma which resulted in her distress. He mentioned nothing about the solution to her sin problem which was what Jesus did in dying for her sin. He mentioned nothing about her responsibility to quit relying on her good works and embrace Christ's work on her behalf as she put her faith in Him alone.

And I remember being livid. In fact, when the program was over later that day I called up to Massachusetts and wanted to talk to the host, but he had already gone home. I told the woman who answered the phone that he did nothing for that woman. That distressed woman all but said, what must I do to be saved?

And he gave her nothing. Yes the name Jesus came up, but ask Jesus into your heart is not the gospel. Which Jesus? The Jesus of the Mormons?, the Jesus of the Jehovah's Witnesses? The Jesus of the New Age movement?

And what about this Jesus. What did He do? Well, everyone knows what Jesus did. Really? Why is it then when you ask people they usually respond that he was a good man, or some sort of prophet. He was a holy person. Some might even say He was the Son of God. But does that guarantee that they know what He did and why He came?

We assume too much when we try and give such innocuous statements like, ask Jesus into your heart, of someone who doesn't know Him. When the jailer asked Paul and Silas, what must I do to be saved, their response was not ask Jesus into your heart.

ACT 16:31-32 "They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house."

If we just give people “Christian speak” without giving them and explaining to them the gospel of Jesus Christ according to the word of God we essentially give them nothing. It would be like someone asking for directions to Wal-Mart and you tell them it’s in Port Charlotte.

Yes, eventually they may find it, but probably not until they ask someone else for directions which are specific in nature. And I’ve got to believe that that woman who called into that show some 24 years ago finally asked someone who had a clue as to what it takes to come into a personal relationship with God.

And when Jesus asked of these two disciples, what do you seek?, whether they fully understood what it was they needed at that time Jesus was going to make sure they would finally understand what their need was and the solution to their sin problem.

JOH 1:39 "Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour."

They wanted answers. And they wanted to spend time with the Lord and ask questions and have fellowship with Jesus. And so they spent that day with him. And we’re told that the end of the day was approaching. It was about the tenth hour, (Jewish time), which means it was about 4:00 PM,(our time).

And so, sunset was going to be upon them shortly which some have assumed suggests that they spent the night where Jesus was staying and continued to have fellowship with Him.

In the course of time these two men begin to tell others of their encounter with Jesus. In fact, one of the two disciples who left John the Baptist and followed Jesus is identified for us in verse 40.

JOH 1:40 "Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus."

By the way, the other disciple who followed Jesus was more than likely John, the writer of this gospel. He has a way of not identifying himself directly. He sometimes refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved.

In any event we know that Andrew was the brother of Peter, the one who would later deny Jesus three times and eventually be the

one who preached the gospel on the day of Pentecost and three thousand came to Christ that day.

In fact, it was Andrew who was instrumental in bringing his brother Peter to Jesus.

JOH 1:41 "The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ)."

If Andrew never shared the gospel with anyone else in the world he would still have played a major role in advancing the Kingdom of Christ as Simon Peter would be one of the most prolific evangelists in the first century.

This is not to give us the excuse not to share the gospel with many people, hoping we bring a Simon Peter to Christ, but it does show that you may play more of a role than you think as you are used by Christ.

In fact, this should encourage our hearts all the more to share Christ with as many people as possible.

But the other thing we see in verse 41 is that Andrew thought enough of his brother not to hide the truth and the hope he found in Christ. We have found the Messiah. I remember when I first came to Christ this is essentially what I told my family.

I was so excited to know that my sins had been forgiven and that I knew without a shadow of doubt that I was going to heaven. As a former Catholic I never had that hope or that assurance. The best I could hope for was Purgatory.

In fact, one of the first verses I shared with my mom and dad was the one John wrote to the church in his first epistle.

1JO 5:13 "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."

I remember explaining how Catholicism never gave me that assurance and that it was deficient and never fully explained the gospel and thus deceived people. Of course that went over like a led balloon. Telling your parents that the life they invested in you, as it related to your spiritual future, was out to lunch, is probably not the best approach in trying to win them over.

But I loved them too much not to try and show them that Christ is the only answer to our salvation, not Christ plus your good works.

But like Andrew the first people I went to were the members of my family. And I'm sure most of you have done something similar over time. But notice the language of the next verse of our text.

JOH 1:42 "And he [Andrew] 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 first thing we notice is that Andrew didn't simply discuss the man Jesus, but brought Peter to him, face to face. How this transcends over to us is that we don't simply give people our impression of who we think Jesus is, but we take them to Jesus as we take them to His word.

To do anything less is to run the risk of giving people bad information about the Son of God who became man. This doesn't necessarily mean we can only share Christ with a bible in our hands. Most of my encounters with people as I have given them the gospel rarely allowed me to turn to a bible.

But this doesn't mean I couldn't tell them the truth about Jesus, which is why it's so important for us to have a handle on the gospel and how to share Jesus effectually so as to explain who He is and why He came and what people must do to come into a personal relationship with Him.

But notice what Jesus says to Simon in verse 42.

JOH 1:42 "... Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).

The first thing we notice here is that Jesus already knew Simon. He didn't need any formal introduction. He goes out of His way to acknowledge that Simon is the son of John, or actually the son of Jonas.

But the point Jesus is actually making here is that despite the fact that Simon has been known to the world by that name he will be known in the future as Cephas, in the Aramaic language, which when translated to Greek is Peter.

The name Cephas or Peter means stone or rock. And what is interesting in this renaming of Simon is that Jesus was sending a message to Peter that He was going to do a work in his life in such a way that he would prove to be a rock; solid and firm in the faith.

Many people are renamed because of what they've accomplished in the past or what they are presently doing. We sometimes get a glimpse into this in our own country with Native Americans. In their culture in the past if they accomplished some great feat in battle for example, they would assume a name which reflects it.

The movie with Kevin Costner brings this out as he is renamed by the Indians who watch him feed and play with a wild wolf; thus the title of the movie, *Dances with Wolves*.

He is given a name to reflect something that has or is presently happening in his life. Not so with Peter. His name reflects something which will happen to him in the future which is going to be initiated by the living God of the universe.

Jesus is going to take Simon, the son of Jonas or John, and make him a son of God as the Lord does a work in his life and not only places him on the firm foundation of Christ but will make him the kind of man who will stand firm on the Rock, being a part of that rock.

And so the Lord renames him Rock, thus Cephas or Peter.

John 1:43-45 ⁴³ The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me." ⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of 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."

When we look at the account of how Jesus meets these men, who will end up being His disciples, it is rather interesting to note some of the differences as to how they meet him. The first two, Simon and probably John, were instructed by a preacher, (John the Baptist), who directed them to Jesus.

Peter is brought to Jesus through his brother. But now as we come to Philip Jesus finds him. Philip wasn't looking for the Lord and he certainly wasn't directed to him by anyone else. Like a lost sheep Jesus seeks him out and brings him to Himself. And so He says to Philip, "Follow Me."

And he did and he learned from the Lord who Jesus was and why He had come. Now we're told that Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida which means "house of fish."

Keep in mind that most of the disciples were fishermen and thus sailors. If you've ever been to a fishing town the people are rugged and hearty. The economy revolves around the fishing industry and so these fishermen were probably decent businessmen as well.

But there is something else about fishermen, especially in this time in history. They were not part of the upper class which is putting it mildly. And yet these are the people Jesus goes to and will one day depend on to advance the Kingdom of God through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The first three disciples are all from Bethsaida; actually the first four since Philip goes to a friend named Nathaniel who is living in the same area though he's originally from the city of Cana.

But like Andrew, who brought his brother Simon to Jesus, Philip goes and finds Nathaniel and encourages him to follow Jesus. But unlike the first three who were all open to seeking this Messiah Nathaniel has a little different take on this whole matter.

John 1:45-46 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 any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

This is very instructive because it clearly shows us what Jesus was doing with these men when they were all together. He was teaching them about Himself, but He was doing it in such a way where He would instruct them from the word of God which they all subscribed to since they were Jews.

And notice that Philip explains that what Moses wrote about in the law, which is to say, the first five books of the Bible, called the Pentateuch, is the very Messiah in their presence, Jesus of Nazareth who is now in the area of Bethsaida.

But what does this mean that Moses wrote about Jesus in the law? Well, again if we go back to Genesis, which was written by Moses as he was inspired by the Holy Spirit, we find that there in Genesis

is the first mention of a deliverer for sinful Adam and Eve, and thus all mankind.

GEN 3:15 "And I will put enmity between you [Satan] and the woman [Eve], and between your offspring and hers; he [the seed of the woman] will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

This is language which speaks of battle. But it is a battle that shows a victor. The seed of Satan, those who live under his dominion, will strike at the heel of the seed of the woman, which means it is not an injury unto death, as Jesus would overcome the grave. But Satan would have his head crushed, which is an injury unto death, and thus Christ will prevail.

Moses was writing of Jesus. And Jesus would have explained this to these first three disciples. But He would have also explained things like the Passover where the lamb's blood would be placed above the doorposts of the Israelites in Egypt so as to have the angel of death pass over them and thus save them. He is that lamb who saves.

Jesus would have shown them how He was that Passover lamb as John the Baptist has called Him the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Jesus would also have taken them to other portions of God's word written by Moses and the prophets and demonstrated that He was born of a virgin in the town of Bethlehem, just as the word of God foretold.

He would explain to them all of those things related to the Messiah, which makes the faith of these first three all that more amazing, because Jesus has not officially started His earthly ministry which is usually seen with His first miracle at the wedding feast at Cana.

These men had to essentially believe that Jesus is who He said He is without having proved He was the Son of God in power. They had to trust Him on His word. And yet, just in the way Jesus has taken them through the word of God and has taught them with authority they must have recognized that He was no ordinary teacher or Rabbi.

But try and explain that to someone who is skeptical. Next week we'll see that Nathaniel, like many today, are very skeptical. But there is an answer for these types of people as we come back here next time.

But take this with you this week. Jesus is seeking out His disciples, and if you have embraced Him as Lord and Savior it is only because He personally sought you out and opened your eyes to the truth of who He is and why He came for us.

He is a good God who loves us with an everlasting love. May we love Him in return with lives of obedience and loyalty as we go forward in His love to a lost and dying world with a message of hope.

And may we do it with the same enthusiasm of Andrew and Philip who sought out others because they had met the Savior, and declare to the world that we have found the Messiah, and so can they.