

**Find Life in the Son:
Follow Jesus.
John 1:35-42**

Introduction

When you're searching for the truth, the world can be a confusing place. So many voices. So many lies. It's been that way ever since the Garden of Eden. The information age has not made it better. It has only multiplied the problem.

Sometimes lies rule.

In the days of John the Baptist the religious and civil leaders of the Jews were largely in it for themselves. Anything that threatened their traditions, their power, their wealth, their reputation was considered an enemy of true religion—as they defined it.

John the Baptist is different. He wasn't baptizing people to make a name for himself, or to gain a following, though he had disciples. He called himself a voice. A man in the wilderness sent by God to prepare the way for the Lord Messiah by calling a people to repentance in preparation for the King.

And when the time came to decrease his own following to set them following Jesus, he did not flinch. His heartbeat was to see people follow Jesus. Our text this morning records how two of John's disciples listened to his

testimony regarding Jesus and therefore left John to follow Jesus.

35 The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, **36** and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" **37** The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. **38** Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which 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 speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. **41** He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which 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 means Peter).

1. Proclamation: Heed what the prophets say (35-37).
2. Invitation: Take the time to investigate who Jesus is (38-39).
3. Transformation: Jesus will not leave you the same (40-42).

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John the Baptist had been sent by God to make Jesus known, so those who were his disciples had been listening the day before to what he had to say about Jesus: the sin-removing Lamb of God, the Exalted Baptizer with the Spirit, and the Anointed Son of God.

All of these descriptions are rooted in the predictions of the prophets of old. John was just the last in a long line of God-sent prophets. By definition, a prophet hears from God then speaks what he's heard to people.

These two are called John's disciples. A disciple learns from his teacher in order to teach others. And he imitates the example of his teacher to live as he lives. John the Baptist was the mentor of these two disciples. Our passage this morning reveals that one of the two was Andrew. The other remains unnamed, which is John the apostle's pattern throughout his Gospel to keep himself unnamed.

Once again John the Baptist draws attention to Jesus as the Lamb of God. That title is central to who Jesus. That's why Jesus

instituted the Lord's table: "Do this in remembrance of me."

Immediately all that comes with that title rushes into their consciousness and they must know more.

They heard, and they followed Him.

They believed what John the Baptist testified about Jesus. How could they do anything else? They had been paying attention to John's teaching. They knew John to be a reliable voice, a man sent from God.

Hear what the prophets say about Jesus! Read Moses, Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, Malachi, John the Baptist. Their predictions of the coming Messiah lead you to Jesus. The offspring of the woman who will crush the serpent's head, the offspring of Abraham in whom all the families of the earth will be blessed, the king of the tribe of Judah, the son of David whose throne is forever, wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities (Isaiah 53), whose birthplace will be Bethlehem (Micah).

If you listen to what they say, you will follow Him. Their testimony is not merely for information. They point you to Christ. Follow Him. He is the Good Shepherd. He leads His sheep to eternal life. No one can pluck them out of His hand.

Applications

- What time have you spent paying attention to the predictions of the prophets regarding the coming Messiah and Savior?
- Who is someone you know who could show you those promises?
- Who is someone you know to whom you could show those promises?
- When are you going to do it?

2. Invitation: Take the time to investigate who Jesus is (38-39).

³⁸ Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which 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.

"What are you seeking?"—What do you want? Jesus does not say, Whom are you seeking? It was obvious they were seeking Him. The question centered on WHY they were following Jesus—core issue.

Many would follow Him to see His miracles. Many would follow Him because He fed them bread.

Many would follow Him because they wanted a king who would provide them political freedom and economic security. Some would follow Him to argue with Him in hopes to trap Him and to destroy Him.

All of these followed Him to use Him for their own purposes.

It is still that way today.

Are you here today for the sake of respectability, belonging, salving your conscience, satisfying expectations of others, mere habit? Or are you here for Jesus?

So, what are you seeking from Jesus?

Are you seeking Him at all?

Every heart has its object. What's yours?

Clues to what Andrew and John wanted from Jesus:

They address Him as Rabbi—a respectful way of saying Teacher—literally, my great one.

Where are you staying?

They are seeking not just his address. They are asking for time with Him to learn from Him.

They had been listening to John the Baptist. If Jesus is the Person John the Baptist declared Him to be, then to spend time learning from Him was priceless.

The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

The One sent to baptize with the Spirit.
The Messianic Son of God.
John the Baptist was the greatest of the prophets, but he himself declared that he did not hold a candle to Jesus.

People have all kinds of ideas about who Jesus is, but much of what they think comes secondhand at best—and often from those who don't know Jesus themselves. Or from those building an empire or a name for themselves.

*Jesus says to the two disciples, "Come and you will see."
His invitation remains open. He is not afraid of your questions. He does not shrink from your exploration and investigation. God the Son came in human flesh to make God knowable to mortal human beings.*

Jesus walked the earth 2,000 years ago. The only way for us to investigate now who He really is demands we heed the eyewitness accounts of what He did and what He said. That's how any credible history is confirmed. *Whatever you think about Jesus, make sure you pay attention to what those who knew Him personally have testified regarding Jesus.* Matthew, John, Peter, Paul, and others.

1 John 1:1-3

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— ² the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— ³ that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

From these who investigated Jesus up close, you can come to know Jesus, too. If you reject their testimony, on what basis can you do so? Is it reasonable to assume that they were all to be liars and frauds? On what honest basis could we reach such a conclusion?

John 1:14,16

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

John's first experience of the fullness of Jesus was that day. It started about the 10th hour—4 in the afternoon. The likelihood is

that they stayed the night. It was an unforgettable evening with God in human flesh.

Don't get tangled up in philosophy and personal opinions of those who never knew Jesus. Don't get sidetracked on the foibles, flaws, and failures of institutions and individuals who say they are following Jesus. The only way to know their authenticity is to come to know Jesus as He actually is according to firsthand testimony. If these institutions, churches, and individuals don't measure up, don't throw Jesus out. Turn your attention away from those doing a bad job of representing Him and focus on the established firsthand testimony. (That is why we are studying the Gospel of John—to get to know the real historical Jesus.)

Once you've established who Jesus is and what He's like, then you'll know better who is actually a follower of Jesus versus just a follower of manmade religion.

The testimony of the apostles who took time to investigate Jesus firsthand leads to others coming to know Jesus through their witness. They actually enter into a relationship with Jesus the Son of God and with God the Father and the Holy Spirit who indwells them. That's what leads to the next truth we discover about true followers of Jesus.

Find a person who truly believes the predictions of the prophets about the Messiah, and actually relies on the testimony of the apostles regarding Jesus Christ, and you will find a person who knows Jesus for who He is. That person will not and cannot remain the same person he or she once was. Followers of Jesus become more like Jesus.

That's why there are still so many still experiencing the power of gospel to this day. They have seen the power of Jesus in the lives of those who follow Him, just as His apostles did 2,000 years ago.

Applications

- In what ways have you investigated who Jesus really is?
- What sources have taken you off track from actually knowing Jesus?
- What time do you regularly devote to spending time with Jesus through the firsthand testimony of the NT apostles?

3. Transformation: Jesus will not leave you the same (40-42).

⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which 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 means Peter).

We are drawn to the prediction of how Jesus will change Simon to Peter, but don't miss the transformation that has already begun in his brother Andrew.

After one evening with Jesus, he is convinced that Jesus is the promised Messiah. So much so that he finds his brother to tell him so and to bring him to Jesus, too.

We are called to make Jesus known to all the world, to all ethnicities. But don't think that all your opportunities to do so are out there somewhere with people you don't yet know. Start at home. Start with your own family. And as the following verses will illustrate, with your friends and acquaintances. If you're not pointing them to Jesus, it's doubtful you'll do so with people far away.

Example: Nunez ministry in the Yucatan

The people you are close to know whether your faith in Christ has made a difference in who you are and how you live. Your brother, your sister, your husband, your wife, your children—they know whether you are still self-centered or glad to sacrifice yourself for others. To help around the house. To give attention to others in need even when you

are pressed for time. To praise others rather than slander them, to build up instead of tearing down.

They see if you are irritable and fretful, or patient and trusting. They see whether you love serving Jesus or love serving money and position. They see if you are hardworking and sincere or whether you do as little as possible only to be thought decent in the public eye. They get to hear the loving care of your voice and to see the compassion in your eyes. In all this they see whether the gospel of Jesus is indeed the power of God unto salvation or just another empty promise.

This is why in 1 Corinthians 7 the apostle Paul encourages those married even to unbelievers to stay with them as long as they remain, for such a saint of God brings holy influence within the family walls and graces the children with divine influence.

Find your brother, your sister, your dad, your mom, your son or daughter, your granddaughter or grandson, and bring that one to Jesus.

Jesus already knows them better than you do, and part of your purpose for being connected to them is to introduce them to their Creator and Redeemer, the One who will make them new by releasing them from their bondage to

sin and its curse. He transforms all who come to Him in faith. We bring plenty of baggage with us, but we can never be the same again. What begins with a change of heart flows out to a change of life leading to our new destiny—an inheritance of the saints.

So let their names fill your prayers. Look for opportunities to build and strengthen connection with them. Talk about Jesus. Show them how He has changed you. Don't stop till they are looking into the face Jesus and He is looking into their eyes to say: You are, but you shall be.

You are Simon son of John (Jonas, Jonah)—that's who you are by birth, by nature. You shall be called (character and reputation) Cephas/Peter—a rock.

Simon was by nature brash and impetuous, a leader, but a loose cannon, quick to speak before he thought through what he'd say. One who seems to react instinctively rather than acting deliberately and wisely. One day he will lead the people of God. He will preach the gospel of Jesus and thousands will respond. In the power of the Holy Spirit he will preach, and heal, and raise people from the dead. He will run from persecution in his youth, but willingly lay down his life in his old age. He will become a stable rock of

strength and undivided loyalty to His Savior and Lord.

Peter was not the only one Jesus ever transformed. He transforms any and every person who comes to Him in faith. He gives them peace from their guilt. He gives them life. He gives them love. He gives them purpose. He gives them joy. He gives them a forever family and an eternal inheritance. He makes them children of God (1:12), born ones of God Himself (1:13).

Applications

- If you are a follower of Jesus, in what ways has He changed you?
- What are the names of those close to you that you could introduce to Jesus?
- What actions are you taking to do so?
- What about your life would get in the way of their believing in the transforming power of Jesus?

Conclusion

1. Proclamation: Heed what the prophets say (35-37).
2. Invitation: Take the time to investigate who Jesus is (38-39).
3. Transformation: Jesus will not leave you the same (40-42).

Closing Song: Just as I Am/I Come Broken

Summary of Applications

- What time have you spent paying attention to the predictions of the prophets regarding the coming Messiah and Savior?
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- Who is someone you know to whom you could show those promises?
- When are you going to do it?
- In what ways have you investigated who Jesus really is?
- What sources have taken you off track from actually knowing Jesus?
- What time do you regularly devote to spending time with Jesus through the firsthand testimony of the NT apostles?
- If you are a follower of Jesus, in what ways has He changed you?
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- What actions are you taking to do so?
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