

JOHN

AND THE WORD WAS GOD

JESUS CALLS HIS FIRST DISCIPLES

John 1:35–51

RELATED SCRIPTURES

Matthew 6:13–20 | Genesis 27:35–36 | Genesis 32:24–30

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 1.25.26

SUMMARY

John the Baptist's ministry was one of preparation—a call for God's people to ready themselves for the coming Messiah. As John's ministry grew, he gained followers, or disciples. In response to the many teachings John gave about the coming Christ, it is no surprise that two of John's followers pursued Jesus after he identified Him as "the Lamb of God" (vs. 35–37). The two disciples immediately call Jesus "Rabbi" (which means Teacher) and begin to follow him. Although the disciples undoubtedly still had many questions, they first asked where Jesus was staying; in response, Jesus invited them, saying, "Come and you will see," which answered their immediate question yet changed their lives forever (vs. 38–39). Next, we learn about Andrew, who, upon hearing of Jesus—the Messiah—through John's teaching, immediately brought his brother Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You shall be called Cephas," Aramaic for *rock*, which is *Petros* in the Greek (and *Peter* in English; vs. 40–42; Matthew 16:18). The following day, they head to Galilee, where Jesus calls Philip, who promptly tells Nathanael that they have found the promised one, "Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael's response, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" foreshadows the unexpected nature of the Messiah—one marked by humility rather than "greatness" as the world defines it, a lesson Nathanael would soon learn. When Nathanael meets Jesus, the Lord surprises him in two ways: First, Jesus calls him, "an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit," which is a reference to Jacob, who deceived his brother (Genesis 27:35–36), but was transformed by God and named Israel (Genesis 28:10–17; 32:24–30). Even more startling, Jesus displays an intimate knowledge of Nathanael, which immediately leads him to confess, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God!" (v. 49). This is symbolic of every Christian: Jesus knows us, calls us by name, and we believe and confess in the saving power of Jesus Christ.

GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of John 1:35–51.

What does this teach us about John the Baptist? Should he feel bothered that his followers suddenly start following someone else? What does this teach us about how we should present ourselves as Christians?

What similarities do you see between Jesus' calling of his disciples and his calling of every Christian? Do you see any behaviors that are emblematic of the way he calls us?

If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today's themes in what you bring before God.