



Metro Calvary – Roseville CA
Richard Cimino
November 15, 2009

The Gospel of John

Come and See

[John 1:35-39](#)

Related Topics: John the Baptist; John the Apostle; Andrew; Peter; Philip; Nathaniel; Pointing people to Jesus – His Mission and His Person; Persistence in Evangelism; God Initiating; Jesus Questions; Bringing People to Jesus; Jesus Reveals Himself

INTRODUCTION

As we pick up in John 1:35 John has been giving to us a running account of certain days in the ministry of John the Baptizer.

On the first of these specific days there was the exchange between John the Baptizer and the fact-finding team sent by the Pharisees. On that day, John denied that he was the Messiah, Elijah, but was the prophet promised by Moses. He has nothing to say about himself except that he was just a voice. He was the one sent to prepare the way for God Incarnate to come into the lives of men and women.

On the second day, John has his first opportunity to point out the One of whom he spoke. John did NOT say, "Behold the great teacher," or "Behold the perfect example." He said, "Behold, here is the remedy for your sins." He said, "Behold, here is the lamb of God who will be slaughtered for the sin of the World." He said, "You want to get clean? You need that guy to die for you. You need his blood to be shed for you."

This morning we come the third of these specific days. As we look at the record of this day we want to bear in mind that there was a time in the life of Jesus when Jesus had zero followers! When Jesus arrived at this scene at the Jordan River He had just come from 40

days in the Wilderness where He was tempted by Satan. When Jesus shows up He does not have thousands with Him, He does not leave with thousands following Him.

THIS IS HUGE - Here we see the beginning of Christianity.

Christianity had it's beginnings in the most insignificant of places, the Judean Wilderness, with just one very strange man pointing others to Jesus, and two men making a decision to follow Jesus!

This morning we are going to zoom in on the first followers of Jesus. We will see John the Baptizer PERSISTING in pointing men to Jesus. We will see these first followers COMING to Jesus. Next week we will zoom in on these first followers of Jesus who are INVITING others to meet Jesus.

JOHN THE BAPTIZER: PERSISTING IN POINTING MEN TO CHRIST

35The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, 36and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" 37The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.

Notice the phrase, "The next day," again. The first thing we want to note is that these first followers of Jesus were the result of John PERSISTING in POINTING to Jesus and PROCLAIMING Jesus to be the Lamb of God. Just 24 hours ago John had POINTED men to Jesus and PROCLAIMED that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. The first time John POINTED and PROCLAIMED there was no apparent results. The Holy Spirit records no one hearing and inquiring; no one believing and following Jesus! But John got up the next day and made the same proclamation, "Behold the Lamb of God." And the Holy Spirit records that in verse 37 that two (of John's) disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.

HUGE LESSONS FOR US HERE:

1. Be persistent in PROCLAIMING Jesus and POINTING others to Jesus. Just because they don't hear and respond the first time does not mean that they will never hear the second or the third or the thirtieth time.
2. Such persistence is really a reflection of the heart of God. [*Romans 10:21 NLT*](#) *21But regarding Israel, God said, "All day long I opened my arms to them, but they were disobedient and rebellious."*
3. It is by exalting Christ, not the church, not the ministry that hearts are moved, and sinners are turned to God. Proclaiming Jesus as God who became man in order that He might be slaughtered as the sacrifice for our sins seems like utter foolishness to the natural man. But it is the simple proclamation of the crucified Lamb of God that has in every age been the power of God unto salvation. If souls are to be saved, then Christ must be exalted as and pointed to as the Lamb of God. We can not be saying, "Behold me," "Behold the church." We must be saying, "Behold the Lamb."

4. John was not only PERSISTENT in POINTING others to Jesus, we are told that John himself was LOOKING at Jesus, *36and he looked at Jesus*. Literally, John the Baptizer was looking steadfastly at Jesus, staring at Jesus. **HUGE:** He pointed others to Jesus by the very direction he was facing! Have you ever turned to look at something because someone else was staring in that direction and you just had to see what it was that so captivated his or her attention? We are more apt to point others to Jesus when our lives are clearly focused upon Him. And the things of His Kingdom!

QUESTION: When people look at YOU — do they see you focused upon Jesus? Not just on Sundays. Not just in relationship to involvement at a church. But do they see you focused on Jesus at work, at school, in your recreation.

EXAMPLE: Valerie and I were newly-weds in our apt complex. One day one of the crazy party people in the apartments came knocking at our door. He was really troubled because the girl he was living with had left him for another guy in the complex. We were quite shocked as to WHY he came knocking on OUR door. Then he told us that he came to us because he saw something radically different about us. We had never met this guy! He could have only seen us coming and going, seen us maybe around the pool. Unbeknownst to us he saw, by the way we lived, that we were staring in a direction that was radically different than direction everyone else's life was facing. When his life was falling apart he wanted to know what we were staring at, so-to-speak.

5. John spoke of the MISSION of Jesus and the PERSON of Jesus. The day before, John proclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." As we noted last week, THAT speaks of the MISSION of Jesus. We need to share with others the MISSION of Jesus. What Jesus has done for them on the Cross. On this day John only said, "Behold the Lamb of God." In essence John was saying, "There is Jesus! Just look at Him! The eternal Word, God the creator who became man! Behold the Lamb!" HOW beautiful is Jesus? [*Rev. 21:23*](#) *23And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.* We need to point people to the PERSON of Jesus. We need to tell them of how wonderful Jesus is in His love and His grace. We need to tell them of His tender mercies. One of the things that moved me to give my heart to Christ was the fact that the guy who told me about Jesus was absolutely in love with Jesus. The way that he spoke of Jesus was so personal, so loving!
6. John the Baptizer had his own disciples, they followed him, respected him, hung on every one of John's words. John knew full well that to speak to his disciples about Jesus like that was an open invitation for them to LEAVE him and transfer their loyalty to Jesus. Yet that is exactly what John did. He WANTED men to become attached to Jesus. He LIVED for that to happen.

QUOTE: William Barclay — The Daily Bible Study Series; Gospel of John; volume 1
There is no harder task than to take the second place when once the first place was

enjoyed. But as soon as Jesus emerged on the scene John never had any other thought than to send men to him.

So we have John the Baptizer POINTING men to Jesus. He was PERSISTENT in POINTING people to Jesus. He POINTED people's hearts in the same direction of his own heart. He POINTED out the MISSION of Jesus and the PERSON of Jesus. He POINTED people AWAY from himself and TO Jesus.

TWO MEN COMING TO JESUS

37The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.

So we have two disciples of the John the Baptizer leaving John and following Jesus. We are told in this account that one of those disciples was Andrew, the brother of Peter. Students of the Bible ask, "Who was the other one?" We are not told. His name is not given here. I believe there is solid Biblical ground to identify the other disciple as none other than the author of John's Gospel. In verse 39, we are given the exact time of day that they went to where Jesus was staying. This is first hand information, a time stamp born out of one's personal experience of a significant event. It is no stretch of the imagination to see this as John's memory from first hand experience. Another clue is that in this account of the life of Jesus, John never mentions his own name. He refers to himself in an indirect way "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 21:20).

HUGE STUFF - As we see these FIRST TWO FOLLOWERS of Jesus, we learn some awesome things about Jesus.

38Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them

We see Jesus as the INITIATOR. As John and Andrew are following from a distance Jesus stops and turns to them. Jesus opens the door, so-to-speak, that they can come in! It is always God who takes the first step. Look at these two men. They are responding to the POINTING and PROCLAMATION of the man that GOD promised to send 400 years before this day. It is God who had sent to John the Baptizer to PREPARE their hearts and IDENTIFY Jesus in His mission and person. And when they finally respond it is God Incarnate who stops and walks to them!

POINT: God has already stepped towards us and when we respond He meets us!

QUOTE: Augustine (4th Century AD)

"We could not even have begun to seek for God unless he had already found us. When we go to God we do not go to one who hides himself and keeps us at a distance; we go to one who stands waiting for us, and who even takes the initiative by coming to meet us on the road."

38Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?"

In the study of the Bible FIRST OCCURENCES are very important. These are the first words of Jesus in the Gospel of John. They are also the very first recorded words of Jesus in his public ministry. There were NO accidents in the words and works of Jesus. He only DID the things the Father sent Him to do. He only said what the Father gave Him to say. It is significant that the first words of Jesus in His public ministry come in the form of a question and in the form of this specific question.

First, we must understand that God never asked questions for the sake of needing to gain information. He asked questions for the sake of those asked and those listening.

- EXAMPLE: In the Garden of Eden — Adam, where are you?
- EXAMPLE: In Caesarea Philippi — Who do men say that I am? Who do YOU say that I am?
- EXAMPLE: To the woman at the well in Samaria — “Where is your husband?”

When God asks it is to bring US into a place of understanding. With the first recorded words of His public ministry Jesus asks the most profound question in anyone's life, "What are you seeking?" These four words go right to the heart of life. Have you ever asked yourself, "Why am I here? What do I really want out of life?"

Anyone who works or goes to school knows what it's like to get up in the morning, eat breakfast, go to work/school (or work and school), work all day, come home in the evening, have dinner, watch TV, talk to the family, whatever; go to bed, get up in the morning, have breakfast, go to work/school (or work and school), work all day, come home in the evening, have dinner, watch TV, talk to the family, whatever; go to bed get up in the morning, start it all over again. Have you ever asked yourself, "Why? What do I want to get out of this?" Well I'm working hard and going to school so I won't have to work and go to school. Because then I can really do what I want to do which is... To which Jesus asks, "And THAT gives you WHAT?" That is what Jesus is asking these two men. The profound nature of the question nailed those men immediately.

"What are you seeking?"

QUOTE: Listen to these amazing words by Alexander Maclaren (1826-1910)
The most of men have never answered that question. They live from hand to mouth, driven by circumstances, guided by accidents, impelled by unreflecting passions and desires, knowing what they want for the moment.... I pray you, dear brethren, to front this question: 'After all, and at bottom, what is it I am living for? Can I formulate the aims and purposes of my life in any intelligible statement of which I should not be ashamed?'

HUGE OBSERVATION:

Remember, Jesus never miss-speaks. He does not ask, "Whom do you seek?" That would be the natural question to ask under the circumstances, after all, John was not talking about a what, he was talking about a WHO. Instead, Jesus asked WHAT are you looking for? Jesus wanted them to get to the bottom of WHAT they were looking for in this life.

This is awesome, the "WHAT" that man is looking for is only going to be found in a "WHO", in the PERSON of Jesus!

- I just want to find my way in life. Jesus said — I am the way.
- I just want to find truth. Jesus said — I am the truth.
- I just want to get a life (as defined by Madison Avenue advertising agencies / Hollywood etc.). Jesus said — I am the Life.

Remember Verse 4 *In him was life and the life was the light of men.*

I just want to find peace. The Bible says *Eph. 2:14 14For he himself is our peace*

Quote: Alexander Maclaren *To the question, 'What seek ye?' the deepest of all answers, the only real answer, is, 'My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.' (Ps. 42:4) If you know that, you know where to look for what you need! 'Do men gather grapes or thorns?'Do men look for pearls in cockle-shells, or for gold in coal-pits; and why should you look for rest of heart, mind, conscience, spirit, anywhere and in anything short of God? 'What seek ye?' The only answer is, 'We seek Thee!'*

We don't want to miss this about Jesus. Jesus is always glad when people come to Him. Having made His infinite condescension in the Incarnation, there was no hour that was inconvenient, no moment in which He was too occupied, no hunger, or thirst, or lack of sleep that came between Jesus and seeking hearts. He was never impatient. He never said, "I have something else to do other than listen to you." Nothing ever hindered Jesus from stepping towards any man or who wanted to draw near to Him.

John 6:37whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

Jesus is the SAME yesterday, today and forever! He is glad when any of us come to Him. He still draws near to us!

So in this moment we see the heart of Jesus. Now we get a look in to the heart of the followers.

38Jesus 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?"

Rabbi is a Hebrew term. It was the title of respect given by students to their teachers and to wise men. REMEMBER John's audience, writing for Greeks. He knew they would not recognize that Hebrew word, so he translated it for them by the Greek word didaskalos or teacher.

CRUCIAL INSIGHT: William Barclay says that in the Hebrew language the word literally means GREAT ONE. That is how genuine believers view Jesus.

“38...where are you staying?”

This wasn't idle or nervous conversation.

Here's the point, they didn't want to just have a few passing words with Jesus. They wanted to **GO** where He was going, **LIVE** where He was living, **BE ABLE** to talk with Him at any time, and **BE ABLE** to ask Him their greatest questions - pour out their hearts to Him.

Here's the picture, the man or woman who would be a follower of Jesus can never be satisfied with a passing word. The follower of Jesus wants to **MEET** Jesus, not as a passing acquaintance, but as a lifelong friend! He or she wants to:

- BE where Jesus is
- GO where Jesus is going
- DO what Jesus is doing!

Note the answer of Jesus:

39He said to them, “Come and you will see.”

Matthew 8:20 tells us that Jesus had nowhere to lay His head. At this point Jesus is beginning to make His way back up the Jordan Valley to the region of the Galilee. No doubt at this time the temporary home of Jesus was probably nothing more than some place on the bank of the Jordan River. But such as it was, He welcomes them to it.

39 ‘...Come and see!’

Here's the point:

Jesus is saying that you've heard John speak of Me, come and hear ME speak to you. You've seen him identify Me, NOW come let ME show you who I am. Now come and see for yourself who I am. Remember, we read earlier that John was NOT the light, but was sent to bear witness of it. He could never fully reveal to these men Jesus the Lamb, the one who lights the new earth in Revelation.

When we say that Christianity is all about Jesus, it really is ALL about Jesus.

TWO POINTS OF APPLICATION:

Point 1

There are a lot of people who reject Christianity on the basis of man's representation of Jesus, but they have never let Jesus prove Himself.

The man who led me to Jesus essentially pointed me to Jesus, identified the mission and person of Jesus. But I had to make a decision to follow Jesus. And when that decision

was made Jesus showed Himself to me. And I could have never imagined the greatness of Jesus, the beauty of Jesus, the love of Jesus, the peace of Jesus, the life of Jesus that He would impart to me. From the moment I trusted Jesus He has shown me that He is the Lamb of God who was slaughtered for my sin. But then He showed me that He is MORE than the Lamb of God, He is the Good Shepherd, the Shepherd of my soul! (*Isa. 40:11 He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.*) Then He showed me that He is more than the shepherd of my soul, He is my righteousness! Then He showed me that more than my righteousness, He is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

“COME AND SEE” - what an amazing invitation!

I am NOT saying, “Try to believe that Jesus Christ is worthy to be trusted.” By it’s very nature, faith cannot be an experiment or provisional. But I AM saying to you that NO ONE has ever trusted in Jesus and has been put to shame. *Psalm 34:5-6 5 Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed.* No man has truly looked to and trusted Jesus and said, ‘He’s a phony! His promises are empty.’ Many men have fallen away from Him, but not because they have proved Him untruthful. They have fallen away because they have become unfaithful.

Point 2

We must be very careful to never allow our Christianity to be merely second hand or merely intellectual. They could NOT live off of John’s faith. They had to “COME AND SEE” Jesus for themselves. It is so interesting that when we have men’s and women’s studies that we find people very quick to participate in the academic discussion of the Bible, but when it comes to their personal experience of Jesus they clam up. There are those who say, “Oh, I don’t like that study because there’s too much emphasis on personal experience and not enough on breaking down the passage.” Guys, the Bible is ABOUT a PERSONAL Jesus. We are the last place to let people take a sloppy approach to the study of the Scriptures. The point of Bible study is to EXPERIENCE relationship with Jesus. Jesus was showing Himself to me and speaking to me long before I ever had a commentary or learned about context or Greek words!

Jesus would say to the religious leaders of Israel, *John 5:39-40 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, 40yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.*

“COME AND SEE”

What a great description of the Christian life! Walking with Jesus and discovering what ONLY Jesus can teach and reveal about Himself.

39 ...So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

According to John, it was the tenth hour when they went. There is some question as to the method of marking time John was using. If it was Jewish time, then it was four o'clock in the afternoon (6:00am is the first hour of the Jewish day). If it was Roman time (as I think it was, because John wrote his gospel for a wider world than the Jews), then it was the same as we count, 10:00am. However long the period of time spent with Jesus, they found themselves absolutely captivated by the person of Jesus. We are not told what they asked him, we are not told what he said to them. Here's what we do know, Jesus said, "COME AND SEE."

They did just that and that time spent with Jesus changed FOREVER for these two men. Years later John would write:

1 John 1:1-3 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— 2the 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— 3that 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.

John has recorded the very hour and day that he met Jesus. He remembered WHEN and WHERE he met Jesus! He no doubt probably remembered the very stone he was standing on when he met Jesus. How about you? For me it was 36 years ago outside of Mario's Pizza on Katella Ave. in Anaheim across the street from Disneyland. I ordered an Italian Sausage pizza (which went untouched) while a guy named Paul told me about Jesus. It was about 1:30am on December 31, 1973. It was drizzling rain and I was sitting in a pretty beat up blue Mercury Cougar that belonged to a guy named Steve. THAT is when and where I met Jesus!

I pray that some this morning will remember that you met Jesus in this place, on this day, at this hour.

From our passage this morning WE KNOW THIS FOR CERTAIN, Jesus will respond to those who would genuinely follow Him. If you've been sensing a hunger and a yearning to know God, He is the One who put it there. He has brought you here today and He is asking you the same question He asked John and Andrew, "WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?" For those who have already met Jesus, Let's be like John the Baptizer. PERSISTENT in POINTING men and women to Jesus. KEEPING Jesus the FOCAL POINT of our lives so that people will look in the direction of Jesus.

As for Metro

QUOTE: Alexander Maclaren

I believe that to lift Him up is the work of all Christian preachers and teachers; as far as they can to hide themselves behind Jesus Christ..... Present Christ, and He will vindicate His own character; He will vindicate His own nature; He will vindicate His own gospel.

'They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him,' and the end of it was that they abode with Him for evermore. And so it will always be.