

# ***“God Has A Plan!”***

John 1:35-51

January 19, 2014

**Intro: VIDEO:** John 1:19-34...

A. Explain the context BEFORE that text:

**1:1-18** Big Idea: ***God wants YOU to KNOW Him!***

- *In the beginning was the Word...*
- *The Word became flesh & dwelt among us*

...see God's glory... & our common ground...

1. ***Created by Jesus...*** (everything)
2. ***Called by Jesus...*** (many)
3. ***Confronted by Jesus...*** (all)
4. ***Cured by Jesus!*** (few/Church)

- *Receive & Believe = children of God!*

**Qt:** “The prologue is the most complete, indeed, the most explicit study of Christ's preexistence in the New Testament... He is God-in-descent, God stepping into the context of humanity... The prologue to John's Gospel is not about a message that offers hope, but about *THE* Message that is the *ONLY* hope.

- **NIV Commentary**

B. Revisit the video's 1:19-34 passage pillars...

**Big Idea: There is NO identity crisis in Christ!**

5 key Questions for us today:

**1. *Who are you?***

(Do you know who you're dealing with?)

\*\*\* Illustration: Bay Times article on  
Jehovah's Witnesses

**2. *What do you say about yourself?***

"I am a VOICE..." He is the WORD!

(Why do you do what you do?)

**3. *Who is Jesus?***

**4. *What do you say about Him?***

"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away  
the sin of the world."

(Do you hear & head the Holy Spirit?)

**5. *Are you SURE?***

**T/S:** Let's move forward with Jesus on our journey...

**Qt:** “Today’s passage perfectly illustrates the biblical balance between divine sovereignty and human responsibility, as John records the call of Jesus’ first disciples to salvation. We meet first the seeking souls, and then the seeking Savior.” - John MacArthur

**VIDEO:** John 1:35-51

**T/S:** Don’t miss the progressive Gospel themes...

1:1-18	=	<i>Theological</i>
1:19-34	=	<i>Christological</i>
1:35-51	=	<i>Evangelical</i>

**Big Idea:** *God has a plan!*

**Preview:**

- A. God’s plan is TOLD... (vv.35-42)
- B. God’s plan is TESTED... (vv.43-48)
- c. God’s plan TRIUMPHS! (vv.49-51)

**T/S:** Let’s take a closer look at how God’s 7-point plan is “told” in John 1:35-42

1. Christianity is a perpetual continuation of BE-ing in-Christ & in “koinonia.”

***35 Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples,***

2. The reality of Jesus requires a response to Jesus.  
(He is either a liar, a lunatic, or the LORD)

***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.***

The Reality of Jesus Requires a Response to Jesus...

Option “A” = Dedicate & Declare

or

Option “B” = Deny & Disobey

3. Most important: the Messiah measures what moves & motivates your heart.

**38** *And **Jesus turned** and saw them following, and \*said to them, "**What do you want?**" They said to Him, "**Rabbi** (which translated means Teacher), **where** are You staying?"*

NOTE: Jesus asks a "what" question and is looking for a "who" answer.

*"What do you want?"*     *Anything but Him is damning...*

**Qt:** = "When the two disciples began to follow Jesus, He asked them, "What do you want?" Following Christ is not enough; we must follow Him for the right reasons. To follow Christ for our own purposes would be asking Christ to follow us—to align with us to support and advance our cause, not His. We must examine our motives for following Him. Are we seeking His glory or ours?"

- Life Application Study Bible.

**Qt: (MacArthur):** "Jesus' immediate response to them, "Come, and see," was the invitation Andrew and John were hoping for. But Jesus "is in fact bidding these men do something more than discover where He is staying for the night; He is inviting them to come and gain from Him an insight into the mind and purpose of God Himself." Jesus knew their hearts, that they were honest, sincere seekers. They had already been drawn to Him by the Father ([6:44](#)) and convicted of their sin by the Holy Spirit (cf. [16:8](#)). The honest seeker will always find Him ([Deut. 4:29](#); [1 Chron. 28:9](#); [2 Chron. 15:2](#); [Jer. 29:13](#)) because, as He promised, "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself" ([John 7:17](#)). On the other hand, Jesus will not commit Himself to the insincere and hypocritical, no matter what their outward profession may be..."

4. The gospel's blood-bought invitation is ALWAYS (both) personal AND experiential.

**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.*

**Qt: (NIV Commentary)** "Throughout the Gospel many people will be challenged to "come and see." Conversion is not about knowledge alone; it is about coming yourself and appropriating a relationship with Jesus personally. John's theology in this chapter stands against such emptiness. On the one hand, we are called to be like

John the Baptist, Andrew, Peter, Nathanael, and Philip—people who have a personal experience of Christ, who "come and see," who do not simply have a scholastic understanding of the Christian faith, but who remain where he is and are transformed by being with him. In other words, these are people who have an experiential dimension to faith, whose heart is engaged, and who "love God" and enjoy a depth of piety and devotion.”

Don't miss the compassion found in the parallels between Christ's calls to "*come and see*" and "*come unto Me.*" - JDP

5. God's grace knows no bounds... the gospel's invitation is for anyone & EVERYONE!

***40 One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.***

(John the Baptist & his dad...)

(Andrew is an everybody)

(Peter is a peaks & valley guy)

6. Following means finding...

**41** He *\*found first his own brother Simon and \*said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ).*

NOTE: Andrew's always bringing somebody to Jesus!

The found GO Find...

Following Christ means finding Christ's ones. - JDP

7. Lastly, Christians help people meet Christ...  
...and Christ makes Christian people!

**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).*

Christ's ones bring others to Christ!

We bring 'em to Jesus!

Christ will change His Christians

Jesus gives us our purpose, potential & power...  
to BE all that He has called & created us to be - Amen!

**Qt: = Simon renamed Peter...**

Jesus saw not only who Simon was, but who he would become. That is why he gave him a new name—*Cephas* in Aramaic, *Peter* in Greek (the name means "a rock"). Peter is not presented as rock-solid throughout the Gospels, but he became a solid rock in the days of the early church, as we learn in the book of Acts. By giving Simon a new name, Jesus introduced a change in character.

- **Life Application Study Bible.**

**(see Christianity's perpetual continuation in Christ...)**

**T/S:** God's plan is about to be tested...

vv.43-51 = (sets blueprint in place for the rest of the Bible)

In v.43 watch how the plan is repeated & proved...

**43** *The **next day** He purposed to go into Galilee, and **He \*found Philip.** And Jesus \*said to him, "**Follow Me.**"*

**NOTE: Find the Lost, Grow Found**

- a. "*The next day*" = perpetual continuation...
- b. "*He purposed*" = gracious, providential plan of salvation
- c. "*to go*" = Jesus models missionary ministry!
- d. "*He found*" = all of grace!
- e. "*Philip*" = personal salvation...
- f. "*...Jesus said to him*" = compassionate command
- g. "*Follow Me*" =
  - *Follow* = Full, "all-in," faithful obedience
  - *Me* = Christ alone (vs. counterfeits)

When following we're finding... &  
When we're finding we're following!

Going to others... won souls = our "crowns" (Thess.)

EZ. 16:49 = Sodom & Gomorah being wrathed for living in ease & neglect...

Parable of the Talents!!! (God's blessings call for a response - Chuck Swindoll)

Acts 20:23-24 = going

**T/S:** \*\*\* v.45-51 = 2nd generation tested...

1. The found go find...
2. Not every encounter will be easy...

***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."***

NOTE: Followers Find....

**ILLUSTRATION: Like matches catching fire!**

Note: (Philip to Nate)

- Philip went in faithful obedience
- Philip shared with passion
- Philip declared Jesus: Messiah!
- Philip did not edit for "looks"

Note: v46a (Nate to Philip)

***46 Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"***

- Nate shows prejudice
  - \* "You make beautiful things"
  - \* "ashes to miracles"
  - \* "Saul to Paul"
  - \* "old you to new you"
  - \* "Dead... to Born again!"
- Nate shows OT knowledge

Note: 46b (Philip back to Nate)

*Philip \*said to him, "**Come and see.**"*

- textbook evangelistic response:
  - \* "Don't bite... Invite!"
  - \* "Debate leads to hate."
  - \* "Come and see!"

v47 = Bring 'em to Jesus... and the rest is up to Him/them.

**47** *Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and \*said of him, "**Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!**"*

- "Behold" = Jesus calls everyone's attention (wow)
  - "an Israelite indeed" = He classifies N as a true child of Abraham... (an O.T. biblical believer)
  - "in whom...no deceit" = he is a committed truth-teller:
    - No deceit does not mean no sin...

- lives on high, hard road
- no political correctness
- a true friend, brother!
- a standard protector (but not "setter" - that is God's job per His Word)

- We're "voices" He is the Word
- Jesus always initiates:
  - \* He sent Philip/us
  - \* He prepares the heart...
  - \* He lets us know He knows us!
  - \* He REALLY does know us
  - \* He measures holiness & heart

**Qt:** (on Nathanael) *“Some things weak, imperfect, and sinful, are found in all, but hypocrisy belongs not to a believer's character.”* - **Matthew Henry**

v48 = Note the transfer of doubt from the Christians to the Christ...  
(normal)

**48** Nathanael \*said to Him, **“How do You know me?”** Jesus answered and said to him, **“Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”**

- Jesus answers the ordinary with the extraordinary...
- Jesus handles the natural with the supernatural
- Christ makes Christians by showing/proving He IS Christ.

**Qt:** Jesus knew about Nathanael before the two ever met. Jesus also knows what we are really like. An honest person will feel comfortable with the thought that Jesus knows him or her through and through. A dishonest person will feel uncomfortable. You can't pretend to be something you're not (with the Holy Spirit). God knows the real you and wants *you* to follow him. - **Life Application Study Bible.**

v48 = before you were sought (by one who has experienced God), you were in fact seen by God (who sent your seeker!)

**Key take away = Jesus** demonstrates His omnipresence & omniscience (deity)

v49 = Saving faith responds faithfully

***49 Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel."***

- a. Respect ("Rabbi") "teach me "
- b. Redeem (Son of God) save me
- c. Relinquish (King) "lead me "

v49 = biblical believer's response:

"Rabbi/Teacher" =

- Respect.... the One calling
- Expect..... to be changed

"You are the Son of God!"

- there is no other name...
- must be full Christology
  - \*Not just who He is...
  - \*But also, what He's done

"You are the King of Israel!"

- Note: modern geo-politics
- sees Him as O.T. Messiah
- affirms deity again...
- acknowledges divine power
- \*\*\* see Zephaniah 3:15b!!!
- \*\*\* Matt. 27:42-43 (both titles applied to Him in mock)

v50 Jesus probes & promises:

***50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these."***

- a. Jesus rewards repentance & redeeming responses
- b. Mustard seed faith will see mountain-moving feats...
- c. "You ain't seen nothin yet!"

## **This verse speaks to the blessing of having "Eternal-Eyes"**

**T/S:** John ends this exposition on evangelism with Christ's own Christian crescendo!

**51** And He *\*said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."*

While one might think that Jesus is still talking with Nathanael in [1:51](#), the verb changes from the singular to the plural, "You will see...." Jesus is making a pronouncement to all of his disciples—and to his readers too—that culminates all that has been revealed about him these four days.

"Truly, truly" = emphatic emphasis

### **Spiritual Vision for Nathanael (V. 51 per Kent Hughes)**

That statement took Nathanael back almost 2,000 years to the time of Jacob. To understand its meaning, we must first know its context—[Genesis 28](#). Jacob had just stolen the birthright from Esau. He was a scoundrel, a rascal who also loved spiritual things. Because of his fear of Esau's wrath, Jacob, the conniver, was fleeing for his life. At this point it seemed that his only friend was his mother.... Under that ominous Syrian sky God gave him a vision of encouragement. "Look, Jacob, do you think you are all alone out here? There is traffic between heaven and earth on your behalf. Let that comfort you." That was the dream Jesus referred to when speaking to Nathanael...

**The finest Greek scholars, from J. H. Bernard to C. K. Barrett, say this means Jesus is the ladder! What a tremendous truth! The ladder is Christ! "Nathanael, you have not seen anything! As you enter into the fullness of your relationship with me, and as your spiritual vision is broadened, you are going to see swarming angels and hear the rustle of their wings as they move on that ladder between heaven and earth for you." And this is actually what happens on behalf of believers today. We need to hold on to this and understand it and believe it until we can almost hear the rustle of their wings.**

We learn from Jacob's vision that God is active in our lives when we are in the wilds. And we see that angels really do minister on our behalf! [Hebrews 1:14](#) says, "*Are not all angels ministering spirits sent out to serve those who will inherit salvation?*"

([2 Kings 6:14-17](#)). Elisha and his servant were surrounded by the enemy, and Elisha prayed that his servant's eyes would be opened. Then his servant saw flaming chariots of fire and the armies of God all around. He saw the reality of ministering spirits. That same reality is ours. Someday we will actually see heaven opened and "the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

"Truly, truly" = emphatic emphasis

**Qt: (NIV Commentary)** "[John 1:51](#) introduces Jesus' first use of the "*amen, amen*" formula (obscured in the NIV's "I tell you the truth"). Literally Jesus says, "Truly [*amen*], truly [*amen*] I say to you. ... " In the Synoptic Gospels *amen* occurs only once when the expression is used, but it is characteristically doubled throughout the Fourth Gospel (used twenty-five times). The word... implies certainty or confirmation and generally was appended to corporate prayers ([1 Cor. 14:16](#); cf. [Ps. 41:13](#)). Jesus uses it to *introduce* sayings that for him are solemn or significant..."

- "I say to you" = God talks to man
- "you will see" = guaranteed to be
- "heaven opened" = unimaginable
- "and the angels of God" = (army)
- "ascending" = carrying us up...
- "and descending" = to join fight
- "on" = shows Jesus is THE Ladder
- "the Son of Man." = the God-man

Key Son of Man v's in John: 3:14; 5:27; 6:27; 9:39

[see prophecy: Daniel 7:13-14](#)

[see Matthew 26:64](#)

[link in Hebrews 10:19-39!!!](#)

See Platt's Radical @experiment" #1... Jesus was not concerned about the lost not coming to church, but rather, that the church would not go to the lost...

**Qt:** (MacArthur) “This is the first of thirteen occurrences in John's gospel of the title **Son of Man**, Jesus' favorite way of referring to Himself (He did so about 80 times in the gospels). In John's gospel, it is associated with Jesus' suffering and death ([3:14](#); [8:28](#); [12:34](#)), His provision of salvation ([6:27](#), [53](#)), and His authority to judge ([5:27](#); [9:35](#), [39](#)).”

**“This passage, which records Jesus' call of His first disciples to salvation, pictures the balance of salvation taught throughout Scripture. Salvation takes place when seeking souls come in faith to the Savior who has already sought them.”**

- The MacArthur New Testament Commentary

## Close:

John is claiming that discipleship has two essential elements: Disciples must know who Jesus is, and they must have a personal experience that completely reorients who they are.

One of the striking features of this story is that people who become disciples of Jesus know what to call him. Within the story there is a litany of titles that could almost serve as an index to the New Testament list of names for Jesus:

- The “Word”
- Creator (Word)
- Sustainer (Word)
- Messiah ([vv. 20, 41](#))
- the Prophet ([v. 21](#))
- Jesus ([v. 29](#))
- Lamb of God ([v. 29, 36](#))
- one who baptizes with the Spirit ([v. 33](#))
- chosen [Son] of God ([v. 34](#))
- rabbi/teacher ([vv. 38, 49](#))
- Christ/anointed one ([v. 41](#))
- son of Joseph ([v. 45](#))
- Nazarene ([v. 45](#))
- Son of God ([v. 49](#))
- King of Israel ([v. 49](#))
- Son of Man ([v. 51](#))

No other chapter in the New Testament provides a comprehensive list like this... These names add an anticipatory element to our reading. We are eager to watch them unfold as the story unfolds, as they are picked up again and again and their meaning is enriched. Like the table of contents in a book, this list of names forces us to look ahead at how this remarkable person named Jesus will be explained in the following twenty chapters.

Let's Pray!