

John 1:35-50

The Bridge

Image Church // Behold: Week 4

Introduction

Merry Christmas Image Family! I cannot believe that it's here- Christmas week! I hope you're locked and loaded on your Christmas shopping!

I hate that we couldn't meet in person this week but with the rise of COVID and the increase in the number of potential scares we've even had within our church community we felt it best and most loving to shift to **phase 2** for this weekend, so thank you for your flexibility on that!

Also, Just a reminder that we are not gathering in typical fashion next weekend, the weekend of Christmas which is December the 26th and 27th... Every year we **Sabbath** (or rest) as a church on this weekend we do this for a couple reasons...

- Is to allow all our people that are involved every week to be able to have a weekend of rest...
- Doing this the weekend after Christmas tethers our hearts to the fact that Jesus is our ultimate rest, He was the fulfilment of the Sabbath...
- We also do this as a tangible expression of the reality that **the church isn't an event, it is a group of people**- the church doesn't stop just because we don't gather in the way we normally do...
 - It is vital that we gather regularly, but taking one week out of the year to step back and rest doesn't create a big irregularity swing to negate that...

We have some special discipleship content surrounding that weekend and I will be giving a shot message closing out the year. imageatl.com

Alright, well, we're continuing our **Behold** series this morning where we've been taking a deep dive into **John Chapter 1** with the goal of looking at **who Jesus is**, and the implications surrounding who He is, unpacking what that means, and how it shapes our belief system and our life ...

And the ultimate goal in this, is that you would walk away with a better grasp and understanding of the scope of who Jesus is that leads you into a greater worship of Him...

And, that you would feel better equipped and empowered to talk about Jesus as you share the gospel and Engage with those outside of the faith...

- There are massive foundational truths in **John 1** for how humanity can be right with God!

OK, so if you haven't already done so go ahead and turn to John 1...

We're going to be in the back half this morning starting in **verse 35**... Really quick to fill you in on the **plotline** for what's happened so far...

- John the Baptist a guy **who was sent by God and assigned with a specific task, to bear witness and to testify about Jesus so that people would believe**
- He's been declaring that the deliverer is coming- and he's been baptizing people... *John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people that they should believe in the one who would come after him, that is, in Jesus.* (Acts 19:4)...
- Then on days as John's declaring all of this, Jesus shows up- John didn't know what He looked like or who he was- he was told that way that he would know is that He would see the spirit descend on him (John 1:33)...
- And when this happens John declares, **behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world...**

- o There He is, there's the one I am here to tell you about this is God's promised deliverer!!

And John the Baptist would say in **John 1:34**: *I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.* And the scene closes out and brings us to our text today...Going to make some observations along the way...Land on the key truth!

John 1:35-50

35 The next day, John was standing with two of his disciples. **36** When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"

37 The two disciples heard him say this and followed Jesus. [we will see in a minute that one of these two is Andrew, but the other is left unnamed, most likely it's John who's writing this account] **verse 38**:

38 When Jesus turned and noticed them following him, he asked them, "What are you looking for?"

They said to him, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?" **39** "Come and you'll see," he replied. So they went and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day. It was about four in the afternoon.

Important: Jesus invitation... You see from the beginning that Jesus is about inviting people into spaces to spend time with them...

- Time and space are something Jesus leveraged a lot... He intersected what He was doing with people, bringing them along...
- Something else to notice is that Jesus invited them into the place where he was staying- he invited them into His living space...
 - o Already we see hospitality emerging from Jesus'...
- Jesus loved the mundane, most of his ministry took place in the day-to-day spaces... In homes, around the table- Jesus knew how to leverage space by inviting people in...

By the way something else to notice... John just made this massive claim about who Jesus was and two guys start to follow Him...

What's crazy is that He didn't unpack the trinity, he didn't jump to who He was and what it meant that He was the Lamb of God, he just extended an invitation to spend time with them...

Application:

Already we see a model- if Jesus is inviting people into his living space, if Jesus is practicing hospitality by engaging and inviting people in should His followers not be about the same thing??

How are you at leveraging your time and space to invite people in?

We live in a culture where **our home is our haven...** We just don't see that here, in fact Jesus' living space is the first option for spending time together... I think that says something about how we should leverage our homes...

- Do you see your home as a space to leverage or a fortress for you??

Let's keep reading... Verse 40...

40 Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard John and followed him. **41** He first found his own brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated "the Christ"), **42** and he brought Simon to Jesus. When Jesus saw him, he said, "You are Simon, son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which is translated "Peter").

Now let me stop here and show you something incredible... Peter's name means rock... Now what you will find is that in the Gospel of John Peter is everything but a Rock... Denies Jesus etc...

But here's the important reality that we have to see here, not only does Jesus really know people (*we're going to see that again in just a little bit in verse 43-51*) and not only does He see into them like He's going to do with Nathanael here in a little bit...

But Jesus takes it even a step further... **Jesus calls people and he makes them into who He calls them to be...**¹

- *I'm going to say that one more time, because y'all are not tracking with me...*

That's good news right there!! That When God calls you to Himself, when He saves you, He also makes you into who He wants you to be...

Doesn't matter where you've been, what you've done or who you've done it with **God has the ability to save you and change you!** To mold you and make you!

It means that **if you don't like where you are now there is hope...** If you want to see changes happen in your life it's actually possible but not by your effort, it's all based on Jesus!

- The onus is off you- the work is not yours... This is so refreshing and so freeing to see and hear!!

You understand the kind of **confidence** this should give you?!?

- Taking your eyes off your failures and onto the Savior... When your eyes are there, that's when the change happens!!

WOW! So much goodness in here already!!!

Let's keep reading... verse 43...

43 The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. He found Philip and told him, **"Follow me."**

- That right there is the consistent call of Jesus...

Again, we see a foundational principle being laid out here at the launch of the beginning of Jesus' public ministry...

- And this is such an important concept whether you've been saved for 5min or 50 years...

Jesus invites you into a relationship, not just to a belief system... He invites you into a life of following Him because of who He is...

- **Right theology should always lead to right activity with your heart and your hands...**
- Christianity is about following Jesus, embracing and experiencing Jesus and cultivating a life where He's at the center, He's Lord- He dictates how we live...

And that's not a burden, it's a blessing... When you follow Jesus, you experience a unique joy that is only possible when you follow Him...

Some of you are not following... This is why the Bible is so important it shows you what that looks like and how it's rooted in who Jesus is and what He's done!

Let's keep reading... Verse 44...

44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter. **45** Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the law (and so did the prophets): **Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth."**

Philip goes even further than Andrew did earlier in his explanation of Jesus... Philip **points out the fact that Jesus is the fulfilment of the OT!** This is huge!

There's also another foundational element here that's important for us to see, and it's the second time the text has referenced it...

And it's **the principle of multiplication** where we see new followers of Jesus point others to Jesus who in turn become disciples and repeat the process...

I love this, we see *evangelism* in its simplest form... Friend to friend, by way of personal invitation... We found Jesus come let me show you...

¹ Carson, D. A. (1991). [The Gospel according to John](#) (p. 156).

- Now, I know that there's a lot they don't know yet, but even still you see this personal testimony blossom into an invitation...
 - o I think it's easy for us to get past the simplicity of this...
We found Jesus let me show you!

This is the framework for the model that Jesus would call all of his followers to in **Matthew 28:18-20...**

Let me ask you... Are you living this out?? Are you stagnant because you've over complicated it??

The power of your personal story... They say that we have found- they discovered Jesus- this is their personal testimony! Not there He is, or let me tell you about a guy, but ***I have found Him!***

- **Use your story!**

Ok, let's look at how Nathanael responds to the invitation, he says...

46 "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Nathanael asked him.

Little across the railroad tracks pride...

But it reveals something even more here... You see the beginning of the upside-down approach that Jesus takes...

- Was born in Bethlehem, crazy story how this happened, but it was a fulfillment of the OT... And Bethlehem was David's hometown...

But rather than be known as Jesus from Bethlehem, which would have carried some weight He goes by Jesus of Nazareth... ***Jesus takes the lowest position...***

We talked about this last week, but we see it again here, ***the humility of Jesus...***

- As followers of Him this should be the posture of our hearts as well...

So, Nathanael says no way anything good comes out of Nazareth and look at how Philp responds...

Verse 46... "Come and see," Philip answered.

Here's what I want you to see and here this morning, this is not only an invitation for Nathanael, but this is also an invitation for you...

Remember why John wrote this gospel in the first place, **John 20:31 so that** you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

I don't know where you are, but I want to invite you to come and see this morning, I want to invite you to lean in and listen to who Jesus is, to open up your heart and your mind...

If you're a Christian this come and see should be a tool for you... For the skeptic or the doubter... take them here and invite them into the journey of the book of John!

Let's see what happens next, look at verse 47...

47 Then Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said about him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit."

This is a set up!!

Abraham, Isaac... Isaac has two boys, Jacob and Esau...

Jacob- deceived his brother and father on his birthright taking Esau's birthright... God's grace, God's faithfulness and sovereignty still is faithful to His promise...

Changes Jacob's name to Israel- would become the name of the nation of God's chosen people- chosen as a means to reveal himself to the world...

- He would be the father of the 12 tribes of Israel...

Hint... Remember Jacob, he's about to pop up again here in a bit... Nathanael is an Israelite, but he's not deceptive, he doesn't have bad motives, he's genuinely open to examining the claims made about Jesus...

Apply: And I love it because what you see here is that when you genuinely and willingly open up your heart to explore and examine the reality of Jesus God will meet you there...

- **Appeal to the doubter and the skeptic**
- Challenge the believers to use the book of John to help non-Christians encounter Jesus...

Alright so Jesus shows off to Nathanael- He was willing and open, and Jesus is like ok I will meet you there, and He does this cool call out...

And Nathanael immediately responds by saying this in **verse 48**...

48 "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

And Jesus says... "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you," Jesus answered.

And to that Nathanael replies...

49 "Rabbi," Nathanael replied, "You are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel!"

This is powerful and it's another expansion on the eyewitness description of who Jesus is...

- The Messiah
- The Messiah the one Moses wrote about in the law (and so did the prophets) ...
- Now Nathanael (of all people) takes it further... Calling Jesus the Son of God, the King of Israel!

Very significant that he acknowledges Jesus as the Son of God and King of Israel... These are massive claims...

Let's keep going and finish out chapter 1, Jesus is about to blow the lid off this thing as this scene comes to a close....

Verse 50...

50 Jesus responded to him, "Do you believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this." **51** Then he said, "Truly I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

What the heck does that mean?!?!

Genesis 28:12-16

12 And he [Jacob] dreamed: **A stairway was set on the ground with its top reaching the sky, and God's angels were going up and down on it.** **13** The Lord was standing there beside him, saying, "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your offspring the land on which you are lying. **14** Your offspring will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out toward the west, the east, the north, and the south. All the peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. **15** Look, I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go. I will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." **16** When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it."

Jacob's ladder...

So, when Jesus says: **you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man**

He's saying that he is the stairway, meaning that He has been and will always be the ultimate and only connection between God and creation...

And watch this, after Jacob's dream he said *surely the Lord is in this place* and so he named the place where he had the dream **Bethel** which means **house of God**...

What we see here is that **Jesus is the new Bethel, He is the place where God is present, heaven has opened up and Jesus has appeared.** And from now on, Jesus will be the place where God appears most clearly among men, and where men find their way into fellowship with God. There are no holy geographic places anymore designated by God as his meeting place with man. Jesus is that meeting place.²

And so, Jesus is telling Nathanael you're going to see greater manifestations of my glory than what you just saw when I looked into you and called out where you had been...

Nathanael, you're going to see that I am the definitive link between God and man... *That when God moves toward humanity He moves on Jesus, and when man moves toward God, He moves on the Jesus!*³
→ Christmas is about God w/ us!

And just **2 chapters** later Jesus would bring even more clarity to what this means and how it would look in **John 3:14-16...**

14 "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, **15** so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. **16** For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

- Gospel → Christmas → Tree

Conclusion [VAMP]

Listen, *Christmas is all about the tree, it always has been about a tree, even from the very foundation of the world.*

But it's not the tree that most people think about around this time of year. It's a different tree...

*It wouldn't be the tree in the den that you decorate, **it would be on a hill of execution.***

From the first breath that Jesus took, he was walking toward this tree. Every step He would take, would be walking to the cross.

Jesus knew when He came to earth that the cross was his destiny. It was the only way that what was broken at the garden with Adam and Eve could be restored.

In this Christmas season, you cannot lose sight of the sacrifice that would come from the baby that we celebrate... You need to be reminded of the tree that Jesus came to hang on for your sin and my sin...

Christmas is a story of that Tree- and the one who came to hang on that tree to satisfy God's requirements so that we could be restored!⁴

Would you see and believe and would that belief captivate your heart and reorient your life... Would you see that Who Jesus is has massive implications for your life and how you live...

I want to close with this quote, I think it embodies my hope for you this Christmas season...

Thomas à Kempis or **Thomas von Kempen** (A German-Dutch author who wrote the imitation of Christ one of the best known Christian devotions) says:

Follow thou me. I am the way and the truth and the life. Without the way there is no going; without the truth there is no knowing; without the life there is no living. I am the way which thou must follow; the truth which thou must believe; the life for which thou must hope. I am the inviolable way; the infallible truth, the never-ending life. I am the straightest way; the sovereign truth; life true, life blessed...

² John Piper. *Son of God, Sone of Man, King of Israel.*

³ Ibid

⁴ Adapted, some language taken from Paul David Tripp: *Make the most of your Christmas tree.*

- Appeal to non-Christian
- Appeal to the impact on the Christian
 - Peter*
 - Your story to point others to Jesus
 - Your heart and your hands

How is your Christmas going to look different in light of Jesus?