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Series: The Gospel of John
Message: Jacob's Ladder

Transcribed Message
December 1, 2024
John 1:43-51

If we were to take a few minutes this morning and go around the room and ask different ones to share their story about how they came to Christ, how they came to understand the gospel, I know three things for sure. One, everybody's story would be different. Everybody's story would be unique just because of the way God works in each of our lives, the different circumstances that we come out of, our different backgrounds. Everybody's story would be unique. Everybody's story would be different.

Everybody's story, secondly, would be special just because as those stories get told, you realize how God just purposely, individually, providentially has arranged so many of the circumstances of our lives in such a way that on that very day when he calls us to himself by means of faith in Christ. He has made us a part of his family.

The third thing I know for sure is that we would all have our socks blessed right off us if we were to do that. So that's why we're not going to do that right now. But everybody's story is unique. Everybody's story is special. Everybody's story is worthy of being told. This is exactly, I think, what we've been seeing in the Gospel of John in this first chapter, especially this last part of the chapter.

We go there again this morning. We look at verses 43 to 51 and we want to see this by way of our big idea. A disciple is simply a learner. If you consider yourself a disciple of Jesus Christ, it simply means you're a learner. And if you're not learning, then you're not a disciple by way of the New Testament definition of that word. And what we learn about, of course, is we learn that Jesus is all that we need. His gospel is sufficient. His work in our life is enough. That's the good news that we get to share with other people that God brings into our life.

Let's do a final review of chapter one. Chapter one is behind us as of this morning. When we look at this first chapter and what we've seen to this point, you remember in those opening 18 verses, we have this amazing prologue. And in this amazing prologue, this

theological discourse that John gives to us, he basically set before us two things. Jesus is the Word and Jesus is God. And he frames that in such a way that he tells us that that Jesus is the preexistent one. Jesus is the coexistent one. Jesus is the self-existent one. When you put all of that together, Jesus is the Son of God. He's very God of very God, and very man of very man.

Then secondly, we were introduced to this man who is sent from God, this man sent from God, whose name, of course, is John the Baptist. A couple of weeks ago, when I said I really like that line – this man sent from God, whose name was John – someone asked me, why do you like that line so much? Well, here's part of the reason why I like that. There are not very many people in the Bible who have their name linked with a descriptor that says something about God immediately after their name. John the Baptist was a man sent from God, whose name was John. Abraham is described as being a friend of God, right? Enoch is a man who walked with God. You don't have very many descriptors like that. Now, obviously, you have that wonderful description in the whole chapter 11 of Hebrews, but these individuals have this description that's given to us in a special way. So that's part of it. And John the Baptist is, of course, the forerunner. He's the one who's going ahead of the Messiah, and he's preparing the way, and he does that.

And then John, the evangelist, the writer of this gospel, introduces us to the first disciple. Jesus and the first disciples is now what we've been seeing in these remaining parts of this first chapter. The first guy is Andrew. Andrew is called by Jesus to be his disciple. Then it's John, the evangelist, the writer of the gospel himself, who was before this a disciple of John the Baptist. And then there's Peter, who had previously been known as Simon. Then he's going to be known as Cephas in the Aramaic and Peter in the Greek. So those were the first three guys that we were introduced to. Now, as you look at that and we'll add to that this morning, you think of God's call and it's true in this first chapter of the gospel of John and it's true in every one of your stories as well.

There are certain definitive things that you can just look at in your life and say, this is how God has called me to himself. And of course, the first thing that we see is we have a seeking Savior. We know that Jesus is the one who said he came to seek and to save that which was lost. We have a seeking Savior. You may not even know it right now. You may not even

realize that you have a Savior that's seeking after you, that's pursuing you. And yet one day we trust God will make that very clear to you.

Then the Holy Spirit is the one who prepares. The Holy Spirit is the one who's tilling the soil of our heart to help us be prepared for when that gospel gets dropped into our life. There is that preparation. Apart from the preparation of the Holy Spirit, we're not understanding this. The natural man, Paul says in 1 Corinthians, does not have the mind of God. He does not understand spiritual things. We know then finally we respond, and we respond because of these previous things that God is doing in our life by way of seeking us and preparing us when we respond to this gospel.

The consistent message of the gospel writers is described in two words, and it's just simply follow me. Follow me. Let's do that. Let's look at two more stories this morning. The first one is the testimony and the story of a man named Philip. Look at verse 43 and 44 again. The next day, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and he said to him, follow me. Now, Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Now, we're not surprised, are we, when we realize we have another day. Verse 43 starts off, as we've seen before, in verse 29, in verse 35, now verse 43. And we have another day marked out in John's chronology of the first week of the ministry of Jesus. And remember, last week we noted the importance of that is not just to give us a chronology, but I think, again, to establish that these things happened in real time, space, history. John is recording for us what has historically happened. I think more than that, it's to say to us these were very impactful days. This is the first week in which the Son of God, who is the self-existent one, the co-existent one, the pre-existent one steps into this humanity. This is his first week of public ministry, and it's impactful, it's significant, it's momentous. People's lives are being changed. John is saying in this first week their eternity is being changed. I think that's the significance. So we note another day.

But on this day, there's a rather ordinary guy named Philip that Jesus calls to be his follower. Before we comment further on Philip and his own experience, would you just notice in that 43rd verse that there's this shift in geography? We're now going from where John the Baptist was doing ministry somewhere east of the Jordan, having come up from the wilderness to engage in his public ministry, somewhere east of the Jordan. It's an unknown place. But in

any event, verse 43 tells us that Jesus left that area where he, too, had been baptized. And now he goes up into Galilee. Now, that's going to be even more significant a little bit later, which we'll comment on.

But just look at the map for a moment. As you look at the map, you realize that the southern part of Israel is where we refer to as Judea, where Jerusalem is. And Jerusalem, of course, is the center of religious activity. This is where all the moving and shaking goes on within the religious life of the nation. And unfortunately, at this point in Israel's history, there wasn't really any vitality to that religious activity, was there? This is where the religious leaders came from to go out and challenge John the Baptist – Who are you? What are you doing? Who has given you the authority to do it? We don't know who you are, and we have the authority to let people do things like this. You're not operating under our authority. So that's the southern part of Judea.

Then you look to the north and there's Galilee. And Galilee is an agricultural area. It's as far removed geography wise and philosophy wise as you could imagine. The people of Jerusalem, the religious leaders, looked down on Galilee in a sense. You have this picture here of these two differing perspectives. Jesus now goes into Galilee. It's not unlike what we experience today, right? I mean, we have the East Coast, and we have the West Coast. And when they fly over the Midwest and this part of the country, what do they call it? They call it the flyover zone. They don't want to land here, and we don't want them to. No, we want them to land. So, of course, we want them to land here. It's a good life. But that's the kind of mentality that existed here. Jesus goes up into Galilee.

Now, you notice also Peter and Andrew are from Bethsaida. You've got this group of men that all know each other, and they're all being chosen by Christ to be his followers. It reminds me that study after study shows that 80 percent of people who come to faith in Christ, who respond to the gospel, do so because they're connected to that gospel by somebody they know. And that shouldn't be surprising, should it? It's called friendship evangelism. It's called connection with people, isn't it? 80 percent. Just think of your story. Now, there's going to be 20 percent of you, perhaps, that a total stranger introduced you to Christ. But 80 percent of you, either by means of family or friends or whatever that looked like, 80 percent of you, if you

look back and remember when you came to Christ, there was somebody that you knew in your life that had a part in introducing you to Christ. That's clearly what's happening here. These guys all know each other. Some of them are brothers.

But here's what I want you to see. I want you to see that Jesus, in calling these different men to himself, does so in such a way that he's not looking for a cookie cutter approach. He's not going out there and finding 12 men to ultimately be his disciples. These men are being called as disciples. Many of them will become apostles. But he's not out there trying to do some cookie cutter thing and finding everybody that looks alike and everybody that talks alike and everybody that acts alike and everybody that thinks alike. That's not it at all. He's going to pick, as we've already seen and will continue to see, he's picking people who are very different. They're different in terms of their background. They're different in terms of their intelligence. They're different in terms of their spiritual giftedness or their giftedness to function and do things that that God will use in their calling. Their personalities are different.

The same thing is true here. I mean, here we are as the gathered community of Covenant. And the truth is, we're all very different in so many ways. God has called people from very different backgrounds, different circumstances. All these things make for such a beautiful picture in the body of Christ. Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter one, remember at verse 26, for consider your calling, brothers. Not many of you were wise according to the worldly standards. Not many were powerful. Not many were of noble birth. It's good to remember that "M" word. it doesn't say any, does it? It says many. It's not many. There are some who are maybe in some sense set apart from the rest of us by means of their gifts and their abilities and all of that, but God says, no, I'm choosing. Just the everyday ordinary people of this world. We are thankful for those that have special gifts but most of us just operate within a very ordinary sense. We're so grateful to God that that's whom he has chosen.

That's Philip. Philip is just an ordinary guy. And then you say, why? Why? Why do you make that observation? Because we have very few pictures into the life of Philip. But the ones that we have, this is what we have. We have his calling here. But then when you get to the sixth chapter, Jesus is getting ready to feed the five thousand. The only time in the gospel account that Jesus ever asks his disciples for advice and the reason is clear as to why he wouldn't do it

again. But the only time Jesus asks his disciples for advice was when he's getting ready to feed the five thousand. And before he displays his miraculous power, he says specifically to Philip, Philip, what do you think we should do to feed all these people? There are five thousand men, there's women and children. Philip and the disciples have already seen the miraculous work of Jesus. They have seen some amazing things already to this point. And Philip, instead of saying, well, Lord, you know best what to do in that regard. I mean, we've seen you do amazing things. Feeding these people isn't anything for you. What does Philip instead do? Philip gets out his calculator and he says, OK, we got five thousand men here. We have women and children. If we could give them fish and chips for five dollars a piece. Jesus, this is a number that we can't possibly come up with. We need to just send them home. And what does Jesus say to Philip? Oh, Philip. Oh, Philip, you haven't watched anything that's happened so far.

And then the next time we see him and the only other time we see him is in John 14. And Jesus just says in John 14, six, I'm the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the father, but by me. Then he goes on to say that because you have seen me, you've seen the Father. And that just doesn't quite register with Philip. What does he say to our Lord? He says, Lord, would you please show us the Father? And what does Jesus say again? He says, oh, Philip. Oh, Philip, you have seen the Father because you've seen me. I am showing you the Father. You don't need to see something else or someone else. You're seeing the Father in me. I and the Father are one. This is the picture that we have of Philip.

Now, we don't want to be hard on Philip because there's one very positive thing that the scriptures do say about Philip. And notice this. He was a student of the Word. He was a student of the Word. He may have been ordinary in some respects. Maybe when those moments came to him, he didn't exactly hit it out of the park. Maybe it was just a slow dribbler down to first. But at least at this point, this man steps up and he's a student of the Word. And look at verse 45. We'll just look ahead to that verse. Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, we have found him of whom Moses and the law and the prophets wrote: Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Philip is a disciple. He's a learner. He is a pursuer of the things of God. He had been reading and studying the Old Testament Scriptures, that which he had available to him.

I call this the progress of revelation, because we know if all you had was the Old Testament, you don't have nearly what we have today in our study, do you? You don't have this fully developed picture. In the progress of revelation, as God is making himself known in all these different ways to the Old Testament, pointing forward to the coming Messiah, Philip was giving his heart to the study of those things. He was learning what it is that the Old Testament said about the one who was going to be the coming Messiah.

Remember the one word that we use to describe the Old Testament. All the Old Testament, we said, can be captured in one word. Remember, that word starts with an A. And all the Old Testament is pointing forward to and looking at the coming Messiah, and that word that captures all of that is the word "anticipation". So that was Philip. He didn't have what we have, but he was in a sense of anticipation because he knew enough about what the Old Testament said about the coming Messiah.

When we get to the Gospels, I'm just going to keep going with this. When we get to the gospel, it's the word what? Starts with an M. He's here. Manifestation. He's here, he's among us, we see him. Then we get to the book of Acts, and we need to tell everybody. It's the word proclamation. Then when we get into the epistles, it's the word that starts with an E and we have to explain it to everybody. I just gave it to you. Explanation. When you get to the book of Revelation, it's all coming to a great climax and an end. And it's the word consummation.

What Philip had was a spirit and a sense of anticipation. He was a student of God's Word. He didn't have all the details, but he was looking. It takes me right to the passage that I talked about last week in that Luke 24 passage, when Jesus is walking with the two disciples. They're all depressed and discouraged. They think Jesus is now simply a prophet. They've given up any idea that he's the Messiah, that he is the Son of God. And Jesus comes alongside of them. And remember, he begins to explain to them, beginning with Moses and all the prophets, why the Messiah was going to have to come and why he was going to die and why he was going to rise again.

And you know what Jesus said to those disciples? Oh, you slow of heart to learn. Oh, you foolish ones. He rebukes them because they had they didn't have the spirit that Philip

displays here. Philip doesn't understand it all, but he's looking. And that's what I think we want to see. That needs to be our heart as well.

Notice the second thing about Philip, this unconditional devotion to Christ, this unconditional devotion to Jesus. What did Jesus say to Philip? He said, follow me. And what did Philip do? Well, he followed him. He obeyed. He was willing to follow the one that he had been reading and studying about and anticipating his coming. And this takes us right to the truth that you cannot separate Jesus from the Word of God. If somebody ever says something so silly as I just want Jesus. I don't want all that doctrine. I don't want all that theology. I don't need all that other stuff. You just simply say to them, well, how do you know who this Jesus is? How do you know this, Jesus? If all you want is Jesus and you don't want to dive into the depths of the prologue of John's gospel and you don't want all that doctrine and all that theology, how do you know this Jesus that you're talking about? That's the only way we know him. We know him through doctrine and theology and through the teaching of Scripture. It's the same thing that sometimes people say, just give me Jesus. I don't need the church. You know, the church is just bad experiences. It just doesn't do anything for me. All I need is Jesus. But that doesn't work. That's not New Testament discipleship. Jesus said, follow me. Jesus loves the church. He gave his life for it.

So here this is what this is. The lordship of Christ on display in Philip's life. He is willing unconditionally just to follow our Lord. Jesus didn't say, now, Philip, when I call you, this is what your life is going to look like. And tradition tells us that Philip was martyred in a very, very horrible way. But here he just says, follow me. And he follows him. And when Jesus says to us, as he does repeatedly in Scripture, follow me, it is a call to unconditional lordship in our life. We don't get to keep parts of our life for ourselves. And Christ's heart, Christ's home, that little booklet that talks about the priorities of life, how you open up every part of your life to Christ. You don't get to take your finances and your money and say, OK, I'm going to handle this, Lord. You don't get to take your personal social life and your dating life and your sex life and all of that and say, no, this is just for me. I make decisions for myself in this area of my life. Lord, you can have everything else, but I get to manage this over here by myself. No, we don't do that. It's unconditional devotion to Christ.

Now, what happens when you answer Christ's call like Philip does to follow him? What happens next? Well, you have to tell somebody. You have to tell somebody, don't you? You want somebody else to know. Let's look at the testimony of Nathaniel in verses 45 through 49. And there's an interesting question and an even better answer, I think, that comes from Philip. Verse 45. Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, we have found him of whom Moses and the law and the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Now, when we read that in our English Bible, we don't get the full emphasis here, because in the Greek text, the emphatic statement at the beginning of this sentence is we have found him. That's the way verse 45 begins. That's at the very front of the sentence. We have found him. Who's the "we", do you think? Well, I think he's talking about obviously himself and he's talking about his friends, Peter and Andrew, and how it is that we have found the one that we've been anticipating all for this time.

What is Nathaniel's response? Nathaniel's response to the "we have found him" is both a response that is prejudicial, but it's also theological. Just look at what he says back. He says, can anything good come out of Nazareth? Is that possible? Nathaniel said to him, can anything good come out of Nazareth? That was his response. Why does he respond in that way? Well, he first responds in that way because it's just a prejudicial mindset towards the city of Nazareth. Remember, I made that comment about Galilee being viewed unfavorably from those who were in the center of power in Jerusalem. Well, if that's the way they viewed Galilee, then it is said that Nazareth was viewed as kind of a backwoods type of a community.

Listen to what D.A. Carson says about the view that people had, not just of Galilee, but of Nazareth itself, as Galileans were frequently despised by people from Judea. It appears that even fellow Galileans despised people from Nazareth. It would be a little bit like Norman and Stillwater, and Stillwater and Norman. You understand and appreciate a little bit of the prejudicial nature of viewing somebody from one of those communities. That's what's happening here.

But it's not just prejudice in the heart of Nathaniel. It's also a theological problem. And the theological problem that Nathaniel has is as he has studied in the Old Testament. He hasn't found anything in the Old Testament that says that Jesus is going to come from Nazareth. In

fact, if you read the whole of the Old Testament, you don't read anything about Jesus coming from Nazareth. You read, for instance, in Micah, chapter five and verse two, Bethlehem, Ephrathah, too little to be viewed with any sense of importance. That's the perspective of Bethlehem at that time. And Jesus was born there.

But then when you get to the Gospels, Jesus is never said to be from Bethlehem. He's always said to be from Nazareth. In a theological sense, Nathaniel is right on the mark when he says, can anything good come out of Nazareth? I didn't know that there was any connection between Nazareth and a Messiah. I don't read anything in the Old Testament about why the Messiah we should be looked for as coming from Nazareth. In that sense, Philip is asking the right question.

Now, look at the answer. Philip's answer is simply right on, isn't it? He says, come and see. Come and see. What a great response. We talked last week about when there are questions that are asked. Don't cut questions off when somebody asks hard questions. Don't cut them off. Don't look down on people who are questioning things. Even if they're questioning things in the Bible, even if they're questioning things about Christianity, accept that as an opportunity to say to them, come and see. Let's look at this together. I think that's exactly what Philip does here. He invites further inquiry, doesn't he?

Then we have this shift in the narrative to the supernatural insight of our Lord. It begins with Jesus's comments to Nathaniel. Jesus saw Nathaniel, verse 47, coming toward him and said of him, behold, an Israelite, indeed, in whom there is no deceit. Jesus saw. Nathaniel, by the way, is the guy who later on in the list of all of the apostles is known as Bartholomew. We never read of Nathaniel as an apostle in the list, but we always read of a guy named Bartholomew. Bartholomew is his surname. Nathaniel is his first name. Nathaniel is going to at some point become one of the twelve, and we know him as Bartholomew. But Jesus says of him, there's no deceit in this man. There's no deceit. There's no pretense. There's no duplicity. What you get with Nathaniel is just exactly what you see. What you hear from Nathaniel, he's just sharing his heart with you. You never have to wonder where he's coming from. You never have to wonder what's his angle? That's not the way he approaches things. He just puts it out there. No phony, no hypocrisy. What a wonderful thing to have said about you.

I even think his initial skepticism, can anything good come out of Nazareth? I think what Jesus is saying is that's a sincere ask. That's a good question. Now, Nathaniel to Jesus, Nathaniel back to Jesus. Verse 48, Nathaniel said to him, how do you know me? Jesus answered him before Philip called you when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. Nathaniel answered him, Rabbi, you are the son of God. You are the king of Israel. How do you know me? Nathaniel wants to know. Jesus's response elicited from Nathaniel in verse 49. You are the son of God. You are the King of Israel. Now, we probably should understand those as synonymous when he says you're the Son of God. You're the King of Israel. You're the King of Israel. You're the Son of God.

Now, as we've seen before in this opening chapter, these people are saying more than they understand. You're the Son of God. Believe me, Nathaniel did not understand the full implication of that. The Old Testament often talk about the King of Israel as being the Son of God. There is a sense in which he's acknowledging something about the anticipated one. But it's probably fair to say that Nathaniel is saying way more than he fully realizes at this time in his life. He realized that this man knew him well. He knew him better than he knows himself. And I think this exchange between Nathaniel and Philip, and I'm going to comment on it more in just a moment, I think what is happening here is that Jesus is going to tell Nathaniel something about what he was thinking about while he was sitting under the fig tree.

You notice we have that exchange when it says that at the end of verse 48, before Philip called you when you were under the fig tree. That's the idea of the fig tree is to be understood. Some Bible teachers think it's just a way of describing that you're at home. Fig tree symbolizes that you're at home. Other people say, no, to sit under the fig tree was a symbolism for just having your quiet time. If you want to put it in our vernacular today or just a time of meditation so that the fig tree is really a place where people would think and contemplate. That's what he's saying. Jesus reveals his omniscience to Nathaniel.

It takes us right to Psalm 139, doesn't it? Where the psalmist says of God towards us. I want you to know, I know your thoughts before you think them. I know your words before you speak them. Now you can talk in your community group about whether that is a comforting truth or a discomfoting truth. I'll let you guys work on that a little bit in community group. But

that's a part of what Nathaniel is expressing here. You know me more than I could have ever imagined anybody would know me. You've discovered something about me that nobody else knows.

Just look at verses 50 and 51, this further testimony of Jesus. Jesus answered him because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe me? You will see greater things than these. And he said to him, truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man. Verse 51 begins in a very familiar way, doesn't it? Truly, truly. Amen. Amen.

Now, here's the interesting thing. In all the gospel accounts – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – John's the only gospel writer who creates that double statement. Truly, truly, this simply means amen. It's a way that Jesus introduces what's to follow by saying, pay attention. This is very important. John's the only one of the gospel writers who doubles those words up. Truly, truly. In your ESV journal, you can put this as the first instance. Truly, truly, he'll do it. Twenty-five times in the gospel of John to say to us, this is important.

What is it that's so important? Well, he takes us back to Genesis 28. That's why there's a look back here, isn't there? He takes us on a look back and he's saying Genesis 28. Remember that story? Jacob is fleeing. Jacob is known as what? The deceiver. This is an interesting interplay here. Jacob's known as the deceiver. Jesus says of Nathaniel, there is no deception in this man. This man is without guile. He's without duplicity. He's not a phony. He's real. Jacob was all the opposite of that. He was duplicitous. He was a deceiver. He was a phony often until God really got a hold of his life. But it's Jacob fleeing from his brother Esau. And remember, he spends the night and as he's sleeping with his head on a rock, which would make you have a vision probably anyway. He's sleeping.

Remember what he sees? He sees this vision of a ladder, doesn't he? And Jesus taps into that and he says, go back to that dream of Jacob. This is what I think. The Scriptures don't tell us this, but I think this is just kind of sanctified curiosity or sanctified imagination. Rather, I think what happened in the previous interchange, when Jesus speaks to Nathaniel and says, I know the thoughts that you're thinking, I think he's taking him to the time that Nathaniel was sitting under the fig tree, whatever that symbolizes. I think Jesus had a conversation with Nathaniel

about the very things he was thinking about. And I think Nathaniel was contemplating this story in Genesis, this story about Jacob and this vision and this dream. That's what Jesus taps into. That's why Nathaniel is blown away by the fact that Jesus knows what he's thinking about when he's sitting under that fig tree. That he's meditating on Genesis 28. And Jesus taps into that and he says, this is what you were thinking about.

And now I want you to know why it's important, because it gives us a picture of Jesus as the mediator between God and man. That's the picture. That's the anticipation that's happening in Genesis 28. Jesus is the ladder. Jesus is the revealer of truth. Jesus is the connection between heaven and earth. Since Genesis three, with the fall of Adam and Eve into sin, there's been a chasm between God and man. That's the chasm that we're all born into this world with.

If you know Jesus as your Savior this morning, that chasm has been bridged, and Jesus is the bridge. He's the ladder. If you've not put your trust in Jesus this morning, there's still a chasm between you and God. And you no doubt at times sense the distance of God from you, because that's the condition into which we're all born. Jesus says to him, I am the one who bridges that gap. I am the God man. There is no other way. You can't get there on your own. If we're going to experience the glories of heaven, it's going to be because Jesus has mediated those glories, and Jesus has brought that revelation to us. Jesus is the one who makes that all possible. What does Jacob name that place? Bethel, house of God. Jesus is the house of God. Jesus is the one who makes heaven known to us.

Now, this last thing very quickly. The testimony of Jesus regarding John the Baptist, John the evangelist. John the evangelist gives us the last testimony of this first chapter. I just listed out for you the ten names that appear in the first chapter, all referring to Jesus. He is the Word. He is God. He is the Light. He is Jesus Christ. He's the Lamb. He's the Rabbi. He's the Messiah. He's the Son of God. He's the King of Israel. He's the Son of Man. All of that comes to us in the first 51 verses of the opening chapter of the Gospel of John. We're only in chapter one, and John the evangelist can't be more clear as to who Jesus is and to why he came.

Where did we start off? We started off and said if we're a disciple, we're a learner. That's what we want to be – a disciple or a learner. We learned that Jesus is all that we need.

The world tells us we need all kinds of things. Jesus says, ultimately, what you need is me. And these words reveal that to us, the sufficiency of God in our life.

What do we take away? My friends, we can't improve on the invitation to come and see. One of the greatest invitation statements that we could ever imagine is that come and see. When you respond, you see the glory of the Son of Man, the Lord of heaven. The Son of Man is a messianic name. It's a messianic term. It appears in Daniel 7. Jesus is that one. He is the one who calls himself the Son of Man.

Look at John chapter three as we close in verse 14. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. That invitation is the same as when John the evangelist wrote it as it is today. If you've never put your trust and your faith in Jesus Christ alone ... that simply means you're not relying on anything that you can do. Not one thing that you can do to earn the forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life. It's all by grace that we're saved. If you believe that and you believe that Jesus is that one, God says, I will close that chasm. I will close that gap. Jesus literally is the one who mediates for us this gap between us and God. Put your trust in Christ this morning as your personal savior and he will forgive your sin, and he will give you the gift of eternal life.

Let's pray. Father God, I'm so very thankful for this opening chapter of John's gospel, this revelation of who, Jesus, you are. Father, we thank you for this revelation about your Son, that he is our mediator, the God-man, the one who bridges this gap that sin has created. And yet now Jesus has made it possible for us to be in a relationship with you, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Father, we're grateful for that. We're grateful for your Spirit. Please open the heart of anyone here this morning, anyone who's listening, who has never put their trust and faith in Christ alone, that they may in this opening Sunday of Advent realize that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior that you have promised. We pray this in Jesus's name, amen.