

# True Discipleship

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**John 1:43-51**  
**October 31, 2021**

So the story is told of a man named Thomas Huxley. He was known as an agnostic, and he was, he got the nickname Darwin's Bulldog because he would vigorously defend the theory of evolution in 19th-century England. One Sunday, though, as most of the people that he knew were preparing to go to church, he approached a guy that he, that was known for his very solid and very real commitment to Jesus. He said to him, "Suppose you don't go to church today, suppose you stay with me and tell me why you are a Christian." But the man said, "You could demolish my arguments in an instant. I'm not clever enough to argue with you." Huxley replied. "I don't want to argue with you. I just want you to tell me simply what this Christ means to you." So the man stayed with him that day and very plainly told Huxley about his commitment to Jesus. When he finished, he looked up and he saw that there were tears filling Huxley's eyes. He said, "I would give my right hand," Huxley said, "if only I could believe that." Well, I'm speaking to a room of people here and many more online who do believe that, right? Who believe in Jesus, who've committed their lives and really their eternities to him.

The New Testament term for that is a disciple. A disciple is a learner, a follower. One who puts such trust in the person that he or she adopts the teachings and examples of that person as their very own. In our text, as well as what we saw last week, we see the very first disciples, the first followers of Jesus, their names were Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathaniel, and John, the author. Along with James, John's brother, this likely constitutes the first six followers of Jesus. A group of people now that what? That encompass the world. This is always Jesus' plan, that this this small group of men with the message of who he is and what he did would spread to every corner of our planet. He told them Matthew 28:19, "Go and make disciples of all nations." And aren't you glad He said that because you and I are are benefiting from that right now. You see, these men made disciples, who made disciples, who made disciples on and on and on down the centuries, in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East. Some got on ships or even got on horses and and went to other parts of the world, far away places, even a place like here. They lived their lives, they farmed, they fished, they got married, they had children, they had friends, they worked jobs, they went to school, played sports, had fun, went on vacations. Did all that stuff, but the mission never stopped. No matter where they were, no matter what they were doing, no matter where they found themselves. In the very prime of their lives or on their deathbeds, they made disciples. They told people about Jesus, called on them to follow him, to believe in him, to give their lives to him. And that's why that message still to this day is spreading all over the world, because this is the mark of true disciples, disciples who are doing what their master told them to do.

And we'll see this true discipleship in our text today. But before we get there, I want you to look at verse 43, our text begins, "the next day," all right, "the next day." This is the third time this phrase has been used in John chapter 1, "the next day." So if we've had the phrase, "the next day," said three times, how many total days is that? It's four days. Tricked you, four days. Four consecutive days that John is recounting for us. In these four days, they mark the end of John the Baptist public ministry, at least what we have in the Bible, and it marks the beginning of Jesus'

ministry in the public, in the public square. So this is the transition from the Old Testament to the New Testament. This is preparation from, hey, the Messiah is coming, to what? Hey, the Messiah is here. Verse 43 says, "Jesus," it says, "decided to go to Jerusalem," or sorry, "to Galilee." So we know that's where he wants to go, but it means we don't know where these events took place. It could have happened in Bethany, verse 28, where all the other events took place. It could have happened while he was traveling north up to Galilee, which is the region around that big body of water in Northern Israel called the Sea of Galilee. Maybe it happened on the way there, maybe it happened when he got there, maybe it happened in Bethsaida, which is a city named in verse 44. We don't know where much of this took place, but we do know that it took place because these are historical accounts.

Now as we get into text, I want us to see true discipleship in Jesus' actions. Look at verse 43, it says, "He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow me.'" Philip, it's interesting, is just inserted into the text without any introduction, suggesting that he was known by John's readers. And what we find in the other gospels, whether it's Matthew 10, Luke 6, Mark 3, or even in Acts chapter 1, he's listed in those lists in every single one, and he's always listed fifth, which I think is the order that he became a disciple. Think about it, Andrew tells Peter, John, the author, is the unnamed disciple, and we talked about that last week, he probably tells his brother James, and then there's Jesus calling on Philip to follow him. And we don't know much about Philip. Only John tells us more than his name. But what we do know about Philip does not put him into the category of impressive. He's not an impressive guy. He's just an ordinary guy who's you find whether it's John 6, John 12 or John 14. He's often confused, not really sure what's going on, and that's just kind of him. But notice Jesus seeks him out, he found Philip. He personally calls this man who is anything but special, which shows there's a variety on Jesus' team. You've got Peter the type A leader, go get him, and you've got this guy who's just kind of like following, not really sure what's going on all the time.

Philip though responds to those words, "follow me," and he becomes a lifelong follower, disciple of Jesus who lived and died taking the message of Jesus into the region that we now call Turkey. Foxe's Book of Martyrs says he was eventually captured, whipped, thrown into jail and crucified, martyred in the city of Hierapolis in 54 AD. And so I want you to notice just the power of one word in Greek, two words in English, "follow me." And those words transform this man's life forever. Verse 44 says that Philip is from a city called Bethsaida, and it says there, "the city of Andrew and Peter." Which you only put that if the people that he's writing to know that's the city and knows who Andrew and Peter already are. So the idea here is that the people are familiar with this city, it's kind of famous; and notice, Philip comes from the place where Andrew and Peter lived. Which means, because these cities are not massive, we would be the size of one of these cities right now. Which means that they they they likely knew each other. Which as you think about it, here's Jesus' disciples are coming from people who have existing relationships. Andrew, his brother Peter, John, his brother James, Andrew and John knowing each other, now people that lived in the same city, Phillip becoming a follower of Jesus.

Now, when I was in Israel in 2017, I remember our tour guide telling us that nobody knows where the city of Bethsaida is. But I remember we were driving down the road and he pointed off into a region and he goes, "We think it might be somewhere over there, but we're not quite sure." Well now, archeologists are absolutely sure they found the city of Bethsaida. It means the house of fish. And even as early as last week, did you see this? There was an article that came out that they've discovered a very well-known ancient church, a church that people in the ancient world

knew about. And they knew about this specific church because it was built on top of the house that Andrew and Peter grew up in. So you can go search for these articles, I'm pretty sure they were last week where you can learn about all the stuff that they have found in the city of Bethsaida. One last thing about this city that I think is significant, Matthew 11, Jesus is talking about these cities that, that reject him and he says, "Woe to those cities." And one of those cities is Bethsaida. And he says to the people of Bethsaida, it will be better for you to be a resident of Sodom on the day of judgment than to be a resident of Bethsaida. Think about it. The God of the universe puts on skin, comes to your city, walks around, calls on you to follow him, and they're like, "no thanks." Jesus is like, "you're cursed, woe to you." And he suggests that part of that curse is that the city will be abandoned. And guess what? Every single city named Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum, every single one of them in ruins today. Jesus is a true Prophet. What he says comes to pass.

So think about it though, here is this cursed city, it's going to be better for you if you're part of Sodom than in that city. And yet as he curses it he has rescued a man, Philip, out of it and changed his life forever. So what we see in Philip is that people become true disciples when Jesus makes them disciples. Which means this whole process starts with point #1) **Make Disciples**. That's how it starts, we make disciples. Jesus is the one who ultimately makes disciples. His powerful word, as we see here in Philip, compels it. The first step in the process of discipleship is when a person is made a disciple. Jesus makes people disciples when he saves them from their sins.

Let's see Jesus do it again, look at verse 47, "Jesus saw Nathaniel coming toward him and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit." So Nathaniel and Jesus are coming together, and Jesus sees him coming towards him and says, "You're a guy in whom there's no deceit." We would say he's the real deal. Now you and I don't see the importance of these words that that Nathaniel saw in these words. Jesus seems to touch on some core conviction in Nathaniel's heart, maybe integrity, honesty, I don't want to be deceptive or I don't want to be phony, but genuine, trustworthy. Whatever it was, we know that this hits at something in his core because of the way that he responds, verses 48, "Nathaniel said to him, 'How do you know me?'" He nails his character and it shocks Nathaniel. He's saying, "how do you know me when we've never met before? How do you know that about me?" Well, we know the answer, right? Starting in chapter 1, verse 1, all the way to this moment right now, we know why Jesus knows him before he meets him. Why? Because Jesus is what? God. That's right. Verse 48, Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Now this is not, you didn't see me but I saw you, you were sitting under that fig tree and I saw, I saw Philip coming for you, and I was just kind of watching it. It's not what Jesus is saying here. What John is showing us is Jesus has supernatural knowledge. He not only has knowledge of a man's heart, but he had, he even had knowledge of his location before they ever met. And this verification of his thoughts and his location was enough for Nathaniel to follow Jesus. As you have to see, so we read that and go, oh, I saw you.

Well, notice how the people in the text respond, notice his response, verse 49, hey, did you see me walking by? No, look at verse 49. I think he answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You're the King of Israel." Translation, you're the Messiah, only Messiah could know that about me. Both phrases by the way, "Son of God" and "King of Israel," are titles that are used for the Messiah in the Old Testament. Here's just one, Psalm 2 verses 6 and 7, God is speaking and he says, "As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill." The hill that Jerusalem is on top of,

"I've set my King there on Zion." And then what happens is now the king speaks, and the king says, "I will tell of the decree; The Lord said to me, 'You are my Son; today I have begotten you.'" So here's the King that God installs saying, "The Lord said to me, 'You are my Son.'" That's because the idea, Son of God and King of Israel are the same idea. The Son of God speaks to his divine origin, that there is a connection and intimacy there that is unlike anything else because he will be what God is, like Father like Son is the idea. He will have God's nature. He will be God. And as the King of Israel, the Messiah will have authority over Israel, God's chosen people. Which by the way, what did Jesus call Nathaniel, behold a what? What does it say there? Behold an Israelite. So when Nathaniel says, "You're the King of Israel," he's saying you're my King and you're the King over my nation. You're the, you're the greater David. You're you're the one we've been waiting for. You're the Jewish royalty. You have authority to rule and reign over God's people.

And I want you to see that in both cases, Jesus takes the initiative to make a disciple out of a person which then saves them. This is His job in discipleship, He makes the disciples when He saves them. This is Matthew 28:19, "Go into all the world, go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them." So we baptize disciples after they become disciples because that's the order, you get saved and then you get baptized. The disciple is made and then they're baptized. And when they're baptized, they proclaim for all to see, I am a follower of Jesus and I'm committing my entire life to him. But even though He commands us to make disciples, what we see in our text is that Jesus is really the reason anyone becomes a disciple. And you think about it, these men here, they could have said something like, "well, Hey, I mean, I I listened to John the Baptist, he told me to follow you, so here I am. Or I I heard you're preaching and and it was compelling, and so I've left my job and I'm now following you." They could really say, I chose to do this. But Jesus says, John 15:16, "You did not choose me, but I chose you." As He's looking out at the 11, Judas is gone, he's betraying him at that time, but he's looking onto the 11, he's saying, "I chose you and appointed you that you should go bear fruit." Translation, that you should go and make more disciples. But all of that happens why? Because I chose you first.

So in that process of discipleship in your life, when were you made a disciple of Jesus? When did you become a follower of His? When were you saved? Last night I talked to a man, after the four o'clock service, who became a disciple of Jesus around 5:10 PM last night, right back there. Isn't that amazing? Grew up Jewish, and I've seen him, I've talked with him for for months. He came up to me, voice quivering a little bit and said, "I want to give my life to Jesus." I was like, this is amazing. This doesn't happen every day that I know of, but this is unbelievable. Let's talk. And so we talked and he prayed and we talked some more. And he's like, "I want to read the Bible now," of course you do now, the author is living inside of you. And so gave him some pointers on that. Told him, "Ask me any questions that you have as you read." We prayed again and then he left. But when that happened, last night, it is because like Philip and like Nathaniel, Jesus worked in his life, saved him and made him a follower of his.

Second question I want you to think about is, who was the person that Jesus used to make you a disciple? When when you think back, whoever it was, it was another disciple, which is what we see in verse 45. "Philip found Nathaniel 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.'" Notice, verse 43, Jesus what? Found Philip, and in verse 45, Philip what? Found Nathaniel. Super simple. And yet this is how Christianity has expanded from this historical moment up into this very day, made disciples, make more disciples. Jesus makes a person a disciple, and then he uses that disciple to

make another person a disciple through that person. In other words, He creates from his disciples He makes them disciple makers. Who is not like I a cul-de-sac that I'm just taking in a lot of stuff and just getting really fat spiritually. No, I'm taking it in, and then what? I'm giving it out. And I'm taking it in and I'm giving it out. And I'm taking it in, I'm giving it out. Using disciples to make more disciples. And notice that word "found," verse 45, the word "found" does not mean that they just bumped into each other one day. That word "found" speaks of of of intention, of mission, of searching. He searched him out, He saw Nathaniel. He said, okay, Jesus, this is happening in me, I need to go talk to my friend right now. And notice it says there, "we." So now Philip is identifying himself with this group of people, Jesus' crew, his disciples, he's like, "We have found the Messiah, the one, the old Testament tells us to look for."

The one Genesis 3 says will crush Satan's head and defeat him forever. The one Genesis 49 says will be a descendant of the tribe of Judah, who will be King over the whole world. The one Numbers 24 says will destroy Israel's enemies. The one Deuteronomy 18 says will be a prophet who will speak God's words, and that God's people should listen to. The one Isaiah chapter 7 says will be born to a Virgin. The one Psalm 118 and Isaiah 28 say will be rejected. The one Isaiah 53 says will die as a substitute for sinners and rise from the dead. The one Daniel 2 says will rule over the whole world. He's saying, Andrew, the one that we've been hearing about from our parents since we were born, the one that we heard from our Sabbath school teachers when we would go to the synagogue, the one that John the Baptist has been screaming about everywhere. Nathaniel, he's here, and his name, verse 45, is Jesus. Where he is from is the city of Nazareth. His father's name is Joseph. This is how you would identify anybody. So I would be Jon of Newport Beach, California, Costa Mesa, California, son of Richard. That's what I would be. If back in the day that's what I would be. And Nathaniel is tracking, probably. "Right, oh yeah, okay, the one that we've been hearing about. Yeah, Jesus of Nazareth." Like record skips, like what? Huh? He probably goes from excited to a skeptic when he hears that. You see it verse 46, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" That Podunk town that barely anybody lives in. Not mentioned anywhere in the Old Testament, and we know now is not mentioned anywhere in Jewish writings from this period of time. It's an insignificant town. So how does such an important person come from this exceedingly unimportant place? You think about it, this is the humility of the incarnation, right? It's just like Jesus being born in a stable instead of a palace.

Well, Philip, rather than argue or debate just says what? "Come and see. Come with me. I'll take you to him. You can see for yourself if what I'm saying is true." And what we see here is that after Jesus makes a person a disciple, true disciples, point #2) **Multiply disciples. True disciples multiply disciples.** They get to work making more disciples. This is the mission of every Christian, at home, at school, your job, your softball teams, make more disciples. And as I say this, you know for many of us that creates fear and it creates conviction. But I just want you to see what Philip did, just said three words, "Come and see." That's easy. Can we all say that? "Come and see." See, it's that, that easy. When you do that, Ephesians 3:8 says that you are telling people about the "unsearchable riches of Christ." Just think about that. The the riches, the blessings of sins forgiven, eternal life that Jesus gives to those who believe in him are so vast and so far reaching that they are unsearchable. That you will never get to the end of all of the blessings that he gives those who believe in him. That it'll be a never-ending stream of blessing, and riches, and kindness, and grace that he gives those who believe. You'll never get to the end and be like, okay, I'm satisfied now. Just be a never-ending stream, further and further experience of the riches of the kindness of his grace to those who believe.

When a person sees this through true disciples, and true disciples tell them about Jesus, 1 Corinthians 1:21, God takes that witness and saves those who believe. This is something we will all give an account for, 2 Corinthians 5:10 says, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil." Now that's a general statement, that that we're going to give an account to Jesus, not for salvation, he took care of that, but this is for rewards in heaven. And he he gives the general statement and then he gets specific in verse 11 when he says, "Therefore," based on all of that, based on that future reality, "therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others." Knowing we'll give an account to our Lord, knowing he will want to know what we did with what he gave us to advance his kingdom, knowing that day is coming, Paul says, "We persuade people to follow Jesus." And think about, look what Jesus does with just three words, "come and see." See, you get people to Jesus, which in our time means getting them to a place where they will hear from him through his word. You get people to Jesus and he does the work. Sometimes it happens immediately, other times it takes a while. But our job is to get people to Jesus through his word. Whether that's you sharing that word with them one on one or you getting them to a place where they will hear his word preached. Either way, you get them to Jesus, that's your job, and then to pray for them.

Think about, you look at Philip, disciples are multiplied when there's a genuine concern and a courageous invitation to come and see Christ. It's it's Philip, it's really him saying, "I see this and I want my friend to see this, I want my friend to have what I have now, because I have Christ." So the question for us is, who are your Nathaniels? On the back of the sermon notes I ask you to list the people that that you want to see become followers of Jesus. If you don't have a list of them, you you list them out so that you can pray for them, specifically by name. And if if you do this with a growth group, you can altogether pray for these people by name when you get together. You list them out, you pray for them. You brainstorm what it will look like then to have that conversation where you say, "come and see." And when you say that, "come and see," and instead of like talking to them at your kitchen table or at a coffee shop where you've got a Bible opened and you're telling them, "hey, here's what Jesus says." If you don't do that and your come and see is going to be bringing them here, you just need to realize that we we try to make it obvious here that when you invite guests, that they're not going to feel completely out of place, right? We don't shame them for not having Bibles. What do we do? We give them one. Here you go. And and we don't shame them for not knowing their Bibles, what do we do? We say, "hey, here's here's the page number where we're going to be today." We try to use insider language, not to use insider language, but language that everybody can understand. The music is normal, the feel is normal. There's signs everywhere so people aren't like, where do I go? It's just obvious I'm not here very much, you know. All of that is on purpose. We do that so that you will have confidence in us that when you bring a friend, or a coworker, or a family member to church, that there aren't going to be these additional obstacles. We want there to be only one obstacle to any person that visits here to becoming a follower of Jesus, and that one obstacle is this, you are a sinner who needs a savior. That's the stumbling block. That's the obstacle we want to take away. All the other obstacles, those people aren't nice, or I was lost, or I didn't understand the lang, we want to get rid of all of that so that you have the confidence to say, "I could bring a friend who doesn't know Jesus, I could bring them here and hear from him. Hey, so friend, come and see."

Jesus makes Philip a disciple, Philip multiplies disciples by bringing Nathaniel to Jesus and makes him a disciple too. And then true discipleship is seen in what happens next, verse 50, "Jesus answered him, Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You

will see greater things than these?" Jesus recognizes the genuineness of Nathaniel's commitment to him, but he lets him know, hey, this is just the beginning. That he's going to see greater things than Jesus' supernatural knowledge of who he is before they met. Nathaniel, he's saying, we're just getting started here. You're going to see greater things than knowing you before meeting you, Nathaniel. Verse 51, it says, "Truly, truly I say to you," which is what I'm going to say you can take to the bank. It's sure, it's solid, it's trustworthy. "Truly, truly. I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." You got that picture in your mind? What in the world does that mean?

This is the first thing that Jesus says about himself in the book of John, and it doesn't correspond to any one singular event in the book. What he is saying is this, heaven isn't shut anymore, guys, heaven is open, and you're going to see heaven on earth. God is going to interact with humanity. You will experience this is what He's saying. Angels, God's communicators, his, God's invisible workers here on earth, they will be ascending and getting their orders, they'll be descending and carrying out their orders. And notice the text, it will all happen in relation to who? The "Son of Man." So God is going to work on earth and these men are going to see it with their own eyes, and it's going to happen through the Son of Man, which is Jesus's favorite title for himself. Son of Man is a reference to Daniel chapter 7 verse 13, where this human actually goes into the very presence of God and doesn't get obliterated. But while he is in the presence of God, God gives him authority over the whole world.

So Jesus is saying, in other words, I am the link between heaven and earth. Heaven is going to manifest itself on earth, and it's going to happen through me. The one who has all authority over this earth, and by the way, that's exactly what happened, right? This verse concludes the introduction of John, John chapter 1, and starting in John chapter 2, you start to see the first of eight miracles, which are all what? Heaven breaking in onto the earth. God working in their midst, why? Because God is in their midst. The word became flesh and dwelt among them, and they saw his glory. And all of that begins to start in chapter 2. And John organizes his whole book around those eight miracles so that you will get to the end of the book and say, "okay, what they said about Jesus in chapter 1, I've seen it in real time in these miracles, he is the Christ, he is the Son of God, I must believe in him." Each miracle is proof that heaven is open, that God is at work in their midst because he's there.

So as we take a step back, Jesus tells Nathaniel, and that "you" by the way, in verse 51, "Truly I say to you," that "you" is plural, so when he says that, he's not just talking to Nathaniel, he's talking to rest of the guys with him. He says to them, this is just the beginning, there's going to be process, a further growth, further insights into who I am, further insights to what I'm doing here in, on this planet. And that's because discipleship includes, point #3) **Mature disciples, Mature disciples.** True disciples mature, they grow, they change. They become more and more like their teacher, which means becoming less and less like what? Like themselves. John 13:15, He says to them, "My example is so that you will follow my example." 1 John 2:6, "If we're followers of His," it says that we should live like he lived. Which isn't like poverty, grow a beard, wear sandals, do miracles. That's not what that means. In the context of John 2, this is obedience. It's doing what God says, it's keeping his word, which is just exactly what Jesus did. Romans 8:29, God's work on our lives as Christians it says, "Is to conform us into the image of his son." Which isn't some weird mystical thing, it simply means that we begin to think like he thought, and talk like he taught, and feel like he felt, and choose like he chose, and act like he acted. The more that God works in our lives, 2 Corinthians 3:18, "We're transformed into His

image." So we more and more begin to think like Him, and talk like Him, and act like Him, and respond like Him, and choose to do certain things and not to do certain things because that's what he would do. With the entire goal that this is what a disciple is, they look like their teacher. Luke 6:40, Jesus put it this way, "a disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone, when he is fully trained will be like his teacher." And that's the idea. True disciples, that's what it means to be a Christian. True disciples will be like Jesus, their rabbi, their teacher. And this happens through a process of maturity that starts when you're saved and continues until you pass into glory. And so between that moment, between those two moments, it's Hebrew 6:1, "Go on to maturity." Which means, again, less and less like me and more and more like Him. So if true disciples are maturing disciples and if disciples are helping other disciples to become mature disciples, and you can look at your life specific incidents in your life and you can ask yourself, is that what Jesus would do?

And don't look for perfection, you're not going to find it in yourself, and don't expect perfection from your spouse, you won't find it there either. Instead, just look for maturity. Is there growth? Is there change? Is there an advancement? Is there, do you see yourself in various ways, it's often slow and over time, but do you see yourself becoming more like Jesus? If so, Praise God. And whatever you're doing, keep doing that, because it's obviously working to make you more like Him. If you don't see that in yourself, it may be because you've grown stale, or lazy, or apathetic, or worldly. And if that's you, today would be a good day to say, I'm going to turn from that apathy, I'm going to turn from that worldliness, and I'm going to follow the work of the Spirit in my life who's constantly encouraging me to obey, who's encouraging me to do the things that he wants me to do. Instead of turning from the Spirit and giving into the world, let's do it the other way around, let's repent of the world and give into the work of the Spirit in our lives. But also if there's no change, if there's no becoming like Jesus, it may be that you're not really a follower of Jesus, it may be that you're not saved. If you're not following Jesus, it's likely because you're not a follower of Jesus. And if that's you, I just want to look one more time at John chapter 1. As I said, this chapter is a is an introduction on a massive scale to who Jesus really is. It starts in eternity past that He is the Eternal God, Creator and giver of life, and it goes all the way to verse 43 that he, 45, that he is Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. He's full of grace and truth. He's the unique God who became a human. He is the Lord of heaven and earth. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He is the Son of God. He's the Rabbi, the teacher of truth. He's the Messiah, the King of Israel, the promised King, who has all authority on heaven and earth, and will rule and reign on earth in his kingdom. This is who he really is.

And before we get to chapter 2, which we'll do next week, John wants us to be really clear on the true identity of Jesus. Now, listen, someone who loves you or maybe God himself brought you here, or he's connected you online right now so that you would "come and see." And here's the deal, all of this information about Jesus is great, and it's wonderful, and it's it's so interesting, but you need to respond. That information is there so that you will respond to it.

John 1:12, "To all who believe in His name, He gives the right to become children of God." It's great to know that He's the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, but He will take away your sin. He will cleanse you from all of your unrighteousness. All of the wrong things that you have ever done, He will wipe them away clean. He will bring peace between you and the God that you've been sinning against. And not only bring peace between the two of you, but allow, give you the right to be adopted into God's family.



I don't know about you, but with how dark this world is getting, I mean, there is a sense, right, that it's just getting darker in our world. The wrong seems oh-so strong. I mean, you think about it like, you're very quickly going to get to a point where you can just put some glasses on and live in a completely different world, right? The metaverse is quickly coming here. Virtual reality. I don't like my life very much, so I'm going to put these glasses on and for the next 20 hours or whatever I'm going to be William Wallace, I'm going to be the President, I'm going to be a celebrity. Not really keen on my family, don't really like my job, it all stinks, but I'm going to put this thing on and I'm going to be a digital slave. And I'm going to get my paycheck from the government to just sit here and do nothing. We're facing some things that just a couple years ago, we go, that's never going to happen, that's science fiction, that free guy thing, that's science fiction. No, it's here. And as I talk to Christians and they're like, "hey, you know Jesus is coming like if he's not coming its gonna, this is crazy, He's got to be coming fast, right?" And I think if he is coming fast and he could be here today, He could come back today, then my thought is, God, please use me to get as many people on this ark as fast as we can. Let's get as many people, friends, family, whoever, let's get them on this ark, because once the doors are shut and judgment comes, I want them to be safe.

So a passage like this, as you look out at your world and you go, how do I respond to all of this? It's making disciples, it's maturing disciples, and it say, God, make me a disciple maker who you use to go get other disciples, bring them to you and get them saved. See, as we look out of the world and it's getting darker and darker and darker, this is the opportunity for the light of the gospel to shine brighter through our lives. Let's pray that the Lord uses each of us to do that in our own spheres. The people that we know, let's pray that He does that with our lives. Amen.

Amen.

Let's pray.

Jesus, we're going to sing one more song in worship for all that you are and all that you've done. We're going to bless your name. We're going to say good things about you because you deserve it. And yet you, you created this whole thing so that your people would tell more people about how wonderful you are. And you did it in a really ingenious way, you give us the greatest gift in the history of the world that we could possibly think of and then say, hey, go tell other people about that. I know that our hearts encourage us to be fearful, I know that the world would not approve. But when we see a man like John last night give his life to you, we realize it's all worth it. And so we need gracious hearts to make courageous invitations to people, people who need to come and see just how wonderful you are. And for those who are here in this room or watching online, people who would say, I'm not following Jesus, I'm probably not a follower of Jesus then, open their eyes, help them to see just how wonderful, and kind, and merciful, and gracious, and glorious you really are, Jesus. Do this please. I pray in your name, Amen.