

## Sunday July 30, 2023 | John 1:30-51

Two weeks ago, we finished with the Priests and Levites who were sent by the Pharisees to question John the Baptist. They wanted to know who John the Baptist was in prophecy. John was very straightforward that he was not the Messiah, Elijah, or the Prophet. He was the voice crying out in the wilderness. This answer was not satisfying for the religious leaders. John's Baptism was deeply offensive to them and they wanted to know who gave him the authority to be doing such a thing.

### John 1:25-29 ESV

(25) They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

(26) John answered them, "**I baptize with water**, but among you stands one you do not know,

(27) even He who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."

(28) These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

(29) **The next day** he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "**Behold, the Lamb of God**, who takes away the sin of the world!

John's baptism was unique. It was with water and was for a specific time for the nation of Israel. The lamb of God was coming. John knew his baptism was to prepare Israel for the perfect sacrifice of Jesus. The Lamb of God who is the only one who could pay for sin. **In large part our society ignores who Jesus is because they do not want to talk about the Lamb.** It forces the issue that they have need of a payment for sin. Jesus as the lamb, affirms that God is the perfect judge, and sin must be dealt with. Jesus as a social reformer could be accepted, even Jesus as a moral teacher who emphasizes love (defined by the World) would be accepted. But Jesus as the Lamb, the perfect sacrifice for sins, this is offensive. But it is absolutely what we need. The Lamb of God is our only hope.

### John 1:30-34 Legacy Standard Bible

(30) **This is He** of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who has been ahead of me, for He existed before me.'

(31) **I did not know Him**, but so that He might be manifested to Israel, I came baptizing with water."

(32) And John bore witness saying, "I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and **He abided on Him**.

(33) **And I did not know Him**, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'The One upon whom you see the Spirit descending **and abiding on Him**, this is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

(34) And I myself have seen, and have borne witness that **this is the Son of God.**"

John is connecting some dots. He tells us twice that He didn't know Jesus was the Messiah. Even though John and Jesus were cousins He didn't know yet that Jesus was the Son of God. God gave John a sign to be looking for. During a baptism the Holy Spirit was going to come and abide on someone. **Whoever the Spirit abided on this was the Messiah, the lamb of God.** Your translation might say "the one the Spirit **remains** on," this is a good translation but the actual word is to abide. It is one of John's favorite words. He will use it often in His gospel. There are times John will use it with a double meaning, one practical and one spiritual.

The Holy Spirit remained on Christ but it was more than that the two were abiding together.

### **Mark 1:10-13 ESV**

(10) And when He came up out of the water, immediately **He saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.**

(11) And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with You I am well pleased."

(12) The Spirit immediately drove Him out into the wilderness.

(13) And He was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And He was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to Him.

The heavens were torn open. This was a momentous event and very few knew what was happening. Jesus was being revealed; He was about to start His ministry. After His baptism He goes to be tempted for 40 days and then when He comes out of the wilderness is where our passage in John 1 picks up. John the Baptist knows He is the messiah because the Holy Spirit came and abided on Him. It fulfilled multiple prophecies.

### **Isaiah 11:1-2 ESV**

(1) There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

(2) **And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him**, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

### **Isaiah 42:1 ESV**

(1) Behold my Servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; **I have put my Spirit upon Him**; He will bring forth justice to the nations.

Jesus had fellowship with the Holy Spirit. He is part of the trinity. He knew what perfect abiding fellowship looked like and **now in human flesh Jesus is abiding with the Spirit**. It is His baptism with John that reveals this truth. John's ministry is fulfilled. This is the one he has been trying to get everyone ready for. **The messiah has been revealed**. John makes it clear that His baptism was of water. It was to prepare Israel and to reveal who the messiah was. Jesus will bring a baptism of the Holy Spirit.

### **John 1:33 ESV**

(33) I myself did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize **with water** said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, **this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.**'

The Word Baptized is actually not translated, they took English letters and copied the Greek word, (βαπτίζω). It should have been translated, **to identify with or immersed in**. It would be similar to saying someone was immersed in a culture. Jesus enabled us to be baptized by the Holy Spirit. Jesus was going to go to the cross, die and be raised again. Then for whoever believes in Him we are baptized, identified with, immersed in, His death, burial, and resurrection.

### Romans 6:3-4 ESV

(3) Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus **were baptized into His death?**

(4) We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, **we too might walk in newness of life.**

This is what our water baptism is a picture of, the true Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Every believer in the Church the moment they believe (Eph 1:13) are brought back and immersed into what Jesus accomplished through His death, burial, and resurrection. Our water Baptism is a public declaration of something that has already happened spiritual. **We are saved because we have been immersed and identified in what Jesus accomplished.** The water baptism we practice does not save anyone. It is a symbol given to us to celebrate what the Holy Spirit did for us the moment we are saved.

This is why Baptism is practiced after someone is saved. Why have someone be water baptized if they have not been spiritually baptized into Christ? Throughout Church history Baptism has been debated and a lot of extra things have been added to it. From baptizing infants, to thinking baptism saved people. One interesting question that I want to address is who is qualified to Baptize? This was the religious leader's issue with John, what qualifications did he have? There is no list of qualifications or instructions in scripture about who can baptize. Every time we see it practiced in the New Testament the person who is discipling and shepherding the new believer is the one who makes the most sense to baptize them. (Acts 8:26-39) It doesn't have to be a pastor, or someone ordained (1 Peter 2:4-7) we are all priest to God. Again, the point is declaring publicly what Jesus did for us. **Jesus is the one who made it possible for us to be baptized by the Holy Spirit.** Water Baptism should be focused on what He did for us.

### John 1:35-37 ESV

(35) The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples,

(36) and he looked at Jesus as He walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

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

The two disciples had been following John the Baptist and heard him multiple times talk about who was to come after. Then up walks Jesus. When they heard this announcement, they didn't miss it. They stopped following John the Baptist and starting following Jesus. Through the end of Chapter 1 we will see multiple of Jesus' apostles start to believe in Him. What amazes me is how unique each story is. These two come to believe in Him through the preaching of a minister, John the Baptist.

### John 1:38 ESV

(38) Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, **"What are you seeking?"** And they said to Him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are You **staying?**"

As the two disciples start following Jesus, He asks them a very important question. **"What are you seeking?"** Again, John will use language that has double meanings.

On a surface level Jesus is asking why they are following Him. But on a Spiritual level He is asking a question that probes the depths of their souls. **“What are you seeking?”** Why were you following John and now are following me? What are you ultimately looking for in life? This morning I want to ask you the same question. **“What are you seeking?”** this morning what is your desire? Is it something earthly, possessions or money? Is it a peaceful resolution to a hard situation? Is it the change in an earthly situation like retirement or a new job? Is it relief from pain, anxiety or worry? We all seek so many things. And yet if we are not seeking Jesus, then each of these things become empty and unsatisfying. **True peace and contentment are only found in Him**, not in stuff, not in a change of situation, but Him.

### **Psalms 42:1-2 ESV**

- (1) To the choirmaster. A Maskil of the Sons of Korah. As a deer pants for flowing streams, **so pants my soul for you, O God.**
- (2) **My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.** When shall I come and appear before God?

Our soul thirst for Him. As a deer pants for water knowing it cannot survive without it, we are to thirst for Jesus in our lives. We start seeking other things and accept the lie that if this change happens then we will be happy or content. Jesus is the only satisfier. **It is a deepening abiding walk with Him that we should desire.** These two disciples have been put on the spot and their answer is very telling.

### **John 1:38 ESV**

- (38) Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, **“What are you seeking?”** And they said to Him, **“Rabbi”** (which means Teacher), **“where are You staying?”**

The call Jesus Rabbi, which means teacher or master. They want to be taught by Jesus. Then they ask where He is staying. The word here is abide (μένω). It is John’s favorite word. It is used **112** times in the New Testament and John alone accounts for half of that using it **66** times (in His Gospel and letters). His language again has multiple layers. Practically these two disciples are asking where Jesus is staying, on a spiritual level they are asking where He is abiding. What are they seeking? **They want to be where Jesus is.** They seek Him.

### **John 1:39-42 ESV**

- (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.
- (40) One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was **Andrew**, Simon Peter's brother.
- (41) **He first found** his own brother Simon and said to him, **“We have found the Messiah”** (which means Christ).

We are finally given one of the names of these two disciples, it is Andrew. He is so amazed after abiding with Jesus that He runs out to find His brother. Notice another example of how people come to know Jesus. Andrew followed Jesus through the message of John the Baptist. Peter believed in Jesus through the testimony of a family member. Andrew was so excited about the truth He had to tell Peter. The most effective evangelism possible is when believers are abiding with Jesus and excited about Him. It is contagious.

**John 1:42 ESV**

(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 means **Peter**).

Jesus looks at Simon and truly sees him. Nothing is hidden. He knows every weakness of Simon, his character flaws, even his impulsiveness. Jesus says something amazing; He changes Simon’s name. He calls him Cephas, or Peter which means rock. Jesus is going to grow Simon into Peter. I am so thankful that Jesus grows us. He knows who we are and He knows what we need to grow closer to Him. Now this story is very different than the story in Matthew 4.

**Matthew 4:18-20 ESV**

(18) While walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.

(19) And He said to them, “**Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.**”

**(20) Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.**

Matthew is describing the call to discipleship and further growth. It is the moment when Peter and Andrew left everything to follow Jesus. John is describing Andrew and Peter’s first experience with Jesus. In John they are in the “Come and See” stage. They are learning about who Jesus is and believing in Him as the Messiah. Matthew is describing a step-in maturity as they grow. Jesus is so gracious in our lives to guide us into maturing with Him.

**John 1:43 ESV**

(43) The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. **He found Philip** and said to him, “**Follow Me.**”

First, we had Andrew respond to John the Baptist, then Andrew went and shared with His brother Peter. Then we have Jesus going out of his way to find Philip. Each story is unique. Each time God works in just the perfect way to fit each situation. This moment makes a huge impact on Philip look at his response.

**John 1:44-46 ESV**

(44) Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

(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.”

(46) Nathanael said to him, “**Can anything good come out of Nazareth?**” Philip said to him, “**Come and see.**”

After Philip meets Jesus, He is so excited he runs off to tell Nathanael (also known as **Bartholomew**). Again, a believer who is excited about who Jesus is can’t stop talking about Him. Philip says we have found the one the Law and Prophets spoke about. He is Jesus of Nazareth. Notice that Jesus was known as coming from Nazareth and not Bethlehem. He is Jesus of Bethlehem, but that title would have had extra royal connotations. **Jesus veiled Himself, people needed to come and see who He was.** Nathanael responds in such an honest way. Can anything good come from Nazareth? The town is tiny, and not respected. Do you really think the Messiah would live in Nazareth? Nathanael had to come and see.

**Psalms 34:8 ESV**

(8) Oh, **taste and see that the LORD is good!** Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

We can hear about who God is from others and learn from them, but at some point, **it must become personal**. I have been told God is good, but do I know He is good to me? The call to come and see is still valid. Jesus wants a personal relationship with each one of us where we abide with Him and know Him.

**John 1:47-49 ESV**

(47) Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, **an Israelite** indeed, in whom **there is no deceit!**”

(48) Nathanael 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.**”

(49) Nathanael answered Him, “Rabbi, you are **the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!**”

Jesus describes Nathanael as an Israelite in whom there is no Jacob (deceit). Jacob was the heal grabber, who manipulated and conned people. Nathanael is an honest Israelite. Jesus knew Nathanael, this caught Him of guard. Again, Jesus is personal with each one of us. **He knows you**. Jesus saw Nathanael under the fig tree. This astounded Nathanael, the only way He could know that is if Jesus is the Son of God. This information was personal and meant something to Nathanael. **Each time Jesus calls a disciple it is exactly in the manner they need**. He didn't rename Andrew but asked what He was seeking. He doesn't tell Peter where He was that day but renames Him. He seeks out Philip intentionally. Our savior knows each of us intimately and knows what each of us needs. I find so much comfort knowing that our savior is that personal and caring in each of our lives.

**John 1:50-51 ESV**

(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.”

(51) 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.**”

Jesus essentially tells Nathanael if that impressed you, get ready for what is coming. Jesus tells him that he will see heaven opened and angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man. Jesus' favorite title for Himself, the one He uses the most, is the Son of Man. **He is God in the flesh**. He is fully human, the Son of Man. He is pointing Nathanael to Jacob's dream:

**Genesis 28:12 ESV**

(12) And he dreamed, and behold, **there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven**. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it!

Jesus is the ladder. He is the connection between God and man. Nathanael is going to see glorious things through the life of Jesus. Jesus will make a path, the ladder to connect Heaven and earth. He will provide a way for man to reach God because of His life, death, and resurrection. **Come and see who Jesus is. Our personal intimate loving savior.**