



Come and See
Message Notes, March 6, 2016
John 1:35-51

As we continue in The Gospel of John, today we examine Jesus' call of his first disciples, which affords us a great model for discipleship.

John gives a different account of the call of the first disciples from the Synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke). The best explanation is that John's account tells of their very first contact with Jesus, and the other gospels tell of subsequent encounters when Jesus actually calls them to be His disciples.

Read John 1:35-51, which tells of two encounters: Jesus with Andrew and then Simon, and Jesus with Phillip and then Nathaniel. Notice the "flow" of these encounters with Jesus: John (the Baptist) >>> two of his disciples. ... Andrew >>> Simon Peter ... Phillip >>> Nathaniel ... What do these "flows" reveal to us?

Nuggets from These Stories

- John the Baptist's humility in releasing his own disciples to follow Jesus.
- Jesus' first words to the two disciples that come to Him – "What do you want?" (Jesus' question to any who come: What do you really want – miracles, wisdom, power, blessings, or are you after truth and transformation?)
- They answer with a question – "Where are you staying?" (In other words, "We'd like to come with you. We want to find out more. We aren't sure yet, but we want to get to know you.")
- Jesus' reply: "Come and see" (not a reprimand or theological discourse, but an invitation to come along.)
- Andrew is one of the two disciples who "comes along." (It is speculated that John himself is the other.) Andrew's first response is to go tell his brother, Simon. Our first and most significant place of evangelism (sharing the life we have found!) is to our family and friends.
- Simon comes and Jesus, who knows what is in a person and gives him a new name: Peter ("the Rock").
- Jesus seeks Phillip out and calls him "to follow me" – not a call to a book or to membership in an organization, but to a relationship! This "follow" tense is a continuous action, not a one-time event.
- Like Andrew, Phillip finds his friend, Nathanael, to tell him. Nathanael is hesitant and questioning – "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" But Phillip does not get upset; he does not argue; he simply invites Nathanael "to come and see."
- Jesus has divine insight regarding Nathanael – "in him is no guile." (Guile is the word for "bait," the *false* lure for fish. Nathanael is not false, but a man of integrity.)
- Jesus – "I saw you under the fig tree" (a figurative place in that day where students and seekers would study and ponder. Nathanael was seeking for the Messiah, and Jesus knew his heart.)
- Jesus' final reply to Nathanael – "Heaven will open and you will see angels descending and ascending on the Son of Man." Paraphrase – "Nate, you ain't seen nothing yet!"



The Four Men (Jesus calls *all* types to follow Him)

1. **Andrew:** Known as the “brother of Simon Peter;” living in Peter’s shadow, but he seems fine with this. A healthy humility. Jesus went first to Andrew, not to Simon Peter. God would use Andrew time and time again to introduce others to Jesus. God delights to use the humble to accomplish His purposes.
2. **Simon Peter:** Bold, boisterous, spontaneous, a man of action. A true leader, but a flawed one – impulsive, up and down, brandishing a sword to protect Jesus one minute, denying he even knows Him the next, heroic and cowardly. But Jesus knows his potential. Jesus focuses on who he will become (a “rock,” strong, stable). Jesus knows people are moved by hope and affirmation, not condemnation and shame. Jesus focuses on our potential more than our failures.
3. **Phillip:** We don’t know a lot about Phillip. The few references (apart from this one) are not very flattering – confusion, questions, doubts. Some speculate Phillip may have been a bit “slow” in understanding. But Phillip is one of the 12 Jesus chose to launch His kingdom.
4. **Nathanael:** Mentioned here positively (a man of integrity), but John only mentions him one other time in the list of disciples. He is never mentioned in the other three gospels, but these list Bartholomew as a disciple. John’s gospel does not. Some speculate Nathanael and Bartholomew may be the same person. Bottom line: Nathanael was not particularly impressive, but again, he was one of the called 12.

The Pattern of Discipleship

- **Come and see.** Jesus’ call is not to an academic exercise or a theological paradigm, but to an ongoing relationship.
- **Go and tell.** We who have “come to see and follow” must share our story with others. The most effective evangelists are not crusade preachers but individuals sharing with family and friends. The most effective evangelists are those new to the faith, whose joy and passion for their new life burns fresh in their hearts.
- **Come and see.** We give the same invitation. Yes, there are basic truths of the Gospel people need to hear, but the most powerful witness we can give is to share our own story and invite others to “come” and share in our journey and get to know Jesus – “Come worship with me. Come serve the needy with me. Come to our small group. Come read the scriptures with me. Come and just hang out.”

Reflection Questions

1. Which of the four disciples do you most identify with? What do you hear Jesus saying to you?
2. Who are people in your life (esp. ones close) you can “go and tell” – praying and looking for
3. ways to share your Jesus story?
4. How can you invite them to “come and see”? How might you hang out with them?