

LifeGroup Notes

John 1:35-51

I (Paul) have a confession. Years ago I preached John 1:35-51, the very passage we explored on Sunday and you'll be diving into now. At the time my main point was, "we're all called to share Jesus, and sharing Jesus is as simply as pointing people to him." *Come and see*, it's right there in the text. Jesus said it to Andrew (v 39) and Andrew copied the same strategy with his brother Simon (v 42). Yes, sharing our faith is part of following Jesus. The problem is, because my focus was humanistic (man centered) I missed the glorious God story. From Genesis to John to you and me, throughout history the one who keeps calling us to him is God! And not just to come and follow him once we get our act together. No, God calls us because he accepts us. He calls us to himself even when we were sinners and he continues to call and accept, even when we continue to stumble. Receiving God's invitation and acceptance doesn't only change our identity (the way we see ourselves), it also changes the way we follow.

Our prayer for you is that God would birth a greater joy, a deeper faith and a stronger resolve to follow Jesus no matter what life throws at you.

Warming up

1. Answer one of the following
 - a. If you had one extra hour of free time a day, what would you do with it?
 - b. Who is someone you were introduced to that changed or impacted your life?
 - c. If you had to be handcuffed to a person for an entire day, who would you choose?
2. How has God been speaking to you through Sunday's sermon or your time in His word this past week? Has anyone been reading John?

God Seeks

Together read John 1:35-42a in a couple different versions.

3. Jesus himself wasn't afraid of asking the probing questions of life like "what are you seeking?" (38). Doesn't matter if you're raising kids, studying, working or retired. We all wrestle with hard questions.
 - a. What are some of those hard life questions you have wrestled with?
 - b. How has God answered or met you in those questions? What ones are you still wrestling with?

4. Consider Andrew's story (vv 35-42b)
 - a. Compare v 38 with v 41. How did his view of Jesus change and why is this significant?
 - b. How has Jesus revealed himself to you in the past? How has he revealed himself lately?
 - c. How has your view of Jesus changed as you have grown in relationship with Him?

God Accepts

Together read 1:42b-51

Have someone read the following recap from Sunday:

What did Jesus say when he met Peter (v 42)? Why did He call him by his full name? Our names are core to our identity. There's a reason why our parents sometimes used our full-names when we were in trouble. It's a way of saying, I know you, you can't hide from me! Who was Simon son of John? He was a rash, rude and rough piece of work. Yet Jesus sought him and welcomed him. Jesus also gave him hope of being able to break free from his old self - you shall be called Cephas.

The same can be said of Nathaniel. His condescending reaction to Philip's invitation reveals a jaded and closed mind. Yet again, how does Jesus respond to him? "Here is a true Israelite in whom there is no deceit." Jesus sees the good in him despite also knowing how critical, judgemental and arrogant Nathaniel can be (cf I saw you while you were under the fig tree BEFORE Philip called you v 48) The point is: believing is more than knowing. It's embracing God's invitation and acceptance. That's what Andrew, Peter, Philip and Nathaniel all did.

5. Have you ever struggled with the notion of God welcoming and accepting you? What changed or needs to change? (cf Romans 5:8-11 noting that "while we were still sinners" and for that matter "still are sinners.")

Strategic pause - Take a minute to praise and pray together.

God Calls

Together read John 1:43

6. Jesus not only seeks and accepts, but also calls us to follow. Why is it so important that following Jesus be rooted in our welcome and acceptance?
7. As Lange and Schaff suggest: *(Follow) cannot mean merely: Join the journeying company [Alford]; yet neither is it the call to the Apostolic office. It is the invitation to discipleship, in the form of a travelling companionship. The rest of the interview (how*

*Jesus knew Philip, and Philip knew the Lord) is not mentioned; only the decisive word of the call.*⁶ On Sunday we touched on 6 core comments of disciples:

- a. Identification: baptism, communion, membership
- b. Celebration: weekly corporate worship
- c. Walk with Jesus: dig into His Word, pray, join a LifeGroup
- d. Give: learn to be a contributor not just a consumer.
- e. Share the load: discover and deploy your gifts.
- f. Join the Mission: extend God's invitation to "come and see."

Which area comes most naturally to you? Which area do you find most challenging to follow? What area do you sense God is wanting to grow in you? What might that look like?

Strategic Pause - Take a minute to solidify any learning and to pray for each other together.

⁶ J.P. Lange, & Peter Schaff, (2008). [*A commentary on the Holy Scriptures: John*](#) Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, (p. 94).