



The Testimony of the Disciples

John 1:35-51 (ESV)—

³⁵The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” ³⁷The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸Jesus 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?” ³⁹He 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. ⁴⁰One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ). ⁴²He 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).

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” ⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip 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.” ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” ⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” ⁴⁸Nathanael 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.” ⁴⁹Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” ⁵⁰Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” ⁵¹And 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.”

Key Words:

“**Disciple**” (v. 35)— a personal follower or student of a teacher

“**Lamb of God**” (v. 36)— John the Baptist used this expression as a reference to the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus on the cross to atone for the sins of the world” (MacArthur).

“**Peter**” (v. 42)— Peter comes from a word meaning “rock.” Jesus knew that Simon was “impetuous, impulsive, and overeager” (MacArthur) by nature, so He gave him a name that perpetually reminded him of what he *should* be, a rock.

“**Moses in the Law & the Prophets**” (v. 45)—Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT scriptures, like Isaiah 53.

“**Nazareth**” (v.45-46)—Galileans (where Nathanael was from) despised Nazareth and viewed it as an insignificant village without prophetic importance.

“**no deceit**” (47)—Nathanael's bluntness revealed that he was an Israelite without duplicitous motives who was willing to examine for himself the claims being made about Jesus. The term reveals an honest, seeking heart.

“**Son of man**” (v. 51)—this is Jesus' human and millennial (future & physical) kingdom title.

Related Passages:

Genesis 28:10-12—¹⁰Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. ¹¹And he came to a certain place and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. ¹²And 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!”

Discussion Questions

*1. Last week we studied the testimony of John the Baptist—“I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son-of God” (1:34). From reading today’s passage (1:35-51), who is John providing as witnesses to testify “that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (John 20:31)? (O) Spiritually speaking, what is a testimony? (O) What is the benefit of using your testimony when communicating the gospel with others? (A) What facts should your testimony include? (A)

John 1:35-51 records the very first interactions of 5 ordinary men with Jesus. This is not their calling to “Follow Him” as disciples (that calling comes in two phases: the first in Matthew 4:18-22 and the second in Luke 5:1-11), but rather their calling to salvation. This section answers the basic question that you and I might ask—“How did you come to know Christ?”

2. Let’s list the names of the five ordinary men who encountered Jesus:

- A. The unnamed disciple of John the Baptist (v. 40) (widely considered to be the author John himself as he never calls himself by name in his writings)
- B. _____ (vs. 35-40)
- C. _____ (vs. 40-42)
- D. _____ (vs. 43-44)
- E. _____ (vs. 45-51) (also known as Bartholomew)

3. Read vs. 35-40. What prompted Andrew & the unnamed disciple to believe in Jesus? (O) Why did they follow Jesus and ask Him where he was staying? Do you think it was because they were curious about his lodging or because they wanted to have an extended conversation with Him? (I) Who did Andrew go and find? (v. 40)

*4. Read vs. 41-42. What prompted Simon to believe in Jesus? (O) What happened during their first interaction? (O) “Peter” comes from a word meaning “rock.” Jesus knew that Simon was “impetuous, impulsive, and overeager” (MacArthur) by nature, so He gave him a name that perpetually reminded him of what he *should* be, a rock. Though our personal names haven’t changed, when we put our faith in Christ as Lord & Savior, we become Christians. “Christian” means “little Christ.” How can that serve as a perpetual reminder of what we *should* be like? (A) How might that impact our testimony to others (husband, kids, friends, the world)?

5. Read vs. 43-44. What prompted Phillip to believe in Jesus? (O) Who sought him? (O) What did he then do? (O)

*6. Read vs. 45-51. How did Phillip describe Jesus to Nathaneal? (v. 45) (O) Why was Nathaneal skeptical? (v. 46) (O) What two things did Jesus do that pointed to His omniscience (all-knowing power) and prompted Nathaneal to believe? (O)

1. (v. 47)—

2. (v. 48)—

How did Nathaneal voice his conviction of who Jesus was? (v. 50)

1. _____ ... which means: _____

2. _____ ... which points to Jesus' deity

3. _____ ...which points to Jesus' humanity (i.e. descendant of David)

What did Jesus promise Nathaneal he would see? (v. 50) (O). Read Genesis 28:10-12. Jesus is referencing this well-known story to point out that, just as "Jacob experienced supernatural or heaven-sent revelation, Nathaneal and the other disciples would experience supernatural communication confirming who Jesus was" (MacArthur). There is a key difference though. In Genesis, what are the angels ascending & descending on? (O) What about in Jesus' statement? (O) What is the significance of Jesus stating that He is, in effect, the ladder between heaven and earth? (I) How does that impact our personal relationship with Him? (A)

7. Here is a list of the twelve disciples. Circle the names with whom we are now familiar.

Matthew 10:2-4—"2The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him."

8. Keeping in mind John's purpose: "but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31), how do the verses that you just studied (1-3 & 14-18) impact your understanding of who Jesus Christ is and what He did? (A)

The First Sign

John 2:1-12 (ESV)—

¹On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ²Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples.³When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.”⁴And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.” ⁵His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

⁶Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.⁷Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸And he said to them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.” So they took it. ⁹When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom ¹⁰and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.” ¹¹This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

¹²After this he went down to Capernaum, with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days.

Key words:

“**Wedding**” (v.1)— “a major social event...that could last as long as a week” (MacArthur)

“**Wine**” (v. 3)—wine was the staple drink in the ancient Near East. “**ran out**”—nothing could have been more devastating at an eastern wedding. It was catastrophic and could have stigmatized the couple and their families for the rest of their lives. It could have even opened up the grooms’ family (the ones responsible for the wedding celebration) to being taken to court. (Phillips & MacArthur)

“**Mother of Jesus**” (v. 3)— John never refers to Mary by name. Since she is aware of the situation (the running out of wine), it appears she had some responsibility for helping at the wedding.

“**Woman**” (v. 4)— polite, but not intimate form of address, much like, “Ma’am.”

“**what does this have to do with me**” (v. 4)—in original text it is an idiomatic/cultural expression literally saying “what to me to you?” It has the effect of distancing the two persons. (MacArthur)

“**My hour**” (v. 4)— refers to the time of his death and glorification. Mary wanted Him to perform a miracle, to reveal Himself fully, but He made it clear that He would act according to His Father’s timetable and this wasn’t **the hour** for His **full glory** to be manifested. He did choose to display His divine power and preview His glory to come. (MacArthur)

“**Water jars...for rites of purification**” (6)—each held at least 10-30 gallons of water and were used to wash hands and the utensils used in serving the guests. (Phillips)

“**Signs**” (v.11)—that by which a person or thing is distinguished from others and is known. It emphasizes the value or significance of the mighty work.

Related Passages: Mark 3:31-35 & John 20:30-31

Study Questions:

1. How does this passage differ from what we have seen thus far in John? What is the purpose of Jesus’ signs?

2. Did this sign meet a genuine need? How?

3. In your own words, paraphrase Jesus’ response to Mary (his mother). What was the purpose of Jesus responding to her the way He did?