

John 1:35 – 2:12

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

Joh 1:35-36 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

The next day referred to here is the third day that has been mentioned. John was with two of his own disciples. These men had heard John preach and believed what he said. But as yet they had not met the Lord Jesus. Now John bore public witness to the Lord. On the previous day, he had spoken of His Person (the Lamb of God) and His work (who takes away the sin of the world). Now he simply draws attention to His Person. His message was short, simple, selfless, and all about the Savior. -BBC

So, don't miss the significance of the Lamb here. In order to understand the book of Revelation you have to see and understand the Lamb. John's witness here in the Gospel of John was that Christ is THE SON OF GOD! In the book of Revelation (Revelation of Jesus Christ) in Chapter 1 we first see Christ described in His glory and the reminder that John bore witness to him; then in Chapter 5 of Revelation where John is weeping because no one is found worthy to take the scroll...enter the Lamb of God!! The Lamb of God that is right here, right now; standing in front of John and his two disciples. Let that sink in!! This gives me chills every time I read it.

"...looking at Jesus..." – this can be interpreted as to view with steadfastness or a very attentive beholding. This was not just some look in passing as we might tend to think about it.

Joh 1:37-39 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

"...they followed Jesus..." while the text does not specifically say here it is implied, they did so with the permission and direction of John. This fulfilled John's ministry and the purpose of his calling.

"...what do you seek..." Jesus is already probing to teach them a strong lesson behind our motivations. Are they motivated by curiosity or by a real desire to know this Lamb?

He extends the same invitation to you today, "Come and see." Taste of the Lord and see whether or not He is good (see Psa_34:8). Notice again how specifically John gears this into time—it was late in the evening.

One of these two who had been disciples of John the Baptist was Andrew, and the very first thing that he does is to go after his own brother, Simon.

"...tenth hour..." Wouldn't you recall the exact moment you met Jesus??

Joh 1:40-42 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).

We are not told too much about Andrew, but it is interesting you always find Andrew bringing people to Jesus. Remember it was also Andrew who brought the little boy to Jesus with the five loaves and two fish. Andrew's primary ministry seemed to be bringing people to Jesus! Implied, based on the text where it says "...first found his own brother..." is that the brother of the other disciple was also found and brought.

Christ is Messiah!! Just imagine the moment. The excitement. The confusion. The unknown. The "what is really going on here...I can't believe this is happening to me...I can't believe this is He who we have been promised...is this really happening" moment!!

This man, Simon, was as weak as water. Our Lord told him that he would be a stone man. I think everybody laughed there that day because nobody believed he could become the rock man, the man who would stand up on the Day of Pentecost and give the first sermon, which would be used to sweep three thousand persons into the church (see Act_2:40-41). – McGee

Andrew brought his brother to the right place and to the right Person. He did not bring him to the church, the creed, or the clergyman. He brought him to Jesus. What an important act that was! Because of Andrew's interest, Simon later became a great fisher of men, and one of the leading apostles of the Lord. Simon has received more publicity than his brother, but Andrew will doubtless share Peter's reward because it was Andrew who brought him to Jesus. The Lord knew Simon's name without being told. He also knew that Simon had an unstable character. And finally, He knew that Simon's character would be changed, so that he would be firm as a rock. How did Jesus know all this? Because He was and is God.

Simon's name did change to Cephas (Aramaic for stone), and he did become a man of strong character, especially after the Ascension of the Lord and the Descent of the Holy Spirit. – BBC

What about the other disciple. Who is it? Likely John, himself for a couple of reasons. 1.) He never refers to himself in his Gospel. 2.) Comparing the tedious detail of this account (down to the very hour of the day it seems plausible that it is an eye witness...the writer himself.

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

Joh 1:43 *The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."*

This is now the fourth day we have read about in this chapter. Bosch points out that on the first day we see John only (vv.15-28); on the second we see John and Jesus (vv. 29-34); on the third we see Jesus and John (vv. 35-42); and on the fourth day we see Jesus only (vv. 43-51). The Lord walked northward into the region known as Galilee. There He found Philip and invited him to be a follower. "Follow Me!" These are great words because of the One who spoke them and great because of the privilege they offered. The Savior is still issuing this simple, yet sublime, invitation to all men everywhere.

It is likely (based on the other Gospels that this is not the first time Jesus has met these men from Galilee. This was, however, the formal invitation to follow.

Joh 1:44-45 *Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 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."*

Bethsaida was a city on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Bethsaida means "house of the fisherman" or "fishtown". Few cities in the world have ever been so honored. The Lord performed some of His mighty miracles there (Luk_10:13). It was the home of Philip, Andrew, and Peter (although likely that Peter and Andrew moved from Bethsaida to Capernaum because Peter likely had a house in Capernaum where Jesus stayed). Yet it rejected the Savior, and as a result it was destroyed so completely that now we cannot tell the exact spot where it was located. Bethsaida was likely about 5 miles up near where the Jordan River comes into the Sea of Galilee.

Philip wanted to share his new-found joy with someone else, so he went and found Nathanael. New converts are the best soul-winners. His message was simple and to the point. He told Nathanael that he had found the Messiah who had been foretold by Moses and the prophets—Jesus of Nazareth. Actually his message was not entirely accurate. He described Jesus as being the son of Joseph. Jesus, of course, was born of the Virgin Mary and had no human father. Joseph adopted Jesus and thus became his legal father, though not His real father. James S. Stewart comments:

It never was Christ's way to demand a full-fledged faith for a beginning. It never was his way to hold men back from discipleship on the ground of an incomplete creed. And quite certainly that is not his way today. He puts himself alongside his brethren. He bids them attach themselves to him at any point they can. He takes them with the faith that they can offer him. He is content with that as a beginning; and from that he leads his friends on, as he led the first group on, step by step, to the inmost secret of who he is and to the full glory of discipleship. -BBC

Joh 1:46-48 *And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!" Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."*

Nathanael had problems. Nazareth was a despised city of Galilee. It seemed impossible to him that the Messiah would live in such a poor neighborhood. And so he voiced the question that was in his mind. Philip did not argue. He felt that the best way to meet objections was to introduce men directly to the Lord Jesus—a valuable lesson for all who are seeking to win others to Christ. Don't argue. Don't engage in prolonged discussions. Just bid men to come and see.

Verse 47 shows that Jesus knew all things. Without any previous acquaintance with Nathanael, He declared him to be an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no trickery or deceit. This was quite the compliment. Jacob had gained a reputation for using business methods that were not entirely honest, but Nathanael was an "Israel"-ite in whom there was no "Jacob." Someone we might refer to as a straight shooter!!

Nathanael was obviously surprised that a total Stranger should speak to him as if He had known him previously. Apparently he had been completely concealed when he was sitting under the fig tree. Doubtless the overhanging branches of the trees and the surrounding foliage hid him from view. But Jesus saw him, even though he was so hidden.

Joh 1:49-51 Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

The Lord had given Nathanael two proofs that He was the Messiah. He had described his character, and He had seen Nathanael when no other eyes could have seen him. These two proofs were sufficient for Nathanael, and he believed. But now the Lord Jesus promised that he would **see greater proofs than these**.

Whenever Jesus introduced a saying with the words Most assuredly (literally "Amen, amen"), He was always about to say something very important. Here He gave Nathanael a picture of the time in the future when He would come back to reign over all the earth. The world will then know that the carpenter's Son who lived in despised Nazareth was truly the Son of God and Israel's King. In that day, heaven will open. The favor of God will rest upon the King as He reigns, with Jerusalem as His capital.

It is likely that Nathanael had been meditating on the story of Jacob's ladder (Gen_28:12). Jacob was running from his brother Esau and he dreamed he saw the Lord of heaven standing at the top of a ladder. That ladder, with its ascending and descending angels, is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the only access to heaven. Jesus is saying I am the ladder, I am the access by which man can come to God! The angels of God will ascend and descend upon the Son of Man. Angels are servants of God, traveling like flames of fire on His errands. When Jesus reigns as King, these angels will travel back and forth between heaven and earth, fulfilling His will.

Jesus was saying to Nathanael that he had seen only very minor demonstrations of His Messiahship. In the future Reign of Christ, he would see the Lord Jesus fully revealed as God's anointed Son. Then all mankind would know that Someone good did come out of Nazareth.

Don't miss the reference here to Daniel 7:13-14, where the King of Glory who comes to Judge the world was called the Son of Man!! Oh how magnificent are the scriptures!!

John 2:1-2 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

The third day doubtless refers to the third day of the Lord's stay in Galilee. In Joh_1:43 the Savior went into that area. We do not know exactly where Cana was situated, but we infer from verse 12 of this chapter that it was near Capernaum and on higher ground. Estimates would have it possibly 5 or 6 miles from Nazareth. So, you start from Nazareth, you go down this valley that eventually brings you out to the sea of Galilee. So Cana is a little village on this road leading from Nazareth to the Sea of Galilee.

There was a wedding in Cana on this particular day, and the mother of Jesus was there. It is interesting to notice that Mary is spoken of as the mother of Jesus. The Savior was not famous because He was the Son of the Virgin Mary, but she was well-known because she was the mother of our Lord. The Scriptures always give the pre-eminent place to Christ and not to Mary. Also no mention of Joseph as he is likely dead at this point in history.

Some old traditions would say this was the wedding of John (the Gospel writer) and he left his bride at the altar, but there is no context or words to give this much reason.

Joh 2:3 And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

The question comes up about the wine. I read recently of a liberal who called Jesus a bootlegger. Such sacrilege! In that day, wine was a staple article of diet. However, drunkenness was absolutely condemned. There was no thought of drunkenness connected with this. A wedding was a religious occasion, by the way, and these were folk who believed the Old Testament. You can put it down that there was no intoxication at this wedding. This is also reason to believe this was a poor family and made minimal provisions hoping the wine would last. In this culture there was a strong element of reciprocity about weddings and it was possible to take legal action against a man who failed to provide the appropriate wedding gift...gives more depth to the impact of this particular miracle.

The wedding is a picture of another wedding that is coming. Christ began His ministry on this earth at a wedding. He will conclude it, as far as the church is concerned, with a wedding. At the marriage supper of the Lamb the church will be presented to Him as a bride.

This is the first miracle which He performed. Moses' first miracle was turning water into blood. Christ's first miracle was turning water into wine. The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. What a contrast!

What did Mary mean by her statement? First of all, it is well to call attention to the fact that this was a very poor family. They simply didn't have enough refreshments. Bengel in his commentary said that, when she told the Lord there was no wine, it was a gentle hint for Him and His disciples to depart. Calvin writes that it was a suggestion for Him to occupy the minds of the guests with a discourse. It would be just like John Calvin to suggest that, by the way. If you have ever read Calvin's Institutes, you know they are profound, but boring. If Calvin had been there, he would have given them a discourse and probably put them all to sleep! However, I do not think that the context here would permit either interpretation. I don't believe it was a hint for Him to leave nor a suggestion to occupy the minds of the guests. I think that very candidly she is saying, "Perform a miracle. This would be an appropriate occasion."

You will recall that when the angel Gabriel appeared to her and told her that she was the one who was to bring forth the Messiah, Mary raised the question about the virgin birth, "... How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luk_1:34). Gabriel made it very clear that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and that which was conceived in her was holy. She showed her faith and submission when she said, "... Behold the handmaid of the Lord ..." (Luk_1:38). From that moment, and during the intervening years, there was always a question about her virginity. People actually raised questions about Jesus. She is really saying, "Here is Your opportunity to perform a miracle and demonstrate that I am accurate when I said that You were virgin born and that You are the One whom I have claimed You are." Jesus gives her a very clear answer.

Joh 2:4 Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."

His implication is, "This is not the occasion. I'll clear your name, but not here."

Significant point of transition; note Jesus refers to Mary as woman. This is the beginning of His public ministry and his relationship is different with His mother. Woman is still a title of respect. It be best translated as "lady". Also indicates she must not seek this help on the basis of their familial relationship but because of who Jesus is.

So Jesus kind of says here, woman, we now have a different relationship, let me consult with my heavenly Father.

When He was hanging on the cross and the mother of Jesus was standing beneath that cross, you remember that He looked down and said to her, "Woman, behold thy son!" (Joh_19:26). At that time His hour had come. In three days He would come back from the dead. When the disciples met in an upper room after His resurrection and ascension, Mary could look around, for she was there, and she could say to each of those disciples, "I told you that He was the Son of God!" Paul says that He is "... declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom_1:4).

Here she is asking Him to do something that will demonstrate who He is to clear her name. He tells her that He is going to do just that—He will clear her name—but that the hour has not yet come. That hour did come! His

resurrection proves who He is. And don't forget that the Resurrection proves the virgin birth of Christ. We tend to look at the virgin birth at Christmastime as an isolated fact. It is connected with His resurrection, friend, because He is who He claimed to be.

Joh 2:5-7 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim.

Mary was confident Jesus would take action but she understood the new relationship and knew He would act in His own way, for His own reasons, and at his own time. (Tasker)

What good advice! I've always wanted to preach a Mother's Day sermon on this text, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." My subject would be "A Mother's Advice." I never got around to it as a pastor, but it is good advice.

Our attention is now drawn to these six water pots. They were used in ceremonial cleansing. Because this was a poor family, the pots were evidently beaten and battered and probably had been pushed in the back somewhere. They hoped when the wedding guests came that no one would notice them. I think our Lord must have embarrassed the family when He asked for those pots to be brought out. Then He tells them the exact procedure to follow, and they filled them to the brim. Keep in mind a "firkin" is 9 gallons so they are technically 18-27 gallons each. Pretty large pots.

Also note they were filled to the brim; Jesus was not going to add anything to the water He was going to transform it!

"With all loving respect, he yet very decidedly shuts out all interference from Mary; for his kingdom was to be according to the spirit, and not after the flesh. I delight in believing, concerning the mother of Jesus, that though she fell into a natural mistake, yet she did not for an instant persist in it; neither did she hide it from John, but probably took care to tell it to him, that no others should ever fall into similar error by thinking of her in an unfitting manner." (Spurgeon)

Does it surprise you that the Lord uses beaten and battered old water pots?

Joh 2:8-10 And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it. When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!"

Special note here; the servants did not perform the miracle. Their efforts alone were completely insufficient...but because of their obedience to Jesus they shared in the joy of the miracle. They obeyed without question. I mean, think back to the potential embarrassment and possible legal troubles this could bring upon their very livelihood.

The ruler of the feast draws attention to the very marked difference between the way the Lord Jesus acts and the way men commonly act. Jesus sent it directly to the master to be tested by the proper authority. The usual practice at a wedding was to serve the best wine first when men could best detect and enjoy its flavor. Later on, having eaten and drunk, they would not be as aware of the quality of their beverage. (any bartenders out there??) At this particular wedding, the best wine came last. There is a spiritual meaning in this for us. The world commonly offers people the best it has to offer at the outset. It holds out its most attractive offers to young people. Then when they have wasted their lives in empty pleasure, the world has nothing but dregs for a person's old age. The Christian life is the very opposite. It gets better all the time. Christ keeps the best wine until the last. The feast follows the fast.

This portion of Scripture has a very direct application to the Jewish nation. There was no true joy in Judaism at this time. The people were going through a dreary round of rituals and ceremonies, but life for them was tasteless. They were strangers to divine joy. The Lord Jesus was seeking to teach them to put their faith in Him. He would turn their drab existence into fullness of joy. The water of Jewish ritual and ceremony could be turned into the wine of joyful reality in Christ.

This marks the beginning of the miracles for Jesus. The 1st miracle...a festive occasion...a marriage feast...

Joh 2:11-12 This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him. After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.

This is probably referring to that time when His hometown would not accept Him. When He went into the synagogue and read from Isaiah, they said, "... Is not this Joseph's son?" (Luk_4:22). They probably would have destroyed Him at that time. So he moved His headquarters to Capernaum, and, as far as I can tell, that continued to be His headquarters during His ministry of three years.

The seven signs in the Gospel of John:

1. John 2:1-11 – water to wine
2. John 4:46-54 – healing of the nobleman's son
3. John 5:1-15 – healing at the pool of Bethesda
4. John 6:1-14 – Feeding the 5,000
5. John 6:15-21 – Jesus walks on water
6. John 9:1-12 – Healing of the man born blind
7. John 11:1-44 – Lazarus raised from the dead

A few key takeaways from the wedding:

- A. Mary shows us to expect Jesus to do great and mighty things but just do not tell Him how to do it!
- B. The servants show us to never question Jesus and enjoy the ride! The ride of the absolute enjoyment of walking according to His truth and His word.
- C. The master of the feast helps us to see that Jesus did and is saving the best for last!
- D. The disciples show us that this is real, tangible and something worth believing in!