

THE SAVIOR IS FOLLOWED

+ **SESSION IN A SENTENCE:**

Jesus invited His first followers into relationship with Him and promised that they would experience great things.

+ **BACKGROUND PASSAGE:**

John 1

+ **SETTING:**

John the Baptist introduced Jesus to the world as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). He understood Jesus's role from the start. Jesus was the sacrificial substitute, laying down His life for His people. John again, the following day, called Jesus the Lamb of God (John 1:36), specifically telling two of his own disciples, allowing them to follow Jesus and become His disciples. The call to follow the Lamb is the foundation of John's Gospel and the basis for the entire story of the Bible. From cover to cover, the Bible invites the reader to look at Jesus, follow Him, and be saved.

DAY 1

READ:

John 1:35-39

FOCAL PASSAGE:

John 1:36

NOTES

It must have seemed odd to hear someone point to another person and describe that person as the Lamb of God. After all, lambs are not people. Ancient Israelites would have appreciated the value of a lamb, both in terms of their role in human society and in terms of their worship to God. A lamb was, after all, the means by which sinners could approach a holy God.

But lambs die. This was their primary spiritual role in society and in worship. They were valuable for food and clothing but especially in the sense that their death appeased the wrath of God for sin. They were not domestic pets; instead, they were brought to the temple to be slaughtered. Their blood and mangled bodies reminded worshipers of the cost of sin and the necessity of holiness.

When the disciples referred to Jesus as the Lamb of God, then, it created some dissonance in the minds of the hearers. Here was the One that John and others were now calling the Messiah—God’s Savior who comes bringing God’s kingdom to earth. And He is a lamb? This term does help picture the perfection of Jesus, since it was only a perfect lamb that could die for sin. But it also meant that the Messiah would die. He would give His life to pay the price for sin. Certainly those who first heard this description did not fully understand, but from the very beginning it was clear that Jesus came to die.

How was Jesus’s sacrifice different than that of lambs in the Old Testament?

DAY 2

READ:

John 1:40-42

FOCAL PASSAGE:

John 1:41

NOTES



KEY DOCTRINE #66: CALLING

The calling of God to salvation happens in two ways: externally through the proclamation of the gospel and internally through the Holy Spirit working in the heart of the person who hears. Both of these callings are essential, and both work together to bring someone to faith in Christ (2 Timothy 1:8-10).

Families can be the most challenging part of our lives for many of us. Our families know us well. They've seen us on our best days and our worst. They know us inside and out. Siblings are even more intimate. They have walked beside us through all of life. We've likely celebrated life's victories with them, but we've also experienced pain and fought with them more than anyone else.

In our passage today, we see Andrew invite His brother to meet Jesus. These two brothers certainly had a back story. They were close, in the way that brothers are. They talked to each other about things that matter, including their relationship with God. So when Andrew found Jesus, he wanted Simon to meet Jesus as well.

Do you have the same impulse toward those in your family? Often times we can grow cold to those in our family, especially if they are not following Jesus and seem hardened to the truth of the gospel. We can feel awkward or cold when it comes to telling them about Jesus and the hope He can bring. Many times we pray for them in private but fail to talk to them about Jesus when we have the chance. We need the challenge from this passage to remind us to persevere in relationship with our family. God places us in these human relationships to give us a chance to share about Jesus, and we should leverage our role to do just that. Of course, God can bring others to share with our siblings and family, but we must not depend on other people to do what we could be doing ourselves.

**Who in your family needs to hear of the hope of Jesus?
What opportunities might you have to share the gospel with them?**

DAY 3

READ:

John 1:42

FOCAL PASSAGE:

John 1:42

NOTES

Jesus changes people. Peter's name changed when he met Jesus. Jesus likely did this to communicate something about Peter's new identity as a follower of Him. No longer would he be marked by his former way of life. Now he would be known as "the Rock." Soon Jesus would suggest that He will build His church on the faithful witness of this rock (Matthew 16:18). Throughout the Bible, a name change is an indication of a life changed by the power of God.

God continues to change those He saves. Those who see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ are transformed from one degree of glory to another (2 Corinthians 3:18). The Spirit of God lives within them and produces change in their character and actions (Galatians 5:22-23). This change is not instantaneous. While God's salvation happens in a moment, the sanctification of a Christian takes a lifetime. Only when we die will we experience the full transformation into the image of Jesus. But throughout this life, we must give ourselves to the progressive growth God's Spirit is producing in us.

The Spirit of God wants to change your life as well. Many times Christians can grow cold or stale to this type of transformation. They may have seen change immediately after coming to faith, but sometimes we stagnate and stop growing. Ask God to bring change in you today, even if that change is small and unnoticeable to start with. God is increasingly transforming us in our sanctification process to become more of who we are meant to be as children of God.

How do you see God's Spirit changing you this week?

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

"So many missionaries, intent on doing something, forget that God's main work is to make something of them."¹

—Jim Elliot (1927-1956)

DAY 4

READ:

John 1:43-51

FOCAL PASSAGE:

John 1:48

NOTES

How does it feel to consider the fact that God takes notice of you? Your life might seem small and insignificant, but the God of the universe is attentive to you. Nathanael was awed by the fact that Jesus saw him under the fig tree and cared enough about him to show him that He is the Messiah.

God continues to notice His people. This is a primary focus of the passage in Matthew 6 where Jesus challenges His people to stop worrying (Matthew 6:25-34). They need not worry but should seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Why? Because they are more important than the flowers of the field and the birds of the heavens. God sees and cares for His creation. Since He takes notice of the birds and the flowers, people should be confident that He cares for us as well.

Sometimes it is tempting to think that God does not notice us. Especially when we are going through hard times, we might think that God has forgotten us or is busy with other things and simply can't handle our needs. Isn't it encouraging to remember that God sees us? He sees what you are going through today. He sees your heart and knows your joys and your pains. He's aware of the things that keep you up at night. And right now, in hundreds of ways that you can't see, He is caring for you.

What would change about you if you truly believed God cared for you?

DAY 5

READ:

John 1:43-51

FOCAL PASSAGE:

John 1:50-51

NOTES

What is the greatest thing God has ever done for you?

The place to start is certainly our salvation. He made us aware of our sin, convinced us of the righteousness of Jesus, and allowed us to repent of sin. He gave us a new heart—one that beats with the life of His Spirit.

Beyond that, He's likely done many things for you. He's given you His Word, His Spirit, His church. He's likely blessed you in innumerable ways in this life. He's come through for you in hard times, turned around a situation that seemingly was beyond hope, and made a way for you where it seemed you were at an impasse.

God can do great things still. Paul reminded the church in Ephesus that God is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think (Ephesians 3:20), in the same way Jesus was telling Nathanael that he would see great things. God is able and powerful to do greater things than even what we've seen thus far.

Some of the manifestations of this promise may come true in this world. We should certainly have hope that God can do greater things here and now. For example, He can send workers to hard-to-reach places and see those who have never heard of Jesus come to saving faith. However, much of the fruition of this promise will come when Jesus returns. When that happens, the entire cosmos will witness the kingdom of God descend on this world and all things made new. We should live with hope and anticipation for that glorious day.

What makes heaven exciting for you to think about?

GROUP

NOTES

VOICES from THE CHURCH

"Jesus was way more than just some prophet or teacher. And to point to Him as anything less than the King of kings, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, is to reject Him and insult Him"²

-Trip Lee

POINT 1: The Messiah invites others to follow Him (John 1:35-42).

Discipleship includes _____ Jesus and staying near Him in response to His invitation to come and _____ Him more.

? What does it mean to follow Jesus for the modern reader?

Discipleship also includes _____ about Jesus with others, bringing them to Him so they too can have a new _____ in Christ Jesus.

? Why is it sometimes difficult to share about Jesus with others?

POINT 2: The Messiah reveals His identity by His power (John 1:43-49).

KEY DOCTRINE #66: CALLING

The calling of God to salvation happens in two ways: externally through the proclamation of the _____ and internally through the _____ working in the heart of the person who hears. Both of these callings are _____, and both work together to bring someone to faith in Christ (2 Timothy 1:8-10).

Our _____ in Jesus is dependent on our understanding of who He is, namely, the Messiah, the Son of God, and the _____ of all.

? What names of Jesus resonate with you at this point in your life, and why?

POINT 3: The Messiah promises greater things to come (John 1:50-51).

Jesus promised to show His people greater things to _____ their faith in _____ .



What causes you to believe that Jesus really is who He says He is?

Jesus described Himself as the _____ of _____ , widening the people’s understanding of who He is and is not.



Who do you say that Jesus is?

MY RESPONSE

Because Jesus gave up His life for us and we have committed to following Him, our lives are to be marked by sacrifice as we are willing to do whatever God calls on us to do as we invest in others so that they might become disciples of Jesus.

- **HEAD:** What are some potential risks and joys from sharing with others the good news of Jesus as the Messiah?
- **HEART:** Do you view sharing the gospel as a joyful privilege or dreaded duty? Why?
- **HANDS:** How will you use your influence to invite others to follow Jesus this week?



Scan this QR code to access this session’s Scripture passages.

VOICES from THE CHURCH

“Jesus has no desire to trick you into following him with a kind of bait and switch. He is utterly up front about the cost. In fact, he urges you to count the cost. ‘For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? . . .’ (Luke 14:28). Let the call to follow Jesus be clear and honest. ‘In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world’ (John 16:33). It is costly, and it is worth it.”³

–John Piper