

Come and See

Եկո՛ւր եւ Տես՛

John 1:35-51

I have heard the story of a man who wanted to apply to a college. He was filling in the applications when he came across the question: “Are you a leader?” He thought for a minute and answered, “No” expecting the worst. Sometime later he received the following letter form the college: “Dear applicant: Our application forms show us that this year we will have 1452 new leaders. We are accepting you because we will need at least one follower.”¹

In the Gospel of John, the phrase “**following Jesus**” has an important meaning: it means to become a disciple of Jesus. “**Whoever serves me must follow me;**” (John 12:26a NIV 11).

In this sermon we will discuss the followers of Jesus.

God loves His creation. The good news is that God continues His creation in our lives.

In the prologue, we found how John the author described **Logos** as bringing new life, new light, a new creation.

John the Baptist witnessed that new creation when he pointed towards the Lamb of God who forgives our sins.

With Jesus there will be a new creation, **there will be a new family of God**. In this part, we will find five new people (four names and one unnamed person) who will become followers of Jesus. Let us read the passage:

(john 1:35-42)

³⁵ The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. ³⁶ When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God!”

³⁷ When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, “What do you want?”

They said, “Rabbi” (which means “Teacher”), “where are you staying?”

³⁹ “Come,” he replied, “and you will see.” So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon.

⁴⁰ Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. ⁴¹ The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ). ⁴² And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas” (which, when translated, is Peter). (John 1:35-42 NIV 11)

For a moment think about the 12 disciples of Jesus. Which names can you recall? You will probably remember Peter, Matthew, John, Judas, James, Philip and Thomas.

But who remembers **Andrew and Nathanael**? How often have you heard about them? **Peter’s name is mentioned 151 times in the Bible while Andrew’s is mentioned only 13 times and Nathanael’s 7 times.**

Let us go back to the Scripture:

-It is the next day and John the Baptist continues witnessing (the voice) about Jesus saying: “**Behold the Lamb of God.**” Now two of his disciples hear this from their master John, and then they decide to investigate more. So they approach Jesus.

And Jesus asks them: “**What do you want?**” «Ի՞նչ կ’ուզեք»:

One of the commentaries says:

John the author wants his audience to reflect a deeper question: The Logos-Messiah confronts those who make any show of beginning to follow him and demands that they articulate what they really want in life.”²

Indeed, what do you want from Jesus? An important question I’ll ask you this morning. What do you want from Jesus? Do you want to know him? Do you, really do you want to KNOW Jesus?

“**Where are you staying Rabbi, (teacher)**” ռ՞ իր էք քու օրեւանդ

actually means, “We want to talk with you more.” They use the adjective **rabbi**; they want to know more about him; they want to spend more time with him. “Where are you staying?”

The answer of Jesus is simple:

“Come and see....” Եկուր եւ տես

This language is consciously designed to describe discipleship: to “follow”, (*akoulotheo*) to “come and see,” and to “stay, remain” (*meno*), each describe aspects of discipleship.³

According to Scripture, they did follow Jesus. They spent that day with Him. Now John starts identifying these people: **Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother...** the other one HE does **not identify by name**. Scholars debate about this, and many come to the conclusion that this unnamed disciple is John, our author, the son of Zebedee.

-The next event is so important. **Andrew goes and finds his brother Simon-Peter.** Have you noticed how Andrew finds people and brings them to Jesus? *Like he found the young boy with fish and bread to feed the five thousand. (John 6:8)*

Andrew’s testimony is an evidence that he encountered the Messiah. He said to his brother Peter:

“We have found the Messiah (that is, the Christ).” vs 41b «Գտանք Մեսիան»

Please notice that our author John knows that his readers would not understand the Hebrew word Messiah, so with any word he writes in Aramaic or Hebrew, he adds the Greek translation as well. Messiah in Greek is *Khrisdos*, the Christ.

We have found the Messiah, the Christ.

I think Jesus found them. His light comes first searching for our lost souls. He finds us. I wish we are open to be receptive to his call....

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world... (John 1:9,10a NIV 11)

-Next is Peter's approach to Jesus. Jesus sees him and gives him a new name: **"You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter)** (John 1:42 NIV 11)

Here in John 1, the focus is much less on what this name change means for Peter, than on the Jesus who knows people truly (43-51) and not only 'sees into' them (47-48) but so calls them that he makes them what he calls them to be.⁴

Jesus gives a new name to Peter. That name is going to be a costly name. Our author is preparing our minds who Peter will be in future.

So, what do I care, Badveli?

What do you want from Jesus? Important question, existential question. What do you want in life? Who are you?

Once you find Christ in your life, **HE is going to give you a new name**, like Jacob who became Israel. **Our identity is shaped in Christ.** As long as you don't find your identity in Christ, you will always be lacking rest, always trying to prove yourself to anyone, including God.

Next passage: (John 1:43-51)

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."

⁴⁴ Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." ⁴⁶ "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.

"Come and see," said Philip.

⁴⁷ When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit."

⁴⁸ "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."

⁴⁹ Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel."

⁵⁰ Jesus said, “You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that.” ⁵¹ He then added, “Very truly I tell you, you will see ‘heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on’ the Son of Man.”

The same themes occur in this passage. Phillip follows Jesus. Like Andrew, Phillip invites Nathanael (gift from God).

-**Philip** (*Greek name, horse lover*): He was drawn to Christ in a very simple way. Philip did hear about Jesus in the town of **Bethsaida** (the *house of fishermen*) which is about 70 miles North of Jerusalem. Five of Jesus’ disciples were from that village!

-Philip heard Jesus telling him: **“Follow me.”** «Եկո՛ւր իմ ետեւէս»:

What a simple way to ask someone to follow! I wish my call was that simple.

There is no one way that invites us to follow Jesus. Each of us is unique, and God can use many ways to invite us to Him.

-It is interesting to see that Andrew, Peter and Philip did not follow Jesus after a **big sermon** with an alter call. **No, they heard and saw.**

Philip heard about Jesus, he got invited to follow and he responded to the call. But quickly he went to tell his **friend Nathanael** (*gift from God*). Nathanael was from **Cana**. (21:2)

-I love **Nathanael’s response**. One can imagine Philip **enthusiastically** telling the Good news that he had found what Moses had told them years ago:

“We have found the one Moses wrote about whom the prophets also wrote -Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph” (vs. 45).

Nathanael’s response:

“Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” (vs. 46)

I love his honest yet typical response.

You have to see that in those days the people of **Bethsaida** or **Cana** did not like the Nazrethians. And vice versa.

-Nathanael was sitting under the fig tree. Please notice that a fig tree in those days **was the place for relaxation and meditation**. For the Israelites, the weather was so hot and dry they needed a place like a fig tree to relax. Perhaps he was in

prayer when he was told about Jesus. Instead of seeing Jesus, he “saw” the “man from Nazareth.”

Phillip: Come and see. Same verbs used; same idea is repeating. If you want to follow Jesus you need to come, and you need to see. In my words: **“I know, I know, but please come only once and you will see with your eyes. You will hear with your ears. Please come and see.”**

Jesus’ response was great: **“Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.”** (vs 47)

You see Nathanael was surprised about Jesus’ knowledge. And Jesus said: “I saw you under fig tree, Nathanael. I can see you very well. I can read you. I know you.” Nathanael declared: **“Rabbi, Son of God, king of Israel.”**

Do you see what is happening? Nathanael **CAME and SAW.**

Please notice John our author is bringing main topics one by one. **Light, life, Creator, Lamb of God, Messiah, Son of God, King of Israel....**

Last remark:

Jesus continued with Nathanael saying, **“Very truly I tell you, you will see ‘heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on’ the Son of Man.”** (vs.51)

Do you remember Jacob’s dream when the angels of God were ascending and descending the stairs? That place was called Bethel, God’s house.

Last Sunday we found that John the Baptist saw the Spirit of God descending over Jesus and remained on him.

Today we find through Jesus we have open communication with God and angels ascending and descending. We do have an open communication with God.

Application:

-“Come, and see” .

This statement was enough for some disciples to follow Jesus. The question that we as church should ask:

Is there anything special to ask people to come and see at PACC?

-What are you seeking from Jesus? What do you want?

-Are you like Andrew, or Philip inviting others to come and see... See Jesus, not Nerses or Kevin?

Let us approach table of the Lord.

Additional notes:

1. I think people see wonderful things in our church. Some newcomers tell me they see **love and care**, they see a **big family**, they see **wonderful food** and **hospitality**, and they see **teaching and worship**....These are wonderful qualities. Yet we need to not fall in the trap of an **activity oriented church**. Beside all the activities we need to **offer Christ**. This should be our main concern. How can we **reflect more of Jesus** in our lives?

We do have wonderful qualities, but we need to work on our **spiritual maturity**. **That is the reason for having Bible studies and Bible teaching.**

Please be sure you are attending one of those groups. We all need teaching.

And one can never graduate from the Christian life.

2. Do you know that Nathanael means "**Gift from God**"? He was a gift from God **for the Armenians, too.**

Do you know that Nathanael's other name is **Bartholomew. (Partoghomios).**

Yes, Thaddeus and Bartholomew became missionaries to Armenia. Brothers and sisters, we as **PACC exist because these two disciples** left their "fig tress", **heard the call from God**, and they saw the **heaven is open** and angels of God is descending and ascending on our nation. And not only on our nation but on all nations as well.

Andrew helped Peter to come to Christ.

Philip helped Nathanael to come to Christ.

Both names were secondary, yet through them the Good News were spread.

Can you leave today this sanctuary without committing yourselves that we all are responsible to use this small sentence: "**COME AND SEE.**"

This means we need to work on two dimensions:

We need to have something to offer when we ask someone to come and see. This is a **collective response.**

On the other hand there is **individual commitment.**

This means personal commitment to God. This means more time to God. This means we all need to be in one for the small groups during week for growth.

Go and say: **COME AND SEE.**

1. www.esermon.com

2. D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 155.

3. Gary M. Bruce, *NIV Application Commentary*. p75

4. D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 156.