

## John 1:35-51

### The First Followers

- Christianity is said to have over 2 Billion followers. John 1:35-51, tells the beginning story or testimony of the earliest followers of Christ.
- John 1:35-51 is still in the **Introduction** portion/phase of this Gospel Narrative.
- John 1:19-51 is a week of ministry. “*Next day*” used at least 3 times in this section. (v.29, 35, and 43). (see page 65-66 of “Encountering John” by: Andreas Kostenberger)
- Outline: **Scene 1:** Day 3: Two of John’s former disciples follow Jesus (1:35-39);  
**Scene 2:** Day 4: Peter meets and follows Jesus (1:40-42);  
**Scene 3:** Day 5: Philip and Nathanael meet and follow Jesus (John 1:43-51);
- **Scene 1:** John 1:35-39. While still baptizing people at the Jordan River (**East of the Jordan**) near the area of **Bethabara**, John the Baptist points his followers/disciples to Jesus again (cf. John 1:29). As a result, two of his disciples decide to follow and stay with Jesus.

### **Important truths to point out/know (v.35-39)**

- A “disciple(s)” (v.35, 37) is a **learner, or an apprentice**. This is why as a learner/disciple, Andrew called Jesus “rabi” (teacher) in v.38.
  - “*Looked at*” (v.36) *lit.* look at something directly, intently. In other words, John looked at at Jesus with amazement, astonished, with focus.
  - “Lamb of God” (v.36) (see v.29 and last MOB discussion for more on this). Ex 12; Is 53 all find their ultimate fulfillment and pointing to Jesus in the NT.
  - “Rabi” (v.38) “The word literally means ‘my great one’, but was a common term of honour addressed by a student to his master.” ( D.A Carson)
  - “tenth hour” (v.39) “they (the Disciples) spent the rest of the day with him” (from about 4:00 OM on).
- **Scene 2:** John 1:40-42. Andrew (one of John the Baptist’s disciples) tells about Jesus to his brother Peter. As result, Peter meets Jesus, gets his name changed by Jesus, and decides to follow Jesus also. Moreover, and importantly, Andrew recognizes and accepts that Jesus is the promised Messiah of the OT.

### Important truths to point out/know (v.40-42)

- “Messiah” (v.40) means the anointed one. This Messiah was incessantly promised in the OT (Ps 2:2; Dan 9:25). Jesus himself affirmed himself to be the promised, and coming Messiah (John 4:26).
  - “Cephas” (v.42) the Aramaic name means, “Rock.” “He (Peter) would be a rock-like man in the church during its early years (cf: Acts 2-5; 10-12).” BKC
- **Scene 3:** John 1:43-51. Jesus traveled with his first three disciples toward **Galilee** (northern Israel). It is there that he met two more disciples (Philip and Nathaniel).

### Important truths to point out/know (v.45-51)

- “*Follow me*” (v.43) is a present tense. Lit. “*Keep on following me.*” The disciples of Jesus physically followed him. They also spiritually (gave their life to Jesus) followed Jesus.
- The Hebrew Bible/OT- TNK (Torah, Prophets, and Writings) is ultimately about Jesus. John 1:45; 5:39 and Luke 24:27, 44 all state that OT prophecies are about Jesus.
- In John 1:47-48, Jesus showed that he is God by demonstrating his **omniscience**. As a result, Nathaniel saw that Jesus is God and decided to follow Jesus also.
- “**Son of God**” (v.49) is a reference to Jesus being God, and also being the promised Messiah. Ps 2:6-7 is a direct reference to the term “Son of God”.
- Jesus’ statements in John 1:50, “greater things than these” is a probable reference to all the other miracles Jesus would do in John 2-13. In addition, it is also a possible reference to Jesus’ future return in power and great glory.

#### ▪ **What is the meaning of John 1:51?**

First, on p. 71, Kostenberger makes a great point by connecting John 1:51 “ascending and descending” statement to John 3:13. Also, the title, “Son of Man,” is stated.

Second, John 1:51 is an obvious resemblance to Jacob’s dream in Gen 28:12. Which shows that Nathaniel was possibly reflecting upon Gen 28.

Third, Jesus (the Son of man) replaces the ladder of Gen 28:12. *“Jesus Himself is the link between heaven and earth (3:13). He is the means by which the realities of heaven are brought down to earth.”* (NIC Commentary, p.171).

Fourth, John 1:51 is ultimately fulfilled when Jesus (the Son of man) returns in the future.

Last, **“The Son of man”** (v.51) is a Messianic term referring to Dan 7:13. In addition, the title also shows that Jesus is fully human.

### **Application/Challenge**

The Disciples spiritually followed Jesus. They also spread word about him to others. **Andrew** spread word about Jesus to **Peter. Philip** to Nathanael. As a disciple of Jesus, am I doing that? Are you doing that? Are we as MOB faithfully doing that?

### **Group Discussion Questions**

1. **Observation:** (what do you see in the text? Don't interpret). Based on the text of John 1:35-51, what titles, names, are said about Jesus?
2. **Interpretation:** (what does the text mean? Interpret the text mean?). What does any of the titles in John 1:35-51 mean or say about Jesus? Example, what is meaning of “Son of Man” in v.51?
3. **Application:** (how does the text apply?) What does this text tell me about Jesus? What does the text tell me about how I, you, and we should respond to Jesus?