

## 11. The Gospel of John—1:35-42

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### *“The Invitation of Jesus” Pt.1*

(12/10/17)

As most of you already know we have started a study in the Gospel of John on Sundays here at Calvary.

The first 18 verses were John’s introduction forming a doctrinal statement on the Person and work of Jesus Christ—a section we entitled, *“Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up”*.

Starting with verse 19, John’s gospel takes the form of a narrative where he now begins to recount for us the life and ministry of Jesus.

But before he focuses on Jesus’ ministry—John starts the narrative portion of his gospel by introducing us to John the Baptist.

As we have already pointed out, John the Baptist was the prophesied forerunner or herald of the Messiah—

**Malachi 3:1 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me...

**Isaiah 40:3 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God.

Now, starting with verse 19 and running thru the end of chapter 1, I have organized the chapter around three main points—

## **I. The Inquisition of the Jews; II. The Introduction of John; and III. The Invitation of Jesus.**

We've already looked at the first two in our last two previous studies—which now brings us to the third main point in our outline—The Invitation of Jesus.

### **III. The Invitation of Jesus—v.35-51**

**John 1:35-37 (NKJV)**

<sup>35</sup> Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup> And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" <sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

Once again, as he did in v.29, John makes it a point to introduce Jesus to the crowd that was there that day by saying, "*Behold the Lamb of God.*"

It's interesting that John didn't present Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah of Israel—rather he focused on His mission.

*Messiah* was His title—*Lamb of God* spoke of His mission.

It's interesting that *they* thought they needed a king—but *God* knew they needed a Lamb.

They were looking for physical deliverance from the bondage of Rome—God was giving them spiritual deliverance from the bondage of sin and death.

The natural man is always concerned and consumed with the physical—but God knows that man's spiritual needs (forgiveness of sin) far outweigh the physical because the spiritual needs of mankind have eternal consequences attached to them.

But here's the problem when we talk about the forgiveness of sin—no human being born of Adam can save us because—sinner can't die for sinner (Hebrews 9:22).

God illustrated this in the Law of Moses when He said that He would only accept as atonement for sin animals that were without spot and blemish. (Explain)

Of course, under the Old Covenant God accepted the blood of animals as a temporary covering (atonement) for sins—but only until the Lamb of God came on the scene, Who alone could take away the sin of the world (v.29).

The only perfect and sinless Man (without 'spot and blemish') Who could die for sinners was the 'God-Man', God incarnate—the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that's why John continued his introduction of Jesus earlier (v.32-34) by making sure we all knew that He was no 'son of Adam'—He was and is the virgin born Son of God.

The two disciples of John the Baptist mentioned in verses 35 and 37 are John (writer of this gospel) and his friend Andrew who was the younger brother of Simon Peter.

So here we learn that they were disciples of John before becoming disciples of Jesus.

**John 1:37-39 (NKJV)**

<sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup> 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?" <sup>39</sup> 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).

When John and Andrew asked Jesus where He was staying—it was their way of saying, '*We might want to be Your disciples, can we talk to You about it?*'

Wiersbe—

*“Where are You staying (living while You’re in town)?” may have suggested, “If You are too busy now, we can visit later.” But Jesus invited them to spend the day with Him (it was 10 A.M.) and no doubt He told them something of His mission, revealed their own hearts to them, and answered their questions. They were both so impressed that they found their brothers and brought them to Jesus.”*

In those days, a disciple (‘a learner’) was a person who lived with their rabbi so that they could learn and absorb everything they could from his life.

When Jesus said to them, *“Come and see”* it was His way of inviting them to live with Him and become His disciples.

Now what you might not know from a casual reading of the gospels is that—Jesus called these men to be His disciples three different times before they fully obeyed by leaving their jobs to follow Him full time.

The first meeting took place in Jerusalem, as recorded right here in John 1:35–42.

The second invitation is found in Matthew 4:18-22—

**Matthew 4:18-22 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup> Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." <sup>20</sup> They immediately left *their* nets and followed Him. <sup>21</sup> Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, <sup>22</sup> and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

It seems, from this passage, that they did leave their livelihood and followed Him—however as we study the gospels further we see that it wasn’t permanent.

We know this because in Luke 5:1-10 we see them back fishing again.

And so, the third time Jesus repeats His invitation for them to leave their fishing nets and follow Him permanently to become *“fishers of men”*.

And this time Luke 5:11 says, *“So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him”*.

This teaches us that once a person is saved it often takes time for them to leave the life they have known for so long to follow Jesus fully.

And I realize that not everyone is called to forsake their jobs and careers to follow Jesus into full time ministry.

The Lord doesn't call all of us who are His people into full time ministry—but He does call all of us into full time commitment.

This means that you should never allow your commitment to your jobs and careers take precedence over your commitment to Jesus—He must be your first love (supreme) and Lord of all.

In one sense, we are all in full time ministry as God's people whether you realize that or not—some of us get paid for it and others don't. (Explain)

**John 1:40-42 (NKJV)**

<sup>40</sup> One of the two who heard John *“speak”*, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. <sup>41</sup> He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). <sup>42</sup> 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).

Andrew was Simon Peter's younger brother—and a real soul winner.

One author summarized Andrew's life in this regard by saying:

*“Whenever you find Andrew in John's Gospel, he is bringing somebody to Jesus: his brother, the lad with the loaves and fishes (John 6:8), and the Greeks who wanted to see Jesus (John 12:20–21). No sermons from Andrew are recorded, but he certainly preached great sermons by his actions as a personal soul winner!”*

Simon (whose name means ‘shifting’ or ‘unstable’)—Jesus now renames ‘Cephas’ (Aramaic for ‘stone), Peter (Petros) is the Greek word for ‘stone’.

And so *Simon* means “shifting”, *Cephas* means “a rock”—a name that Peter would eventually grow into.

It's interesting the transformation that takes place in a person's life when they decide to follow Jesus with all their heart and life.

We see a similar transformation take with the men who joined themselves to David, a man after God's heart (and often used by the Holy Spirit as a type of Christ).

David had this amazing ability, because of his heart for God, to draw people to him and inspire those around him.

While David was out in the wilderness running from Saul word got out and suddenly men came from all over the land to join up with him.

**1 Samuel 22:2**

**And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him.**

Not exactly the kind of guys you'd think would make a good army—but as these men spent time with David an interesting thing began to happen—a transformation began to take place.

These four hundred men (the number eventually grew to six hundred)—but as they spent time with David they became like him—men after God's heart.

And in the process this rag-tag group of misfits and malcontents became a super-elite group of fighting men—possibly the finest soldiers the world has ever seen.

This transformation is exactly what happens with every person that joins up and hangs out with the Son of David, Jesus Christ—we become like Him (2Cor. 3:18), men and women with His heart—and it seems the greater the dysfunction, the greater the transformation!

We see this transformation take place with the men Jesus chose to be His apostles.

**Matthew 10:2-4 (NKJV)**

<sup>2</sup> Now the 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; <sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup> Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

I want you to take a good hard look at the men Jesus chose to start the most important religious movement in the history of mankind:

- He chose one man who was impulsive and unstable—Simon.
- A couple of hot heads (James and John);
- A skeptic named Nathanael;
- A doubter named Thomas;
- A political rabble-rouser/assassin named Simon the Zealot

All but Judas were radically transformed—because all but Judas were truly saved!

But look, would you have chosen these men for this ministry?

And yet they were transformed in the presence of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God never chooses a person to use based on what they are at that moment—but based on what He knows they can become through His power and grace.

The world looks for those who are strong, self-confident and assertive to be leaders—what psychologists referred to as “S.N.L.’s” (strong, natural leaders).

The world thinks that only those who are highly intelligent and gifted with natural abilities can be leaders.

The world even takes outward appearance into consideration when choosing its leaders (height, stature and beauty).

The prophet Samuel made that mistake when God sent him to anoint the new king of Israel who would take Saul’s place—

**1 Samuel 16:6-7 (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup> So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the LORD'S anointed *is* before Him." <sup>7</sup> But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For *the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*" (David the shepherd boy)

And so, if a person has a heart for God regardless of their physical attributes or their prior moral failings they can be used by God—and in fact are often chosen by God to serve Him before someone who is very gifted.



As the apostle Paul tells us—

**1 Corinthians 1:26-31 (NLT)**

<sup>26</sup> Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. <sup>27</sup> Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. <sup>28</sup> God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. <sup>29</sup> As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

Now often when I teach on this the thing that Christians immediately think about is how unworthy they are and how inadequate they feel when it comes to serving God—“*Who am I*” they say, “*that I should think I can serve God?*”

And to that I say that—everyone who God has called into ministry has felt that way.

Moses said, “*How can I serve God—I stutter?*”

David, Jeremiah, Timothy and Mary were only teenagers when God called them into ministry—I'm sure they didn't feel worthy or qualified.

Even the great apostle Paul expressed his unworthiness at his call by God into the ministry—

**1 Corinthians 15:9-10 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup> For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am...

**1 Timothy 1:12-14 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup> And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry, <sup>13</sup> although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. <sup>14</sup> And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

Let me give you the only two things that are necessary for effective ministry—the first was expressed in 2Chronicles 16:9—

**2 Chronicles 16:9 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup> For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of *those whose heart is loyal to Him*...

The Hebrew word translated *loyal* carries with it the idea of “*completeness*” or “*whole-heartedness*.”

That same Hebrew word could also be translated “*at peace with*.”

So first of all, God is looking for people to use whose hearts are fully given over to Him (not half-hearted commitment) and whose hearts are at peace with God—what does that mean?

Well, a Christian whose heart is not at peace with God signifies a heart that is restless, a heart that thinks that maybe the world still has something to offer in the way of pleasure, fulfillment and happiness—like King Solomon. (Explain)

So, the first qualification for ministry is a loyal heart.

The second qualification for effective ministry is found in Act 4:5-13 (paraphrase)—

**Acts 4:13 (NKJV)**

<sup>13</sup> Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

Today many in the church believe that a seminary degree is what qualifies a person for the ministry—nothing could be farther from the truth.

I have seen many men with seminary degrees that I am convinced were not called by God into full time ministry—especially when it comes to being a pastor.

Graduating from seminary doesn't make you a pastor—it makes you a graduate!

What qualifies a person for ministry is the call of God upon their life because—“*whom the Lord calls He equips.*”

And how does He equip a person after He calls them—by them being with Jesus (Acts 4:13).

And how does a person have contact and fellowship with Jesus?

By staying in the Word—

**2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

This is the best ministry training you can get.

And then the third qualification for ministry is to be baptized with the Holy Spirit (listen to our last study in John 1 online).

As we close, let me just ask you one more time—look at the men Jesus chose to start the most important work in the history of mankind—the work of saving fallen sinners.

J. Vernon McGee—

*“The wonder of it all is that Jesus called men like this. I have always felt that since He called imperfect men like the disciples were, He may be able to use me, and He may be able to use you. It is encouraging to know that we don’t have to be super-duper saints to be used by Him... Whatever your talent may be, if you will turn it over to Him, He can use it”.*

Next week we’ll finish looking at the “Invitation of Jesus”.