

# The Starting of a Movement

John 1:35-51

## INTRODUCTION

This morning, we will be discussing the start of the greatest movement in human history regarding its reach and meaning. Much of history can be seen through many movements, some good and some not so good. For example, in recent times, there has been the Pro-Life movement, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the Civil Rights movement just to name a few. Depending on what worldview one takes determines how one judges any of these, or the many other, movements to be either good or bad.

The “Jesus movement” deals with matters on a higher plane because it is a movement not of different causes within a worldview, but of the status of the worldview itself. Christianity, another name for the Jesus movement, is a worldview-level movement in which to evaluate all of the different causes of life. Remember my quote from last Sunday by Josh McDowell.

### **Josh McDowell:**

“Few people seem to realize that the resurrection of Jesus is the cornerstone to a worldview that provides the perspective to all of life.”

Today, we see in John’s Gospel the grassroots of how this “Jesus Movement” began with some of John’s disciples going over and making contact with Jesus, and as they say the rest is history.

## **John 1:35-51**

### **Jesus Calls the First Disciples**

<sup>35</sup> The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, <sup>36</sup> and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” <sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup> Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?” <sup>39</sup> He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. <sup>40</sup> One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus 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 means Christ).

<sup>42</sup> He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas” (which means Peter).

## **Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael**

<sup>43</sup> The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” <sup>44</sup> Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. <sup>45</sup> 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.” <sup>46</sup> Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” <sup>47</sup> Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” <sup>48</sup> Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” <sup>49</sup> Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” <sup>50</sup> Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” <sup>51</sup> And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

### **I. The Claim of John Sparked Curiosity in Two of His Disciples**

- A. John, as we have seen from the previous passage, has been revealed to who the Messiah was and claims because of such revelation that Jesus is indeed the Lamb of God.
- B. This would have sparked curiosity with the disciples of John and so they did what curious people do, followed to know more.
- C. Jesus knowing their curiosity and probably seeing them try to be subtle in behind Him then turns and asks them a question, “What do you seek?”
- D. Notice it was not “Who do you seek?” Basically, Jesus is asking them their agenda in following Him.
- E. They answered Jesus by asking a question themselves which was not “Who are you?” but rather “Where are you staying?”
- F. They were curious about where Jesus was staying while in the region. Most likely they wanted an opportunity to have an uninterrupted visit with Him to

ask questions to Him, and about Him, in light of John's proclamation that He was the Lamb of God.

### **Hendriksen & Kistemaker**

The two disciples, accordingly, are asking, “**Where are you lodging?**” Whether this temporary abode of Jesus was a home in Bethany beyond the Jordan or a near-by cloth-covered booth, constructed of platted twigs, has not been revealed and is of no particular significance. The important thing to notice is that the disciples desired an opportunity for uninterrupted conversation with Jesus. Because this was rather difficult out in the open, they ask where Jesus is staying just now, clearly implying that they are desirous of receiving an invitation to visit him. Their interest has been fully aroused by the testimony of the Baptist, who, accordingly, proved that he was a true herald and way-preparer.<sup>1</sup>

- G. They wanted time to spend with Jesus. And Jesus was very open to the idea that they stayed all day with Him. Most commentators would say that the tenth hour was on Roman time, not Jewish time which would have been 4 pm, but rather 10 am. Romans measured time as we do by noon or midnight, and the Jewish time was measured regarding sunrise.
- H. Verse 40 identifies one of the two disciples of John as Andrew, Peter's brother. The other disciple's identity is left silent. Some commentators believe it may have been John himself.

## **II. When in Touch with Jesus**

- A. When one is in touch or has been touched by Jesus one wants to tell others naturally.
- B. If you don't have a desire to tell others about Jesus, you may not be in touch with Him.
- C. Andrew did what a lot of us need to do; He began with his family.
- D. The closest mission field is one often across the living room floor.
- E. Andrew tells Peter we have found the Messiah.

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<sup>1</sup> Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). [\*Exposition of the Gospel According to John\*](#) (Vol. 1, pp. 103–104). Baker Book House.

## **Hendriksen & Kistemaker**

When Andrew sees Peter, **he said to him, We have found the Messiah.** The expectation of the coming of the Messiah, the testimony of the Baptist with reference to Jesus (1:29, 36), and especially the day-long visit with the latter at his temporary abode near the Jordan, had paved the way for this joyful exclamation. It must be borne in mind, however, that the conception of the Messiah in the minds of the disciples was still in need of purification. The history of their confession and witness-bearing reveals many ups and downs. Though all in all there is a gradual upward trend in their recognition and understanding of Christ's mediatorial office, nevertheless, even after the Lord's resurrection, nationalistic elements cling to their Messianic hopes and expectations (cf. Acts. 1:6). The joyful discovery which finds expression in the words of Andrew was a good beginning on the path to greater and deeper knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

F. Andrew introduces Jesus in whom he had spent all day with to his brother Simon.

G. The Scripture teaches that Jesus "gave him the look over" and gave Simon a new name Cephas or Peter meaning the "Rock."

H. When we come to Jesus not only do we get new vocations for our lives but also a new identity in Him.

## **N.T. Wright**

There are four things going on in this quick-fire conversation. Andrew and Simon (and the other, unnamed friend) are looking for the Messiah, and they think they've found him. Jesus is looking for followers, and when he finds them, that gives them a new vocation (Simon becomes 'the Rock', an important but dangerous name). John's readers, out there in the **Gentile** world, would sense Jesus calling and renaming them too. And we, reading this book in the hope of finding out more about Jesus, may discover that he is simultaneously coming to find us. And perhaps to give us new names.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). *Exposition of the Gospel According to John* (Vol. 1, p. 106). Baker Book House.

<sup>3</sup> Wright, T. (2004). *John for Everyone, Part 1: Chapters 1-10* (p. 15). Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

- I. Peter was no longer the Simon the Fisherman but rather Peter the Rock. Peter later confesses his faith in Christ and Jesus said it was upon that confession in which the Church would be built.

### **Matthew 16:13-20 ESV**

<sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” <sup>14</sup> And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” <sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” <sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” <sup>20</sup> Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

### **III. The Calling of Philip and Nathanael**

- A. The day after meeting with the two, Andrew and the other unknown disciple, Jesus decides to go to Galilee.
- B. Notice it says in the text Jesus found Philip.
- C. Philip was from the same town as Andrew and Peter in Bethsaida which is on the northeastern side of the Sea of Galilee.
- D. Jesus is slowly gathering a following.
- E. But notice how it primarily has happened through the word of mouth who have been touched by Jesus.
- F. Philip does the same thing that Andrew did. He went and told someone.
- G. Philip doesn't just run up to Nathanael half-cocked with emotion but rather brought evidence.

### **John 1:45**

“We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

H. Nathanael was a skeptic wondering if anything good came out of Nazareth.

### **Hendriksen & Kistemaker**

**And Nathaniel said to him ...** The echo of the word *Nazareth* has not yet died when Nathaniel, in complete candor, exclaims, **Out of Nazareth can any good come?** Though some are of the opinion that this scorn for Nazareth must be interpreted as springing from town-rivalry—a possibility which cannot be denied—yet, in view of the immediate context here (see also 7:52), it is more probable that Nathaniel meant to say, “Is it possible, indeed, that *the Messiah* can come out of Nazareth? Have Moses and the prophets predicted that any good thing in the Messianic category would come forth from that town?” **Philip said ...** Philip gives the best possible answer—one that closely resembles Christ’s reply to Andrew and John, recorded in 1:39—, **Come and see.**<sup>4</sup>

- I. When Nathanael does “come and see” Jesus immediately identifies him as an “Israelite with no deceit” or “trickery.”
- J. Nathanael according to this testimony was a straightforward authentic man.
- K. Nathanael replies to Jesus “How do you know me?” This is a major question to ask Jesus.
- L. Jesus did not say, “Well, I met Andrew and Peter who were from the same town as Philip who had mentioned you.”
- M. No, Jesus spoke to Nathanael not as the Son of Man but as the Creator God who knows beyond all-knowing. He said, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig-tree, I saw you.”
- N. Nathanael’s world had to collapse when the living God states, “I saw you.”
- O. Nathanael confesses “You are the Son of God, the King of Israel.”
- P. Jesus then prepares them for more than just that. They will see Heaven and Earth overlap because of who Jesus is.
- Q. In this passage, the overlap of the Son of God and the Son of Man comes up. This is why as I have said before when studying about Jesus or reading

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<sup>4</sup> Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). [\*Exposition of the Gospel According to John\*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 109). Baker Book House.

about Jesus in a passage, we need to ask ourselves if Jesus is revealing His divinity or assuming His humanity in the context.

## **CONCLUSION**

This movement didn't begin in the halls of anywhere famous such as Congress or the Senate of Rome, but rather on the riverside, out under fig trees, by the Sea of Galilee, where ordinary people do ordinary things. In this case, ordinary people couldn't stay ordinary when in the presence of the extraordinary.