

**Livin' the Life**  
**Following Jesus, part 7**  
**John 1:35-51**  
November 5, 2017

We are in our series in the Gospel of John, "Livin' the Life" looking at what life in Jesus means for us today. John wrote to convince us to believe in Jesus for eternal life and to strengthen the faith of those who already believe in Jesus. Today we begin looking at the ministry of Jesus, Following Jesus, 1:35-51, as we look at Jesus gathering disciples.

**John Points His Disciples to Jesus (35-42)**

John the Baptist is with two of his disciples as Jesus walks by and John testifies a second time, Look the Lamb of God! As a result, they leave John and follow Jesus (35-37). There is a connection between hearing John's testimony and following Jesus. The day before John testified that Jesus was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (1:29). This testimony is a trigger that starts a chain reaction of people following Jesus, becoming his disciples. These two disciples of John follow Jesus because Jesus does something that John the Baptist cannot, remove their sin (not sins). Last week we saw that John's ministry was to prepare people for Jesus. So, it is appropriate that John's disciples leave him to follow Jesus (see also 3:25-30). The nature of faith, becoming a disciple, is coming to Jesus to remove our sin. It is not primarily to make you happy, save your marriage, or God has a wonderful plan for your life. CS Lewis said I did not go to religion to make me happy. I always knew a bottle of port would do that. If you want a religion to make you feel comfortable, I certainly don't recommend Christianity. Rather the primary motive for trusting Christ is that first, Jesus removes the penalty of sin, which makes us guilty before God and condemns us to a just punishment, hell. Second, Jesus removes the power of sin, sin as the controlling factor that dominates our lives. Third, Jesus removes the presence of sin when we will be completely free of all sin in eternity.

Jesus turns and sees them following and asks, "what are you seeking?" But instead of answering his question, they counter with their own question, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" He invites them to come and see. They came and saw, spending the day learning from Jesus (38-40). A disciple teacher relationship had three characteristics. First, the disciple learned from the teacher. Second, the disciple desired to had become like the teacher. And third, the disciple sought to faithfully represent the teacher. So, in simple terms, disciples follow Jesus, are formed by Jesus, and are faithful to the mission of Jesus. But what separated Jesus from other teachers is that by following Jesus, his disciples put themselves in the place to receive grace from the One full of grace and truth and from his fullness we receive grace (1:14, 16-17). But what is grace? Grace has a face, Jesus, and grace is provided because of his death on the cross (Titus 2:11-14). Grace is God's empowering presence which gives birth to and sustains our spiritual lives. Grace is God providing for people who cannot provide for themselves. Grace is like a prism that manifests itself in a myriad of ways in our spiritual lives. God has chosen means or ways by which he dispenses grace. When we put ourselves in the way of these means, we receive grace. By following Jesus, being with Jesus, the disciples put themselves in the way of grace. In fact, they did more than this, they built their lives around Jesus to avail themselves of grace. God pours out grace into our lives through three primary ways or means. The first means of grace is the word of God, where we hear God's voice. The second means of grace is prayer, where we have God's ear. And the third means of grace is community, where we belong to his body. It is through these three primary means we receive grace to follow Jesus, to be formed by Jesus, and to be faithful to the mission of Jesus. If we want to follow Jesus, to be like Jesus, and to represent Jesus, then it is wise to build habits in our lives arounds these three means in our spiritual lives.

Then we learn the name of one of these disciples, Andrew, is Simon Peters brother. The first thing Andrew does is find Simon and tell him that they had found the Messiah and then brought him to Jesus. Jesus changed Simon's name to Cephas, which means Peter. In naming Simon Peter, Jesus exercises complete and sovereign authority to change both his identity and destiny. That is what Jesus does to each of us when we come to faith in Jesus, he changes our identity and our destiny.

## **Jesus Gathers Two More Disciples (43-51)**

The next day, Jesus goes to Galilee. He finds Philip and invites him to become a disciple too. Philip went and found Nathaniel and tells him that they had found him who the Old Testament wrote about, and identifies him as Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. There is a pattern here, those who follow Jesus tell others they know about Jesus. But Nathaniel is the first to show resistance, "can anything good come out of Nazareth," showing prejudice. Yet Philip does not give up, but invites Nathaniel to come and see. When Jesus sees Nathaniel coming, he says, "Behold an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." Meaning that what you see is what you get. Surprised that Jesus knows this about him, Nathaniel asks, how do you know me? Jesus tells him, "Before Philip even approached you, I saw you under the fig tree." Jesus has supernatural, prophetic, insight into Nathaniel's heart and circumstances. Nathaniel responds, Rabbi, you are the son of God, you are the King of Israel. Nathaniel recognizes something Messianic about Jesus' but nothing near to him being God in the flesh. Jesus counters, "because I have supernatural insight you believe?" You (plural) will see greater things than these. Jesus overcame Nathaniel's natural resistance and graciously persuades him through supernatural insight. Then Jesus describes the greater things. You will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man. That is, Jesus is the final and decisive connection between God and humanity (Heb 1:1-4). The angels are ascending and descending on the Son of Man, Jesus.

### **Take Aways . . .**

- Are you trusting Jesus to free you from the penalty of sin and the power of sin?
- Are you relying on God's word, prayer, and community as means of grace?
- Do you need to build habits around these three means of grace?
- Are you following Jesus?

### **Questions for Life Groups:**

1. How did you come to follow Jesus?
2. What is the difference between Sin and sins?
3. What did David say is grace? How do you know if you are experiencing grace?
4. What are means of grace? Is God obligated to give grace if we partake of the means of grace?
5. What are the three primary means of grace David described?
6. Can you think of others means of grace?
7. David said that it is wise to build our lives around the means of grace and foolish not to do so. Are these means of grace habits in your life?
8. What are the three adjective David used to describe what it means to follow Jesus?
9. What does Jesus changing Peters name tell us about Jesus?
10. How has Jesus changed your identity and destiny?
11. In what ways can we invite others to come and see Jesus or bring them to Jesus?
12. Is there someone in your life right now that you can invite to come and see Jesus or bring to Jesus that we can pray for tonight?
13. How did Jesus overcome Nathaniel's natural resistance to Jesus?
14. Do we all have a natural resistance to Jesus? How does Jesus overcome our resistance?

