



EXPLORE THE BIBLE®

The Gospel of John Sermon Series

Supports Session 2: Come and See

Sermon Title: “You Will See Heaven Opened” (John 1:35-51)

Connection to Session 2

This passage describes the calling of Jesus’s first disciples. Philip goes and calls Nathanael to follow Jesus, serving as a model for how we are to call others to follow Jesus as well.

Introduction/Opening

Some countries are known for their oppressive leadership. The people of Israel had been living under Roman oppression. It was an intense and complex time in the life of the nation. They were awaiting the Messiah to come and deliver them. This is the world that Jesus stepped into.

Outline

1. What Are You Looking For? (1:35-42)

a) Behold the Lamb. This is the second time in John’s Gospel in which Jesus is described as the Lamb of God. In 1:29, John the Baptist calls Jesus “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.” In the Old Testament, God instituted a sacrificial system that taught Israel the seriousness of sin and their need to be at peace with God. On this side of the cross, Christians understand why Jesus needed to die. He needed to die to take the punishment of our sins upon Himself.

b) When the two disciples go to Jesus, He asked them, “What are you looking for?” This is a simple, yet profound question.

c) In verse 41, we find them coming to the conclusion of who Jesus is: He is the Messiah. When you seek Jesus, you will see Him for Who He is, the Messiah who takes away our sins. Jesus is the One Whom we should be seeking in this life.

2. What You Will See (1:43-51)

a) Philip went to Nathanael and told him: “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the law (and so did the prophets): Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth” (v. 45). Initially Nathanael was skeptical.

b) Once Nathanael goes to Jesus, he began to see Jesus for Who He is. Jesus reveals that He saw Nathanael under the fig tree. We do not know what he was doing under the fig tree, however it was significant enough for him to see that Jesus is the “Son of God” and “King of Israel” (v. 49).

c) Jesus told Nathanael that he will “see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man” (v. 51). Jesus was alluding to Genesis 28 and Jacob’s dream at Bethel. Ancient Near Eastern temples usually had a flight of steps up to the heavens where the deity dwelt. The steps were seen as a bridge between heaven and earth. Jesus was saying the angels will be ascending and descending on Him. This means that He is the bridge between heaven and earth.

1. Have you seen heaven opened through Jesus?
2. Jesus is the only way for us to have access to God.

Conclusion

This text moves us to ask some important questions. Have you seen the Lamb? What are you seeking today? Have you seen Jesus for Who He is? He is the Christ, the One to whom all the Old Testament points. He is the Son of Man, the One on whom angels ascend and descend. Jesus is the gate of salvation. Have you seen Him?

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