

Call The Witnesses (Part 1)

John 1:19-42

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In John 20:30-31 we have what's called the purpose statement of this gospel. In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, those first three synoptics, you don't really have a purpose statement in the gospel as clearly as you find in the gospel of John. Matthew says, "Behold your King;" Mark says, "Behold your Servant;" Luke says, "Behold the Man;" but John says, "Behold your God." He tells us in this purpose statement that these signs were written (and there are seven of them, miracles pointing to the deity of Jesus Christ), "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." John's gospel is the gospel of belief, and we saw in the prologue, John 1:1-18, a summary of the entire gospel. It's really kind of a summary of all that we're going to learn about who Jesus is, that He came to bring light, and that there were those who believe and those who rejected that light.

The prologue that we spent two weeks covering is theological. Tonight we move into a section that is historical, so we go from the theological section to the historical. I want to give you just kind of a brief little outline (as we go I'm going to outline the gospel of John), but in the prologue, verses 1-18, we have the incarnation of the Son of God; and tonight, beginning in John 1:19 all the way to John 4:54 (the end of chapter 4), we have the presentation of the Son of God. We go from the incarnation of the Son of God to the presentation of the Son of God where we're going to see that Jesus is presented as being the Son of God and then the responses that we see to Him.

Tonight we're going to cover two sections. The first is the witness of John the Baptist. He calls the witnesses into the courtroom, John 1:19-34. The second thing we look at (verses 35-51) is the witness of the first followers of Jesus Christ. John goes into the first year of the ministry of Christ where the other gospels kind of start later in the ministry of Jesus. Now, if you're outlining tonight, beginning in verse 19 down to verse 28, we see John's witness—the witness of John the Baptist—to the priests and the Levites. John the Baptist is testifying or witnessing to the priests and the Levites (they were sent from the Sanhedrin) that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Let's read verses 19-28. It says, "And this is the record," that idea of a record is the witness or a testimony, "of John," this John is not John the author of the book of John, but he's John the Baptist. He says, "...the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? 20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ," I'm not the Mashiah, I'm not the Messiah. "And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias?" Are you Elijah? "And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. 22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? 23 He said," John said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. 24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. 25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why

baptizest thou then,” in other words, if you’re not the Christ and you’re not Elijah and you’re not the prophet (verse 25), then why are you baptizing? “John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; 27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose. 28 These things were done in Bethabara,” older manuscripts have Bethany, “beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.”

I read this large section because it’s a main division, and we have here John the Baptist witnessing concerning Jesus to the priests and to the Levites. Let’s go back over it and unpack these verses. This is the record or the testimony in verse 19. John starts his gospel with the testimony or the witness of John the Baptist, but he doesn’t start with John the Baptist in camel skin eating grasshoppers saying, “Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand.” He doesn’t start where Luke does in chapter 1, where he goes into great detail about his parents and about Zacharias the priest. John’s dad was a priest and was married to Elisabeth and how she was barren in her old age. He was praying for a son and God told him, “You’re going to have a son,” and he really didn’t want to believe the Lord and so was struck dumb and couldn’t speak all during his wife’s pregnancy, which might have been a good thing, I don’t know. He was struck dumb and just before John was born and they were going to name the child, they were going to name him Zacharias, Jr. after his dad, and he said, “No. His name shall be John,” because the Lord actually told him through the angel that his name was to be John, and he was going to be the forerunner to Messiah.

John’s ministry actually breaks what has been known as the four hundred silent years. Those are the years between the last prophet of the Old Testament, Malachi, and the coming of John the Baptist in the New Testament. It’s the intertestamental period. It’s between the Old Testament and the New Testament or four hundred silent years. It doesn’t mean God wasn’t speaking, we just don’t have any recorded revelation of that time. I like to think of John the Baptist as actually being the last of the Old Testament prophets, and he was a fiery, rough preacher. As I said, he spent the first thirty years of his life out in the wilderness, and he had this camel skin outfit and ate wild honey and grasshoppers. Locust, though, could be, by the way, a certain pod off of a plant. We think of it being grasshoppers. It’s either grasshoppers or a pod off of a plant. He was what I used to call the first hippie preacher in the Bible.

They came to just check him out. They were just amazed by this guy, and John was spoken of by Jesus (and I don’t want to miss this). Jesus said, “Among those that are born of women,” that’s quite a few people, think about that. That would include King David and Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Elijah, and all the great prophets. “Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist,” and then He went on to say, “but he that is least in the kingdom of God,” right now, has privileges John didn’t have, “is greater than he.” John had a great privilege—he closed off the Old Testament and ushered in the New Testament, and he was the promised forerunner there of Messiah. If you want to get background on John, read Luke 1 and some of the synoptics that talk about his fiery preaching as he rebuked the religious community, and the crowds were coming down to hear him as he was preaching that the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Who were the Jews (verse 19)? That's a euphemism or statement that was used in the gospels, and especially in John, to refer to the religious leaders of Israel and more strictly speaking, a group known as the Sanhedrin. The word "Sanhedrin" means seventy. They were like their Supreme Court. They were the top dogs. They were the rulers in Israel, and they had a responsibility when someone was preaching and drawing big crowds (Jews were coming down and we're going to see that they were being baptized so this concerned them) to find out, "Who are you?" and "What are you doing?" and "What are you preaching?" I think it's good to be discerning about who you listen to. It's good to be discerning about who you follow. They had a responsibility, and they were doing it, but we're going to see that they were basically blind though to the truth. They were blind leaders of the blind. The Jews, referring to the spiritual leaders of Israel, sent priests and Levites. Now, the Sanhedrin was made up of Pharisees and Sadducees. It seems that in this case, though, as the Scriptures indicate, that they were Pharisees who were sent to inquire of John, not the Sadducees. Pharisees were the minority in the Sanhedrin, but they were conservatives. The Sadducees were the liberals. They were the ones that didn't believe in life after death or angels or spirits. Sometimes, jokingly, I say, "That's why they're sad-you-see," because they don't believe in life after death or the resurrection from the dead.

The Pharisees were made up of priests and Levites that came from Jerusalem. They asked him a whole bunch of questions. I don't know if you noticed it when we read it, but the first one is, "Who are you?" That's a good place to start. And John, "...confessed, and denied not; but confessed," and said, "I am not the Christ." So, "Who are you?" and he says, "Well, I want to make it really clear, I am not the Christ." The Christ is the New Testament equivalent of the Old Testament Messiah, and that would be the Mashiah which means the Anointed One. Israel was waiting for their Messiah, their Christ, and John wants them to know very clearly that, "I am not the Messiah." Then, in verse 21, they ask him, "What then? Art thou Elias," Elijah. Why would they ask him, "Are you Elijah?" Well, he kind of had an Elijah style to him, but in the book of Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament, there's a closing prophecy (Malachi 4:5-6) that says before the great and notable, or terrible, day of the Lord that Elijah the prophet will appear, so they were expecting...even Jews today anticipate Elijah coming before the Messiah comes on the scene. When they have their Passover meal, they'll leave one chair empty at the table expecting Elijah one day will show up and sit there, anticipating the coming of Messiah.

If you make a note of these verses, Malachi 4:5-6, there's an indication that Elijah will come before Christ. I believe that reference, though, is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, that Elijah will come before the second advent and the Lord will return, but it's interesting that Jesus said concerning John, that he was Elijah. In Luke's gospel (you can write this down, Luke 1:17) it says that he came in the spirit and in the power of Elijah. It kind of confuses some people today, "Well, Jesus said he's Elijah, but John said he wasn't Elijah, so which is he? Is he Elijah or is he not?" Well, in Luke's gospel it says he came in the spirit and the power of Elijah, so he was kind of a type of Elijah and had the spirit and power of Elijah, but he wasn't Elijah. He was John the Baptist.

Write down Revelation 4, because just before the Second Coming, during the tribulation, two

witnesses will come on the scene to testify about Jesus during the tribulation just before the Second Coming. It's a good good bet that one of those two witnesses is going to be Elijah. It could be the other one will be Moses from some of the plagues that are brought on the earth; but certainly, based on the Malachi passage, one of them, most likely, will be Elijah. So, he says, "I'm not Elijah," "And he saith, I am not." So, "I'm not the Messiah, I'm not Elijah," the one that was prophesied in Malachi, and then they said, "Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No." This is the one that many people don't get or understand. This is a reference to a prophecy given by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15-18, when Moses said, "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." Moses was speaking about Jesus. That, I believe, is a messianic prophecy, but they were confused about who it might be. They just thought he would be a prophet. It's alluding to the Deuteronomy 18 reference. That reference is mentioned in two other places in the New Testament, and you ought to write them down. In Acts 3:22-23, Peter is preaching in the book of Acts and mentions Moses' words and relates them to Jesus, so under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Luke records it for us in Acts, that Peter made that tie-in that the Deuteronomy passage is a reference to Jesus, so that Prophet is Jesus Christ.

In Acts 7:37, (sorry about all these verses and books) Stephen is preaching and does the same thing. He mentioned the Deuteronomy passage and clearly mentions the fact that it's referring to Jesus, who is that Promised One that Moses spoke of. So, he's not the Messiah, he's not Elijah, and he's not "that prophet," but then who is he? Notice the end of verse 22, "What sayest thou of thyself?" "We need to give an answer to those that have sent us. We can't just go back to the Sanhedrin and tell them who you're not. We need to tell them who you are." I love what John says here (verse 23), "He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness," can you imagine that? They go back to the Sanhedrin, "Who is he?" "He's the voice!" Just "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias," Isaiah. That is Isaiah 40:1-5, a marvelous prophecy, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. 2 Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem...Prepare ye the way of the LORD." That is a prophecy of John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah.

Just a little footnote. I love these little footnotes that sometimes pop into my brain and we can share. In your English translation, it has that translated "Lord," but when you go to Isaiah 40:1-5 it uses the word "LORD," so it's a reference to Jesus Christ. Whenever you have LORD, this is what we would translate Yahweh or Jehovah, and it's a reference to God. You can point this out to some Jehovah's Witnesses who will knock on your door that deny that Jesus Christ is Jehovah, that He is the LORD whom the forerunner, John the Baptist, came to announce.

It says in verse 24, "And they which were sent were of the Pharisees." These were the blind leaders of the blind. "And they asked him, and said unto him," "Okay, okay, you're the voice of one crying in the wilderness, but, 'Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?' What are you doing with this baptism stuff?" The Jews did baptize, and their baptism symbolized forgiveness of sins and being purified and initiated into Judaism, but it was only given to—listen to me carefully—it was only given to Gentiles who are what we call proselytes. If a Gentile wanted to proselyte into Judaism, they would baptize that Gentile, but

no one would baptize a Jew. As far as the Jews were concerned, they had an in to heaven because of their race and their religion, so there's really no need for them to be baptized. If a Gentile wanted to come into heaven, he had to be baptized into Judaism and had to become a Jew. They were a little freaked out by this, you know, he's baptizing these Jews down in the Jordan River and they didn't understand that.

Now, in verse 26, "John answered them, saying, I baptize with water," what he's emphasizing here is that his baptism was preparatory—he was prepping people for the coming of Christ—and, more importantly, it was symbolic. The baptism of John the Baptist was not Christian baptism, that wouldn't be instituted until after Jesus died, buried, resurrected; and before He ascended, He gave us the Great Commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature...baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This is not what John was doing. His baptism was preparatory, preparing Jewish people for, "Your Messiah's coming. Prepare your heart. Be hungry for God. Repent of your sins, and prepare your heart for the coming of Messiah." It was all symbolic of verse 27, "He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." They didn't wear shoes, this is kind of the King James translation here, it was sandals; and the lowest slave was the one who would wash feet. His job was to untie sandals and wash feet. John's humility here says, "I'm not even worthy to wash His feet. I'm not worthy to untie His shoes and wash His feet, so I'm the humblest, lowest of the lowest." "He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me," as we're going to see because He was, "before me." We're also going to see that He's coming and He will baptize, but He will baptize with the Holy Spirit, but he just makes mention of the fact that He's coming and, "I am not worthy to unloose," His sandals.

In verse 28, John makes mention, "These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing." This is one of those locations in the Bible that we have not been able to pinpoint with absolute accuracy. Some older manuscripts have this "Bethabara" referred to as Bethany. There were two places called Bethany. There was a Bethany beyond the Jordan, and there was a Bethany that was on the backside of the Mount of Olives where Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha, were from. This is a different Bethany. It was on the east side of the Jordan River. When it says, "beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing," John was baptizing from the eastern side of the Jordan River which is the country of Jordan today. You need to get a map and familiarize yourself with the geography of this area.

A couple of things before I move on, that is, John's self-effacing witness. The lesson that we would drive home from this point is John's self-effacing witness. This is a great passage for preachers, for Christians, that we should be pointing people to Jesus Christ. It would have been a great opportunity for John to say, "Yeah, I'm the Messiah. Let's take an offering right now. Yeah, I'm the Messiah. Build me a new house," or "Give me some food. Give me some clothes." A lot of preachers like to take advantage of people today and live off the flock. The Bible tells pastors to feed the flock not fleece the flock—a lot of flock being fleeced by shepherds that are only in it for the money—but John, as we should be as well, was humble and self-effacing; and we should learn from him to point others to Jesus. Too many times we

get enamored by the messenger rather than the One he's preaching, so we need to keep our eyes on Jesus Christ and focus upon Him.

We move (verses 29-34) to John's witness at Christ's baptism. It says, "The next day," and by the way, what we're going to have, and it's best I can tell, these are four days in the initial ministry of Jesus where He's actually just recruiting His disciples; so verses 19-28 is day one and verses 29-34 is day two. "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold," look, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. 31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. 32 And John bare record," there it is. This is the witness or the testimony, "saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

This is information that we don't get in Matthew, Mark, or Luke, an insight that John gives us about John the Baptist and his witness or testimony to him. "Again the next day," as I said the very day after John sees Jesus down by the Jordan River and says, "Look," or "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." The passage doesn't tell us who John is addressing. Earlier we know he is dialoging with the Pharisees, but now we don't know who he's addressing. It's kind of a given that he's addressing the multitudes and the crowds that came down to the Jordan River to hear his preaching. You know, just about any revival, whether it be in Scripture or in church history, where there was a work of God and a revival of God, at the center of it was always a man of God preaching the Word of God. Spiritual revival happens when the Word of God is preached and the Spirit of God works through the Word of God to revive God's people and also in evangelism bringing people to Christ. John speaks about Jesus and points to Him and says, "Look, the Lamb of God who takes away (carries away) the sin of the world."

This title for Jesus, and as we go through, I'm going to kind of collect all the titles of Jesus found in John's gospel. First of all, we found that He's the Word, and He's the light, and He's the truth; now we find out that He's the Lamb of God. This title is only used four times in the New Testament. Its imagery comes from the Old Testament, but it's only used four times. I'm going to give them to you. The first time is here in John 1:29. The second time it's used in John 1:36, we'll get it in just a moment, and then it's used in Acts 8:32. By the way, in Acts 8, there you have the story where it's alluding to Isaiah 53. It's also used in 1 Peter 1:19. Those are the four times that Jesus is called the Lamb of God. We don't know if he's thinking of the passover lamb or other sacrificial lambs, but just as a general concept, the idea is that He is the sacrifice for our sins. This is John already introducing the idea of Jesus going to be crucified or die upon a cross for our sins, so He's the Lamb, that substitutionary lamb.

I like the imagery of the scapegoat, and it fits with this passage, who carries away the sin of the world. Notice that John's gospel is universal, too, not just the Jews but of the world. He dies

and His death is sufficient for all mankind. The scapegoat or lamb was used where they would pronounce their sin on a goat or a lamb and then let the lamb run off into the distance, so it would carry away their sins, and you would hope and pray he wouldn't be back the next day so you'd throw rocks at it, "Get away, goat!" The idea of forgiveness actually has contained in the word the idea of taking or carrying away or separating. When God forgives our sins, He actually carries them off or takes them away. Again, we learn in John's gospel this is for those who receive or believe in Him. Yes, Jesus died for the sins of the world, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," but it has to be those "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." If you don't believe in Him or receive Him or trust Him, then your sins are not carried away, you're not forgiven, and you'll have to answer for your sins before a holy, righteous God.

In verse 30, "This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me," and then, again, John's statement, "for he was before me," again, alluding to His eternality and His deity because John was actually six months older than Jesus was. An interesting statement in verse 31, "And I knew him not." It's interesting because John and Jesus were kinfolk, to use the term. They were relatives. You think that when they were at their family reunions and got together at holidays, they didn't see each other? No, because John was out in the wilderness. Can you imagine your kid growing up in the wilderness? "Hey, where's your son?" "Oh, he's out in the bushes. He's out eating grasshoppers." He came out of the wilderness preaching, so he's an interesting character; and as far as we know, he had no formal education. He was born into the family of a priest and could've been a priest, yet God had called him to be the forerunner of the Messiah.

John says in verse 32, "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him." Here's John's witness or John's record. Now, again, the Holy Spirit manifested as a dove and the dove becoming a symbol of the Holy Spirit, "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God." John doesn't go into any details about Jesus being baptized and the fact that the heavens opened up and the Spirit descended. He mentions the Spirit coming as a dove, but what he doesn't mention is the audible voice of the Father. The Bible tells us that at this moment the Father actually spoke audibly. Now, it could be that to some it just sounded like thunder or a noise, but God the Father spoke from heaven and said, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," or "in whom My soul delights."

Again, it's interesting that you have God the Father speaking from heaven; you have God the Son, Jesus, being baptized; and you have God the Holy Spirit descending from heaven in the form of a dove and lighting upon Jesus Christ. Remember when we were in John 1:1 and I talked about the Word being with God, and that means face-to-face so you have two persons? And that there are those who falsely teach what's called Modalism—that God the Father became God the Son, and God the Son became God the Holy Spirit—that they weren't three separate Persons, just One Person taking on different modes—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

That kind of pretty much blows it out of the water here. You have God the Father speaking, God the Son on earth, and God the Holy Spirit descending in the form of a dove, so all three of the Trinity—God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are a part of the story of the baptism of Jesus.

John objected when Jesus first got there and said, “I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” He wasn’t being baptized for His sin, He was being baptized to identify with sinners, whom He came to redeem. John saw Him, experienced this, heard the voice from heaven, but notice at the end of verse 33, he says, “the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost,” the Holy Spirit. This was initiated in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost, when the church was born, the Holy Spirit came. In John’s gospel, like no other gospel, we’re going to get in the Upper Room Discourse some amazing teaching that Jesus gave about the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, who will come to comfort us, lead, and guide us into all truth, so He would come and baptize us with the Holy Spirit. John’s baptism was symbolic in just preparing them. Christ’s baptism would be a work of the Holy Spirit producing a unified body of believers in one body, the church.

John says, “And I saw, and bare record that this is,” and here’s his statement, “the Son of God.” Now, he’s introducing Jesus with this new title. In verse 29, He’s the Lamb of God. It could be alluding to Isaiah 53, “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities,” and He was like a lamb who bore our sins and punishment, and then he says He’s the Son of God (verse 29). He’s the Lamb of God (verse 29), and the Son of God (verse 34) at the end of this section, and that Jesus would come to baptize with the Holy Spirit.

In John 1:35, is the second main division tonight, verses 35-51, where now we have the witness of the first followers. It moved from the witness of John the Baptist to the Pharisees and to the scribes, the Levites, now you have the witness of John the Baptist as he relates it to the first followers of Christ. Beginning in verse 35, we have the witness of Andrew and Peter. What Jesus is going to do here is He’s beginning to gather His disciples and we see their witness to who they believe Jesus is. Let’s go through at least this section, then we’ll probably wrap it up. In verse 35, “Again the next day,” so this is day three. Each one of these sections start with “the next day.” “...after John stood, and two of his disciples,” again, this is John the Baptist not John the author of the gospel, but notice that John the Baptist had his own disciples. It mentions two of them in verse 35. These two disciples of John the Baptist are Andrew, mentioned in verse 40, there’s no question about that, and it’s believed by most Bible scholars and students that the other disciple of John the Baptist is John the writer of the gospel. I hope I haven’t thoroughly confused you. John the Baptist has his own disciples, and two of them are going to leave the Baptist and follow Jesus Christ—Andrew and our John, the beloved, the writer of this gospel. It says, “And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith,” John did, “Behold the Lamb of God!” Again, he used that same title, “Look, the Lamb of God.”

In verse 37, “And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.” Isn’t that commendable of John? His congregation is shrinking so that they can follow Jesus Christ. Again, we should always be encouraging people to follow the Lord. They started following

Jesus Christ, and in verse 38, "Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye?" That's a legitimate question. They're following Him, "What are you looking for?" "They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,)" or literally means teacher, "where dwellest thou?" What do they mean by that? Not only do they mean, "Where are You living? Where are You staying?" but it's actually a euphemism for, "Can we meet with You? Can we hang out with You? Can we spend some time with You?" They were pointed to Jesus by John and were told, "Here's the Lamb of God," and they say, "We want to know more about Him. We want to check Him out. We want to spend the day with Him. We want to follow Him." They're not yet officially disciples, though they are now beginning to follow Jesus; so they leave John and begin to follow Jesus and ask Him, "Where are You dwelling?"

Just a little footnote there, the Bible says, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests," Jesus is the One speaking, by the way, "but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." You might actually almost say that Jesus was homeless because He really was. He didn't own a home. He didn't buy a home. He didn't have a home. Now, He did hang out at friends' houses. He hung out at Lazarus, Mary, and Martha's house, and that was probably His favorite place to hang out. He loved their crash pad and Martha was an amazing cook, but do you know where Jesus primarily lived? Under the olive trees in a garden called Gethsemane. He probably stashed His bedroll up in the branches of the trees, and when they said, "...where dwellest thou?" He said, "Follow Me," and took them down to Gethsemane and said, "You see that olive tree over there? I sleep under that tree every night." Can you imagine that? One thing about this garden, it was a privately owned garden, and Jesus, no doubt, got permission to crash there with His boys, His disciples. He wasn't trespassing, okay? This wasn't a homeless encampment for the disciples. They had permission to camp out under the stars in the Garden of Gethsemane.

When I'm in Gethsemane on tours to Israel, not only do I love to think about Christ's agony in the garden, that's one of my favorite places to visit in the holy land, but I like to think about Jesus sleeping on His bedroll just looking up at the stars at night through the branches of the olive trees seeing the stars and talking to His disciples about the infinite creation that He spoke into existence.

In verse 39, "He saith unto them, Come and see." They said, "Where are You dwelling? We want to hang out with You." "Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour." Now, you're going to find references in John's gospel to the hour, so it gives us the time, and there's two ways that the time could be established. It could be Roman time or Jewish time. What seems to be the case in this instance is that it's Roman time rather than Jewish, but we don't know. Now, if it was based on the Jewish time clock, it would be 4 p.m., which wouldn't give them much time to hang out with Jesus. If it were Roman time, and more times than not in the gospel of John it seems to be Roman and we'll get it as we go through, then it would be 10 a.m. and they would've had the day and into the evening to spend with Jesus.

Verse 40, "One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him," that is, Christ, "was

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas," which is Aramaic, "which is by interpretation, A stone." In the Greek it's Petros which means a stone.

As I said, we'll probably stop here because we have a large section to finish, and my favorite is the end of this section; that is, from verses 43-51, but we'll save it for next Wednesday night so we don't rush through it. Going back over this section and making application, Andrew and Peter testified who Jesus is. Andrew is called the friendly disciple or friendly apostle. Every time Andrew appears in the Bible, it's interesting, Andrew is always bringing someone to Jesus. It's interesting, he's the one who brought the boy with the loaves and the fishes. There's all the multitude and they all need to be fed. The other disciples are dismissing the possibility. Philip says, "Two hundred penny worth would not be sufficient, two hundred denarii could not feed this multitude. Send them away." There's an In-N-Out a couple of miles down the road, they can go there and get some double-doubles or something, you know, why bother with it? Yet, in the middle of this unbelief and this great need to feed the multitude, Andrew shows up and says, "I found a little boy here, and he's got a few loaves and some fish. Maybe that would help," and they dismissed that and said, "What are they amongst so many." He's bringing people to Him. Then, some Greeks wanted to see Jesus, Gentiles. They said, "We would like to see Jesus." Everyone was freaking out thinking, I don't know if it's okay for Gentiles to come to Jesus, but Andrew brought them to Jesus, so he is known as the friendly apostle, and we should follow his example and bring others to Christ.

It's also interesting that he first found his own brother Simon, and this is the first case where we find Andrew bringing someone to Jesus. What an interesting thought. We should bring our family and friends to Jesus. When we are born again, we come to know the Lord, we want to share with our parents, siblings, our brothers and sisters, our aunts, our uncles, so he first of all thinks of his own brother and runs and gets Peter. They were fishermen from the Sea of Galilee. He first finds his own brother, Simon, and what does he say? "We found the Messiah," the Mashiach, "We found the Messiah, the Christ," and he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus actually changes his name in kind of a prophetic anticipation of who Peter would be, and I'm sure that Peter is thinking, Man, this is crazy. Jesus said, "Thou art Simon the son of Jona," but I'm going to give you a new name, "thou shalt be called," Peter or Petros, "Cephas," in the Aramaic, "which is by interpretation, A stone," or rock. Jesus actually gives him the name Rocky, and we know later on when Jesus talks about the church being built, Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," that's the foundation on which the church is built. It's not Peter, but on his confession. When you read in the epistles of Peter—1 Peter and 2 Peter—you're amazed to see how Peter became a rock! Peter was just a little rolling stone here, a little pebble—Peter denied the Lord, Peter was flaky, and Peter had all kinds of problems—but when I think of the Lord choosing Peter and changing his name from Simon to Petros or rock, I think of the Scripture that says, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise...not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of

the world to confound the wise,” you ought to memorize that verse because it’s referring to you and me, “...the weak things...and base things...the despised..and things which are not, to bring to nought...that no flesh should glory in his presence.” God can take the weakest and flakiest and He can make a rock out of us.

The followers of Christ, as we see with Andrew, and next week when we pick up our study we’ll get into Philip and Nathanael, verses 43-51, which is a marvelous episode there, we should point others to Jesus in humility like John and go out and find others and tell them about Jesus. Something that should characterize as Christ’s followers is a heart for and a desire to tell other people about Jesus. It’s what we call personal evangelism. Now, they may not come to Christ, but you can tell them about Christ. You can sow the seed, other people can pray for them, other people can water it. It may be that your mom and dad haven’t come to Christ, or your husband or your wife haven’t come to Christ, or your siblings haven’t come to Christ, but you keep praying for them asking God to give you opportunity to speak to them. Sometimes it’s hardest to witness to those who are closest to you. They’re the ones that put up the wall and don’t want to hear, so you have to pray for them. Pray that God’s Spirit opens their heart and their eyes. John pointed people to Jesus, and he did it with humility. Andrew brought his brother to Jesus, he brought Peter, and we need to also be eager to bring others to Jesus Christ. Amen?