Two Men and a Wedding

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Preacher: John Lau

[0:00] What would it take for you to put your trust in someone and follow them? For me, the reputation and credential of the person is an essential factor.

Do the actions of those people match the words that come out from their mouth? But I think I relied on the witness and testimony of other people more.
Does anyone that I know and trust also follow that person? What is their experience with that person? We'll be spending a few weeks in chapter 1 to 12 of the Gospel of John to read his testimony and witness about Jesus Christ.
John wrote to show his readers the greatness of Jesus Christ. He warned us to see Jesus as glorious. By seeing his glory and examining the evidence of who he claims himself to be, John hopes that we'll become a believer and follower, in other terms, a disciple of Jesus.
And as you follow Jesus, and when Jesus becomes more central to your life, your life will be abundant. Jesus himself also has the same aim in mind as he walked on this earth more than 2,000 years ago, and as he now sits by the right hands of our Heavenly Father to intercede for those who put their trust in him.
[1:38] He told his disciples that he had come so that his disciples may have life and have it abundantly. Today, as we continue in chapter 1 and 2 of John, let's look at Jesus' invitation to his very first group of disciples and two aspects of who Jesus is.

You can find the outline in our St. Paul's app. Last week, our senior minister, Steve, encouraged us and invited us to look, to behold, to think, and gaze, ponder, understand, and get who Jesus is and what he has done.
He ended the sermon with these two points. If you missed the preaching, I encourage you to look up the St. Paul's Chesswood channel on YouTube and to watch it again or go to our website to listen.
Firstly, how much we will align our life with Jesus and grow in abundant life is directly proportional to how much we behold Jesus, look to Jesus, and understand Jesus.
We will be filled with all the fullness of God as we grasp the breadth, length, height, and depth of the love of Christ. And to the degree that we grow in the abundant life is a degree that we too will be a voice to the greatness and goodness of Jesus Christ.
[3:12] We will see from today's passage how this proposition unfolds in two persons we will meet today. So please turn your Bible to John 1.35.

John 1.35. When two of John the Baptist's disciples heard him referring to Jesus again, saying, look, the Lamb of God. They followed Jesus.
And our passage shows us that Jesus took notice that they were following. In verse 38, it says, Jesus saw them. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, what do you want?
I want us to pause and try to imagine what tone Jesus would use to ask this simple question. Whichever way I imagine, I still find the question, what do you want?
A bit abrupt and challenging to say it in a friendly way. But it does not sound rude. When I hear the question, I can only think of the time when my kids are much younger and try to net me for something.
[4:27] And that's how I answer or question them. What do you want? There will be another one of this kind of interaction in the later part of our passage today.

How are you going to read the Bible? How are you doing with reading the Bible? Nick mentioned about we encourage each other to read the Bible and build a habit of reading at least four or more times a week.

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Are you a morning reader? Reading your Bible in the morning? Or evening reader who has a Bible by your bed and read before you sleep or finish the day.
Maybe you read the Bible during the day or maybe during lunchtime. As you read the Bible, how often would you pause and slow down? Especially if it's some kind of dialogue or passage that you have read before.
Do you ever consider what tone of voice the people you are reading would use? I believe our own culture and background or whether we are reading the Bible in a language that is not our hard language may affect how we read the Bible.
[5:37] We need to take care not to read into what is in front of us. Something that may originate from our own culture and background that is not helpful, which may hinder us from seeing the complete picture.

Pause and think. Pause to imagine. And use something like the app, the word one-to-one, which would be an excellent way of you to behold Jesus better.
Pause and ask yourself, is the perception of Jesus really who he is? Or are you making Jesus into what you want him to be? I hope as you listen to this series of preaching from the first 12th chapter of John, you will see Jesus as who he is, not what you want him to be.
Getting back to the question Jesus asked the two disciples of John the Baptist as he saw them following. Apart from the tone that he was used, which is maybe hard to conclude, we can also consider why Jesus took that moment to turn around and ask them, what do you want, after he saw them following.
John Carson commented that, on one level, what do you want can be a straightforward narrative to invite them to articulate what is on their mind while following Jesus.
[7:02] However, it may also be John's intention to guide his reader to reflect on more profound questions.

It might be that the word, the Logos, the Messiah who comes to take away the sin of the world, confronts those who make any show of beginning to follow him and demands that they articulate what they really want in life.
When was the last time you think about such question, about what do you really want in your life? What do you really want from Jesus as you follow him? Why are you here at church on Sunday or any, on today or any other Sunday?
They told Jesus that they want to know where Jesus was staying. These two disciples of John, they reply, demonstrate their intention to follow Jesus because at that time, unlike ancient China, students often move in to stay with their teachers so they want to check out where they're going to live later on.
In today's term, asking where Jesus is staying is like us checking out our kids' school on orientation day or going to all week before you attend university.
[8:26] You want to check out the place, you want to check it out for your kids or yourself before taking the next step to be fully committed. And Jesus saw their intention, he invited them to, his invitation to them was, come and you will see.

And they went and remained with Jesus for the whole day. They are invited to come and see the Lord. There is an invitation for us as we come to consider Jesus.
It's not just an invitation for those who are not Christian, but it's an invitation for Christians as well. It's an invitation for meditation and reflection on Christ.
That invitation still stands today. Jesus is asking you now, what do you want? And inviting you to come and see who he is and what he has accomplished for you.
At these two disciples of John find out who Jesus is. One of them named Andrew goes and finds his brother Simon and brings him to Jesus. Andrew has become the voice of the greatness and goodness of Jesus Christ after spending a day with him like his previous teacher, John the Baptist.
[9:49] We are told in verse 43 to 46 that another person, Philip, also went and found Nathaniel and brought him to Jesus.

Philip even used the very similar phrase that Jesus used, come and see, and extended Jesus' invitation to Nathaniel even after he made some degrading comment about where Jesus is from.
From Jesus' interaction with Nathaniel between verse 47 to the end of chapter 1, we see how Jesus is all-knowing.

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Or if we use one of those big words, we can see Jesus is omniscient. Let's read that interaction again. When Jesus saw Nathaniel approaching, he said to him, He truly is an Israelite in whom there is no disease.
How do you know me? Nathaniel asked. Jesus answered, I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip calls you. Then Nathaniel declared, Rabbi, you are the son of God, you are the king of Israel.
[11:03] Jesus said, you believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that. I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.

Do you notice a word that John keeps using as he encourages his reader to look to Jesus? It mentioned John the Baptist saw Jesus passing and the two of his disciples went and saw where Jesus was staying.
John also highlighted that Jesus saw the two of John's disciples following and Jesus saw Nathaniel while he was still under the fig tree before Philip calls him.
I saw you is such a simple face but it also is so rich and manifested. I believe it also can be a good revealer of what's going on in our hearts.
I saw you an image of parents playing high and sick and pick-a-poo with their children coming to mind. The laughter and joy in their playful interaction are so contagious.
[12:17] It can also be a marker of the beginning of a relationship as if someone would say when I saw you the first time I fall in love with you. That's my wife over there.

On the other hand if you know that you have done something wrong something you should not have done or you have not fulfilled what you ought to have done hearing their face can bring up so much worry fear anxiety and guilt.
I saw you can be comforting and reassuring especially to someone who may be at a crossroad or a dana feeling all alone questioning all the things that are happening in their life where there seems to be no one who care or take notice of the pain and suffering you are going through having someone to say to you I saw you could mean so much.
I believe Nathaniel may be going through one of those moments under the fig tree but he followed Philip to go and see Jesus but he was seen by Jesus before he got there.
Jesus knows Nathaniel and tell him that he saw him while he was alone under the fig tree and that's what Jesus is saying to you and me.
[13:46] Jesus has supernatural knowledge of what is going on in your world and he does not hold any of that knowledge against you or me. No need to be embarrassed about what is going on in your mind.

Jesus saw you and he is the answer to all the questions you have about your life and your world. Jesus does not use his knowledge about you to control or manipulate you.
He loves you. Jesus is all knowing with supernatural knowledge. He promised that when you see and behold him your life will change and you will see greater things.
He can do it because he is also all powerful as we see from chapter 2 verse 1 to 12. There's a wedding at Canaan in Galilee.
Jesus mother was there and so were Jesus and his disciples. It is here that Jesus had another abrupt interaction with someone, his mother.
[14:52] Let's see in verse 3. When the wine was gone, Jesus mother said to him, they have no more wine. Woman, why do you involve me? Jesus replied, my hour has not yet come.

Again, I find it difficult to put the phrase woman, why do you involve me? In a pleasing and non-confrontational way. But why does Jesus have to speak nicely and offensively to people or his mom all the time?
The problem of my discomfort is obvious to do with me. I'm concerned about the tone of Jesus' interaction earlier and here.
It has a lot to do with how I want to present Jesus as a friendly person or for others to think that I am a nice person.
But apart from being our friend, there's more to Jesus and it's nothing to do with what people think of me. Here's a lesson for myself and maybe for some of you too.
[16:03] Before we see Jesus as our friend, be sure you see Jesus as the Son of God, the King, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

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We need to see Jesus as who he is, not as what we want him to be. The hour that Jesus mentioned is constantly referred in the Bible about his death on the cross, his resurrection, and his return to the Father's side until his second coming.
That is the only way that sin of this world is dealt with once and for all. It's our only way to be reconciled with God. We need to acknowledge Jesus' Lordship before we can see the genuine friendship that Jesus offered to each of us.
There is something special about this wedding at Canaan, and it's not just because the wine has run out. Wedding is used as a metaphor for our relationship with God in the Bible.
Jesus is a bridegroom who takes care of the wedding. Our eternal relationship with God is an image of one big everlasting joyous wedding where we enjoy banquet where food or wine will not run out.
[17:22] On the contrary anything we try to rely on for joy in our life our great relationship our career success our wealth and our achievement will ultimately run out.

No matter how hard we try to build a great life something comes in and ruin our effort our efforts are never enough.
In Jesus' time the wine running out means the bridegroom had done a terrible job of preparation. It's a disastrous situation that would be a very shameful embarrassment.
It would be the talk of the time forever. By making new wine for the wedding at King Jesus showed he has power over the created order because he is the creator who comes to earth.
He is all powerful omnipotent and can make everything new. Jesus did much more than simply feel a need or a first some kind of social disaster.
[18:35] He turns embarrassment into a blessing. what the master of banquet said to the bridegroom in verse 10 is a climax of this story.

Everyone brings out choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests had too much to drink. But you have saved the best till last, till now.
Instead of having to endure shame, the bridegroom was publicly honored for his over-the-top hospitality for saving the good wine for last.
Jesus came to bring blessing to us, not judgment. He used stone water jar that was set aside for ceremonial washing to change water into wine.
It is through his death on the cross by his blood that he cleansed us and forgives us of our sins. He holds the power to change whatever embarrassment in your life that are so shameful that you would want to keep hiding into something for his glory.
[19:50] But before Jesus can give us a cup of blessing, he will have to take the cup of divine wolf. And he did it willingly for you. And you don't have to hide anything anymore.

changing water to wine is the first of many situations in John's gospel where Jesus restores something to better than original condition.
It reveals Jesus' deep concern for meeting people at their point of need, no matter how trivial or inconsequential those needs may be.
John told us in verse 11 of chapter 1, and also later on in chapter 20, verse 30 to 31, why he has chosen to tell us more particular events in his gospel.
Verse 11, what Jesus did here in Canaan of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory and his disciples believed in him. In chapter 20, verse 30, Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book, but these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you might have life in his name.
[21:12] God John wants us to read his gospel and come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God, and by believing we might have life in his name, and it will not be any ordinary life, but life that is filled to the broom and abundant life.

Believing and trusting is relational. I can imitate and do exactly what another person does, but that will not guarantee I have a relationship with that person.
Jesus is looking forward to a relationship with his followers. He invites anyone who makes any shows of beginning to follow him to articulate what they really want in life.
Coming to Jesus, what do you really want in life? Jesus invites us to come and see him and form a relationship of following him.
That relationship will help us to understand the glory and greatness of the relationship between God the Father and God the Son. When you come to Jesus, you have to look out for his glory already

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revealed in his words and deeds.
[22:33] As you read the Bible, look for Jesus. Look and read directly of his teaching from the gospel. Pause and be amazed at the wonders that God is doing in Jesus.

Many people come to Jesus to treat him as a primary example to imitate how they are to live their life. That is not the key to abundant life.
The key is to believe in Jesus after seeing his glory.

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