

Come and See

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Date: 12 March 2023

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[0 : 00] Well, it's my privilege to have the chance to preach this morning, and I will continue in the book of John like Jonathan just said.

We'll continue in chapter 1, and we'll finish chapter 1 today. But I do want to mention this, that when we were reading, or when the passage from Genesis was read, did you catch that last phrase? That last phrase says, Jehovah's in this place.

You know, the Word of God declares this, where two or more are gathered in His name, there He is in the midst. And so it's this morning we come with this understanding that Jehovah's in this place, and it's my prayer that the words of Jehovah, through His Word, would touch us deeply.

So this morning we turn to chapter 1, and we're going to read starting in verse 35, but before I read, I just want to share a couple of things about this passage and about this chapter 1.

I don't know if you would have picked it up unless you've dug a little bit to see this, but do you realize that the place where John is baptizing, this place on the east side of the Jordan is roughly 20 miles from Jerusalem, and it's roughly 85 miles to Bethsaida.

[1 : 22] Now why would I share that? Why is this geography important? Because what we see is we see these men, what will be introduced to these men, Andrew and Philip and Peter, Nathaniel, will be introduced to these men this morning.

And it's interesting to note that they're from Bethsaida, which is on the northern side of the Sea of Galilee, roughly 85 miles. And in that day, it takes a long time to travel 85 miles, and it begs the question, why are you down there?

Why are you spending time with John? What is the occasion? And what we can glean here is that they're by foot roughly five days journey down to this area, and they're disciples of John the Baptist, meaning they consider him their rabbi.

They have sat at his feet to learn from him. And it means evidently that they had spent some measure of time with him, so they had been following him for quite some time.

They were seekers of truth. You know what's interesting? That these blue-collar guys, these rough guys, these fishermen, you know they didn't go to Jerusalem to find the rabbis in Jerusalem, to find the greatest of the Pharisees or the greatest of the Sadducees.

[2 : 56] They didn't even go to the synagogue to seek truth. You know where they went? They went where God had stirred them, to this guy who's in the wilderness who's preaching this message of repentance.

There's something in them that was stirred by the truth that was being proclaimed by this guy who dressed differently. He didn't have the religious garb that most would have.

He wasn't looking for the applause of men. He didn't wear tassels on the bottom of his garment. But he had come proclaiming a gospel of the coming Messiah.

And they were drawn to it. They were seeking truth. And I think that's important for us to understand as we look at these encounters.

This morning we're going to look at five encounters with Jesus. From the text we read this morning we'll see four, but I'm going to back up a little bit and we're going to talk about the encounter of John the Baptist with Christ as well.

[4 : 03] That would be five encounters with Christ. And it's my hope this morning that we consider if we've had an encounter with Jesus.

And if we have had an encounter with Jesus, what did he say to us? What is it that stirred in our hearts when we had this encounter with Jesus?

And it's in my hope that as believers, for those of us who are in the kingdom, born again, that we would not just have one encounter with Jesus, but it would be continual.

That we would fellowship with the Lord often. So if you would turn to verse 35 in chapter 1, as we read from the scriptures this morning, I would ask you to follow along.

It's my hope that you would bring your Bible and you would be so familiar with your Bible that you would not want to leave it at home. That it would be with you often. And hopefully the pages would get quite fragile because you've turned there so many times.

[5 : 11] And hopefully you've got highlights and notes and such in your Bible because you treasure the time you spend there. This is the very word of God we read, starting in verse 35, and it says this.

The next day, that is the day after the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. The next day, again, John was standing with two of his disciples and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, Behold, the Lamb of God.

The two disciples heard him say this and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, What are you seeking?

And they said to him, Rabbi, where are you staying? He said to them, Come and you will see. So they came and they saw where he was staying and they stayed with him that day for it was about the tenth hour.

One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon and he said to him, We have found the Messiah, which means Christ.

[6 : 24] And 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 or rock.

The next day, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, Follow me. Now, Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

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.

Nathanael said, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said to him, Come and see.

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said, Behold, an Israelite indeed in whom there is no deceit.

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.

[7 : 31] Nathanael answered him, Rabbi, you are the son of God. You are the king of Israel. 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. 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.

Let's pray again. Father, this morning I ask that you would open our spiritual eyes, that as we look at your word, we would see your truth for what it is, and you would open our understanding.

God, as we read, we would understand the truths here. And God, I pray that you would touch our heart with your word. Father, may your word plant itself deep within our heart.

This morning may your word move us to desire you, and to seek you more, and to follow you, and to love you, and to serve you.

[8 : 31] And I pray in your name. Amen. I want you to see this about the encounter of John with Jesus. It would help us to understand what John thinks about himself, who John sees himself to be.

Very interesting in the word. It says this, John says this in verse 23, I am the voice. I am the voice. What voice, John? I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord, as the prophet Isaiah said.

Do you hear what he's saying about himself? He's saying this, that the prophet Isaiah foretold of this guy who was coming before the Messiah, and this guy was going to be a voice in the wilderness, and he was going to be proclaiming a message.

Before Jesus the Messiah came. If we look at Mark chapter 1, Mark starts his gospel talking about this voice.

[9 : 46] And Mark says it like this. Chapter 1, he says, The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord. Make his paths straight. John appeared baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the

forgiveness of sins.

I want you to notice something here. Mark shares with us something vital that we need to understand about John. He says this, Behold, this God speaking, Behold, he's speaking through his prophet Isaiah, and he says, Behold, I send.

I send. God sent. John the Baptist was sent by God, and John knew it. John realized that he had been sent by God.

And notice what he says about John. He says, My messenger. Behold, I send my messenger. The person that I have moved in his life, the person that I have put my words in his mouth, it's that person that I've sent to be the forerunner of the Messiah.

[11 : 12] It's John. And he is a voice crying in the wilderness. It's interesting. He's crying in the wilderness, not in the synagogue. Not in the temple.

He's crying in the wilderness. It's John who's not dressed like rabbis. It's John who doesn't act like rabbis.

It's John who's not religious. He's not part of the religious system. It's this guy who's coming out of the wilderness, likely a nomadic scenario where he's been in the wilderness.

Do you all realize his parents were very old when he was born? It was a miraculous birth. Do you all remember Elizabeth? She who was barren, who was the laughing stock of their city, their town, who obviously had not been blessed by God because she was barren.

You know that barren women were pushed to the sidelines of society? And in her old age, through much prayer, you can be sure, from her and her husband, Zechariah, she became pregnant.

[12 : 31] In her old age. Miraculous. It can't happen. Can it? Nothing's impossible for God. And what did she do? Paraded around town?

No, she stayed in her house. And she said, this is too good to be true. And Mary, the mother of the coming Messiah, received this encounter from an angel, Gabriel, who said, and by the way, your relative Elizabeth is with child.

And in her excitement, she leaves and she goes down to the city where her relative stays. And as she's walking across the threshold of the door, Elizabeth prophesies.

And you know what she prophesied? You know what she said? She said exactly what God put in her mouth. And what did God put in her mouth? Who am I?

That the mother of my Lord. God. I'm going to turn there so I don't mess it up. And why is it granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

[13 : 36] For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby, John the Baptist, leaped in my womb. And it has a nice little phrase at the end. You remember what it says?

Leaped in my womb for joy. Do you know in the womb of Elizabeth was John the Baptist? Who leaped when the Messiah arrived.

You know, there's something strongly spiritual about that, isn't there? So I want you to hear from Luke 1 what John the Baptist's father prophesied about him.

So you understand that Elizabeth and Zechariah were very old in age. Likely, John was very young when they passed away. And so he would have been raised by relatives, possibly been raised by relatives.

There's no way to know this for sure. But there's evidence that would lead us to think that perhaps he was raised in a nomadic setting in the wilderness. That's what nomads did. They wandered in the wilderness so their flocks could be fed.

[14 : 50] No way to know for sure. But it is interesting that he wasn't surrounded by the religious system. He was free to be led by God. And Zechariah shares something of importance with us that I want you to hear this morning.

So Zechariah, you'll remember the story. He goes into the holy place. It was the greatest gift of life for a priest to be allowed to have the privilege to go and walk in.

And he took incense to put on the altar, which represents the prayers of the saints. And he goes in and he puts incense on the altar. And what happens? He has an encounter, doesn't he?

And in that encounter, he is mute. He can't speak. As he walks out, he was greeted by an angel in that setting. He walks out. He can't talk anymore. And he doesn't talk again until when?

Until his son, John the Baptist, is dedicated on the eighth day. So can you picture this? The first words out of his mouth are not even his words.

[15 : 55] He prophesies as the Holy Spirit moves upon him. And he speaks these words. He talks about Christ and the Messiah. And then in verse 76 of chapter 1 of Luke, it says this, And you, child, I can just picture him holding this child in his hands.

John the Baptist, his eight-day-old son in his old age. Can you imagine waiting all those years for a child and his child to be born?

And he's holding his child here. And his mouth has been mute. And when he opens it up, God's word spills out of his mouth. And he says, And you, child, you will be called prophet, the prophet of the Most High.

There's a lot in that phrase. The prophet of the Most High. For you will go before the Lord to prepare his way to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins.

Wow. Now, John's eight days old, and I doubt he remembers hearing that. But don't you know that Elizabeth and Zechariah sensed this powerful movement of God, this miraculous thing that God is doing in the life of John the Baptist?

[17 : 11] And we go back, and I want you to see this about John the Baptist. And we're getting to the encounter. We're not to the encounter yet, because I want you to realize these things.

Is that John is a prophet. And you remember what Christ said about John the Baptist? Listen to what he said. What did you go in the wilderness to see?

You know what the people were doing? They heard about this guy who was so different, radically different than any other religious message they'd ever heard. And word began to spread in that culture, and people began to go to him from all kind of places to where he was baptizing.

And they were hearing the message of John the Baptist, and Christ asked this question to his disciples. He says this, What did you go out to the wilderness to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you.

And more than a prophet. You hear what he says there? Christ said, yes, he was a prophet. He was the spokesperson for God. You know what a prophet is?

[18 : 18] Prophet is one that God chooses to speak through to the people. God moves in their heart to put his message in their heart. They open their mouths, and the word of God spills out of their mouth.

The Holy Spirit is the one that speaks to these men. He is more than a prophet. This is he, him, the one that is written about.

Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you. Truly, I say to you, and we've heard this before in the book of John, as Jonathan was preaching, I say to you, among those born of women, there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist.

And remember what it is to be great in the kingdom of God? Go lower. Go lower. Do you think John saw himself as someone who was low?

Listen to what it says. Listen to it. He said he knows about himself, these things, that he is that voice, that he is the person that was prophesied about in the Old Testament.

[19 : 23] He is the one. And it's validated by the Holy Spirit through Zechariah, his father. He is the voice from the wilderness.

And if you look down to verse 33, chapter 1, it says, I myself did not know him. That is, in the natural, I've never seen Jesus before. I didn't know who he was.

I could not have visibly recognized him. Though he saw him, in a sense, saw him, experienced him in the womb of Elizabeth when Jesus walked across the threshold, he had never seen him with his eyes.

He said, I myself did not know him, but he who sent me said to me. Y'all realize the importance of that phrase? He who sent me, who sent him?

John, you remember in Mark? It said this, Behold, I send my messenger. You know what it is? It's God's messenger with God's message.

[20 : 31] John is the messenger sent by God. He says, I'm the voice, and he who sent me said to me, you know what? God spoke to John the Baptist.

God validated to John the Baptist who was the Christ. Christ. And what was the response of John the Baptist when he saw Jesus? Behold, the Lamb of God.

Let me just ask this of you and I. Is that true for us? Have you seen Jesus? Have you experienced Jesus?

When you walk away from your experience with Christ, do you find yourself saying, Behold, the Lamb of God. There He is. Do you find yourself pointing at Jesus?

Do you find yourself sharing it with people you come in contact with? There He is. You need Jesus. We all need Jesus. Do you think with John understanding who He was, and with John receiving these words from God the Father, you would think that he would be tempted to think of himself more highly than he ought to think.

[21 : 48] Correct? I mean, he's in a role that he knows God has placed him in. But I want you to hear, oh man, I want you to hear the heart of John.

He encounters Christ as the forerunner, the one that was called by God as a messenger. And here's the interaction. We see it a little differently through the eyes of Matthew.

If we look in Matthew chapter 3, listen to the encounter when Jesus comes to John to be baptized.

Here it is. Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by Him.

John would have prevented it. Does that not strike you? John's like, no. I'm baptizing all these people.

They need to repent. They need to be baptized. You don't need to be baptized. Who am I that you would even come to me? You remember what he said about the sandals of Jesus?

[22 : 55] I'm not worthy to be the lowest servant in the house of my God to even untie the latchet of the sandal of Jesus. I'm not worthy to be the lowest servant in the house of my God.

Does that echo with you? How do we view ourselves? Are we going lower?

Are we recognizing realizing more and more and more that apart from Jesus we're nothing? We don't deserve to be in the house of our God, do we? You know it's a gift for you and I that He gave us?

That we would be allowed to be in the house of our God? That we would be allowed to be a servant in the house of our God? Listen to what happened. He said, John would have prevented him saying, I need to be baptized by you and you come to me?

But Jesus answered, let it be so for now for thus it is fitting to fulfill all righteousness. Let me just make this point. Do you think that in that encounter John would have been in awe?

[24 : 16] I think right here it reveals that he's like it probably can't get words out to start with because the Holy Spirit or the Father is indicated there He is, there He is, there He is, there He is, He's coming, He's coming to you right now.

That's Him. That's the Lamb of God and He's hearing all this and He knows it and He's like, I'm not worthy that you would come that close to me.

Who am I that you would even approach me? And in awe He says, I understand who you are. I need to be baptized. I'm nothing.

I'm nobody. So here's what I see. I see an awe in the heart of John the Baptist. This greatest of all who have ever been born by a woman. He is deeply humble.

And He's obedient, isn't He? Though He knew that He should not baptize the Messiah, the Messiah said, I want you to baptize me. This is just the way it needs to be.

[25 : 28] Yes, Lord. You know, when we encounter Christ, is that the response that we have? Do we see ourselves for who we really are that we're nobody apart from Him?

Do we shout, behold the Lamb of God? Is that something that often comes from our lips? Do people look at us and see, there's that guy, that radical dude, man.

I wish he'd shut up sometimes. I'm tired of hearing him talk about Jesus all the time. Does that characterize the way we walk and the way we live and the way we interact with people?

I hope it does. We move on here. So you can picture these two disciples of John who've been following Him and who've been learning from Him, who've been seeking truth, who've been seeking the Messiah, the Lord, the truth, the Father, and they're following John because they know something is from God.

Something about John is from God. Something about John can't be explained. There's something supernatural going on here and they're following Him and you know what He says?

[26 : 43] Jesus walks by them and as He's walking by, He says to them, Behold, there He is, the Lamb of God. He says it again. He can't contain Himself.

You know He had lived for this very day? Do y'all realize that John had lived all these years for that very day? Do you realize that was the purpose for which He was sent? That when Christ came and was baptized, do you realize that the purpose for John was fulfilled?

And He makes a statement, He must increase, I must decrease. My role is finished. His role is beginning as the Messiah.

And He turns, He says, there they are. And so what did the disciples do? They had come and they had learned, they knew something was supernatural about John. Would you depart from that? Would you leave? Wouldn't you want to be around John? This guy that absolutely is obvious that God is doing something incredible in his life. What did they do? They left. Listen to what it says. [27 : 52] And He looked at Jesus, John the Baptist did, as He walked by and said, Behold the Lamb of God. The two disciples heard Him say this and they did what? They followed Jesus. Let me ask you this question. For all of us, you know, we live in the South.

There's steeples all over town. You know, especially go look over the bridge or Avonel, you look down. Steeples, steeples, steeples, all over the place. Churches on most corners. You've heard about Jesus, haven't you?

What is the effect in your heart when you've heard about Jesus, when Jesus has been presented to you, when you see Jesus in the pages of the Word, have you followed Him?

Church, have you followed Him? Have you sought Him with all your heart? Are you seeking after Jesus to know Him?

Not just to know about Him, not just to know doctrine. Do you want to know Him personally, deeply, intimately? He invites us all there.

[28 : 56] notice what it says. They followed Jesus and what did Jesus do? He had just walked by them, hadn't He? And they start following Him. What does He do? Do you realize that anybody who seeks Jesus, Jesus always turns?

For anybody that is seeking, truly seeking, you know what He does? He turns. But it's an interesting question He throws their way. Do you know what the question is? In the text it says this, what are you seeking?

Why are you following me? What are you doing? What is He asking? He's asking for their motive.

Why do you want to spend time with me? What is your motive? You know, we can glimpse ahead to chapter 6.

And it says this, when He had fed many in the wilderness and He left and He went to another place, a large crowd followed Jesus. You remember chapter 6. And Jesus answered them.

He said, why did you, why have you come across to the other side of the sea? And He answered them and said, Jesus, He said, truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me not because you saw signs and saw something supernatural, but because you ate and you're in, excuse me, you ate your fill of the loaves.

[30 : 17] Their belly was full. They received food. They're chasing Him because He's a provider. He can provide for 5,000 with a small handful of loaves and some fish.

There's something supernatural about this guy. I love the fact that I can eat and be full. And they're chasing Him for why? For what they can get. You know what begs the question for you and me? Why are we following Jesus? Are we following Jesus for what we can get? Are we following Him for who He is? Jesus said to these, Do not work for food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life.

Don't live for the temporal. Live for the spiritual. Live for my kingdom. Live for me. And so they said to Him, Rabbi, where are you staying?

In other words, wherever you're going, I'm going. Wherever you're staying, I'm staying. We want to be at Your feet. We want to be taught by You.

[31 : 29] We want to learn. We want to be in Your presence. We're hungry for You. We believe that You really are the Messiah. We've been looking for all these years and now we know it for sure that You're the One.

We want to be with You. What did He say? Nah. Nah. I don't think you're ready. That isn't what He said, is He? He says, come.

You know, for all who seek Him, you know what Jesus says? Come. Come. And when He says come, what is He going to show you? He's going to show you Himself. He's going to reveal to you something so powerful.

Himself. The author of life. So they came and they saw where He was staying and they stayed with Him for a day and it was about the tenth hour. One of the two who heard Him speak followed Jesus and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

And what did Andrew do when he spent time with Jesus? What was the effect on Andrew? Do you notice?

[32 : 36] He left and went and found Simon and said, man, come on. Come on. You got to come, man. You don't want to miss out on this. He's right over there. Come on. Let's go. Let's go. And he takes his brother, Simon, and he does what?

He takes him to Jesus. Do you know if we chased Andrew through the Gospels, you know what he does? He takes people to Jesus. That's who he is.

He's like, I don't have all the answers, but I know who does. Come on. I'm going to take you. I'll show him. Church, do we do the same thing? We don't have all the answers.

Do you find yourself taking people to Jesus? Do you find yourself that the problems and the lives of people that you come in contact with are spiritual? And if they're spiritual, there's one who has an answer for those spiritual things.

His name is Jesus. And then, we love this third encounter, this encounter of Simon Peter, of Peter, we're going to call him Simon because when they say here in the text, Simon Peter, they're looking backwards as they're writing this thing.

[33 : 42] But you know who he was? He was Simon. His name was not Peter until after the encounter. Do you all know that? Listen to what it says. And by the way, you know what I was struck by when I was studying this?

You know who Simon Peter is? As we read through the scriptures, read through the book of Acts, you know what it is? He's this loud, impetuous, he puts his foot in his mouth, he talks before he, I mean, he just, he says things that before he thinks about things.

He's just this fire type of a guy, fiery type of a guy. And here's the encounter with Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, you are Simon. You shall be Peter.

Think about that. You are, but you shall be. You know, before we were in the kingdom, we were somebody, but since we've come into the kingdom, we're somebody else. Do you all realize that? Do you realize that a true encounter with Christ leads to being born again?

It leads to salvation. It leads to a change. It leads to newness of life. You know, Romans 6 says that. We've been united with Christ, so now walk in newness of life.

[34 : 50] You've been born again. You're no longer bound by sin, but you're new creatures. I've put my desires in your heart. I've changed your heart of stone and made it a heart of flesh.

And Peter was dumbstruck, I'm just guessing. There's no words that seem to go from Peter. He's like, huh? What do you mean I'm going to be another guy? Radically different guy.

Do you think that's true in the life of Peter? Do you see a different guy after Pentecost? You know, Peter's the same one that was scared of the servant girl at the gate when he was going to warm his hands after Jesus had been arrested.

And you know, that same guy is the guy after Pentecost that stood up to the Pharisees and said, that's Jesus, man. You need to be saved. I mean, he's saying, in his first sermon, he talks about, you think these guys are drunk because they've had this, the Holy Spirit come upon them in this Pentecostal thing.

You think they're drunk. They're not drunk. This is what was talked about in the prophets. This is the movement of God that Joel spoke about. I mean, he's bold as a lion.

[35 : 59] You go from this timid guy that's scared of getting hurt to this bold guy who's willing to die. Is that true for you? Do you find that now that you're a Christian, do you find that there's a willingness in your life and your heart to be willing even to die for the kingdom?

Amen. You know, that's the high call of God. This soft, mushy Christianity that's being served up on platters is not what the Scriptures talk about.

You know what the Scripture talks about? They talk about, the Scripture talks about a radical giving my life away to become a bondservant of Christ to set my eyes and fix them on Jesus to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

That that's the way I live. I don't live for the world anymore. I don't live for temporal things. I live for Him now. And let me just say this, for those of us who genuinely desire to seek and live for Him, you know what's going to happen in your heart.

Even though our personalities might not be like Peter's, there's going to be a boldness that comes through the indwelling Holy Spirit. the fourth encounter.

[37 : 20] The next day, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, Philip, follow me. And you know what some would think, wait a minute, Jesus, I've got things at home I've got to do.

I left the garden unattended. It's got some weeds in it. I've got fishing plans for my buddy. I've got things on the calendar, Jesus. He says, follow me.

What did Philip say? He said, everything else doesn't have any meaning compared to the invitation. Follow me.

And what does he do? Very similar. He found Nathaniel and he said, he said something different. I want you to hear this. And we're going to end with Nathaniel's encounter.

But I want you to see what Philip said to Nathaniel. Philip found Nathaniel. So there he is again. What is the effect of experiencing the presence of Jesus? What is the impact of the encounter with Jesus?

[38 : 24] On Philip, you know what he did? He went and told people. He found him. And he said, come and see. Come on, let's go see. I want you to see, Jesus, I want you to see that he really is the Messiah.

And so he goes and he says, we found him. Who? The one that Moses and the prophets talk about. Why would he bring that up? Let me just say that it gives insight in the scripture here that these two men were seekers of truth in the word.

They knew the law and they knew the prophets. They had been seeking hard. They knew the prophecies about the coming Messiah. That's why it's interesting to see the response of Nathanael. Listen. We found him of whom Moses and the law and also the prophets wrote Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Nathanael said, can any good thing come out of Nazareth?

I want us to see why he makes that comment. You know why? Because he knew the scriptures. And what do the scriptures say about where the Messiah is coming from? They don't ever mention Nazareth.

[39 : 32] Nazareth is in that part of Israel that's not even pure. You know when the temple was built and David was receiving all the wood and the cypress and all the trees from Hiram and he was cutting all this wood and then afterwards he gifted 20 cities to Hiram and it was in the region where Nazareth is.

This region that was kind of black eye because of this. And that's where Jesus came from this place called Nazareth. But he's saying wait a minute there's no way Nazareth nothing good ever comes out of Nazareth.

It's not pure. And on top of that the scriptures say it's Bethlehem. Why do you think the Messiah is coming from Nazareth? You've got to be wrong. And he says well come and see.

You come and experience and see for yourself. He said well I trust you. I believe you. You're a deep friend of mine and I'm going to trust that you have the perspective. I'll go. And what happens when he gets there?

It's the encounter of Nathaniel with Jesus. And listen to the encounter. He says how do you know me? Did somebody tell you about me?

[40 : 42] I mean how do you know? How do you know that I'm not deceitful? How do you know I live like that? Well you know a caveat here you know how I know he knows?

He's omniscient. Jesus knows our thoughts. Jesus knows our desires. Jesus knows all about him. That's why Jesus could say to Peter you're going to be somebody totally different.

You're going to be using the kingdom like you have no idea that I've got a plan for you. And he says Nathaniel when you were under the fig tree I saw you. Now understand it's hard to understand what's going on here but here's what I believe.

I believe that Philip was in the habit of getting alone with God. And I hope all of us are. And he had this hiding place. Have you all ever seen a fig when it's figs are heavy on the limbs?

And when it hangs down? Some of these fig trees get humongous. They're big. And you know there's a whole canopy of limbs. You could go up under it and it's like a whole a nice little area that the limbs have sagged down and they're kind of protected this quiet place.

[41 : 48] It's my belief that likely he had gone there for his quiet place and nobody else knew about it. He had found this spot to get along with God and even that morning he was talking to God and maybe even that morning God had pricked his heart with something powerful.

And so he says I saw you when you were under the fig tree and immediately Nathaniel's mind was like uh-uh nobody knows I was there. Not a soul in the world knows that's the greatest hiding place you've ever seen.

How do you know I was there? And he goes you are God. There's nobody that could possibly know that. There's nobody that could possibly know what God spoke to my heart this morning but it's as if Christ knew every thought that he had.

And he said you're the son of God you're the king of Israel. Church why do I spend all this time talking about these encounters with Jesus is because the message is for you and me.

How has it affected your life? I realize there might be some here that would say I'm not a Christian. I'm still investigating.

[42 : 57] I'm still listening. I'm still trying to understand what this is all about. I'm drawn. There's something dragging me back to church dragging me back to this whole idea of Christ and what it's all about.

I don't know what it is but I sense something going on. Let me just say to you if you're in that place come and see. Christ would say why are you following me?

Come on. Come and see. I will show you who I am. I will show you who you are. I will show you what you need. And for us church for those of y'all who are born again those of y'all who are genuinely believers you know what he says?

He says follow me. And let me just encourage all of us when he says follow me he doesn't mean just come to church on Sunday. You know what he means? It's to give your life away in service to the king that you would be willing to be the lowest servant in the house of your God.

Let's pray. Father I pray that your word would move us this morning to turn and follow you all the days of our life to never veer to the left or to the right but by your strength and your power and your supernatural ability to move us in our heart Father give us a courage give us a desire to want you more than anything else.

[44 : 22] And Father I pray that you sustain us and you would lead us and you would draw us into an intimate relationship with you in this I pray in your name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.