

# GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

## Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide

### WHAT JESUS SEES IN YOU!

**John 1:36-51 (SB 05.22.2022)**

#### Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

In today's text, Jesus begins to gather his first disciples. These became the men that Jesus spent most of His time with over the next three and a half years. They traveled together; shared meals together, ministered together and basically lived together. There were always crowds around Jesus, but throughout the gospels we repeatedly find Him trying to get away from the crowds so He could spend more time with His disciples. Given the scope and importance of His mission, and the short timeframe that He had to accomplish it in, it seems like a curious strategy. If He had hired a consulting firm or PR strategist to help Him map out a plan for His ministry, they would have certainly recommended doing things differently. In the eyes of the world, He did it all wrong. But it worked, so maybe He knew what He was doing after all. What did Jesus know that we don't? He knew that His best shot at changing the world was to reproduce Himself in His disciples. This process of transformation is what we call discipleship. It's something that is best done one on one. Disciples can't be mass-produced; they must be hand-shaped, one at a time. There is an ancient proverb that says, 'He who cares for the days, sows wheat; He who cares for the years, plants trees; but He who cares for the generations, educates people.' Jesus wanted to change the world. That's why He chose to invest in people. Let's get into our study...

1. What spoke to you from Pastor Daniel's sermon?
2. When have you witnessed the power of someone's words?
3. What kinds of communication tend to capture your attention?

#### Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

#### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 1:35-42

1. What are most people looking for in life today? Why do you believe that?
2. In what ways was Jesus' question in verse 38 so unexpected and challenging?

The calling of the first disciples is packed with some great moments! John the Baptist had disciples who followed him, and when he made a comment about Jesus being "the Lamb of God," two of his disciples slipped away and began following Jesus from a distance. Jesus' question of them in verse 38 was on point. He knew the two men were searching for something in life. His question challenged them to think about what really matters in life. This very question can still be asked of people today: "What are you looking for?" The two followers asked Jesus a question, but Jesus chose not to answer it directly (see the last part of v. 38). This probably caused the men to be even more curious about Jesus. They committed to spend the day with Him and learn more about Him.

After a time, one of the two followers, Andrew, became convinced that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. He found his brother, Peter, and brought him to meet Jesus. Immediately Jesus spoke to Peter and called him by name. Then He gave him a new name.

## **BREAKTHROUGH! in 2022**

3. Do you have a nickname? What is it, and who gave it to you? Do you like it?
4. Why is it significant that Peter got a new name? How does one's name impact his or her identity?
5. When has God not only "called you by name," but also "given you a new name"?

It is important to note that Jesus called Peter by his name. Jesus knows each of us by name, and Scripture says that He even knows the number of hairs on our head (see Luke 12:7). When Jesus calls us to be His disciples, He does so knowing everything about us – the good and the bad – nothing is hidden from Him. In spite of our shortcomings, Jesus still calls us to "come and follow." Jesus' giving Peter a new name signifies Peter's new identity—he became a follower, a disciple, of Jesus.

6. Can you name any other people in Scripture whom God gave new names? Who?

### **HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 1:43-46**

1. What was the last thing you discovered that was so good, you could hardly wait to tell someone?
2. When you have good news to share, who is the first person you want to tell?

The calling of the first disciples continued the very next day. When Jesus saw Philip, He stopped and told him to "Follow Me!" Philip did what Andrew had done the day before – he went to someone he cared for, Nathanael, and challenged him to come and meet with Jesus. Philip believed Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah.

A wonderful pattern emerges in these verses. Jesus calls people to "Follow Me," and those people in turn call others to "come and see" – and to follow Jesus as well. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you can ask friends and family to "come and see" Jesus, too. That was the pattern among Jesus' first disciples. They were called. They called others.

### **ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ JOHN 1:47-52**

1. When you consider that Jesus knows everything about you, how does that make you feel? Use the following options as a guide: Proud – I am living my life to please Him; Afraid – I worry about being punished for wrongdoing; Thankful – I am grateful He knows me personally; Amazed – With the billions of people on the planet, how can He know me?

Jesus proved He was the Messiah by revealing knowledge of Nathanael's activities just prior to their meeting – Jesus saw him sitting under a fig tree, perhaps taking a break from his work or enjoying the shade on a hot day. Nathanael quickly acknowledged Jesus' deity (see v. 49). Jesus' calling of the first disciples was done in personal ways. Jesus singled out people He called to be His disciples, and He called some of them by name. He knew things about them that only God could know. He called these men to a life of discipleship, and He is doing the same thing today.

Jesus knows you. He knows me. And He calls us to follow Him, making Him the Lord (boss) of our lives. Jesus loves you just as you are, with all of your imperfections and weaknesses. He knows your potential, and He has great things planned for your life. What Jesus told Nathanael could be said to you and I today: "Greater things than this will you see." God has a wonderful plan for your life, and it begins with you saying "yes" to the call to follow Him as a disciple.

### **Applying God's Word**

**What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.**

**The commissioning of a ship is one of the most important days in its life. After years of construction, the ship is ready to be put into service. This was the case with the U.S.S. Ronald Reagan, one of the United States' nuclear**

## **BREAKTHROUGH!** in 2022

powered aircraft carriers. At the commissioning ceremony, a sponsor delivers the orders, among other things, that officially commission the vessel. The sponsor is typically someone related to the person for whom the vessel is named. In this case Nancy Reagan, Ronald Reagan's wife, was the sponsor. Mrs. Reagan's words at the commissioning service included a phrase spoken at all commissioning services: "Man the ship, and bring her to life." When she said these words, the 4,500 crew members ran to their stations and the ship literally came to life. The U.S.S. Ronald Reagan then began its service to our country. By Nancy's words, she brought an aircraft carrier to life. As incredible as that was, her action pales in comparison to the words spoken by Christ as He called the first disciples. His words were powerful, for they challenged these men to essentially "man the church, and bring her to life." They left jobs and families to follow Him. They heard His voice and responded. His words were powerful. His words were personal. He called individuals. And He's calling you, too.

1. Have you ignored Jesus' calling you to be a disciple? If yes, what do you believe He wants you to do?
2. Which of your friends, classmates, or neighbors could you introduce to Jesus? How might you lead them to "come and see"?
3. Is there a secret sin that Jesus knows you commit? Because He knows all about you, which sin do you need to ask Him to forgive?

PRAYER: Ask the Lord to help us be obedient to God's call on our lives. Praise Him for giving us a new identity—a new name and a new purpose—to better love and serve Him. Pray that we will be open to tell others about Christ's glorious name!

*"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." {John 1:45}*