

GET INTO THE STUDY



5 minutes

SAY: “In our last session, we looked at the value we place in others because we are in Christ. Today we look specifically at the responsibility we have to share Christ with others.” Invite members to turn to **page 3** in the **Personal Study Guide (PSG)** and review session titles.

DISCUSS: Draw attention to the picture (**PSG, p. 60**) as you introduce **Question #1: When have you needed courage to introduce yourself to someone?**

OPTION: IN ADVANCE, bring index cards and pens. Provide one card and a pen to each member. Instruct members to write the following headings on their cards: *Family member, Neighbor, Friend, Coworker, Other*. Ask members to prayerfully consider names of people who are not Christians and write those names under the appropriate headings. Encourage members to pray for these people this week.

SESSION 5 SHARE CHRIST



The Point

We have a responsibility to introduce our friends to Jesus.

The Bible Meets Life

A relationship with Jesus Christ colors every other relationship. As we saw in Session 1, the love of Christ—and our love for Christ—lead us to love others and ground

every aspect of those relationships in love. The best way we can love others is to introduce them to Jesus—the One who leads us to love them.

The Passage

John 1:35-49

The Setting

Following his impressive introduction, John set his Gospel in historical context by linking the beginning of Jesus’ ministry with that of John the Baptist. The Baptist had begun preaching and baptizing, and even gathering disciples. He identified the One sent from God to be “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (1:29).

John 1:35-39

- 35** Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;
- 36** And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!
- 37** And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.
- 38** Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?
- 39** He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

Seek a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.

Verses 35-37. John the Baptist understood his calling: to “make straight the way of the Lord” (John 1:23). His preaching emphasized the coming judgment, the need for repentance, and the coming Messiah.

One day, John the Baptist stood with two of his disciples, one later identified as Andrew (v. 40). Both likely grew up in good Jewish homes where they practiced all the prescribed rituals and sacrifices. Still, they ached for a true word from God and became interested in the excitement surrounding the Baptist’s unique preaching ministry. Convinced that their religious activities and heritage lacked the power to atone for their sins, they attached themselves to John as his disciples.

1 ▶ Looking upon Jesus as he walked, John pointed the two disciples to “the Son of God” (v. 34). By directing his own disciples to Jesus, John had done something quite out of the ordinary. Normally a teacher trained his disciples to go out and teach others. John modeled a true servant’s heart since he showed no typical human desire to make a name for himself.

By calling out, **Behold the Lamb of God!** John issued a clarion call for Andrew and the other disciple (perhaps John, brother of James) to follow Jesus. For months, the Baptist had preached day after day, preparing the way for the Messiah by connecting Him to the sacrificial system. So when these two disciples heard John clearly identify the Messiah, that was all

GUIDE: Direct attention to **The Bible Meets Life (PSG, p. 61)**. Highlight the author’s examples of casual introductions of people who went on to form the Beatles and give us Apple® computers.

Reinforce the importance of introducing people to Jesus by reading **The Point (PSG, p. 61): We have a responsibility to introduce our friends to Jesus.**

PRAY: Begin the Bible study with prayer. Ask God to give us the courage we need to introduce others to Jesus. Thank Him for the relationship we have with Jesus and the strength we have through the Holy Spirit.

STUDY THE BIBLE John 1:35-39



10 minutes

GUIDE: Before reading the passage, set the context by summarizing the information in **The Setting** on page 62.

READ: Ask a volunteer to read John 1:35-39.

GUIDE: Use **Bible**

Commentary 1 on page 63

and this page as well as

DIGGING DEEPER on **PSG**

page 63 to give more

background on John the

Baptist's referring to Jesus as

"the Lamb of God" and what it means to follow Jesus.

SUMMARIZE: John had been telling anyone who would listen that the Messiah was coming. John's message was clear:

- *Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand* (Matt. 3:2).
- *I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord* (John 1:23).

As John's disciples, they repeatedly heard this message and surely were in a state of hopeful anticipation. So when John made this declaration, he immediately set Jesus apart from all others.

they needed to know, **and they followed Jesus**. The Greek word for *followed* is in a tense that reflects a once-for-all act, meaning these two were ready to make a commitment to Jesus. They literally walked with Jesus; soon they would walk with Him spiritually as well.

To become a follower of Jesus, we must agree with holy God that we are sinners and that all of our good works could never atone for our sins. God did not send His Son as the sacrifice to save sinners who could not in any way save themselves. We must look to Jesus, the Lamb of God, and place our faith in Him. ◀

Verse 38. Knowing someone had begun to follow Him, **Jesus turned, ... and saith unto them, What seek ye?** Jesus' question broke the ice for them. The Lord certainly did not ask the two what they were seeking because He didn't know. His question not only forced them to consider why they followed Him, but it also showed Jesus' eagerness to reach people.

Even today, Jesus' question to these two disciples remains the basic question of life. Anyone coming to Jesus, whether for the first time or each day in worship, should ask, "What do I want from Jesus? What do I expect to receive from Him? And if I follow Him, how will it change the way I live?"

The pair expressed further interest with another question: **Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest thou?** By calling Jesus *Rabbi*, they acknowledged their shift of allegiance from John to Jesus. As His disciples, they wanted more than a casual conversation by the side of the road; their question revealed they wanted to know where He stayed so they could spend time with Him, open and pour out their hearts to Him, and learn from Him.

Verse 39. Jesus replied to their seeking hearts, **Come and see**, which conveyed the idea, "If you come—and I want you to come—then you will see." Since **it was about the tenth hour** (four in the afternoon), Jesus invited them to spend **that day** and evening with Him.

John 1:40-45

40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, 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 by interpretation, A stone.

43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 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.

Tell others of your experience with Jesus.

Verse 40. After having spent only one evening with Jesus, the two disciples became witnesses to others. The reference to **Andrew** as **Simon Peter's brother** presupposed that readers knew *Simon Peter*, since this is the first reference to him in John's Gospel.

Verses 41-42a. Convinced Jesus was the Messiah, Andrew immediately went and found his brother, Simon. Jesus had met the deepest need of Andrew's heart, and he could not contain his joy. He had to tell his brother immediately, so that he could experience in Jesus what Andrew had.

Although Andrew seemed to live in Simon's shadow in the Gospels, he became one of the first disciples of Jesus. He also brought Simon to Jesus. Several times in John's Gospel, we see Andrew bringing someone to Jesus (John 6:8; 12:22).

2 ▶ Simon could have been intrigued by John's ministry as well. Given his proximity, Simon also might have followed the Baptist as one of his disciples. When Andrew found his brother, he said to him, **We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.** *Messias* means "Anointed One" and carried deep meaning for the apostle John throughout his Gospel. He wrote this Gospel "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (20:31).

Andrew's announcement, "We have found the Messiah," echoed the Baptist's proclamation, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" Obviously, the Baptist taught his disciples that *Lamb of God*

DISCUSS: Question #2
(PSG, p. 62): **How did Jesus first catch your attention?**

(Alternate: How would you describe your reasons for following Christ?)

OPTION: IN ADVANCE, invite someone from your group or church to share briefly about how they came to know Jesus. Ask them to share about the person or persons who were instrumental in their earliest understanding of Jesus.

TRANSITION: "In the next verses, we'll see Peter and Philip's reaction to Jesus."

STUDY THE BIBLE

John 1:40-45



10 minutes

READ: Ask a volunteer to read John 1:40-45.

SUMMARIZE: Refer members to **PSG pages 64–65**. Ask a volunteer to read these paragraphs aloud:

What do you think of when you see the word evangelism? The term itself makes a lot of believers nervous. We know sharing Jesus with others is important, but we're frightened by the prospect of actually doing it. For some, this is especially true when sharing Christ with family members.

But notice how naturally and quickly Andrew told his brother Simon about Jesus. As Jewish men, they longed for the coming of the Messiah. Andrew had even aligned himself with John, the one who was proclaiming the coming Messiah. So we might even hear enthusiasm in Andrew's voice as he announced to Simon the good news that Jesus was in fact the Messiah they sought!

GUIDE: Use **Bible Commentary 2** on page 66 and this page to explain that the terms *Messias* and *Lamb of God* are synonymous.

and *Messias* were synonymous terms. While Andrew's simple pronouncement showed no awareness of the saving nature of Jesus' ministry, he knew enough to make the connection. He also knew he should tell other people about Jesus. ◀

Satan attempts to disqualify followers of Jesus from sharing the good news, telling them they do not know enough. But in Andrew, we have an example of someone who, after only one day with Jesus, went searching for his brother to bring him to Jesus. We only need to be willing to tell others of our experience with Jesus. The rewards of sharing the message last for eternity.

3 ▶ Verse 42b. It must have shocked Simon when Jesus looked right at him and called him by name, **Thou art Simon the son of Jona**, then suddenly change his name to **Cephas**, or the more common Greek form of the name Peter. *Cephas* was not typically a name, but the Greek transliteration of an Aramaic word for **a stone**. Thus Simon's new name actually functioned more like a nickname. Jesus not only knew him, but He knew what Simon would eventually become, so Jesus gave him a name that would reflect his character after the Lord's work in him. Over the course of the next three plus years, Jesus would change Simon from a self-centered, defensive, and overbearing man into a solid, immovable, and unbreakable rock for God.

Jesus knows everything about us, including our futures, before we ever meet Him. We begin with Christ by trusting Him as the Lamb of God who takes away our sin, and He gradually develops us to the point where we can be used to bring others to Him. ◀

Verses 43–45. The day after Andrew brought Simon to Him, **Jesus would go forth into Galilee** to go soul-winning Himself. John continued developing the “finding” theme as Jesus **findeth Philip** and as **Philip findeth Nathanael**.

Unlike when Jesus saw Andrew and John and asked, “What seek ye?” (v. 38), Jesus commanded Philip directly, **Follow me**. This classic invitation stated as a present tense imperative carried the idea of an ongoing commitment to follow Jesus.

John paused to offer an incidental remark: **Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter**. This bit of information served to establish a relationship between the two brothers and Philip, who came from the same Galilean town.

John did not elaborate on the conversation between Jesus and Philip, but it must have been amazing because Philip could not keep such good news to himself! Immediately **Philip findeth Nathanael** to tell him about Jesus. Philip's conclusion about Jesus as Messiah told everything, **We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.** What Jesus did for Philip that day likely went along the same lines as the conversation Jesus had with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus following the resurrection (Luke 24:13-35).

Philip simply told Nathanael what he had learned about Jesus. We know relatively little about Philip. He received only scant mentioning in the Gospels, and some of John's other references to him (John 6:4-7; 12:20-23; 14:6-11) leave him looking a little less than sharp. He may have lacked the confidence and initiative to assert himself to follow Jesus without a direct invitation. But we should remember he did follow Jesus. And he brought others to Jesus. Philip's actions provide us with an unashamed example of telling someone our own experiences with Jesus.

John 1:46-49

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

Invite others to know Jesus for themselves.

Nathanael's friend Philip shared the good news with him, so Nathanael had the privilege of hearing it from someone who cared very much for him. Given that Philip identified Jesus as the one "of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write," these two might have often pored over the words of prophetic Scripture together. They may have

GUIDE: Use **Bible**

Commentary **3** on page 66 to explain the Greek form of the name Peter, *Cephas*, a transliteration of the Aramaic word for "stone." Share how this functioned like a nickname and was a name that reflected who Simon would become.

DISCUSS: **Question #3**

(PSG, p. 65): What often holds us back from telling others about Jesus?

(Alternate: What do Jesus' simple words "follow me" mean?)

TRANSITION: "In the next verses, we'll see Nathanael's reaction to Jesus."

STUDY THE BIBLE

John 1:46-49



15 minutes

READ: Read or ask a volunteer to read John 1:46-49.

DISCUSS: Question #4
(PSG, p. 66): Why are some people skeptical about Jesus in our day?

SUMMARIZE: Refer group members to **PSG page 67** to what we can learn from how Philip dealt with Nathanael.

- *Philip did not take Nathanael's skepticism as a personal offense. We might be tempted to take it personally if others don't immediately see what we see in Jesus. We convert their doubt about Him into skepticism about us, as if they were asking, "How can you be so foolish as to believe in Jesus?"*
- *Philip did not get into an intellectual argument with Nathanael. He defended neither Jesus nor Nazareth.*

DISCUSS: Question #5
(PSG, p. 68): How can we make sure our group is a place for others to "come and see" Jesus?

(Alternate: What are the main benefits of following Christ?)

known the Messiah would come from David's line, be born in Bethlehem, and be born of a virgin. But to hear any talk that Messiah would be connected with Nazareth made no sense to Nathanael.

Verse 46. Even in the face of Philip's enthusiasm about Jesus, Nathanael started out as a doubter who refused to believe anything worthwhile could **come out of Nazareth**. His question may have stemmed from a rivalry between Nazareth and Cana (Nathanael's hometown, John 21:2) or because the Jewish people did not envision the Messiah coming from Galilee. Nathanael could not envision that the Messiah would come from Nazareth. Although Nathanael expressed skepticism, Philip challenged him to **come and see**.

John offered the testimony of eyewitnesses—Andrew, John, Simon Peter, Philip—who came and asked questions based on the Old Testament promises and came to the conclusion that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Philip challenged Nathanael in essence, "You come and ask your questions."

Verse 47. Even as Nathanael approached Him, Jesus read him like a book. Jesus called him a true Israelite in whom there was **"no deceit."** This alone could have stopped Nathanael in his tracks. He had not yet met Jesus or had any conversation with Him, yet Jesus described his heart and character accurately. Jesus contrasted Nathanael with the original Israel and forced the readers to recall the story of Jacob. Jacob, whose name meant "deceiver," took his brother's blessing by deceiving their father Isaac. As **Jesus saw Nathanael** approaching Him, He sized him up as someone with no hypocrisy or phoniness. In a nation full of apostates and supposedly self-righteous people who exalted themselves, Jesus had found an honest, true-hearted man—a rare commodity in Israel.

Jesus knows everything about us. Nothing escapes His watchful eye, not even a single thought. This cuts both ways. First, this offers great hope to anyone willing to hear the gospel. Despite his skepticism, Nathanael responded to Philip's invitation to go see Jesus. A willingness to listen to the truth can result in a person receiving purpose and direction in life. However, we should see the warning that comes in knowing that Jesus sees everything. We cannot hide our sin and hope it will not be judged.

Verse 48. Nathanael knew Jesus had aimed His words at him personally, and asked, **Whence knowest thou me?** Jesus' answer convinced him. Philip must have found Nathanael **under the fig tree** and there told him about Jesus. This implied Jesus also knew about Nathanael's disparaging Nazareth comment—Jesus knew everything about him. Jesus essentially said, “I saw you when My eyes could not see you. I can see your heart.” That the Lord saw him without seeing him physically pointed to His omniscience.

4 ▶ Verse 49. Nathanael stacked together three great titles: **Rabbi ... Son of God ... King of Israel.** John clearly wanted to show Nathanael as a skeptic without any predisposed notion to believe Jesus could be the Messiah. The radical change that occurred in him showed the compelling weight of evidence caused Nathanael to confess Jesus as Messiah.

Nathanael's confession anticipated John's hope in writing his Gospel: that his readers might come to “believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31). Nathaniel's willingness to come to Jesus and his purity of heart allowed him to see truth by the grace of God. When he saw it, he saw it big time. John designed this portion of the narrative to lift up Christ and to give readers a clear picture of His divine nature. ◀

John took the experiences of this little group of men who knew each other and who caught fish together, and he showed how Jesus changed their lives. Even from the beginning of His ministry, Jesus commissioned this collection of the most common people who could offer first-person testimonies of how Christ had changed their lives and could change the lives of others as well.

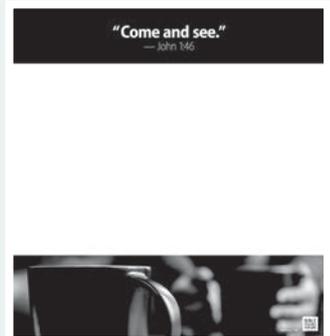
In a similar way, the gospel came to us through the first-person testimonies of one or more individuals whom God placed in our lives. Just like Andrew found his brother and pointed him to Jesus, and just like Philip found his friend and invited him to meet Jesus, each of us can and should do the same for our family members, friends, and classmates; as well as others we meet every day.

GUIDE: Refer group members to **PSG page 68** to three titles that Nathanael attributed to Jesus:

- *Rabbi*
- *The Son of God.*
- *The King of Israel.*

Use **Bible Commentary 4** to further explain the significance of these titles for Jesus.

LEADER PACK: Point to **Item 5: Come and See.** Ask a volunteer to read the verse aloud. Invite group members to write first names or initials of those whom they intend to introduce to Jesus this month.



DO: Invite volunteers to share responses to the activity on **PSG page 68: “Helping Others ‘Come and See.’”**

LIVE IT OUT



5 minutes

GUIDE: Emphasize **The Point: Strong friendships thrive because of shared commitment.**

REVIEW: Review **Live It Out (PSG, p. 69;** see text to the right). Encourage each group member to follow through this week with at least one of the applications.

WRAP IT UP

GUIDE: Emphasize that sharing Christ should really be as simple as introducing others to our best friend, inviting them to “come and see.”

PRAY: “Father, help us lead others to Jesus as these disciples did.”

NOTE: Remind group members that **PSG pages 6-9** are there to journal one another’s prayer requests.

LIVE IT OUT

What will you do to invite others to “come and see” Jesus? Consider the following applications:

- ▶ **Pray.** If you’ve never talked about Jesus with someone else, begin with prayer. Who do you know who is without Christ? Pray for the person, pray for the opportunity to talk, and pray for boldness.
- ▶ **Invite.** Invite others to “come and see” by inviting them to join your Bible study group. Bible study is a great way for individuals to see what God’s Word says about Jesus.
- ▶ **Tell.** Telling others about Jesus does not require a deep grounding in the Bible and theology. Telling someone about Jesus can be as simple as telling how you met Him and what He has done in your life. Share with others your own encounter with Jesus and how He changed your life.

Someone introduced you to Jesus. Someone took the time to invite you to “come and see” what Christ was all about. Now it’s time for you to do the same.

BIBLICAL
ILLUSTRATOR



Part of a stone plaque shows a fisherman returning with his catch; the two seated on the lower register share a cup. Dated to about 2900–2350 B.C., the plaque is from Khafajah, the site Tutub, which was part of ancient Mesopotamia.

Nathanael, mentioned only in John's Gospel, is the first person John declared to be a believer. Only one piece of personal information is certain about Nathanael: John states he was from Cana of Galilee.

Nathanael had a hard time believing someone from Nazareth could ever be the Messiah. Philip took Nathanael to Jesus, who surprised Nathanael when He referred to him as a true Israelite.

Nathanael's reply, "How do you know me?" provided Jesus an opportunity to challenge Nathanael. Jesus stated He knew Nathanael was under a fig tree before Philip approached him (1:48). By stating He saw Nathanael under the fig tree prior to Philip's arrival, Jesus revealed He had access to personal information that only God had. Nathanael's faith confirmed in him the truth of Jesus' statement. Nathanael, having cultivated his faith as a true Israelite, declared Jesus' identity by using two messianic titles: Son of God and King of Israel (v. 49). How appropriate that a true Israelite would know the true King of Israel and could identify the Son of God.

Jesus equated these declarations with belief. Thus, Nathanael believed and received Jesus, becoming the first example of the truth in 1:12.

The excerpt above is from the article "Nathanael: All We Know" (Fall 2013), which relates to this session. More *Biblical Illustrator* articles are available that relate to this session. See page 7 about *Biblical Illustrator*.

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. It is our responsibility to see that every person has the opportunity to hear that truth so they may repent of sin and trust in Christ.

Each week, make yourself available either before or after the session to speak privately with anyone in your group who wants to know more about becoming a Christian. See the article, "Leading Someone to the Greatest Decision of All," on page 2 for guidance in leading a person to Christ.

Remind group members that **page 2** in the **PSG** offers guidance in how to become a Christian. Encourage believers to consider using this article as they have opportunities to lead others to Christ.

**GROUPS
MATTER.**

Grow with other group leaders at the [Groups Ministry](http://GroupsMinistry.com) blog.

LifeWay.com/GroupMinistry