

### Sermon Analysis

**Title:** A Personal Invitation: Following Jesus and Bringing Others to Him

**Sermon Summary:** This sermon explores John 1:35-51, examining the extraordinary nature of Christ's invitation to follow Him. The message emphasizes that Christianity is not merely religion but a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Through the examples of Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael, the pastor illustrates how the first disciples immediately responded to meeting Jesus by bringing others to Him. The sermon challenges believers to examine their own lives, asking whether they are actively following Christ and inviting others into relationship with Him. It addresses the sin of silence—knowing what is right to do but failing to do it—and calls Christians to personal evangelism. The message emphasizes that Jesus simply says "follow me" and invites all people to "come and see," making salvation and discipleship accessible to everyone who responds to His call.

#### Key Points:

- When John the Baptist declared Jesus as the Lamb of God, his disciples had to choose whom to follow—ultimately choosing Christ
- Jesus asks a penetrating question: "What seek ye?"—challenging us to examine our true motives and priorities in following Him
- Seeking God must be intentional; we must "set our heart and soul" to seek the Lord, or we risk doing evil
- Andrew's first response after spending time with Jesus was to find his brother Peter and bring him to Christ
- Silence about the gospel is sin—James 4 teaches that knowing to do good and not doing it is sin
- The story of the four lepers in 2 Kings 7 illustrates that "we do not well" when we have good news and hold our peace
- Common excuses for not sharing the gospel (not my responsibility, people won't listen, I'm not able) are refuted by Scripture
- Jesus personally invites people to follow Him, calling them into relationship, not religion
- The pattern of discipleship is simple: hear about Jesus, follow Him, spend time with Him, then bring others to Him
- God uses everything in our lives—even tragedies—to draw people to Himself
- We must seek the Lord "while He may be found" because there may come a time when hearts become too hardened

#### Scripture Reference:

- Primary: John 1:35-51
- Supporting passages:
  - Deuteronomy 4:29 (seeking God with whole heart)
  - 1 Chronicles 22:19 (setting heart and soul to seek the Lord)
  - 2 Chronicles 12:13-14 (Rehoboam did evil because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord)
  - Isaiah 55:6 (seek ye the Lord while He may be found)
  - Matthew 6:33 (seek first the kingdom of God)
  - James 4:17 (knowing to do good and not doing it is sin)
  - 1 John 3:17 (shutting up bowels of compassion)
  - 2 Kings 7:3-9 (the four lepers with good news)
  - Romans 1 (being a debtor to share the gospel)

## John – Week 8 – A Personal Invitation – Bible Study Helps

- Matthew 4 (Jesus calling disciples from their fishing boats)
- Mark 2 (friends bringing paralyzed man through the roof)

### Stories:

- **John the Baptist's disciples following Jesus:** Two disciples of John the Baptist heard him declare Jesus as the Lamb of God and immediately began following Jesus, spending the day with Him
- **Andrew finding Peter:** After spending time with Jesus, Andrew's first action was to find his brother Simon Peter and bring him to Jesus, saying "We have found the Messiah"
- **Jesus finding Philip:** Jesus personally sought out Philip and simply said "Follow me," demonstrating that Christ actively seeks people
- **Philip and Nathanael:** Philip found Nathanael and invited him to meet Jesus. Despite Nathanael's initial skepticism ("Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"), he came and was convinced when Jesus demonstrated supernatural knowledge
- **The four lepers (2 Kings 7):** Four starving lepers discovered the abandoned enemy camp full of food and initially hoarded it, but then realized "we do not well" and went to share the good news with others
- **The paralyzed man and his four friends (Mark 2):** Friends who loved their companion so much they removed a roof to lower him to Jesus, demonstrating the lengths we should go to bring people to Christ
- **Nick, the man without limbs:** The pastor shared about meeting a man born without hands or legs who preached powerfully for Christ, eliminating everyone's excuses about not being able to serve God
- **The woman at the well (John 4):** Jesus went out of His way, passing through Samaria when He didn't have to, to seek out and save a woman who needed Him

## John – Week 8 – A Personal Invitation – Bible Study Helps

### Discipleship Questions

When Jesus turned to the disciples and asked 'What seek ye?', what does this question reveal about the difference between following Christ out of curiosity versus following Him with genuine commitment?

Andrew's first action after meeting Jesus was to find his brother Peter and bring him to Christ. What prevents us from having this same immediate urgency to share Jesus with those closest to us?

The sermon emphasizes that 'silence is sin' when we know the gospel but don't share it. How does this challenge your understanding of what constitutes sin in the Christian life?

Jesus said 'come and see' rather than commanding the disciples to follow immediately. What does this gentle invitation teach us about how God draws people to Himself and how we should approach evangelism?

The passage warns about seeking the Lord 'while He may be found,' suggesting there may be a point of no return in rejecting God's call. How should this truth impact the urgency with which we respond to God and share the gospel with others?

Rehoboam 'prepared not his heart to seek the Lord' and therefore did evil. What practical steps can we take daily to prepare our hearts to seek God and avoid spiritual drift?

The four lepers said 'we do not well' when they kept the good news to themselves. In what ways might we be guilty of hoarding spiritual blessings rather than sharing them with a starving world?

Nathanael initially responded with skepticism asking 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?' yet Philip simply said 'come and see.' How can we respond with grace when people we invite to Jesus express doubt or prejudice?

Jesus told Nathanael he would see 'greater things' after one simple revelation convinced him. How does remembering God's past faithfulness in your life encourage you to trust Him for greater things ahead?

The sermon challenges whether we are truly 'following' Jesus or just practicing religion. What is the difference between having a personal relationship with Christ and merely maintaining religious habits?

# Small Group Guide: A Personal Invitation

Based on John 1:35-51

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## Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

**Icebreaker Question:** Share about a time when someone personally invited you to something that changed your life (could be church, an event, a friendship, etc.). How did that invitation make you feel?

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## Key Scripture Review (5 minutes)

Read together: John 1:35-51

**Central Theme:** When we encounter Jesus Christ, the natural response is to personally invite others to come and see Him for themselves.

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## Discussion Questions

### Part 1: The Opportunity - "Come and See" (15 minutes)

1. **What Seek Ye?** (v. 38)
  - When Jesus asked the disciples "What seek ye?", what do you think He was really asking?
  - If Jesus asked you that question today, how would you answer? What are you truly seeking in life?
2. **Seeking the Lord**
  - The sermon mentioned several verses about seeking God (Deuteronomy 4:29, 2 Chronicles 12:14). What's the difference between "doing right" and actively "seeking the Lord"?
  - What does it look like practically to "set your heart and soul to seek the Lord"?
3. **Come and See**
  - Why do you think Jesus' invitation was simply "come and see" rather than a long explanation?
  - How can we adopt this same approach when sharing Christ with others?

### Part 2: The Mission - "He Brought Him to Jesus" (15 minutes)

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4. **Andrew's First Response (v. 41-42)**
  - After spending just part of a day with Jesus, Andrew's first thought was to find his brother Peter. What does this tell us about genuine encounters with Christ?
  - Who was the first person you thought of after you got saved? Did you tell them?
5. **Silence is Sin**
  - The sermon stated that "to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). How does this challenge your view of evangelism?
  - What are some common excuses we make for not sharing the gospel? Which ones resonate with you?
6. **The Lepers' Story (2 Kings 7:9)**
  - Discuss the statement: "We do not well. This day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace."
  - How does this story apply to Christians who have the gospel but don't share it?

### Part 3: The Invitation - "Follow Me" (15 minutes)

7. **Personal Invitations**
  - The pattern in this passage is: hear about Jesus → follow Him → bring others. How have you seen this pattern in your own life or in others?
  - Why are personal, one-on-one invitations often more effective than mass approaches?
8. **Nathanael's Skepticism (v. 46)**
  - Nathanael asked, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Yet Philip simply said, "Come and see."
  - How should we respond when people are skeptical or dismissive about Jesus?
  - What can we learn from Philip's approach?
9. **Follow Me**
  - Jesus' call to "follow me" appears throughout the Gospels. What does it mean to follow Jesus in your daily life?
  - The sermon asked: "What happened to the fire, the zeal, the love?" If you've lost some of that initial passion, what might help reignite it?

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### Key Takeaways

- ✓ **Seeking God is active, not passive** - We must intentionally set our hearts and souls to seek Him daily
- ✓ **Silence is sin** - If we know we should share the gospel but don't, we are sinning against God and failing to love others
- ✓ **Personal invitations matter** - Following Andrew's example, we should personally invite people to "come and see" Jesus

## John – Week 8 – A Personal Invitation – Bible Study Helps

- ✓ **It's not complicated** - We don't need to have all the answers; we simply need to point people to Jesus and let them encounter Him
- ✓ **Following Jesus is ongoing** - Salvation is just the beginning; we must continue to follow Him daily

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## Practical Applications

### Individual Commitments (10 minutes)

Choose 1-2 action steps to commit to this week:

1. **Pray specifically** for 3 people in your life who need Jesus. Write their names down and pray for them daily.
2. **Invite someone** to church, a Bible study, or to coffee to talk about spiritual things. Use the "come and see" approach.
3. **Evaluate your seeking** - Set aside 15-30 minutes daily this week to intentionally seek God through prayer and Bible reading.
4. **Share your testimony** - Tell someone this week about what Jesus has done in your life, even if it's brief.
5. **Confess silence** - If you've been silent about Jesus, confess it to God and ask Him to give you boldness and opportunities.
6. **Study "Follow Me"** - Do a personal word study on all the times Jesus said "follow me" in the Gospels. Journal about what it means for your life.

### Group Commitment

**Challenge:** As a group, plan an event or gathering where each person can invite someone who needs to meet Jesus. It could be a meal, game night, or service project followed by testimonies.

**Date/Plan:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### Closing Reflection (5 minutes)

**Question:** If someone were to ask you today, "Where does Jesus dwell?" (like the disciples asked in v. 38), what would you tell them? How would you invite them to "come and see"?

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### Prayer Time (10 minutes)

## John – Week 8 – A Personal Invitation – Bible Study Helps

- Pray for the specific people each member wants to invite to Christ
- Pray for boldness to overcome excuses and silence
- Pray for fresh passion to follow Jesus wholeheartedly
- Pray for those affected by tragedies (like Tuskegee Valley mentioned in the sermon)
- Pray for each other's personal commitments

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## For Further Study

- Read and discuss the entire Gospel of John over the coming weeks
- Study the other "follow me" passages: Matthew 4:19, Matthew 9:9, Mark 2:14, Luke 5:27, John 21:19
- Research the backgrounds of the disciples and how they responded to Jesus' invitation
- Read and discuss C.S. Lewis's "Mere Christianity" or "The Case for Christ" by Lee Strobel as tools for sharing faith

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## Memory Verse

**John 1:39** - "He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day."

**Challenge:** Memorize this verse and use it as your personal evangelism approach this week.

## 5-Day Devotional:

# A Personal Invitation to Follow Jesus

### Day 1: The Lamb of God

**Reading:** John 1:29-34

**Devotional:** John the Baptist's declaration "Behold the Lamb of God" changed everything for those who heard it. This wasn't just religious language—it was an announcement that God Himself walked among humanity. When you truly grasp that Jesus is the Lamb who takes away your sin, how can you remain unchanged? Today, reflect on the first time you encountered Jesus. Has familiarity dulled the wonder? The Creator of the universe didn't just observe your struggle from heaven—He became the sacrifice for your redemption. Let this truth refresh your soul. When did you last pause to truly behold Him? Set your heart today to see Jesus with fresh eyes, remembering that the Lamb of God gave everything for you.

### Day 2: Come and See

**Reading:** John 1:35-39

**Devotional:** Jesus asked the disciples a penetrating question: "What seek ye?" This question echoes through time to us today. What are you really seeking? Comfort? Success? Approval? Jesus invites honest seekers with two simple words: "Come and see." He doesn't force Himself on anyone, but graciously opens the door. Notice the disciples spent the entire day with Jesus—their first step in following Him wasn't a transaction but a relationship. Are you taking time to truly be with Jesus, or are you just going through religious motions? Christianity isn't about duty; it's about dwelling with the One who loves you. Today, accept His invitation afresh. Clear your schedule, open your Bible, and simply come and see. Spend unhurried time in His presence.

### Day 3: The First Thing

**Reading:** John 1:40-42

**Devotional:** After spending one day with Jesus, Andrew's first impulse was to find his brother Peter. Notice the word "first"—it was his immediate priority. When you encounter Jesus and experience His transforming love, the natural response is to share Him with others. Yet many of us grow silent over time. We make excuses: "They won't listen," "I'm not able," "It's not my responsibility." But James 4:17 reminds us that knowing to do good and not doing it is sin. Andrew didn't wait to become a theologian or perfect disciple. He simply said, "We have found the Messiah," and brought Peter to Jesus. Who in your life needs to meet Him? Your family member? Coworker? Neighbor? Don't hold your peace. This day is a day of good tidings.

## Day 4: Follow Me

**Reading:** Matthew 4:18-22

**Devotional:** "Follow Me"—two words that contain everything. Jesus didn't ask for religious performance, financial pledges, or perfect understanding. He simply invited people into relationship: Follow Me. Peter and Andrew left their nets immediately. Matthew left his tax booth. They had responsibilities, businesses, families—yet they recognized that following Jesus was worth forsaking everything else. Have you taken your life back from Jesus? Many start strong but gradually let other priorities crowd out their devotion. Following Jesus isn't a one-time decision but a daily surrender. He doesn't want part of your life; He wants all of it. Today, examine what you're holding back. What nets do you need to leave? What securities are you clinging to? Jesus promises that those who lose their life for His sake will find it. Will you follow Him afresh today?

## Day 5: Greater Things

**Reading:** John 1:43-51

**Devotional:** Nathanael was skeptical: "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Yet Philip's response mirrors Jesus' invitation: "Come and see." When Nathanael encountered Jesus, one personal word from the Lord transformed his doubt into worship. Jesus then promised, "You will see greater things than these." This is God's pattern—He reveals Himself personally, then leads us into experiences beyond our imagination. Whatever brought you to Jesus initially was just the beginning. He has greater things planned for you than you can conceive. But here's the key: you'll see these greater things as you follow Him and bring others to Him. When you participate in God's mission of redemption, you witness miracles. As you seek Him with your whole heart and soul, He reveals more of Himself. Don't settle for past experiences. Ask God today: What greater things do You have for me?

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### Reflection Questions for the Week:

- Am I seeking the Lord with my whole heart and soul?
- Who has God placed in my life that needs a personal invitation to meet Jesus?
- What excuses keep me from sharing Christ with others?
- Have I taken my life back from Jesus, or am I truly following Him daily?
- What "greater things" might God want to show me as I walk in obedience?