

“And He Brought Him to Jesus”

John 1:35-51

From time to time we hear statistics about how people first came into church membership. These figures trace back to the Institute for American Church Growth, which asked 10,000 people about their pilgrimage. What led them in? Answers were: Special need, 2 percent; Walk-in, 3 percent; Pastor, 6 percent; Visitation, 1 percent; Sunday school, 5 percent; Evangelistic crusade, 5 percent; Program, 3 percent; Friend/relative, 79 percent.

-- Wayne Zunkel

This passage is the first time we see Jesus reaching out to others. He has just been baptized, was coming back from the wilderness temptation, and was pointed to by John the Baptist as the one to whom he was bringing people.

There's a verse in 1 Peter that says we are to follow the steps of Jesus:

1 Peter 2:21

²¹ For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

The first step, as given in the gospels, is that of baptism (Jesus being the example). The second step He gives us to follow is that of bringing others to Him – or, at the very least, telling others of Him.

I. JOHN THE BAPTIST BROUGHT TWO OF HIS DISCIPLES – VS. 35-40

A. These were two of the students

("disciple" – μαθητης – means a learner or a pupil, student) that were being taught by John the Baptist.

B. Vs. 36 – he pointed them to Jesus.

C. Vs. 37 – Once Jesus was pointed to (He had no characteristics that would have made Him stand out in the crowd), He was referenced as the sacrifice for their sins, and because they knew what that meant they started following Him.

John 4:28–29

²⁸ The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

²⁹ **Come, see a man**, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

John 4:39–42

³⁹ And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

⁴¹ And many more believed because of his own word;

⁴² And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

D. Vs. 38 – Upon hearing John preach concerning the Messiah, and having found Him, they wanted to go where He was going in order to learn from Him

(seen in the reference to "Rabbi," or "Master").

John 3:2

² The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

John 12:21

²¹ The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

E. Vs. 39 – If we truly want to follow the Master, and learn from Him, then we have to go where He wants us to go and live like He wants us to live.

Matthew 11:28–30

²⁸ Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

II. ANDREW BROUGHT PETER – VS. 41-42

A. Vs. 41a – The first thing we find Andrew doing when He had chosen to be a disciple of the Master was going out and finding his brother Peter.

B. Vs. 41b – He told Peter about the Lord by telling him that he had found the "Messias" – the "Christ" – the Anointed One – their Redeemer.

Isaiah 61:1

¹ The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

Luke 4:18-21

¹⁸ The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

¹⁹ To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

²⁰ And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

²¹ And he began to say unto them, **This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.**

Acts 10:38

³⁸ How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

C. Vs. 42 – That was enough to inspire Peter to want to know more so Andrew brought Peter to Jesus, where Jesus then received him into the fold.

D. It would appear that although Peter came to know the Lord at this point in his life, he did not begin following the Lord until sometime later when Jesus actually called him to follow Him.

Mark 1:16–20

¹⁶ Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

¹⁷ And Jesus said unto them, **Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.**

¹⁸ And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

¹⁹ And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

²⁰ And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

E. When someone comes to the Lord, He will receive them if they are coming to know Him.

John 6:35–37

³⁵ And Jesus said unto them, **I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.**

³⁶ **But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.**

³⁷ **All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.**

III. JESUS BROUGHT PHILIP – vs. 43-44

A. This illustrates the reference in the introduction that we are to follow "his steps."

B. Vs. 43 – Jesus was on His way back to that part of Israel where He was from, and from where He would do most of His ministry work – Galilee – and, while on His journey, he “findeth Philip” and called him.

C. Vs. 44 – Nothing more is said of this call, nor, really, of Philip’s response, other than that Philip was from the same town as Andrew and Peter. What is indicated from “reading between the lines” is that he was apparently influenced by Andrew and Peter’s conversion and once Jesus said “follow me,” he immediately responded – speaks to the testimony of a changed life as found in Andrew and Peter.

The young salesman was disappointed about losing a big sale, and as he talked with his sales manager he lamented, “I guess it just proves you can lead a horse to water but you can’t make him drink.” The manager replied, “Son, take my advice: your job is not to make him drink. Your job is to make him thirsty.” So it is with evangelism. Our lives should be so filled with Christ that they create a thirst for the Gospel.

IV. PHILIP BROUGHT NATHANIEL – VS. 45-51

A. The first phrase in verse 45 shows that the first thing Philip did was find someone else to introduce to Jesus.

B. Vs. 46 – Nathaniel became a bit skeptical of the message of the Messiah at first. He apparently knew the Old Testament

for he referenced it in this verse in relation to from where the Messiah would come.

C. Vs. 47 – Once he reached Jesus, Jesus referred to him being an Israelite – showing that he was someone who would have known the Scriptures – and that he was a man of “no guile” – he wasn’t saying he could be saved because he was a good man, but that he was not being ignorant or antagonistic when he asked about Jesus being from Nazareth.

D. Vs. 48-49 – Then, an interesting conversation followed – once Jesus spoke to Nathaniel, and told him he had already seen him, Nathaniel immediately recognized that Jesus was, in fact, the Messiah, the Son of God. This was the work of the Holy Spirit.

E. Vs. 50-51 – Jesus then tells him, as well as the others that were there – at least Philip – that there were many more miracles to come.

Conclusion: Who have we brought to Jesus?

You lived next door to me for years

We shared our dreams, our joys, and tears.

A friend to me you were indeed...

A friend who helped me when in need.

*My faith in you was strong and sure
We had such trust as should endure.
No spats between us ever rose;
Our friends were like...and so our foes.
What sadness then, my friend, to find
That after all you weren't so kind.
The day my life on earth did end
I found you weren't a faithful friend.
For all those years we spent on earth
You never talked of second birth.
You never spoke of my lost soul
And of the Messiah Who'd make me whole.
I plead today from Hell's cruel fire
And tell you now my last desire.
You cannot do a thing for me...
No words today my bonds will free.
But do not err, my friend, again;
Do all you can for souls of men.
Plead with them now quite earnestly,
Lest they be cast in Hell with me.*