

John is the fourth gospel. Significantly different than the other three (Matthew, Mark and Luke – often called the Synoptic Gospels), it is believed to have been written last, with the author having a copy of the other gospels present during its composition. It tells the story of Jesus – the same story – with a different deroulement, in which the life of Jesus doesn't climax in a final trip to Jerusalem. It also uses language and terms that reflect greater poetic integration and theological reflection.

This story of the call of the first disciples is different than the story told in the other gospels, even though at least two of the same characters (Peter and Andrew) are in both versions. Why? Read the story in Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20, and Luke 5:1-11.

The story of discipleship, vocation, of faith as a journey is reinforced through several literary elements, in particular the repetition of the temporal phrase "**THE NEXT DAY**", which underlines the idea of a daily progression, and movement.

looked /watched: the Greek word here means to fix one's gaze on someone, thus to look with penetrating insight. It's used here in v.36 and in v.42.

the Lamb of God: This is the second use of this title in John, echoing John's identification of Jesus in John 1:29 "the next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, 'Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'" It brings to mind the story of God providing the lamb for the sacrifice for Abraham in Genesis 22, as well as the lamb of passover whose blood is used to mark the doorposts at the time of the Exodus. It's used in particular in John's gospel.

follow: the word in Greek means more than simply physically following someone, it is the metaphor used for commitment to a master, a relationship between student and teacher, a life of discipleship.

What are you looking for?: These are the first words spoken by Jesus in the gospel of John. They express the basic need of humanity that causes him/her to come to God. Humanity wishes to stay (the same word *meinen* in Greek for remain, dwell, abide" used in verse 39 "remain") with God. Humanity is constantly seeking to escape our temporality, change and death, seeking to find something that is lasting. To that hunger, Jesus responds with the all embracing challenge to faith "**COME AND SEE**". Throughout John, the theme of "coming" to Jesus is used to portray discipleship (John 3:21; 5:40; 6:35, 37, 45; 8:37). Similarly John uses the metaphor of "**SEE**" as another description of faith in Jesus.

Rabbi: the word in Hebrew is a title meaning "teacher" or "master" as in one that disciples follow. Among the four gospels, John uses this title for Jesus the most in his telling of the story.

four o'clock in the afternoon: Some scholars understand this to indicate that this all happened as the sabbath began (at sunset on Friday), which would mean that these first disciples would have had to remain with Jesus through the sabbath end, Saturday at sunset.

SCRIPTURES FOR

SUNDAY 1.7.2018

John 1:35-51

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

³⁵ **THE NEXT DAY** John again was standing with two of *his disciples*, ³⁶ and as he **watched** Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is **the Lamb of God!**" ³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they **followed** Jesus. ³⁸ When Jesus turned and **saw** them **following**, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "**Rabbi**" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "**COME AND SEE.**" They came and **SAW** where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and **followed** him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his brother *Simon* and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated **ANOINTED**). ⁴² He brought Simon to Jesus, who **looked** at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called *Cephas*" (which is translated *Peter*).

⁴³ **THE NEXT DAY** Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "**Follow me.**" ⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." ⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of **Nazareth?**" Philip said to him, "**COME AND SEE.**" ⁴⁷ When Jesus **saw** Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" ⁴⁸ Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I **saw** you under the fig tree before Philip called you." ⁴⁹ Nathanael replied, "**Rabbi**, you are **the Son of God!** You are **the King of Israel!**" ⁵⁰ Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I **saw** you under the fig tree? You will **see** greater things than these." ⁵¹ And he said to him,

Messiah: This was long held to be the title of the One that God would rise up as the key to the salvation, deliverance, liberation of the people of Israel from their foreign oppression. It's a Hebrew word מָשִׁיחַ [mashiach], meaning "anointed one" ...as in when a royal is ordained or anointed; it was translated into Greek with the word Χριστός [christos] from which we get the word "Christ." It's a title that is religious, military and political.

ANOINTED: the Greek word used here is Christ – which is the translation of Messiah into Greek, the "anointed" one.

"Very truly, I tell you, you will ~~see~~ heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon *the Son of Man.*"

Questions for the practice of Examen & Contemplation

- What shimmers for you in these passages?
- What word, phrase or image touches your life today?
- How does this story about discipleship touch your own story of following Jesus?