

Gospel of John Chapter 1, Verses 18-51 – John Karmelich

- I. As we have said earlier, the focus of the Gospel of John is “Who is Jesus”
 - A. This lesson presents 4 witnesses who testify of Jesus
 - B. There are 4 people who testify of who Jesus is in this lesson
 - 1. John the Baptist says Jesus is eternal,
 - a) He is the man uniquely anointed with the Holy Spirit
 - b) The Lamb of God
 - c) The unique son of God
 - 2. Next we have Andrew:
 - a) Andrew states that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ
 - 3. Next we have Phillip
 - a) Phillip states Jesus is the One prophesied in the Old Testament
 - 4. And Last we have Nathaniel:
 - a) Nathaniel states that Jesus is the Son of God, King of Israel
- II. The real application for us in this lesson is all about **ministry**.
 - A. What is the Christian Ministry?
 - 1. The best definition I found is two-fold
 - a) Ministry is talking to people about God
 - b) and Ministry is talking to God about people
 - 2. Jesus teaches all of us to Love one another
 - a) in practical terms, that means putting other people’s interest in front of our own
 - b) Ministry involves helping to build up and mature the Body of Christ
 - c) It’s not just evangelism
 - d) Its helping others to grow as a Christian
 - (1) That can range in activities to comforting people with needs
 - (2) To giving good Godly advice to those who ask for it
 - (3) Again, it’s talking to people about God
 - (a) and talking to God about people
 - B. Tonight we see 4 people who are called into the ministry
 - 1. These 4 people are examples for us
 - a) They are examples of how to minister to others
 - b) as well as recruit others into the ministry
- III. Let’s start with the first 3 verses about John the Baptist...
 - 1. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name [was] John.
 - 2. 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.
 - 3. 8 He was not that Light, but [was sent] to bear witness of that Light.
- B. Like John, we are called to bear witness of the light.
 - 1. We are not called to be attorney’s
 - 2. We are not called to debate people
 - 3. 1 Peter 3:15 says we are to given an answer when confronted
 - a) But that is not what God calls us to do

4. God calls us to be a witness
 - a) That doesn't mean we have to wear animal fur , eat locust and call people Broods of Vipers!
 - (1) For those who don't know,
 - (2) These are references to John the Baptist found in the other Gospels
 - b) It does mean we are to live our lives as Witnesses for Jesus
 - (1) "Walk the walk and "talk the talk"

C. let's look a little more at John the Baptist...

IV. Verse 19: Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" 20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

A. Notice who John focuses his witness on..

1. John **could** have said:

- a) I am a priest and prophet
- b) I am the Miraculous born son of Elizabeth and Zacheius
- c) I am called and Chosen by God to preach..

2. But No! His focus is not on himself, but on Christ!

B. To me one of the key verses for us is to remember the words "I am not the Christ"

1. To quote a line from a priest in an old movie I liked.

- a) There are only two things I know for sure... There is a God, and I am not him!
- b) The constant mistake we make in life is we try to fix things our self
 - (1) When we try to do things ourselves and not invoke God's help...
 - (2) The constant battle of ...I need God's help in this part of my life
 - (a) But I can handle the rest...
 - (3) We need to remind ourselves of the line... I am not the Christ" fairly often!

C. John went on to say that he was neither Elijah?" nor *quote* "the Prophet?" *unquote*

1. First of all, what is the big deal about Elijah?

- a) In the last book of the Old Testament, the Book of Malachi,
- b) There is a quote that the Prophet Elijah will come
 - (1) "before the great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Malachi 4:5)
 - (2) My question is... "Has the dreadful day of the Lord already happened?
 - (a) I say, no as that is what the Book of Revelation is all about
- c) Jesus has stated that John did come in the Spirit of Elijah (to those who would believe)

2. There is also this "prophet"

- a) This is a quote from Deuteronomy 18:15
 - (1) God promised to send a "prophet" like Moses again...

3. In the Book of Revelation, Chapter 11..there are 2 witness that go forth in Jerusalem
 - a) Prior to God's judgement being poured out...
 - b) Although these profits are not named by name..
 - c) Most commentators speculate they will be Elijah and Moses (or someone like Moses)
 - (1) The proof in Revelation 11
 - (a) The prophets have the power to shut heaven so that no rain will fall
 - (i) (Revelation 11:5)
 - (ii) This is a power only given to Elijah in the Old Testament
 - (b) The prophets also have the power to turn the waters into blood
 - (i) This is a power that was only given to Moses...
4. Anyway, all this is for the reference as to why the religious leaders asked John these questions
 - a) For those who needed to know!
 - b) back to the text...

V. Verse 22 Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" 23 He said: "I [am] 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the LORD," ' as the prophet Isaiah said."

A. First of all, why did John go way out in the Wilderness to preach

1. Why didn't he preach from the steps of the Temple?
 - a) Mainly because that is what John was called to do by God!
 - (1) John studied Isaiah... and the passage from Isaiah 40:3
 - (a) This was where God called John to be...
 - b) The application for us is obvious...
 - (1) God does not always call us to witness in the best of locations
 - (2) Sometimes God calls us to (pardon-the-pun) God forsaken places
 - (3) to be a witness for Him!
2. You may think, Why did God put me here?
 - (1) Or why is God allowing me to go through this trial
3. It may be that God wants you to minister to someone
 - a) Or be a witness to someone..
4. Let's face it... being in the Hot desert, wearing a camel' hair coat & eating locusts
 - a) doesn't sound like a comfy position
5. But John had a purpose
 - a) John knew He was called by God
 - b) John's parents knew from birth he was raised with a special purpose
 - (1) (Read Luke chapter 2 if you don't know the story!)
 - (2) And John will receive a prophet's reward...
 - (3) because John was loyal to what God called him to do
 - (4) And that's the lesson for us
 - (5) To be loyal servants... to whatever ministry God calls for us!

- VI. Next, Verse 29.... The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
- A. "The Lamb of God" was probably a strange title..
1. The local residents were probably not familiar with the title..
 2. Remember that John studied Isaiah,
 - a) Isaiah 53:7 said of the Messiah: He was lead like a lamb to the slaughter...
 3. The Lamb of God is a symbol of God's sacrifice of our sins
 - a) It's hard to imagine a more innocent animal than a Lamb
 - b) The Lamb is symbolic of the Innocent..
 - (1) It is the innocent paying for the Guilty...
 - (2) The Lamb of God paying the price for our guilt..
- B. In Genesis Abel brought a lamb for sacrifice
1. This is a Lamb for an Individual
- C. In Exodus, Each household killed a sacrificial Lamb for the Passover
1. This is Lamb for the Family
- D. In Leviticus there was a Sacrificial Lambs to atone for your sins
1. This is the Sins of the Nation
- E. And then in Isaiah, there is the Lamb of God
1. This is for the Sins of the World!
- VII. Next set of verses...
1. 30 "This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'
 2. 31 "I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."
 3. 32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.
 4. 33 "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'
 5. 34 "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."
- B. First of all Why was Jesus himself baptized
1. Not that Jesus needed cleansing from sin
 2. But in order that He might identify himself with sinners!
 - a) Remember from last week, that God had to become Man to relate to us
 - b) So that through Him, we might know the way to Salvation
- C. In any of the Gospels, there is very little record of Jesus prior to the Spirit descending upon him... Why?
1. Because Jesus ministry began when the Holy Spirit descends upon Him
 2. Just as our ministry begins when the Holy Spirit descends upon us
 3. When we become born-again, this isn't the end, its the beginning
 - a) It's like when you get married...
 - (1) It's not, I'm married, that's it, I can relax now..
 - (a) No!.. The work is just beginning
 - (b) A good marriage takes hard work
 - (i) But the rewards are worth the work!
 - (2) This is why Paul compares our relationship with God to a good marriage
 - (a) Same principal

4. When we acknowledge Jesus as our Savior, we receive the Holy Spirit..
 - a) Then our ministry begins
 - b) Remember that our theme tonight is about Ministry!

VIII. Verse 37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

1. 38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"
 2. Verse 39 He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).
- B. There were two witness named.. One was Andrew and the other was un-named...
1. Most commentators agree that the "other" disciple was the Gospel-writer John
 2. Only John himself could remember this many details...
 3. In Verse 39... John says it was about the tenth hour (probably 4pm)
 - (1) To John.. He remembers the details so vividly, he even remembers the hour!
- C. Notice Jesus 1st words... What do you seek
- a) or What are you looking for
 - b) Jesus is calling His people toward him
 - (1) We seek Jesus, because He first seeks us
 - (2) In Verse 43... God seeks Phillip
 - (3) In Verse 45 Phillip tells his brother "We have found Jesus"
 - (a) We do that too
 - (b) We tend to say "I have found God"
 - (i) When the truth is... that God first found us!
 - (ii) The glory of our salvation, belongs to God, not us...
 - (iii) The key to remember, is God loved us first, and called us to be his disciples!

IX. Verse 40 One of the two who heard John [speak,] and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

1. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ).
 2. 42 And he brought him to Jesus.
- B. Let's talk a little about Andrew
1. Notice Andrew did **not** say
 - a) I found Jesus, and I'm keeping him to myself
 - b) I'm tired of being known as Peter's brother!
 - c) This one is mine!
 2. No... Andrew was a witness
 - a) Andrew introduced Peter to Jesus
 - (1) Peter brought 3,000 to the Lord in Acts 2:41
 - b) Andrew brought a little boy with some food to Jesus
 - (1) Jesus used that little boy's food to feed 5,000 (john 6:8-9)
 - c) A contingency of Greeks said to Andrew "Sir we would to see Jesus (John 12:20)
 - d) Never, ever, underestimate the power of being used by God
 - (1) We may think God is using us in a simple manner
 - (2) But God can use that simple manner in a great and powerful way!

- X. Verse 42: And he (Andrew) brought him (Peter) to Jesus.
1. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah.
 2. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).
- B. We can all relate to Peter...
1. The name Simon in Hebrew means reckless
 - a) That was a good description of Simon Peter
 - b) The guy had boldness
 - c) Peter was the kind of guy who had the "shoot first, ask questions later personality"
 2. Jesus is making a bold prediction about Peter
 - a) Although your name Simon means "reckless",
 - b) I am changing your name to Peter, which means "Rock"
 - c) I'm changing you from reckless to a rock of stability...
 3. One of the great studies sometime is to compare Peter's speeches in the Gospels
 - a) To Peter's speeches in Acts and the Letters of Peter
 - b) You can see the transformation in his personality after Peter received the Holy Spirit
 - c) That is what God is doing to you and I
 - (1) He is changing us,
 - (2) moment by moment,
 - (3) from unstable to stable
 - (4) Jesus made a statement about Peter's life that applies to our lives as well
 - (5) Put our trust in Jesus
 - (6) And as his ministers, He will transform our lives!
- XI. Next we have Phillip
1. 43 The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."
 2. 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.
 3. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote -- Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."
- B. Phillip is one of those guys called directly by God
1. Some people have dramatic conversions
 2. And they are used in equally a dramatic way by God
 3. Phillip did not waste time keeping the Good News of Jesus to himself
 - a) But like Andrew, he was called by God for a purpose
 - b) And immediately worked to lead others to Christ

XII. Last set of verses deal with Nathanael

1. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote -- Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."
 2. 46 And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."
 3. 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"
 4. 48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."
 5. 49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"
 6. 50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these."
 7. 51 And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."
- B. We get the impression Nathanael was the kind of guy who knew his Old Testament...
1. God calls some people with no background in the Scriptures
 2. And God calls others with great Bible Background, (like Paul for example)
 - a) Nathanael knew that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)
 - (1) So he questions whether or not anything good can come out of Nazareth..
 3. Notice that Jesus doesn't return the insult of where-Jesus-is-from with another insult
 - a) Jesus' first words to Nathanael was a compliment..
 - (1) "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"
 4. Next we have the reference to the fig tree
 - a) There are all sorts of speculations as to what the Fig tree means...
 - (1) The truth is nobody knows for certain..
 - (2) The best-guess is that it is a reference to Israel
 - (a) To a religious Jew, the Fig Tree represents Israel in the Old Testament
 - (b) To study under a fig tree had literal and figurative interpretations as a place to study
 5. But whatever it was... It was enough to convince Nathanael that Jesus was the Messiah..
- C. And Jesus promised Nathanael "You will see greater things than these."
1. This is also a promise to us...
 2. Again, being born-again is just the beginning of our relationship
 3. God rewards our ministry by our growth and maturity in Him
 - a) Like Nathanael We will see greater things than these...
- D. The last verse has a reference saying "the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

1. Remember that Nathanael was a student of the Old Testament..
 - a) Jesus uses that knowledge to tell Nathanael who he is..
 - b) This is a reference to a dream Jacob had in Genesis 28:12
 - c) Jesus is saying that He is the ladder
 - (1) Jesus is the connection between God and Man
 - (2) Angels are the messengers between God & Man
 - (3) And Jesus is the Way to God

XIII. In Summary, this is about Ministry

- A. It is examples of who, and more importantly **how** God calls people into ministry

XIV. We see four different ways people came to Christ in this Chapter

- A. Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist
 1. Andrew came to Christ because of the preaching of John the Baptist
- B. Peter came because of the witness of his brother Andrew
- C. Phillip came as a direct call of Christ
- D. Nathaniel came as he overcame personal prejudices by a personal encounter with Christ

XV. With that let's close in prayer

- A. Pray for the us to discover and fulfill the ministry that God calls each of us to!

This week's Text...

Gospel of John (NKJV)

1:18 No one has seen God at any time.

The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared [Him.]

19 Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

21 And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."

22 Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

23 He said: "I [am] 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Make straight the way of the LORD,' 'as the prophet Isaiah said."

24 Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

26 John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know.

27 "It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

30 "This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'

31 "I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.

33 "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

34 "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.

36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"

39 He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

40 One of the two who heard John [speak,] and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ).

42 And he brought him to Jesus.

Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah.

You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).

43 The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and 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 of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote -- Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

46 And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"

48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these."

51 And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."