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## Expect Results

### John 1:35-49

**Intro:** In our last 2 studies we looked at 2 very important principles for **effective witnessing**. Both were illustrated by the witness of John the Baptist of Jesus during the opening days of Christ's earthly ministry. The **1<sup>st</sup>** principle was that **John did *not* bear witness of himself**. He confessed that **he was *not* the Light**. The **2<sup>nd</sup>** principle was that **he *did* bear witness o the Light**. That Light was Jesus and John bore witness of Him **verbally**. These 2 now bring us to a **3<sup>rd</sup> great principle**: John bore witness of Jesus **verbally** for the singular purpose of **leading others to believe in Jesus *personally***. Thus, while he was witnessing, John had both the present life and eternal destiny of his listeners in view. When we witness, we must remember that we are not just offering a person eternal life in heaven after they die but the forgiveness of sin, peace with God and entrance into His family and His care in this life right now.

This **3<sup>rd</sup>** principle of effective witnessing is clearly illustrated in today's text. Here is the account of the conversions of **those who actually *did* believe** as a direct result of John's witness. We see Andrew and an unnamed disciple (**probably John**) decide to follow Jesus based on the witness of John the Baptist; then, thru their witness and that of Philip, both Peter and Nathaniel come to accept Jesus as the Messiah of Israel. The story of these conversions occupies the next three days of the first week of Christ's ministry but **the point** of the text is clear: **if we faithfully follow the first 2 principles then we should expect results!** These results may not be exactly what we anticipate nor will they always appear in the time frame we might imagine but those things aren't for us to decide anyway. The truth of the matter is: if we **1) put the needs of the lost before our own** and if we **2) faithfully declare the reality of Christ** in our lives both by living it and speaking it, we should expect positive decisions for Christ to inevitably result from it.

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**35-37- next day** – this is now the 3<sup>rd</sup> day in sequence of the 1<sup>st</sup> week of Christ's earthly ministry. The 1<sup>st</sup> day began in **vs19**; the 2<sup>nd</sup> day in **vs29**; so this would be the day *after* John 1<sup>st</sup> bore witness of Jesus as being the Lamb of God. This week will culminate at the wedding in Cana of Galilee

and since Jewish weddings traditionally were on Wednesday, that would make this 3<sup>rd</sup> day a Sabbath day. But it wasn't a day of rest for either John the Baptist or Jesus because John was preaching and Jesus was gathering disciples.

As John was standing with 2 of his disciples near the place where they'd been baptizing, *Jesus walked by*. They happened to be **in the right place at the right time!** A lot of church-goers hold to the unfortunate belief that God awards a divine version of brownie points for their regular attendance. Of course, this is **not** true. Knowing this, some may question: "**So what's the benefit in going? Why put yourself thru all that for no good reason?**" Well, there is a good reason for church attendance: because that's where Jesus is most likely to pass by. This reality is equally beneficial to the saved as well as the unsaved. Church isn't the only place Jesus is found; it's just the most likely.

**Lamb** – Just like the previous day, John again testifies that Jesus was the Lamb of God. But this time, he spoke for the benefit of his 2 disciples, directing them to Jesus. Upon hearing John's testimony of Jesus, the 2 immediately set off after Jesus. The word "**follow**" doesn't mean they just tagged along after Jesus; it literally means they became His followers = they switched allegiances! These 2 committed followers of John dropped him like a hot potato and took off after Jesus. Why? Most likely, they understood John was pointing out Jesus to them as the Coming One he had been preaching about. It's no wonder they were so eager to find out more about Him. But don't feel sorry for John: he was happy when people left him to follow Jesus because his whole ministry focused on Jesus. That's the point of all witnessing – getting people to switch allegiances by sharing the truth of God's solution to their desperate situation.

**38-39- What?** – Jesus wasn't asking for information, He was merely giving them a chance to state what was on their minds. In fact, He was forcing them to define the purposes of their hearts. There are many reasons why a person wants to follow Jesus, many of them are good but some of them are not. Were these 2 looking for a revolutionary leader to overthrow Roman? If so, they'd be better off joining the Zealots! What ever reason people have for coming to Jesus, if it doesn't involve complete repentance and full submission to His Lordship, they're wasting their time.

These 2 guys really just wanted to get to know Jesus better but simply stating that might've seemed presumptuous so they just asked where He was staying. Jesus' response was simple: "**Come and see**" He was inviting them to *spend the day* with Him. A short conversation with Jesus right there on the road would've been good but to be invited to spend the day with Him and enjoy a more private conversation would be better! Jesus' invitation was more than they dared hope for and the offer to "**Come and see**" is still extended to all those who want to get to know Him better.

What Jesus said to them during their visit is not recorded. No doubt He told them about His mission, revealed their own hearts to them and answered their questions. Whatever was said was enough to convince them that John the Baptist was **not** mistaken: this **was** the Coming One, the expected Messiah of Israel! Such wonderful news could not be kept to themselves, their friends and loved ones must also share in it with them!

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**40-42a- Andrew** – Note: Andrew's 1<sup>st</sup> act after making Jesus' acquaintance is to bring his brother Simon to Jesus to do the same thing. That seems to be his ministry because whenever Andrew is mentioned in this book, he is bringing someone to Jesus: his brother, the boy with the happy meal (6:8), the Greeks who wanted to see Jesus (12:20). We have no recorded sermons from Andrew but his testimony as a personal soul winner is a great sermon to all of us. But, the significance of this 1<sup>st</sup> example of normal human witnessing is that it was a witness that began **at home**. Why is this important? It's through the home that the great majority of people come to faith in Jesus Christ. **What about evangelist and missionaries?** They have an important place in the body but the truth is, they only win a small portion of those who come to Christ. When a missionary wins a person to Christ, the 1<sup>st</sup> thing that new convert does is go to everyone that's close to them and share the good news they've just received. But there is 1 requirement that must be met before home evangelism can be effective: **there must be a noticeable change in our manner of life!**

The evidence of this is our willingness to take 2<sup>nd</sup> place in order that the ones we're witnessing to might see Jesus.

Sharing tracts on the street or in the Dr.'s office is witnessing but it's witnessing that hardly costs us anything; it's not that difficult. But, if you're going to witness effectively to your brother, there **must** be a **change in your life**. See, unlike the guy on the street – **your brother knows you**. He knows

whether the thing you are professing has affected you personally. He can tell if you're still lazy and like to shirk your familial responsibilities. He knows if you're truly concerned about your family members or if you're still focused on defending your own interests. Basically, he knows whether the faith you profess is real or ineffectual. He knows whether Christ occupies the highest point in your life or whether you still do. See, a faith that doesn't **change** you won't **save** you and it won't save your family either.

Andrew appears 3 times in John's gospel and in each case; he puts himself 2<sup>nd</sup> in order to introduce others to the Savior. This same truth is born out again in Jesus' declaration to Simon Peter.

**42b** – Simon's conversation with Jesus gave him a new name but, more importantly, it gave him a new life. Note what Jesus said to him – "**You are...You shall be...**" This is a great encouragement to everyone who trusts in Jesus as Savior. As we'll see, it took a great deal of work for Jesus to transform **weak, self-centered** Simon into a rock, but He did it! Jesus will do the same thing for you and I. Yes, it's true that Jesus will accept you as you are but it is equally true that He will **not** leave you as you are. His will and goal is to transform you into the person you were created and saved to be. Truly, as **vs12** declares – He gives us the **power**, the **authority** or "**the right to become...**" Neither Simon nor Andrew could fathom what Simon would become, but Jesus could and He made it come to pass.

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**43- Philip** – How many people did they meet on the road to Galilee? Yet, when Jesus found Philip, He simply said, "**Follow Me.**" Now, we should recognize that there was a note of divine authority in this command, but it's the same authority that's in every command of Jesus. Why did Philip respond? His heart was already prepared to respond. We don't know what kind of preparation Philip experience but God usually prepares a person before He calls them. This doesn't imply Philip had no say in this – he still had to choose to respond to both the preparation and the call. While we don't know what happened in Philip's heart, we do know he proved his faith by sharing it with his friend Nathaniel.

**44-46- found** – This is how the number of Christ's followers has continued to increase even to this day. Someone who accepts the gospel goes out and finds another person and shares the good news with them. Now, in the witness of Philip we have the first opposition to the gospel. Philip tells

Nathaniel that he's discovered the One that Moses and the prophets had written about – it just so happens to be Jesus of Nazareth! Nathaniel is incredulous: “**Can anything good come out of Nazareth!**” Apparently Nazareth didn't have a very good reputation in Israel but that's beside the point. The point is, no matter what you say – people are predisposed to be opposed to the truth of the gospel. The gospel forces people to confront their own sin, their own failings, their own inability to earn salvation & God's love! So, it's only natural for the lost to be resistant to the gospel – it's not logical or rational but it is natural because of sin.

What was Philip's response to this opposition? Did he blast Nathaniel with well formulated arguments on why Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah? Did he castigate him for being so obviously bigoted against the lowly little hamlet of Nazareth? Did he try to persuade him with emotional stories of how others have been saved from the miry clay by Christ? No, he didn't do any of these things. In the face of opposition, Philip merely invited Nathaniel to “**Come and see**” for himself. “**Don't take my word for it; hear what Jesus says about Himself!**” Where did Philip learn to do this? From Jesus (39)! Philip is merely emulating Jesus' approach, even using the identical words in addressing Nathaniel.

**47-49- King** – Nathaniel might not have been convinced by Philip's presentation but he was convinced by Jesus' own words. This is an important lesson for anyone who witnesses of Jesus to the lost. We must **be willing to let Jesus win them thru us and not depend on our own clever techniques or arguments**. You'll never argue or debate anyone into salvation. You may not have the capacity to convince someone they need salvation – that's okay because it's not our job to convince them, it's just our job to tell them. When we witness, we must learn to let Jesus speak for Himself thru His Word. When we express genuine faith in His Word, relating our own experiences with Jesus and are not ashamed to invite others to come to Him – there will be positive results and we should expect to see them.

Whatever doubts Nathaniel may have had vanished instantaneously. He acclaims Jesus as Messiah using 2 specific messianic titles: **Son of God** (Ps 2) and **King of Israel**. Both indicate that Nathaniel was now a believer and a follower.

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The primary lesson of our text today is that the witness of John the Baptist was immediately picked up by those who believed as the result of his testimony. Then Andrew and Philip and eventually John, Peter and Nathanael became the **next witnesses**. What's more, they followed the same pattern of witnessing that John the Baptist had followed. That is, **(1)** they did not attract attention to themselves, **(2)** they bore a verbal witness to Jesus, and **(3)** they did so in order that those to whom they were speaking might believe in him also.

**Come and see** is the **great invitation** of **God's grace** – **Taste and see that the Lord is good** (**Ps 34:8**). 😊