

John 1:35–51 - What are you seeking?

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Calvary Chapel Ontario

We're in John chapter 1. This is our fourth installment in this chapter, so we're picking up the text in verse 35, and we're going to read through the end of the chapter. All right. Verse 35 through the end, goes like this:

35The next day again, John was standing with two of his disciples, 36 and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" 37The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. 38 Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" 39 He said to them, "Come and you will see." So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. 40 One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah (which means Christ). 42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas" (which means 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 of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. 46 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 to him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit! 48 Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." 49 Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!". 50 Jesus answered 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, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Let's pray. Father, as we get into the Word today, as always, we come to You and we ask for You to open our hearts. We ask, Lord, for the ministry of Your Holy Spirit, to bring life and wisdom and truth and understanding to our hearts. Jesus, we are utterly dependent upon You to illuminate our hearts, so we ask

You to do that today, and we praise You that You long to bring wisdom and grace to us. We ask all these things in Jesus' name, amen.

As we get into this last section of John chapter 1, you'll notice that the focus begins to shift now. It's been really centered around John the Baptist quite largely up to this point, but now we're moving away from that. We're transitioning away and into the ministry of Jesus, and it begins in verse 35 by John telling us, John said again for the second time, as Jesus passed by "*Behold, the Lamb of God!*" And we talked about in our last study of John, the significance of that statement, "*Behold, the Lamb of God...*" and so forth. Because, and we talked about how the whole idea of the sacrificial lamb was something that was very common to Jews at that time, and that was not a difficult concept for them to lay hold of at all. But essentially, we kind of forget what it all means.

The sacrificial lamb only did one thing ever, it died. That's all the sacrificial lamb was for, was to sacrifice, to be sacrificed. And so essentially, when John the Baptist is saying, and now for the second time as he sees Jesus, "*Behold, the Lamb of God!*" he's saying, behold Him who will die! He will be sacrificed for us.

It's kind of interesting, isn't it? I mean, we hear that phrase, "*Behold the Lamb of God!*" and it sounds, "ooh, that is so cool." But it means He's going to die. And this is something that Jesus announced Himself. Let me show you on the screen from Matthew chapter 20. Jesus Himself said:

Matthew 20:28 (ESV)

"...the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

That was it, guys. That was it. I mean, you know, we love all the other things that go along with Jesus coming. We love the fact that He went around healing everybody He saw that was sick. That's pretty cool. I like reading about that stuff. It's also kind of exciting to read about all the people that He set free from demonic activity, possession and that sort of thing. How the demons would just freak out as soon as Jesus came onto the scene, it's pretty cool.

And I love the teaching ministry of Jesus, it's one of the reasons I love the gospel of Matthew so much. Because there's more teaching there that is recorded by Jesus. But you know what, as cool as all those things are, those were not the primary reason He came. Those were not the primary reasons that

He came. He came to die for you and for me, and to bear our sin on the cross. That's why He came.

It's one of the reasons why every Christmas, you know, when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we always connect the manger with the cross. Because it doesn't make sense - it's just a, it's just a happy story otherwise. Kind of like the way all the Hallmark movies kind of characterize it, you know. They all, the ones that have a theme around Christmas, they all have to say, "well, that's what Christmas is all about." And it's never about Jesus, as far as they're concerned. It's never about the cross. But that is what Christmas is all about. It's about the cross. Jesus was born so he could die for us on the cross. Gives it kind of a whole new slant, doesn't it, you know? When you think about that in relation to John repeating this idea, "*Behold the Lamb of God!*"

Now we're told at this time that in verse 37, that two of John's disciples heard ("*37 The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus...*") what John had said about Jesus. And were told in that verse that they began to follow Jesus, and I love the next verse:

"38 Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?"

And this is a great question, and it's interesting that this is the very first recorded statement of Jesus by John - a particular penetrating question, and that is, "*What are you seeking?*" I think that that's a question, arguably, the most important question that Jesus could have asked them, and still asks us a question that we all need to grapple with at some point in our lives, "*What are you seeking?*"

What are you looking for? What are you living for? What gets you out of bed in the morning? What are you searching for? What do you want - more than anything else? Yeah, that's a good question. I don't think it can be really overstated in terms of, you know, its importance. Because what we seek in this life ultimately becomes our focus. And our focus, if it becomes consumed by worldly passions, worldly desires, and so forth, can create a whole boatload of heartache, if we're not careful. And this is one of those things we have to be very careful about.

We, and I don't care how long you've walked with the Lord, you have to always be vigilant about this issue of "why am I doing," (what am I) what I'm doing. What do I want? What am I trying to get out of this? What am I seeking, you know? You can't ever stop asking those questions.

And when I say we need to be vigilant about it, what I'm saying is we need to have the guts to pray the same prayer that David prayed related to this, where he literally invited the Lord to investigate his inner desires, and passions, and searchings. Let me show you this, from Psalm 139, up on the screen:

Psalm 139:23-24 (ESV)

Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

"Search me" (he just says) "*Search me, (O God...*". I mean this was the invitation. Go ahead, just turn the search light of your presence on in my heart. And he said, "*Try me, (and that means test me,) and know my thoughts! see if there be any grievous way in me, and (then Lord,) lead me in the way (that is) everlasting!*"

Because the whole idea here is that he says, "I know that these other things that I might otherwise seek after, those aren't everlasting things - those are very temporal things." And see, that's what happens. Our lives become consumed with temporal longings. They really have no eternal value at all. They're just temporal. And so he says, "I want you to look into my heart and I want you to see what's really going on there." Do you see how courageous that is to pray that prayer? I mean, that takes guts. Because most of us wouldn't pray that prayer because we're pretty sure He'd find something grievous there, and we would just as soon He not bring it to light. Thank you very much, you know. So that a courageous one.

Reading on middle of verse 38 here, after Jesus asked the question, (what are you seek) or "*What are you seeking?*" they said to him, "*Rabbi, where are you staying?*" Now that's an interesting thing. What would you think if somebody said that to you? I mean, it's one thing if somebody walks up to you and says, "Hey, can I have a few minutes of your time?" You know that they want to talk to you and have a chat. But what if somebody comes up to you and goes, "Where do you live?"

It's like, "Why?"

Well, what this means, the whole idea behind "*where are you staying?*" is we want to spend time with you. We want to spend time and get to know you. We want to know what's going on, and why John keeps saying this, whenever You walk by, "*Behold the lamb of God!*" We want to know more.

And Jesus accommodates them. Notice in verse 39, He says, "*Come and you will see. (And) So they came (we read here) and (they) saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for, it was about the tenth hour.*"

And that would be about four o'clock in the afternoon because the Jews reckoned time according - well, a new day began at 6 AM and so they began to count hours from there. The first hour would be 7 AM, so the 10th hour would be 4 PM, so it was already getting lateish in the day, and so "*they stayed with him.*"

And then it goes on to say in verse 40, that, "*40 One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew. (who is) Simon Peter's brother.*"

All right. And we all know who Simon is, of course, because he's talked a lot about in the Bible. But Andrew, who doesn't get as much ink as his brother, is this first, one of the first ones to come in to follow Jesus. He was a disciple of John the Baptist, but he came to follow Jesus. And who's the other person that was with Andrew? Now it doesn't say. The author doesn't identify him, which leads Bible students and scholars to believe that was in fact, John himself, John the Apostle. And the reason is because he doesn't actually ever mention himself by name throughout the course of his gospel account. And he could very well have been the person that was with Andrew that day.

But we're told in verse 41 that Andrew "*found his own brother, Simon...*" or Shimon, if you will, which is the way they would've pronounced it in the Hebrew, "*and said to him, 'We have found (Mashiach or) Messiah.'*" (And) *42 He brought him to Jesus. (and) Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas'...*" that's Aramaic. And then he puts parenthetically, (*which means Peter*) which is interesting because Peter doesn't mean anything to us. But it did to them because it was Petros in the Greek, and they both mean rock. He kind of said, "you're Simon, I'm going to call you Rocky." There you go!

I kind of like the fact that Jesus gave names to people. I mean, that's kind of cool. Even with, James and John, He called them the "Sons of Thunder," which is kind of interesting. But I like to give names to, when I get close to people. If I ever give you a name that isn't your name, that means, I really like you, and I'm really close to you, or something like that. I do that with all my grandkids, all my kids. They all have different names, you know and stuff. So, but I like the fact that Jesus gave different names. But in this particular case, He says to Simon, I'm going to call you Rock. I'm going to call you the rock. What's interesting about that is it took quite a while for Simon to live up to that name.

Because in the early days, he was really not a rock at all. He wasn't very stable. Later on, he became much more so.

But I find it interesting here that Andrew goes to his brother right away. I mean, immediately he goes to his brother, "Simon, we found Him!" I see that in people a lot when they come to Christ, they want to reach family, you know. And that's a tough job. I don't know how many of you have tried to reach family members for Christ. But those of you that have probably know just how challenging that is. It's probably, well, it's undoubtedly easier to witness to a stranger than it is to family members.

And you know if you've tried to do that, and you've struggled, and maybe even failed for at least the time being, you just need to know you're in good company because Jesus struggled reaching His family. Let me show you a couple of passages where he talks about this whole idea of reaching relatives. We have a couple of - one here from Mark:

Mark 6:4 (ESV)

And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household."

John 7:5 (ESV)

For not even his brothers believed in him.

"And Jesus said (to the people around him) the prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives (that's where there's a problem) and (even) in his own household." It's just really going to be hard.

And then you'll see from John 7:5 there, that *"even his brothers (didn't believe) in him."* At least not at first.

So it is very challenging reaching family. So, I would encourage you, if you're praying for a family member keep praying, and don't give up. And look for opportunities to share, but look for open doors that God creates. Sometimes we want our family members to be saved so badly that we end up pushing through doors that aren't open - not even a crack. And we end up hurting ourselves, hurting the door, and turning off our relatives. Because their hearts just aren't ready to receive, you know. We have to be discerning. We have to learn to be led by the Holy Spirit when we witness to people, you know.

You know what I mean by that? Jesus told this wonderful parable of the sower where he talked about seed being scattered onto all different kinds of ground.

Some of it you'll remember in that parable did no good because it was scattered on the hard path, remember? It didn't do any good. Birds came and ate it - flew away. And that can happen in situations where we're witnessing without being led by the Holy Spirit. There's no open door, there's no softness, there's no receptivity in the heart of the person to whom you're speaking. You're just scattering seed.

And people love to say, "well, God's Word never returns void." Yeah, you're misquoting that. It says, "His word never returns void for the purpose for which He sent it" (*Isaiah 55:11*) not for the purpose to which you sent it. It's an important distinction, you know. We need to be led by the spirit. Lord, is it time? Is it time? Is this the time? Do I see the signs of an open heart, a receptivity here, you know? So there you go.

We're told in verse 43:

"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."

Phillip's hometown exactly, was referred to as Bethsaida in Galilee. And the city of Bethsaida, at that time was, Bethsaida, I think I said right, was located on the northeast side of the Sea of Galilee. So Jesus is traveling way up into Galilee, where of course he had been raised. And you'll notice that the words to Philip were very simple in terms of what he said to him. He just said, "*Follow me.*" That's it. "*Follow me.*" No long explanation or anything like that. He just said, "*Follow me.*"

And it's a very simple thing to say, but it's a very difficult thing to do. Can we all just admit that here today? Following Jesus is challenging, especially in the culture in which we live today? Following Jesus is not easy. And don't let anybody tell you that it is. It's very hard. Much more challenging to do than to say. Because you know this whole idea of following Jesus, that's what's behind the word discipleship. To be a disciple is to be a follower of Jesus.

Here's the problem. There's a lot of Christians who confuse the idea of salvation with discipleship. Do you understand Christians, that those are two different things? Salvation is not the same as discipleship, okay? Here's how we know salvation is free, discipleship is costly. And if you don't understand that difference, you're going to be confused by the Word of God.

And I remember a time in my walk with the Lord when this wasn't made clear yet to me. And I would hear or read in the Bible about the free gift of salvation,

and then I would read these passages where Jesus talked about discipleship, and I thought they were the same thing. And so I was like, "wait a minute, that's not free." That would cost me everything. Let me show you an example. Here's Jesus talking about discipleship from Luke:

Luke 14:26-27 (ESV)

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple."

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, (this is a hatred by comparison, okay? The crowd knew what he was saying) yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. (And he went on to say) Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple."

What does it mean to bury your cross? It means to die to self. Is that hard or easy? That's really hard. Dying has never been easy. So Jesus is talking about really hard things here, really costly things. Laying down your life is an extremely costly thing. Okay, you with me?

Now, what does the Bible say about our salvation? Well, you keep going back to Ephesians chapter 2 verses 8 and 9:

Ephesians 2:8-9 (ESV)

For by grace you've been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not the result of works, so that no one can boast.

"For by grace you've been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; (Paul writes) it is the gift of God, not the result of works, (it's nothing you do, it's nothing you pay for, it's nothing you earn) so that no one can boast." You can't boast in your salvation because it didn't cost you anything. So you see salvation and discipleship are two very different things. One is free, one is costly. Don't confuse them.

"Well, Pastor Paul, are you telling me you can be saved and not be a disciple?"

Well, listen, I'm just telling you what the word says. I'm telling you that one of them is free, and it says it in the Bible. It's free. And the other one says it's going to cost you your life.

I love the fact that when Jesus was talking to that other thief, that repentant thief who was hanging on a cross next to Him, He just embraced him for his faith. Can you imagine if that thief would've said, "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." But Jesus would've said, "Well, here's the deal. You haven't really been a disciple yet. In fact, you've been pretty much living for your own self, all your life. You never really picked up your cross and here you are on the cross, but you never picked up your cross, and I don't think this is going to work out."

Wouldn't that have been a tragedy. Jesus didn't say that. He said, "This day (...today you will) you'll be with me in paradise."

He responded to the man's faith, not his lack of discipleship. So, some important things to keep in mind. I want you to know, though, that what Jesus is saying to Philip when He says, "Follow me." He's saying, come be My disciple. Come and give it all for Me.

Notice now it goes on to say in verse 45, that:

"⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We found him of whom Moses in the Law and all (also) the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.' (and) ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' (and) Phillips said to him, 'Come and see.'"

Honestly, I really love this exchange because this is really good stuff in terms of understanding how to witness and share Christ with someone. I want you to notice the first thing that Nathanael says is he predicates his statement to Nathanael - when Philip talks about Jesus, he predicates it on the word. Did you see that? He said, "We have found him of whom Moses...(about) and)...the prophets wrote (about.)" We found him. We found him.

What is Philip doing here? He's basing his invitation on the authority of the Word of God, right? He's not basing it on his personal opinion, "Well, I think this guy's really something. And boy, when he talks, it makes me feel so good! I just get little tingles all over!"

No, there's none of that going on. There's none of feely, emotional, opinion that is being expressed here. It's, "We found the one who's in the Word," you see? Now, if Nathanael's got a problem, and he does kind of make a statement here to push things away just a little bit, but if Nathanael has a problem with what Philip is saying, the problem is with the Word of God, you see. Not with

Philip's statement or opinion or feelings, "Well, I'm glad that works out for you, but it's just not the thing for me."

No, see, that's a response you get from somebody when your comment to them is all based on you. No, this is what the Bible says, you see. And that's what Philip is doing, and I love that. That's a really smart thing to do.

And then Nathanael, he does give that statement. He says, "*Can anything good come (out of) from Nazareth?*" And that's a way of kind of just, pushing this thing back into Philip's court, you know, to respond about this thing.

Have you ever shared Christ with somebody, and they had an objection? And they shared that objection? How did you respond when they objected to what you just said? I love how Philip handles it. He just says, "Well, come see." Isn't that great? He didn't feel like, you know, there was this big burden on him to have the perfect argument, you know. He just says, "*Come see.*"

Now you know you're thinking about this, and you're thinking, well, how does that apply to today? Well, you might invite somebody to church. "Well, come see. See what you think. Come and hear." Or, "Hey, you know what? Are you willing to sit down and read through the Bible with me? Let's read. Let's get together and read through one of the gospel accounts. Come see. Come see what you think."

Instead of coming up with all these perfect answers I think a lot of Christians don't get around to sharing their faith because they feel like, "Well, I just don't know enough to really answer." Yeah, of course. That's fine. Philip knew little or nothing at this point. He's just brand-new follower of Jesus.

"So what is He, this Jesus guy, are you kidding me?"

"Yeah. Come see. Come see for yourself."

Isn't that a great, I mean, that's brilliant. Puts it all back on Nathanael. The responsibility is on him to be open enough to check it out, you know. I just think that's really good.

Now, the words that Nathanael says here, when he says, "*Can anything good come out of Nazareth?*" He's not necessarily dissing people from Nazareth. There's a lot of Bible commentators who will say that the people in Nazareth weren't highly thought of. I don't think that's really what Nathanael's getting at. You'll remember, he's responding to Philip, who said, "We found the man who's

in the Word," and Nathanael's coming back and saying, "Is there anything in the Bible about somebody coming out of Nazareth?" Because there wasn't. They knew Messiah was going to be born in Bethlehem of Judah, not Nazareth.

So that's really kind of, you know, what he's saying. Does anything, is anything good supposed to come out of Nazareth? I mean, do you ever read that in the Word? You just told me, "You found the one who in the Word, was declared by Moses and the prophets. I don't remember reading anything about Nazareth." That's what Nathanael is saying.

And yet he's challenged to "*Come see.*" And he ends up doing that. And so in verse 47, it says:

"⁴⁷Jesus saw, Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, 'Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there's no deceit!'" (and that's a way of saying, here's a very honest man who's coming right now. And ⁴⁸Nathanael said to him (Jesus,) 'How do you know me?'" (and) Jesus answered him, 'Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.'"

Interesting statement here. "Under the fig tree" was actually a euphemism that the Jews used for somebody who was meditating on scripture. And so if you said, if somebody said, "Hey, where were you today?"

"I was under the fig tree."

That meant, I was just hanging out, just meditating on the Word of God. Now, that's an interesting statement in light of the conversation that goes on here, you know, between Nathanael and Jesus. Nathanael comes back, and you know, when Jesus says, "*I saw you.*" I saw you when you were under the fig tree, even before Philip came and grabbed you. And he says, "*Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!*" And Jesus responded in verse 50 by saying, "*Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? Let me tell you something here, Nate, you're going to see stuff a whole lot bigger and better than that. In verse 51 He says, ⁵¹Truly, truly I say to you, (you will) you're going to see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.*"

Interesting, isn't it? What does that remind you of? Well, it reminds you of a passage in Genesis. Remember when Jacob was kind of on the run from his brother who wanted to kill him because he had stolen his brother's birthright? And along the way he had a vision. And he saw a ladder, and he saw angels ascending and descending from heaven. And Jesus is using this same picture

now, and it's very possible that Nathanael was actually meditating on that very passage in Genesis 28, and that's why Jesus said what He did.

But did you notice here that He says in verse 51, He says, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending* (notice this) *on the Son of Man.*" This is the first time Jesus makes reference to Himself as the "Son of Man." People ask me from time to time, "What are the implications? What does it mean when Jesus said, He's the "Son of Man?" And I'm not going to get into all of those today, but there are some important insights we could talk about.

But primarily when Jesus uses the term "Son of Man," He's aligning Himself with a particular prophetic statement made in the book of Daniel that all the Jews would've known. Let me show it to you on the screen. It's from Daniel chapter 7 verses 13 and 14, and it goes like this:

Daniel 7:13-14 (ESV)

I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Isn't that interesting? So you see, this was a very common understood passage among the Jews concerning Messiah. And Daniel says, I saw this One who was, who looked like a Son of Man. So Jesus went around calling Himself the "Son of Man." That was His way of saying, I'm Him. I'm Him. I'm the One Daniel spoke of who receives glory from the Father and a kingdom that will never pass away. So that's what's going on here.

Now, before we kind of wrap up here this morning, there's something that I want to revisit for just a moment if I could. And it's this statement that Nathanael makes concerning Jesus when he says, does anything good come out of Nazareth? Once again, they didn't expect anybody to come out of Nazareth. They expected people to come out of Bethlehem. Which brings up an interesting question, why didn't Jesus tell people He was born in Bethlehem?

He allowed people to refer to Him as, Jesus of Nazareth, because that's the way they called people. Either it was Jesus, son of somebody, or they would say where you were from.

And Jesus knew that they called Him, Jesus of Nazareth, and that would've been a problem for a lot of people. In fact, you'll remember there's one instance where the Pharisees are talking among themselves and they say, "Look it up, nobody ever comes out of Nazareth. The Messiah doesn't come out of Nazareth, so He can't be the Messiah."

Well, but He was born in Bethlehem. Here's the question, why didn't He just say it? Why didn't He stop at one particular point and just kind of go, "Hey guys, listen. I know you call me Jesus of Nazareth, but I just wanted to kind of just give you a little tip. I was actually born in Bethlehem. There! Okay?"

That would've cleared up so much. There wouldn't have been all this debate going on, and all this other hooah, you know. These are things I wonder about, pray for me. But I just think to myself, it would've solved so many problems. So why didn't He just say so? Do you know the answer to that question of, why didn't He just say so, is a key to, and a critical key to understanding so much about the Bible. And if you stumble over this, you're going to stumble over a lot of other things. The key is this, the reason Jesus just didn't come out and say it is He wanted people to dig. He wanted people to search. He wanted people to pursue the truth. Do you think He would've denied it if somebody would've asked Him?

"By the way, they call you Jesus of Nazareth, but where were you born?"

You think He would've lied? Of course not. All you got to do is ask. But it's funny, they didn't, they didn't ask, they didn't search, they didn't seek, they didn't pursue. But that is such a key, and I believe that one of the reasons so many truths in the Bible are not immediately apparent is because God wants us to search for them. He wants us to seek them out. He wants us to use the brain that we've been given to pursue the truth and lay hold of it.

You know, I hear people from time to time, they'll say to me, "Jesus never came out at any time, ever once and said, I am God. Never once."

And I'm like, "Did you ever read what He did say?"

All the claims that Jesus made about Himself, you think a man could make those claims? Good grief, we painted Him around this auditorium. Have you ever noticed:

I Am The True Vine

I Am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End

What would happen if some mere man made that statement? They'd put him in one of those little rubber rooms, with the little jacket that ties in the back.

I Am the Bread of Life

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

I Am the Gate for the Sheep

I Am the Way and the Truth and the Life

I Am the Light of the World

I Am the Good Shepherd

You think anybody could just make those statements? Good grief! Think it through, you know. That's what He wants. He wants us to dig, He wants us to pursue and not just expect that we're going to trip over the truth.

"Oh, look at there, that was incredible."

He wants us to get out your shovel and your pick and dig into it.

Have you ever read through the Book of Wisdom in the Bible? It's the book of Proverbs. When you read through the Book of Proverbs, you come to Proverbs chapter 2. And when you start chapter 2, you read something very interesting about this whole process of pursuing truth. Let me show you on the screen:

Proverbs 2 (ESV)

My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

He's not talking about tripping over the truth there. He's talking about pursuing it. Digging for it. Applying reason and understanding it pleased God very much

to give you a brain that can reason. And He wants you to use it, as it relates to understanding the things of the Word of God.

And you know what? We see people stumbling over things throughout the course of the book of John. You know, we're going to get into John chapter 2 next week, Lord willing, and Jesus is going to have a conversation with the Pharisees, and He's going to talk about His body, but He's going to call it a temple. And He's going to say, destroy this temple and I will raise it in three days. They misunderstood.

And then we're going to get to John chapter 3, and we're going to read about the conversation Jesus had with Nicodemus. And He's going to talk to Nick about being born again, and Nicodemus is going to misunderstand. "How can a person be born when they're old?"

And then we're going to get into John chapter 4, and Jesus is going to have a conversation with the woman at the well in Samaria, and He's going to talk to her about living water, and she's going to misunderstand. Because everybody's thinking materially, physically, and He's got something else in mind if they would just apply themselves and use reason and dig. And that's what He wants us to do. He wants you to want Him. He "is the Truth," He said. Do you want Him? Are you pressing in?

It's gotten to be my little, I have a little favorite phrase I use when I respond to people's email questions when they write me Bible questions and the last thing I say is, "God bless you as you press in on Jesus." That's what it is guys. We need to be pressing in. Not just waiting to stumble over truth that's just sitting out there in front of everybody. Dig for it. It's there. You will find it, and you'll be incredibly blessed.

Listen, what the author of Hebrews said to us is true "...*He rewards those who seek Him,*" (Hebrews 11:6 ESV) "*who seek Him.*" Seek Jesus. That's the One you want to seek. It's a person that you're seeking. Amen.

Let's stand together. As we normally do, you know, we're going to close in prayer here. And then if you need prayer personally, for any situation going on in your life, or maybe for even for somebody else, we'd be more than happy to pray with you, so just come on down front. If you're new, consider coming down and introducing yourself. I'd like to meet folks.

Let's pray. Father, thank You so much for Your Word. Your Word is so good, so rich, and so full. Thank you, Lord, for being the Teacher, for instructing us in

all things that are good and right, and true and pure. And our desire is for You, Father. Our desire is to know and to lay hold and to press in. And I pray that You'd help us to do that, Father God. And Lord, give us the courage to stop and to invite You in, to look into our hearts, and to see what we're seeking and why.

We want our desires, even our desires to be from You, because we know Lord God, that's where real satisfaction comes. Not from the world, not from seeking the things of the world or running after the things of the world, but running after You, Jesus, with all of our hearts. Help us to do that, we pray. For we ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, who is the Savior, and soon coming, Redeemer. And all God's people say it together, amen.

God bless you. Have a good rest of your Sunday.