

Meeting Jesus (PART 3):

King

JOHN 1:40-42

Baxter T. Exum (#1450)
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Over the past few weeks, we have been looking at the last half of John 1 as the first apostles start meeting Jesus for the very first time, and we've been noticing the titles or descriptions given to Jesus during those first meetings. We started with Jesus being introduced by John as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. We learned, then, that as the Lamb of God, Jesus is completely worthy of our worship in every way. As we sing and as we pray, we need to be thankful for Jesus as our Lamb and for the sacrifice he made for us as he took our place on the cross.

Last week, we continued on with verses 38-39, and we saw Jesus introduced as a RABBI or TEACHER. Jesus, of course, looks back, he sees Andrew and most likely John following him, and he asks them, ***"What do you seek?"*** They respond, ***"Rabbi, where are You staying?"*** And the Lord answers, ***"Come, and you will see."*** They then go with the Lord, and they spend the rest of the day together. We ended last week with the question: Is Jesus our teacher? Are we learning by reading his word?

This morning, we continue on with verses 40-42. Notice, please, John 1:40-42,

⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated 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 is translated Peter).

So, the new description, of course, is ***"MESSIAH"*** or ***"CHRIST."*** After spending the previous day with Jesus, Andrew goes and finds his brother Simon, and he explains that they have found the ***"Messiah."*** And we will get to this in just a moment, but the words ***"MESSIAH"*** and ***"CHRIST"*** both refer to Jesus as being a KING. I want us to move through this passage by looking at the three characters.

- I. So we start with **ANDREW** (in verses 40-41), and we find that **ANDREW** is someone we might identify as an **INVITER** - **ANDREW THE INVITER**.

By way of background, I find it interesting that Andrew's name literally means "manly." We think of "ANDROID," which I guess literally is a man-like robot of some kind; or the ANDROID operating system, which is supposedly a man-like or a human-like interface. We're not exactly sure what Andrew's parents had in mind if they were the ones who gave him this name - perhaps they were hoping that he would grow up to be manly, perhaps they named him after somebody, or maybe there's the possibility that Andrew is a name that he earned later in life. I've read that the name "Baxter" means "baker." Of course, I doubt my parents named me "Baxter" in hopes that I would grow up to be a baker! But sometimes there is something to be learned from a name, so we do need to at least point it out from time to time.

Here in the United States, we have a number of significant places named after "Saint Andrew." We think of the San Andreas fault out in California, or San Andreas lake (out there as well). Down in Verona, there is a Saint Andrew's Catholic Church, and the church facility itself is shaped like a boat - some of you might have noticed it right across from the high school in Verona. Of course, if Andrew ever saw a church named after himself, he might get rather angry (to say the least), but the boat-shaped church building in Verona is at least a reminder to us that Andrew was a fisherman. Andrew spent most of his life on the water - fishing for a living. Andrew was a commercial fisherman, a manly-man. When I picture Andrew and some of the other apostles, I picture those men on *Deadliest Catch*. The apostles were not wimpy, as they are often depicted, but they were outdoorsmen, hard-working men who risked their lives making a living fishing on the Sea of Galilee.

So, we have seen the call of Andrew over the past two weeks as he is introduced to Jesus as the Lamb of God and as the Teacher. This morning, we discover what Andrew does with that information. He finds first his own brother Simon, and he introduces his brother to Jesus. Simon Peter goes on to be rather famous as a part of the Lord's inner circle. Peter confesses Jesus as the Son of God. Peter walks on water. Peter is there for the transfiguration. Peter whacks off a guy's ear with a sword. Peter preaches the first sermon. Peter writes two books. Andrew, though, is usually identified as "*Simon Peter's brother.*" For those of us with siblings: Try to imagine how irritating that must have been! I love my sister, but I would hate to go through life being known as "Emily's brother." Beyond what happens here, we have no record of any of Andrew's missionary journeys. We have no accounts of any sermons that he preached. We don't have a "Book of Andrew" in the New Testament. Instead, one of his leading accomplishments is that he brings his brother Peter to the Lord. Peter, of course, will go on to have a leading role in the church. Peter is mentioned 153 times in the New Testament (second only to Jesus), while Andrew is only mentioned twelve times. So, Andrew is rather quiet. Andrew is an inviter. Andrew's work is more personal. Andrew does what is natural.

Most of us, when we discover something amazing, we share it. We go to a good restaurant, and we tell people about it. We find a good product, and we talk about it. If something good happens to us, we tell those who are closest to us - I tell my wife and my children, and then my parents, maybe my neighbors, I tell you. And that's what Andrew does - he finds Jesus, he discovers that Jesus is the Lamb of God, and the first thing he does is to go find his brother. And I would also point out: Not only does he TELL his brother, but he BRINGS his brother - we see this at the beginning of verse 42, where the text says that Andrew "*brought*" his brother to Jesus. So, he finds Jesus, and he doesn't just sit there wondering what to do, he doesn't head off to take some class on the latest sales techniques, but he knows what he needs to do - he shares this good news with those who are important in his life. He goes and he gets his brother, and he lets Jesus do the rest.

So what? What does this mean for us? Andrew's mission is our mission. If I can talk about the weather to the lady who cuts my hair, shouldn't I also be able to talk with her about something that is truly important? If I can talk to my neighbor about the latest construction on Verona Road, then shouldn't I also be willing to talk about the best of all possible news? If I can talk to a friend about a new restaurant we just went to here in

town, shouldn't I also at least mention what is truly important in my life? If I can talk to a friend down at Cottage Café about how hot it's going to be today, then shouldn't I be able to talk about the Lord? And the reason for all of this is: The new highway going in, or the new restaurant, or the great new gadget I just found online will not save anybody, but the good news about Jesus can! So, we learn from Andrew that we share what is important to us.

And if we were to keep reading the gospel accounts looking for Andrew, we would find that every time we read about Andrew doing something, he is bringing people to Jesus. Beyond what happens here, we have the situation in John 6:8-9 where thousands of people have followed Jesus out into the wilderness, and they run out of food. Nobody knows what to do until Andrew finds a young boy and brings him to Jesus and says, ***"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?"*** Jesus, then, takes those loaves and fish and feeds 5,000 people. But that starts with Andrew bringing the young man to the Lord just as he did with Peter. The other reference comes in John 12:20 when some Greeks come to Philip and say, ***"Sir, we wish to see Jesus."*** By the way, we engraved this on the top of the podium we made for song leading on Wednesday evenings a while back - we totally ripped it out of context - but it is a good thought. The men come to Philip and say, ***"Sir, we wish to see Jesus."*** Philip tells Andrew, and Andrew and Philip went and tells Jesus. Andrew, then, is an inviter. Andrew is the facilitator. Andrew is the bringer.

Sometimes we ask the question, "What would Jesus do?" and that is a great question, but this morning, maybe we need to be asking ourselves, "What would Andrew do?" Today, we have tracts (or brochures) in the entryway. We have little invitation cards (the size of business cards) that we can keep with us, or at home, or in the car. We have cards about the clothing give-away. We have DVD's out there. We have a website that we can share online. We have church accounts on Facebook, and Instagram, and Twitter, and Google Maps, and Yelp. All around us, we have some very simple tools that make it even easier to do what Andrew did here. But the main idea is: Andrew is an inviter. Andrew tells his brother. Andrew brings his brother. So, the first lesson we learn from this passage comes from Andrew, and we learn from Andrew that we don't necessarily need to serve publicly (we don't need to be famous) to have a huge impact - all we need to do is to help those we know and love make a connection with Jesus.

II. **As we go back to our text, we continue, and the second big idea from this passage comes from Jesus as we find that Jesus is identified here as the "MESSIAH."**

So, in this series, Jesus is identified as the Lamb of God, as a teacher, and now as the Messiah. As we are introduced to Jesus, then, we quickly get a more detailed picture of who he really is. And here, he is the Messiah. What I find interesting is that John translates this word for his readers, ***"We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ).*** So he translates it from ***"Messiah"*** (the Hebrew word that Andrew actually used), and he translates it to ***"Christ"*** (which is a Greek word that most of John's original readers would have known). But what is really interesting (and almost funny) to me, is that both words come from languages that most of us don't speak today! So, in a sense, we need a translation of the translation!

But just a side note here: The church (from the beginning) has always reached across language, and ethnic, and political barriers. Just the fact that the author of this passage gives a translation in the text itself is amazing. We think back to the first sermon preached by Peter in Acts 2 - one defining characteristic of that sermon was that people from many nations all heard the preaching in their own language. And really throughout the book of Acts, one of the big challenges they overcame was the racial divide between Jews and Gentiles. The gospel is truly for all people, and we have a reminder of this in this explanation given by John in verse 42. And we've already seen it with the translation and explanation of ***"Rabbi"*** in last week's passage -

the same thing. Jesus is addressed as ***“Rabbi, which translated means Teacher.”*** And we will see it again in verse 42 as we read about ***“Cephas (which is translated Peter).”***

But back to the text, and before we get to what the word Messiah actually means (in English), we need to notice that whatever it means, it was a term Simon would have known, and it was something he was really looking forward to. In other words, if Andrew comes running up to Simon and says, ***“We have found the Messiah!”*** it’s probably safe to assume that both Andrew and Simon had been LOOKING for this Messiah. So with that as background, we need to know that the word ***“Messiah”*** was a Jewish word and ***“Christ”*** is the Greek translation of it. And both words literally refer to the ***“Anointed One,”*** to someone who has been ***“anointed.”*** And it was a word used in the Old Testament to refer to all of the kings. Before any king of Israel would take the throne, a prophet or priest would take oil and would pour it on the man’s head as a sign that God approved of that man being king. And so, to be ***“anointed”*** was to be approved by God. When Andrew comes to Simon and says, ***“We have found the Messiah,”*** he was saying, ***“We have found God’s Anointed. We have found the King! We have found the Christ!”*** Contrary to what some may think, ***“Christ”*** is not Jesus’ last name! But when we refer to Jesus Christ, we are referring to Jesus, the Anointed; we are referring to Jesus, the Messiah - God’s approved choice to rule over his people. When we refer to ourselves as the ***“Four Lakes Church of Christ,”*** it means that we are a church of the King; we are a church belonging to the King; we are a church governed by the King; we are a church belonging to God’s Anointed; we are a church under the authority of the Messiah.

Of course, at the time this first happens, it had been many years since Israel had had a king. As we’ve been studying in our Wednesday class, God sent the Babylonians to destroy his own people due to their rebellion, the king was killed, and even after they came back from captivity, they never had a king again - they had governors appointed by their oppressors, they had lesser leaders, but never a king. At the time Jesus comes on the scene, Rome was in charge. They were oppressed by Rome. They paid taxes to Rome. Rome had appointed various leaders - corrupt and evil men like King Herod, governors like Pontius Pilate. So, by the time we get to 30 AD or so, the people are more than ready for a king to come in and to make things right. They are looking for God’s anointed. And that is why Andrew is so excited here, ***“We have found the Messiah! We have found the Christ! We have found the Lord’s Anointed!”*** He is recognizing that Jesus is God’s approved King. Jesus is the one we have been waiting for.

And this, of course, is good for us to realize. Jesus is our King. And not only is he our King, but he is God’s only approved King. He is the last and only God-approved leader. He is the only one with the authority and power to give us freedom from sin. So as we worship Jesus, we worship him as our King, as the Messiah, as the Christ. He has every right to rule in our lives and in our hearts. We as his people have every reason to bow and to subject ourselves to his authority. Jesus is our King.

III. We now come to the last part of this passage as we meet **SIMON** for the first time, and on this occasion, Peter is given a new name.

According to verse 42, ***“Jesus looked at him and said, ‘You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas’ (which is translated Peter).”*** What do we think of when we think of Simon Peter? We think of somebody who was quick to speak, somewhat unstable, unpredictable. Of all the disciples, no one speaks up more often than Peter. Of all the disciples, no one is rebuked or corrected by Jesus more often than Peter. Of all the disciples, Peter is the only one who has the audacity to reprove or try to correct Jesus. And yet, we find here that when Jesus meets Simon, the first word that comes to the Lord’s mind is ***“Rock,”*** and so Jesus gives

him a new name, ***“You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas.”*** That’s pretty bold, isn’t it! It’s hard to imagine meeting somebody for the first time, and they give us a new name.

So, we have the shock of this sudden name change, but we also have the name itself. “Rock” is probably not the first word that came to mind when Simon was described by his friends. His friends probably laughed when they heard that his new name was Rock. One author suggested that this might be like calling a bald-headed man “Curly,” or a fat man “Slim,” or a tall man “Shorty.” “Rock” didn’t really fit Simon at the time. At the time, Peter was impulsive and somewhat unstable, but Jesus could see him as a rock, as something of a foundation, as a stabilizing influence on the church. Jesus could see the potential in this man. And in the same way, Jesus has the ability to see us not for what we are right now, but he sees us for what we can become. Jesus can see Simon’s potential. And if that is true for Peter, then it is also true for us.

We also learn from this that Jesus has the authority to do this. Jesus has the power to give us a new name. We notice how Jesus speaks with authority here, ***“You shall be called Cephas.”*** He doesn’t say, “If you don’t mind,” or “If you like this new name,” or “If it works out,” but with the power to do it he simply changes Simon’s name. Giving a name is the power given to parents. We don’t just go around renaming people. President Bush was known for giving people some pretty funny nicknames - but he was the president! If I meet a first-time guest after worship today, and they try to give me a new name, I would probably laugh at that. If someone comes up to me today and says, “Your name is now George,” I would think it’s a joke. They don’t know me. They don’t have that kind of authority. But Jesus knows Peter. And not only does he know Peter, but he has the power to change his name.

I would also point out: This is apparently the only time in Scripture where Peter is at a loss for words! This is the only passage where Peter is silent. Peter is speechless!

Conclusion:

As we come to the end of today’s study, we put it all together by noting that Andrew was right to go get his brother - what a great example for us! And in light of Jesus really being the Messiah, Jesus was also right in giving Simon a new name. It took some teaching, and 3-½ years of training, and patience, but just a few years later, Peter would go on to stand up in front of thousands on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and very boldly declare in a very rock-like way, ***“...let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and CHRIST—this Jesus whom you crucified”*** (Acts 2:36). And a short time later, when threatened by the authorities to keep quiet, it was Peter who replied (in Acts 4:19-20), ***“Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.”***

Like Peter, all of us here this morning need someone who has the power to see us not for who we are right now, but someone who can see us for what we have the power to become. And that someone is Jesus, the Messiah. As he did for Simon, the Lord Jesus also gives us a new name. When we obey the gospel, we take on His name - we are Christians. And then we start becoming more and more like him. We turn to Jesus in faith, we turn away from sin, and when we submit to his rule in our lives in the act of baptism, we are born into his kingdom.

Does Jesus reign in our hearts right now? If he does, that’s why we’re here - to learn more about him, to worship, and to be more like him, to submit to his leadership. But if he is not yet King in your life, we would invite you call out to him through baptism for the forgiveness of sins. If you have any questions, we hope you’ll

get in touch. But if you are ready to accept this offer right now, we would love to help in any way we can. You can let us know about your decision as we sing this next song. Let's stand and sing...

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