

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Balance of Salvation

Scripture: John 1:38-51

Code: 1504A

This morning if we can capture a title out of the narrative, perhaps the title might be the balance of salvation. Salvation is both an historic fact, and historic event that happens in time and at the same time an eternal choice that happened before time began. Often in Scripture we read about the human side of salvation, the idea that whoever wants to come to Christ may, and that is true. For Jesus said, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." But more often in Scripture we read of the divine side, elect before the world began. "All that the Father gives to Me shall come to Me," is the other side of the verse I just quoted...John 6:37. And so, salvation is a beautiful balance between the will of God and the will of man. Salvation is the will of God in action, bringing about a response from the will of man.

Now salvation is a divine act. Salvation demanded a divine initiative. Man could not design to die himself for his own sin, God had to do that. The love that initiated salvation came from God. The grace, the mercy, the forgiveness, all of that was divine. And so, salvation in the truest sense is a divine act yet it demands a human response. Salvation is the work of God and at the same time it is the activity of man as he responds to the work of God in his heart. And we cannot understand it from a purely divine standpoint, we can't grasp divine truth, we can't hold on to the sovereignty of God in our small little brains, it's too great a thought for us. And so God has reduced it to simplicity. We simply understand that we are saved by the sovereign act of God, we are also saved by the act of our will. We don't attempt to justify the two, we accept them because they are biblical.

Illustrating it from my own standpoint, when I came to Jesus Christ I came to Him because I wanted Him. I came to Him because I decided in my life that I decided in my life I was tired of my sin, I was tired of the way I had been living and I wanted Jesus Christ whom I knew to be the Son of God to become my Savior. And salvation was an act of my will. And what I didn't know at that time and know now is that prior to the time that I decided for Jesus Christ, He had long before the foundation of the world chosen me in Him.

Maybe I can illustrate this and I hope you won't mind if I do this. Terry, would you just raise your right hand for me for a second? Thank you. Now whose will caused Terry to raise his hand? His will, he didn't have to raise his hand, I hold no threat over him. Not only his will, my will. He exercised his will in response to my will and apart from my will he wouldn't have raised his hand. And that is exactly in a very mundane sense what salvation is. It is my will responding to the will of God. And that's the two sides of salvation. That's the balance. And I do not of my own will seek God, says Paul, until

God has sought me. Augustine said, "We should never seek Christ unless God had already found us." And so salvation is my will in response to the will of God.

And so, Scripture presents two sides to salvation, the balance between the seeking soul and the seeking Savior. And we shall see it as we examine our text for in verses 38 to 42 we have the seeking soul and in verses 43 to 51, the seeking Savior. The human side is in verses 38 to 42, although the divine is there the human side is emphasized. And the divine side is emphasized in 43 to 51 although the human is there, it is the divine that is emphasized.

Now, we are entering the public ministry of Jesus Christ. And as we enter it we see Him in our section four this morning calling out two groups of disciples. These are the first two groups of disciples that He ever called and there are six in all. And we'll meet them in a moment as we go through the text. But I want you to get the picture of where we are now.

Remember that the Apostle John is writing this gospel. And that his purpose is to present Christ as the Son of God. So everybody that John can find who will testify that Christ is God, John will use him to do that. So when John talks about somebody being...becoming a Christian and believing in Christ, he doesn't just say, "Well, So-and-so believed in Christ," and then goes to the next thing. No. He takes that person and says, "No So-and-so said Christ is God," see, because he wants everybody that he can get to testify that Christ is God. That's his point in this book, to get us to see that Christ is the Son of God, indeed God in a body. So he gathers together this first group of disciples and before John the Apostle leaves them he has them testify as to who Christ is. So he's adding witnesses upon witnesses to build a case to prove that Christ is the Son of God.

And so, we see the first group of disciples that Jesus picks out. And they are really just the first of many countless millions who have come down through history, even to today. And every disciple that Christ calls out becomes a witness...becomes a living declaration that Christ is God. And whether he issues it out of his mouth or not, that's another story. He is a witness by the very fact of his salvation.

Now we've already met one witness, we've met John the Baptist who gave his witness, right? He said, "Behold the Lamb of God who take away the sin of the world." When he met Christ he witnessed to who He was. Now we are about to meet the next two disciples of Christ and we see them introduced in verse 35. We'll back up to verse 35 and meet them.

"Again the next day John stood and two of his disciples," two of the disciples of John the Baptist, remember who had built a little following for himself, not because he desired to but because people attached themselves to him as a prophet of God. Two of his disciples are there with John. And John looked on Jesus as He was walking about there in that place in Bethany and he said to these disciples, "Behold, the Lamb of God." Now we told you last week what he meant by that. He was saying, "What are you doing hanging around me, there is the Lamb of God, there is the Christ, there

is the Savior of the world. Why are you staying here?" And, of course, in verse 37 the two disciples heard him speak and followed Jesus. He said there is the Lamb of God and they went after Jesus Christ. And there were the first two disciples. Now they're not named yet, they shall be named. Well one of them is named in a minute, the other one we know because it's the same one who never names himself...that's John. So it's John and Andrew, these first two who were disciples of John the Baptist. And John says, "There is the Messiah, go after Him."

So at the end of verse 37 they move toward Christ and the whole picture changes. John the Baptist fades from the scene and we begin the narrative of the ministry of Christ at verse 38. Now as we begin our narrative we're going to see the two sides of salvation...the balance of salvation, the seeking soul and the seeking Savior. Notice the seeking soul in verses 38 to 42.

Now here are these two disciples having left John the Baptist, starting after Jesus Christ. In verse 38 we read this, "Then Jesus turned and saw them following and saith unto them," stop right there.

Now here we are introduced to the seeking soul. We have heard nothing about the Father drawing them, yet Jesus says no man comes unto Me except the Father draw him. Nobody comes to Jesus Christ unless he's been convicted by the Holy Spirit of his sin. We don't even hear about that. Did it happen? Certainly it happened, the Father drew them. Certainly they were convicted of their sin and knew they needed a Messiah. They knew all of that. They knew they weren't righteous and they wanted the righteousness that Messiah could provide. They knew all that, that had already happened. But John wants us to see the human side of salvation, the seeking soul. And so we see these two following Christ.

Now maybe they were shy. I mean, after all, if this was Messiah, He would be the greatest person in the universe next to God...them perhaps not understanding that He was God at that point. And they wouldn't sort of walk up to Him and just start a conversation, maybe they were afraid and shy. Maybe they just couldn't believe the wonder of who He was. I don't know what the reason was but they just kind of followed along. And then Jesus did something, He turned around to face them. And He said something to them. And what He was doing was opening the door to their salvation, in effect. And here again you have the divine initiative. A man could follow Jesus Christ forever, if Jesus Christ never turned to talk to him he'd never know salvation. So you have even here the indication of the seeking Savior which is completely developed in verses 43 to 51. Christ did turn and you see a glimpse of divine initiative right there.

And I'll tell you something. This is a very beautiful thought because whenever a soul is an honest soul, Christ will meet that soul. And here's a principle I don't want you to ever forget, we're going to see it in Scripture right here and a couple of other passages that is really a very critical passage. If you don't come to Jesus Christ honestly, He won't meet you. And I'll show you what I mean by that in a moment.

But when the soul of man is really honest, that's why He said to Nathanael, "There is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." He's honest. Sure he said, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" And that wasn't a wise crack, he was honest. But when a man is really honest and when a man comes searching to know who Jesus Christ is, God will reveal it to him because he wouldn't be searching unless God had already drawn him. He wouldn't be coming toward Christ unless there had been some divine initiative to draw him that way because man certainly is bent toward sin and does not seek God, Romans 3, unless God spins him around and turns him toward Himself. And so it is that these two have already been drawn by the Father to Jesus Christ. They have already been convicted by the Holy Spirit of their sin and they're coming after Jesus Christ with sincere hearts. And when a man is honest and when he really says I want to know who I am, I want forgiveness, I want freedom from guilt, I want to repent of my old life, I want peace and love and joy and meaning and he really is honest with Christ, Christ will turn and meet him. And so when somebody comes to me and says, "Well I'm trying, I'd like to give my life to Christ but I can't seem to find it," I'll say, "Well okay, what are you holding back? Level with me cause you're not being honest? If you really want to know Jesus Christ and you really want to repent and be what He wants you to be, He'll meet you in that split second with all your doubts, with all your misunderstanding." When a heart begins to long sincerely, passionately to meet the Christ in a real experience of salvation, He will meet that individual.

And so Jesus didn't leave these two groping, He turned. He knew their hearts were honest. He knew they were prepared by the Father. He knew the Spirit had brought conviction. They were ready. And so He met them in that instant. And just the opposite was true in the next chapter, look at chapter 2 verse 23 and I want you to see what He does with the insincere hearts.

And here were a lot of people who believed but weren't ready to commit. You remember, the devils believed and they tremble. Now 2:23, He was in Jerusalem at the Passover and the feast day, many believed in His name when they saw the miracles which He did. They liked His tricks. They weren't ready to commit themselves to Him, they just believed in who He was because they liked His miracles. There's a difference between believing and receiving. They weren't ready to repent, they weren't sick of their sin. They said, "Oh, it's terrific, He's got to be the Messiah." And you know what they did? They all followed Him just like those two disciples.

You say, "Were they all following Him believing, surely He turned and met them." No He did not, look at verse 24, "But Jesus did not do...what?...commit Himself unto them." Why? Because in verse 24, "Because He knew them." He knew them all, pantos, all men, He knew everything that was in their hearts. He knew that they weren't really honest. He didn't need anybody to tell him what a man was thinking, verse 25, He knew what was in a man. You see, Jesus didn't commit Himself to the insincere heart. And if you're searching hypocritically for Jesus Christ and you can't seem to find Him, it's not because He doesn't want you to find Him, it's because if you're not sincere He can't meet

you. And so the honest heart is the thing and an honest heart is a prepared heart. That's why Jesus said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." And before that in the same verse He said, "All the Father gives Me shall come to Me." So when the Father sends somebody whose heart is ready, whose heart is prepared, who is honest and not hypocritical and there's no deceit, when he's coming to Christ completely stripped of his own self design and self will, when he has had it, when he's tired of his sin, when he's ready for Jesus Christ to make him what He wants him to be and he comes in that kind of honesty, even with doubts, Christ will meet him on that ground.

And I've often said to people, if you really want to know Jesus Christ, if you really want to know if He's the Son of God and you've got doubts and you want a life that is changed, you meet Him with all your doubts and in a split second you'll know who He is and you'll know the salvation that He offers. Christ commits Himself to the honest, searching heart. And He knows who is sincere. He said to the Jews, I think it's Luke 6:46, He said, "Why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not the things I say?" He had a lot of hypocrites, they followed Him everywhere. The crowds that went after Him just wanted to see what He did. They never wanted to commit their lives to Him. The same crowd that killed Him. There were a lot of hypocrites on Palm Sunday, as it's called. There were a lot of hypocrites there when He came in, "O Hosanna, hurray for the King," and they were yelling for his blood a few days later. They liked His miracles. Remember the hypocritical leaders that came to Him and they said, "Oh, you know, we'd like to talk to You, give us Your wisdom." And what were they really trying to do? Trap Him in His word and get Him in a position where they could either get Him from the Roman angle or from the Jewish angle.

And not only that, I always remember the indelible thing about the time that He fed the multitude and then He went across the sea and they all followed Him. I heard a preacher say, "Isn't that wonderful? He had given them food, He had met their need and they all followed Him." No they didn't follow Him, they followed Him because they wanted some more food. They didn't care about Him. He said, "You came after Me because your stomachs need food." Oh there were a lot of hypocrites. And Jesus never met the phony, He only met the sincere heart.

And there are a lot of people in a church like that. There are a lot of people to them the church is sort of a glorified security blanket. They like to put their thumbs in their mouths and tickle their nose with the church. They like to think of the church as kind of a facility where they can have friends and parties and just think, it doesn't even cost as much as the Y, and that way they can sprinkle little divine salt on their human activity. And they wonder why nothing ever happens to change their lives. They're not meeting Jesus Christ honestly. If all you want out of the church is entertainment and friends and parties, then you've got the wrong idea of what the church is all about. No, Jesus Christ knows who the honest seekers are. He knows the real searching soul because that searching soul has already been prompted by God the Father and convicted by the Holy Spirit and Jesus knows that.

So he says to them in verse 38, "What seek ye?" And that's a lot of introduction but you need to understand that. What seek ye? You say, "Well if He knows everybody what's He asking them that for?" Well He's not asking them for His benefit, He's asking them for their own benefit. What are you coming after Me for? Think about it. It's a good thing to ask because John was one of the two, I'm sure John would have said, "Oh," in his own heart he would have been very honest and said, "We want forgiveness, we want to know if You're Messiah, we want to know what You've got to give us, we want You." That's the same John who a little while later sent his mother to see Jesus and said, "Say, could my two boys sit beside You in the Kingdom?" See, mood is changed pretty fast, don't they? You see, initially what he wanted was probably all legitimate, it got a little twisted as time went on.

I don't know if Jesus asked that question of Judas or not, but Judas was in it for the money. He was in it for the money. He didn't end too well. Never very successful when you go into the ministry for money. But He wanted them to really consider their motives. He wanted them to consider their own motives. What were their motives? Were they Pharisees who wanted to get into some subtle dialogue about the law and play games with their minds? Or maybe they were Sadducees who wanted a lot of pomp and had a lot of ambition and wanted to be big mucky-mucks in the operation. Or maybe they were Zealots and maybe these Zealots decided that this might be a good military commander that could lead an insurrection against Rome. I don't think they were those, but I just think Jesus wanted them to examine what their motives were.

You know what I think they were? I think they were a couple of simple bewildered puzzled guys trying to figure out if this was really Messiah, and if He was they wanted to give Him everything they were. You see, they had doubts. Isn't that a beautiful thing? You'll never know all about Jesus Christ till you meet Him. I've met people who say, "Well once I get rid of all the complications and I really understand it, then I'll meet Christ." You'll never meet Him. They were puzzled but they knew that if this was Messiah they were ready to give their lives to Him.

Have you ever asked yourself, "What are you seeking?" What do you want? What do you want out of Jesus Christ? What do you want from Him? Or do you want anything? What do you want in life? Do you want self-glory, self-will, prestige, power, popularity, money, health? Sorry, Christ can't guarantee you any of those commodities...in spite of what Christian Science says. You might not be healthy. In spite of what some of the other cults say, you might not have enough money. What does Christ guarantee? Oh, a few things like love, peace, joy, meaning, purpose, hope. It all depends on what you want. What do you want? If you want what Christ can offer, He's there if you're honest.

I want you to see a beautiful thing. They said to Christ, "Where do You dwell?" And the Greek scholars take this sentence and kind of tear it apart a little bit and they think that maybe what was in their minds was this, they could have said, "Could we go with You?" But they didn't. Evidently they

still didn't want to bother Jesus and I think it's Godae(?) makes a very interesting point of this, he says that evidently they were just going to find out His address and come and see Him at a later time, make an appointment, see. But I love this thing, they said, "Where are You?" You know, like we don't want to bother You but if we just knew where Your place was we'd come and see You in a couple of days when You get kind of relaxed. And look what He says to them in verse 39, fantastic. He says unto them...what? I'll have an appointment next Tuesday at three. What does He say? "Come on, come on, today is the day of...what?...salvation." Jesus never put anybody off. That's a beautiful thought. I would to God that were always true in our ministry. Christ never put anybody off. I always remember when He walked in the city and you remember Zacchaeus? He went up in a tree because he couldn't see because of the crowd. And he climbed up in a tree and I'll never forget what Christ said to him. Christ walked along, saw him up there and said, "Hey, Zacchaeus, get down from that tree, I'm coming to your house...when?...today." And you better believe he got down off that tree.

Christ never put anybody off. He never was too busy. You never have to worry about Christ having time for you. He stood over Jerusalem and cried because they wouldn't come to Him. That's a beautiful thing about Jesus Christ, He's only got the whole universe to worry about but He's got every second of every day for me. Fantastic thought, isn't it? Come and see. Listen, you can stand around and wonder who Messiah is, you can have a lot of theological discourse about it but finally you just better go and see who He is. How do you do that? You sit down with Him and you have some time.

You say, "Well how can you sit down with Him and have some time with Him to find out who He is?" Simple, Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear My voice and open the door, I'll come in and sup with Him and he with Me." You want to get to know Him, meet Him. You can stand on the outside looking in and you miss the whole point. Come with your doubts and invite Christ to be real to you and He will be.

And so, He said come and see and they came and they saw. Verse 39, they saw where He dwelt but they also saw it was spiritualized, didn't they? They saw a lot more than the house that He happened to be using for that day because the next day He left the country. It's a good thing they went that day. You'll see not only physically but spiritually. And then I just love this next statement. It's just really fantastic. At the end of verse 39 and you just pass over it, and I began to think about this and what is this saying? "For it was about the tenth hour," well what is that? So who cares what time it is? So you know who wrote this chapter? John. So you know who was one of these two disciples? John. So you know who cares what time it was? John does. Why? Because ten o'clock one January afternoon in a Galilean, on a Galilean day his life got transformed. John is 60 years ahead of this. He's writing this 60 years later and he says ten o'clock...ten o'clock. What happened at ten o'clock, John? Everything happened. Ten o'clock January Galilean day the dividing line in my life. It was six o'clock for me on a summer day in a place called Eutaw, Alabama and I met Jesus Christ. I had just been thrown out of a car at 75 miles an hour, and when God got ready to talk to me He made sure I listened. And it was that day at six o'clock that I met Jesus Christ...six o'clock a summer afternoon,

the dividing time in my life. I'll never forget that. Neither could John...ten o'clock, he met Jesus.

I imagine many of you remember, don't you? When it was? Maybe you don't, maybe you do. John remembered and he went and stayed all day with Jesus and it all began at ten o'clock. You know what that tells me? Listen to this. Salvation is no religious process. It is a historical event. It may take time for the Spirit of God to bring you to that point but when it happens it happens, ten o'clock in the morning. You say, "Well my Bible says four o'clock," don't worry about it, that just means that they have accepted the fact that it's Jewish time, I believe John always uses Roman time. And you'll find it again in the times around the cross. John will differ with the other writers and if you don't take it as Roman time, you've got all kinds of problems. You take it as Roman time which starts at midnight, it's ten o'clock in the morning. The reason that you have to accept that is that it says they abode with Him that day. If it's four o'clock in the afternoon, He wouldn't even get there till five o'clock. John uses Roman time and so it's ten o'clock in the morning. And they spent the whole day with Jesus.

I don't know what went on but I can imagine. Oh, I mean, just unbelievable. Spending the whole day with the Messiah that every Jew since the beginning of Jews had been dreaming about. And here are His first two and I could just see them sitting there hanging on every word, the expression of His person.

You know what's really exciting? Just grab this thought. What they had waited centuries to experience in one afternoon, you and I have every moment of every day. Constant communion with Jesus Christ. I tell you, that's exciting. I get blessed.

Verse 40 tells us who they were or who one of them was. "One of the two who heard John speak and followed him," that is John the Baptist speak, "and followed Him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother." So we automatically know the other one is John cause he never mentions his name. He never even mentions his brother's name. And when he's got a chance to introduce his mother, he doesn't even mention her name. He never brings up anybody in his family. But we know it's John. And there's another dimension to this that's really interesting, but before we consider just that dimension, let's look at Andrew.

Now Andrew was Simon Peter's brother, poor Andrew. If we didn't qualify his name by calling him Peter's brother, he might not be too well known. But everybody knows Peter. Andrew was just kind of there, you know. You say, "Oh, yeah, not too much of a guy." You know there's something fantastic about Andrew, you know what he...every time we meet him in the Bible, three times, he's always doing the same thing...he's three times in the New Testament and three times he's doing the same thing. You know what he's doing? Bringing somebody to Jesus. Isn't that fantastic? Here he goes and gets Peter, loud-mouth rash Peter. You know, I call Peter the Apostle with the foot-shaped mouth. He was always saying the wrong thing.

So Andrew, here he goes and gets Simon Peter his brother and brings him to Jesus. In John chapter 6 he goes and gets a little boy with the fishes and he brings him to Jesus. Later on in John 12 verse 22 he gets some Gentiles and brings them to Jesus. You know what he spent his life doing? Bringing people to Jesus. Oh he wasn't a great orator. He never gave a speech, never gave a big sermon. There's not any in the Bible. He wasn't a great logician like Paul. And I don't think he ever wrote a book, at least not a canonical book that's in the New Testament, I don't think he ever wrote anything. What did he do? Nothing much, just spent his life bringing people to Jesus. What a beautiful character, what a beautiful character...and what a commendation. And I love his mode of evangelism.

Watch this, verse 41, terrific. He goes and gets Simon and he says unto him..."Simon, we're taking a religious survey..." No, he's rather adept at the direct method. He says, "Simon...what, what does he say?...we have found...what?...the Messiah." He doesn't beat around the bush. No, there's sometimes when the indirect method is necessary obviously, but not with Andrew. "Hey, Simon," he says, "we found the Messiah. I mean, let's not dinker around with it, here it is. This is what I want you to know, the Messiah is here. We found the Messiah." What a tremendous statement. Just imagine, the anointed one, the Mashiah of the Old Testament Hebrew, the Meshiha of Aramaic, the Christos of Greek, the anointed one of God. And we read it in Psalm 2:2 at the beginning of our service. God's anointed Son, the King of Israel, we've found Him, we've found Him. The search is over. We found the wonderful, the counselor, the mighty God, the Father of eternity, the Prince of Peace, we found the seed of Genesis 3:15, we found the Son of Psalm 2:2, we found the King of 2 Samuel 7, we found the Lamb, the branch, the root, we found Him. You see, that's the human side...who really found who? The Son of Man is come to seek. But, you see, John's showing us the human side. We found Him. And the human reaction. Centuries of waiting for David's greater Son are over, He's here.

You say, "Well, what happens when the seeking soul finds the object of his search?" Well you know what happens, he doesn't stop searching, he stops searching for the object that he was searching for and starts searching for another object. As soon as Andrew found the object of his search, he didn't stop searching, he just started searching out others to bring them to Christ, didn't he? He found Christ and then he found his brother.

Now I want you to notice something that's very interesting here. You'll notice that it says in verse 41 that he first finds his own brother. And the word "first" is protos here which is a little different form. Most often the form would be proton and the protos form which is the word "first" implies that there has to be a second. Now watch this because this is a very interesting thing and most commentators agree with this interpretation and it's very interesting. He...let me read it to you in a way that might lay it so you can understand it...he first finds his own brother, that implies that secondly John found his own brother. And so, the preponderance of scholarship would agree that not only in that little

statement do you have Andrew finding his brother, but unnamed John finding unnamed James. So here we have the conversion of John and James without them ever being mentioned by the use of the Greek words that John chooses to use. And so they are the first four disciples...Andrew and Peter and James and John...the first four all from the same location, Bethsaida.

And notice in verse 42 just the beginning this thought, he brought him to Jesus. And as we said, this is what he spent his life doing. But notice in verse 42 it says, "And when Jesus beheld him He said, Thou art Simon the son of Jonah." I know you, I know you, and there's a little tinge of sovereignty again in there. I know you. You're that hot-headed impulsive rash vacillating unstable guy, you're Simon. I imagine Simon had kind of a reputation. He couldn't have missed, you know, must have had a reputation. What good could this guy do the Messiah? So He says to him, "You are Simon but you are going to become Cephas," that's the Aramaic word for rock or stone. And being interpreted it says a stone, which is petras or Peter. You're going to become Peter, a stone. He says it in Aramaic and also in Greek. He says, "Peter, you may be a marshmallow but you're going to become a stone."

Now it didn't happen easy. It took a long time for Peter to become a stone. He tripped all through his life with Christ. He was always making ridiculous suggestions. "Let's stay up on this temple and build booths," at the transfiguration. "Lord, You're not going away." "Get thee behind Me, Satan." "I'll defend You, Lord," and he whacked off the ear of Malchus. He was always doing...he was still soft for a long time. But here you have a prophetic statement, Jesus says you are going to be called stone. Some day you'll be one. And the constant reminder that every time somebody called Peter's name he was reminded that he was supposed to be a rock must have been a challenge. But eventually Peter became a rock. After the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, you see him and you see a rock. He denied Christ three times, the prior experience. And now he stands up in Jerusalem, preaches a message and indicts the whole population, tells them they killed the Prince of life. And then he goes on from there to preach the person of Christ and 3,000 people were saved. You read his epistles, 1 and 2 Peter and you see the tremendous rock-hard stand he takes on discipline, on discipleship and on sound doctrine. And then you see him at the end of his life being crucified upside down and you say, "Yeah, Peter became a rock," and he did. In fact, he was one of the foundation stones of the Apostles upon which Christ built the church. And so He calls him a rock and we are introduced to Peter.

And we're going to fall in love with Peter as we study throughout the life of Christ. What a change. Christ can change a life, transformation. It didn't happen over night, and that's a good principle to learn. Some people think that salvation is an instant panacea for all your neuroses and all your psychological quirks. It isn't. If you've got a bad temper, you're going to get saved and still have a bad temper, but at least you'll have the resource to begin to work on it. That's why the Christian life is the process of sanctification as God little by little molds you, or chisels, depending on the case, to make you into the image of Christ. It's a process by which you grow into His image. All right, this is what maturity is all about.

So we've seen the seeking soul. And we've seen it from the human side as we saw Peter, we saw John and Andrew and James by implication, and we see the human aspect more than a divine. Now as we enter into the second part we see the seeking Savior and for verses 43 to 51 which we'll consider very briefly because the narrative is very obvious, we will find the seeking Savior. And this time we see salvation from the divine side. We saw it already in a little way in the first part, but here it's fully developed.

Now verse 43 says this, "The day following, the next day, Jesus would go forth," this is the fourth day since we began with the witness of John the Baptist, "Jesus would go forth into Galilee." He started toward Galilee. "And He finds Philip and Philip believed in Him." No. He said, "Follow Me." Now there is the divine dimension of salvation, the seeking Savior. He walked over to Philip and said, "Philip, follow Me." That's the divine side of salvation. It doesn't record Philip's response. It doesn't record Philip's salvation. It just says, now you want to know who Philip was, he was the one from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter, that's the Philip. It doesn't talk a thing about how he believed or what he believed or why he believed or what his thoughts were like it did in the first part. It's simply the divine side of salvation. "Philip, you have been chosen by God, follow Me." You know what it says in John 15:16? Tremendous verse, don't ever forget it, Jesus said to His disciples one day, listen to this, "You have not chosen Me...what?...I have chosen you and ordained you." That's the divine side. And so here we see the divine side, follow Me. A magnetic drawing of God's power.

Now, of course, you say, "Well did Philip ever believe or did he just get zapped right into the thing?" No, of course he believed. You just saw the human side has to be there, but the emphasis shifts so you'll understand the balance. Sure he believed, it's not recorded. It's enough to know that God called him, for when God calls that settles it. What did Jesus say? "All that the Father gives to Me shall come to Me."

Okay, so we see then the beginning of the seeking Savior's ministry, we see it from the divine side as He calls. And He calls this man Philip who was from the same town where Andrew and Peter and James and John were all from. And as I said, there's no record of his conversion.

Now in verse 45 Philip does exactly what the other two guys did. He first finds somebody else immediately. He..this is something that salvation...have you ever, you know you see somebody who is a new Christian and they've got this fantastic reality of who Christ is and you can hardly restrict them from wanting to share it. Really the effective evangelism begins at that point, that's why Christ indicted the church at Ephesus because they left their first love. You know, people think, well the more you know Christ, the more zealous you are. Well most of that time that's not true. Evangelism wanes in proportion to the years that people are Christians, often, if they're not really honest disciples. But in the first warmth of this experience, Philip went right after Nathanael and said unto him similar to what Andrew had said, however, he takes it purely from the human side, "We have found Him of

whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write."

And, of course, they knew who that was. There's no question about that. Him of whom they wrote, that was Messiah. Who is He? "He is Jesus of Nazareth the son of Joseph, that carpenter, or that mason," as the same Greek word means carpentry and masonry, it may have been that he did both because the houses were built out of stone, not wood but there was window framing and door framing. It may have been that Joseph was both. But he said this is Jesus from Nazareth. And Nathanael couldn't believe his ear. Nazareth? Messiah comes out of that place? And he says that in so many words in verse 46, but he's honest. Nathanael said unto him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" I mean, what's He doing up there?

It was interesting because there was probably a pretty good rivalry between Bethsaida and Nazareth. There was a lot of rivalry in the towns in those days, kind of like local high schools. And everybody had their territorial rivalries, very interesting, and the battles that went on often times. But he says, "You mean Messiah started in that place?"

And I love Philip's answer, same answer. "Well let me sit down and discuss with you the merits of Messiah." No...no. He says unto him, what does it say at the end of verse 46? "Come and see." Same thing again. Don't stand around speculating about who Christ is, if you're really honest and you want to know if He's the Son of God, invite Him into your life and find out.

The honesty, that's the greatest apologetic in Christianity, did you know that? That's the most simple and most profound defense of Christianity there is...come and see. You can stand up and say you can disprove evolution, you can prove the Bible is scientifically accurate, you can lay out all the prophecies under the sun but nobody is going to get saved until they come and see. And you can't argue with that one, can you? If you're ever talking to someone about Christ, that's the one argument that they'll never be able to argue against. All right, you've got a lot of intellectual arguments, why don't you just invite Christ in and see? Then you've gotten down to the basis, haven't you? Come and see, come and see. We found Him, come and see...see, of course, with a spiritual eye.

And so, in verse 47 he comes and Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him and He says of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile," and interestingly quoting something from the life of Jacob in Genesis 27, that same statement was made of him. But He says, and He's quoting Jacob here and will again in verse 51...from the life of Jacob, not Jacob especially, but..He says, "There's an honest heart," again see there's the honest seeking heart. There's the honest seeking heart.

But now notice in verse 48 again we see the sovereign side of salvation, the seeking Savior because Christ has already prepared this guy, He's already programmed. Watch this, "Nathanael says unto Him, 'How do You know me?' Jesus answered and said unto him...watch...`Before Philip called thee when thou wast under the fig tree I saw thee.'" I know everything about you. He could have said,

"Who do you think made you?" And whatever it was that Christ had implied to Nathanael, he got the message because in verse 49 he said, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God, the King of Israel." Remember the woman at the well? She said, "Never a man told me the things that that man told me, He's got to be the Messiah." Nathanael couldn't believe that Jesus Christ was reading his mind when he was sitting under a tree where he couldn't even be seen. Jesus said, "I knew you when you weren't even here, when you were over there under that fig tree." He's probably thinking, "How did He know I was under a fig tree?" You don't need to tell Him anything about Nathanael, He knew everything about Nathanael, every hair of his head. And Nathanael said, "Oh, that's a convincing one."

Hey, can you see the beauty of the person of Jesus Christ? Can you see the tremendous preparation in the heart of a man? Here is Nathanael, he comes to Christ. The simplest little thing and he believed, right? Jesus didn't do a miracle for him. No big deal. And at the same time you have multitudes who followed Christ all His life, saw everything He did and concluded that He did it by the power of Satan. What's the difference? The sovereignty of God. And so he says, "Come and see," and he came and saw and he replies with that tremendous sweeping answer, "Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel." Why those two together? Because as we read earlier, Psalm 2 puts those two together...the anointed one is the King and the Son of Psalm 2:2.

And so, what a testimony. See what John the Apostle is doing now? He's got a lot of testimonies. He's got the testimony of John the Baptist who said, "Behold, the Lamb of God." He's now got the testimony of Andrew and John who said...where is it?... "The Messiah is here, we found the Messiah," verse 41. And now he adds to that the testimony of Nathanael who says, "Thou art the Son of God, the King of Israel." You see him building his case? No question about it.

Now in response to that in verse 50, "Jesus answered and said unto him, 'Because I said unto you I saw you under the fig tree, did you believe? You believed because of that miracle of My omniscience? You believed...and this implies a yes answer and there are four kinds of class conditionals in the Greek and this implies a yes, in other words, He's saying...You actually believe because of that miracle of knowing you before you got here? Listen...He says...I am going to show you greater than that.'" He says, "Nathanael, you're just getting in on the beginning.

You say, "What's the rest?" Verse 51, now hang on to this one. "He saith unto him, Verily, verily I say unto you, hereafter you shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." Now commentators have had a field day with that verse. Let me see if I can reduce it to a simple concept in just a matter of seconds. Listen. That comes out of Genesis 28, now hang on to this, this is very important. In Genesis 28 Jacob saw a ladder, remember it? And Jacob saw a ladder going from earth to heaven and angels going up and down the ladder and Jacob was dreaming of a day...now watch this...dreaming of a day when man would have access to God. You see, that's what that ladder represented, from earth to heaven and angels were ministering to that

ladder to keep it open, to keep it available, to keep it working so that man could go to God. And Jacob was dreaming of that day.

Do you know who that ladder is? The Son of Man, look at it, what does it say? You shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending not upon a ladder but upon what? On a man. You know what He was saying to Nathanael? He was saying, "Nathanael, it's wonderful that you know I'm omniscient, but let Me tell you something better, you now have permanent open access to God through Me." Isn't that a beautiful thought? "I am that golden ladder." And you say, "What are the angels doing there?" Who ministered to Christ? Who ministered to Him after His temptation, through His life? The angels did. Who ministers to God? The angels. Who ministers to us? The angels. That's a busy place, you see them up and down, up and down.

He says, "Nathanael, it's good that you appreciate My omniscience, but wait a minute, I want to show you that you have open access to heaven." Tremendous promise...tremendous promise.

Well we see some exciting things. We see the two sides of salvation, the seeking soul and the seeking Savior, the balance of salvation. If you're honest and you want to know Jesus Christ, if you're honest in your heart it's because the Savior has sought you out, God has drawn you, the Spirit has convicted you. And if you'll put your trust in Christ even with your doubts, you'll know if you'll come and see. Christ is available. And when you meet Him you have open access to heaven. What a thrill...what a thrill.

And so, today we have seen the passage that began the work of Christ. And I say in conclusion, it's one thing to see the beginning of the work of Christ, I trust you're experiencing it in your own life. If you can sense the Holy Spirit of God in your heart convicting you of sin and the need for repentance and the desire to have what Christ can give you, love and peace, joy, forgiveness, freedom from guilt, all of these things, and you're really honest and you want Jesus Christ, if you'll come to Him with an honest heart, He'll meet you. If you'll ask Him into your life, He'll be there. Why don't you do it right now, right where you sit, just invite Christ in. Meet Him...meet Him. Get to know Him. Start that love relationship with Him. I trust that you did invite Him in.

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