

“Five who Followed in Faith!”**I. INTRO:**

- A. This Tuesday, Jan.20, our next president **Barack Obama** will be sworn into office! I would like to remind us of our **Biblical obligations**:
 - B. **He is God’s sovereign choice!**
 1. Rom.13:1,2 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority **except from God**, and the authorities that exist are **appointed by God**. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.
 - a) A reminder that this was written by Paul when **Nero** was emperor of Rome.
 - b) **Barack Obama** is **God’s sovereign choice** for our country.
- C. **Honor him!** 1 Pet.2:17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king
 1. It is **unacceptable** for Christians to speak **disrespectfully** of their president.
 - a) You can speak out against any **policies**, but not **him**.
 - b) Ex.22:28 You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.
 - c) Eccl.10:20 Do not curse the king, even in your thought;
 - d) If you have a tendency toward doing that, I encourage you to “**grow up!**”
- D. **Pray for Barack Obama!**
 1. 1 Tim.2:1-4 Therefore I exhort first of all that **supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks** be made for all men, for **kings** and **all who are in authority**, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
 2. Shame on the Christian community who has come against Pastor Rick Warren for accepting the honored position to pray at the inauguration.
 - a) Billy Graham(a democrat) participated in **9 presidential inaugurations**: [Lyndon Johnson; Richard Nixon(twice); Ronald Reagan(twice); George H.W.Bush; Bill Clinton(twice); George W. Bush] **Republican or Democrat**.
 3. **Pray daily for your president** (a diff road ahead taking over the problems of our nation!)
 - a) Let’s Pray for him now...

E. **Intro:**

- F. Do you remember the time when you first realized Jesus **died in your place?**
When you came to Him by **faith?** When He embraced you with **forgiveness?**
- G. Jesus **called** a few men to follow Him; He **transformed** their lives; then **used them** to transform others.
1. In each case: there is an **evangelistic approach**, which creates **interest**, & then a **conversation** with Jesus, which leads to a **life-changing decision!**

II. **FIVE WHO FOLLOWED IN FAITH! (35-42)**

- A. **ANDREW & ANOTHER DISCIPLE!** (35-39)
- B. The next day - *John's daily diary* records a 3-day period (note: 29,35, 43)
- C. John didn't name the 2nd disciple, most think it is *John the Apostle*.
- D. (38) You finally meet Messiah & what are you going to ask Him? What a funny question!
- E. When Andrew and John ran up behind Jesus, what did Jesus do?
1. He casually turned and said, "What do you seek?"
 2. He didn't give them a **sales pitch** about all the things He could do for them.
He didn't give them all the **benefits** of being His disciple.
He didn't even ask them to **follow Him**.
 3. His first words to them were, "What do you seek?" But they didn't tell Him, they fired back another question, "**Rabbi**, Where are you staying."
 - a) They probably addressed Him as Rabbi to let Jesus know that they weren't interested in just a **brief conversation**. They were really wanting to **know more about Him**, & had deeper questions of life.
 - b) Q: Are you looking for a **rabbi/teacher** this morning? Do you have questions that you just can't figure out on your own? Questions about life & death, good & evil, heaven and hell? Questions about purpose and direction and meaning and hope? Jesus is telling you, "Come and see."
- F. **The Approach?** Mass evangelism; Jesus confronted him directly on the street.
- G. **The Message?** "Behold the Lamb of God".
- H. **The Response?** They followed Christ.

I. **PETER!** (40-42)

- J. Here's an **interesting observation** someone made of Andrew: Every time he is mentioned he is bringing someone to Jesus!
1. In 1:42 he brings **his brother** Simon to Jesus; In 6:8,9 he brought a **lad** with a simple lunch to Jesus, that by it our Lord miraculously fed a multitude;
In 12:22 he helped direct the **seeking Greeks** to Jesus.

2. (Spurgeon) “I will not believe that you have tasted of the honey of the gospel, if you can eat it all yourself.”
- K. This soul winner starts at home!
1. Often today, we want to get the new believer away from any unbeliever...
 2. “Get rid of your **old friends**. Your **family** probably wont understand. You need **new friends**, & we’re your **new family**!”
- L. Simon’s **new name** symbolized a **new beginning** in his life.
- M. We have found the Messiah!
- N. **Petros** - Seeing beyond the rough edges!
1. Peter had a lot of rough edges. At times hardheaded & abrasive.
 2. **But Jesus** was able to see beyond all that - beyond the rough edges to the precious stone beneath. To see beyond stubbornness to stability.
- O. **Jesus** had a **jeweler’s eye** for spotting a diamond in the rough. **Do you?**
1. **Can you see the potential in others?** (example: Marie/Haiti “She will be a leader!”)
 2. **Can you see the potential in your children, in your mate, in your friend?**
- P. There are over **130 species of minerals** that have been cut into **gemstones** with **50 species in common use**.
- Q. Gemstones are first **Cut**; then **Shaped** on the grinding wheel; then **Polished**.
1. Often they are **Treated**, to enhance **color or clarity**.
 2. Sometimes **Heated** (some Ruby’s); Sometimes **Irradiated/Radiation** (Blue Topaz); **Waxing/Oiling** (Natural fissures; some Emeralds, Turquoise); **Fracture Filling** (Diamonds, Emeralds, Sapphire).
- R. When a jeweler first sees a **rough stone**, a **raw gemstone**, he must see the **final product**: He pictures it *Cut; Shaped; Polished; Treated; Heated; Irradiated; Waxed; Oiled;* & depending on your past...maybe even *Fracture Filled!*
1. Sometimes just the **simple recognition** of the presence of **the Jewel** is all the encouragement people need to start to chipping away at their own rough edges, to bring that precious stone to light!¹
- S. **The Approach?** Personal Evangelism, brother to brother.
- T. **The Message?** “We have found the Messiah”.
- U. **The Response?** Peter’s face-to-face encounter w/Jesus, giving him the encouragement he needed to follow Christ.

¹ Chuck Swindoll; Commentary on John; pg.26

V. **PHILIP!** (43)

- W. After a *sleep over* with Jesus...
- X. Jesus initiates *going & finding & calling* Philip.
- Y. Simple invitation, “Follow Me!”
- Z. We have a **very brief character sketch** of Philip, thanks only to John’s gospel.
 - 1. We’ll see him as “*scrutinizing, logical, somewhat pessimistic, & having a little difficulty stepping out in faith*,” throughout this gospel.

AA. **The Approach?** Cold-Contact evangelism; Jesus confronted him directly on the street.

BB. **The Message?** “Follow Me”, simple & straightforward.

CC. **The Response?** Philip obviously followed Him.

DD. **NATHANAEL!** (44-51)

EE.(45) Philip shares his experience with another, Nathanael.

FF. **We have found Him** to whom the Scriptures gave witness has been found!

GG.(46) **Nathanael the skeptic.** “*Nazareth, you mean sin city itself? Come on Philip*”

- 1. But Jesus turns his **skepticism** to **faith!**

HH.(47) **No deceit/guile** - Hebrew word for guile originally referred to “*the bait used in catching fish.*” A word that described when Jacob **deceived** Isaac.

II. (49) During Jesus’ trial before Pilate, His **kingship** was the paramount issue, & it is still the issue today. **Who is the king of your life?**

JJ. (51) Christ alludes to ***Jacob’s ladder*** Gen.28:10-17.

- 1. Christ reveals the glory of heaven & opens it for us to enter in.

KK. Christ is “God’s ladder” between earth & heaven. (Like bridge analogy)

- 1. Jesus **replaces** the ladder; Jesus is God’s **link w/earth**; Jesus is the **new Bethel** (**God’s dwelling place**).
- 2. He **reveals** God to men & **takes** men to God.
- 3. He **opens** the way to heaven & is the **way** to heaven.
- 4. Christ is God’s “**stairway to heaven!**” (or if Led Zeppelin comes to mind); Christ is God’s “**staircase to glory!**”
- 5. He **bridges the gap** between earth & heaven. (Morris; LKGNT)

LL. **The Approach?** Resembles Andrews approach to Peter (Personal Evangelism); but it's also possible that **the Word of God** played an integral part in this.

1. **The Jewish Talmud** encouraged sincere, searching Jews to seek out places of solitude where they could pray, meditate, & study the Scriptures.
2. **Rabbinic writings** give evidence that scholars & students often **studied under shade trees**. Perhaps Nathanael was digging into the OT prophecies of the **Messiah** at the very time Jesus had seen Him.²

MM. **The Message?** “We have found Him of whom **Moses** in the Law, & also the **prophets**, wrote - Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

NN. **The Response?** Nathanael’s unqualified statement of faith, “**Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!**”

OO. **Wrap up!**

PP. **What raw gemstones:** *Amber Andrew; Sapphire Cephas; Fire-Opal Philip; & Nephrite Nathanael*...one day to be beautiful polished precious stones.

QQ. **Andrew & the other disciple** were saved through **a preacher** (John the Baptist).

RR. **Peter** found Christ through **his brother** Andrew.

SS. **Philip** was called **by Christ personally**.

TT. **Nathanael** found Christ through the **Word of God & Philip's testimony**.

UU. **Andrew**(mass evangelism); **Peter**(personal); **Philip**(cold-contact); **Nathanael**(the Word).

1. God uses **different people & circumstances** to bring people to His Son.
2. He is a God of **infinite variety**.³
3. Which **style** did you come to Christ with?

VV. Jesus calls each one individually; uses different approaches; but the same Master calls

1. Q: **Have you headed His call?**
2. **Read 1 Chron. 28:9** David wisely counsels his son Solomon, “**If you seek Him, He will be found by you!**”

WW. **The disciples:** The 1st 5 followed in Faith, though faulted & flawed. Disciples, ordinary human beings. No job descriptions given. Even Mary Magdalene though once afflicted by 7 demons wasn't disqualified. Jesus didn't spend a lot of time looking for the most qualified people. Instead, He chose people who were still childlike; not afraid to leave the known comforts of this world; even the security of their jobs; or their reasonable way of life,...to follow Jesus. “**Come & See!**” “**Follow Me!**”

² Chuck Swindoll; John; pg.28

³ Warren Wiersbe; Outlines of the NT.