

MARK OF A DISCIPLE

Disciples of Christ extend Christ's invitation to others.

SCRIPTURE

JOHN 1:43-51

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

John the Baptist was the forerunner of the Gospel message. He was tasked with the honor of introducing the Messiah to God's chosen people, Israel. His message was one of repentance and getting ready for the arrival of the Christ. John's God-given authority drew people from all over to hear him speak about the coming Christ. When Jesus arrived, John quickly pointed to Jesus and said, "There he is, the one I've been telling you about, the Lamb of God." As John and Andrew did before, Philip invited Nathanael to come and see the Messiah for himself.

Check out the **Teacher Prep Video** for this lesson: <https://vimeo.com/933475856>

FACILITATOR NOTE: We've giving you a lot of teaching material. Don't feel like you should cover everything here. You know your group better than anyone. Choose the material that will best fit your students and skip over the rest.



OPENING

PRAYER

1-2 minutes

Start your small group by asking the Lord to bless your discussion and time together.

OPTIONAL: Give students an opportunity to lead the prayer.

OPENING QUESTIONS

3-5 minutes

- How was the week? What's the best thing that's happened? Anything major going on?
- When has God tried to get your attention this week? How did you respond?



EXPLORE

EXPLORE GOD'S WORD

3-5 minutes

Today we are in our second lesson in the *Come and See* series. We will be studying the story of two friends: one already knew Jesus, and one was skeptical. When we don't know what to say or how to answer the skeptic, we don't need to worry! Sometimes the best thing disciples of Christ can do is extend Christ's invitation to others.

Read John 1:43–45 and discuss 1–2 of these questions:

7–10 minutes

- What have you been so excited about that you couldn't keep it to yourself?
Answers will vary but may include making the team, getting a lead role, going on an awesome vacation, your birthday is coming up, etc.
- Why is Philip so excited to tell Nathanael about Jesus?
Not only is Nathanael a friend, he is a fellow Jew. Both men would have studied the Scriptures since childhood, and both were expectantly waiting for the Messiah to fulfill the Old Testament prophecies!
- What do you think motivated Philip to share Jesus with Nathanael?
Because they were friends, Philip loved and cared about Nathanael. He wanted Nathanael to know the Good News because it changes everything!



ASK INTENTIONAL QUESTIONS

Say something like: The invitation that Jesus gave to his disciples to “follow me” changed them forever. None of them were ever the same after their encounters with Jesus. Jesus made such a difference in their lives that they could not keep it to themselves. The news was just too good!

Read John 1:46 and discuss 1–2 of these questions:

7–10 minutes

- Why was Nathanael initially skeptical about Jesus?
Jesus was from Nazareth, which wasn't known for anything significant. He had a preconceived notion of who the Messiah was supposed to be, and Jesus didn't meet those standards.
- What do you think are some of the barriers to people coming to Jesus today?
Answers will vary, but some might be: the church's reputation, being skeptical of the reliability of the Bible, people who say Jesus changed their lives but they live the same way as everyone else, etc.
- What was your initial response to Jesus when you started your faith journey?
Answers will vary but may include being skeptical, overcoming doubts, etc.



ASK INTENTIONAL QUESTIONS

Say something like: Jesus isn't afraid of our doubts. He wants to invite each one of us into a relationship with himself. He knows us, sees us, loves us, and gently calls us to himself.

FACILITATOR NOTE: If you have extra time, go through the next set of questions. If not, skip to the **Connection** section.

Read John 1:47–51 and discuss 1–2 of these questions:

7–10 minutes

- How did Jesus show that he knew Nathanael?
In verse 42, Jesus refers to Nathanael's character. Then, in verse 48, Jesus tells Nathanael that he saw him under the fig tree. There was something about the way Jesus told Nathanael about himself that got his attention.
- Do you think this was enough “proof” for Nathanael?
Nathanael's belief wasn't only about proof. The Holy Spirit also allowed Nathanael to believe, much like when Mary recognized the resurrected Jesus in the garden (John 20:15–16). His spiritual “eyes” were opened.
- Jesus knew Nathanael before they had ever met. How does it affect you knowing that Jesus—God himself—knows you better than you know yourself?
Answers will vary but may include the following: God is not distant and uninterested; he is a personal and relational God, etc.



ASK INTENTIONAL QUESTIONS

Say something like: No one has a real encounter with Jesus and stays the same. He loves us, heals us, knows us, sets us free, challenges us, and transforms us for good. His purposes are always good. Because of this, we can't keep him to ourselves. When you've been invited into the family of God, it only makes sense for us to invite others into the wholeness of life we've been given. They need to come and see! Jesus will meet them there.



CONNECT & APPLY

CONNECTION

5-7 minutes

Show your students how Scripture connects to their lives: Use the example below OR share a personal story of an experience you had sharing your faith.

Example: Michelle became a Christ-follower at church camp last summer. That choice came with some pretty drastic changes in her life that Michelle didn't expect. Her anxiety has been replaced by peace. She now sees clearly how poorly she sometimes treated her family and friends and how damaging that selfish behavior was to those relationships. Her desires and priorities have also shifted, including a desire to invite others to meet Jesus and experience the life changes she has. Because she is still new in her faith, she doesn't know a lot about the Bible and is pretty positive she won't know many answers to questions her friends will have about God. Still, she knows the difference Jesus has made in her life and is excited to tell her friends about it.



SHARE PERSONAL STORIES

- Other than inviting people to church, how can you invite people to “come and see” Jesus?

You can introduce others to Jesus through how you live. The way you love them, encourage them, speak freely of what God has done and is doing in your life, offer to pray for them, remind them that God loves them and that he knows them by name, etc. You can also invite them to a Bible study or offer to read through one of the Gospels with them so they can “see” for themselves who Jesus is in the Scriptures.

MARK OF A DISCIPLE

2-3 minutes

Disciples of Christ extend Christ's invitation to others.

Use the Mark of a Disciple to reinforce the lesson and challenge students to apply it to their lives.

APPLY IT

5-10 minutes

Just as Jesus already knew Nathanael, Jesus already knows your friends and family who need him. Pass the invitation along. Who has he put on your heart to invite to “come and see” for themselves?



MAKE LIFE APPLICATION

Be specific:

- What are you going to do?
- When are you going to do it?
- Is there someone who can keep you accountable?



HOLD STUDENTS ACCOUNTABLE

FACILITATOR NOTE: Allow students who are comfortable to share their plans for application. This may encourage or spark ideas for other students, plus add a level of accountability.



CLOSING

PRAYER

2–3 minutes

Take time to pray. Pray for students to be so moved and excited about what Jesus is doing in their lives and who he is that they can't help but invite others to come and see for themselves.

Write down any prayer requests mentioned and ask your students about them at your next meeting.

MEMORY VERSE

Send the memory verse graphic included in your download to your students later this week to keep the conversation going.

"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

John 3:17 (ESV)

NOTES

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