

Come and See! *The Journey Begins*

As Frodo Baggins left the safety of the Shire on an adventure to get rid of the Ring, we are embarking on a journey together with Christ in which God will take us where he chooses. Jesus is *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. He is the *resurrection and the life*. He came that we might have *the more abundant life* with him.

Journey Together:

1. What's the best trip you have ever taken?
2. Describe your greatest childhood fantasy adventure.
3. How can we relate the Christian life as a great and exciting adventure?

Note: When John describes what it was like having been with Jesus, boring was nowhere in the vocabulary. Notice his reflections on life with Jesus...

1 John 1:1-3 *"¹From the very first day, we were there, taking it all in—we heard it with our own ears, saw it with our own eyes, verified it with our own hands. ²The Word of Life appeared right before our eyes; we saw it happen! And now we're telling you in most sober prose that what we witnessed was, incredibly, this: The infinite Life of God himself took shape before us. ³We saw it, we heard it, and now we're telling you so you can experience it along with us, this experience of communion with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ"* (Message Bible)

Road Map: John 1:35-51.

4. John and Andrew wanted to hang out with Jesus. What do you think impressed John, Andrew, and, in turn, Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel, to want to know more about Jesus? What indications did they have that he was, in fact, the Messiah? What was Jesus' response to them?

5. Why did Nathanael question if anything good could come from Nazareth? What might have been questionable about Jesus' background?
6. Jesus showed an interest in each of these early followers – especially Peter. What nickname might Jesus give you?
7. What are some obstacles in the way of you discovering more about Jesus?
8. What intrigues you most about Jesus? What seems to be drawing you to want to know more about the life of God? What great things do you want to see from God?
9. What further questions do you have from this week's reading?
10. How can this group pray for you right now?

My Journey:

1. How has God been using *Journey* in your life this week?
2. What were the Jewish expectations of the Messiah? What were some of the promises that Jewish messiahs were making?
3. As you meditate on verse 39, what does Jesus want you to come and see about him?
4. What further questions do you have from this week's journey?

Backstory: As we begin the *Journey Bible Study*, we are setting out on a journey of discovery about God through the life and ministry of Jesus. There are several key points to make about this first lesson that will help set the stage for the entire *Journey Study*.

1. This is an invitation to check Jesus out. John made very clear why he wrote his gospel account of Jesus in John 20:30, 31 – that we might believe. In other words, John has been very selective. In John 21:24, 25, he tells us that he is the one who wrote the account and that if all he knew about Jesus were written down there wouldn't be enough books to contain all the good things Jesus did. So, again, he was very selective in what he included so that, from the stories, we might come to similar conclusions about Jesus as he did. This means that John's Gospel needs to do the work. As you lead out in this study, the pressure for people to come to faith rests on God's Word, not on us as the leader. Let the Word to do its work and let people wrestle with the Word. John points out seven signs concerning Jesus as Messiah:

1. Turning water to wine at Cana wedding (John 2)
2. Healing an official's son – Cana (John 4)
3. Healing a man at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath (John 5)
4. Feeding the Five Thousand, Passover (John 6)
5. Replacing water and light, Tabernacles (John 8)
6. Healing a man born blind (John 9)
7. Raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11)

But, of course, the greatest sign of his identity is his death and resurrection, to which all of these signs point.

2. We discover right away that when we check Jesus out he already knows us. This is a great lead into Lesson 2, which talks about who Jesus is and how it is that he knows so much about us. The journey with Jesus is as much a journey to self-discovery as it is learning about God. We see this in this first lesson as Jesus gives Peter a nickname and knows so much about Nathaniel.

The dialogue with Nathaniel was important since it demonstrated to him that Jesus was the Messiah. What was it about Jesus seeing Nathaniel under the fig tree that convinced him that Jesus was the One? Ellen White suggests in the book *Desire of Ages* that Nathaniel was praying for direction about the Messiah's coming (page 140). Other scholars agree that the fig tree might have been a place of solitude and prayer for Nathaniel and that Jesus heard and saw him praying for insight. This would explain Nathaniel's enthusiasm and his 180° reversal. Nathaniel's response, that Jesus came from Nazareth, was not so much about how bad Nazareth was. Everybody knew that the Messiah was supposed to come from Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). Jesus demonstrated even more knowledge about Nathaniel when he complemented his knowledge of the Scriptures and remembered the Messiah's true birthplace.

Jesus rewarded Nathaniel's belief when he quips that a simple answer to prayer is enough to believe. Nathaniel would see much more than this. In Jesus, Nathaniel would see Heaven opened and have constant access to God. This was also what John intended for us to see. Heaven will be opened up for us as we walk, watch, listen, and pray for God's revelation of himself through Jesus.

3. One final point in this first lesson. Encourage participants to follow the five S's in the introduction and guide. The principles of ***Seek, Soak, Seal, Script, and Share*** will make the difference in helping each journey participant become more than a spectator as they listen and follow the disciples on their journey with God in personal life discovery. *Enjoy the Journey!*