

To Be With Him

Movement One: Trust and Friendship · Mark 3:13-19; John 1:35-51

SESSION OVERVIEW

Discovery Aim

Discover, from Mark 3 and John 1, that the Lord's own method of spreading the Gospel was to call particular people into his company first and send them second, and that in John 1 not one named person arrives at Jesus alone.

Catholic Touchstone

The Church exists in order to evangelize, and every baptized person shares in Christ's prophetic office. What is handed on is not first a doctrine or a moral code but a Person. This study's pastoral emphasis follows from that: an introduction is a common and powerful form of evangelization, and it is not a rival to argument.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The two purposes, in that order

Mark 3:14 reads: "And he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach." Two purposes hang off a single act of appointing. In the Greek they are two parallel purpose clauses, *hina* plus the subjunctive in each case: that they might be with him, and that he might send them out. This is one calling with two ends, not two separate jobs, and Mark names companionship first.

Nothing in the passage suggests the twelve were selected because they were qualified. Verse 13 says he called to him "those whom he desired." The initiative and the criterion are both his. St. Luke's parallel adds a detail Mark leaves out: Jesus spent the whole night in prayer before he chose (Luke 6:12-13).

The setting is a mountain, which in Mark is a place of revelation and appointment. The number is twelve, which is not a convenient committee size but the tribes of Israel. Jesus is not founding a club. He is refounding a people.

The list includes the man who handed him over

Mark closes the list at verse 19 with Judas Iscariot, "who betrayed him." This matters more than it looks. Mark refuses to let us read the calling as a guarantee. Being with Jesus is necessary and it is not sufficient, because nearness never overrides freedom.

Hold this. In Session 9, and again in the module on the people closest to you, someone in your group will be carrying a person who walked away. This verse is what keeps them from concluding that they must have done it wrong.

John 1: a chain made of ordinary introductions

St. John the Baptist points and says, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" Two of his own disciples leave him and follow Jesus. One is named as Andrew in verse 40. The other is never named. Many readers, ancient and modern, have

supposed the evangelist himself, and that reading is old and reasonable, but the text does not say so and we should not hand a plausible tradition to the group as a fact.

Jesus turns and speaks his first recorded words in this Gospel: "What do you seek?" It is a question, not an announcement. They answer with a question of their own, and it is a strange one. Not "what do you teach" but "where are you staying." The verb is *menō*, to remain or abide, one of the load-bearing verbs of this Gospel, and it runs all the way to "Abide in me" in John 15:4. Their question suggests they wanted his company, not only his information.

His answer is the title of this study: "Come and see." Then verse 39: "they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour." The evangelist remembers the time of day decades later, and reports not one word of what was said.

Then the chain. Andrew "first found his brother Simon" and brings him. Philip finds Nathanael and brings him. Philip himself is called directly by Jesus, and he is the exception the text puts right in the middle of the chain: verse 44 tells us his town belonged to Andrew and Peter, but a shared address is not an introduction. Every other named person here arrives through somebody. Hold Philip lightly, because Session 8 has God calling a man directly and still routing him through a human being.

What Philip did and did not do

Nathanael's objection in verse 46 is not a philosophical difficulty. It may be contempt for Nazareth, or scepticism that the Messiah could come from a place of no consequence; the village is unmentioned anywhere in the Old Testament. The text does not tell us which. Philip does three things worth noticing.

He made a specific, checkable claim first (verse 45): this is the one "of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote." He did not skip content. He then declined to defend Nazareth, which was not really the question. And he moved the conversation from a claim about a town to an encounter with a person.

What finally answers Nathanael is not an argument at all. Jesus tells him he saw him under the fig tree. The objection dissolves because Nathanael is known. Keep this in view: it is the hinge of the whole study, and it will be pressed hard in tonight's steelman.

OLD TESTAMENT ROOTS AND FULFILLMENT

The mountain and the appointed elders

Exodus 24:1-2 and 9-11: Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders go up the mountain, behold the God of Israel, and eat and drink. The pattern is called up, brought near, and given communion in God's presence. Note that the covenant is ratified earlier, in verses 3 to 8, before the ascent; do not reverse the sequence. What carries over to Mark's mountain is ascent, representative leadership, and nearness.

Elisha follows before he is sent

1 Kings 19:19-21: Elijah throws his mantle over Elisha at the plough. Elisha slaughters his oxen, burns the yokes, and then, in the text's own summary, follows Elijah and ministers to him. A long period of service follows. Only in 2 Kings 2:9-15 does he ask for the double portion and take up the mantle. The Old Testament already knows that a season of accompanying comes before a ministry of one's own.

Jacob, guile, and the ladder

This is tonight's live discovery, so do not spend it here. In Genesis 27:35 Isaac says of Jacob, "Your brother came with guile." In Genesis 28:10-17 that same man dreams of a ladder set on the earth with its top reaching heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it, and he wakes and says the Lord is in this place.

Jesus greets Nathanael as "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile," and then promises that they will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man. The "you" in verse 51 is plural: he begins with Nathanael and the promise widens to all of them. Jesus is placing himself where the ladder was. The first thing Nathanael is promised is not information. It is access.

The prophet like Moses

Deuteronomy 18:15-18 is one likely background among the law and the prophets Philip invokes in verse 45. The claim he makes to Nathanael is not vague enthusiasm; it is that the specific expectation running through the law and the prophets has landed on a particular man with an address.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

VOICES OF THE CHURCH | St. John Chrysostom on Andrew's first instinct

St. John Chrysostom, preaching his way through the Gospel of John for his congregation, teaches in substance that Andrew's very first act after his afternoon with Jesus was to go looking for his brother, and that this is simply what a heart does when it has actually received something.

That much is his. The application this study draws from it is our own, and worth keeping anyway: the impulse to share tends to follow from having received something, rather than being an extra duty laid on top of it.

St. John Chrysostom, summarized from his Homilies on the Gospel of John. This is a faithful summary of his teaching, not a quotation.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH | Pope St. Paul VI on witnesses and teachers

Pope St. Paul VI observed that people today listen more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and that if they do listen to teachers, it is because those teachers are also witnesses.

He was not dismissing teaching, and this study is not either. He was saying that the teaching gets a hearing through a life. That is the whole reason Movement One is about trust before Movement Two is about proclamation.

Pope St. Paul VI, Evangelii Nuntiandi 41 (1975), restating a line from one of his own addresses the previous year.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH | Pope Benedict XVI on what Christianity actually is

Pope Benedict XVI opened his first encyclical by insisting that being Christian is not the result of "an ethical choice or a lofty idea" but of an encounter with an event and a Person, an encounter that gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.

Everything in this study follows from that sentence. If what we were handing on were an idea, a good argument would be enough. It is a Person, so an introduction is required.

Pope Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est 1 (2005).

CATECHISM CONNECTION

These paragraphs give the Church's own statement of the pattern the group is about to find in the text.

- **CCC 787.** From the beginning, Jesus associated his disciples with his own life, revealed the mystery of the Kingdom to them, and gave them a share in his mission, joy, and sufferings. This is Mark 3:14 in the Catechism's own words.
- **CCC 542.** Christ gathers people around himself by his word, by signs of the Kingdom, and by sending out his disciples. Gathering and sending belong to one movement.
- **CCC 425.** The transmission of the Christian faith consists primarily in proclaiming Jesus Christ in order to lead others to faith in him. Note the word primarily: not exclusively, but first.
- **CCC 429.** From the loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire to proclaim him. The Catechism puts desire downstream of knowledge, in that order.
- **CCC 904-907.** The baptized share in Christ's prophetic office, and the lay faithful in particular are called to this. This is not a specialist ministry.
- The application of these paragraphs to the three names your people will write tonight is our extension of them, not their wording.

THREAD WATCH

THREAD WATCH | leader only

Thread A, "With him, and sent." Planted tonight in Mark 3:14. Every session from here asks quietly which of the two the room is neglecting. It resolves in Session 13. Do not name it as a thread out loud; just let the verse do its work.

Thread B, "Whose work is this?" Planted quietly tonight in "those whom he desired" and in Andrew announcing "we have found the Messiah" when in fact he had just been handed him. Someone may reach for this in Build 2. Affirm it in one sentence and move on. It gets pressed in Session 8 and resolved in Session 9. Resolving it tonight costs you the payoff.

Thread C, "The room you are afraid of." Planted tonight in Nathanael's prejudice about Nazareth, which is the first time in this study that a real social obstacle appears. It runs through Sessions 5, 8, and 12, and through the module on the people closest to you.

Sealed sheet. Take-Home 1 carries the sealed page. Tell the group tonight only that they will open it later in the study. Do not say which session. It opens at Session 9.

SESSION GOALS

1. Have every participant see, in the text of Mark 3:14 rather than on your authority, that the sending is the second of two purposes and not the first.
2. Have the group trace out of John 1 for themselves that every named person arrives at Jesus through another person.
3. Establish the thesis of the study: what we hand on is a Person, so the normal form of evangelization is an introduction rather than an argument.
4. Let the room say honestly what it braces for when faith comes up, without solving it tonight.
5. Get three names written, sealed, and prayed for daily starting this week.

TIMED PLAN

Minutes	Movement
0:00-0:08	Welcome, opening prayer, and how this study works. Mention the weekly practice ladder and the sealed page.
0:08-0:22	Win questions. Let these run; the second one sets up the whole study.
0:22-0:40	Build 1 to 3, on Mark 3:13-19.
0:40-0:58	Build 4 to 6, on John 1:35-51.
0:58-1:08	Live discovery: Jacob, guile, and the ladder.
1:08-1:18	Build 7, the build-then-press on whether "come and see" is a dodge.
1:18-1:26	Send questions.
1:26-1:30	Live It This Week, hand out take-homes, explain the sealed page, closing prayer.

If you only have 75 minutes, cut these first

- Run the Jacob discovery as a two minute leader summary instead of a group hunt. Saves eight minutes and costs the best moment of the night, so cut something else first if you can.
- Drop Build 3 (Judas on the list) and carry it into Session 9, where it fits equally well. Saves six minutes.
- Hold the Dig Deeper on the tenth hour for the take-home. Saves four minutes.

IF IT GOES SIDEWAYS

IF IT GOES SIDEWAYS | leader only

If someone says openly that they are not sure they believe any of this, do not correct it tonight. Thank them for saying it, tell them the study assumes a mixed room, and move on. Sessions 6 and 9 will meet them properly.

If someone treats the three names as a target list ("I am going to get my brother this year"), reframe gently and immediately: rung one is prayer and silence, and no one on that page is a project. Let the group hear you say it once, kindly, so it sets the tone for thirteen weeks.

If the room goes silent at the Win questions, answer the first one yourself, briefly, and include something that did not go well. The group will match the level of honesty you model, not the level you ask for.

If a strong apologist in the room hears tonight as "arguments do not matter," do not fight it in the moment. Point to Build 7, where the text answers it, and let the passage do the work.

Discussion Guide

To Be With Him

Mark 3:13-19; John 1:35-51

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you called the ones you wanted, and they came to you. Before you sent the Twelve out to preach, you kept them near. Keep us near this hour. Give us the honesty to admit what we are afraid of, and the trust to believe that you are already at work in the people we love. Amen.

WIN

- ▶ Who is the person who first made faith seem real to you? Not what they said. What did they actually do?
- ▶ When your faith comes up with someone who does not share it, what do you brace for?

BUILD

Read Mark 3:13-19 aloud, slowly, all the way through the list of names. Then work the questions. Resist the urge to summarize the passage before the group has looked at it.

- 1. Mark says Jesus appointed the twelve for two purposes. Read verse 14 again. What are the two, and in what order does Mark put them?**

ANSWER | share after the discussion

To be with him, and to be sent out to preach. Mark puts being with him first, and he hangs both purposes off a single act of appointing. In the Greek these are two parallel purpose clauses, so this is one calling with two ends rather than two separate jobs.

Nothing here suggests they were sent because they were qualified. They were sent because they had been kept close. If the group gets only one thing tonight, this is it.

- 2. Verse 13 says he called to him "those whom he desired." What does that phrase do to the idea that the twelve were picked for their usefulness?**

ANSWER | share after the discussion

It grounds the choice in his own initiative, and names no prior qualification as its basis. St. Luke's parallel adds that he spent the whole night in prayer before choosing (Luke 6:12-13).

There is relief in this and also a loss of control, and the group should feel both. If the selecting is his, then our part in another person's conversion is smaller than we fear and more real than we think.

Leader note: if someone reaches for "so conversion is God's work, not ours," affirm it in one sentence and

move on. That question is coming back later with much more force.

3. Read to the end of verse 19. Who is the last name on the list, and why would Mark put him there?

ANSWER | share after the discussion

Judas Iscariot, named as the one who betrayed him. Mark will not let the calling be read as a guarantee.

Being near Jesus is necessary, and it is not sufficient, because nearness never overrides freedom. Judas had the external discipleship and the proximity. Persevering faith and interior communion are a further thing, and they are what this study is actually aiming at.

This is not a discouragement. It is protection. Later in this study someone will be accompanying a person who walks away, and this verse is what keeps them from concluding they did it wrong.

4. Now read John 1:35-51. On paper, make a simple list: who comes to Jesus in this passage, and how does each one get there?

Give them two minutes with pens before anyone speaks. The list is the point, and it lands harder if they build it themselves.

ANSWER | share after the discussion

The two disciples of St. John the Baptist come because John points and says, "Behold, the Lamb of God." Simon comes because Andrew goes and gets him. Nathanael comes because Philip goes and gets him. Philip is called directly, and even he is found in a town that verse 44 tells us belonged to Andrew and Peter.

Every named person except Philip arrives through somebody else, and Philip is called directly by Jesus. The chain is made of ordinary introductions between people who already knew each other, with one exception the text puts right in the middle of it.

Ask them to sit in that for a moment before moving on. This is the pattern the rest of the study unpacks.

5. Jesus speaks his first recorded words in this Gospel in verse 38. What are they, and what kind of sentence is it?

ANSWER | share after the discussion

"What do you seek?" It is a question. His opening move with two strangers is not an announcement, a proof, or an invitation to a program, and it leaves them room to answer badly.

Notice what they ask back. Not "what do you teach" but "where are you staying." The verb is *menō*, to remain or abide, and John will still be using it in "Abide in me" at John 15:4. Their question suggests they wanted his company, not only his information.

Then verse 39: they stayed with him that day, and it was about the tenth hour. Decades later the evangelist still remembers the time of day, and reports not one word of what was said.

DIG DEEPER

The tenth hour. Roughly four in the afternoon, if John is reckoning hours in the Jewish manner. The first evangelization in this Gospel is an unrecorded afternoon. What the evangelist chose to keep was the hour and not the conversation, which is worth sitting with, though the text does not tell us why.

The unnamed disciple. The text does not name him. Many readers, ancient and modern, have supposed the evangelist himself, and that reading is old and reasonable. John does not say so, and we should not hand the group a plausible tradition as though it were a fact.

6. Nathanael raises a real objection in verse 46. What does Philip say, and just as importantly, what does he not say?

ANSWER | share after the discussion

He says, "Come and see." He does not defend Nazareth, and he does not produce an argument about the town.

But look at verse 45 before you conclude he dodged. He had just made a specific, checkable, historical claim: this is the one of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote. He kept the claim and changed the venue.

And notice what actually answers Nathanael. Not an argument at all. Jesus tells him he saw him under the fig tree, and the objection dissolves because Nathanael has been known. Hold that; the next question presses on it.

LIVE DISCOVERY | let the group find it

Do not tell them this one. Let them find it.

Ask two people to look up and read aloud, in this order: Genesis 27:35, then Genesis 28:10-17.

Then ask: what did Jesus just call Nathanael in verse 47, and what does he promise him in verse 51? Give the room a full minute of silence. Someone will get it.

What they should find: Jacob was the man who came with guile, and he is the man who saw a ladder set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Jesus greets Nathanael as an Israelite in whom there is no guile, and then promises him he will see heaven opened and the angels ascending and descending on the Son of man.

Jesus is putting himself where the ladder was. He is the place where heaven touches earth. The first thing Nathanael is promised is not information. It is access.

7. Someone says that "come and see" is a dodge, and that Philip should have answered the question he was actually asked. Are they right?

ANSWER | share after the discussion

Work the build-then-press below before you settle this. The honest conclusion is not "invitation instead of argument" but "invitation is the thing the argument is for."

BUILD THEN PRESS

Build the objection at full strength:

Put this at full strength. Do not let the room dismiss it, because a real person in a real conversation will make it.

Nathanael raised a specific objection and Philip simply did not engage it. In our own conversations, "come and see" can be exactly what we say when we cannot answer the question. A friend says the Church covered up abuse, or that the Resurrection is a legend that grew in the retelling, and "just come to Mass with me" is not an answer to either.

Scripture itself tells us to be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls us to account for our hope (1 Peter 3:15). Peter says make a defense. He does not say change the subject.

And the Catholic tradition has produced an enormous body of argument precisely because arguments matter. A Catholicism that can only ever say "come and see" produces people who cannot say why, and those people fold the first time someone with a confident objection sits down across from them.

Then press, from the text:

Now press, from the text.

First, look again at verse 45. Philip did not skip content. He made a specific, historical, checkable claim before he issued any invitation. Whatever "come and see" means here, it does not mean "say nothing true."

Second, look at what the objection actually was. Nathanael did not ask for evidence. He voiced a prejudice about a village. Philip answered the objection that was really there instead of the one that was formally stated, which is a skill this study will keep returning to.

Third, look at what resolved it. Jesus knew him. An argument can clear an obstacle out of the road; it does not by itself produce a disciple. Both are real work and they are not the same work.

So the answer to the objection is yes and no. Yes, we owe people real answers, and refusing to give them is cowardice dressed as humility. No, the answers are not the destination. They are how you get someone close enough to be known.

SEND

- Of the people you will actually see this week, who is the one you would least like to have this conversation with? You do not have to say the name out loud.
- If the ordinary way people meet Christ is that somebody they already trust introduces them, what does that make you?

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

Rung 1 of the ladder. This week you do nothing visible at all. That is deliberate. Movement One is trust, and trust is not built by announcements.

- Write three names on the sealed page in your take-home. People you actually see, not people you admire from a distance.

- Pray for those three by name every day this week. One minute is enough. Say the names out loud.
- Tell no one that you are doing this. Especially not them.
- Notice, without acting, one moment this week when you could have said something about Christ and did not. Do not judge it. Just notice it, and bring it back next week.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you know the three names we have written better than we do, and you have been at work in them since long before we thought of them. Teach us to want them near you more than we want to be the one who brought them. Keep us with you this week, so that when you send us, we will have something to bring. Amen.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

"And he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach."

Mark 3:14

SESSION 1 | PART THREE
Leader Reference Card

To Be With Him

Every passage used in this session, in the order it appears.

Passage	Where and why
Mark 3:13-19	Primary text. The two purposes of the appointment, and the naming of Judas at the end of the list.
Luke 6:12-13	Leader prep and Build 2. The whole night in prayer before the choosing.
John 1:35-51	Primary text. The chain of introductions, "What do you seek," and "Come and see."
John 15:4	Build 5. The verb <i>menō</i> , abide, carried to its full weight later in the Gospel.
Exodus 24:1-2, 9-11	Old Testament Roots. Moses and the elders called up the mountain, brought near, and given communion in God's presence.
1 Kings 19:19-21	Old Testament Roots. Elisha follows and ministers to Elijah long before he is sent.
2 Kings 2:9-15	Old Testament Roots. The double portion, after the years of being with.
Genesis 27:35	Live discovery. Jacob, the man who came with guile.
Genesis 28:10-17	Live discovery. The ladder at Bethel, and the angels ascending and descending.
Deuteronomy 18:15-18	Old Testament Roots. The prophet like Moses, standing behind Philip's claim in verse 45.
1 Peter 3:15	Build 7, the objection at full strength. Always be prepared to make a defense.