



Initial  
**Disciples**

## Initial Disciples

Welcome to Jesus Time where we spend time with Jesus in His time and culture.

Today as we conclude John chapter one we learn that the Apostle John who is also known as the Revelator, details for us a series of five consecutive days. This day one begins within Verses 19-28 and are an account of John the Baptist's contentious encounter with the Priests and Levites from the Temple itself in Jerusalem. John the Baptists testifies that he is not the Christ but the one who prepares His way.

We find the elite are concerned that the Baptizers narrative has changed from the unthinkable that they; the Jews, need to repent of sin. But now John includes a warning that the Messiah has arrived.

Apparently during Jesus's forty days and nights upon the mount of Temptation, John the Baptist has been working hard at informing all who sought him out that indeed the Christ has arrived. John's words no doubt were spied upon by the Pharisees & now have disturbed their status quo.

On the second day John the Apostle recalls within verses 29-34 that this was when the Baptizer boldly and publicly proclaimed to all whom were present, this be when- John noticed Jesus passing him by and he publicly states that Christ is the only needed sacrifice for Sin for He is the very Lamb of GOD & look! He is now literally walking right past them. At this the remaining spies must have been seething.

What we miss here is this; For the Jew this means an end to sacrificial Rabbinic Judaism. Likewise all of its Law & requirements of Temple transferred personally unto Him- the Messiah Christ. Of course this was when John the Baptist noticed Jesus returning from His testing trials in the Judean Wilderness, Christ returns to the Baptist just as He had departed forty days prior.

Now here brothers and sisters in Christ our Apostle John begins to count his days with Jesus, and his third day with Christ will be at the wedding feast in Cana.

Get that? John concludes chapter one with a series of five memorable days for him personally. The first two are with the Baptizer, while the latter three are with Jesus in which our Apostle John numbers them for us one, two, three. The 3<sup>rd</sup> day we will find as we begin chapter 2.

Do not forget John did not divide his writing in this manner, it was we who added the chapter & verse numbers many centuries later in order to make it easier for reference and to look up Biblical passages.

These five consecutive days from the Apostle's perspective are a case where it is unfortunate that our numbering system divides John's thoughts. So remember topics are often divided in Bible chapters. Just because a chapter changes it does not necessarily mean the exact scriptural subject matter has.

Ok moving on, after Jesus testing trials the very first thing that Christ our Lord does is to call His initial Disciples unto following Him. This is when Jesus's public Ministry begins.

Again; this Gospel bears the personal witness of John of these monumental events.

What we will find here is that the Creator of the universe born into human flesh did not recruit the religious pious nor the wealthy elite. Neither did Christ the Lord petition either kings or nobility.

Instead- let it be said, that Jesus sought from the most common and often flawed people of all.

Why? Because the privileged, the learned, & the powerful would think too much of themselves as compared in contrast to those weak and meek, being- they are the ones selected for use by Christ.

It has been said GOD does not call the qualified rather He qualifies the called.

✠ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. <sup>28</sup> God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no one may boast before him.

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:27-29 NIV

Remember Jesus used the meek & weak, oppressed as they were within the strongest Empire of all time. & by Christ, through Christ, & for Christ- they changed the world.

My personal favorite Bible verse:

✝ But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. <sup>10</sup> That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 12:9-10 NIV

Now technically speaking we are moving into what is called by scholarly Biblical Theologians the period of Consideration of Christ Jesus’s Ministry.

What I’m mentioning here is that the Gospel of John has a unique literary structure that can be divided into distinct sections with the goal of presenting GOD coming to us within human flesh.

John- as he was instructed by Christ now elderly and released from the isle of Patmos, was by now the only surviving Apostle, and by John’s life experience with Christ, John was the most learned Church Elder.

John was now greatly experienced being twice instructed by our Messiah Lord Jesus.

The first as a teenager during Jesus Earthly Ministry.

What many miss here is that John was actually humanly related to Christ.

John’s mother was Salome a sister of the virgin Mary making her “Sons of Thunder” as Jesus Himself called them, each also a chosen Apostle, this means John and James were actually cousins unto Christ.

Do not be confused here James the Apostle was and is Jesus’s human cousin where as the Epistle or Letter of James in the New Testament of your Bible was authored by Jesus’s half brother James.

The Epistle of James his mother like Jesus is for him the formerly virgin Mary, by Joseph the carpenter Jesus’s human step father. Amazingly from the Baptizer to Christ’s cousins & later Jesus’s own family GOD used them all.

In fact we will see the Gospels mention that Jesus had quite a few younger half brothers and sisters.

Now the second time Jesus had instructed John the Apostle was when the risen glorified Christ showed unto John His Deity within His human flesh each on the isle of Patmos, and this continued when Christ “Raptured” as in Jesus took John into Heaven within a preview of the actual Rapture of the Church.

After John did as he was instructed to do by Jesus. John did his very and impressively best to carefully compose his recollections of our Lord and Savior’s Ministry into a very manageable Gospel presentation.

Briefly it goes like this:

1. Prologue 1:1 - 18 Explains how GOD became human for the purpose of our redemption.
2. Consideration 1:19 - 4:54 Jesus is presented unto various individuals and groups.
3. Controversy 5:1 - 6:71 Begins by miracles designed to expose tradition & force peoples decision.
4. Conflict 7:1 - 11:53 Over and over as Jesus teaches & performs miracles the elite oppose Him.
5. Crisis 11:54 - 12:36a Despite conflict and warning Jesus goes to Jerusalem during Passover.
6. Conference 12:36b - 17:26 Christ gathers His Apostles to prepare them & us for His death.
7. Consummation 18:1 - 20:31 The Divine triumph of Jesus’s Love by His Sacrifice for human Sin.
8. Epilogue 21:1-25 Our commission to share our faithful belief in and for Christ’s service.

After John the Baptizer saw Jesus return from the Judean desert he then proclaimed loudly “ Here is the Lamb of GOD!” Later to those who were now coming in droves to here John teach and to Baptize Them; John the Baptist gave to them this testimony:

The second of five consecutive days from the Apostle John’s vantage point.

✠ Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. <sup>33</sup> And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>34</sup> I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One.” John 1:32-34 NIV

As in the Holy Spirit apparently had not only instructed John to prepare the way of the Lord, but also GOD in Spirit either directly by Prayer to John or by messenger be it Angelic or human, John does not elaborate how he knew the Holy Spirit Himself would identify the Christ- but John knew. He knew precisely how the Messiah would be identified before him by GOD Himself.

GOD visibly, physically, identified and edified publicly unto the Baptizer Jesus His Christ.

Also note here that John said that the Holy Spirit did not pre-identify to Him Jesus as the Christ.

Where as earlier in this chapter we have a clue that by John’s parents Elizabeth and Zechariah and by His reputation of character and behavior, when Jesus came to John to be Baptized by him, John questioned Jesus; “ You come to me to be baptized? “

This means we all have to continually Pray and study GOD’S Word to be able to learn and discern the Will of the Lord in His Time not our own.

Even John the Baptist had to wait until each he and Jesus were of the correct age of thirty years and then for the correct sign from the Holy Spirit to confirm and leave no doubt about what most likely John the Baptist already suspected; that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ.

This means that we too should also learn to wait patiently for the Lord.

On this third day of five- John’s 1<sup>st</sup> day with Christ: Brothers Andrew & Peter and our Apostle John are the first 3 Disciples called.

✠ The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup> When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God!”

<sup>37</sup> When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup> Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, “What do you want?”

They said, “Rabbi” (which means “Teacher”), “where are you staying?”

<sup>39</sup> “Come,” he replied, “and you will see.”

So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon.

<sup>40</sup> Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup> The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ). <sup>42</sup> And he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas” (which, when translated, is Peter).

John 1 :35-42 NIV

Cephas is Aramaic and Peter is Greek each mean rock, this also means that Peter was likewise in the vicinity of the Baptist.

The scriptures inform us that each Andrew and John were followers of John the Baptist. Meaning through John they too were looking for the Messiah to appear.

The fourth consecutive day which is John's second with Christ, Phillip & Nathanael are called.

✠ The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me." <sup>44</sup> Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. <sup>45</sup> Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

<sup>46</sup> "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.

"Come and see," said Philip.

<sup>47</sup> When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." <sup>48</sup> "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you." <sup>49</sup> Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel." <sup>50</sup> Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that." <sup>51</sup> He then added, "Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."

John 1: 43-51 NIV

Phillip must have also accepted the Baptists words that the Messiah is here, then likewise Phillip told Nathanael & when he heard that Jesus was from Nazareth, Nathanael balked. What we miss here is during the time of Christ was that Nazareth was the southern most city within Galilee & as such it was the place of gathering and conference for the Priesthood within Galilee. ( Northern Israel Galilee, Hated Samaria, then Southern Israel Judea. Most Jews walked miles around in Syria to avoid Samaria because the Assyrians dumped criminals in Samaria.)

Tiberias and Nazareth were the two largest cities of Galilee in Jesus Time.

Tiberias was of course each Hellenistic and Roman, founded in 18 AD/CE by Herod Antipas.

Antipas lived and ruled in Tiberias even moving from the city that was named after him to the one he named for the current Emperor. You see this was more than just catering to his boss, Antipas secured for himself security and safety by living amongst the hated Roman pagans with their soldiers. For free.

Tiberias was a refuge within Israel for the Romans & also for the shunned Jews who were loyal to Rome. Such Jews escaped Jewish wrath because no decent Jew would ever be caught setting foot in Tiberias. This was done by Tiberias being built over a well known graveyard thusly doubly unclean was any Jew who entered into this Roman stronghold of abode.

So naturally Nazareth was where the Jewish Priesthood would assemble as in the Priests would congregate in Nazareth before they set off together for Temple in Jerusalem. (safety in numbers highway bandits were common)

So John's recording of the negative reaction Nathanael had when he learned Christ was from Nazareth was plainly understood in Jesus Time because Israel's Priests were known for oppression and corruption.

Remember this means throughout Christ's lifetime His hometown of Nazareth routinely had groups of Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees present.

Obviously Phillip knew Nathanael.

Nathanael by his preconceived notions that no one from Nazareth can be of any good.

Jesus immediately understood Nathanael's self imposed intellectual barrier that would have been under normal circumstances nearly impossible for any of us to be able to overcome, So,...

Jesus, simply astonished Nathanael by informing him exactly where he was and what he was doing prior to Phillip approaching and informing him that he had found the Christ.

This each disarmed and impressed Nathanael that yes indeed someone from Nazareth can be good.

We have already seen John the Baptist previously call Jesus "The Lamb of GOD", as in the once and for all perfect unblemished sinless human being- who is the atoning sacrifice unto GOD for mankind's Sin. Likewise this is the first time Jesus calls Himself before these initial Disciples "The Son of Man."

Meaning after Jesus had just astounded His new found believers by describing to Nathanael his previous whereabouts and activities unseen by Christ, impressed as he was- it was Nathanael who called Jesus the Son of GOD. Because, it was simply impossible for Jesus to know these things without being Deity.

Jesus, then by saying to these Disciples they will see the Angels of Heaven attend the Son of Man, thusly affirming that He is each the Deity Nathanael said He was as the actual living Son of GOD, who is also fully human as THE Son of Man. Get that ? Jesus just said Yes I AM ( GOD ) & I'm human.

Remember when the word THE is added before anything in Greek this means it is THE paramount or top. So when Jesus says He is "THE" Son of Man, He means He is the ultimate sinless human who is "THE" sacrificial Lamb of GOD.

As we conclude our study of John chapter 1, the 5<sup>th</sup> & final of our 5 consecutive days from John's perspective, we will find in chapter 2 in what will forever be known as the wedding of Cana.

These eventful consecutive days from John's perspective can actually be even more understood by knowing a custom from Jesus Time.

Jewish weddings for maidens were always in Israel at this time on a Wednesday.

Where as widows always remarried on Thursdays.

What I'm getting at is this by counting back we can glean a better understanding of John's recollections.

Day 5 will be on a Maiden Wednesday at the wedding in Cana, again we will find this in chapter 2.

Day 4 John's 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive day with Christ Jesus was John's 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive day of him recording monumental events. On this day John records Jesus was traveling back to Galilee and in route He called each Nathanael and Phillip also as His Disciples this had to be a Tuesday.

Day 3 was John's first day with Jesus and the 3<sup>rd</sup> overall of the 5 detailed for us and had to be Monday. Andrew and John our Revelator Apostles each- started their day as students of John the Baptist and were literally transferred unto Jesus our Christ. Naturally before this day was complete Andrew sought out Simon/Peter his brother & likewise he too was informed by Jesus that he would also become a Disciple.

Day 2 of John's 5 recorded was of course upon a Sunday when John the Apostle was with John the Baptizer- when; publicly the Baptist informed all present that the "Lamb of GOD" was walking right past them, when- the Baptizer noticed Jesus returning from the wilderness of His temptation.

Day 1 of the life altering events for John the Apostle was on Saturday the Sabbath for the Jews. Beginning roughly 6 PM Friday night to 6 PM Saturday day. It was on the Sabbath day that the Pharisees of Jerusalem came out and confronted John the Baptist. Meaning the Pharisees broke their own rules about how far they can travel on the Sabbath. They questioned the Baptist who do you think you are? Baptizing Jews & calling the descendants of Abraham to repentance? By whose authority do you do this ? Are you the Christ ? In which John replies I'm not the Christ, I do this by GOD'S authority as His Prophet to prepare the "Way of the Lord" ( Isaiah 40:3 ) & then the Baptist says: at long last the Messiah has arrived!

Remember this is how John the Apostle decided to fulfill the instructions of Jesus- His and our Christ. When Jesus within Rev. 1:19 told John to write down what was, what is, and what will be, John chapter 1 first gives to us how GOD became human and then the Apostle recalls for us- his five monumental consecutive days that he learned of the Christ, and then He was personally called by Christ. These five days literally usher in hope for all of us; the previously unredeemable unto GOD. Now and forever more we can be Saved by Faith in GOD'S Grace found only through Christ Jesus.