

Book of John #3

John 1:39-51

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We are in the third week of John 1 and will continue in John for the first half of 2024.

To start off, we will watch a short music video, “**Typical**,” by a band called “Mutemath”
<https://youtu.be/sa0JsNHJUoU?si=HSmDoTh-3oGoidGl>

Lyrics:

Come on, can I dream for one day? There's nothing that can't be done But how long should it take somebody Before they can be someone 'Cause I know there's got to be another level Somewhere closer to the other side And I'm feelin' like it's now or never Can I break the spell of the typical? Now I've lived through my share of misfortune And I've worked in the blazing sun	But how long should it take somebody Before they can be someone 'Cause I know there's got to be another level Somewhere closer to the other side And I'm feelin' like it's now or never Can I break the spell of the typical? Typical, typical, typical I'm the typical I'm the typical Can I break the spell of the typical? Because it's draggin' me down	Oh, I'd like to know about when When does it all turn around? Yeah I know there's got to be another level Somewhere closer to the other side And I'm feelin' like it's now or never Can I break the spell of the typical? Typical, typical, typical Break the spell (of the typical) Break the spell (of the typical) I'm the typical
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Advent calls us out of the typical, the ordinary, and the difficult. We spend most of the church year in “**ordinary time**” having the same rhythms of attending church on Sundays, etc. but these typical times are punctuated by holidays, days to focus on something extraordinary, something atypical. The two most important holidays are Christmas and Easter preceded by Advent and Lent.

Last week, Eric talked about the light and how Advent ‘parents us.’ Parenting means something that shapes and molds us. Advent parents us by giving a routine and consistency to our year, similar to a parent creating family traditions and routines.

Also, parenting means *discipling* or *disciplining*, *forming*, and *shaping* someone, *developing habits* and *patterns* that shape a person. Sometimes you have to say “NO!” to one thing and “PAY ATTENTION!” to other things. This is the summary of parenting: It’s discipleship by showing someone **THE WAY**. *Advent shapes us in this way as well.*

This year, our church is talking “I Am Statements” Jesus said about himself in John and we during Advent, we have **five candles** to light each week:

Week 1: I am the **Light** **John 8:12** “I am the light of the world” This theme of light a big emphasis in John’s gospel

Week 2: the **Truth** (taken from **John 14:6**; we will revisit this next spring)

Week 3: the **Way** (Today’s focus....probably the least emphasized in the Gospel of John)

Week 4: the **Life**

Week 5: **Jesus Christ**

Last week we heard about John the Baptist inviting people to follow the way of Jesus and purification and repentance through baptism: repenting means turning around from where you were going and facing the other way. This is getting ready for the Messiah, what we do in Advent. John pointed us to Jesus so when Jesus arrived, it was clear to his followers. They now have to transfer to follow Jesus instead of John.

Today we will focus on five **Five mini-stories** of Jesus calling his disciples to something they don’t really know about. They have misconceptions: they thought it would involve overthrowing governments, etc. It doesn’t end the way they think it will be but then it is much more than they could have imagined.

First, let’s start with a map:



Notice (in red) the sea of Galilee and Nazareth, the hometown of Jesus where he lived most of his childhood and early adult life. He was born in Bethlehem which is near Jerusalem, below this boundaries of this map.

John probably came out of the east side of the river to baptize people in the Jordan. People from Bethesda and Capernaum go south to find him.

Eventually you will reach the Dead Sea and then the city of Jerusalem where the elite teachers of the Law lived. So the disciples of John and the

leaders meet along the river in the middle.

Although we have been calling the Gospel of John the “drama gospel” because it has a slower pace with intense characters, the first chapter takes place over only 3 days:

John 1:35-51

Mini Story #1 *Jesus meets his first disciples*

35 The next day John was there again with two of his disciples.

The two disciples were Andrew and probably John, the writer of this gospel, who commonly deemphasizes himself.

36 When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God!”

37 When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. **38** Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, “What do you want?” They said, “Rabbi” (which means “Teacher”), “where are you staying?” **39** “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.

What happened during this day? It was probably very non-typical, unlike anything they had experienced before.

Mini-story #2 *Andrew tells his brother about Jesus*

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

Was Peter a follower of John the Baptist? We don’t know...but his brother Andrew was. The first thing Andrew does is tell his brother about the most important thing to happen in the history of their country! Jesus told Peter he had a new name:

Mini Story #3 Peter gets a new name

Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas” (which, when translated, is Peter). **42** And he brought him to Jesus.

A Greek speaker would have known Peter meant rock. Jesus was calling him *out of the ordinary* to something **steady, reliable, unshakeable**. He is **not** those things yet! We will see this play out in the rest of this Gospel. Jesus shapes him after following Jesus for a long time.

Mini Story #4 *Jesus meets Philip*

43 The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, (Doesn't say where...) he said to him, "Follow me." **44** Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida.

Mini Story #5 *Philip finds Nathaniel who meets Jesus*

45 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."

This is the other side: to a Jew, they have been waiting for this. This is WAY out of the ordinary. Philip probably had a similar experience to Andrew and John and found his friend (or brother?) Nathaniel

46 "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.

(this is a backward, podunk town! How can this be?)

"Come and see," said Philip. (Notice how calm he appears...)

Philip must have spent time prior to this and he was convinced.

47 When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit."

48 "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."

This is a minor miracle! How could Jesus know Nathaniel before he had met him? He names exactly where Nathaniel was before he called him. This is supernatural.

Jesus has supernatural insight into Nathaniel: who he was and what he was doing.

49 Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel."

This is not typical!

50 Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that."

You have no idea! This is just a minor miracle! There is so much more you will see...

51 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.'"

That refers to prophecies in Daniel and Jacob's ladder that Jews would have known about. These serious followers of God would have known about this.

What does this mean for us?

1. We should **Prepare the Way** for this next year. Advent also prepares us for a new year: 2024 is in front of us. The calendar drags us to fresh starts: New Year's Day is parenting to get ready for something.
2. We should **Celebrate Advent and Christmas**. Continue to do this! Our whole culture drags us into Christmas whether we like it or not. It puts me into Christmas. Even this parents us: accepting and cooperating helps you to be molded and shaped.
3. Traditionally, the season of Lent is the season for **Fasting**. During Advent, some Christians fast on Fridays. I personally will fast from headphones (where I tune out the world) and social media. Pick something you want to fast from this Friday! Say no to something so you can...
4. **Watch and Listen** to Jesus instead.
5. **Study the Gospel of John**, one chapter per week. We have mini books here you can take. We will read a chapter each week until we're done in May.