



Jesus Announces His Precise Purpose John 1:35-51

³⁵ The following day John was again standing with two of his disciples. ³⁶ As Jesus walked by, John looked at him and declared, "Look! There is the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ When John's two disciples heard this, they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Jesus looked around and saw them following. "What do you want?" he asked them. They replied, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?" ³⁹ "Come and see," he said. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when they went with him to the place where he was staying, and they remained with him the rest of the day.

⁴⁰ Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of these men who heard what John said and then followed Jesus. ⁴¹ Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means "Christ").

⁴² Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus. Looking intently at Simon, Jesus said, "Your name is Simon, son of John—but you will be called Cephas" (which means "Peter").

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Come, follow me." ⁴⁴ Philip was from Bethsaida, Andrew and Peter's hometown. ⁴⁵ Philip went to look for Nathanael and told him, "We have found the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth." ⁴⁶ "Nazareth!" exclaimed Nathanael. "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" "Come and see for yourself," Philip replied.

⁴⁷ As they approached, Jesus said, "Now here is a genuine son of Israel—a man of complete integrity." ⁴⁸ "How do you know about me?" Nathanael asked.

Jesus replied, "I could see you under the fig tree before Philip found you."

⁴⁹ Then Nathanael exclaimed, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God—the King of Israel!"

⁵⁰ Jesus asked him, "Do you believe this just because I told you I had seen you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this." ⁵¹ Then he said, "I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and the angels of God going up and down on the Son of Man, the one who is the stairway between heaven and earth."

In verse 51 Jesus is alluding directing to Jacob's dream all the way back to the Book of Genesis, chapter 28.

In the first part of the dream Jacob saw a giant *staircase*. A lot of you have heard the story of Jacob's ladder, but the word *ladder* does not in any way get across the meaning of the word that you actually have there in Genesis 28, for the word translated *stairway* means a grand ramp.

What the vision meant was God is doing business on earth. God's glory and power and life are coming to earth, and in particular, are coming into Jacob's life.

All through the Bible, the presence of God is a very rare moment. Yet here it's coming down into Jacob's presence *and he's a liar, he's a cheat, and he hasn't even repented yet.*

1. How could heaven be open to Jacob?

The answer we find 18 centuries later, is right here in this narrative between Jesus and Nathanael.

⁵¹Then he said, "I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and the angels of God going up and down on the Son of Man, the one who is the stairway between heaven and earth." John 1:51

Jesus is saying, "*Heaven and earth intersect upon Me. Angels descend and ascend on Me.*"

What is he saying? "*It's me, it's my coming, my living, my dying. I'm going to fulfill all the requirements of salvation so if you believe in me, God can come into your life.*"

Heaven has been opened, but not just opened for anyone.

2. Heaven has been opened for the humbled.

"Nazareth!" exclaimed Nathanael. "Can anything good come from Nazareth?"

"Come and see for yourself," Philip replied. John 1:46

Nazareth is the place where everyone would say, "*You don't want to go there or be from there, and most certainly God would never go there and God could never come from there!*" But he did.

Contrary to what Nathanael says, God's glory tends to come down in stables, not luxury hotels; onto crosses, not thrones; and into the lives of desolate people with a stone for a pillow.

Author/Pastor Tim Keller

Isaiah 57:15 The high and lofty one who lives in eternity, the Holy One, says this: "I live in the high and holy place with those whose spirits are contrite and humble. I restore the crushed spirit of the humble and revive the courage of those with repentant hearts.

- So don't despise the lowly.
- Don't be seduced by human celebrity.
- Make sure we not only care for but respect what God is doing in the small places through small people.

Individually remember:

- The best things you are ever going to do in life almost nobody is going to see.
- The only eyes that count; see you.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of all these witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and run the race with perseverance marked out before us." Hebrews 12:1

So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless. 1 Corinthians 15:58

Why this is true? Because God's salvation was achieved by humbling, and it's received by humbling.