



### LET'S BEGIN HERE

One encouraging aspect of John's gospel is his portrayal of not only the deity of Jesus but also the compelling accounts of the first few individuals who responded to Jesus' call for followers. Far from perfect, these men demonstrated a range of expression and authenticity in their responses. The outcome of each encounter with Jesus proves refreshing for anyone who believes God only uses perfect people. Early in John's opening chapter we discover that nothing could be further from the truth!

Let's listen in as the Master Disciple-Maker, Jesus, recruits five common individuals for an uncommon mission. And He shows them how faith in Him would make that possible!



### YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

As we turn to this passage, we'll use the *Searching the Scriptures* method of Bible study to observe, interpret, correlate, and apply the text. Chuck Swindoll's book, *Searching the Scriptures*, explains these methods in more detail, and you can purchase a copy at Insight for Living Ministries' [online store](#). Also, you may wish to check out [Chuck's commentary on John's gospel](#).



### Observation: Taking a Bird's-Eye View

One approach to the observation process in Bible study is to take a bird's-eye view. In a sense, this approach highlights larger organizational patterns to help frame your study. That's what we will do as we begin our study of this final section of John chapter 1.

## Quotable

*There comes a time  
in all our lives  
when something  
sparks the need for  
change . . . when  
we ask ourselves,  
“Will I continue  
living as I have  
been living, or will  
this day mark a  
change in direction  
for my life?”*

— Charles R. Swindoll





### Searching the Scriptures Tool

Observation is a critical beginning technique to put together the pieces of a passage of Scripture. Read the passage carefully, noticing features such as contrasts, comparisons, repeated words, cause-and-effect, and emphasized words. Particularly notice imperatives (commands) and verbs (action words), which are like tree limbs. All the ideas in the paragraph, like branches and leaves, connect to these words.

### Time

Read John 1:29–51. What words or phrases indicate time parameters? Write down as many as you observe.

How do these time indicators keep the story moving forward? How much time would you say John covers in these few verses?

### Structure

Read 1:29–51 again. Do you notice any structural patterns? Look for repeated conversations, words, or transitions. Write down your observations.



# BEHOLDING CHRIST . . . THE SON OF GOD

## Five Who Followed in Faith

*John 1:35–51*

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How would you describe the setting of John's story? If you were to divide these several verses into separate episodes of a television series, how many would there be? Write down each one, and give them each a creative title.

If you could choose a one- or two-word theme for this section of John 1, what would it be? Why?

### Characters

The next aspect you can study in your bird's-eye view of verses 29–51 is *whom* does John introduce you to in the story. Identifying people and names is an important part of observation that provides helpful clues to the author's meaning.

Once again, read verses 29–51 and identify all the individuals and their names. Write down each name as it appears in the passage. Include next to the name any details that John offers about the person.

What phrases or patterns does John repeat as he introduces each man? Based on your observations, write a brief description in your own words of each person with whom Jesus interacts.



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### Helpful Hint

This would be a good time in your study to consult a Bible dictionary. Look up the names of each individual John mentions in this passage. Make some notes about what you discover.



### Interpretation: Jesus' Calling of the Five

Interpretation answers the question, *What does this passage mean?* To clarify the meaning of a text, first view it through the eyes of the original audience. How did John intend his readers to understand this passage? Because Jesus' focus was on people, John's emphasis here on how these five men first encountered Jesus is extremely important. Let's take a close look at each encounter and see what John perhaps wanted us to learn. He includes details about Jesus' *approach* to each person. Then he follows with a description of their *responses*. For each one, make some notes about what John reveals.

#### Andrew and John

*The following day John was again standing with two of his disciples. As Jesus walked by, John looked at him and declared, "Look! There is the Lamb of God!" When John's two disciples heard this, they followed Jesus. (John 1:35–37)*

#### The Approach

How would you describe the approach used to attract these two individuals to Jesus? What is the context of their situations when responding to John the Baptist's witness?

#### The Response

How did these two men respond? (We know from verse 40 that they are Andrew and John.)



### Simon Peter

*Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of these men who heard what John said and then followed Jesus. Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means "Christ"). 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"). (John 1:40–42)*

### The Approach

How would you describe the approach used to reach Simon Peter? How is it different from the approach used with Andrew and John?

### The Response

How did Andrew's response impact Simon Peter's response? In what way are they related?

### Philip and Nathanael

*The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Come, follow me." Philip was from Bethsaida, Andrew and Peter's hometown. 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." "Nazareth!" exclaimed Nathanael. "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" "Come and see for yourself," Philip replied. As they approached, Jesus said, "Now here is a genuine son of Israel—a man of complete integrity." "How do you know about me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus replied, "I could see you under the fig tree before Philip found you." Then Nathanael exclaimed, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God—the King of Israel!" (John 1:43–49)*



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### *The Approach*

In both Philip's and Nathanael's case, how would you describe the approach to introducing them to Jesus? How are they the same? How are they different?

### *The Response*

How did Philip respond? What was the immediate impact of his response to Jesus?

How did Nathanael respond to Philip's initial witness?

How did he respond to meeting Jesus personally?



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### Correlation: The Impact of Following Jesus

Correlation helps us look at other passages in the Bible that support our interpretation of Scripture. The lives of the five men who followed Jesus in faith would never be the same. In fact, later in the New Testament we encounter these same individuals impacting others with the message of Jesus. Read the following Scripture passages and write a sentence or two about how each demonstrates the longer-term impact of encountering Jesus.

#### Acts 3:1–6

Who is the disciple mentioned here? What is the context?

What is the approach?

What is the response to Jesus?

#### Acts 8:26–40

Who is the disciple mentioned in this story? What is the context of the encounter?

What approach is used to share about Jesus?



What is the response to Jesus?

In your own words, how would you summarize the relationship between the encounters described in these two passages in Acts and what John describes in the passage we've been studying from John chapter 1?



### Application: Bringing Home the Lessons

By studying how Jesus encountered and responded to these five men, we can learn much about how He desires we approach people.

What was Jesus' attitude toward each man He encountered and ultimately called to follow Him?

How much is your attitude toward people shaped by Jesus' evident love and care for them? In what ways do you view the potential in people as Jesus did in these five men?





Think of someone in your life whom you feel is most unlikely to come to know Jesus. Based on what you've learned in this study, how might you approach this person in a way that reflects the love and grace of Jesus?



### A FINAL PRAYER

*Father, I thank You that You considered me worthy of the grace and love of Your Son, Jesus. Help me to see others as You see them—with love and grace, not judgment and indifference. Use me to draw someone closer to You today—and ultimately to a knowledge of Your Son, Jesus. In His name I pray, amen.*



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John 1:35–51

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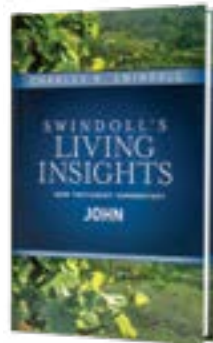
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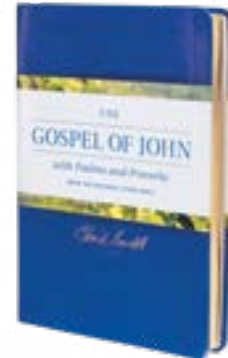
### Tools for Digging Deeper



**Beholding Christ . . .  
The Son of God:  
A Study of John 1–5**  
by Charles R. Swindoll  
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For the 2018 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Mark Tobey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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