International Bible Study Commentary
Verse-by-Verse Bible Lessons Thru the Bible
L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

John 1:35-42 Commentary
New Revised Standard Version

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Study Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the *International Bible Study Commentary* website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the *International Bible Study Forum*.

(John 1:35) The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples,

The day before "the next day," John the Baptist told his disciples that Jesus is the Lamb of God and the Son of God. And he told them how the Holy Spirit had confirmed these facts. As the Lamb of God, Jesus would *take away the sin of the world* (John 1:29). In Matthew 1:21, the angel of the Lord emphasized this fact when he appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him about Mary: "She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for *he will save his people from their sins*." In John 1:34, John the Baptist

said, “And I myself have seen and have testified that *this is the Son of God*.” In Luke 1:35, “The angel said to Mary, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called *Son of God*.” Though Jesus came as the long-expected Messiah and fulfilled the Scriptures, from the first the gospels emphasize two facts about Jesus’ work in our world that do not contain the political and messianic aspirations of the Jews at that time. From the beginning, the Gospels declare that Jesus is the Son of God who will take away the sin of the world. More than anything else, more than another political leader, in Jesus’ day and in our day we all need Jesus working in our lives and taking away our sin and sinfulness with the power of the Son of God. Jesus came to save us from our sins, and sins are destroying our world. The world needs Jesus to do what He came to do and is still doing. In the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus will work within those who receive Him and believe in Him until He returns to our world as the glorified Messiah and visible King of kings. By John “proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins,” John was preparing his believers and disciples to receive Jesus and what Jesus came to do (Mark 1:4). No wonder John could never have explained to some investigators from the Pharisees what he had been teaching his disciples and the repentant crowds who came to him for baptism. The two disciples with John the Baptist “the next day” knew these facts and more. The two disciples were Andrew and most

probably John the Apostle, who wrote this Gospel.

(John 1:36) and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!"

Notice: when John stated to his disciples that Jesus is *the Lamb of God*, they knew that they needed what Jesus came primarily to give to our world more than they needed a new king in Jerusalem. A disciple is a student, and as students of John the Baptist they knew the right emphasis that John had placed on the Lord that he was preparing believers to follow. The *Lamb of God* is the *Sacrifice of God*, though they did not yet know what that would mean until they became disciples of Jesus and saw Jesus suffer and die on the cross. Later, as an apostle, John wrote in his letters about Jesus: "He is *the atoning sacrifice for our sins*, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world" and "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be *the atoning sacrifice for our sins*" (1 John 2:2 & 4:10).

(John 1:37) The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.

When these two disciples learned that Jesus was the answer to their problems with sin, that repentance and baptism were not the end of their quest for spiritual wholeness, but only prepared them to receive what Jesus came to give as the *Lamb of God*, they left John immediately and followed Jesus. They were the first to do what John prepared his listeners to do. John humbly

proclaimed the coming of Jesus, and later declared about Jesus, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

(John 1:38) When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi” (which translated means Teacher), “where are you staying?”

The truths John and Andrew had learned about Jesus inspired them to follow Jesus, and they had learned these truths from a man filled with the Holy Spirit. Sharing the truths in the Bible about Jesus will influence some people to want to learn more about Jesus and become His disciples. Jesus knew He would call John and Andrew to be His apostles someday in the future, but first they needed to become His students, His disciples. When Jesus saw them following Him, He knew what they were looking for, but He wanted them to answer the question. Later, John explained why Jesus did not trust everyone who came to Him and said they believed in His name. In John 2:24-25, John wrote, “But Jesus on his part would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone.” Notice: Jesus did not ask, “*Who* are you looking for?” or “*Who* do you seek?” They could have answered the Messiah or the Son of God or the Lamb of God, for Jesus is all three. Rather, Jesus asked, “*What* are you looking for?” or “*What* do you seek?” What do most people seek from Jesus? Andrew and John wanted Jesus

to be their Teacher. They addressed Jesus as “Teacher.” They sought to be taught by and about Jesus. They wanted to learn more about Jesus from the One that John had told them they needed to prepare themselves to meet. They wanted to spend time with Jesus to learn from Jesus; therefore, they asked Jesus, “Where are you staying?” The Holy Spirit inspired John to write his Gospel for people who truly wanted to learn about and from Jesus. To do so, people must spend time with Jesus reading the Bible and the Holy Spirit will use the truth of the Bible to teach them. They also need to spend time with others who love Jesus. In Hebrews 10:24-25, we read, “And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

(John 1:39) He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon.

At Jesus’ invitation, they went with Him and saw where He was staying. The “next day” would have begun a sundown, at about 6:00 pm; therefore, they may have spent 2 hours with Jesus before going back to their homes and families. The next “next day” begins with John 1:43. Within two hours, they learned that Jesus was everything John had proclaimed about Him and much more. John does not tell us the content of their conversation, but John will teach

what he learned about and from Jesus during his time with Jesus during Jesus' public and private ministry, and he will reveal more of Jesus' specific teachings about sin and Jesus as the answer to our problems with sin.

(John 1:40) One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

Simon Peter and Andrew were fishermen, and Jesus later met with them again while they were fishing in the Sea of Galilee. After they learned more about Jesus as His disciples, Jesus called them to serve Him as apostles (see Matthew 10:2).

(John 1:41) He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed).

After learning about Jesus from both John the Baptist and Jesus, Andrew went to tell his brother Simon that they had found the Messiah. Notice the Apostle John wrote his Gospel (which means "Good News") for both Jews and Gentiles: he carefully translated words from the Aramaic or Hebrew language to the Greek language when needed. "Anointed" can mean "Christ" or "King." Jesus Messiah means the same as Jesus Christ and King Jesus. Since the Messiah was long-expected by the Jews, and Simon knew the meaning of "Messiah" as well as the prophecies and the expectations about the Messiah (he may have been a disciple of John the Baptist too), Andrew called Jesus

"Messiah" instead of "Lamb of God," which at first would have probably required much explanation to Peter. Andrew told Peter what he had learned, and that was enough for Peter to want to meet Jesus and learn more about Jesus from Jesus. Sometimes just telling someone what we have learned about Jesus from the Bible will be used by the Holy Spirit to lead them to seek Jesus and trust in Jesus.

(John 1:42) He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

After Andrew brought his brother to Jesus, Jesus began to have many meetings with them as their Teacher. Sometimes He would even call them from their fishing to follow Him and learn something new from what He intended to show them as He helped others. Sometimes Jesus would meet with His disciples in the home of Simon and Andrew and heal people (Mark 1:29). Jesus gave Simon the name Peter, which showed Peter and others how He could change a person into the type of person they never thought they could become. "Peter" means "Rock." We learn from John that the disciples followed Jesus thinking He was the Messiah, but Peter was the first disciple to call Jesus "the Son of the living God." In Matthew 16:16-17, we read, "Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For

flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.'" We learn from Jesus changing Peter into "the rock" how Jesus can change any of His disciples into people they never thought they could become. The Apostle Paul is another example of how Jesus can change anyone enslaved to sin into good, faithful, loving and courageous followers of Jesus.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. Why do you think John emphasized to his disciples that Jesus is the Lamb of God?

2. Do you think people need the Lamb of God today? Why or why not?

3. When you come to Jesus, what are you looking for? Think of three things you would like to have from Jesus.

4. To be disciples of Jesus, what do people need to do?

5. Jesus changed Simon into Peter, the "rock." What are three ways Jesus can change His disciples today?

All Rights Reserved © 2019 by L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.
Permission Granted for Not for Profit Use.
Contact: P.O. Box 1052, Edmond, Oklahoma, 73083 and lgp@theiblf.com.