

The Purpose of Grace Growth Groups:

Growth Groups help you take your next step with God by developing meaningful friendships built around God's Word. As we connect with one another and with God's Word, incredible things take place and we naturally grow. In community, this growth occurs through 4 primary activities:

We SHARE Life

Each week we'll take time to connect and share what is happening in our lives. This will become more natural as we begin to feel more comfortable with one another. Sharing life and accepting each other is essential to the healthy relationships needed for growth groups.

We STUDY God's Word

Each week we'll study the previous week's sermon text, though we will not rehash the sermon. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life. Accountability to God's Word is transformational and brings spiritual growth in our lives. We also take time to seek God in prayer for relevant needs and issues present in our group.

We SUPPORT Each Other

Each week we'll learn how to care for one another as Christ instructed us. People who know each other well, care for each other well. This care will take many forms, such as prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging, accountability, advice, and meeting real needs.

We SERVE Together

Spiritual growth is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. Jesus reminds us that the world will know we're his disciples by our love. The role each member fills in serving one another and the local community is essential; for we were created to serve others, not ourselves. Throughout the semester, we will serve the other members of our group and together the group will serve the local community through one service project.



- change happens in circles, not rows -

Come and See

I. Andrew brought his BROTHER to Jesus

- A. Through the centuries, this is how most people come to faith in Jesus Christ
- B. Each time Andrew is mentioned in the Gospel of John, he is bringing someone to Jesus

II. Philip brought his FRIEND to Jesus

- A. Nathaniel wasn't impressed with Phillip's testimony
- B. Phillip didn't argue with Nathaniel

III. Who will bring your RELATIVES and FRIENDS to Jesus?

- A. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you!
- B. Invitation opportunities

Growth Group Guide For the week of March 11th, 2018

Spring Growth Group Information:

- **Today begins the eighth week of our Spring Semester of Growth Groups.** Each semester lasts for 15 weeks. Sunday's mark the beginning of each new week.
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MY STORY:

- 1) When you receive good news, whom do you most often share it with first?
- 2) As a kid, what would it take to get you to believe something your sibling told you?

DIGGING DEEPER:

1) Our message this week from John 1:40-46 is part of a larger passage (John 1:35-51) in which we read about the calling of the first Disciples of Christ. From verse 35-51 Christ is called by several titles. Take a moment to list those names and share why you think each person assigned Jesus that particular label.

Verse 36 "Lamb of God" ...John the Baptist

Verse 38 "Rabbi" ... John the Baptists 2 disciples (One we know was Andrew, the other disciple is most likely John the author/disciple)

Verse 41 "The Messiah" ...Andrew to Peter

Verse 45 "Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" ...Phillip to Nathaniel (aka Bartholomew)

Verse 49 "Son of God" & "King of Israel"Nathaniel

Verse 51 "Son of Man" ...Jesus

- 2) Of the four people in verses 37-48 to follow Jesus, answer this;
 - a) How was the initial contact with Jesus made for each one? What was said/done to get them to go meet Jesus?
 - b) How much did each one know about Jesus when he decided to follow Christ?

If you read the following passages it will look like there is a conflict as to when Andrew/Simeon Peter first met Jesus:

Matthew 4:18-22

Luke 5:2-11

John 1:35-42

However, chronologically the scriptures should be listed with John 1:35-42 first and then the other two following. This is because in John there was this initial meeting of Andrew/Peter with Jesus right after John the Baptist calls Him "the Lamb of God".

Then later when they are in their boats (Matthew 4:18-22; Luke 5:2-11) Christ comes by again and that is when He calls the brothers to "follow him".

Andrew – What's interesting here is that John the Baptist directed Andrew's attention to Christ by stating "Behold the Lamb of God". So apparently Andrew, as a disciple of John the Baptist, knew very little about Jesus until John the Baptist proclaimed Christ as such.

Simeon Peter- The only thing that Simon (Peter) knew about Jesus was that Andrew his brother referred to Him as the Messiah they had been searching for.

Phillip – John's passage tells us that Jesus found Philip. Whether Jesus went directly out to find Philip, or Jesus happened to find Philip as He was going to Galilee we cannot be for certain. We don't really know how much Philip knew Jesus up until this point.

We might assume that Philip had come across Jesus at some point prior to this because we know in the other gospels Jesus had interactions with other disciples prior to calling them. But we cannot be certain. All we can be certain of is that according the passage in John 1 Jesus made the initial move to meet with Philip.

Nathanael (Bartholomew) – Nathanael knew nothing of Jesus other than 1) his friend Philip spoke of Him being from Nazareth, 2) He was the son of Joseph, and 3) Philip thought He was the fulfillment of prophecy from the Law of Moses (Deut 18:15). Nathanael only came to meet Jesus

because his friend Philip invited him. Otherwise, Nathanael would have probably steered clear of a person from Nazareth.

3) Why do you think Jesus took different approaches with each man mentioned in verses 37-51?

Jesus' approach with Andrew:

i. *What do you seek? "It was not an accident that the first words which the Master spoke in His Messianic office were this profoundly significant question, 'What seek ye?' He asks it of us all, He asks it of us to-day." (Maclaren)*

ii. *"He probed them to find out whether they were motivated by idle curiosity or by a real desire to know him." (Tenney)*

iii. *Jesus did not refer them back to John the Baptist, even though he knew a lot about Jesus. To be Jesus' disciple, they must deal with Jesus directly. So Jesus invited John (many believe the 2nd disciple of John the Baptist is the apostle John) and Andrew to be a part of His life. Jesus didn't live a cloistered, ultra-private life. Jesus taught and trained His twelve disciples by allowing them to live with Him (Guzak).*

Jesus' approach with Peter:

Jesus must have known that Peter was ready to change his life and begin a new path. Perhaps Christ wanted to instill within Peter confidence, or to let him know that He saw something deeper/stronger in Peter.

According to www.Sermonwriter.com

Such name changes indicate the beginning of a new life—a new purpose—a new relationship with God.

Cephas is the Aramaic word for rock and Peter is the Greek word for rock. Jesus sees rock-like possibilities in Peter that will not be realized for quite some time. For now Peter is spontaneous instead of rock-like.

Jesus' approach with Philip:

a. *He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me":*

b. *Follow Me: There was nothing dramatic recorded about the call of Philip. Jesus simply said to him, "Follow Me," and Philip did. (Guzak)*

i. *"The verb 'Follow' will be used here in its full sense of 'follow as a disciple'. The present tense has continuous force, 'keep on following'." (Morris)*

Jesus' approach to Nathanael:

The incident which is before us now runs substantially on the same lines as the previous bringing of Peter to Jesus Christ. In both cases the man is brought by a friend, in both cases the friend's weapon is simply the expression of his own personal experience, 'We have found the Messiah,' although Philip has a little more to say about Christ's correspondence with the prophetic word. In both cases the work is finished by our Lord Himself manifesting His own supernatural knowledge to the inquiring spirit, though in the case of Nathanael that process is a little more lengthened out than in the case of Peter, because there was a little ice of hesitation and of doubt to be melted away. And Nathanael, starting from a lower point than Peter, having questions and hesitations which the other had not, rises to a higher point of faith and certitude, and from his lips first of all comes the full articulate confession, beyond which the Apostles never went as long as our Lord was upon earth: 'Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel.'

4) Both Andrew and Phillip use the phrase "We have found..." when approaching their brother or friend about Jesus, as if they had been searching for a while. It would also appear they were anxious and excited to bring others to meet Jesus. Do you feel like most Christians have this same zeal to search for Christ and share Him? Why or why not? What do you think it takes to - continue that zeal / to bring it back?

TAKING IT HOME:

1) What traps do we fall into, or are afraid of falling into, when attempting to introduce friends, family, or acquaintances to Jesus Christ?

Arguing over Bible facts (whether Bible is true or not)

Trying to prove there was a Jesus or if there is a God

Complicating the process

Don't think the person really cares to hear about Jesus

Thinking we are bothering the person.

2) Andrew and Phillip shared a commonality with the person they introduced to Christ. Andrew & Simeon were searching for the Messiah. Phillip and Nathanael were searching for the promised One in Deuteronomy 18:15. What are some things you search for in your life (i.e. family, hobbies, work, etc) that would be a commonality with unbelievers in your life that could serve as a way to introduce them to Jesus?

If you decide to answer this in your Growth group, I thought it would be good to have people list off things that they know they deal with on a regular basis. For instance many believers seek a loving marriage, happy family, fulfillment at work, fun in life, etc...just as non-believers seek after them. But as believers we know that none of these things can be fully accomplished without our relationship with God being in right standing. We also know that without Christ we can't have that right relationship.

So often we see non-believer's misguided search for happiness but don't think about how we want a lot of the same things – we just choose to put God first and let Him guide us with the other things.

Andrew related to his brother Simeon in searching for the Messiah.

Philip related to his friend in searching for the fulfillment of prophecy.

We all have friends we have common things were looking for – get rich, get married, have babies, retire, own things, etc – we just have a different approach. We can use these common life experience to segue into an introduction to Christ.