

John 1:35-51<sup>1</sup>  
 Jesus calls four disciples.  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany  
 Supplementary Lectionary Series “B,”  
 Gospels, adapted

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 FRANs presentation  
 Elders

<sup>35</sup> The next day<sup>2</sup> John was there again with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup> When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Behold! The Lamb of God!”

<sup>37</sup> When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup> Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, “What do you want?”

They said, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?”

<sup>39</sup> “Come,” he replied, “and you will see.”

So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup> The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ).<sup>4</sup> <sup>42</sup> And Andrew brought Simon to Jesus.

Jesus looked at Simon and said, “You are Simon son of John (Jonah). You will be called Cephas” (which, when translated, is Peter).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>43</sup> The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, “Follow me.”

<sup>44</sup> Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida.<sup>6</sup> <sup>45</sup> Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the One about whom Moses wrote in the Law [Hebrew: Torah – Instruction], and about whom the Prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

<sup>46</sup> “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked.

“Come and see,” said Philip.

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<sup>1</sup> *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984. All Scripture references are taken from this translation unless noted otherwise.

<sup>2</sup> On the previous day, John the Baptizer had pointed to Jesus and proclaimed, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29b).

<sup>3</sup> If this was the way Jewish time was kept, it would be 4:00 p.m. (*Concordia Self-Study Bible*). However, “John seems to count hours the Roman way, from midnight: 10 a.m.” (*Concordia Self-Study Commentary*). Kretzmann (Kretzmann, Paul E. *The Popular Commentary of the Bible, Vol. 1, New Testament* (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1924; from [www.kretzmannproject.org/](http://www.kretzmannproject.org/)), adopts for the 4:00 p.m. time.

<sup>4</sup> Both Messiah (Hebrew) and Christ (Greek) mean Anointed One.

<sup>5</sup> In the Greek “Peter” is *petros* and “rock” is *petra*. The rock on which the church is built is Peter’s inspired confession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah, “the Son of the living God.” The Greek *petros* (Matthew 16:17), basically a pebble, is here [Matthew 16:18] distinguished from *petra*, a solid rock” (*Concordia Self-Study Bible*).

<sup>6</sup> Bethsaida was located at the northerneastern tip of the Sea of Galilee.

<sup>47</sup> When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, “Here is a true Israelite,<sup>7</sup> in whom there is nothing false [no deceit, no guile].”

<sup>48</sup> “How do you know me?” Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, “I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.”

<sup>49</sup> Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel.”

<sup>50</sup> Jesus said, “You believe because I told you<sup>8</sup> I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that.” <sup>51</sup> He then added, “I tell you the truth, all of you<sup>9</sup> shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

COME AND SEE JESUS  
I. THROUGH HIS WORD  
II. THROUGH HIS WITNESSES

In the Name of Jesus, who is the Lamb of God who has taken away the sins of the world, Dear Fellow-Redeemed,

John the Baptizer points to Jesus as “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (1:29b&36b). Hearing this announcement, two of John the Baptizer’s disciples, Andrew and John, both of whom would become Apostles of Jesus, begin to follow Jesus. Jesus turns to them and says, “What do you want?” (1:38).

What do you want? It is a good question for us. What do you want? Food, clothing, shoes, house, home; enough money; comfort; peace ... the list can go on and on. But as you look at these things, which of them can you take with you when you die? Job reminds us, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart” (Job 1:21a). St. Paul echoes that same thought in his First Epistle or Letter to Timothy, “We brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it” (1 Timothy 6:7). So, what do you want?

What do you want? .... What do you really need? You need Jesus. You need to have faith in Jesus. Through faith in Jesus, you have the forgiveness of sins and eternal life in heaven. Eternal life in heaven with Jesus is better by far than life on this earth (cf. Philippians 1:22&23). The only way in which you have faith in Jesus for eternal life, is through the Means of Grace – the Gospel in Word and Sacraments. Through the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus, the Holy Spirit creates and sustains faith in Jesus in your heart. This is what you really need. So how does this Gospel come to you?

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<sup>7</sup> A “true Israelite”; therefore a believer based on the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. Note: “Not all who are descended from Israel are Israel” (Romans 9:5b); and, [Abraham] “is the father of all who believe” (Romans 4:11b).

<sup>8</sup> In this verse, the “you” is singular, referring to Nathanael.

<sup>9</sup> Here the “you” is plural, referring to all Jesus’ disciples.

One of the things that our text this morning reveals to us is that the Gospel is brought to us by other people. The Gospel is brought to us by a Friend, a Relative, an Acquaintance, or a Neighbor; this is called a FRANs – F R A N s – network.

For many of us, the Gospel was brought to us as little children in Holy Baptism, when mom and dad and sponsors brought us to the Baptismal Font, and we were baptized with water in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (cf. Mark 7:3&4; Matthew 28:19).<sup>10</sup> Someone brought us to the Gospel or, rather, brought the Gospel to us. Well, what is the case for others?

How are others brought to the Gospel? How is the Gospel brought to others? The same way. And, here is where you – each one of you – come in. You have a FRANs network – Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors. You are to share with them the same Gospel that has been shared with you.

Share the Gospel with others. After his resurrection from the dead, Jesus commanded, “Go into all the world and preach the Good News [the Gospel] to all creation” (Mark 16:15). Jesus proclaimed, “Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in [my] Name to all nations .... You are witnesses of these things” (Luke 24:47&48). Again, Jesus directed, “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19&20a) – thus, Holy Baptism is to be followed by thorough instruction in God’s Word, “teaching them to observe everything [all of God’s Word] I have commanded you.” Once more, just before his ascension into heaven, Jesus told his disciples, believers, “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8b). There is no question: You, believers in Jesus, are to speak God’s Word to others. To whom specifically are you to speak God’s Word?

Here, again, is where your FRANs network comes in: Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances, Neighbors. To these you are to proclaim God’s Word. But how effective is speaking God’s Word to others?

The effectiveness of God’s Word in the hearts and lives of others is not your concern. God proclaimed through his Old Testament Prophet Isaiah,

**<sup>10</sup> As the rain and the snow  
come down from heaven,  
and do not return to it  
without watering the earth  
and making it bud and flourish,  
so that it yields seed for the sower  
and bread for the eater,**

**<sup>11</sup> so is my Word that goes out  
from my mouth:  
It will not return to me empty,  
but will accomplish what I desire  
and achieve the purpose  
for which I sent it  
(Isaiah 55:10&11).**

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<sup>10</sup> My own Baptism took place at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Hammond, Indiana, on November 2, 1941.

It is God's Word that accomplishes what God wants to accomplish. You do not determine what that Word is going to accomplish. Similarly, St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians,

***2:1 When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the Testimony about God. 2 For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. 3 I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. 4 My Message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, 5 so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power (1 Corinthians 2:1-5).***

St. Paul did not rely on eloquence of speech; he did not rely on a programmed evangelism presentation or spiel; he simply proclaimed "Jesus Christ and him crucified." It was the Spirit's power through that Message that created faith in the hearts of the Corinthians; it was not St. Paul's doing. Paul also testifies to this fact at the beginning of his Epistle to the Romans. Paul declares, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16a). "The Gospel ... is the power of God"; not the eloquence or presentation of the speaker. Yet, as noted previously, God has chosen that believers are to proclaim the Gospel to others. Jesus said, "You are my witnesses" (cf. Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8b).

Jesus said, "You, believers in me, are my witnesses." We see this truth at work in our text this morning: COME AND SEE JESUS ... I. THROUGH HIS WORD; II. THROUGH HIS WITNESSES.

## COME AND SEE JESUS I. THROUGH HIS WORD

Our text deals with five disciples: Andrew; his brother, Simon Peter; Philip; his friend, Nathanael; and, although he is not mentioned by name, John who would become one of Jesus' disciples; [in his Gospel, John refers to himself as the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23; 19:26)]. All of these had heard the preaching of John the Baptizer, the forerunner of Jesus.

On the previous day, John the Baptizer pointed to Jesus and declared: "Behold! The Lamb of God! Who takes away the sin of the world" (1:29b). On this day also, as Jesus walked by, John proclaimed, "Behold! The Lamb of God!" (1:36b). On the basis of this declaration, Andrew and John (who would become Apostles) followed Jesus.

John the Baptizer proclaimed that Jesus was "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (1:29b&36b). This Word motivated Andrew and John to follow Jesus. Jesus took note of the fact that they were following him, turned around, and said to them, "What do you want?" (1:38b). There is that question again. "What do you want?" Probably

somewhat timidly and hesitantly, John and Andrew answer, “Rabbi ... Teacher ... Where are you staying?” (1:38b). Jesus told them, “Come and see” (1:39a). They spent the rest of the day with Jesus (cf. 1:39b). What a day that must have been!

Imagine! Sitting at the feet of Jesus. Listening to his Word. Listening to him reveal that he was the Savior whom God had sent into the world to redeem mankind from sin, death and hell. And, as you look at some of the rest of the things that are said about Jesus in our text, you will come to understand what you too are to say about Jesus to your Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors – your FRANS network.

#### APPLICATION

Review the names, phrases and references to Jesus in our text. He is called “the Lamb of God” (1:29b&36b); he is called “Rabbi” and “Teacher” (1:38b&49a); he is referred to as the “Messiah,” “Christ,” the Anointed One (cf. 1:41b); he is referred to as “the One about whom Moses spoke in the Law – Torah, Instruction – and the One about whom the Old Testament Prophets also wrote” (cf. 1:45; 5:39; 20:31); he is referred to as “the Son of God” and “the King of Israel” (1:49); Jesus refers to himself as “the Son of Man” (1:51b). All of these references tell you something about who Jesus is and what he has done. These different titles, references and names, then, can serve you as you speak to others about Jesus.

Jesus is the Lamb of God who has taken away the sin of the world (cf. 1:29b&36b). Everyone is a sinner. That means that everyone does, thinks or says things that are wrong and wicked. God demands perfection (cf. Leviticus 19:2; Matthew 5:48). God punishes sin (cf. Psalm 5:4-6). But, instead of punishing each and every person, God placed upon his Son the punishment for the sins of the world (cf. Isaiah 53:4-6; 2 Corinthians 5:19a,21a). Jesus is the Lamb of God sacrificed for the sins of the world (cf. 1 John 2:1b&2).

Jesus is called Rabbi or Teacher (cf. 1:38b&49a). If you want to know about Jesus, then listen to him as he teaches you – listen to what he says in his Word – the Bible. Here is a hint for you too as you deal with your FRANS network: Direct people to their Bibles. If they do not have one, give them one. Tell them that they may start by reading the Gospel of John or, perhaps, the Gospel of Mark. There they will learn about what Jesus did for them.

Jesus is referred to as the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One (cf. 1:41b). It was through anointing – having a special oil poured over one’s head – that a person was installed into an office in the Old Testament. Jesus is anointed to serve in three offices: Prophet, Priest and King. These are truths about which you can speak to your Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors.

Jesus is the Prophet. He proclaimed God’s Word in truth and purity. You have that Word in the Bible. Jesus continues today as the Prophet, as he sends you out with his message of forgiveness and salvation.

Jesus is the Priest – the Great High Priest. In the Old Testament, priests prayed and interceded for the people and offered sacrifices for the people. Jesus, the Great High Priest, offered up himself for the sins of all. Tell others about this truth. Jesus continues as the Great High Priest today by interceding for believers before the Throne of God. St. Paul reminds you, “There is One God and One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men” (1 Timothy 2:5&6a; cf. Romans 8:34b).

Jesus is the King. Recall that Nathanael confessed that Jesus was “the Son of God” and “the King of Israel” (1:49). Jesus is King of Israel – not the Israel that counts itself by the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but the Israel of all who believe in Jesus as St. Paul describes them in Romans 4 and 9 (cf. Romans 9:6&7a; 4:11b&16). Jesus is also King because only he could win the battle against sin, death, hell and the devil. Jesus’ resurrection from the dead assures everyone that he is King over all, and that everything is under his guidance and control – all for the good of those who believe in him (cf. Ephesians 1:18-23). Moreover, Jesus is “the Son of God.”

Nathaniel declares that Jesus is “the Son of God” (1:49). When the Angel Gabriel came to the virgin Mary to announce that she would be come pregnant and give birth to a Son, Gabriel told her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). If Jesus were a mere man, he would be a sinner like the rest of us and could redeem no one. The Bible tells us,

**<sup>7</sup> No man can redeem the life of another  
or give to God a ransom for him—  
<sup>8</sup> the ransom for a life is costly,  
no payment is ever enough—  
<sup>9</sup> that he should live on forever  
and not see decay** (Psalm 49:7-9).

Jesus had to be more than a man to redeem mankind, to be the ransom for all people – the redemption from sin, death and hell. At the same time, Jesus had to be true man.

Jesus refers to himself in our text as “the Son of Man” (1:51b). Jesus is both true man, born of the virgin Mary, and true God, the eternal Son of the Father. Only Jesus is the Savior and Redeemer of mankind, and only by faith in him does a person come to the Father in heaven for eternal life. Jesus proclaimed, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). This is a very important point that you will want to make to your Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors.

The common religion of mankind includes the thought that as long as you try to live a good life and as long as you have some sort of religion, Christian or otherwise, you will get to heaven. You need to point out to your Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors, that this is not the case. Faith in Jesus alone as one’s Savior, brings a person into heaven with the Father and with Jesus.

When Philip told Nathanael about Jesus, he referred to Jesus as “Jesus of Nazareth” (1:45b). Nathanael’s reaction was “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” (1:46a). Nazareth was not only a town in Galilee, a province which the Jews despised; in and of itself, Nazareth was despised. Yet, you will want to point out to others, how appropriate it was that Jesus came from the despised town of Nazareth.

Jesus himself was “despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (cf. Isaiah 53:3a, KJV). Jesus, from the despised town of Nazareth in Galilee, was so despised and rejected that he was killed by crucifixion – Jesus was nailed, hands and feet, to a cross. Jesus’ suffering on the cross took away the sins of the world, as again, the Prophet Isaiah says, “He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). But then direct your Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors to the victorious truth: On the third day, Easter Sunday morning, Jesus arose from the dead (cf. Matthew 16:21; 17:9,22&23; 20:18&19; 28:1-20; cf. also Mark, Luke, John ...). No longer despised and rejected, Jesus is the only victorious King, Savior and Redeemer!

So, what Word of God, are you to bring to your Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors? “Jesus is the Lamb of God who has taken away the sins of the world.” Jesus is our Rabbi and Teacher who instructs us from his Word, the Bible. Jesus is the Christ, Messiah, Anointed One, who has fulfilled all of God’s promises of deliverance from sin, death and hell. To accomplish the salvation of mankind, Jesus was despised and rejected; Jesus carried on the cross the sins of all – your sins too. Through Jesus alone, you have eternal life in heaven with God. Jesus is the Son of God and the Son of Man – the only One who could and has delivered you. These words and phrases, which you use to speak about Jesus to others, are words and phrases you can use to speak to your Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors.

It is through your testimony to Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors, that others will COME AND SEE JESUS.

## COME AND SEE JESUS II. THROUGH HIS WITNESSES

So, to whom shall you speak these simple truths of God’s Word – who Jesus is? It has already noted that you are to speak to your Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors about who Jesus is. As you look at the text, you see how this took place for Andrew, John (the Apostle), Simon Peter, Philip and Nathanael.

All of these men heard and were disciples of John the Baptizer, who proclaimed that Jesus was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (cf. 1:29ff). Crowds came to listen to John the Baptizer, repent of their sins, and be baptized in the Jordan River by him (cf. 1:24-26; Matthew 3:1-12; Mark 1:1-8; Luke 3:1-18). Then we look more specifically at Andrew and John (the Apostle).

**<sup>40</sup> Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John [the Baptizer] had said and who had followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup> The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). <sup>42</sup> And he brought him to Jesus ... (1:40-42a).**

Was Simon Peter, Andrew's Friend, Relative, Acquaintance or Neighbor? Peter was Andrew's brother. Peter was part of Andrew's FRANS network. We also look at Philip.

Philip had heard the preaching of John the Baptizer. Jesus called Philip to follow him (1:43).

***Philip found Nathanael and told him, 'We have found the One about whom Moses wrote in the Law [Hebrew: Torah – Instruction], and about whom the Prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph' (1:45).***

Was Philip Nathanael's Friend, Relative, Acquaintance or Neighbor? Philip was Nathanael's friend. Nathanael was part of Philip's FRANS network. And we noted before, that these Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors simply spoke about Jesus to others.

They spoke about Jesus to their Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors, and would continue to do so. They spoke about who Jesus was and what he had done. They spoke, in other words, the truths of the Scriptures to others.

#### APPLICATION

Here then is your assignment, commission, directive and guideline. Identify your Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors – your FRANS network. Speak to them about Jesus. What should you say? Use the names and phrases that refer to Jesus, which identify who Jesus is and what he has done. This is no big secret, and it is no big or complicated program.

Simply tell others about Jesus. Speak to them about repentance and forgiveness of sins in Jesus. Invite them to come with you to Bible study and Worship. You yourself will not convert any of these to faith in Jesus; conversion – bringing a person to faith in Jesus – is the work of the Holy Spirit alone. But the Holy Spirit will use you to accomplish in the hearts of the people to whom you speak, that which the Holy Spirit desires to take place. God's Word that you speak to others, does not return to him empty, but accomplishes what he desires and achieves the purpose for which he sent it (cf. Isaiah 55:11).

On the last page of your worship folder, you have a place where you can write for yourself a reminder of who are your Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors. It is your "FRANS Network List."

## My FRANs List

**Friends:**

**Relatives:**

:

**Neighbors:**

Use the list as a reminder for yourself of the command, directive, commission and guidance your LORD Jesus has given to you to speak his Word to others: Your FRANs network.

### CONCLUSION

What do you want? More than physical comforts and provisions. What do you want? You want to be with Jesus in heaven in eternity. This is what you want and need; it is also what others need and are to want. God makes you part of the process of bringing others to faith in Jesus as you speak about Jesus to your Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors – your FRANs network. Through the Word of God that has been brought to you and through the Word of God that you bring to others, the Holy Spirit will create faith in Jesus in those whom he has chosen from eternity to be believers in Jesus. Amen.