



*April 3, 2022*

*“Follower”*

*SS at 9:30. Service at 10:30 with King’s Kids.*

*NEWS*

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Orthodox belief pertaining to the nature of God and the nature of Christ is neither a \_\_\_\_\_ of more than one thing into only one thing nor a loose association of \_\_\_\_\_ individuals. Rather, in both cases, it is a \_\_\_\_\_ of individuals so perfectly unified relationally that they think, act, and speak as one.

People may \_\_\_\_\_ you, but make sure it’s because they are offensive miscreants, not because you are an offensive miscreant! “There’s no particular virtue in accepting \_\_\_\_\_ that you well deserve.”

Trust God, do right, follow Jesus, get your worth, value, and acceptance from Him alone and you will find your reward in Heaven. II Timothy 3:12.

### **John 1:35–51 ~**

A disciple is μαθητής (mä-thā-tās). The concept of a disciple comes from the idea of conformity, far more than from learning. Peripatetic is from the Greek verb περιπατέω (pě-řē-pä-tě-ō), which means to walk around \_\_\_\_\_ going anywhere. Follow Jesus, not to a physical location, but to a transformation of self.

*Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.*

*God Bless You!*

Andrew was the brother of Simon Peter. His name is Greek Ἀνδρέας (än-dřě-ās). John the Apostle was the brother of \_\_\_\_\_ the Apostle. Their father Zebedee had a fishing business with Peter and \_\_\_\_\_.

The Baptist “Looked”. It is a verb made a participle that \_\_\_\_\_ its base meaning. The word “walked” is not Jesus passed by, but that Jesus walked without geographical destination. It is the word περιπατέω (pě-řě-pä-tě-ō).

Jesus turned to them and pointedly asked “What is it that you eagerly expect to find with Me?” Many people follow Jesus for the \_\_\_\_\_ reasons and often they are not even aware of those \_\_\_\_\_ reasons.

They address Jesus as “Rabbi.” John 15:16,

When a person really needs some encouragement, \_\_\_\_\_ of giving it, folks disparage the person for being needy.

Christianity for every person comes as an ever-increasing comprehension, thus enabling a gradual realignment of perception, which in turn, \_\_\_\_\_ result in a growing reordering of behavior over time.

Andrew went and got his brother Simon. We then meet Phillip of Bethsaida, and he brings Nathanael from the Cana who \_\_\_\_\_, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; the King of Israel.”

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Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

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# Alêtheia

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP




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the gospel of

# JOHN

ΕΝΑΡΧΗ Η ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΝΗ ΠΡΟΣΤΟΝ  
 ΘΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΤΗ ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΣΤΟΣ Η ΝΕΝΑΡΧΗΤΙΡΟΣ  
 ΤΟΝ ΘΗΝ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΣ ΤΟ ΚΑΧΟΤΙΣ

Last week, we talked about orthodox belief pertaining to the nature of God and the nature of Christ. Neither is a blending of more than one thing into only one thing and neither is merely a loose association of separate individuals. Rather, in both cases, it is a harmony of individuals so perfectly unified relationally that they think, act, and speak as one.



The universe is made up of an untold number of diverse things and yet if only a single thing were removed, the universe would no longer be what it is. More to our point... Imagine a marriage where the two individuals were so beautifully in tune with each other that they were one with each other. So united in

purpose that they function as though they were a singularity without a hint of dissonance. Now, imagine all of us like that with each other and simultaneously with God forever and ever.

When you can imagine that you have a glimpse of Heaven. You see Heaven is not a bunch of individuals in a loose association, nor is Heaven a blending of all of us into a single consciousness. It is millions of individuals choosing to be in perfect Harmony with the One and so, in perfect harmony with everyone else so choosing.



I finished last week with an exhortation to place your entire focus on following Jesus. Doing your best with intentionality as the Holy Spirit guides you and letting the chips fall where they may. Leaving the results of your efforts to Him, thereby getting your approval from Him. If the world doesn't like that – let the world be hanged. You follow Jesus!

Just to finish that thought my dear friends... The world may hate you and people may treat you poorly, but make sure it's because they are offensive miscreants, not because you are an offensive miscreant! The last half of 1 Peter goes into detail about getting along, doing right, honoring all and then in verse 20 states, "If you patiently endure mistreatment or punishment for doing wrong, there is no reason to praise you for that. But if you suffer for doing good, and you are patient, then God is pleased." Why? Because Christ suffered for you and gave you an example to follow. This is what you were called to do, be like Him and do as he did. It goes on to say that the way Christ was able to be maligned and abused without answering in kind was because He committed Himself to God who judges justly. In other words, He trusted God would sort it all out perfectly one day. Well, even when we believe that

we think that that day is too far away... What is a year, or even a hundred years in the face of all eternity?

Trust God, do right, follow Jesus, get your worth, value, and acceptance from Him alone and you will find your reward in Heaven where moth and rust have no effect and where it actually matters for all time. Honor all people, love the family of believers, fear God, respect the king, because “There’s no particular virtue in accepting punishment that you well deserve.”

And if you do what God is asking you will be abused – I guarantee it, but you don’t have to believe me. II Timothy 3:12, “Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” That’s what the Holy Spirit told the Apostle Paul to record for the church. How to respond to such attacks? Remember the attackers are exactly like you. They are merely scared, hurt, self-absorbed humans who need Jesus. Offer them Jesus, rather than a fight.



John 1:35–51, 35Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples, 36and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” 37The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, “What do you seek?” They said to Him, “Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?” 39He said to them, “Come, and you will see.” So they came and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. 40One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41He found first his own brother Simon

and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which translated means Christ). 42He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter). 43The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.” 44Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. 45Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” 46Nathanael said to him, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” 47Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” 48Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” 49Nathanael answered Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.” 50Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” 51And He said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

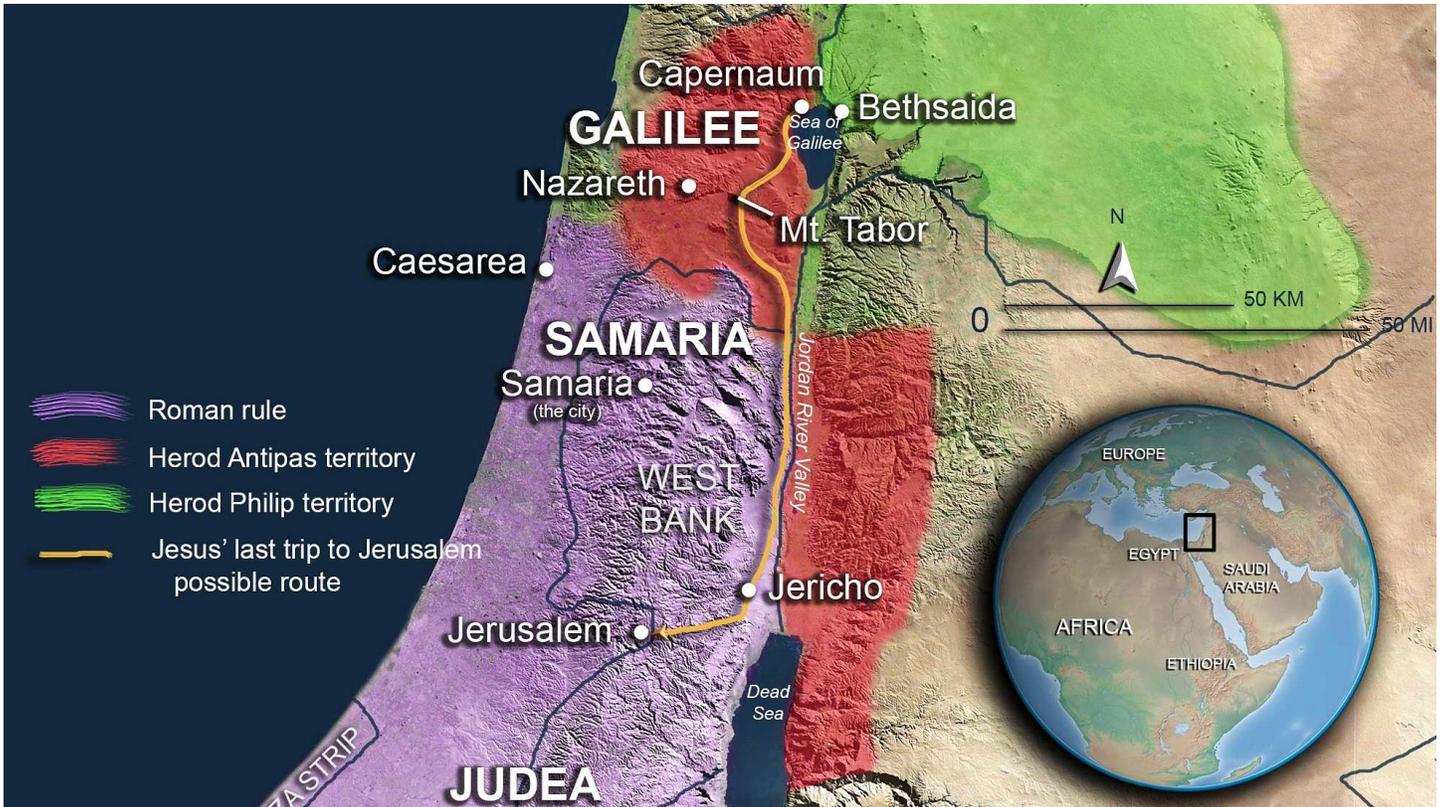
John the Baptizer, Jesus' slightly older relative was standing by the Jordan River near Bethany, roughly in the vicinity of Jericho. With Him were two of his disciples.



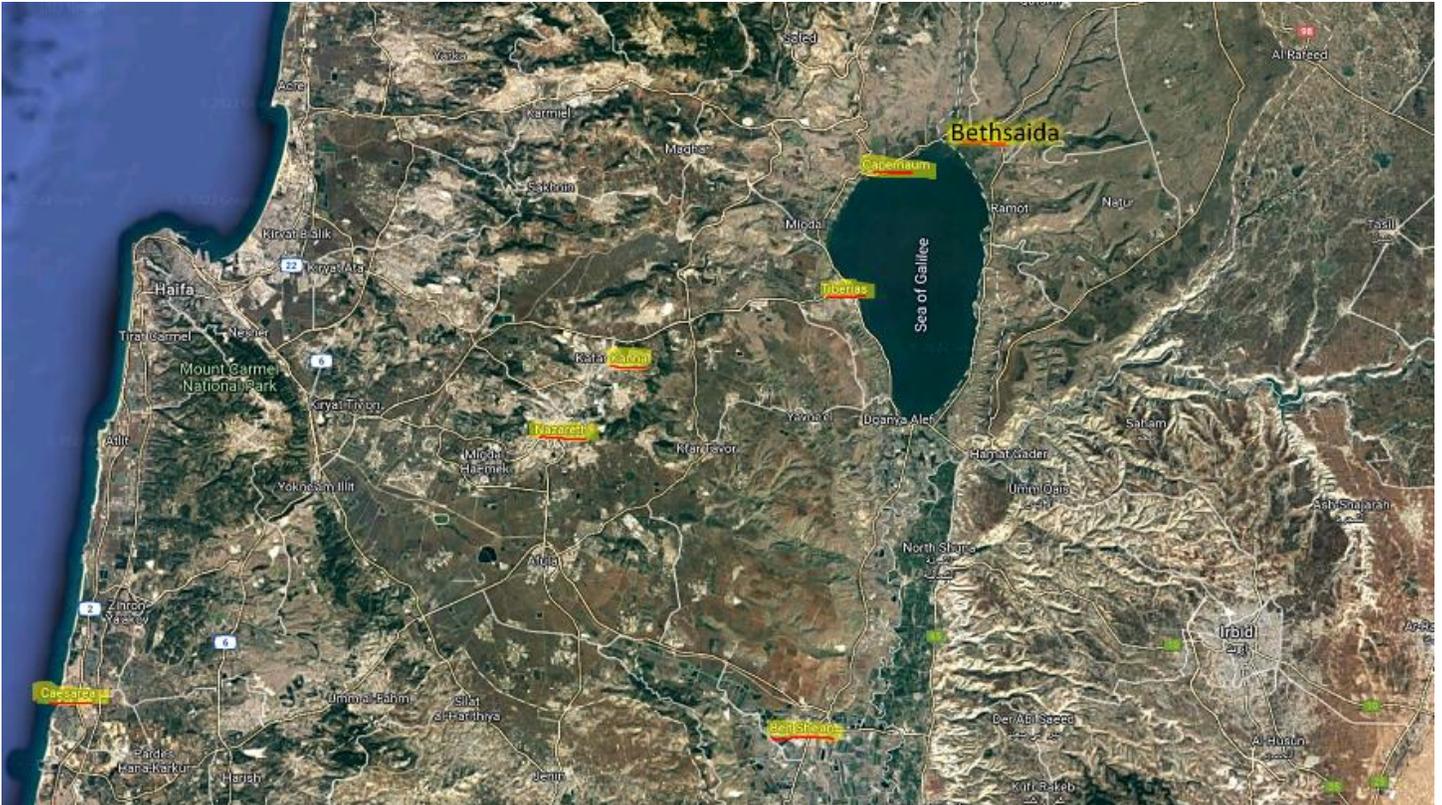
Let me interject here that a disciple was a follower of a teacher, mentor, leader, master. The word is μαθητής (mä-thā-tās), from which we get our word mathematics. The essential idea is that math is an exact science. As I've often said, a student who tells their math teacher that  $2+2=5$  is not cute, original, or innovative, they're just wrong. The concept of a disciple comes from the idea of conformity, far more than from learning. Homer,

the author of the Iliad and the Odyssey, some 3,000 years ago, used other terms for learning something and used this term for something a person had become accustomed to through intentional conformity. It's like training, rather than learning. Like becoming a pilot as opposed to learning about flying. Well, Aristotle about 350 years before our incident on the Jordan River, developed the idea in full, with his peripatetic school. Peripatetic is from the Greek verb περιπατέω (pě-řē-pä-tě-ō), which means to walk around without going anywhere. Similar to the Australian concept of a walkabout. The destination is not geographical. Aristotle's disciples would follow him around intentionally conforming themselves to him.

That's precisely the style of training both John and Jesus used. It is what all Christians ever since have been called to do. Follow Jesus, not to a physical location, but to a conformation to Him as a transformation of self.



Gaulanitis/Phillip, Samaria & Judea/Pilate, Galilee & Perea/Antipas, Decapolis.



Caesarea, Beit Shean (Scythopolis), Tiberias, Nazareth, Cana, Capernaum, Bethsaida. The two disciples with John were Andrew and John, son of Zebedee, author of this Gospel. Andrew was the brother of Simon Peter. His name is Greek Ἄνδρέας (än-drë-ās), meaning manly, as in a tough guy, or warrior. He and his brother were from Bethsaida on the northern tip of the Sea of Galilee, in what was technically the province of Gaulanitis ruled by Herod Phillip. Today part of that territory is called the Golan Heights. While I'm at it, Simon, his brother, is also a Greek, not Jewish name. It is reminiscent of the Hebrew name Simeon but is actually Greek. Philip was

also from Bethsaida and that is a purely Greek name as well.

In those days, Bethsaida, and its province Gaulanitis, were extremely pagan in religion and Greco-Roman in culture. Hence, the Greek names. We also know, that both Andrew and Phillip were completely fluent in Greek as we'll see when we get to John chapter 12.





John the Apostle was the brother of James the Apostle. Their father Zebedee had a fishing business with boats, plural, and had partnered with the other brothers Peter and Andrew. By this time Peter was living in his mother-in-law's home in Capernaum. That's a town just a bit southwest of Bethsaida, but in the province of Galilee, ruled at the time by Herod Antipas. It was more Jewish than Bethsaida, but far more Greco-Roman than Jerusalem.

Salome was the mother of James and John, and I'm personally certain that she was one of Mary's sisters. Mary as in the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus, making those Jesus, James, and John, first cousins. That's a bit of background.

“Looked at Jesus as He walked,  
and said, “Behold, the Lamb of  
God!”

The two disciples heard him  
speak, and they followed Jesus.”

Andrew, and John the Apostle, had attached themselves to John the Baptist as two of his disciples. In verse 36, their leader, John the Baptist, “Looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” Well, that’s what they were waiting for, so the next words are, “The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.”

Now, there’s some cool stuff here that’s easy to miss, but it’s and it really occurs in every verse. I won’t belabor it and I won’t cover every verse this way, but just to give you a sense of the perfection of John’s Gospel I’ll point out a couple of things here.

“Looked at Jesus as He walked,  
and said, “Behold, the Lamb of  
God!”

The two disciples heard him  
speak, and they followed Jesus.”

John crafted a remarkable work using very basic Greek and it speaks to the divine nature of his inspiration. He has that the Baptist, “Looked”. It is a verb made a participle that intensifies its base meaning. As such it means to fix your gaze with intensity in order to discern something about what you’re seeing. This is not a casual observance, but a concentrated visual examination. The Baptist focused on Jesus, the One he now knew with certainty was the Messiah that they were anticipating.

He did so as “Jesus... walked”. His walking is obviously coordinated later with the two dudes following that walking, “they followed Jesus.”

The word “walked” is not Jesus passed by, or Jesus was journeying elsewhere, it is that Jesus walked without geographical destination. It is the word περιπατέω (pě-řē-pä-tě-ō), as in the Peripatetic school of Aristotle I mentioned earlier. There are many other ways to say what Jesus was doing, but this word choice gives the unmistakable sense that Jesus walked as a teacher.

They “followed,” as His first disciples. They detached themselves from the Baptist and they attached themselves to Jesus as His disciples. Now, the word for followed means literally to follow behind and in a subordinate position. They submitted to His authority by walking after, rather than ahead of, or even beside.

As I say, the Greek term carries the implication that you are either the lead person’s slave, servant, or learner. You have subordinated, subjugated, humbled, yourself to your superior, as in your master or mentor. A slightly modified form of this verb was coined early on in

Christianity to refer specifically and only to a true follower of Jesus Christ as a Christian.

These interesting relationships are packed into every verse. Anyway, both Andrew and John went after Jesus with the obvious intention of being His disciples since their previous mentor announced that Jesus was the very One that they were waiting to follow.



Jesus turned to them and pointedly asked a question that is more than a mere, “What do you seek?” It is more intense. It has more to do with zeal, fervor, and desire. It’s like, “What is it that you eagerly expect to find with Me?” In other words, “What are you

passionately seeking, and what part do you think I play in that quest.”

Many people follow Jesus for the wrong reasons and often they are not even aware of those wrong reasons. It's a question you should ask yourself. Why am I following Jesus? What am I hoping to find in Him?

They address Jesus as “Rabbi.” That's the first indication that they didn't really know Who Jesus was, or to what they were attaching themselves at that time.



John explained that Rabbi meant teacher and that's basically correct, but it gives a slightly wrong

impression for us here today in the 21st century West. In ancient Judaism and the early Christianity that followed, a teacher was a highly respected and deeply esteemed person who had knowledge to impart that was not available elsewhere. You couldn't go to the library, look it up on your computer, watch a YouTube video or a TED Talk, or even phone a friend. There was no online course, or television evangelist, so you had to learn from a willing teacher in person, if you wanted to know. Rabbi actually means great one. Such a person, a person with knowledge who was willing to share it, was not just attentively listened to, they were respected and obeyed.

To stress an important part of that, a teacher only taught those he was willing to teach. A good teacher chose his students. He was selective about whom he would allow in his class. In John 15:16, Jesus talking to His disciples said, "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit".

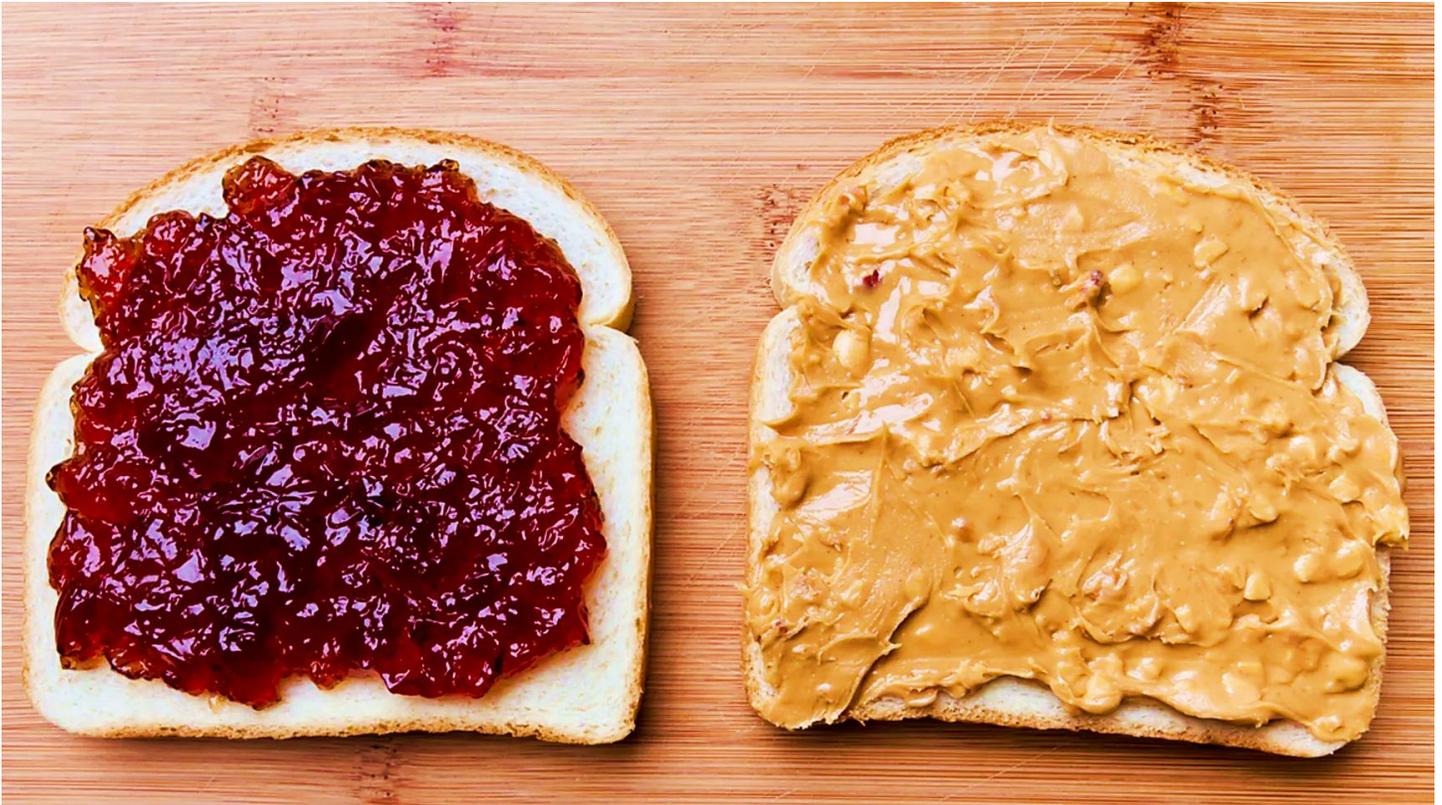
Matthew 23:6-8, 6“They love the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues, 7and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi by men. 8“But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers.

So, they called Him Rabbi and you might remember that Jesus blasted the Pharisees and Scribes for that enjoying that honorific title. In fact, He went on to say that we should not be called by titles such as Rabbi, teacher, father, or leader.

In true human legalistic fashion, there are those who strictly avoid those specific terms, but then have no problem using titles like pastor, which means the same thing. The injunction had nothing to do with respect and appreciation for Christian teachers and leaders, it had to do with pride and caste – with the stratification of value. Jesus ridiculed Jewish leaders for loving the

honor and respect and elevation of being called Rabbi. He wasn't disparaging teachers, or people respecting and obeying teachers, He was criticizing people for loving that deference and the associated value distinction that naturally arises from it.

I am your teacher and your leader because I am your pastor. I have never once, in nearly two decades as such, ever introduced myself that way, never corrected someone to add a title, never even flinched when people treated me without respect. My conscience is completely clear on this matter. I have no need nor desire for human accolades, respect, or appreciation. I work for God in the role that He assigned to me and what you do with that is between you and God. Just so I don't mislead anyone, while I don't care about being respected in my role, that does not mean that God doesn't care about how you treat me. You work that out with Him.



But my value here at Alêtheia is identical to the value of the smallest child in the nursery. My role is different, but I am no more worthy and no more respectable and no more valuable than anyone else. But my friends, that being true should not lead anyone to value me less, but to value everyone else more. We are all completely equal members of God's family. My value and so the respect due me as a teacher, leader, pastor is different than the toddler's value and so respect as a nose mining rug rat. We are equal, we are complementary, we fulfil different roles and so we receive a different kind of respect, but the respect is equal.

That's precisely what the Bible teaches regarding a married couple. Each is completely equal, but each is assigned, by God, a different role within the family. The husband must be respected as the wife must be equally respected, but each respected differently due to the differences in the roles that they play. How can we possibly assign a greater value to either party? There is no marriage without both and there is no church without us all.



The clergy – parishioner dichotomy is precisely what Jesus railed against. Yes, we should all stay in our lane, but no one in Christianity is better than, or worth

more than anyone else. Having no hierarchies of value, does not mean, having no hierarchies of organization and position. If you want to call me pastor, or give me an encouraging compliment, or pay me some respect, fear not, I guarantee it will not go to my head. In similar fashion, I call you all my co-equal brothers and sisters, I am trying to encourage you all and I deeply respect each of you as the child of God you are... I'm assuming none of that will go to your head either.

It's so fascinating how fearful and broken we are... I have seen so many times where a person really needs some encouragement. A member of the family recognizes that need but instead of giving the encouragement, they disparage the person for being needy. Lord, please help us to "Be devoted to one another in love and Honor one another above ourselves."



It was a misunderstanding of this concept that led Christianity to move our culture towards a rejection of human authority and ultimately to a refusal to be respectful to those people serving us as our teachers, leaders, and protectors. Failures of the church to promote a proper Biblical Christianity led the West to Modernism and Modernism inevitably led to Postmodernism. From a suspicion of institutional authority to a complete suspension of any external authority including Truth itself. In America today, we are so self-oriented that we are the only authority we recognize and so we actively criticize, mistreat, and

abuse, anyone crazy enough to step up and serve us as teachers, leaders, or protectors.

Look at the way we, in America, treat our schoolteachers, our government officials, and our law enforcement personnel. Go out and simply ask a schoolteacher, a county commissioner, or a local cop, if they feel respected by the people they serve.



Anyway, there is a humble respect in the term the guys use to address Jesus, but we'll also admit that it is a title far short of what would have been appropriate for the Word of God made flesh. John will show us a progressive revelation and a progressive

understanding by the disciples. No one gets all the information in an instant and even if they did, no one could digest all the ramifications of an information dump of that magnitude.

Christianity for every person comes as an ever-increasing comprehension, thus enabling a gradual realignment of perception, which in turn, must result in a growing reordering of behavior over time. A developing transformation of being, from child of dark, to child of Light, that is a measurable change. Faith without evidence of faith, is no faith at all.

They'll get there, but for now, they're taking baby steps. "Where are You staying?" "Come, and you will see." That's always the way with Jesus. It isn't ever, "I'm staying at the Holiday Inn," it's always "Come to Me, follow Me, and then, and only then, will you see, will you discern, will you understand." Christian answers are found in the process of following, not in the process of questioning.

It was the "Tenth hour." That's 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I know, some translators go with 10 in the morning. It's possible, but 4 pm is almost certainly

correct. There is a tradition that it was Friday and the reason Andrew and John had to stay with Jesus the whole next day was because the Sabbath started just two hours after they joined Him.



Andrew went and got his brother Simon. Anyway, upon meeting Simon, Jesus “Looked at him.” This is that same word used earlier meaning an intense focus and then He said, “You shall be called Cephas.” It is Greek Κηφᾶς (kā-fās), that approximates the Aramaic Kê-fā meaning rock. In Aramaic both the name and the rock are identical. When we translate, instead of transliterating into Greek we get the word πέτρα (pēt-ṛä) and using proper Greek grammatical forms we

extrapolate that out to the proper pronoun Πέτρος (pēt-řős), giving us in English Peter. So, the dude ended up with several names. We could reverse engineer his name Simon to a Jewish name Simeon, or in Hebrew, Shē-mōn. He is Simon Barjona, son of John. He is called by Paul Cephas and by most others as Simon Peter or simply Peter. It's a big deal to change a person's name in this way. It was the purview of God and it had to do with the role to which God was calling a person.

Peter, like it or not, was the first leader of the church. His faith and his leadership are what Jesus used to build His church.



We meet Phillip of Bethsaida, and he brings Nathanael to Jesus. Nathanael was from the town of Cana just north of Jesus' hometown of Nazareth. His comment is likely related specifically to Judas the Galilean, or to him and a long list of other self-proclaimed Messianic, and semi-messianic figures who arose from the area in the first several decades of Roman occupation.

It's kind of like, here we go again, another Galilean leading a doomed revolution. Here Nathanael isolates Nazareth instead of the whole province as we see those from Judea doing. It's probably due to some rivalry between Nazareth and Cana just 4 miles away.

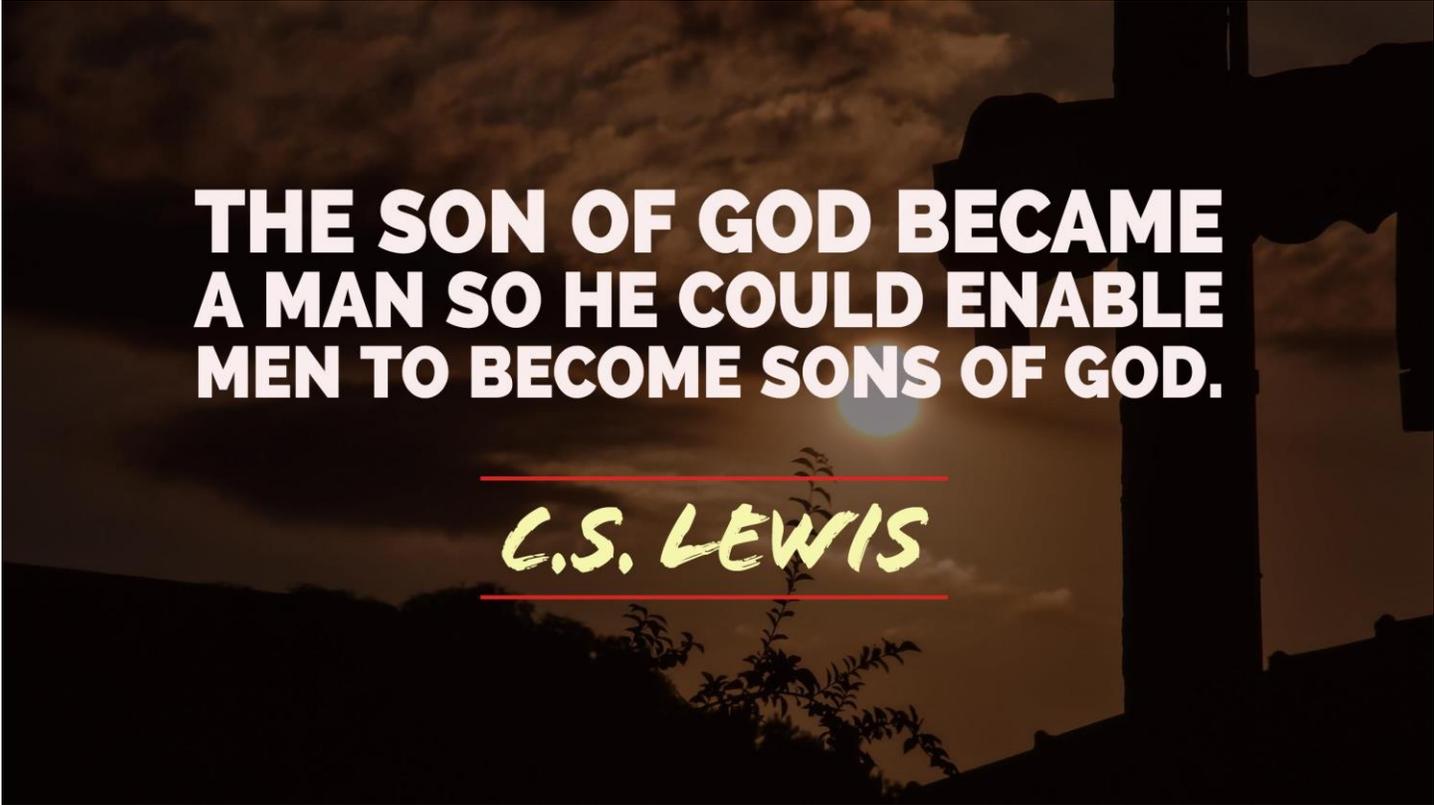
He probably didn't want to disparage his province directly.

Jesus' words to him seem odd and what's even odder is the reaction of Nathanael after Jesus tells him that He saw him under a tree. "Sitting under a fig tree," was a typical metaphor for a person in study and prayer. It is traditionally thought that Nathanael was in deep study and prayer concerning the arrival of the Messiah and that he may have been given some insight into that by God. The thinking goes that when he met Jesus, Jesus said something that was in his vision and so he knew immediately and without question that Jesus was the true Messiah.

We don't know for sure. What we do know is that Jesus said something that resonated spiritually with the man that isn't obvious to us in the retelling of the event. Whatever the precise details, what Nathanael then declares is crystal clear.



“Rabbi, You are the Son of God; the King of Israel.”  
Jesus then told him You are going to see greater things  
than this to confirm your belief.



**THE SON OF GOD BECAME  
A MAN SO HE COULD ENABLE  
MEN TO BECOME SONS OF GOD.**

**C.S. LEWIS**

Then verse 51 is addressed to the group foretelling a future where they would all “See the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.” Nathanael called Him the Son of God, and then Jesus confirmed the correctness of that by the content of verse 51 but stressed His human condescension. Jesus’ favorite title for Himself is Son of Man. The fully God, identifying Himself with the fully man.