



We are beginning a Summer series looking at the foundations of faith and grappling with some of the basics. This series will cover areas you may have looked at before but it is always good to check your foundations and go deeper in some of these fundamentals. Our series begins with 'Invitation' – and Jesus' calling of the disciples.

This study has two sections. The first looks at the invitations Andrew and Simon receive and ends with an imaginative prayer time. The second looks at Philip and Nathanael's invitations and leads us towards considering who we might invite. You probably won't have time to do both sections you plan in advance where to lead your group.

1. Where have you seen evidence of God in your life this week? Are there any stories you might share?
2. Have you ever received a special or significant invitation? What was it for? How did it feel?

Read John 1:35-42

3. Does anything strike you immediately from this passage? What stands out and what questions does it raise in you?
4. The invitation of the influencer: v35-37 John and Baptist was very influential in the lives of Andrew and his friend. Who are the most influential voices in your life? As well as the personal ones, are there voices of people you don't know that you pay attention to?
5. Who are the voices that direct you to Jesus? Are there people you pay more attention to than others?
6. The invitation of family: v40-42. Andrew brings Simon to Jesus. Are you more or less likely to do things your family are excited about?
7. Andrew's invitation v41 to Simon is full of enthusiasm. For Andrew, it is phrased as 'We have found the Messiah'. Why was this such an important thing for Andrew and the 1st Century Jews?
8. What phrase might you use to tell someone what you've found in Jesus? (For example – I've found belonging. Or I've found freedom from guilt...)
9. When Simon comes to Jesus, Jesus gives him a new name. Why do you think Jesus does this? What might this be important for Simon?

Following Jesus involves not just receiving an initial invitation but a regular reminder of his desire that we follow him. Use this imaginative prayer exercise to consider how where he might be leading you today?

Imaginative prayer time: As a group, invite people to engage with a small section of the story in quiet prayer.

Reread v37-39 slowly, and invite the group to imagine you are the other disciple with Andrew. Ask these questions giving people time to mull them over in their mind. There's no need to share answers as you go.

- a. When Jesus turns around to look at you what look is in his eye?
- b. When Jesus asks 'What do you want?' What is the longing of your heart?
- c. When Jesus says 'Come and you will see?' will you go with him? Where is he leading?
- d. How would it feel to spend the day with Jesus? What would you do together?

If this is a new practice for your group, you might like to follow the script over leaf.

In groups of around 4 – can you share your response to Jesus' question 'What do you want?' Pray that in for one another.

Section 2: Read John 1:43-46

10. The direct invitation of Jesus: v43 Jesus finds Philip and asks him directly to follow him. How do you think Philip would have felt about this?

11. Have you ever had the sense of being directly asked to do something by Jesus? Was there a time, perhaps, when he asked you to follow him?
12. The persistent invitation: v45-46 Nathanael is initially quite sceptical of Philip's claims about Jesus. What do you think that is? Why do you think people today are sceptical about faith?
13. Philip doesn't give in to Nathanael's push back but still says 'Come and See. Do you find it easy to be persistent in inviting or is it easy to give up? What is appealing about Philip's way of inviting - 'Come and See'.
14. Do you have people you could invite to 'come and see' Jesus? What makes it easy to invite, what makes it harder?

Final Prayers

- Is there anything else that today's study has thrown up that you need to pray into?
- Are there any other things for which people would like prayer?
- Lift one another up to God for the week ahead.

Script for the imaginative prayer exercise: Take this slowly. We are going to imagine that we are 'the other disciple' with Andrew and notice our responses. It is an opportunity to enter more deeply into the story, to pay attention to things about ourselves and Jesus. There is no need to rush.

*Imagine you are with Andrew and John the Baptist by the river Jordan. It's hot and dusty. What does river look like? What does John look like?
Something catches John's eye and he looks to the distance. 'Look' he says 'the Lamb of God.'
You look up. You see Jesus walking by.*

Together you and Andrew decide to follow Jesus.

*Notice how close do you get?
How are you feeling?*

Jesus turns around and looks directly at you.

What is the look in his eye?

Jesus asks you, 'What do you want?'; 'What do you want?'

Pause and ask yourself: 'What do I want from Him?' What stirs deep in your heart?

Andrew replies 'Rabbi, where are you staying?'

*Jesus looks at you again.
'Come' he says 'you will see.'*

As you set off with Jesus, where is he leading you?

As you find where he is staying, you spend the day with him.

Pause and consider: How does it feel spending the day with Jesus? What will you do together?

Slowly come back to the room.

You might like to split into groups of about 4. Can you share what you thought about when Jesus asked you 'What do you want?' Listen to one another and then pray that request to God for one another.