

A.C.T.S.

Our 'Core Values' at Gilcomston Church

We believe it's important that everyone is clear as to what we are about as a local fellowship: we've set this out as four basic 'parameters' defining our aspirations and priorities, and it's these which we will be working through in this series of studies drawn from John's gospel.

You can find the background to this short series [here](#).

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1. John 1.29-51 [w/b Sunday 6th January 2019]

“.., ‘Come and see,’ said Philip ..”

John starts his record of the life and ministry of Jesus by speaking of Jesus as ‘the Word’. In the Greek thought of the time this term was used to designate that underlying order which gave meaning and purpose to life. John throws something of a bombshell into the philosophical circles of his day by suggesting that the meaning of life is found in a Person and in relationship with Him.

Interestingly his narrative then begins by showing the ways in which a variety of different individuals are drawn to this Person, Jesus. Although our world today is different in many ways, our desire for meaning and purpose remains the same: and it is still in Jesus that we discover that for which our hearts all long.

So how are we drawn to Jesus?

[Despite your best intentions, there may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group! It may be helpful to try and ensure that in this study you cover questions 1, 3, and 4. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. **Read John 1.29-51.** There’s a real benefit in reading through the whole of the passage and getting some sense of its thrust.

How were you first ‘attracted to Jesus’?

While recognizing that it is always the work of the Spirit of God which draws people to Jesus, in what ways could you see Him using *your* life to that end?

Are you asking Him to do this?

2. Read John 1.29-34. John the Baptist was an Elijah-like figure who exploded onto the landscape of Judaism with a powerful message which obliged everyone to sit up and take notice.

John's message pointed simply to Jesus: to what truths about Jesus did he point?

What is there about Jesus, in terms of John's message, which is so singularly attractive?

3. Read John 1.35-42. Hearing both the message of John and the call of Jesus, two of John's disciples resolve to follow Jesus and in so doing start something of a 'chain reaction'.

How were these two men attracted to Jesus?

Andrew provides a striking illustration of a person attracting others to Jesus: what do you find instructive, and what do you find challenging about his example?

Simon provides an illustration of a person being attracted to Jesus: how did that happen?

4. Read John 1.43-45. Having 'found' Jesus, Philip, in much the same way as Andrew did, 'finds' someone with whom he can share his discovery.

How does Philip describe Jesus to Nathaniel?

How would you describe what you have found in Jesus to a friend?

Is it more *your* own experience, or *their* situation which determines how you speak of Jesus?

5. Read John 1.46. Nathanael is what Tim Keller calls 'a skeptical student' (see Tim Keller, *Encounters with Jesus*): as such Nathanael is not untypical of many today.

What is the reason for Nathanael's skepticism?

How have you encountered this sort of skepticism on the part of family and friends with whom you've shared Jesus?

What lessons are there for us to learn from Philip's response to Nathanael?

6. Read John 1.47-49. The sudden and complete turn-around in Nathanael's perspective is remarkable - it doesn't always happen like this!

What prompted such a change in Nathanael?

Coming to know Jesus often begins with the discovery that we are ourselves known by Him: in what ways have you experienced that?

Think of some perhaps skeptical friends for whom you might start praying that they'd discover they're already known by the Lord.

7. Read John 1.50-51. Jesus' response to Nathanael's expression of faith encourages him to see that there's much, much more for him to discover and enjoy in relationship with Jesus.

What might be the 'greater things' to which Jesus refers?

Are you expecting yet more from Jesus?