

SERMON SERIES: The Rescue - Jesus' Ministry Begins

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Key Line

Following Jesus requires my proximity, not my perfection.

Introduction

Sometimes we find ourselves in a place we think we don't belong—with people we feel are better than we are.

Seek the Word

Read John 1:35-36.

- What did John say when he saw Jesus walking by? (*Behold the Lamb of God!*)
- What was the significance of the lamb in the Old Testament? (*The lamb was sacrificed for the sins of the people. This compares Jesus to that sacrificial lamb that would be killed for their sins.*)

Read John 1:41-48.

- What did Andrew call Jesus? (*Messiah*)
- What does “Messiah” mean? Why is it significant? (*The Hebrew people were waiting for a messiah to come and save them.*)

Read Mark 2:13-19.

- Levi was a tax collector. Why did people hate tax collectors? (*They cheated the people and took more money than they had to collect for the government and they worked for the oppressive Roman government.*)
- Who does Jesus say need him the most (vs. 17)? (*The sick, referring to sinners*)

Talk About It

- Jesus called his disciples. When he did, he did not make them first stop sinning and become better people. He just told them to follow him. Why do you think he didn't make them clean up their lives first? What does this mean to us in our culture today?
- Did Jesus expect people to stay the same forever after beginning to follow him? How do people change?
- In these verses about the calling of the disciples, what things do you notice about them? Describe the disciples. Why do you think Jesus chose imperfect people and didn't require them to change in order to follow him?
- What did Jesus require his followers to believe at the beginning? (*Nothing. He just called them to follow him and be close.*)
- What's the difference between a religion and a relationship? (*A religion requires people to follow a list of rules and behave a certain way, and it does not produce real change in*

people's hearts. Relationships require love for Jesus, a desire to know him and be close to him. It produces real change.)

Three main points to remember from these passages:

- Sin does not disqualify you from following Jesus.
- You don't have to believe everything to start following Jesus.
- Jesus' invitation is to a relationship, not a religion.