

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO ON EARTH? WE ARE GOD'S GIFT TO EACH OTHER!

What was Jesus up to on earth?

- Several people in this passage give a variety of names for or to Jesus. What names do they give him and what do those names tell us about what Jesus was up to on earth?
- In v.51 Jesus quotes from Genesis 28:12 and claims that he himself is the ladder connecting earth and heaven. Jesus is Bethel — the House of God — the place where that connection is made and is sustained. The emphasis is on restoring God's presence in the earth. Discuss.
- It's great to call people to respond to Christ by doing what Jesus did in v.43. But while Jesus sometimes issues an explicit call, he very often names over people what his divine design for them is. In order to call out over someone what Father's divine design for them is we will have had to think about them and pray for them. This is a habit of love — the habit of thinking about a friend, colleague, acquaintance when we are apart with sufficient love so that we begin to discern their divine design. How can we cultivate that habit? And will we be brave enough to encourage people by telling them how they are God's gift to us. This is Jesus' method after all!

John the Baptist > Andrew — John 1:35-40

- John the Baptist names Jesus 'the Lamb of God'? To whom does he announce this?
- John did not tell them to follow Jesus, nevertheless, after hearing him say 'look, the Lamb of God,' they did follow Jesus. Modern people need to be told what the implications are of an announcement, whereas ancient people thought these things through for themselves and saw that a revelation required action and took it. How can we develop that skill?
- "If you knew what God had in mind for you, you would never be jealous of anyone else." Discuss

Andrew > Simon — John 1:40-42

- What was the first thing Andrew did? See also John 6:8-9 and 12:20-22. What's the pattern?
- In verses 38, 41 and 42 the Gospel writer, John, explains Hebrew words for any Greek readers. Explanation is inclusive and loving. It happens when we are thinking of the other, rather than just ourselves. Examples were given on Sunday of explanation on Sunday mornings. What were those examples? We prioritise the presence of God, and we welcome and embrace the presence of strangers, guests and visitors by explaining (not mansplaining). Discuss.

Philip > Nathanael (the disciple that Matthew, Mark and Luke call Bartholomew) — John 1:40-42

- How does Philip name Jesus to Nathanael? How does Nathanael react? Is that negative or positive?
- Jesus was given insight into Nathanael's whereabouts and thoughts. Jesus did not challenge Nathanael about his attitudes to Nazarenes, but rather focused on his good quality. Why?
- Jesus liked to name to people what they were on earth for — and sometimes even to rename them (v.42). It was about calling out God's divine design for people. How would you label this outreach method? How does it work?
- "Honour is the choice to magnify another person's worth above their weakness. It attracts the glory of God." Alan Scott. Discuss.