

Origin Stories

Episode Spotlight

In this episode, we find Peter and his companions having a discussion about the various fees and taxes that they have to pay to the Roman government. We immediately see the oppression that the Romans have imposed on the Jewish people. But it gets worse if we continue in the scene. James, John, and Peter begin to discuss all of the fees they had to pay in the temple. The Jewish temple was the center of Jewish religious practice. It was also an economic center that could cause a burden to the Jewish people, which is not what God intended. In both cases, we see the would-be disciples are looking for a messiah to come and resolve all of their issues. They were looking for a messiah to deliver them from their oppression.

We get to listen in on them as they describe what they think the Messiah would look like. It sounds more like a superhero than Jesus Christ. They were looking for a conquering king that can rescue them from their oppression, but at the beginning of our story we see the disciple John giving a description of Jesus from [John chapter 1](#). Let's consider this His origin story. John says some really powerful things that while it may not look like Jesus is a superhero when His future disciples see Him, it is clear that Jesus is more powerful than they ever could imagine. John describes Jesus as the physical manifestation of the Word of God. Not only is He the manifestation of the Word of God, but He is God himself. He is not just any superhero. He is the all-powerful Savior of the universe.

The beginning of the scene not only gives us an introduction to who Jesus is, but also why Jesus came to earth. There is a quotation from the prophet Isaiah that details Jesus' plans. Jesus has come to bring liberty to people who are captive, to bring healing to people that are broken-hearted, and to bring good news to those that are downtrodden. This sounds like a superhero, but it doesn't sound like someone who is coming to overthrow an empire. Rather, Jesus came to bring a different kind of power and a different way of looking at power. That's not exactly what His future disciples were looking for at that point.

This is very important because this gives us an early look into how the disciples would view and receive Jesus. They were looking for a superhero, not just a religious leader. By the discussion that we imagined in the episode, we can tell that they were tired of their oppression, and they were looking for an answer. So when Andrew shows up, it is no wonder that they were so excited to go and meet Jesus.

Think back to when you first met Jesus. What was your life like? What needed to be changed about your life? What were the things that were oppressing you? This is

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important to remember so that we can share our testimony with others. If they know that Jesus delivered us from our oppression, they may be more inclined to let God deliver them from theirs. Remember how excited Andrew was when he came and told his brothers that he had seen the Messiah? Could you imagine what it felt like after living in darkness for so long, to see the light of Christ and know that your life was about to change? No wonder they wanted to follow Him.

We see in this text three examples for Biblical witnesses. First of all, we learn from John the Baptist that our discipleship is not to generate our own glory or make a name for ourselves, but to help people meet Jesus. Then we see that Jesus shows us that it's not always just our words that will convince people, but also our actions that truly show the light of Christ. When the would-be disciples asked Jesus for information, He simply said, "Come and you will see". Jesus knew His actions would speak for themselves. Once they saw His actions it was easier to listen to the good news He preached. Doing good things is no substitute for evangelism, rather our actions amplify our words. Finally, Andrew encourages us to bring others to Jesus after we have experienced His goodness. Look at the keyword "follow". In the Greek, it means not only to go after, but also to obey. The fruit of these three witnessing events was that the disciples became obedient followers of Jesus. They weren't just chasing after Him, but they were also taking heed of His commandments.

Let's Discuss

1. Did anything stand out to you as you experienced the Scripture? _____
2. How does God want you to respond to His Word today? _____
3. Think back to when you first met Jesus.

What was your life like? _____

What needed to be changed about your life? _____

What were the things that were oppressing you? _____

This is important to remember so that we can share our testimony with others. If they know that Jesus delivered us from our oppression, they may be more inclined to let God deliver them from theirs.

4. Remember how excited Andrew was when he came and told his brothers that he had seen the Messiah?

Could you imagine what it felt like, after living in darkness for so long, to see the light of Christ and know that your life was about to change? _____

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Character Spotlight

John the Baptist

What was it like to be John the Baptist? _____

John was a peculiar man. He did not eat what most people ate and he didn't speak the way most people speak. John had disciples, but he wasn't trying to have them follow him. As he spoke, he talked about the Messiah, someone whose sandals he wasn't worthy to buckle. Think about the humility it takes to be John. People are listening to you, and you are gaining popularity, but you cannot point to yourself. Rather, you are pointing to the Messiah, one who is coming to save the world.

As you meditate on John, think about the way you influence others in your own life.

Is it to gain fortune or popularity? _____

Or is it pointing to something bigger than yourself? _____

We should all be willing to point to Jesus, for He is the one that can truly save us from our sins.

Andrew

Andrew must have been looking for the Messiah. When we find Andrew, he is already following John the Baptist, who is preaching about the coming of the Messiah. When John the Baptist identifies Jesus as the Christ, Andrew immediately chases after him.

Who in your life is waiting for an answer? _____

Who is waiting to find Jesus? _____

There is someone in your life who is questioning and looking to find God. What are you doing to point them to the Messiah? _____

Peter

We don't learn much about Peter in this first episode. What we do know is he is looking for an answer to this oppressive Roman system. Maybe that is why he decided to follow his brother Andrew to meet Jesus. The narrator describes Peter's first impression of Jesus. Could Jesus be the person that Peter was looking for? _____

When Jesus sees Peter, who was usually called Simon, He immediately calls him Peter, which means the rock.

How did Jesus know Peter? _____

Could it be that Jesus' immediate response to Peter formed a connection? What happened when you first came in contact with Jesus? _____

Did you feel convicted? _____

Did you feel seen? _____

Did you feel loved? _____

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And...Action!

At the beginning of the script, in John 1, we experience Jesus' origin story, like pulling back the curtain to see Jesus before the manger, when He was the Creator of the Universe with His Father, God. We have the benefit of the full story, but do you feel the anticipation of the would-be disciples, not knowing when and how the Messiah would come? God became mortal man for us, God incarnate. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us..." ([John 1:14](#)). God knowingly sent His Son to Earth to be sacrificed for us, to pay the penalty of death for our sins, to provide a way for us to be with Him, to be rescued from this world of sin, oppression, and pain. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him." ([John 3:17](#)). His mission was clear from the beginning, Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10).

John the Baptist also had a unique origin story, he knew his mission, identity, and purpose and he clearly communicated it to others. Spoiler alert, Peter eventually did too. [1 Peter 3:15](#) says, "but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,".

Have you considered your own origin story? We have a responsibility to share our origin story as a testimony to spread the hope of the Gospel. Do you have the hope of the Gospel, have you considered how your story will end? If not, you can know your eternal destination and have hope today! [2 Corinthians 6:2](#) says, "Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Let today be the day of your salvation and freedom from oppression. Know the truth and grace of Jesus and experience light and life. [John 1:12](#) shows us how, "But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God". To become a child of God, is to be transformed into Christ's likeness. Jesus came to Earth to bring good news to the afflicted, heal the brokenhearted, and free people from their oppression! ([Isaiah 61:1-2](#))

If you have the hope of the Gospel, then spread the hope! Share your own origin story, like John the Baptist. He knew his mission and always pointed people to Jesus. He was brave enough to obey God to say the hard things, are we?

Action: Be ready to share your own origin story, the reason for the hope within you. Reveal your journey to knowing Jesus with transparency, openness, gentleness and respect. There is value in your testimony!

How:

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1. Be authentic, share your own adversities and struggles and how Jesus healed your broken heart, freed you from oppression, and is the good news to you!
2. Who is the villain in your story, maybe your own selfish behavior or pride?
3. Share what shapes your beliefs and values. How have you changed/transformed into a new creation? ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#))
4. What motivates you, what is your hope, what is the mission God has created you for?

Ways To Share:

1. Write your story and practice telling it to others.
2. Video your story and share it on social media.
3. Illustrate your life before and after Jesus through an artistic medium and make it available to others. For example, use the gifts God has given you such as painting, sculpting, music, drama, or digital art.
4. Obey God to share in the ways He has put before you, wherever He has placed you, even when it means facing your fears!