



**Key Text:** John 1:42

**Key Point:** God has a name for you.

[**Author Note:** Do your typical introduction here.]

If this is your first week here, then you chose a great week as we’re starting a new sermon series on *Loving Like Jesus*.” While you may still be checking this whole Jesus thing out, this series will be an amazing opportunity for you to be exposed to God’s love, but also learn how you can love others. We’re very excited for the next three weeks as all of you are exposed to this idea of loving the way that Jesus loved.

[Pray]

How many of you have a name? Every one of us, right? Duh, that was obvious. Well, how many of you have some kind of nickname that someone else has given you? Sometimes, we’re given a name by a friend or family member to show that they care about us, but sadly, sometimes people are mean and give us insulting names.

The amazing thing about Jesus is that He gives each of us a name to show He cares for us. Often, the name He gives us communicates what our purpose is going to be.

Our main verse tonight comes from the Book of John. Check this out.

**John 1:42 (NLT)**

*Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus. Looking intently at Simon, Jesus said, “Your name is Simon, son of John—but you will be called Cephas” (which means “Peter”).*

After Andrew finally finds Jesus, he goes to get his brother, Simon, to take him to Jesus. When he does, Jesus looks at Simon intently. This means that Jesus is looking at Simon with purpose and authenticity.

Have you ever met someone, and while they said, “It’s good to meet you,” you could tell they weren’t being sincere? Yeah, me too. But Jesus isn’t like

that with Simon, and He isn't like that with us, either. When we first meet Jesus, He looks at us with purpose because He knows we have a purpose in Him. Which is the first point:

### **Jesus looks at you with purpose.**

Did you know that you have a purpose? We all have a purpose in this world. We are all made by Christ for specific plans and opportunities to spread His incredible love to the world.

#### **Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT)**

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”*

[**Author:** The following illustration can be found here: <https://www.family-times.net/print.htm?pgID=100974>]

I was reading about the 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team. Check this out:

*In February 1980, the U.S. Olympic hockey team slipped its foot into a glass slipper and walked away with a gold medal at Lake Placid, New York. Those collegians had shocked the world by upsetting the powerful Soviet team, and then they grabbed the championship from Finland while the crowd chanted, “U.S.A.!” Before his team's victory over the Soviet Union which advanced them to the finals, the coach of the U.S. hockey team told his players, “You are born to be a player. You are meant to be here at this time. This is your moment.”*

The coach of that U.S. team was Herb Brooks. They weren't projected or meant to win this game, but that was according to the world's standard. Coach Brooks, at this moment, looked at his athletes and told them with intention and purpose in his voice that he believed in them and he knew they could do it. That sounds a lot like Jesus.

We are given a purpose by God to do good things. We may not know specifically what those things are, but we can trust that if we continue to live out the path that Christ has set before us, He will only continue to reveal that purpose to us. When we give our lives to Christ, He lets us know that we can trust Him and that we have a future and a hope. When we rely fully on God, it is comforting to know that He knows our future, and

as long as we trust Him through it all, then we can know that it’s going to be good. When we trust in Him, we can live knowing that one day we will get to meet Him and live in Heaven with Him.

The awesome thing about Jesus is that He just wants to love you. In Ephesians chapter 1, Paul writes about how God adopted us into His family, before we were ever thought of by our parents and before the Earth was even created.

God has had you on His mind since the beginning. He loves you more than anyone else can or will, which is why, when we meet Him for the first time, He always looks at us with intent and purpose. He wants us to feel comfortable and feel that we belong. Even when we fail and fall into sin, we get to go to Jesus, and He still looks at us with purpose, because He knows us and wants us to feel His love. We get to belong because that’s what God’s love does. Jesus looks everyone in the eye with purpose and love.

### **We are given a new identity in Christ.**

Let’s look at verse 42 again to get the full effect of the second part of the verse.

#### **John 1:42 (NLT)**

*Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus. Looking intently at Simon, Jesus said, “Your name is Simon, son of John—but you will be called Cephas” (which means “Peter”).*

When Jesus looks intently at Simon, He tells him that his new name is Peter, which means rock or stone. Simon’s new identity in Christ is Peter. When you look ahead to the Book of Acts, Peter is the one that God uses to be the rock or cornerstone of the church when it starts.

This happens with many others in the Bible. Abraham’s name means “the father of many nations,” which was his name given by God to communicate his purpose. Before the name change, his name was Abram, which means father. So, he went from father to father of many nations, because when he came to fully surrender his purpose over to God, God communicated his purpose through his new name.



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