

Program: SS Panel 2024 4 Q

Quarterly title: Themes in the Gospel of John

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Lesson Title: #4 Witnesses of Christ as the Messiah

For Lesson Dates: October 19-25, 2024

Section title: Wednesday - Philip and Nathaniel

Note: This color and font = quarterly text

Note: This color and this color and font = John Dinzey notes

Lesson 4

*October 19–25

Witnesses of Christ as the Messiah

Read for This Week’s Study: *John 1:19–23; Isa. 40:1–5; John 1:29–37; Rom. 5:6; John 1:35–39; John 1:43–51; John 3:1–21.*

Memory Text: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God’” (*John 3:3, NKJV*).

WEDNESDAY

October 23

Philip and Nathaniel

Read John 1:43–46. What did Philip’s message reveal about his faith in Jesus already?

John 1:43–46 **43** The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.”

44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

>> no statement is made at this juncture that Philip decided to follow Jesus. But it is evident that he did, as we continue reading.....

John 1:45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

G3482 (**Thayer**) **Ναθαναήλ** **Nathanaël** **Thayer Definition:**

Nathanael = “gift of God”

*****READ*****

Philip was from Bethsaida, as were Andrew and Peter. He found his friend Nathaniel and told him about Jesus. John the Baptist had called Jesus “the Lamb of God.” Andrew had told Peter that he had found “the Messiah.” But Philip calls Jesus the one Moses and the prophets wrote about and adds the name, “Jesus of Nazareth.” His reference to Nazareth sets off a sharp reaction from his friend.

John 1:46 And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

Nathaniel seems to have been prejudiced against the little town of Nazareth. Surely a king would not come from such a wayside location. Prejudice easily blinds the eyes from seeing people for what they are really worth. Philip seems to have recognized, possibly from previous conversations with Nathaniel, that the proper way to deal with prejudice is not some exalted philosophical or theological argumentation but rather to invite the individual to experience the truth personally for themselves. He simply said, “Come and see.” And that is exactly what he did. He went and saw.

Read John 1:47–51. How did Jesus convince Nathaniel of who He was, and what was Nathaniel's response?

John 1:47–51 47 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!”
48 Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?”
Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

*****READ*****

It was enough. The divine Spirit that had borne witness to Nathanael in his solitary prayer under the fig tree now spoke to him in the words of Jesus. Though in doubt, and yielding somewhat to prejudice, Nathanael had come to Christ with an honest desire for truth, and now his desire was met. **His faith went beyond that of the one who had brought him to Jesus. He answered and said, “Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel.”** DA 140.4

John 1:49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

John 1:50 Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.”
51 And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

>>> Nathanael's are needed today who will say to their family and friends, “Come and see.”

*****READ*****

Philip said to Nathanael, “Come and see.” He did not ask him to accept another's testimony, but to behold Christ for himself. Now that Jesus has ascended to heaven, His disciples are His representatives among men, and one of the most effective ways of winning souls to Him is in **exemplifying His character in our daily life.** Our influence upon others depends not so much upon what we say as upon what we are. Men may combat and defy our logic, they may resist our appeals; but a life of disinterested love is an argument they cannot

gainsay. A consistent life, characterized by the meekness of Christ, is a power in the world. DA 141.5

Missing between verse 46 and verse 47 is the crucial detail of just how Nathaniel responded to Philip’s invitation. He got up and went to see, however. His friendship with Philip was stronger than his prejudice, and his life would be changed from that moment on.

Jesus says nice words about Nathaniel, calling him an Israelite in whom there is no deceit (*John 1:47*), a great contrast from what Nathaniel had said about Jesus (*John 1:46*). Nathaniel responds with surprise because he had not met Jesus before.

Then Jesus refers to seeing him under a fig tree, and this small statement convinces Nathaniel. Jesus, by divine insight, had seen Nathaniel praying, searching for truth under that tree (see Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 140, 141). Nathaniel then makes an exalted confession, calling Jesus Rabbi, the Son of God, and the King of Israel. Note how the seemingly smallest revelation leads to the grandest confession of faith.



Additional notes:

“The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow Me.” Philip obeyed the command, and straightway he also became a worker for Christ. DA 139.6

Philip called Nathanael. The latter had been among the throng when the Baptist pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God. As Nathanael looked upon Jesus, he was disappointed. Could this man, who bore the marks of toil and poverty, be the Messiah? Yet Nathanael could not decide to reject Jesus, for the message of John had brought conviction to his heart. DA 139.7

At the time when Philip called him, Nathanael had withdrawn to a quiet grove to meditate upon the announcement of John and the prophecies concerning the Messiah. He prayed that if the one announced by John was the deliverer, it might be made known to him, and the Holy Spirit rested upon him with assurance that God had visited His people and raised up a horn of salvation for them. **Philip knew that his friend was searching the prophecies**, and while Nathanael was praying under a fig tree, Philip discovered his retreat. They had often prayed together in this secluded spot hidden by the foliage. DA 140.1

The message, “We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write,” seemed to Nathanael a direct answer to his prayer. But Philip had yet a trembling faith. He added doubtfully, “Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Again prejudice arose in Nathanael's heart. He exclaimed, “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” DA 140.2

Philip entered into no controversy. He said, “Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” In surprise Nathanael exclaimed, “Whence knowest Thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.” DA 140.3

It was enough. The divine Spirit that had borne witness to Nathanael in his solitary prayer under the fig tree now spoke to him in the words of Jesus. Though in doubt, and yielding somewhat to prejudice, Nathanael had come to Christ with an honest desire for truth, and now his desire was met. His faith went beyond that of the one who had brought him to Jesus. He answered and said, “Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel.” DA 140.4

If Nathanael had trusted to the rabbis for guidance, he would never have found Jesus. It was by seeing and judging for himself that he became a disciple. So in the case of many today whom prejudice withholds from good. How different would be the result if they would “come and see”! DA 140.5

While they trust to the guidance of human authority, none will come to a saving knowledge of the truth. Like Nathanael, we need to study God's word for ourselves, and pray for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. He who saw Nathanael under the fig tree will see us in the secret place of prayer. Angels from the world of light are near to those who in humility seek for divine guidance. DA 141.1

With the calling of John and Andrew and Simon, of Philip and Nathanael, began the foundation of the Christian church. John directed two of his disciples to Christ. Then one of these, Andrew, found his brother, and called him to the Saviour. Philip was then called, and he went in search of Nathanael. These examples should teach us the importance of personal effort, of making direct appeals to our kindred, friends, and neighbors. There are those who for a lifetime have professed to be acquainted with Christ, yet who have never made a personal effort to bring even one soul to the Saviour. They leave all the work for the minister. He may be well qualified for his calling, but he cannot do that which God has left for the members of the church. DA 141.2

There are many who need the ministration of loving Christian hearts. Many have gone down to ruin who might have been saved if their neighbors, common men and women, had put forth personal effort for them. Many are

waiting to be personally addressed. In the very family, the neighborhood, the town, where we live, there is work for us to do as missionaries for Christ. If we are Christians, this work will be our delight. No sooner is one converted than there is born within him a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus. The saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. DA 141.3

All who are consecrated to God will be channels of light. God makes them His agents to communicate to others the riches of His grace. His promise is, "I will make them and the places round about My hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing." Ezekiel 34:26. DA 141.4

Philip said to Nathanael, "Come and see." He did not ask him to accept another's testimony, but to behold Christ for himself. Now that Jesus has ascended to heaven, His disciples are His representatives among men, and one of the most effective ways of winning souls to Him is in exemplifying His character in our daily life. Our influence upon others depends not so much upon what we say as upon what we are. Men may combat and defy our logic, they may resist our appeals; but a life of disinterested love is an argument they cannot gainsay. A consistent life, characterized by the meekness of Christ, is a power in the world. DA 141.5