

JESUS THE ONE PROPHESED: WITNESS OF PHILIP JOHN 01:43-45

Introduction

Philip's discovery and witness of Jesus Christ was unmistakable. Jesus was the One prophesied in Scripture; He was the promised Messiah.

- I. Philip's experience (vv. 43-44).
- II. Philip's first concern: Nathanael (v. 45).
- III. Philip's conviction: Jesus was the One prophesied (v. 45).

I. *John 01:43–44 Jesus Christ, Seeking Man*

Philip's experience involved three significant points.

1. Jesus Himself went forth and sought Philip — Philip was not seeking Jesus. The initiative came entirely from Jesus. Jesus made the move to find and save Philip and to enlist Philip in His mission.
 - a. Jesus travelled a long distance to find Philip. Galilee was a long distance away, and note: the stated purpose for Jesus' going to Galilee was to find Philip. This is a picture of how far Christ will go to reach a soul. In order to reach a man, Christ will go any distance...
 - to any sinner, no matter how terrible or awful his sin. He will prick and prick at the mind and heart of a person.
 - to any place, no matter how hidden or shameful. He will send a thought or memory or person of righteousness to remind and warn a person.
 - to any condition, no matter how hopeless or helpless. He will see that the message of hope and help crosses a person's path.
 - to any person, no matter how shameful or guilty. He will see that a person hears the word of salvation if he repents, and hears the word of judgment if he does not repent.

Christ will go any distance to reach people. He will go to any place, to any condition, to any person. He will see that every person has some chance of turning to God. The word of deliverance can come from any number of sources: another person, a thought, a stirring of conscience, a memory, a writing, or just seeing nature (Rom 1 :20). Christ seeks every person, and He will go any distance to reach him, no matter the difficulty.

Thought 1. Every person must heed the *seeking* of Christ when His seeking is sensed. A person must respond immediately, for God's Spirit does not always strive or contend with man. When we first feel the pull to make a decision for Christ, if we put the

decision off for an hour or two, the pull fades and eventually leaves us completely. God's Spirit does not continue to strive or contend with us.

Gen 6:3 Then the LORD said, "My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years."

Prov 29:1 A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed - without remedy.

Thought 2. Every believer should be willing to go any distance to reach people, no matter how far or how deeply depraved the person may be. Too many in the world are considered and treated as *untouchables*: the alcoholic, immoral, poor, prisoner, lowly, diseased.

Acts 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Mat 25:35 "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in."

Mat 25:36 "I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." (Remember that the person in prison is guilty of the most serious offenses and sins.)

- b. Jesus is seen fulfilling His mission in seeking and saving Philip. He came into the world for the very purpose of seeking and saving the lost.

Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

John 10:10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

John 18:37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

1 Tim 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — of whom I am the worst.

2. Jesus Himself called Philip. He called Philip to "follow Him" (See *Follow, Jn. 1:43; Cross and Discipleship, Lk. 9:23*).

Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."

John 10:27 "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

John 12:26 "Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me."

3. The reason Philip was called by Jesus is apparently the reason verse 44 is mentioned. He was from the same town as Andrew and Peter. Philip longed for deliverance; he ached for the Messiah (“We have found the one...v. 45). Therefore, he had sought the company of those who were like-minded. He wanted the fellowship of those who sought godly deliverance. In search of such people he had met Andrew and Peter and had apparently become friends of theirs for some time. Therefore, it was only natural for Andrew and Peter to suggest that Jesus seek out Philip to become a disciple. The point is this: Philip was called by Jesus because...

- he had done something about the longing and aching for deliverance within his soul.
- he had sought the fellowship of those who were seeking for God’s salvation.
- he had placed himself where the message would reach him when it came.

Mat 5:6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

Luke 6:21 “Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.”

John 7:37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.”

Psa 107:9 For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

Isa 55:1 “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.”

JOHN 01:43 FOLLOW (AKOLOUTHEI)

To become a close companion, a close follower, a disciple. Two significant ideas are in the word: union and likeness, or cleaving and conformity. To follow Christ means...

- to cleave, to be united to Him, to be in close union with Him.
- to become like Him, to be conformed to Him. □

JOHN 01:44 BETHSAIDA

Jesus carried on a large ministry in Bethsaida, but the gospels tell us nothing about the city itself. The city was denounced by Jesus because of its rejection of Him (Mt. 11:21; Lk. 10:13). (Mk. 6:45; 8:22; Lk. 9:10; Jn. 12:21 other references to the city.) □

II. *John 01: 45 Witnessing*

Philip's first concern was to reach his friend Nathanael. Philip "found" Nathanael. Jesus had challenged Philip to "follow" Him, to become just like Him, and Philip did. He went out and did exactly what Jesus had done to him. Jesus had sought and found Him. Now, following the example of his Lord, he went out and found his friend Nathanael. Philip became a personal soul-winner just like his Lord.

John 20:21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

2 Tim 2:2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

Acts 4:20 "For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Acts 22:15 You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.

2 Cor 4:13 It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak.

III. *John 01: 45 Philip's Conviction and Decision*

Philip's conviction: the One propheted was Jesus Christ. "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law and about whom the Prophets also wrote — Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Note four points.

1. Philip was extremely joyful. "We have found the One." There was jubilation, excitement and rejoicing beating in the chest of Philip. Jesus had met the needs and craving of his heart.

John 15:11 "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."

John 16:24 "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."

Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Psa 16:11 You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Isa 12:3 With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

2. God's eternal plan for man and his world is recorded in Scripture. It is there for man's direction.

John 5:39 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me.

2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

3. Philip and Nathanael knew the Scriptures. They were familiar with the prophecies about the promised Messiah.

2 Tim 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

1 Pet 2:2 Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.

1 Pet 2:3 Now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

4. Jesus of Nazareth was definitely identified as Messiah. ■

LUKE 09: 23 CROSS AND DISCIPLESHIP

Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." Luke 09:23

People in Jesus' day knew what it meant to "take up" a cross. They saw scores of criminals bear the cross to the place where they were to be executed, and they witnessed scores of crucifixions, some even by the side of the roads that led in and out of the cities.

The cross does not mean merely bearing one's particular hardship in life, such as poor health, abuse, unemployment, invalid parents, an unsaved spouse, a wayward child. The cross is always an instrument of death, not just an object to carry or bear. The Christian is to die mentally and actively. He is to deny himself daily. He is to let the mind of Christ, the mind of humbling himself to the point of death, be in him and fill his thoughts every day (Phil. 2:5-8; 2 Cor. 10:3-5). He is to put his will, his desires, his wants, his ambitions to death. In their stead, he is to follow Jesus and to do His will all day long. Note this is not negative, passive behaviour. It takes positive, active behaviour to *will*, to *deny self*, to *take up* one's *cross*, to *follow* Christ. A person has to act, work, get to it, be diligent, consistent, and enduring in order to die to self.

There are several ways the believer dies to self. Romans 6:11-13 spells out the ways as clearly as they can be.

Rom 6:11-13 *In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. (see Rom. 6:2-10)*

1. The believer reckons or counts himself crucified with Christ.

Rom 6:11a *In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin.*

Rom 6:6 *For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.*

Gal 2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

Gal 5:24 *Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.*

2. The believer reckons or counts himself dead to sin, but alive to God.

Rom 6:11 *In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

1 Pet 4:2 *As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.*

3. The believer does not let sin reign in his body.

Rom 6:12 *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.*

Col 3:5 *Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.*

4. The believer does not yield the parts of his body to sin, as instruments of wickedness.

Rom 6:13a *Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness.*

Rom 8:13 *For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.*

5. The believer yields himself to God — as much as those who are raised from the dead are yielded to God.

Rom 6:13b *But rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life.*

Rom 12:1 *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship.*

Rom 13:14 *Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.*

6. The believer yields his body members as instruments of righteousness.

Rom 6:13c *And offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.*

Gal 5:16 *So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.*

It should be noted that one's hardship or burden can bring a person to the place where the Lord can deal with him. It is then that the hardship becomes the cross and denial of self that Jesus is talking about. With an act of self-denial, the Christian can then count or reckon himself alive to God (Rom. 6:13). He can then follow Jesus. This is an act which can be described as committing all that one is and has to Christ. It is an act that needs to be repeated every day (see Mt. 10:38). □

JESUS THE SON OF GOD, THE KING OF ISREAL: THE WITNESS OF NATHANAEL

JOHN 01:46–49

Introduction

Nathanael's confrontation with Jesus was dramatic. Nathanael was a man of prejudice and strong feelings, yet he knew despair and hopelessness; therefore, it was difficult to lead him to Christ. However, despite all, his friend Philip persisted and refused to give up in witnessing to him. As a result, Nathanael was won to Christ.

- I. Nathanael's experience (v .46).
- II. Nathanael's confrontation with Jesus (vv. 47-48).
- III. Nathanael's conviction: Jesus was the Son of God (v. 49).

JOHN 01:46–49 NATHANAEL

John alone mentions Nathanael. However, the other three gospels mention a disciple that John does not, Bartholomew. These two names probably refer to the same person. It is thought that Nathanael was a man's first name and Bartholomew was a man's second name. □

I. John 01:46 Nathanael's Prejudice and Philip's Witnessing

Nathanael's experience. Note three facts.

1. It was Nathanael's close friend Philip who shared the good news with him (Jn. 1:45). He had the privilege of hearing the gospel from someone who cared for him very deeply. He was so loved by Philip that he was the first one with whom Philip shared the most important experience of his life.
 2. Nathanael was a man gripped by despair and prejudice.
 - a. The despair is seen in his response to Philip. He rejected Philip's testimony and did it in a negative, skeptical, reactionary spirit: "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" He struck out at what Philip had said. He questioned it; he would not accept it nor believe it. There was a sense of hopelessness, of despair and skepticism in his question. Apparently he was a man who had tried and followed so many voices in the world that he had just lost hope. Many in the world had promised so much, only to leave him still empty and searching. Why should he believe and follow another voice?
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Thought 1. So many voices in the world promise the path to life and fulfillment and joy and satisfaction. However, their claims are soon discovered to be false, and they still leave the human heart empty and wondering. A person caught up in despair wonders about the real purpose, meaning, and significance of life.

Job 10:1 *“I loathe my very life; therefore I will give free rein to my complaint and speak out in the bitterness of my soul.”*

Psa 31:10 *My life is consumed by anguish and my years by groaning; my strength fails because of my affliction, and my bones grow weak.*

Psa 42:6 *My God. My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon — from Mount Mizar.*

Psa 73:2 *But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold.*

Psa 73:16 *When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me.*

Psa 137:1 *By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion.*

Isa 49:14 *But Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me.”*

Jer 2:25 *Do not run until your feet are bare and your throat is dry. But you said, ‘It’s no use! I love foreign gods, and I must go after them.’*

1 Th 4:13 *Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.*

Eph 2:12 *Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.*

- b. The prejudice of Nathanael is seen in his slur against Jesus because Jesus was from Nazareth (See *Nazareth*, Jn. 1:46). Nathanael was apparently a crowd follower. He had allowed himself to be influenced by the world’s foolish prejudices.

Thought 1. Prejudice has a great failing; it disregards the wrong within oneself and with one’s own place (city, home, business, church); it overlooks personal wrong, shortcomings, weaknesses and error.

Acts 10:34-35 *Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.”*

Rom 2:11 *For God does not show favouritism.*

Rom 10:12 *For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him.*

3. Nathanael was still invited to follow Jesus. His sin, despair and prejudice did not discourage nor keep Philip from inviting his friend and neighbour to “come and see” Jesus. Note also that Philip did not argue with Nathanael. He simply led him to confront Jesus.

Thought 1. Note three things.

- 1) No matter what the sin is, we must still go and invite men to “come and see” Jesus. Because Philip went to his dear friend, Nathanael did come to Jesus, despite his despair and prejudice.
- 2) Think what Nathanael would have missed if he had...
 - let his prejudice against the people of Nazareth keep him from the One who was called Jesus the Nazarene.
 - let his wallowing around in despair keep him from coming to Jesus.
- 3) The way to lead a man to Christ is not by argument, but by making him confront Christ.

Acts 4:20 “For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

Titus 2:15 These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

Psa 66:16 Come and listen, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me.

JOHN 01:46 NAZARETH

The town was an obscure village in Galilee. Galilee bordered Gentile or heathen nations; therefore, it was sometimes called *Galilee of the Gentiles*. The Jews were so deeply prejudiced against the Gentiles that they considered anyone or anything touched by a Gentile to be unclean in the sight of God. Nazareth was despised by the Jews because it was on the border of Gentile country and was so commercially touched by Gentiles. It was despised by the Romans because its citizens were a conquered people. □

II. *John 01:47–48 Jesus Knew the Guileless Man*

Nathanael’s confrontation. Two very significant things happened in Nathanael’s confrontation with Jesus.

1. Jesus knew Nathanael, his beliefs and character.
 - a. Jesus knew his beliefs. This is seen in Jesus’ calling Nathanael “a true Israelite.” He was the epitome of an Israelite, everything an Israelite should be. He *believed* the promises of God. He tried to live up to the covenant name, the standard God had set

for Israel, and he was looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the Messiah. Jesus Christ knew Nathanael's beliefs.

Thought 1. Christ knows the beliefs of each man, that upon which the man has set his heart. He knows both the good and bad beliefs, both the godly and evil thoughts of the human heart.

John 2:25 *He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.*

1 Cor 1:30 *It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God — that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.*

1 John 3:20 *Whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.*

1 Sam 2:3 *“Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the LORD is a God who knows, and by him deeds are weighed.”*

Psa 69:5 *You know my folly, O God; my guilt is not hidden from you.*

Jer 17:10 *“I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve.”*

Psa 69:5 *You know my folly, O God; my guilt is not hidden from you.*

- b. Jesus knew his character. Nathanael was a man “in whom there [was] nothing false” (dolos). This means he did not deceive, bait, or mislead people. He did not hide what he thought; he said what he thought and acted as he felt. He was straight-forward, open and honest, not deceptive or hypocritical. This trait had just been demonstrated in his response to Philip. He would not hide his true thoughts (v. 46).

Thought 1. One of the great tragedies in the legacy of persons is that they are full of guile or false traits. Many deceive, bait, and mislead others. Few are straightforward, open and honest, free of deception and hypocrisy.

Mat 5:8 *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”*

2 Pet 3:14 *So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*

Rev 14:5 *No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless.*

Psa 32:2 *Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.*

Psa 24:3-4 *Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false.*

2. Jesus knew Nathanael's innermost being, all things about him (See *Fig Tree and Worship*, Jn. 1:48).

Thought 1. Jesus knows everything about every man. Nothing escapes His watchful eye, not even a single thought.

- 1) This offers great hope to the man who will cast himself upon Christ. Christ can help him by meeting his need and giving purpose and direction to his life.
- 2) This is a great warning to the man who goes his merry way, thinking his sin is hid and will not be judged.

Luke 12:2 There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.

1 Cor 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

Job 10:14 If I sinned, you would be watching me and would not let my offense go unpunished.

Jer 2:22 "Although you wash yourself with soda and use an abundance of soap, the stain of your guilt is still before me," declares the Sovereign LORD.

Jer 16:17 My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from me, nor is their sin concealed from my eyes.

Hosea 7:2 But they do not realize that I remember all their evil deeds. Their sins engulf them; they are always before me.

Amos 5:12 For I know how many are your offenses and how great your sins. You oppress the righteous and take bribes and you deprive the poor of justice in the courts.

JOHN 01:48 FIG TREE AND WORSHIP

In Palestine the fig tree stood for peace, security, rest, and worship (1 Kng. 4:25; Mic. 4:4). Very often a man would seek solitude and worship under his fig tree. No doubt this is what Nathanael had been doing. When Jesus told Nathanael that He had seen him under his fig tree, He was telling Nathanael that He knew everything about him, even the deepest longings of his heart. Jesus knew Nathanael's despair and sense of hopelessness; He knew his longing for peace and release and freedom. That was enough to cause Nathanael to give his life to Jesus forever. □

III. *John 01:49 Nathanael's Confession*

Nathanael's conviction. He confessed that Jesus was the Rabbi (Prophet), the Son of God, the King of Israel. Note two things:

1. How readily Nathanael confessed Jesus as His Lord.

Mat 10:32 "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven."

Luke 12:8 "I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God."

Rom 10:9 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

1 John 2:23 No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

1 John 4:15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.

2. How clearly Nathanael grasped who Jesus was.

- a. He was "Rabbi," the great Teacher or Prophet promised to Israel. Jesus is the Godly heir — He was qualified to be the Messianic Prophet of God Himself. Jesus Christ Himself proclaimed what the Messianic Prophet of God was to do.

Luke 4:16-21 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

- 1). The Messianic Prophet of God was prophesied.

Deu 18:15 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.

Isa 9:2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

Isa 11:1-4 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him — the Spirit of wisdom and of

understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD — and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth: with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

2). Luke 03:38 Jesus Christ was the Messianic Prophet of God (see above statement of Christ, Lk.4:16-21).

Mat 21:11 *The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”*

Luke 7:16 *They were all filled with awe and praised God. “A great prophet has appeared among us,” they said. “God has come to help his people.”*

Luke 13:33 *In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day — for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!*

John 3:34 *For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.*

John 6:14 *After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.”*

John 7:40 *On hearing his words, some of the people said, “Surely this man is the Prophet.”*

John 8:26, 28 *“I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from him I tell the world.” So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.”*

John 9:17 *Finally they turned again to the blind man, “What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” The man replied, “He is a prophet.”*

b. He was the Son of God (Jn. 1:34).

What did John mean by “the Son of God”? Note the definite article. Christ is the Son, not a son of God. He is...

- the *only* Son
- the *one and only* Son
- the one and only Son who came from the very *side* of God, that is from the deepest part, from the most intimate place, from the most honourable fellowship of God.

Christ was coexistent. He was and is face-to-face with God forever. The word *with* (pros) has the idea of both *being with* and *acting toward*. Jesus Christ (the Word) was

both with God and acting with God. He was “with God”: by God’s side, acting, living, and moving in the closest of relationships. Christ had the ideal and perfect relationship with God the Father. Their life together — their relationship, communion, fellowship, and connection — was a perfect eternal bond. This is exactly what is said: “*He was with God in the beginning*” (Jn. 1:2).

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched — this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.

1 John 1:2 The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

c. He was the King of Israel (See *Jesus Christ, King of Israel*, Jn. 1:49). ■

JOHN 01:49 JESUS CHRIST, THE KING OF ISRAEL

Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel.” John 01:49

Jesus was declared to be the Messianic King. God had given to David and his seed (the Messiah) the promise of eternal government (2 Sam. 7:12; Psa. 39:3f; 132:11).

Note how often Jesus was called the son of David. (Mt. 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9, 15; Acts 2:29-36; Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8; Rev. 22:16.) It was the common title and popular concept of the Messiah. Generation after generation of Jews had ached and looked for the promised deliverer of Israel. The people expected Him to be a great general who would deliver and restore the nation to its greatness. In fact, they expected Him to make the nation the centre of universal rule. He would, under God, conquer the world and centre the glory and majesty of God Himself in Jerusalem; and from His throne, the throne of David, He would execute *the Messianic fire of judgment* upon the nations and peoples of the world (Mt. 1:18; 3:11; 11:1-6; 11:2-3; 11:5; 11:6; Lk. 7:21). □

JESUS THE SON OF MAN, GOD'S MEDIATOR: THE WITNESS OF JESUS HIMSELF JOHN 01: 50-51

Introduction

Jesus bore witness to Himself. He clearly declared who He is.

- I. The response of Jesus to Nathanael (v. 50).
- II. Jesus is the revelation of God: the One who reveals greater things (v. 50).
- III. Jesus is the mediator: the One who opens the doors of heaven (v. 51).
- IV. Jesus is the Son of Man: the pattern, the perfect representative of man (v. 51).

I. *John 01:50 Nathanael*

Nathanael's experience with Jesus in the previous passage (vv. 46-49) was the background for what Jesus said in this passage (vv. 50-51).

II. *John 01:50 Jesus Christ, The Revelation of God*

Jesus Christ is the Revelation of God, the One who reveals greater things. Note two points.

1. It was belief in Jesus that brought "greater things" into Nathanael's life. Nathanael believed Jesus; therefore, he could expect to receive greater things, to receive more and more from God.

Mat 17:20 He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

Mark 9:23 "'If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes."

John 10:10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

Rom 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

1 Cor 2:9 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."

Eph 3:17-19 So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to

know this love that surpasses knowledge — that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

2. It is Jesus Himself who is the Revelation of God; therefore, it is Jesus who reveals the “greater things” of life.

The way to God is through Jesus Christ Himself (Jn. 14:6). This is a critical verse, for Jesus said that no man could reach God unless he approached God through Jesus Himself. Note Jesus' claim to divinity: “I Am” (Jn. 6:20). Jesus made three phenomenal claims. a). I am the Way b). I am the Truth c). I am the Life.

John 14:6 *Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*

- a. Jesus Christ is the Embodiment of Revelation.

John 1:1-2 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.*

Col 2:9 *For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.*

- b. Jesus Christ is the Communicator of Revelation.

John 1:4 *In him was life, and that life was the light of men. (see Jn 1:1-3)*

John 1:14 *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

John 14:9-10 *Jesus answered: “Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.”*

- c. Jesus Christ is the Liberator of Revelation.

John 8:31-32 *To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

John 10:10 *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”*

III. John 01: 51 Jesus Christ, The Mediator

Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and man. This is seen in the picture Jesus painted by the words, “You shall see *heaven open*, and the angels of God *ascending* and *descending* on the Son of Man” (v. 51).

This is a picture of Jacob's ladder (Gen. 28:10-22). It is a picture of open access into the very presence of God: the door of heaven is open and the angels are *ascending from earth* to heaven. Jesus was saying...

- He is Jacob's ladder; the ladder is a symbol of Him. He is the One who opens heaven.
- He is the One who reaches *from earth* to heaven, the One by whom man has his communication carried up into heaven.

Thought 1. Three critical facts should be noted.

- 1) A man *can* approach God and enter heaven through Christ (Jn. 14:6). The gulf, the loneliness, and the alienation which man knows have been bridged.
- 2) A man has access to God *only* through Christ (Jn. 14:6).
- 3) A man can have *constant* communication with God. The picture is that of angels carrying messages from earth to heaven and back to earth again.

IV. *John 01:51 Jesus Christ, The Son of Man*

Jesus Christ is the Son of Man. This does not mean that Jesus was born of a man. It means that He is more than what an ordinary man is, more than a son of some man. Jesus is what every man ought to be, *the Son of Man Himself*.

1. Jesus Christ is the Ideal Man: the *Representative Man*, the *Perfect Man*, the *Pattern*, the *Embodiment* of everything a man ought to be (See *Birth of Jesus Christ, Son of Man*, Mt. 1:16). Jesus Christ is the *perfect picture* of a man. Everything God wants a man to be is seen perfectly in Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:14; Col. 2:9-10; Heb. 1:3).
2. Jesus Christ is the *Ideal Servant* of man. The term *Ideal Servant* stresses Jesus' sympathy for the poor, the broken hearted, the captives, the blind, the bruised, the outcasts, the bereaved (Lk. 4:18). Jesus is the pattern, the model, the perfect example of concern and caring. He served other people just as every man ought to serve other people.

Jesus called Himself "the Son of Man" about eight times. It was His favourite term. The title *Son of Man* is probably based upon the Son of Man in Daniel 7:13-14. There is also a picture of Jesus as the heavenly Son of Man contrasted with Adam as the earthly Man in 1 Cor. 15:45-47. Both references picture Jesus as *the Representative Man, the Ideal Man*, in God's plan for world history.

Mat 8:20 *Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."*

Mat 9:6 *"But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home."*

Mat 20:28 *“Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

Mat 24:27 *“For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.”*

Mark 8:38 *“If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.”*

Luke 18:8 *“I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”*

Luke 19:10 *“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”*

John 5:26-27 *“For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.”*

John 6:53 *Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.”*

John 12:23 *Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.”*

John 13:31-32 *When he was gone, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.”*

Mat 16:13, 16 *When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*

Acts 7:56 *“Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”*

Rev 1:12-13 *I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone “like a son of man,” dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. ■*

MATHEW 01:16
BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD

*And Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. **Mathew 01:16***

Note the changed expression from “the father of”. Jesus was born of Mary but not of Joseph. Joseph was the husband of Mary, but Jesus was not born of Joseph. He was born of the Holy Spirit through Mary.

This stresses a vital fact: Jesus was not born of a man, but of the Holy Spirit. He was Divine, yet human through His conception in Mary. He was God-Man, fully God and fully man. The real significance of this is that as God, He had the *capacity not to sin*. No other man since Adam has ever had this capacity, for all other men have had a human father and human mother, a father and mother contaminated with a sinful human nature. Therefore, the child of a man is born with the same nature, a nature that *cannot help but sin*. However Jesus Christ, as the only begotten Son of God born of the Holy Spirit, had the capacity to live a perfect and righteous life. He had the capacity never to sin.

However, Jesus Christ, as man, also had the capacity to sin. He suffered the pull and strain and suffering of temptation as all men do. He could have *willed* to sin. (Jn. 6:38.)

But there is this glorious difference. He utilized the capacity never to sin. He learned obedience by the things that He suffered (Heb. 5:8). He never gave in to temptation; He never sinned (2 Cor. 5:21). Thereby He became the Perfect and Ideal Man in whom all men find their salvation. □