

## See for Yourself

In our studies in John's first chapter of his gospel, we realize that we are entrusted with an amazing and glorious message of Jesus Christ, the Word become flesh and the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. We learn in this great chapter how we are to go about getting this great message to the world around us.

### John 1:43-51

43 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me."  
 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 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." 46 Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" 48 Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." 49 Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" 50 Jesus answered 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, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

#### I. Jesus is Lord of the Mission (vs. 43)

From this verse we can see that Jesus decides *where* we go, *whom* He calls, and *what* a disciple must do, "Follow me." Jesus is clearly the one directing His own mission. (See Matthew 9:38).

#### II. Jesus is the Essence of the Mission (vv. 44-46).

- a) He determines the method of our discipleship (vv. 44-45a).  
 We learn from Jesus that real Christian discipleship happens one on one. Evangelistic crusades and rallies are very helpful, but the main methodology for Christian disciples is ministering to our neighbors one at a time.
- b) Jesus is the message (vs. 45b).  
 Notice that Philip simply says to Nathanael, "We have found him" (vs. 45). Philip goes on to explain that this Jesus is the one promised in the Old Testament and, furthermore, He is very human — He is from Nazareth and the son of a carpenter. Also notice that when Nathanael responds cynically, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip does not enter into long argumentation but simply invites him, "Come and see." So it is with us. We must present Christ simply and compellingly and invite others to come and experience Him themselves.

#### III. Jesus is the Reward of the Mission (vv. 47-51).

- a) His greatness inspires our highest praise (vv. 47-49).  
 Notice that Jesus' greatness is immediately revealed to Nathanael when he understands that Jesus has known him before they even met, so Nathanael responds with true praise, calling Jesus Rabbi, Son of God, and King of Israel. Throughout the ages, a king's greatness is revealed by his titles. For example, Prince Charles is His Royal Highness Prince Charles of Edinburgh, Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester, Duke of Cornwall, Duke of Rothesay, Earl of Carrick, Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, etc. John shows us in the first chapter of his gospel that Jesus also is revealed through many titles: the Word, God, the Life, the Light, Son of God, Messiah, Lord, the Lamb, the Baptizer, Rabbi, Son of Joseph, King of Israel,

Son of Man. And when one looks to the Scriptures, he finds more than 200 titles of Jesus Christ. He is great indeed and greatly to be praised by those who come to know Him.

- b) His promise of greater things inspires our perseverance (vv. 50-51). Jesus assures Nathanael that he will see greater things than what he saw on the first day he met Jesus. Specifically Jesus refers to an experience of Jacob in Genesis 28 in which Jacob received a vision of angels ascending and descending upon him with God's promise that Jacob and his offspring would receive a land, a legacy, a blessing, and a mission to the entire world. Jesus assures Nathanael that he will behold these great promises being fulfilled in and through Jesus Himself. This great revelation inspires all of the disciples so that Nathanael (whom most scholars believe to be Bartholomew) and Philip go into various parts of the world to proclaim Christ, even to their own martyrdom. We serve a great Savior, indeed!

### Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important how we conduct the Christian mission?
2. How would you summarize what John teaches us in John 1 about Christian discipleship?
3. What does Jesus mean when He says, "Follow me"?
4. What can we learn from the way Philip evangelizes Nathanael?
5. What are "the greater things" Nathanael will one day see?

### Going Deeper

1. How would you assess your own "one on one" evangelism and discipleship ministry? What can you do to strengthen your efforts?
2. Has your sense of wonder and your love for Christ waned recently? How can you regain your zeal for Him?