

CHAPTER 5

PHILIP AND BARTHOLOMEW

Review of Chapters One through Four

We have now studied four of the 12 disciples: Peter, Andrew, James and John. As a review quiz, please answer the following 20 questions, using the names of the four disciples as listed above:

1. Who was the first disciple to be martyred (to die for his faith)? _____
2. Which disciple died as an old man and was never martyred? _____
3. Which disciple was usually the first one to act or speak? _____
4. Who was Peter's brother? _____
5. Who was John's brother? _____
6. Who walked on the water? _____
7. Who were the "sons of thunder"? _____
8. Who denied the Lord three times? _____
9. Who was the "apostle of love"? _____
10. Which of these disciples were fishermen? _____
11. Which disciple wrote five New Testament books? _____
12. Which three disciples were in the "inner circle"? _____
13. Which disciple was in the innermost circle? _____
14. Who preached on the Day of Pentecost resulting in about 3000 people being saved and baptized? _____
15. Which disciple seemed to stay nearest and closest to the Lord? _____
16. Who were the Sons of Zebedee? _____
17. Which disciple was at the foot of the cross when Jesus died? _____
18. Which disciple sliced off the ear of Malchus? _____
19. Which disciple brought Peter to the Lord? _____
20. Who was "the disciple whom Jesus loved"? _____

PHILIP

In all the lists of the disciples, the name of Philip always comes.... (circle the correct answer)

| | | |
|----|---------|--|
| a. | fourth | See Matthew 10:2-3, Mark 3:16-18, Luke 6:13-14, and Acts 1:13 |
| b. | fifth | |
| c. | sixth | |
| d. | seventh | |

Do not confuse this man with another man who is also named Philip whom we read about in Acts 6:5, Acts chapter 8 and Acts 21:8. The Philip whom we are studying in this chapter is called PHILIP THE APOSTLE (see Matthew 10:2-3). The Philip that we read about in Acts chapter 8 is called PHILIP THE _____ (see Acts 21:8). Both of these men loved the Lord and served Him faithfully.

Philip Meets the Lord

We first read about Philip in chapter one of the Gospel of John. What was the name of Philip's hometown (John 1:44)? _____ This small fishing village was located on the shore of the Sea of Galilee (see a map of Bible lands). What other disciples were from this same village (John 1:44)? _____

In John 1:43, we learn about the time when Jesus called Philip. Jesus found Philip and said to him, " _____ ME!" (John 1:43). Do you think Philip did this? _____ It is true that Jesus found Philip (John 1:43), but it is also true that Philip found Jesus. In John 1:45, Philip said, "WE HAVE _____ HIM!" Philip was a seeker! He was looking for the Messiah. Did Philip find what he was looking for? _____ Those who seek God will find God: "If thou _____ Him, He will be _____ of thee" (1 Chronicles 28:9). Are you a seeker? Do you desire to find the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord and God?

Philip Finds Nathanael

Jesus found Philip (John 1:43) and Philip found Jesus (John 1:45). As soon as Philip had found Jesus, he wanted to find someone else (see John 1:45). Philip had made a great discovery, and he wanted to share this discovery with his friend Nathanael. In many ways Philip was like Andrew (see John 1:35-41). After Andrew found the Lord, he quickly went and told _____ (John 1:41). After Philip found the Lord, he quickly went and told _____ (John 1:45).

Let's learn two important lessons from Andrew and Philip:

LESSON #1—WE NEED TO FIND CHRIST AND MEET HIM IN A PERSONAL WAY.

There are some people who go to Sunday School every week and even read their Bibles at times, and yet they have never really found Christ and have never really come to know Him in a personal way. Jesus Christ wants to come into your life and make Himself very real to you. He even stands at the door KNOCKING (Revelation 3:20). What must *you* do (Revelation 3:20)?

_____ **How** can you do this? Have you done this?

Benjamin Franklin could never share with anyone else the wonderful discovery of the telephone because he never discovered the telephone. Alexander Graham Bell invented and discovered the

telephone about 100 years later! A person cannot share with others what he has never found or discovered himself. A person must first discover Christ for himself, and only then can he begin to share Him with others. Before Andrew ever went to Peter, something wonderful happened to Andrew. Before Philip ever went to Nathanael, something wonderful happened to Philip. Has something wonderful happened to you? Have you met a wonderful Person (compare Isaiah 9:6)? Have you found Him to be a wonderful Saviour and Friend and Lord?

LESSON #2—WE NEED TO SHARE WHAT WE HAVE FOUND WITH OTHERS.

Andrew told Peter what he had found (John 1:41). Philip told Nathanael what he had found (John 1:45). Have you told anyone what YOU have found? There are many people whom you know who have never met Christ in a personal and real way. They have never discovered **WHO** Jesus really is and **WHAT** He has done for them. How can you help these people? Go out and tell others what you have found!

Philip was a man who was familiar with the Scriptures. He knew what God had said in His Word. Philip said, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets, did write" (John 1:45).

MOSES WROTE ABOUT THE COMING MESSIAH. Philip may have been thinking about the great passage found in Deuteronomy 18:15-19. The GREAT PROPHET mentioned here in verse 15 is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE PROPHETS WROTE ABOUT THE COMING MESSIAH. Philip was aware of many passages found in the writings of the Old Testament prophets that spoke of the coming Saviour-King (see for example Micah 5:2; Isaiah 9:6-7; Isaiah 40:3-5; Jeremiah 23:5-6). The entire Old Testament looks ahead to the coming of Christ. Philip knew this and was convinced that he had found the Person that the Bible talks about.

We need to make sure that the Christ whom we discover is the Christ that the Bible talks about. Some people think that they have discovered Christ, but the Christ they have discovered is not the Christ of the Bible. Theirs is a Christ whom they have made up in their own minds (such as a "Jesus Christ Superstar" or a "Jesus Christ the revolutionist"). If the Christ whom people talk about does not resemble the Christ of the Bible, then they have not really discovered the real Person of Jesus Christ.

Philip is Tested by Jesus

What question did Jesus ask Philip in John 6:5?

_____ (The word "whence" means "from where"). Jesus already _____ what He would do (John 6:6). Jesus knew that He would feed these thousands of people by a great miracle. Jesus asked Philip this question because He wanted to test Philip's faith and see what Philip would say.

Did Philip think that it was possible to buy food for such a great number of people (John 6:7)?
 _____ Would even 200 pennies (200 *denarii*) be enough to buy bread for each person to take just a

little (John 6:7)? _____ Two hundred *denarii* is a large sum of money. The silver *denarius* is a Roman coin. It was the amount of money that an average worker would receive for one day's work. For a man to earn two hundred *denarii* he would have to work _____ days! How much money does your father make for one day's work? Multiply this by 200 and you will understand the amount of money Philip was talking about!

Philip's answer showed how little faith he had in his Lord. He should have said something like this: "Lord, it is impossible for us to buy food for these thousands of people. If You want these people fed, then You will have to do something. A miracle is needed, and I believe you are able to do it. We can't do it, but YOU CAN! Since You have proved that You can provide wine at a wedding (John chapter 2) and since You have proved that you can heal the sick and diseased (John 6:2), then I believe that You are also able to feed this vast crowd. I'm going to trust you to do what is best for these people!" Philip needed to learn that nothing was too hard for the Lord. The Lord has no problem when it comes to supplying that which is needed!

Philip Learns Another Lesson

Philip is also mentioned in John 12:20-22 and John 14:6-9. In this last passage Philip learned a valuable lesson. Jesus had been talking about COMING TO THE FATHER and KNOWING THE FATHER (see verses 6-7 in John 14).

When Philip heard Jesus' answer to Thomas, he said, "Lord, _____ the _____, and it **sufficeth** us [it's enough, it's all we need]" (John 14:8). Philip had a good desire. He wanted to know the Father. He wanted to see the Father, but Philip failed to understand something that was very important. If a person really comes to know Jesus Christ, then who else do they come to know (John 14:7)? _____ The person who has seen Christ has also seen _____ (John 14:9)! Philip wanted to be shown the Father, but he failed to understand that he had already been shown the Father. Jesus Christ is the One who reveals and makes known God the Father.

Perhaps Philip wanted some amazing and spectacular manifestation of God (something he could see with his eyes). He was looking for additional revelation, but he needed to understand that he had all the revelation that he needed, and this revelation is found in Jesus Christ.

There are people today who are looking for **added revelations**. They want God to reveal Himself and make Himself known to them in special ways. They want to have a special vision or a special dream or to receive a message from God in some other special way such as by speaking in tongues, etc. They need to understand that what they already have is ENOUGH! The Bible is all that they need! God has revealed Himself fully in the Bible. As we go to the Bible, we get to know Jesus Christ. As we get to know Jesus Christ, we get to know God the Father (John 14:7). We do not need new or additional revelation. Rather, we need to pay attention to the revelation which God has already given to us!

Philip's Later Life

The Bible does not tell us a great deal about Philip. In this chapter of notes we have already mentioned all the verses that talk about Philip.

Historical tradition tells us that Philip preached the gospel in Asia Minor, probably spending most of his time in the area called Phrygia (see a Bible map). An early historian by the name of Eusebius called him “the great light of Asia.” Philip brought Nathanael to the Saviour, and we can be sure that before his life was over he had brought many more people to Christ.

We do not know much about the death of Philip, but it is quite certain that he died the death of a Christian martyr. He was a man who was "faithful unto _____" (Rev. 2:10)!

BARTHOLOMEW

Bartholomew is found in all of the lists which give the names of the disciples (Matt. 10; Mark 3; Luke 6; Acts 1), but the New Testament does not tell us anything else about Bartholomew.

It is very likely that Bartholomew was the same person who is called Nathanael in John chapter 1. Reasons that support this possibility are as follows:

1. In New Testament times it was not uncommon for a person to have two names. For example, Matthew the tax collector was also called by the name Levi (see Matthew 9:9 and compare Luke 5:27,29).
2. In the gospels written by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the name Bartholomew is mentioned, but the name Nathanael is never found. In John's gospel the name Nathanael is mentioned but the name Bartholomew is never found.
3. In the gospel of John, chapter one, we learn that Philip and Nathanael were good friends. In fact, it was Philip that brought Nathanael to Jesus. In the other three gospels the name Bartholomew is always found after the name of Philip (Mark 3:16-17; Matthew 10:2-3; Luke 6:14 and following).
4. In John 21:2 and 14 the Bible seems to indicate that Nathanael was one of the 12 disciples of Jesus. Since the name “Nathanael” is not found in any of the lists which give the names of the 12 disciples, then we assume that this man must have had another name. Bartholomew seems to be the most likely choice.

We cannot be absolutely sure that Bartholomew and Nathanael are one and the same person, but the above four reasons make it seem quite likely that this was so. If they were not the same person, then the Bible tells us practically nothing about Bartholomew other than listing his name. If they were the same person, then we know several things about this man from chapter one of John's gospel.

Nathanael Meets Jesus

Nathanael was a man who knew the Bible. He had a good knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures. This is why he said, “Can there any _____ thing come out of _____? (John 1:46). He did not know of any Old Testament passage which said that the Messiah would come from the city of Nazareth. He may have been thinking of the important prophecy found in Micah 5:2 which clearly states that Israel's King must come out of the town of B_____. Of course Nathanael did not realize that “Jesus of Nazareth” was born in Bethlehem, not Nazareth. Nazareth was the town where He grew up, but it was not His birthplace.

Nathanael had his doubts but he was a sincere and open-minded man, and so he left his fig tree and followed Philip. Notice the first thing Jesus said to Nathanael: “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no _____ [deceit, trickery]” (John 1:47). Nathanael was not a tricky or deceitful person. He was a man with an honest and sincere and open heart. He was one of the Jews of his day who was waiting and looking for the coming of **the Promised One**, the Messiah.

Nathanael was surprised by the words which he heard. He asked, “How do you know all about me?” (compare John 1:48). The answer that Jesus gave him was even more surprising! “Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the _____ tree, I _____ thee” (John 1:48). Jesus saw Nathanael even though Jesus was not there! Nathanael was amazed to hear Jesus describe the very scene where he had just been! Even before Philip spoke to Nathanael, Jesus knew all about this man! Was this proof enough to convince Nathanael who Jesus really was (see John 1:49)?

Jesus knew all about Nathanael. He knew what Nathanael was thinking! He knew just where Nathanael was! He knew just what kind of a person Nathanael was! The same is true for us. The Lord knows all about us! He knows you better than you know yourself! He knows all about you and all about your thoughts. He knows all about your problems and doubts and worries. He knows your heart.

When we go to the doctor we want him to know as much about us as possible. The more he knows about us the better he will be able to help us. We can then trust him to do what is best for our body. The Lord Jesus is the great Doctor of the soul! He knows all about us, and He knows exactly what is wrong with us. We need to trust Him and allow Him to do His wonderful work in our soul!

Nathanael was an open-minded man who was open to correction. At first he was wrong in his opinion of Jesus (John 1:46), but he soon changed his mind after Jesus spoke with him (John 1:48-49). God wants us to have open hearts and to have minds that are willing to change when we are confronted with the truth.

The last thing we read about Nathanael is found in John 21:2. He went fishing with six other disciples and Jesus appeared unto them (John 21:14). The Bible does not tell us anything else about this man.

Historical tradition does not give us very much helpful information either. We must say the same thing about Bartholomew as we said about Philip. We are not sure how he died, but we can be quite sure that he was put to death because he faithfully preached Christ as “the _____ of God and the _____ of Israel” (John 1:49). He too shall receive the martyr's crown (see Rev. 2:10)!

WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND IN THE LIVES OF PHILIP AND BARTHOLOMEW THAT SHOULD BE FOUND IN YOUR LIFE ALSO?