

WEEKLY REFLECTION

What we do here at The Gathering is to gather: we gather on Sundays to hear the Word of God being preached. We meet throughout the week to encourage and build one another up. But we are different from any other social group that gathers only for the sake of gathering. Instead, we gather because we are to scatter: the impetus in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18) was not merely to “go”, but to “*make disciples of all nations*.” The word “go” is simply the pre-requisite for making disciples of all nations.

But before we can get to the place of going, we must first choose to follow Jesus. John 1:43-51 details the story of Philip and Nathanael, two individuals who had radically different responses to Jesus’ invitation to follow Him. Where Philip readily agreed (v.45), Nathanael was more cynical and needed convincing. (v.46) Jesus, however, was not daunted. As He chose to meet Nathanael where he was, He showed him how much He cares and sees. The exact meaning of Jesus’ statement here is unclear, but something happened under the fig tree, something that Nathanael didn’t expect for anyone to see or hear. (v.48-49) When Jesus proved to Nathanael that He had heard him and saw Him, Nathanael did a complete 180 as He joyfully identified Jesus as the Son of God. (v.49)

The story of Philip and Nathanael is really the story of Jesus with us all: He alone invites us to follow Him. While it was Philip who invited Nathanael to “come and see” (v.46b), it was Jesus who transformed Nathanael’s heart and allowed him to see the truth of who He really is. And yet, the story does not stop there: as Jesus said, “You will see greater things than these.” (v.50b)

Church, will we choose to follow? Regardless of whether we are Philip or Nathanael, will we choose to “come and see”? And will we follow in His footsteps, and invite others to “come and see” along with us?

QUESTIONS

QUESTION ONE:

Philip's response to Jesus was immediately to believe, and to follow Him. He says of Jesus that "we have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote". (v.45b)

Nathanael's response, on the other hand, was more cynical. "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (v.46)

What does Philip's introduction of Jesus say about Him? Why do you think Nathanael's response was so cynical? Are there people in your life that act similarly to Philip and / Nathanael? What do you think is driving their response?

QUESTION TWO:

Apart from Philip and Nathanael's own claims about who Jesus is, other people have made claims about Jesus' identity within the same chapter.

Go through the six claims made about Jesus in John 1:36, 38, 41, 45, and 49. What are these six claims, and what do they tell us about Him?

What might be some of the claims that you have about Jesus, and what do they reveal about yourself in relation to Him?

QUESTION THREE:

Oftentimes when introducing people to Jesus, we feel that the pressure is on us to convey, defend, and explain how amazing He truly is. Yet in response to Nathanael's cynicism in verse 46, Philip only invites him to "come and see".

What are some of the fears or challenges you face in inviting people to know Jesus? What is stopping you from doing so? How might you break out of your comfort zone in having "Jesus conversations", and how might you turn to the Holy Spirit for help in doing so?