

F. Jesus the Lamb of God, the Son of God: The Third Witness of John the Baptist, 1:29–34

(1:29–34) **Introduction:** John’s witness about Jesus Christ is one of the greatest witnesses ever given by man. John was unmistakable in His proclamation of the Lord Jesus Christ (Lu. 4:18–19).

1. Christ is the Lamb of God (v.29).
2. Christ is the Preeminent One (vv.30–31).
3. Christ is the Messiah, the One upon whom the Spirit of God remained (vv.32–33).
4. Christ is the Son of God (v.34).

1 (1:29) **Jesus Christ, Lamb of God:** Jesus Christ is the “Lamb of God.” Down through the centuries “*the Lamb of God*” has been one of the most cherished symbols of Jesus Christ held by believers. There are four reasons for this.

- a. The Lamb is a picture of Christ our Passover who was sacrificed for us.

“For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us” (1 Co. 5:7).

Historically, the Passover refers back to the time when God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage (Ex. 11:1f). God had pronounced judgment, the taking of the firstborn, upon the people of Egypt for their injustices. As He prepared to execute the final judgment, the faithful, those who believed God, were instructed to slay a pure lamb and sprinkle its blood over the door posts of their homes. The blood of the innocent lamb would then serve as a sign that the coming judgment had already been carried out. When seeing the blood, God would *pass over* that house. Those who believed God applied the blood to their homes and were saved, but those who did not believe did not apply the blood to their homes and their firstborn were destroyed.

Symbolically, the Passover pictured the coming of Jesus Christ as the Savior. The *lamb without blemish* pictured His sinless life (see Jn. 1:29), and the *blood sprinkled on the door posts* pictured His blood shed for the believer. It was a sign that the life and blood of the innocent lamb had been substituted for the firstborn. The *eating of the lamb* pictured the need for spiritual nourishment gained by feeding on Christ, the Bread of Life. The unleavened bread (bread without yeast) pictured the need for putting evil out of one’s life and household. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Feast of Unleavened Bread*—Mt. 26:17.)

The major point to note is this: it was the blood of the lamb that saved the people. The lamb was sacrificed; that is, its blood was shed as a substitute for the people. The lamb symbolized Christ our Passover who was sacrificed for us. If we believe and apply His blood to our hearts and homes, He saves us. If we do not believe and do not apply the blood to our hearts and homes, we are destroyed. It is the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for us; it is His blood which saves us.

- b. The Lamb is a picture of the precious blood of Christ which redeems us.

“Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Pe. 1:18–19).

Historically, two lambs were sacrificed “day by day continually ... the one ... in the morning; and the other ... at even” (Ex. 29:38–39). The sacrifice of the two lambs, the shedding of their

precious blood, became a substitute for the people. The people knew their sins had separated them from God and that their sins had to be removed before they could be reconciled to God. Thus, symbolically, the sins of the people were removed from the people and placed upon the two animals. The animals, without blemish and without spot, had the sins of the people placed upon them; and symbolically, they bore the judgment of sin, which was death. They were sacrificed for sin, and by their death, they symbolically set the people free by redeeming them from their sins. (But note a critical point. It was not the deed that caused God to remove the sins but the *faith* of the person in God's Word *that He would remove the sins.*)

This, of course, is a picture of Christ. (See Is. 53:6–7; Je. 11:19; Ac. 8:32; 1 Co. 5:7; He. 9:28; 1 Pe. 2:22–24; Re. 5:6; 6:1; 7:9; 12:11; 13:8; 14:1; 15:3; 17:14; 19:9; 21:22.) Jesus Christ is ...

- the perfect Lamb of God, without sin (blemish or spot). (See note, *Jesus Christ, Sinless*—Jn. 8:45–47.)
- the One upon whom the sins of the people were placed
- the One who bore the judgment for sin, which was death
- the One who was sacrificed for sin
- the One whose death sets people free by redeeming them
- the One whose blood is counted precious both by God and believers

It should be noted that Christ *willingly* offered Himself as the sacrificial Lamb, as our substitute and sin-bearer; and God willingly accepted the offering and sacrifice of His Son for us (Jn. 10:17–18). God is *satisfied* with the settlement for sin that Christ made. If any person really believes the blood of Christ to be precious—really believes that the blood of Christ covers his sins—God will take that person's belief and count it as righteousness (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, 2—Ro. 4:22; notes—5:1; 1 Jn. 2:1–2).

c. The "Lamb of God" is not *of men*, but *of God* (tou Theou). The idea is that the Lamb belonged to God; that is, God gave, supplied, and provided the Lamb for sacrifice. (See Ge. 22:8 where God provided the lamb for Abraham as a substitute for Isaac.)

This glorious truth speaks volumes on ...

- the unbelievable love of God for man (Jn. 3:16; Ro. 5:1).
- the great sacrifice and humiliation Christ underwent for man (Ph. 2:6–8; 1 Pe. 2:24).
- the forgiveness of sins and salvation which came from God's grace and not from man's resources and works (Ep. 2:8–9; Tit. 2:4–7).
- the deity of Christ, His being *of God* (see Master Subject Index, Jesus Christ, Deity).

d. The "Lamb of God" takes away the sin of the world.

- 1) The phrase *takes away* (airon) means to lift away, to carry off. It means to bear in behalf of one, as one's substitute. Jesus Christ was the sacrificial Lamb of God who bore our sins. He lifted our sins off of us and bore and carried them away.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pe. 2:24).

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (He. 9:28).

- 2) The word *sin* (harmartian) is singular, not plural. All the sins of the world are taken and placed into one package. The whole package of sin—all the sin of every man who has ever lived—was laid upon and borne by Christ.

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 Jn. 1:7).

- 3) The world is looked at as a whole. Christ bore the sins of the whole world, not the sins of just some men. No matter the depth and ugliness of a man’s sin, Christ bore the sins of the whole world.

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 Jn. 2:1–2).

2 (1:30–31) Jesus Christ, Preeminent: Jesus Christ is the Preeminent One, the *One before all*. Note what John said.

a. John said that Christ “was before me”; that is, He existed before me. He was the Preexistent One, the Eternal God (see note—Jn. 1:15 for discussion).

b. John did not know who the Messiah would be, only that the Messiah was to come. Note that John knew Jesus personally; they were cousins (Lu. 1:36). However, John did not know that his cousin, Jesus, was to be the Messiah. Note another fact: how faithful John was! He was a man of strong faith. He had never seen the Messiah, yet he went about his mission of preaching and baptizing. He acted on God’s Word and on God’s Word alone, believing that the Messiah would come.

Thought 1. Christ is the Preeminent One, the Eternal God. Believers must follow the example of John and ...

- declare that Christ is before all
- believe God’s promise: the Messiah has come
- act and get about their mission of proclaiming Christ

3 (1:32–33) Holy Spirit: Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the One upon whom the Holy Spirit of God remained. Note several facts.

a. This is the “record,” the strong witness of John.

b. The dove was a sacred bird to the Jews. It was a symbol of peace and gentleness, of purity and innocence; but even more significant, the dove was often identified with the Spirit of God. When the dove descended upon Christ, it symbolized the Spirit of God Himself descending upon

Christ. The dove identified Jesus as the Messiah and endued Him with the power of God (see outline and notes—Mk. 1:9–10).

c. In the Old Testament the Spirit of God came upon men only on special occasions. He never remained upon men. John went out of his way to point out that the Spirit’s descent upon Christ was unique: He abode (v.32) and He remained upon Christ (v.32). The Holy Spirit entered the life of Christ once-for-all, permanently and powerfully, in His full manifestation and unlimited power.

Thought 1. When a person is baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ, the Holy Spirit enters the life of the believer, becoming a permanent experience of the believer.

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another” (Jn. 15:16–17).

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you” (Jn. 16:7).

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness” (Ro. 8:9–10).

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (1 Co. 12:13).

d. John repeated, he did not know who the Messiah would be. God’s sign to John was the Holy Spirit’s coming upon the Messiah in the form of a dove.

e. Christ is the One who baptizes believers with the Holy Spirit.

Thought 1. It is the person who receives the Spirit of God that has the presence and care of God looking over his life (see notes—Jn. 14:15–26; Jn. 16:7–15; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ac. 2:1–4; note—Ro. 8:1–17).

4 (1:34) Jesus Christ, Son of God: Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (See notes—Jn. 1:1–2; 10:30–33; Ph. 2:6; 2:7 for more discussion.) 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 only *begotten* Son
- the only begotten Son who came from the very *bosom* of God, that is from the deepest part, from the most intimate place, from the most honorable fellowship of God

a. The gospel writers say that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
1:21	1:1	1:31–32	1:18, 34, 45

2:15	3:11	1:35	3:16–18, 35–36
3:17	13:32	3:38	5:19, 21–23, 25–26
4:3	14:61	4:3, 9	6:40, 42
8:29	15:39	4:41	8:35–36
11:27		8:28	9:35 (see 19:7)
14:33		10:22	10:36
14:36		22:70	11:4
16:16			14:13
17:5			17:1
26:63			19:17
27:30, 40, 43, 54			20:31

The gospel writers also say that Jesus Christ constantly claimed that God was His Father, that He was the Son of the Father in a unique sense.

<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
7:21	8:38	2:49	3:35
10:32–33	13:32	9:26	5:17, 19–23, 26, 30, 36–37, 43, 45
11:25–27	14:36	10:21–22	
12:50		22:29, 42	6:27, 32, 37, 39, 42, 44–46, 57, 65
15:13		23:34, 46	
16:17, 27		24:49	8:16, 18–19, 27–29, 38, 49, 54
18:10, 19, 35			
20:23			10:15, 17–18, 25, 29– 30, 32, 36–38

24:36

25:34

26:29, 39, 42, 53

28:19

11:41

12:26–28, 49–50

14:6–13, 16, 20–21,
26, 23–24, 28, 31

15:1, 8–10, 15–16,
23–24, 26

16:3, 10, 15–17, 25–
28, 32

17:1, 5, 11, 24–25

18:11

20:17, 21

b. The book of *Acts* says that Jesus Christ is the Son of God:

Acts 3:13, 26; 8:37; 9:20

c. Paul says that Jesus Christ is the Son of God:

Romans 1:4, 9; 5:10; 8:3, 29, 32

1 Corinthians 1:9; 15:58

2 Corinthians 1:19

Galatians 1:16; 2:20; 4:4, 6

Ephesians 4:13

Colossians 1:13

1 Thessalonians 1:10

Hebrews 1:2, 5, 8; 3:6; 4:14; 5:8; 6:6; 7:3, 28; 10:29;
11:17

Paul also says that God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Romans 15:6

2 Corinthians 1:3; 11:31

Ephesians 1:3

d. Peter says that God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:

1 Peter 1:3

e. John, in his Epistles and *Revelation*, says that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:

1 John 1:3, 7; 2:22–24; 3:8, 23; 4:9–10, 14–15; 5:5, 9–13, 20

2 John 3, 9

Revelation 2:18, 27; 3:5

G. Jesus the Messiah, the Christ: The Witness of Andrew, 1:35–42

1. **Andrew's experience**
 - a. He stood in the midst of John's two of his disciples; preaching
35 Again the next day after John stood, and
 - b. He heard John proclaim that Jesus was the Lamb of God
36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!
 - c. He followed Jesus
37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.
2. **Andrew's critical hour**
 - a. Jesus turned: A symbol of initiative following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?
38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them
 - b. Jesus asked the basic question of life: What do you want? What do you seek?
39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.
3. **Andrew's great decision: He went & saw Christ & remained with Christ⁴**

40 One of the two which heard John *speaking*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

4. **Andrew's first concern: His brother** 41 He first findeth his own brother Simon,
5. **Andrew's conviction: Jesus was the Messiah** and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

6. **Andrew's fruit: Simon was brought to Jesus** 42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

G. Jesus the Messiah, the Christ: The Witness of Andrew, 1:35–42

(1:35–42) **Introduction:** this was Andrew's discovery of Jesus. He discovered that Jesus was the Messiah, the Christ. (See note, *Andrew—Mk. 3:18* for more discussion.)

1. Andrew's experience (vv.35–37).
2. Andrew's critical hour (vv.38–39).
3. Andrew's great decision: he came and saw Christ and remained (vv.39–40).
4. Andrew's first concern: his brother (v.41).
5. Andrew's conviction: Jesus was the Messiah (v.41).
6. Andrew's fruit: Simon was brought to Jesus and was reaped (v.42).

1 (1:35–37) **Andrew:** there was Andrew's experience. His experience was simple, somewhat like the experience of many who come to Christ.

a. Andrew *stood* where preaching was. Note the word *stood* (v.35). John had been holding his campaign around the Jordan. Andrew, who had an ache for the Word of God, had become interested in what was happening and had attended the meetings, and had at some point become a follower of this preacher of righteousness. The point to see is that Andrew hungered for righteousness; therefore, he availed himself of the opportunity to hear preaching. He "stood" right in the midst of preaching. He was there to hear the Messiah proclaimed.

b. Andrew "heard him [the preacher] speak." He was listening to the message, not allowing his mind to ramble elsewhere. He was alert and awake; therefore, when the announcement of the Messiah came, he was ready. Note also the message: "Behold the Lamb of God." It was the message of the Messiah's sacrificial death (see note—Jn. 1:29).

c. Andrew "followed Jesus." The word *followed* (*ekolouthesan*) is in the Greek aorist tense, meaning a once-for-all act. Andrew was turning to Jesus, *ready* to make a commitment to Him. He wanted to become a disciple of Jesus.

Thought 1. The same three steps must be taken by each of us.

- (1) A person must *stand* where the Word, Christ Himself, is preached. A person must have a hunger that drives him to preaching, a hunger that drives him to stay alert and awake to hear the Word proclaimed.
- (2) A person must *hear* the Word, the announcement: the Lamb of God has come to take away the sin of the world.
- (3) A person must follow Jesus.

“Then spake Jesus again unto them, Saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (Jn. 8:12).

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (Jn. 10:27).

“If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour” (Jn. 12:26).

“Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain upon the earth” (Ho. 6:3).

Thought 2. Two things will cause a man to miss Christ.

- (1) Not *standing* where Christ is preached: standing elsewhere in the world, in self, in the flesh; standing in the midst of those who do not care for Christ nor for the preaching of the Word.
- (2) Not *hearing*: allowing the mind to wander, being sleepy-eyed, disinterested, distracted, inattentive.

Thought 3. Note several significant facts about John.

- (1) His message was Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.
- (2) His purpose was to point people, even his own followers, to Christ. He wanted people *to be* where they could receive and grow the most. (How different from so many ministers!)
- (3) His spirit was filled with enormous humility. He was completely selfless. He pointed His own followers to Christ and encouraged them to follow Him.

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Pe. 1:18–19).

2 (1:38–39) Andrew—Seeking Christ—Invitation: there was Andrew’s critical hour. This is a most graphic picture: it shows the *great eagerness* of Jesus to reach men. Jesus longs for men to come to Him, and He longs to reach out to help them in their coming. Note: Jesus was walking some distance away and Andrew and his friend were following behind Jesus. Jesus did three things that demonstrated His great eagerness.

a. “Jesus turned” to face them. This was a clear demonstration of His open arms, His willingness, and His eagerness for them to join Him. He knew their hearts had just been stirred

to reach out to Him and to follow Him, so He immediately snapped around to face them and help them. (See Lu. 15:20.)

b. Jesus asked the basic question of life: “What seek ye?” He did not ask, *Whom seek ye?* but “What seek ye?” What are you after? Are you seeking ...

- meaning, purpose, and significance in life?
- a religion of self-improvement and human development?
- rules and regulations and laws of righteousness?
- fellowship and companionship?
- deliverance from trials and trouble and suffering?
- approval and acceptance of God?
- blessings from God, His care and provision and security?

Note what Andrew and his friend asked: “Rabbi ... where dwellest thou [pou meneis]?” They had never met Jesus before, yet they called Him Master or Teacher, acknowledging His position as *their* Teacher. They were not asking for a simple conversation by the side of the road. They were asking to join Him in the quiet of His home, to open and pour out their hearts to Him and for Him to become their teacher. They wanted Him to meet the crying need of their hearts and to do such in the quiet confines of His dwelling.

“That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us” (Ac. 17:27).

“But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (De. 4:29).

“Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near” (Is. 55:6).

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart” (Je. 29:13).

c. Jesus extended the invitation: “Come and see.” The invitation was immediate: it was while Andrew and his friend were attracted to Jesus. They were invited to Jesus while they sensed their need. Jesus did not postpone their request nor leave them hanging.

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Mt. 11:28).

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Is. 1:18).

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Is. 55:1).

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Re. 22:17).

3 (1:39–40) **Decision:** there was Andrew’s great decision. He “came and saw” and “remained” with Jesus. There are three significant facts here.

a. Andrew “came” to Jesus. He accepted the invitation. He walked up to Jesus and walked along with Him *in order to* see just where Jesus did dwell.

Thought 1. Note two critical points.

- (1) Andrew had to accept the invitation.
- (2) Andrew had to be willing to “see” where Jesus dwelt and to let Jesus lead him to His dwelling place.

“For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Co. 6:2).

“But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation” (Ps. 69:13).

b. The word *see* (opsesthe) was a promise: “ye shall see.” Jesus was talking about much more than just seeing where He lived. He was talking about *seeing* the truth and learning of Him. Andrew was being assured, if he would come, that he would most definitely see and learn the truth of life. The Lord guaranteed it. (See note, *See*—Jn. 20:20.)

“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Co. 4:6).

“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power” (Ep. 1:18–19).

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy” (1 Pe. 2:9–10).

c. Andrew and his friend “abode with him,” that is, by Jesus’ side, in His presence. They received of Him and He met their needs. Note a significant fact: this confrontation with Jesus changed their lives forever. This is seen in that the very hour is still remembered fifty or more years later (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn. 1:39). Andrew and his friend committed their lives to Jesus.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (Jn. 1:12).

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Ro. 10:13).

“And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Lu. 9:23).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:39) **John the Apostle—Confrontation—Conversion:** Is the hour known by John the Apostle because he was the other unnamed disciple with Andrew? Apparently so. Note how significant the experience with Jesus was. John still remembered the hour some fifty years later (see Jn. 18:15; 20:3).

4 (1:41) **Witnessing—Family:** Andrew’s first concern was his brother Peter. The scene was striking. As quickly as he could after discovering Jesus for himself, Andrew rushed to find his own brother, Simon.

a. Andrew had met Jesus personally, and Jesus had met the crying need of his heart. Andrew could not contain the peace and joy; he just had to tell his loved ones immediately. He wanted them also to experience the love and joy and peace of Jesus.

b. Andrew was a great witness, a great personal worker for the Lord. He was always seen bringing someone to Jesus (see Jn. 6:8; 12:22).

“And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Mt. 4:19).

“For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Lu. 19:10).

“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” (Jn. 20:21).

“And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” (Jude 22–23).

“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise” (Pr. 11:30).

“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever” (Da. 12:3).

5 (1:41) **Messiah—Witnessing:** there was Andrew’s conviction, “We have found the *Messiah*.” (For the meaning of the word “Messiah,” see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Christ*—Jn. 1:20.)

6 (1:42) **Witnessing:** Andrew’s fruit, Simon, was reached for Jesus and reaped. Andrew saw his brother Simon come to Jesus.

a. Note the word *beheld* (emblemsas). It means to look upon with an intense, earnest look, to concentrate, to stare and gaze upon. Jesus looked into the innermost being of Peter.

b. Note the words, “Thou shalt be called.” They refer to the future. Simon’s name would be changed to Cephas. This was a prediction that he would be converted and changed from a self-centered, defensive, overbearing, and carnal man into a strong, solid, immovable and unbreakable rock for God.

Thought 1. Note two significant facts.

- (1) Jesus “beholds” a man: studies and knows him intimately. This is both a comfort and a warning, depending upon man’s response.

“[Jesus] needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man” (Jn. 2:25).

“For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known” (Lu. 12:2).

“Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD” (Je. 23:24).

- (2) Jesus sees the potential within a man and longs to change that man to make him everything he can become.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Co. 5:17; see Ep. 4:24).

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins” (Ep. 2:1).

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Pe. 1:23).

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh” (Eze. 36:26).

H. Jesus the One Propheted: The Witness of Philip, 1:43–45

1. Philip’s experience

- a. He was sought by Jesus Himself¹
- b. He was called by Jesus Himself
- c. The reason: Philip knew Andrew & Peter^{DS2}

43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

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

2. Philip’s first concern: Nathanael

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

3. Philip’s conviction: Jesus was the One propheted³

H. Jesus the One Propheted: The Witness of Philip, 1:43–45

(1:43–45) **Introduction:** Philip’s discovery and witness of Jesus Christ was unmistakable. Jesus was the One propheted in Scripture; He was the promised Messiah.

1. Philip’s experience (vv.43–44).
2. Philip’s first concern: Nathanael (v.45).

3. Philip's conviction: Jesus was the One prophesied (v.45).

1 (1:43–44) Salvation—Discipleship—Jesus Christ, Seeking Man: Philip's experience involved three significant points.

a. Jesus Himself went forth and sought Philip—Philip was not seeking Jesus. The initiative came from Jesus entirely. Jesus made the move to find and save Philip and to enlist Philip in His mission.

1) Jesus traveled 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 sin, no matter how terrible or awful. 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 through seeing nature (Ro. 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 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 with us.

“And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man” (Ge. 6:3).

“He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy” (Pr. 29:1).

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 *untouchable*: the alcoholic, immoral, poor, prisoner, lowly, diseased.

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Ac. 1:8).

“For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me” (Mt. 25:35–36). (Remember that the person in *prison* is guilty of the most serious offenses and sins.)

- 2) 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.

“For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Lu. 19:10).

“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (Jn. 10:10).

“To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice” (Jn. 18:37).

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1 Ti. 1:15).

b. Jesus Himself called Philip. He called Philip to “follow Him” (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn. 1:43; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lu. 9:23).

“And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Lu. 9:23).

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (Jn. 10:27).

“If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour” (Jn. 12:26).

c. 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 (see “We have found Him, v.45). Therefore, he had sought the company of those who were like-minded. He wanted the fellowship of those who sought for godly deliverance. In search for 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

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Mt. 5:6).

“Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh” (Lu. 6:21).

“If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (Jn. 7:37).

“For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness” (Ps. 107:9).

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Is. 55:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:43) **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

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(1:44) **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; Lu. 10:13). (See Mk. 6:45; 8:22; Lu. 9:10; Jn. 12:21 for other references to the city.)

2 (1:45) **Witnessing**: Philip’s first concern was to reach his friend Nathanael. Philip “findeth” 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.

“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” (Jn. 20:21).

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Ti. 2:2).

“For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Ac. 4:20).

“For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard” (Ac. 22:15).

“We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak” (2 Co. 4:13).

3 (1:45) **Conviction—Decision**: Philip’s conviction—the One prophesied was Jesus Christ. “We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Note four points.

a. Philip was extremely joyful. “We have found Him.” There was jubilation, excitement, and rejoicing beating in the chest of Philip. Jesus had met the needs and craving of his heart.

“These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” (Jn. 15:11).

“Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full” (Jn. 16:24).

“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Ro. 14:17).

“Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” (Ps. 16:11).

“Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation” (Is. 12:3).

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

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (Jn. 5:39).

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Ti. 3:16).

c. Philip and Nathanael knew the Scripture. They were familiar with the prophecies of the promised Messiah.

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Ti. 2:15).

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious” (1 Pe. 2:2–3).

d. Jesus of Nazareth was definitely identified as the Messiah. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn. 1:45.)

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(1:45) Scripture, Fulfilled—Prophecy, Fulfilled:

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES OF JESUS AND THEIR FULFILLMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Prophecies	Fulfillment
Ge. 3:15	The Promised Seed of a Woman aGa. 4:4; Lu. 2:7; Re. 12:5
Ge. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18	The Promised Seed of Abraham Ac. 3:25; Ga. 3:8 (Mt. 1:1; Lu. 3:34)
Ge. 17:19; 22:16–17	The Promised Seed of Isaac Mt. 1:2; Lu. 1:55, 72–74
Ge. 28:14 (Nu. 24:17)	The Promised Seed of Jacob Lu. 3:34 (Mt. 1:2)

Ge. 49:10 ^a	Will Spring from the Royal Tribe of Judah	Lu. 3:33; He. 7:14
De. 18:15, 18	Will Be a Prophet	Jn. 6:14; Ac. 3:22–23
2 S. 7:13 ^b (2 S. 7:13; Is. 9:1, 7; 11:1–5)	Will Be the Eternal Heir to David's Throne	Mt. 1:1 (Mt. 1:6; Lu. 1:32–33)
2 S. 7:14 ^a	Will Be God's Son	Mk. 1:1
Is. 35:6; 61:1–2 (see Ps. 72:2; 146:8; Zec. 11:11)	Will Meet the Desperate Needs of Men	Mt. 11:4–6
Job 17:3	Will Ransom Men	Ep. 1:7 (1 Jn. 2:1–2)
Ps. 2:1–2	Will Be Rejected by the Nations	Lu. 23:36 ^a , 38
Ps. 2:7	Is the Son of God	Ac. 13:33; He. 1:5; 5:5
Ps. 8:2	Is to Be Praised	Mt. 21:16
Ps. 16:8–11	Will Be Resurrected	Ac. 13:34–35; 2:25–28, 31 (Mt. 28:1–2; Mk. 16:6, 12, 14; Lu. 24:1–53)
Ps. 22:1	Will Be Forsaken by God	Mt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34
Ps. 22:7	People Will Wag Their Heads at the Cross	Mt. 27:39
Ps. 22:18	Clothes Gambled for	Mt. 27:35; Mk. 15:24; Lu. 23:34; Jn. 19:24
Ps. 22:22	To Secure Many Brothers	He. 2:12
Ps. 31:5	Commends His Spirit to God	Lu. 23:46
Ps. 40:6–8	Fulfills God's Will	He. 10:5–7
Ps. 41:9	Is Betrayed by Judas	Jn. 13:18; Ac. 1:16
Ps. 45:6, 7	Is Eternal and Preeminent	He. 1:8, 9

Ps. 68:18	Will Lead Captivity Captive	Ep. 4:8–10
Ps. 69:21	Was Offered Drugs on the Cross	Mt. 27:48; Mk. 15:36; Lu. 23:36; Jn. 19:28, 29
Ps. 69:25; 109:8	Judas' Fate	Ac. 1:20
Ps. 89:26–27	Exaltation	Ph. 2:9 (see Re. 11:15)
Ps. 95:7–11	Hearts Hardened Against	He. 3:7–11; 4:3, 5–7
Ps. 102:25–27	Is Creator and Is Eternal	He. 1:10–12
Ps. 110:1	To Be Exalted	Mt. 22:44; Mk. 12:36; Lu. 20:42; Ac. 2:34, 35; He. 1:13
Ps. 110:4	The High Priest	He. 5:6
Ps. 118:22, 23	The Stone	Mt. 21:42; Mk. 12:10; Lu. 20:17; Ac. 4:11
Ps. 118:25, 26	The Triumphal Entry	Mt. 21:9; Mk. 11:9; Jn. 12:13
Ps. 132:11, 17	The Son of David	Lu. 1:69; Ac. 2:30
Is. 7:14	The Virgin Birth	Mt. 1:23
Is. 9:1, 2	A Light to Those in Darkness	Mt. 4:15, 16
Is. 11:2	The Spirit Rests Upon in a Special Way	Lu. 4:18–21 (see Mt. 12:18; Jn. 3:34)
Is. 11:10	To Save the Gentiles	Ro. 15:12
Is. 25:8	To Conquer Death	1 Co. 15:54
Is. 28:16	The Stone	Ro. 9:33; 1 Pe. 2:6
Is. 40:3–5	To Have a Forerunner	Mt. 3:3; Mk. 1:3; Lu. 3:4–6
Is. 42:1–4	To Minister to the Gentiles	Mt. 12:17–21
Is. 49:6	A Light to the Gentiles	Lu. 2:32; Ac. 13:47, 48; 26:23

Is. 53:1	Would Not Be Believed	Jn. 12:38; Ro. 10:16
Is. 53:3–6	To Die and Arise	Ac. 26:22, 23
Is. 53:4–6, 11	To Die for Man’s Sins	1 Pe. 2:24, 25
Is. 53:4	To Heal and Bear Man’s Sickness	Mt. 8:17
Is. 53:9	To Be Sinless	1 Pe. 2:22
Is. 53:12	To Be Counted a Sinner	Mk. 15:28; Lu. 22:37
Is. 54:13	To Teach As God	Jn. 6:45
Is. 55:3	To Be Raised	Ac. 13:34
Is. 59:20, 21	To Save Israel	Ro. 11:26, 27
Je. 31:31–34	To Make a New Covenant with Man	He. 8:8–12; 10:16, 17
Ho. 1:10–11	To Bring About the Restoration of Israel	Ro. 11:1–36
Ho. 1:10	The Conversion of the Gentiles	Ro. 9:26
Ho. 2:23	The Conversion of the Gentiles	Ro. 9:25; 1 Pe. 2:10
Joel 2:28–32	The Promise of the Spirit	Ac. 2:16–21
Amos 9:11, 12	The Lord’s Return and David’s Kingdom Reestablished	Ac. 15:16, 17
Mi. 5:2	The Birthplace of Messiah	Mt. 2:5, 6; Jn. 7:42
Hab. 1:5	The Jews’ Unbelief	Ac. 13:40, 41
Hag. 2:6	The Return of Christ	He. 12:26
Zec. 9:9	The Triumphal Entry	Mt. 21:4, 5; Jn. 12:14, 15

Zec. 11:13	Judas' Betrayal	Mt. 27:9, 10
Zec. 12:10	The Spear Pierced in Side	Jn. 19:37
Zec. 13:7	The Scattering of the Disciples at the Cross	Mt. 26:31, 56; Mk. 14:27, 50
Mal. 3:1	The Forerunner, John the Baptist	Mt. 11:10; Mk. 1:2; Lu. 7:27
Mal. 4:5, 6	The Forerunner, John the Baptist	Mt. 11:13, 14; 17:10–13; Mk. 9:11–13; Lu. 1:16, 17

I. Jesus the Son of God, the King of Israel: The Witness of Nathanael,¹ 1:46–49

1. **Nathanael's experience²**
 - a. A man of despair & prejudice
 - b. A man invited to follow Jesus despite prejudice

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.
2. **Nathanael's confrontation with Jesus**
 - a. Jesus knew him: His beliefs & character
 - b. Jesus knew his innermost being—all things about him³

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

48 Nathanael saith unto him, 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.
3. **Nathanael's conviction: Jesus was the Son of God⁴**

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

I. Jesus the Son of God, the King of Israel: The Witness of Nathanael, 1:46–49

(1:46–49) **Introduction:** Nathanael's confrontation with Jesus was dramatic. Nathanael was a man of prejudice and strong feelings, yet he knew despair and hopelessness; therefore, he was difficult to lead 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.

1. Nathanael's experience (v.46).
2. Nathanael's confrontation with Jesus (vv.47–48).
3. Nathanael's conviction: Jesus was the Son of God (v.49).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:46–49) **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.

1 (1:46) **Nathanael—Prejudice—Witnessing**: Nathanael's experience. Note three facts.

a. It was Nathanael's close friend Philip who shared the good news with him (cp. 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.

b. Nathanael was a man gripped by despair and prejudice.

- 1) The despair is seen in his response to Philip. He rejected Philip's testimony and did it in a negative, skeptical, reactionary spirit: "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" 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?

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.

"My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul" (Jb. 10:1).

"For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed" (Ps. 31:10).

"O my God, my soul is cast down within me" (Ps. 42:6).

"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me" (Ps. 69:2).

"But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped" (Ps. 73:2).

"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me" (Ps. 73:16).

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion" (Ps. 137:1).

"The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me" (Is. 49:14).

“Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go” (Je. 2:25).

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep [dead], that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope” (1 Th. 4:13).

“That at that time ye were without Christ ... having no hope, and without God in the world” (Ep. 2:12).

- 2) The prejudice of Nathanael is seen in his slur against Jesus because Jesus was from Nazareth (see *DEEPER STUDY # 2, 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.

“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Ac. 10:34–35).

“For there is no respect of persons with God” (Ro. 2:11).

“For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him” (Ro. 10:12).

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

“For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).

“These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee” (Tit. 2:15).

“Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul” (Ps. 66:16).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(1:46) **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. (See note, pt.2—Mt. 13:53–58 for more discussion.)

2 (1:47–48) Guilelessness—Jesus Christ, Knowledge—Sin, Exposed: Nathanael’s confrontation. Two very significant things happened in Nathanael’s confrontation with Jesus.

a. Jesus knew Nathanael, his beliefs and character.

- 1) Jesus knew his beliefs. This is seen in Jesus’ calling Nathanael an “Israelite indeed.” 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.

“[Christ] needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man” (Jn. 2:25).

“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Co. 1:30).

“For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things” (1 Jn. 3:20).

“Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed” (1 S. 2:3).

“O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee” (Ps. 69:5).

“I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” (Je. 17:10).

- 2) Jesus knew his character. Nathanael was a man without guile (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 what he felt. He was straightforward, 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. Many deceive, bait, and mislead others. Few are straightforward, open and honest, free of deception and hypocrisy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Mt. 5:8).

“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless” (2 Pe. 3:14).

“And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God” (Re. 14:5).

“Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile” (Ps. 32:2).

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully” (Ps. 24:3–4).

b. Jesus knew Nathanael’s innermost being, all things about him (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—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.

“For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known” (Lu. 12:2).

“Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God” (1 Co. 4:5).

“If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity” (Jb. 10:14).

“For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD” (Je. 2:22).

“For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes” (Je. 16:17).

“And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face” (Ho. 7:2).

“For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right” (Amos 5:12).

(1:48) **Fig Tree—Worship:** in Palestine the fig tree stood for peace, security, rest, and worship (see 1 K. 4:25; Mi. 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.

3 (1:49) **Confession—Decision:** Nathanael's conviction. He confessed that Jesus was the Rabbi (Prophet), the Son of God, the King of Israel. Note two things.

a. How readily Nathanael confessed Jesus as His Lord.

“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven” (Mt. 10:32).

“Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God” (Lu. 12:8).

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Ro. 10:9).

“Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also” (1 Jn. 2:23).

“Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God” (1 Jn. 4:15).

b. How clearly Nathanael grasped who Jesus was.

- 1) He was “Rabbi,” the great Teacher or Prophet promised to Israel (see note—Lu. 3:38 for discussion).
- 2) He was the Son of God (see notes—Jn. 1:1–2; 1:34 for discussion).
- 3) He was the King of Israel (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Jn. 1:49 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(1:49) **Jesus Christ, King of Israel:** Jesus was declared to be the Messianic King. God had given to David and his seed (the Messiah) the promise of eternal government (2 S. 7:12; Ps. 39:3f; 132:11).

Note how often Jesus was called the son of David. (see Mt. 12:23; 15:22; 20:30–31; 21:9, 15; Ac. 2:29–36; Ro. 1:3; 2 Ti. 2:8; Re. 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 center of universal rule. He would, under God, conquer the world and center 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 (see DEEPER STUDY #2—Mt. 1:18; DEEPER STUDY #2—3:11; notes—11:1–6; 11:2–3; DEEPER STUDY #1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY #2—11:6; note—Lu. 7:21. Referring to these notes

will show what the Jewish concept of the Messiah was.) (See note, *Jesus, Davidic Heir—* Lu. 3:24–31 for more discussion.)

J. Jesus the Son of Man, God’s Mediator: The Witness of Jesus Himself, 1:50–51

1. **The response of Jesus to Nathanael (see vv.46–49)** Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under
2. **Jesus is the revelation of God: The One who reveals greater things** the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.
3. **Jesus is the mediator: The One who opens the doors of heaven** 51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven
4. **Jesus is the Son of Man: The pattern, the perfect representative of man** open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

J. Jesus the Son of Man, God’s Mediator: The Witness of Jesus Himself, 1:50–51

(1:50–51) **Introduction:** Jesus bore witness to Himself. He clearly declared who He is.

1. The response of Jesus to Nathanael (see vv.46–49).
2. Jesus is the revelation of God: the One who reveals greater things (v.50).
3. Jesus is the mediator: the One who opens the doors of heaven (v.51).
4. Jesus is the Son of Man: the pattern, the perfect representative of man (v.51).

1 (1:50) **Nathanael:** Nathanael’s experience with Jesus (vv.46–49) was the background for what Jesus said in this passage.

2 (1:50) **Jesus Christ, Revelation of God:** Jesus Christ is the revelation of God, the One who reveals greater things. Note two points.

a. 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.

“Verily, I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you” (Mt. 17:20).

“Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth” (Mk. 9:23).

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (Jn. 10:10).

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” (Ro. 11:33).

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Co. 2:9).

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Ep. 3:17–19).

b. It is Jesus Himself who is the revelation of God; therefore, it is Jesus who reveals the “greater things” of life. (See note—Jn. 14:6 for more discussion.)

1) Jesus Christ is the embodiment of revelation.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God” (Jn. 1:1–2).

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (Jn. 14:6).

“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9).

2) Jesus Christ is the communicator of revelation.

“In him was life; and the life was the light of men” (Jn. 1:4; cp. Jn. 1:1–3).

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:14).

“Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works” (Jn. 14:9–10).

3) Jesus Christ is the liberator of revelation.

“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (Jn. 8:31–32).

“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (Jn. 10:10).

3 (1:51) Jesus Christ, Mediator: Jesus Christ is the mediator between God and man. This is seen in the picture Jesus painted by the words, “Ye shall see *heaven open*, and the angels of God *ascending* and descending upon the Son of man” (v.51).

This is a picture of Jacob’s ladder (Ge. 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.

4 (1:51) Jesus Christ, 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*.

a. Jesus Christ is the Ideal Man: the *Representative Man*, the *Perfect Man*, the *Pattern*, the *embodiment* of everything a man ought to be (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—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 (cp. Jn. 1:14; Col. 2:9–10; He. 1:3).

b. Jesus Christ is the *Ideal Servant* of man. The term *Ideal Servant* stresses Jesus' sympathy for the poor, the brokenhearted, the captives, the blind, the bruised, the outcasts, the bereaved (cp. Lu. 4:18). Jesus is the pattern, the model, the perfect example of concern and caring. He served other people just like every man ought to serve other people.

Jesus called Himself "the Son of Man" about eighty times. It was His favorite 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 Co. 15:45–47. Both references picture Jesus as *the Representative Man, the Ideal Man*, in God's plan for world history.

"And Jesus saith unto him, the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Mt. 8:20).

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Mt. 9:6).

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:28).

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Mt. 24:27).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk. 8:38).

"Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Lu. 18:8).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lu. 19:10).

“For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man” (Jn. 5:26–27).

“Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you” (Jn. 6:53).

“And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified” (Jn. 12:23).

“Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him” (Jn. 13:31–32).

“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?... And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mt. 16:13, 16).

“And [Stephen] said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God” (Ac. 7:56).

“And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks [churches]; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle” (Re. 1:12–13).¹

¹ Leadership Ministries Worldwide. (2004). [*The Gospel according to John*](#) (pp. 28–45). Leadership Ministries Worldwide.