

Come and See!

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 15 July 2018

Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[0 : 0 0] Well, if we could, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, this morning, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, and the Gospel according to John, the Gospel according to John, chapter 1, page 1069 in the Pew Bible, and if we take as our text, the words of verses 45 and 46. John 1 at verse 45. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, we have found him of whom Moses and the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Nathanael said to him, can anything good come out of Nazareth? Philip said to him, come and see. Philip said to him, come and see.

I'm sure you've often said to yourself, there's not much in a week. I often say that to myself on a Sunday morning. It seems to go from one week to the next. Because, well, you're in church on Sunday, and then it's Monday again. And then in no time at all, it's Friday, and then we're back to the weekend. And it doesn't take long for the weekend to pass, and it's Sunday morning, and then Monday morning is looming again. Unless, of course, you're retired or you're on holiday. But even when you're retired or when you're on holiday, you often say, well, there's not much in a week there either.

Time passes so quickly. One week just seems to roll into the next week. But, you know, on a Sunday morning, at the beginning of a new week, do you ever stop and wonder to yourself, well, what will this week hold for me? I'm sure we've all made plans for the week ahead, where we all have an idea of what we hope to be doing. There's nothing wrong with that unless you're doing it in the pew.

But, you know, as we're reminded so often, there are many things which we don't plan for. And we often say it, we don't know what a day nor an hour will bring in our life. We don't know what's around the corner for us. And there are many things that we just can't put into our diary.

And as you know too well, a lot can change in our homes and in our families and in our experiences from one Sunday to the next. There's not much in a week, but a lot can happen in a week.

[2 : 3 6] And, you know, that's what John reminds us in the opening chapter of his gospel. He reminds us that there's not much in a week, but a lot can happen in a week. Because when John introduces us to Jesus, he tells us in the opening verses, he tells us that Jesus is the eternal Son of God who existed out with time. He was the Word who was in the beginning with God. And yet by verse 14, John is telling us that he became flesh and he dwelt among us. And then in this opening chapter, John tells us that the eternal Son of God, he tells us what he did within the time frame of one week.

Because John, he gives to us this day-by-day account of the first week of Jesus's ministry. And on day one, you can read in verse 19 that the Jews, they sent priests and Levites to ask John the Baptist if he was the Christ. But John the Baptist confessed, I am not the Christ. Then on day two, we read in verse 29, it says, the next day he saw Jesus coming towards him and said, behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Then on day three, we read in verse 35, the next day again, John was standing with two of his disciples and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, behold, the Lamb of God. And then on day four of Jesus's ministry, we read in verse 43, the next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, follow me. We don't know what happened on day five or day six. It was probably the Sabbath.

But then on day seven, we read at the beginning of chapter two and verse one, on the third day, there was a wedding at Canaan, Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. It was the third day after day four, which is day seven. And it was the end. That was the end of the first week of Jesus's ministry. And with this, John is reminding us at the outset of his gospel that there's not much in a week, but a lot can happen in a week.

And what happened in that first week of Jesus's ministry was wonderful because in this chapter, we see different people finding Jesus, following Jesus, and fearing Jesus.

There's different people all the time. They're finding Jesus, following Jesus, and fearing Jesus. But there's one person in particular that I'd like us to focus upon this morning. And that's this man called Nathaniel. Because Nathaniel was like many others in this chapter who could be described as finding Jesus, following Jesus, and fearing Jesus. And of course, I hope that everyone here today can be described as finding Jesus, following Jesus, and fearing Jesus. So there are three headings, finding Jesus, following Jesus, and fearing Jesus.

[5 : 38] So we look first of all at finding Jesus. Finding Jesus. Look at verse 43. It says, The next day, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, follow me. Now, Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathaniel 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. Nathaniel said to him, Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Philip said to him, Come and see.

So John tells us on day four of the first week of Jesus's ministry, Jesus decides to go to Galilee. And as it always was with Jesus, his decisions, his decisions were made with a specific plan and purpose in mind.

And in this case, Jesus's decision to go to Galilee was to find Philip. And when Jesus found a lost Philip, Jesus said those precious words to him at the end of verse 43, Follow me. Follow me. Follow me. And then John tells us that Philip was from the same fishing community as Andrew and Andrew's brother, Peter.

And John, he mentions Andrew and Peter because Jesus has already found them and they're already following Jesus. But, you know, what we ought to note is that there's a pattern with Andrew and Philip.

Because when Jesus found Andrew and Philip, they followed Jesus. But they also wanted to find others so that more would follow Jesus.

[7 : 16] And that's what we see with Andrew. Jesus found Andrew. Andrew followed Jesus. But Andrew went to find Peter so that Peter would also follow Jesus.

Look at verse 40 to explain what I mean. It says, Philip. Philip followed Jesus.

But then Philip went to find Nathaniel so that Nathaniel would also follow Jesus. And what we ought to see is that when Jesus found both Andrew and Philip, they followed Jesus.

But they went to find others so that more would follow Jesus. And, you know, this should remind us that everyone who comes to follow Jesus, they find Jesus in different ways.

Because some are like Andrew and Philip. Because some are like Andrew and Philip, where Jesus finds them where they are and they follow him. Others are like Peter and Nathaniel.

[8 : 38] And they're introduced to Jesus by someone else. Everyone who comes to follow Jesus finds Jesus in different ways. And, you know, it was J.C. Ryle who said, All true Christians are led by one spirit.

They're washed in one blood. They serve one Lord. They lean on one Saviour. They believe one truth. They walk by one general rule. But not all are converted in one and the same manner.

Everyone who comes to follow Jesus, they find Jesus in different ways. Nobody, no two people have the same conversion story. And, you know, that's what we see here.

Jesus found Andrew, but Andrew introduced his brother Peter to Jesus. Jesus found Philip, but Philip introduced his friend Nathaniel to Jesus.

They all came to follow Jesus, but they all found Jesus in different ways. But, you know, it's safe to say, looking at this passage, if Jesus had never found Andrew and Philip, then Peter and Nathaniel would never have been introduced to Jesus.

[9 : 55] And, you know, it should make us realise that Jesus has a plan and a purpose for our lives. Because in finding Andrew and then finding Philip, Jesus had a plan and a purpose for them to find Peter and to find Nathaniel.

So that they too would introduce Peter and Nathaniel to Jesus. And, you know, the same is true of me and you. Jesus has found us as Christians.

However he found us, Jesus has found us, forgiven us, saved us, delivered us, redeemed us, washed us, and made us his. Jesus has found us, and he has placed us in our family, and he has given to us our friends, and our work colleagues, and our neighbours, and it's all according to his plan, and his purpose.

He has sovereignly put us where we are, for a plan, his plan and purpose. Because his plan and purpose is for us to introduce our family, our friends, our neighbours, and our work colleagues to Jesus.

That's his plan and purpose. His plan and purpose for us is that we get alongside our family, that we strengthen our friendships, that we get to know those in our community, that we spend time with our work colleagues in order to introduce them to Jesus.

[11 : 20] And of course that takes time, that takes effort, that takes commitment, and it will cost us. It will cost us to introduce someone to Jesus.

But you know, this is the master's plan and purpose. This is what we've been called to do as Christians. We are to show forth the praises of him who hath called us from darkness into his marvellous light.

And you know, that's what we see Andrew and Philip doing. Andrew went to his brother, Peter, and he said, we have found the Messiah. And then he brought him to Jesus.

Philip went to his friend, Nathanael, and said, we have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, this Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And you know, this is what I love.

Both Andrew and Philip, they introduced those closest to them to the Saviour. They introduced those whom they loved to the Saviour. But they didn't introduce him, this person, they didn't introduce them to any Jesus.

[12 : 32] They didn't introduce them to the Saviour of their imagination. No, the Saviour who found them, the Saviour they followed, and the Saviour they wanted others to find and follow.

He was the Saviour of Scripture. Andrew and Philip didn't present any other Saviour to their family, friends, neighbours, or work colleagues, but the Saviour found in Scripture.

Because Andrew, he went to his brother Peter and said, we have found the Messiah, the one promised in Scripture. Philip went to his friend Nathaniel and said, we have found him of whom Moses in the law, the first five books of the Bible, and also the prophets.

He was written about in these books. We have found him, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. They didn't present any other Saviour but the Saviour that was promised in Scripture.

Andrew said that it was Jesus, the promised Messiah. He was the Christ. He was the King and the Saviour of his people. And Philip, Philip said that Jesus was the one whom Moses referred to in the law.

[13 : 41] Jesus was the priest, the priest who came to forgive sin, to secure redemption, to satisfy the divine justice of a holy God. That's why when you read John the Baptist, John the Baptist looks at Jesus and the first thing he says is, behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

John saw a priest when he looked at Jesus. A priest who would offer himself at the cross of Calvary as the Lamb of God in order to reconcile sinners to a holy God.

But you know, the Saviour of Scripture, he was not only the king, he's not only the priest, we're also told he's a prophet. He's the one whom the prophets revealed as the Saviour who would be born in Bethlehem but live in Nazareth.

And you know, what we have to notice is that Andrew and Philip, they didn't present to their family, their friends, their neighbours, their work colleagues, they didn't present any other Saviour but the Saviour of Scripture.

They presented Jesus Christ as he is revealed to us in the Bible as the prophet, priest and king. And this is what's so wonderful because where else are you going to find Jesus but in the Bible?

[15 : 02] Where else are you going to find this prophet, priest and king but in the Bible? And for you as someone who's sitting here unconverted today, if you want to find Jesus then you will find him in the Bible.

If you want to find this prophet, priest and king then you will find him in the Bible. If you want to find the Saviour of Scripture not the Saviour of your imagination then you will find this Saviour in the Bible.

And this might be an obvious point to make but I believe it's a necessary one. Because my unconverted friend here today, in order to find Jesus in the Bible you have to seek Jesus in the Bible.

Don't expect to find Jesus if you're not seeking him. Don't expect to be saved if you're not asking to be saved. Don't expect forgiveness if you're not asking for forgiveness.

My friend, in order to find Jesus you have to seek him. He is there to be found in the Bible but you must seek him with all your heart.

[16 : 21] In order to find Jesus you have to seek him. And so the first thing we see in this passage is finding Jesus. Finding Jesus. But secondly we see following Jesus.

Following Jesus. It says in verse 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.

Nathanael said to him can anything good come out of Nazareth? Philip said to him come and see. We said earlier that Jesus found Philip.

Philip followed Jesus. But then Philip went to find Nathanael so that Nathanael would also follow Jesus. But when Philip went to find Nathanael in order to introduce him to the saviour found in scripture the reaction Philip received it probably wasn't what he expected.

Because with Philip he had just found Jesus. There was an excitement. there was this enthusiasm. He had found the promised saviour who is revealed in scripture and with Philip there's this new found passion to reach the lost those closest to him in his family.

[17 : 42] He wants to tell them all about Jesus. But when Philip goes to find his friend Nathanael and tell him that this saviour is actually Joseph the son of Joseph he's Jesus of Nazareth.

When Philip tells Nathanael that Philip is met with some resistance. There's a wall put up straight away and there's rejection as to the authority and the integrity of Philip's claim.

Because Nathanael he questions Philip can anything good come out of Nazareth? Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Now Nathanael he didn't ask that question without good reason because Nazareth was a place that was despised by many of the Jews.

Nazareth was the location of a Roman army garrison. Nazareth was always this constant reminder that Israel was under the rule and authority of the Roman Empire.

But more than that because Nazareth was a holding for all these Roman soldiers it was a very ungodly city. Nazareth was a place where morality was minimal and religion was nominal.

[18 : 54] And so for a Jew anyone who came from Nazareth they were known as a troublemaker and the last person that Nathanael thought would ever come from Nazareth was the saviour who's promised in scripture and maybe for Philip his friend's question had caught him by surprise as we said Philip he's full of excitement he's full of enthusiasm he's just found Jesus but then to have his statement questioned and his saviour undermined it would have been a hard blow to take but the truth is when we tell people about Jesus and when we explain to them that Jesus is the saviour of sinners we expect them to agree with us we expect people to see what we see we expect them to come and follow Jesus too I mean it's obvious isn't it you're thinking well why what's holding you back why don't you just come but more often than not when we introduce someone to

Jesus or when we speak to them about the gospel or when we address issues of sin or their soul it's met with resistance it's met with rejection it's met by a refusal and like Nathaniel's question there may be many things said there may be many questions posed some may even be aggressive or antagonistic towards Jesus and the gospel but you know I always think it's good for us to have these conversations conversations with people that we understand where people are at and what they're thinking about and what reservations they have about committing their life to Jesus Christ it's good for us to have conversations with people about Jesus because if we don't how will we ever know what's on their heart and what's in their mind and you know if we come across resistance like Philip did

I often come across resistance far too many of you give me resistance but you know it shouldn't put us off that shouldn't make us stay quiet that shouldn't cause us to hide our Christianity not at all because when it comes to Christ and Christianity it's almost always met with resistance at first the wall always goes up first you know you come to the opening verses of this chapter we're told that Jesus he came to his own people and even his own people they didn't receive him there was resistance there was rejection there was refusal that's what Philip encountered Nathaniel put up resistance to the truth there was rejection of the truth there was even refusal to believe the truth but you know what I love about Philip it's that he didn't give up on his friend he didn't say okay I'll leave you to it he persisted he didn't

Philip didn't stop at the first hurdle Philip might not have had answers to all Nathaniel's questions he might not have been able to explain all the finer points of theology Philip may not even have had lots of information but he certainly had an invitation because Philip came to his friend Nathaniel and he gave to him the greatest invitation come and see come and see and what Philip was saying to Nathaniel was if you don't believe me come and see don't just take my word for it come and see for yourself come and see for yourself Philip he didn't try and argue the point with Nathaniel he didn't get into a debate with Nathaniel he didn't come out with lots of information for Nathaniel all Philip could give to Nathaniel was this simple invitation come and see come and see and when

Nathaniel received the invitation to come and see Jesus he came and when Nathaniel found Jesus Nathaniel began to follow Jesus but you know what's interesting about the gospel message that we have presented to us in the Bible is that there are these two themes that run side by side one is the invitation come and see the other is the instruction follow me and the two run side by side the invitation come and see the instruction follow me and we see both the invitation and the instruction in this passage and in many other gospel passages if we go a couple of chapters on chapter 4 when Jesus met with a woman of Samaria and Jesus revealed to this woman that her greatest need in life was not another husband for her happiness but a savior for her sin and when she came to know

[24 : 20] Jesus she went into her local village and she said to people come see a man who told me all things that I ever knew is not this the Christ and even at the empty tomb of Jesus an angel he issued the invitation to the woman who came to look for the body of Jesus the angel said to the woman he is not here for he is risen as he said come see where the Lord lay again and again the gospel it gives this invitation to come and see Jesus to come and see the savior who is revealed in scripture that's the invitation that the gospel gives us and needless to say many of you if not all of you you've heard it you've heard this invitation to come and see Jesus and in some measure you have seen Jesus you have encountered the savior revealed to you in scripture you have come face to face with the gospel of

Jesus Christ on numerous occasions but let's be honest here let's be honest for a moment it's not the invitation that's an issue for you you like the invitation you enjoy the invitation you like receiving the invitation but what's the issue is the instruction follow me that's the issue the issue is the instruction that Jesus gives to you when you hear the invitation follow me and you know that's what we read about time and time again in the gospels because when Jesus when he met Simon Peter and Andrew when they were casting a net into the sea Jesus said to them follow me and I will make you fishers of men and they left their nets and followed him James and John they were just the same they were mending their nets Jesus said to them follow me and they left their boat and followed him when Jesus found Philip as we read

Jesus said to him follow me Philip followed him when Jesus met Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth Jesus said to him follow me Matthew followed him my friend my friend they followed him they followed Jesus but for you it's not the invitation to come to Jesus that's the problem the issue is the instruction you don't like the instruction that Jesus gives because the instruction Jesus gives to you today is follow me follow me but in order to follow Jesus you know that it involves commitment you know that it involves denying self you know that it involves following instruction because that's what Jesus says if anyone will come after me let him deny himself take up his cross and follow me my friend finding

Jesus and following Jesus it involves fearing Jesus it involves fearing Jesus and that was the case for Nathaniel because as we said Nathaniel could be described as finding Jesus following Jesus and fearing Jesus and that's what I want us to consider lastly fearing Jesus finding Jesus following Jesus and fearing Jesus look at verse 47 Jesus saw Nathaniel coming towards him and said of him behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no deceit Nathaniel 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 Nathaniel answered him Rabbi you are the son of God you are the king of Israel when

Nathaniel responded to Philip's invitation to come and see Jesus. Nathaniel discovered that Jesus knew more about him than he ever cared to realize because the first thing Jesus reveals is that he knew where Nathaniel was from. Jesus knew that Nathaniel wasn't from the ungodly city of Nazareth like he was. Jesus knew that Nathaniel was from Cana in Galilee. Nathaniel was of good stock; he was from a good place. That's why Jesus makes that little comment: "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no deceit or no guile." And with that comment, Nathaniel is immediately aware that Jesus knows where he's from and he also knows what he said about Jesus, which is why Nathaniel responds by asking Jesus, "How do you know me?" and Jesus says that he not only knew where Nathaniel was from but he also knew where

[29 : 33] Nathaniel was at because Jesus says before Philip called you before Philip spoke to you before Philip introduced you to me and invited you to come and follow me. I saw you. I saw you when you were under the fig tree. I saw you and you know it should make us realize that well, there's no such thing as chance because as we said earlier, Jesus had a plan and a purpose for going into Galilee. Jesus found and Jesus followed. Jesus then Philip went to find Nathanael so that Nathanael would also follow Jesus and that's what's happening here. Jesus had a plan and a purpose in order to meet with this man Nathanael and Jesus knew everything about him. Jesus knew where Nathanael was from. Jesus knew where Nathanael was at and by his confession, by Nathanael's confession, Jesus knew where

Nathanael was going because when Nathanael discovered that Jesus of Nazareth is the saviour promised in scripture, he responds to Jesus by saying, "Rabbi, you are the son of God, you are the king of Israel." When Nathanael discovered that Jesus knew everything about him, Nathanael feared Jesus; he feared him. He submitted his life to him. Nathanael showed Jesus the respect and the reverence he deserved and as we said, finding Jesus and following Jesus it involves fearing Jesus. Jesus knew everything about Nathanael; he knew where Nathanael was from, he knew where Nathanael was at and by his confession, Jesus knew where Nathanael was going and you know the same is true for you, the same is true for you.

Jesus knows everything about you, everything about you. He knows where you're from, where you were born, the date of your birth, where you grew up, your home, your parents. He knows where you're from, he knows everything about you today, he knows where you're at, he knows where you're at spiritually, he knows if you're rejecting him, he knows if you're seeking him, he knows if you're interested, he knows if you don't care at all. Jesus knows where you're from, Jesus knows where you're at and Jesus knows where you're going. Jesus knows where you're going and for many of you, for all of us, in fact we all know where we're going, we don't have to wait until the day of judgment for that, anyone who's not following.

Jesus knows where they're going, anyone who's following Jesus knows to where they're going, we all know where we're going. Jesus knows where we're from, where we're going, where we're going and that's the big question, my friend, where are we going, where are you going, where are you going because finding Jesus and following Jesus it involves fearing Jesus and you know it was Jesus who said, "Do not fear those who are able to kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both body and soul in hell." Fear him, my friend. Jesus knows where you're from, he knows where you're at and he knows where you're going, he knows everything about you but my friend, the question is, where are you going, are you going to follow this Jesus, are you going to respond to the call today and come and follow him, to deny self, take up your cross and follow him.

I hope that each and every one of us will be able to be described like Nathaniel Nathaniel as someone finding Jesus following Jesus and fearing Jesus the invitation is out there the word of God is saying to you come come and see come and see may the Lord bless these thoughts to us let us pray oh Lord our gracious God we give thanks that the invitation of the gospel is full and free and help us Lord we pray or to hear the invitation to come and see this wonderful saviour a saviour who does in us and for us exceedingly abundantly above all more than we could ask or even think help us Lord if we're seeking that we might find help us Lord if we're following that we might keep following and keep looking to Jesus that each and every one of us would fear this Jesus we would see him as the prophet priest and king the one who rules and overrules in all things the one who knows us so intimately so personally and yet desires for us to come and know him because to know him is life eternal bless us Lord and we pray speak to us we ask leave us not to ourselves but go before us for Jesus sake

[35 : 59] Amen we're going to bring our service to a conclusion by singing the words of Psalm 66 Psalm 66 in the Scottish Psalter page 299 Psalm 66 we're singing from the beginning down to the verse marked 5 and if you look at Psalm 100 these opening verses they're very very similar to Psalm 100 and it's almost if you look at it in the original language it's almost as if it's just been lifted out of it so Psalm 66 from the beginning all lands to God in joyful sounds aloft your voices raise sing forth the honour of his name and glorious make his praise down to the verse marked 5 command the works that God hath wrought with admiration see and working to the sons of men most terrible is he these verses of Psalm 66 to God's praise

O land to God in joyful sounds and of your voices raise say for the honour of his name and glorious make his praise say unto all the devil in all thy works art thou through thy clut power thy foes to thee shall be constrained to bow on the earth shall worship thee they shall thy praise proclaim proclaim in songs they shall sing cheerfully unto thy holy name come on the words that God hath wrought with admiration see that the nations see shall see it's working to the sons of men most terrible is he the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore

Amen Amen