



## Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

### Look Into Jesus January 16-18<sup>th</sup> 2021

#### John 1:43-51

<sup>43</sup> *The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."*

<sup>44</sup> *Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. <sup>45</sup> Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."*

<sup>46</sup> *"Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.*

*"Come and see," said Philip.*

<sup>47</sup> *When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit."*

<sup>48</sup> *"How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.*

*Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."*

<sup>49</sup> *Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel."*

<sup>50</sup> *Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that." <sup>51</sup> He then added, "Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."*

1. What are you skeptical about?

Answers will vary.

If discussion is slow, remember the two definitions for skeptical.

The modern definition means you doubt something.

You might doubt:

- a facebook article you read
- someone who claims to disprove the Bible

- the claims of a bad magician

The older definition means you want to research something.

You might want to research:

- how the COVID vaccine is affecting those who took it
- an investment opportunity that suggests good returns
- two Bible passages that *seem* to contradict one another

2. What lessons can you learn about dealing with skeptical people from this lesson?

Philip's invitation is a fabulous answer to someone who is skeptical about Jesus. "Come and see." (v. 46)

We don't want to shame or punish someone who is asking questions about Jesus. In a sense they are asking to be exposed to God's Word, the only thing that can create faith.

On the other hand, we don't need to know every single answer. It's ok, to say, "I don't know." or "I can't think of a good way to say that." That doesn't mean we can't invite them to check it out for themselves. We may say "Come and see." by inviting someone to church, connecting them with a pastor, or providing them with a good book or online resource that addresses their question.

3. What evidence do you see in this story that Jesus can look into human hearts? What evidence can you think of from the rest of the Bible?

In this story:

- He knows Nathanael has no deceit before they meet. (v. 47)
- He knows Nathanael was sitting under a fig tree. (v. 48)
- He knows Nathanael will see greater miracles. (v. 50)

In the rest of the Bible:

- He knew all about the Samaritan woman (John 4:29)
- Peter says that Jesus knows all things (John 21:17)
- Jesus could read the hearts of his enemies (Matthew 22:18)

4. Jesus knows everything. What are some ways that truth might be unsettling? What are some ways it might be comforting?

Unsettling: Jesus knows my sins.

- Jesus knows what I've done in the past.
- Jesus knows my heart is not always pure now.

- Jesus knows my ambitions for the future can be selfish.
- Comforting: Jesus knows me personally.
- He knows exactly what I need. (Matthew 6:31-34)
  - He knows what stressors I can need. (2 Cor. 12:7-10)
  - He knows my struggles and can relate to them. (Heb. 7:26)

5. Jesus told Nathanael he would see greater things (v.50). List 5 great things Jesus' disciples saw and rank them from 1-5 with 1 being the greatest.

Make sure the crucifixion and resurrection get on the list. I'll leave the ranking to you.

Some examples:

- Jesus turned water into wine. (John 2:1-11)
- Jesus healed a young boy. (John 4:46-54)
- Jesus made an invalid walk. (John 5:1-18)
- Jesus fed 5000 men. (John 6:5-14)
- Jesus walked on water. (John 6:16-21)
- Jesus made the blind see. (John 9:1-7)
- Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. (John 11)
- Jesus died for the sins of the world. (John 19)
- Jesus rose from the dead. (John 20)
- Jesus gave a miraculous catch of fish. (John 21:11)
- Jesus ascended into heaven. (Acts 1)

That's almost exclusively from John. Your answers will vary.

6. List 5 great blessings you have seen from Jesus. Rank them from 1-5 with 1 being the greatest.

Make sure you include the fact that he created faith in your heart.

- He gave you life. (Psalm 139:13)
- He gave you new life at baptism. (Mark 16:16)
- He put faith in your heart. (Romans 10:17)
- He gives you physical blessings. (Hebrews 1:3)
- He protects you. (Psalm 91:9-10)

7. Saving faith comes from hearing the gospel. How did Jesus present the gospel in this story? How did Philip?

Jesus promised that Nathanael would see greater things, hinting at

the greatest thing—forgiveness of the world through his own death and resurrection. Jesus then put that truth into terms that Nathanael would understand by referencing Jacob's vision (v. 51, and Genesis 28). Nathanael would know from that allusion that Jesus was promising to connect him to God. That is the very heart of the gospel.

Philip presented the gospel, not by an eloquent speech or lengthy explanation, but by inviting Nathanael to come and see Jesus.

Perhaps we can do the same—not making a full explanation but inviting someone to hear about Jesus at church or in the Bible.

Then let Jesus do the preaching with his faith-creating word.

8. A long-time believer, and a skeptical worship visitor will both benefit from looking more into Jesus. In what ways will their benefit be similar? In what ways will their benefit be different?

Same:

- Both can learn new things about Jesus.
- Both can find relief for their sins.
- Both can hear God's law for their life.

Different:

- A long-time believer may be doing more reviewing while the visitor may hear it for the first time.
- A long-time believer may readily admit his sins while a visitor may raise a few more objections if he's new to hearing God's law.
- A long-time believer may be familiar with words used about Jesus like *grace* and *faith* and *righteousness*, while the visitor may require a little more explanation.

9. If you had to explain to a friend in one minute or less, why you continue to learn about Jesus, how would you do it?

Answers will vary.

If you're stuck, try to put into words, what good thing you have in your life that you'd be missing if you didn't have Jesus.