

Nathaniel – “I saw you”

RICHARD BROWN



John 1:43-50 (NIV)

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, “Follow me.” ⁴⁴ Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. ⁴⁵ 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.”

⁴⁶ “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked. “Come and see,” said Philip.



John 1:43-50 (NIV)

⁴⁷ When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, “Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.” ⁴⁸ “How do you know me?” Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, “I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.”

⁴⁹ Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel.”



John 1:43-50 (NIV)

⁵⁰ Jesus said, “You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that.” ⁵¹ 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”



Nathaniel – “I saw you”

1. Nathaniel the Cynic?
2. Philip the Encourager
3. Jesus the Word of God



Nathaniel the Cynic?

- Nathaniel replies *“Can anything good come from Nazareth”*
 - Judeans often viewed the Galileans with contempt – they mixed with foreigners, they had strange accents, lax in following religious rituals
 - Nazareth was seemingly unimportant. It is not mentioned in the OT.





Nathaniel the Cynic?

- John 7:41-42 - *“How can the Messiah come from Galilee? ⁴² Does not Scripture say that the Messiah will come from David’s descendants and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?”*
- Nathaniel simply writes off the possibility that Jesus could be the Messiah.





Nathaniel the Cynic?

- QUESTION:
 - Am I quick to dismiss something that maybe God is actually at work in?
 - How could this possibly be God's will?
 - How can that possibly work under these circumstances?
 - This is simply not scriptural.
 - Sorry, I'm just not bought into this!!!





Philip the Encourager

- Philip's response to Nathaniel:
 - *"Come and see... [I will come with you]"*
- Sometimes we have to travel with a person before their eyes can be opened.





Philip the Encourager

- What if Philip had given up trying to encourage Nathaniel?
- QUESTION:
 - Who has helped you become the person you are today?
Who has been your Philip?
 - Who have you helped to become all that they could be in God?
Who have you been a Philip to?





Jesus the Word of God

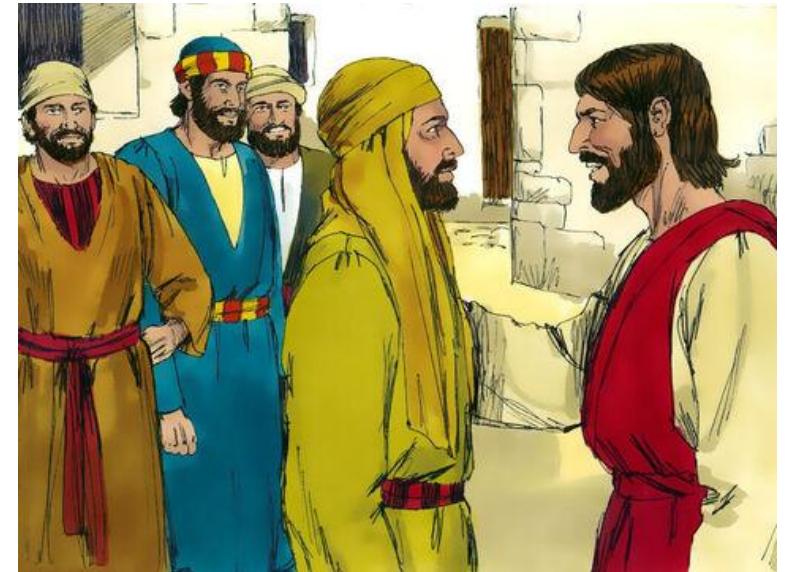
- Jesus says to Nathaniel: *“Here is a man in whom there is no deceit”*
 - If Jesus declares that Nathaniel was a good man, we can be sure that he was.
- Nathaniel replies: *“How do you know me?”*
- Jesus says: *“I saw you...”*





Jesus the Word of God

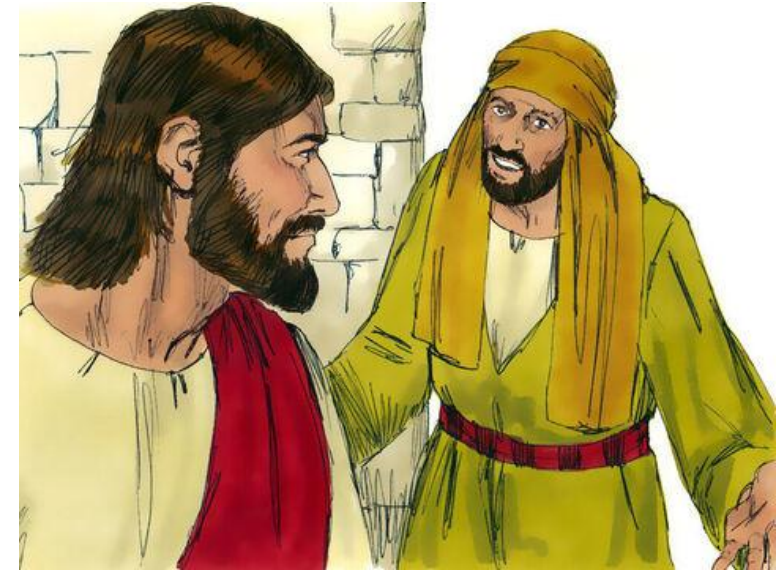
- Jesus encourages Nathaniel by bringing God's word
- Nathaniel in his pain, needed to be seen. *"I saw you..."*
- God sees each one of us. He knows our hurts, our pains, our fears, our doubts, and he says: *"I see you..."*





Jesus the Word of God

- We can be Jesus to others around us
 - You've been on my heart recently
 - I was praying for you the other day...
 - *"I saw you..."*





Summary

- Who are you in today's story?
 - Perhaps you feel that you're not part of this story at all – it's all new? Jesus sees you.
 - Are you going through difficulties and feel alone? If so then let someone in.
 - Do you have a friend, colleague or loved one who you know is struggling? If so then come alongside them. If possible take them to Jesus.
 - Has God laid on your heart someone close to you? Have the confidence to share with that person what God has said to you.
- Oh that we may *"see people"*, really see them.