

*“Finding Jesus; Found by Jesus”*

February 3, 2013

Text: John 1:43-45

**The day that a person becomes born again, is the best day of his life—better than his original birth-day, better than any day on which he might achieve his highest goals/accomplishments.**

Before that day he was spiritually dead/lifeless, spiritually blind, and spiritually ensnared/enslaved by sin.

Everything he did, even things he considered good things, were done for reasons that were wrong, because they did not glorify his Creator.

W/o even realizing it, he lived at odds w/ God, seeking his own will—not God’s—and seeking vainly to live his own life, independent from God.

His entire life was an unending accumulation of offenses, insults, & guilt against God, against God’s will, and against God’s glory.

At the moment of his conversion, all that was swept away, never to be recalled again.

As the prophet Isaiah put it=> *“Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back”* (Isa 38:17).

The condemnation of the Law, which once hung over his head was forever lifted off, and taken away.

Not only have this person's past spiritual problems been resolved,  
a whole new future has opened up before him, as he  
receives new birth.

He has begun to live in the light of God's grace, rather than  
the oppressive darkness of sin's corruption/death.

Spiritual freedom has replaced his enslavement to sin  
because the cross of X has broken the back of sin.

Although it's still his enemy, it's a crippled enemy.

His future will never again be what his past once was.

Although he will stumble from time to time, he'll  
never again love his sin as he did before.

He no longer has to dread the terrifying specter of hell.

He anticipates spending eternity in the delights his Savior's  
presence, of heaven & of a personal holiness that will  
make him fit for heaven.

He can sing that old Wesleyan hymn=>

Happy day, happy day,  
When Jesus washed my sins away!  
He taught me how to watch and pray,  
And live rejoicing every day.

**In today's text we will consider the conversion of Philip.**

From the H.S.'s p.o.v., we will read that Jesus "*found Philip.*"

From Philip's p.o.v., he will tell his friend Nathanael "*We have  
found Him [the Messiah].*"

As we will see, both descriptions of Philip's conversion are  
correct though the 1<sup>st</sup> one lies behind/within/beyond the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**\* Jesus Found Philip**

[John 1:43-44]=> *“The next day He [X] purposed to go forth into Galilee, and **He found Philip**. And Jesus said to him, ‘Follow Me.’ / Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter.”*

**This was “the next day” after Andrew & the Apostle John had met Jesus, spoken w/ Him, and come to believe in Him.**

Apparently, Andrew/John, a/w/a their brothers (Peter/James, respectively) now followed Jesus, crossed over the Jordan River with Him, and traveled west toward Galilee.

They may have gone around the north end of Lake Galilee.

That would have taken them thru Bethsaida (both Andrew & Peter’s—a/w/a Philip’s—hometown).

The name Bethsaida lit. translated is “his of fish,” but it had come to mean something like “Fishertown.”

This was prob. a little village that housed a number of fishermen, who made their living from the waters of the lake.

Whether/not it was here that Jesus met Philip we aren’t told.

But we get the impression from vs 43 that Jesus’ purpose in going to Galilee was (primarily/partly) to find Philip.

That He found him, because He had gone there looking for him.

**Philip would later become one of Jesus’ 12 Apostles.**

Jesus had looked-for/found Philip because God had chosen him, and had given him to Jesus, for that very purpose.

In the Upper Room on the last night of Jesus' life He

prayed to the Father=> *"I manifested Thy name to the men whom **Thou gavest Me** out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me, and they have kept Thy word"* (Jn 17:6).

If you are a believer, it's because Jesus is the Good Shepherd who has found you, one of the sheep given Him by God.

That was the point of Jesus' parable of the lost sheep=>

Luke 15=> *"What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it? / And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. / And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'"* (Lk 15:4-6).

The angels a/w/a X, rejoiced, when He found you (like a sheep lost in sin), & brought you back to be w/ Him.

Q: Isn't the lost sheep in that parable a Xn, who is already saved, but has wandered away from X?

A: No, he's one of God's elect, whom God has given to Jesus, but who hasn't yet believed in Him unto eternal life.

Jn 10 (Jesus)=> *"**My sheep** hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; / and **I give eternal life to them**, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. / My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand"*  
(10:27-29).

Philip was one of those lost sheep who would recognize Jesus' voice, because he had been claimed by the Father, & given to His Son, so that X could give him eternal life.

So are you! If Jesus has become your Shepherd/Savior.

In Lk 19, Jesus said=> *"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost"* (Lk 19:10).

Can you say w/ John Newton, "I once was lost, but now am found" because Jesus has found me?

**As X spoke to Philip, the power of the H.S. went to work on his heart, so he knew intuitively that everything X said was true, & that he could trust Him w/ his very soul.**

Jesus said, *"Follow Me,"* & Philip did so, w/o question, binding himself to Jesus as one of His disciples, one of His flock.

If God hadn't acted on Philip's heart, he never could/would have responded that way.

In Jn 6, Jesus will teach=> *"No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him"* (6:44).

In our own case too, the HS has borne witness of X to our hearts (15:26).

**Philip illustrates the unpredictable grace of God.**

In every list of the Apostles found in the Gospels, he always is the 5<sup>th</sup> one named—right after the 4 who formed the central core of the 12=> Peter/James/John/Andrew.

Jesus seems to have gone looking specifically for Philip, to find him.

And yet, as we examine Philip's life in the Gospels, he never seems to have become very important, either as a man of great faith, or as a man of spiritual insight=>

**In fact, it would be easy to characterize Philip as the “wrong man”;**

The man a head-hunter would never have recommended to X as a candidate for the Apostolate.

\* He came from the wrong city—Bethsaida.

In Mt 11, Jesus will pronounce a woe on that city for its

unbelief=> *“Woe to you, **Bethsaida!** For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. / Nevertheless I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you” (11:21-22).*

Yet in spite of the tendency of Bethsaida's residents not to believe, here was one Bethsaidan brimming w/ enthusiastic faith=> Philip.

2) He had no religious/family connections to bring him to faith in Jesus as Peter/James had, being brought to X by their brothers.

Philip would soon bring his friend Nathanael to Jesus, but no one brought him—X had to find Philip for Himself.

3) He had a Gk name rather than a Hb name, which always made southern Jews in Jerusalem suspicious of people like him.

They felt that it reflected a family looseness about  
compromise w/ the corrupt Gk culture—not just its  
language, but its depraved moral values as well.

Andrew was the only other Apostle w/ a Gk name.

- 4) Philip seems to have lacked a good understanding of who  
Jesus was—the Son of God, born in Bethlehem in  
fulfillment of Micah’s prophecy regarding Messiah  
(Mic 5:2).

When Philip tells his friend Nathanael about Jesus, he will  
describe Him as “*Jesus of Nazareth* [not Bethlehem],  
*the son of Joseph.*”

Joseph may have been Jesus’ legal guardian, but he  
wasn’t Jesus’ father—God was.

It’s true that Jesus hadn’t yet revealed these truths to him.

But Nathanael will declare Jesus to be the Son of  
God and the King of Israel w/o Jesus revealing  
these truths to him either.

Philip, on the other hand, doesn’t yet see that.

- 5) When Philip was tested by Jesus, he failed the test (Jn 6:4-7).

In Jn 6, Jesus will look at the great multitude following  
Him at Passover time, and He’ll ask Philip=>

“*Where are we to buy bread, that these may eat?*”

The correct answer was that they didn’t have the financial  
resources to feed all those people by the usual means;

So they needed God Himself to intervene and provide the bread, as He had provided manna in the wilderness.

Verse 6=> *“This He [X] was saying to test him [Philip]; for He Himself knew what He was intending to do.”*

Philip’s answer shows that Philip wasn’t even operating on the level of faith, trusting X to solve this dilemma=>

*“Philip answered Him, ‘Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.’”*

Philip looked the situation over, made some estimates, and did a few quick calculations.

Philip’s calculations proved it simply couldn’t be done.

6) Philip brought people to X at the wrong time.

In Jn 12, certain Gks came to him (prob. because of his Gk name) & said, *“Sir, we wish to see Jesus”* (12:21).

Philip/Andrew brought the matter to Jesus, who answered,

*“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be Glorified”* (12:23).

I.e., *“I’m on My way to be crucified. It’s too late for that now.”*

7) In the Upper Room, Philip made the wrong request of X=>

*“Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.’ / Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, ‘Show us the Father’? / Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me?’”* (Jn 14:8-10).

The only other Apostle to earn such direct reproof from X  
as that, was Peter.

Aren't you glad for Philip, whose life demonstrates that, even if  
all you do/are falls short, and is wrong, you can still be 1 of  
God's chosen, & Jesus will still search you out?

As you look at Philip's faith, you see how frail/weak/faulty  
one's faith can be, and yet God will still save his  
soul, based on that faith.

Philip didn't even understand as much about Jesus as  
Nathanael did (vs 49), and Philip's faith & spiritual  
awareness later proved to be minimal at best.

Yet, by God's grace, his heart was wide open to believe in  
Jesus the Messiah, whatever the truth was about Him,  
might be.

Attitude/faith (not depth of knowledge) are everything in  
salvation, and the case of Philip proves it.

J.C. Ryle=> "His heart was at present better than his head."

And the next thing we see of this good/open-hearted man is  
that he running off to tell Nathanael about Jesus.

**X loves the sheep given to Him by His Father, and He places a  
high value on each one—even those who, to outward  
appearance, don't have much to offer Him in return.**

He will form even the weakest of them into exemplary servants  
of God who will do great things in His name, for His  
Kingdom.

In Mt 19, X will tell the 12=> *“Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel”* (Mt 19:28).

Even Philip will be sitting on one of those thrones, ruling for X, & undoubtedly doing an admirable job of it, when Jesus has perfected him.

God, according to His own purposes, had chosen Philip to become one of the leaders in the church, & a ruler of one of the 12 tribes of Israel in the Millennial Kingdom.

**This text teaches us that, if we find the Savior, it will be because He has first found us.**

We have loved Him because He first loved us, and we found Him because He first found us, just as He did Philip.

Salvation is all of His grace, from our election in eternity past, to our repentance/faith, to our redemption, to our preservation and sanctification, to our ultimate glorification.

We have been saved 1<sup>st</sup> to last, by God’s grace.

Praise His name!

**\* Philip Found Jesus**

[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.’”*

**From Philip's perspective, he & the other 4 disciples had found Jesus, & discovered Him to be the Messiah.**

Salvation results from man's seeking/finding Jesus, the only One who can solve the cancerous sin problem in his heart.

Any Calvinism that makes believers mere passive recipients of God's grace, is a Calvinism gone awry.

- \* Jesus is the pearl of great price discovered by a merchant who sells all he has (including all his other pearls) in order to purchase it (Mt 13:45-46).
- \* Jesus is the treasure hidden in a field, for which a man sells all his possessions to purchase (Mt 13:44).
- \* Jesus is the priceless treasure that all who are wise search-for, find, and willingly make any sacrifice necessary, in order to acquire.

**Finding Jesus as one's Savior begins with a consciousness of one's urgent need for Him.**

Philip was conscious of his own need, which is why he felt Jesus fulfilled all the Messianic prophecies in the Law/Prophets, that he had been studying.

He/Nathanael had been reading the Law/Prophets, undoubtedly thinking to themselves, "I hope Messiah comes soon, because His people really need Him."

Then, looking into his own heart, Philip must have thought=> "My own soul needs Him—urgently."

I hope you ask yourself, Do I feel a need for Jesus as my Savior?

You'll never really seek Him, until you feel you need Him.  
It must begin w/ your realizing that sin is a deadly problem  
w/i your heart, that you cannot take care of it  
yourself.

Only Jesus can.

That only Jesus, the great Physician, can make you whole,  
spiritually.

**Philip also realized that Jesus was the great Messiah  
prophesied in the OT (the "Law and the Prophets").**

If you/I are to find X, we too must search for Him, in Scripture,  
with the goal of finding there the Savior for our souls.

We will never find Jesus as Philip did, as long as we are  
indifferent to our soul's very real/eternal needs;  
As long as reading Scripture is just a tedious religious duty;  
As long as we don't read the Bible carefully/prayerfully,  
having an insatiable hunger for righteousness,  
hoping to find X's holiness for ourselves in its words.

But when we sincerely/earnestly look to find our Savior, the real  
Jesus in God's Word, it won't be long before He reveals  
Himself to us there, just as He did to Philip.

He will leap off the pages, drawing us irresistibly to  
Himself.

**Philip came to the conclusion that he was welcome to take  
Jesus, the Messiah, as his own Savior.**

And you/I must realize, in the same sense, that Jesus says to us personally=> *“Come. And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost”* (Rev 22:17).

Jesus never locks the door to anyone who comes to Him.

The lock is on our side of the door, so we must open it.

Philip realized, & we must realize, that it's our responsibility to receive Jesus into our hearts, as a gift of God's grace.

We can only do so, through the enabling of the H.S., for which we pray.

But having come to grips w/ that truth, our will must act.

We must believe in His name, w/o trying to earn His grace w/ our good deeds and religious works.

It can be difficult to receive a grace-gift, knowing we don't deserve it, and will always be in the giver's debt.

But that is exactly what we must choose to do in response to Jesus' offer of salvation, if we're to be blessed, as Philip was.

Then we will be able to say as he did, “I have found Jesus.”

**Both the OT/NT give us every reason to believe in Jesus, repeatedly demonstrating that He is indeed the Messiah, & that He fulfills all the Messianic prophecies throughout the OT.**

\* Every sacrifice that was offered was a prophetic type of the Lamb of God who would come and offer Himself as the final/conclusive sacrifice for man's sin.

\* Every H.P. was a living prophetic type of the “*great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God*” (Heb 4:14).

\* Every OT judge/deliverer from Othniel to Samuel was a prediction of man’s final “Deliverer” from sin.

X was also the Prophet like Moses who was prophesied to come.

\* Jesus was the great descendant of David who would come to reign on David’s throne forever, but whom David himself would address as “my Lord” (Mt 22:43).

\* Jesus fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy of the child born of a virgin whose name would be “Immanuel” (Isa 4:14).

\* Jesus was the Lamb foretold by Isaiah, the “righteous Branch” foretold by Jeremiah, the “true Shepherd” foretold by Ezekiel, the Messiah foretold in Daniel 9, cut off after 62 weeks.

**Philip looked at OT prophecies of Messiah like these, he looked at Jesus, he made the connection, & then ran to Nathanael to tell him excitedly “We have found Him!”**

The “we” he referred to was himself/Andrew/Peter/James/John.

Having become born again by his faith in X, Philip could not contain his excitement, or keep the good news to himself.

And he had absolutely no desire to do so.

He couldn’t feel indifferent, and he couldn’t keep silent.

He was filled with the joy of spiritual rebirth/renewal, and he was a partaker of X's own desire for the salvation of others who were still among X's lost sheep.

This energy/excitement over the joyous blessing of salvation is typical of new converts.

It has always been a driving force in the spread of the gospel, and in the Church's growth.

**Q: How do we reconcile the 2 perspectives taught in this text?**

Did Jesus find Philip? Or did Philip find Jesus?

Some would say, It's either one or the other, but it can't be both.

I respond by asking, Who says it can't be both?

[Paul], would you please raise your hand?

Whose will caused him to do that—his, or mine? Both.

This notion that man has a totally free will is simplistic nonsense.

I think of the 19<sup>th</sup> century poem *Invictus*=>

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll.  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.

Brave talk, but what happened when his wife smiled at him, batted her eyes, & said "Honey, let's go to the circus."

He didn't really want to go, but he knew what all husbands know=> a happy wife is a happy life.

The captain prob. changed his course, to please his wife.

Do we have free will? Yes, but not completely free, because it is strongly influenced by hosts of forces/personalities outside ourselves.

**In the same way, on a spiritual level we find X, & He finds us, if we're among those the Father has given to Him.**

E.g., at the time leading up to your conversion you became thoughtful/pensive, didn't you?

If you hadn't become thoughtful, but had remained careless & indifferent, you wouldn't have sought a Savior.

Who made you so thoughtful thinking about eternal things?

It was the H.S., mercifully opening your eyes to the truth.

He may have done it thru circumstances around you, but

He did it.

Then you developed a sense of your own sinfulness and your spiritual need, until you became like the publican in Lk 18, beating on his breast & crying "*God, be merciful to me the sinner!*" (Lk 18:13).

Before then, you were like the rest of the world, indifferent to your spiritual neediness, blinded to it by Satan.

He had used the cares of this world & the deceitful of riches to choke out any thought of spiritual/eternal things before that time.

Suddenly, repentance was the only way to relieve your soul from the grievous foulness of your own sinfulness.

Where do you think that godly sorrow, that repentant spirit,  
came from? Your fallen nature as a depraved sinner?

Not a chance!

Who do you suppose it was, convicting your soul of its sin?

I can tell you=> the H.S.

Then somehow, the seed of God's Word came to you and was  
sown in the richly prepared soil of your heart.

When you heard/read that Jesus saves/cleanses from sin,  
you longed for that, and you knew intuitively it was  
right/true—though you prob. didn't know how you  
knew.

Who do you think it was, witnessing of X to your heart?

Rom 3:11 says=> *“THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR  
GOD.”*

And yet, you sought Him.

How was it that you beat the odds like that?

And where did your faith in X, suddenly come from?

The answer to all these questions is that you/I were under the  
irresistible, magnetic pull of the H.S., to use our will in  
accordance w/ the desires/feelings/thoughts He was  
creating w/i us.

Was it our free will? Absolutely.

Was it under the irresistible power of God's will?

Absolutely!

Did we find Jesus by an act of our own will? Yes.

Did He first find us? Yes, just as He did Philip, not circumventing Philip's own will.

How should we respond? Praise God for rescuing us out of darkness/blindness/spiritual-death, giving us life, and gently/firmly leading us home, like a lost sheep!

“O happy, happy day, when Jesus washed my sins away!”

## ***“Finding Jesus; Found by Jesus”***

February 3, 2013

Text: John 1:43-45

1. The day that a person becomes born again is the [10 best] day of his life.

Isa 38:17

**In today’s text we will consider the conversion of Philip...**

2. From the Holy Spirit’s point of view we will read that Jesus *“found Philip”*; from Philip’s point of view, *“We have found Him”*; both are [16 correct].

### **\* Jesus Found Philip**

**[John 1:43-44]**

3. Jesus had looked for and found Philip because God had chosen him and had [12 given] him to Jesus.

Jn 17:6; Lk 15:4-6; Jn 10:27-29; Lk 19:10

4. As Christ spoke to Philip, the power of the Holy Spirit went to work on his heart so that he knew intuitively that everything Christ said was true and that he could [12 trust] Him with his very soul.

Jn 6:44; 15:26

5. It would be easy to characterize Philip as the “[12 wrong] man.”

Mt 11:21-22; Mic 5:2

6. When Philip was tested by Jesus, he [14 failed] the test.

Jn 6:4-7; 12:21, 23; 14:8-10; 1:49

7. Christ loves the sheep given to Him by His Father, and He places a high value on each one—even those who [12 don’t] have much to offer Him in return.

Mt 19:28

8. This text teaches us that if we find the Savior, it will be because He has [12 first] found us.

### **\* Philip Found Jesus**

**[Verse 45]**

Mt 13:45-46, 44

9. Finding Jesus as one’s Savior begins with a consciousness of one’s urgent [10 need] for Him.

10. Philip came to the conclusion that he was welcome to take the Messiah as his [8 own] Savior.

Rev 22:17; Heb 4:14

11. Philip looked at OT prophecies of Messiah, he looked at Jesus, he made the connection, and then ran to Nathanael to tell him, “*We have [12 found] Him!*”

12. Do we have free will? Yes, but not completely free because it is [22 influenced] by outside forces and personalities.

Lk 18:13

13. Where do you think godly sorrow, that repentant spirit, came from? Who do you suppose it was [24 convicting] your soul of its sin?

14. Did we find Jesus by an act of our own will? Yes. Did He first find us? Yes. How should we respond? [14 Praise] God!