



The Belief & History of the Church of God Reformation Movement Blog # 208 “A Call to Discipleship- Nathanael”

October 11th, 2019 Rev. Dr. Dave McCowan

This month we will discuss the disciple Nathanael, or his other name is Bartholomew. Read John 1: 43-51.

Nathanael first questioned or doubted if Jesus was the promised Messiah when Philip told him about Jesus. Nathanael's response to Philip telling about finding Jesus was, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

When Philip invited Nathanael to come and see for himself, he was willing to go and see for himself. Even though he questioned or doubted he was willing to go and see for himself who Jesus was. Many are not willing to take that much of a step to determine if Jesus is who others say He is.

Willingness is one of the first steps toward discipleship or following Jesus Christ. Some might say faith is the first step, and it might be. But I have found that discipleship often starts with a willingness to take time to listen to Jesus or others who tell about Jesus. Many may even start out somewhat skeptical like Nathanael was when he heard about Jesus. We should never let other's skepticism about Jesus keep us from inviting them to come and see Jesus.

When Nathanael met Jesus and listened to what Jesus had to say, he quickly went from non-belief to belief. I believe the turning point came when he heard Jesus say I saw you under the fig tree. For this statement to trigger such a dramatic response in Nathanael, it must have had deep meaning. This is what I think Nathanael might have been doing when Jesus saw him under the fig tree.

Nathanael might have sought out the shade of this fig tree to offer a prayer of confession. It may have been a prayer about his sin or brokenness.

Nathanael might have been sitting under the tree examining his life and thinking about what was ahead for him. There may have been some things he was not so proud of and some things he wished he could go back and do-over. He might have been fearful of a major life event or decision he was about to make.

Nathanael may have been under the fig tree making a vow to God. Have you ever been in a situation when you were in such distress that you made a vow to God?

Whatever Nathanael was doing under the fig tree it must have been very significant to him. It was probably something only he knew about. Most, if not all of us, have had an under the fig tree moment. A time when we were alone confessing our sin, brokenness, examining our life, planning for the future, or even making a vow to God.

It is good to know that Jesus sees us when we are under the fig tree. It brings me great peace, hope, and comfort to know that Jesus sees and hears me when I am under the fig tree.

Do not despair if you are under the fig tree now. Jesus sees you and hears your prayer.

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