

Slide Children's Moment

Theme: Sharing Jesus with our friends.

Object: Oreo Chocolate Cream Cookies

Scripture: "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip. (John 1:46)

I love a good cookie. Yesterday I eat a great cookie. They were called Chocolate Cream Oreos. I want to tell you that these cookies were not only good, but they were delicious. They were so good that I couldn't wait to tell you about them. In fact, I wanted to share some with you. I have some of Chocolate Cream Oreos this morning so that you can taste them and see how good they are. *(Pass out some of the cookies for the children to try.)* I know you agree that those are really good cookies.

That is why I couldn't wait to share them with you. Have you ever found something so good that you couldn't wait to share it with a friend? This morning I want to tell about a man named Philip who couldn't wait to tell a friend about something good that he had found. What Philip found was much more important than cookies. Philip had met Jesus. When Phillip met Jesus, he knew that Jesus was the Savior that God had promised, and he became one of Jesus' disciples. After Philip met Jesus he couldn't wait to tell his friend Nathanael. He 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." "Nazareth? Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," answered Philip. Then he took Nathanael to see Jesus and Nathanael also became a follower of Jesus. That is how the good news of Jesus is spread. Friends telling

friends! When we discover a really good cookie, we can't wait to tell a friend about it. Shouldn't we be even more excited to tell our friends about Jesus?

Dear Father, nothing can compare to the Good News of Jesus. Help us to share the Good News with others. Amen.

Slide The First Disciples – Part II

Open in Prayer

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We begin this morning in verse 43 reading from the New American Standard Bible, “The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.” The phrase “next day” indicates that it is now the day after Andrew found Peter and brought him to meet Jesus. Jesus had decided to leave the area of the Jordan River where John the Baptist was ministering and go to Galilee. Philip was one of two disciples with a Greek name, a name that meant “lover of horses” an interesting tidbit. Where Jesus met Philip is not stated, but Philip, like Andrew, John and Peter was a Galilean for he was from Bethsaida whose name means the “house of the fisherman.” Which I can better understand since Bethsaida was located at the north end of the Sea of Galilee and its main industry was fishing. This was also the hometown of Andrew and Simon Peter even though they later moved to Capernaum. This is important to note, as we will see in a little while. Unlike Andrew and John, who were introduced to Jesus by John the Baptist and Simon Peter who was told about Jesus and brought to Him by his brother Andrew, Jesus takes the initiative by calling Philip directly. What we learn from this is whether a person is introduced to Jesus by others or is called directly by God, no one comes to saving faith in Jesus unless God seeks them and regenerates their soul. Jesus sought out Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.” Philip obeyed. This is consistent with what we find in John chapter 15 where Jesus says to His disciples,

Slide¹⁶ “You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would

go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.” Taking a friend to the movie is nice and sharing a cookie like the children learn this morning is tasty, but sharing the gospel of Christ is eternal. It is God – God the Father or God the Son or God the Spirit, it is God that draws people to Himself and brings their souls alive, this process is called “election.” However, God also uses people, you and me, to share the gospel with those He is calling. **Blank**

Even though Philip is one of the twelve disciples of Jesus we do not know much about him. Early church tradition says that he was from the tribe of Zebulun. Philip is mentioned in the Synoptic Gospels, but in the Gospel according to John, Philip is one of the first disciples of Jesus. Philip having a Greek name might explain why the Greeks sought him out when they came to the Passover in John 12:20-23 as the mediator between them and Christ. In John chapter 6 Philip is mentioned in the feeding of the 5000. In John chapter 14 Philip is shown to be somewhat naïve, but sober minded. He questioned Jesus because of his lack of understanding of who Jesus is in totality: he was anxious about the 200 denarii to buy bread when he was in the presence of the very “Bread of Life.” He sought additional revelation by asking to be shown the “Father” to be reassured of Jesus’ deity in John 14:8 and yet he was instrumental in bringing others to Christ, even though he had, at times, questions and doubts. In the Book of Acts we read the one story about Philip and it is about him preaching Christ. **Slide** Please turn in bibles to Acts chapter 8, beginning in verse 25 we read, “So, when they had solemnly testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they started back to Jerusalem, and were preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans. Wherever they went they preach Christ! ²⁶ But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, ‘Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza.’ (This is a desert road.) ²⁷ So he got up and went;

and there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship,²⁸ and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah.²⁹ Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go up and join this chariot.'³⁰ Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, 'Do you understand what you are reading?'³¹ And he said, 'Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.³² Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: 'HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER; AND AS A LAMB BEFORE ITS SHEARER IS SILENT, SO HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH.'³³ 'IN HUMILIATION HIS JUDGMENT WAS TAKEN AWAY; WHO WILL RELATE HIS GENERATION? FOR HIS LIFE IS REMOVED FROM THE EARTH.'³⁴ (This passage is from Isaiah 53:7-8)³⁴ The eunuch answered Philip and said, 'Please *tell me*, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?'³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture **he preached Jesus** to him. Using the questions God had placed in the heart of the eunuch and the God breathed scriptures Philip preached Christ.³⁶ As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?' **Slide**³⁷ [And Philip said, '**If you believe with all your heart, you may.**' And he answered and said, '**I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.**']³⁸ And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him.³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing.⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus (*ad-zo-tos*), and as he passed through he kept preaching the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea." I love this story for illustrates the simple process of salvation. God was calling the eunuch, God used the willing servant Philip, Philip preached Christ, the eunuch responded by believing and was baptized and the focus

was squarely on Christ and not on Philip. This is how it should be today. I hear people talking about how they are the special chosen of God, how they do things for God, as if God needs our help. They instead, should be talking about how grateful they are because God used them and how God worked in their life and the lives of others – serving others in the name of Christ – the focus must always be on Christ not us. **Blank**

Concerning Philip's life and ministry after Pentecost little is known. The third century historian and bishop Eusebius wrote that Philip lived as one of the great lights of Asia and was buried in Hierapolis (*Hi-er-ap-o-lis*). There are a number of traditions concerning his ministry and the manner of his death, but we do not know how, when and where for certain he died. In July of 2011 excavation director Francesco D'Andria was working in a field at Hierapolis (*Hi-er-ap-o-lis*) in Turkey. He announced they had finally found the tomb of the martyred Apostle Philip. The remains of the Apostle Philip however, were no longer in the tomb. According to D'Andria, the saint's relics were very likely moved from Hierapolis (*Hi-er-ap-o-lis*) to Constantinople at the end of the sixth century and then possibly taken to Rome and placed in the newly dedicated Church of St. Philip and St. John (*now know as the Church of the Holy Apostles*), although 12th-century reports describe seeing Philip's remains (somewhat of a morbid thought) still in Constantinople, the seat of Christian Turkey. Sounds like a lot of guessing. Actually, to be honest, none of this is very important to me. These facts and theories are interesting, but not important. What is important is what we are told in the Bible. We are called to believe in Christ, be his disciples, like Philip and others, to live a Christ-like life in worship of Christ and service to others and preach the risen Christ. People are always looking for relics to worship instead of the invisible God. This is no better than pagan

worship. Likewise, praying to dead saints is wrong, for Christ is the only mediator between God and man.

Remember Andrew ran to find his brother Simon because he wanted Simon to know the Messiah. Like Andrew - Philip could not keep the good news about Jesus to himself – he immediately went and found his friend Nathanael. We know almost nothing about Nathanael for certain. Theologians believe that Nathanael of the Gospel according to John is the same disciple called Bartholomew in the Synoptic Gospels. We do know that his name means “gift of God” which certainly tells us what his parent’s thought of him at his birth. Let me now focus on what we do know about Philip and Nathanael. Using Philip as an example I believe that as we work our way through the Gospel according to John we will see that to be an effective disciple and witness for Jesus there are several things that must happen. It is these elements of knowledge and faith that came to life in the disciples over the three years they spent with Jesus. We too, must possess them. When Philip finds Nathanael he tells him in verse 45, “**We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and *also* the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.**” Philip begins his sentence with “**We**” thus showing Philip has quickly included himself as one of the several followers of Jesus. Is this not how you felt when you accepted Jesus into your heart? You belonged to Him, it is that quick – you are different and Jesus is no longer a person who lived a long time ago, but the living God living in you. This is the first element of being a disciple - truly believing Jesus is the Christ. Philip was a student of the scriptures and uses a term that was common to mean the breath of the entire Old Testament or the only scriptures at that time. He says, “**Moses in the Law and *also* the Prophets wrote.**” Jesus uses the same terminology in the Gospel according to Matthew to describe the Old Testament scriptures, **Slide** “**Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to**

fulfill. (Matthew 5:17 NASB). **Blank** Philip may have used this term because he knew that Nathanael loved the scriptures and studied them. Philip is telling Nathanael that he had found “Thee One” who is the fulfillment of the scriptures. Philip continues by saying the Messiah is “Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Joseph was Jesus’ legal father, not his biological father. John writing “Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph” does not in any way deny Christ’s virgin birth for His deity. Jesus was often associated with Nazareth where he grew up. Just as we saw earlier that Andrew and Peter were born in Bethsaida, but lived in Capernaum. They were at times associated where they were born and at other times where they lived and this is also true of Jesus. Philip telling Nathanael that Jesus was from Nazareth presented a problem for Nathanael as we see in verse 46, “Nathanael said to him (Philip), ‘Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?’ ” As a student of scriptures Nathanael knew that Nazareth was not mentioned in the Old Testament and the Messiah was to be born in and come from Bethlehem according to the prophet Micah. At this time in history, Judeans looked down on the area of Galilee as a backwater and insignificant part of Israel. Even below the low status of Galilee was the status of Nazareth. So as Israel looked down on Galilee, Galileans looked down on Nazareth. So, Nathanael responds, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Philip responds simply, echoing Jesus’ reply to Andrew and John, “Come and see.” Nathanael rose above his prejudice and went to investigate because he saw the passion and belief of Philip. The first two elements of being a disciple and witness of Christ are; first, truly believing Jesus is the Christ and second, you must know God’s saving work in your life and that it has been done forever. Philip at this early stage fulfills number 1 and has begun the process of understanding and believing number 2. As new believers we do not have to have all the answers, people want to know why we are different and the simple truth is because Jesus lives and He lives in us. Once we have come to

faith in Christ it is our responsibility to investigate and study and meditate on the Bible, just like the Ethiopian eunuch, in order to grow in our faith and be able to share Christ with others, just like Philip and the other disciples.

Philip and Nathanael approach Jesus and Jesus calls out to Nathanael in verse 47, **“Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!”** It appears at first that Nathanael is coming to Jesus because of Philip, but now we begin to see that Jesus sought Nathanael first. Jesus describes Nathanael, as **“an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!”** Jesus’ point is that Nathanael’s honest reply to Philip reveals his lack of placating his friend and his eagerness to examine this Jesus for himself. Jesus may have been alluding to Jacob the father of the nation Israel, who in contrast to Nathanael, was a deceiver. Unlike many of his fellow Israelites Nathanael was not going through the motions, practicing religious rituals but not believing in the scriptures and their promise of the coming Messiah. When Jesus said **“an Israelite indeed”** He meant Nathanael was an Israelite “in truth” or “genuinely”. The Apostle Paul pointed out how mere external conformity to ritual and observances of Judaism did not make one **“an Israelite indeed.”** In Romans we read, **Slide** **“For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.”** (Romans 2:28-29 NASB) Later Paul again writes, **Slide** **“But *it is* not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are *descended* from Israel; nor are they all children because they are Abraham’s descendants...”** (Romans 9:6-7 NASB) this brings us to Jesus making clear another principal of being a true disciple and witness of Him to the Israelites and for us today. In John chapter 8 we read the words of Jesus, **Slide** **“So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, **‘If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the****

truth will make you free.’ ” (John 8:31-32 NASB) We must study to gain understanding of who God is and what God wants from us and what He wants us to be. **Blank**

Nathanael was a true disciple from the beginning as we see in his response to Jesus, “ ‘How do You know me?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.’ Nathanael answered Him, ‘Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.’ ” Jesus knew Nathanael’s character before they met, it is now clear that before Philip told Nathanael about Jesus – it was Jesus who knew Nathanael and called him. Even though Jesus seeing him “under the fig tree” may seem simple Nathanael understood it was supernatural and Jesus being supernatural then had to be the Messiah. As a student of the scriptures the fig tree may well have been where Nathanael went to study and meditate. King David expressed it well how God knows everything about us, **Slide** “O LORD, You have searched me and known *me*. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways. Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all. (Psalm 139:1-4 NASB) **Blank** Just as David understood God’s all knowing of his life, let me ask you, “Where is it you go to study the Word of God and meditate on Jesus and spend time with Him and how often?”

Nathanael makes clear his understanding of Jesus’ omniscience when he answers Jesus saying, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.” It is clear from this statement Nathanael recognizes Jesus as the long awaited Messiah. Nathanael uses two titles, the same two titles King David used when he wrote the words of God concerning Jesus in the second Psalm, **Slide** “But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain. I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You.’ ” (Psalm 2:6-7 NASB) Nathanael declares that Jesus is Lord and his king – King David wrote that the

coming Jesus was King upon Zion and the Son of God and the Apostle John wrote that the purpose of his gospel is **Slide** “...that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:31 NASB) We can see this purpose displayed by Nathanael. **Blank** This is the second time in the first chapter John has written “Son of God,” the first being when John the Baptist used it in verse 34. In both cases the use of the definite article indicates that the title is used in its fullest sense, affirming Jesus’ absolute equality with God the Father. Throughout the New Testament the followers of Christ use this title and we can see how they grew in their understanding of its complete meaning and truth.

The Old Testament builds an understanding of God and the need for the Messiah. It speaks consistently of the coming Messiah. This is why we are studying the Old Testament on Wednesday nights where Pastor Rick’s teachings on the Tabernacle, meaning the abode or dwelling place of God and how it demonstrates God’s foretelling of Jesus. The Old Testament describes the Messiah as the “King of Israel” in Zephaniah, Zechariah and Micah. By addressing Jesus as the “King of Israel” Nathanael also acknowledges Him as his personal King.

Jesus’ reply to Nathanael in verse 50 should be understood more as a statement of fact than a question. Reading verse 50, “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe?’ ” Nathanael is the first disciple in the Gospel of John to have clearly understood and believed in Jesus as the Christ and declared “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel” before the other new disciples of Jesus. Jesus relies by telling Nathanael plainly, if you think my supernatural knowledge of you and seeing you sit “under the fig tree” is enough to know me as the Messiah you haven’t seen anything yet. Jesus finishes

by saying to Nathanael, “You will see greater things than these.” It is almost as if Jesus is saying, “Wait until you see what I am about to do in your home town of Cana and that will be just the beginning.” The Wedding at Cana that we will study soon, the Lord willing, is the first of thirty-seven miracles of Jesus recorded in the gospels. Nathanael would witness countless other miracles that were not recorded in the New Testament as the Apostle John made clear, **Slide** “there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written.” (John 21:25 NASB) **Blank**

Jesus closes chapter 1 by telling Nathanael and those with him, Andrew, John, Simon Peter and Philip get ready men I am going to stretch your minds and build you into my disciples who will change the world forever – although they did not understand the future at this time. Jesus says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.” Jesus may very well have been eluding to the record of Jacob’s dream in Genesis 28, **Slide** “He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.” (Genesis 28:12 NASB) Jesus is making the point that it is He and He alone that brings heaven and earth together and **Slide** “... there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, *the man* Christ Jesus.” (1 Timothy 2:5 NASB) Jesus has come to fulfill the covenant God made with man, the covenant seen in the Old Testament that was **always kept by God** and rarely kept by men. Apostle Paul said it this way, first in Hebrews chapter 9 verse 14, **Slide** “How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, **cleanse your conscience from dead works** to serve the living God? Then Paul completes the thought began chapter 9, (Jesus) **Slide** “has obtained a more

excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.” (Hebrews 8:6_{NASB}) All serve God and Jesus who is God. Jesus is and will always be served by the angels in heaven, the saints on earth until its destruction, the serving and praising Jesus in eternal heaven, and He is recognized as God by the disobedient residing in Hell and every knee will bow to Him as LORD. **Blank**

To help the Jewish people understand as Nathanael did, in verse 51 Jesus refers to Himself for the first time as the “**Son of Man**” which was used by the prophets Ezekiel and Daniel in the Old Testament 61 times as the title of the Messiah. Building on the Old Testament the inspired New Testament writers use this title “**Son of Man**” 85 times and it is the favorite way Jesus refers to Himself. In the Gospel of John as we study we will see the Apostle’s uses the title “**Son of Man**” to identify Jesus’ suffering and death (3:14; 8:28 and 12:34). That it is Jesus as the “**Son of Man**” who is the provision for the salvation of mankind (6:27, 53). Jesus as the “**Son of Man**” has all authority to judge all men (5:27; 9:35,39). The prophet Daniel spoke of Jesus saying, **Slide** “Behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. **Slide** And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language might serve Him. **His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one, which will not be destroyed.** (Daniel 7:13-14_{NASB}) This morning we have seen this is what Nathanael and Philip believed and Andrew, John and Simon Peter. This is what the Ethiopian eunuch believed and King David believed. They believed because the Savior had already sought them. The question this morning is, **Slide** “Do you believe?” Jesus is calling.