

THE TWELVE

#5. Philip – Struggles With Faith

10.7.18

John 6:1-7 NASB After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). ² A large crowd followed Him, because they saw the signs which He was performing on those who were sick. ³ Then Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat down with His disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near. ⁵ Therefore Jesus, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, *said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these may eat?” ⁶ This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do. ⁷ Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.”

The Central Lesson of his Life: We must expect challenges to our faith, even as it grows!

I. Background and Observations

- A. Philip is a Greek name that means “lover of horses.” This may indicate that his family were Hellenistic Jews who had resettled in Israel.
- B. Like Peter and Andrew, he was from the area of Bethsaida (John 1:44).
- C. All the stories about Philip appear in the Gospel of John.
- D. The evidence suggests that Philip was a person prone to systematic “processing.”
- E. If he fits that classic role, he was probably narrowly focused, often missed the big picture, and had a tendency to point out why something “couldn’t be done” instead of finding ways to solve the problem or remove the obstacle.
- F. He is first in Group Two: Philip, Nathaniel (also known as Bartholomew), Thomas, and Matthew.
- G. Philip’s later ministry and death: Philip was crucified in 80 AD, in Asia Minor (present day Turkey). One tradition describes his crucifixion along with his sister, Mariamne. Many scholars and archaeologists believe his tomb was discovered while excavating a church in 2011.

II. The Philip Episodes

A. We meet Philip in John 1.

1. He was called the day after Jesus called the first four Apostles. John 1:43 NASB
⁴The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me."
2. Like Andrew, Philip's heart was that of an evangelist. He sought out Nathaniel just as Andrew sought out Peter (John 1:45).
3. As a thinking man, Philip was ready to receive Messiah. Nathaniel would hesitate, but accepting Jesus was "logical" to Philip, who had been prepared for this discovery by the ministry of John the Baptist.

B. The next time we see him is John 6 as Jesus feeds the 5,000 men, plus women and children.

1. Note: Jesus wasn't looking for an idea — He already knew the plan. When Jesus asks a question, it is almost always in order to help us see something about ourselves.
2. Instead of seeing a tremendous opportunity for The Lord, Philip is knee-deep in figuring out what it will cost, and he's already concluded that it cannot be done.
3. Now, Philip had been present when the water had been turned to wine (John 2:2), and he had witnessed regenerative healings. But it seems his "default mode" had not changed as a result. As a result, on this occasion, he had a lapse of memory.

C. He was possibly the "Administrator." He is depicted as the "secretary" of the group in John 12, and we see him bound up with protocol and procedure.

D. We see him in John 14 on the night of Jesus' betrayal.

1. It is evident he is prone to missing the most obvious lessons.
2. On this night, he will learn the significance of Father's love.
3. **John 14:1-9 NASB** "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ If I go and prepare a place for

you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way where I am going.” ⁵ Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?” ⁶ Jesus *said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. ⁷ If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.” ⁸ Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” ⁹ 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 can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

III. Lessons from the Life of Philip

- A. Jesus calls people of all personality types.
 - 1. Learn your strengths and weaknesses.
 - 2. Play to your strengths; manage your weaknesses.
- B. Friendships are the most common/effective means to evangelism.
- C. We must guard against our thoughts being earthbound.
 - 1. Faith can be dead. (unbelief)
 - 2. Faith can be limited. (Philip)
 - 3. Faith can be weak. (Andrew)
 - 4. Faith can be struggling. (the father of the demonized boy)
 - 5. Faith can acknowledge the obstacle, but focus on Heaven’s resources. (Elisha)
- B. The discovery of God’s Fatherhood is life-giving!

**There is nothing I can do to make Him love me more.
There is nothing I will do to make Him love me less.
His love for me is perfect, complete, and unconditional.**