

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes

Sermon Notes for October 18-19, 2003

Dale Whitehead

"The Witness of Nathanael"

John 1:43-51

What do we learn about Nathanael in John 1:43-51?

We learn that Nathanael highly valued the Word of God (John 1:43-45).

Jesus was not requesting Philip to follow Him. He was commanding Philip to follow Him.

Philip went to his very close friend Nathanael after being confronted by Jesus and bore witness of Christ (John 1:45).

We learn that though Nathanael highly respected the Word of God, his personal prejudice became an obstacle to his faith (1:46).

Nathanael's prejudice was related to the disadvantaged, such as those from Nazareth, being major players in the emergence of the Messiah.

Those struggling with various issues such as prejudice must not only be given the opportunity to hear about Jesus, but to "come and see" Jesus.

We learn that though Nathanael had an issue with prejudice which threatened his faith, his sincere desire to please the Lord had ultimately prevailed.

When Jesus declared that Nathanael was an Israelite indeed, He was simply saying that he had a heart to obey God (Romans 2:25-29).

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes

The word "guile" (DOLOS) occurs eleven times in the New Testament and conveys the meaning of trickery or cunning.

When Jesus described Nathanael, He was simply saying that Nathanael's love for God was genuine and was free of hypocrisy.

If people's hearts are like Nathanael's, they will ultimately come to the place where the truth that has been presented to them about Jesus will eventually make sense.

We may not specifically know the significance of the fig tree, but it is clear that Nathanael did and viewed this knowledge of Him as supernatural.

Nathanael went from questioning whether or not Jesus was the Messiah to speaking of Him in the highest terms available to him.

When Nathanael referred to Jesus as the Son of God, he did not say Jesus was God, he simply repeated what the Old Testament taught about the Messiah (2 Samuel 7:14; Psalms 2:7).

The title "King of Israel" was used by Palestine Jews for the Messiah, and was used during Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem (John 12:13).

There is no record of Christ's disciples literally seeing angels using Him as a ladder to ascend and descend to and from heaven. Christ's statement is figurative.

Christ's statement simply means that His future disciples with the eyes of faith will be able to see what Christ has pictured for them in John 1:51.

Christ is pictured in John 1:51 as actively providing for the needs of His disciples by utilizing the resources of heaven which would even include the angels themselves.

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The disciples of Jesus are constantly assured that He is the Christ because they are able to see with the eyes of faith His loving and abiding care.