



# Tuesday Morning Bible Study with Ted

## The Apostle Series

### Philip: Allowing God to Use Your Strengths

July 20, 2021

1. The first three gospels don't tell us anything about Philip, they only give his name. John's gospel mentions him four times, giving us an opportunity to get to know him. Let's look at these four different accounts and meet Philip.

#### The First: John 1:43-46

43. The next day Jesus wanted to go into Galilee, and he found Philip. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." 44. Philip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter. (CEB)

#### His position among the twelve

2. In all the lists of the twelve apostles, Philip is always mentioned at the beginning of the second group. This seems to indicate that he was the leader of group two, which included Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthew.
  - a. Philip had grown up with Andrew and Peter, and was perhaps a close friend of theirs.
    - i. It seems to me that there were friendships established between Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, and Thomas prior to their discipleship.
    - ii. We know they were most likely all fishermen from Galilee, (cf. John 21:2—Note: the "two others of his disciples" not named in John 21:2 are most commonly believed to be Andrew and Philip because they are the ones most frequently associated with the disciples who are named.)

#### His portrayal from John's gospel

45. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law and the Prophets: Jesus, Joseph's son, from Nazareth. 46. Nathanael responded, "Can anything from Nazareth be good?" Philip said, "Come and see." (CEB)

3. Verse 43 tells us that Jesus found Philip.
  - a. I would like to add that Philip had a seeking heart. This is evident from verse 45: "*Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law and the*

*Prophets: Jesus, Joseph's son, from Nazareth.*" Apparently, Philip and Nathanael had been studying the law and the prophets and were searching for the Messiah. So, when Jesus came to Philip and said, "Follow me," his eyes, ears, and heart were open and ready to follow Him.

### Did Jesus find Philip or did Philip find Jesus?

- b. In John 1:43 it says that Jesus found Philip, but in verse 45, Philip tells Nathanael that he found Jesus. Well, from the Lord's viewpoint, He found Philip; but from Philip's viewpoint, he found the Lord.
  - i. Isn't that the way your own testimony goes? The sovereign side is that God found you, but the human side is that you found God. When salvation occurred, both you and God were seeking. **THOUGHTS ABOUT YOUR OWN CONVERSION OR RELATION TO GOD?**
  - ii. Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10), but God also says, in Jeremiah 29:13, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."
  - iii. God seeks the true heart that seeks Him, and this is illustrated in the call of Philip. Jesus found him, but He found a man who was honestly seeking the truth.
4. At the beginning of verse 45 we see Philip's immediate response to his own conversion: "Philip found Nathanael."
  - a. He immediately ran to tell Nathanael that he had found the Messiah.
  - b. You can just imagine the excitement, the thrill, the joy, and the ecstasy that he had in telling Nathanael that the One they had been searching for had arrived.
  - c. The end of verse 46 tells us that he wanted Nathanael to go and see Him for himself.
5. I truly believe we learn about our own faith through Philip from this account in John 1:43-46.
  - a. The first thing we learn about him is that he was a truly religious, God-fearing Jew who was honestly seeking for the Messiah.
  - b. We also learn that his immediate response to his own salvation was evangelism. He immediately went to his friend, Nathanael, and told him of Christ.
  - c. So, Philip had a seeking heart and the heart of an evangelist. **THOUGHTS?**

### The second: John 6:5-6

5. Jesus looked up and saw the large crowd coming toward him. He asked Philip, "Where will we buy food to feed these people?" **6.** Jesus said this to test him, for he already knew what he was going to do. **7.** Philip replied, "More than a half year's salary worth of food wouldn't be enough for each person to have even a little bit." **8.** One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said, **9.** "A youth here has five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that for a crowd like this?" **10.** Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass there. They sat down, about five thousand of them.

1. Although Judas Iscariot was the treasurer, it was Philip who felt the need to be responsible for the food. He had already analyzed it, figured it out, and calculated that two hundred denarii would not be enough money to feed the crowd.

2. This figure was either the amount Philip calculated they could gather from the people or the amount the disciples had available to spend on food.
3. The reason two hundred denarii wouldn't be enough is because one denarius (a day's wage) only bought thirty-six barley biscuits, each of which was about the size of a hand, one and one-half inches thick.
4. When Jesus asked Philip how they were going to feed the crowd, we see that he had already figured out that 7,200 barley biscuits wouldn't be enough to go around.

### The attributes distinguished

6. It's interesting that it never entered into Philip's mind that the Lord was supernatural and that He could do a creative miracle.
  - a. The supernatural resources of Jesus Christ totally escaped his thinking—he just calculated everything out.
  - b. Philip was analytical, pragmatic, and pessimistic. He's the kind of person who would sit in a board meeting, punch all the figures into his calculator, and say, "Can't do it! We don't have the money! It can't be done!"
  - c. He had too much arithmetic to be adventurous and was so stuck on facts that he missed faith altogether.
7. Christ was trying to teach Philip about faith and that with Him all things were possible, but he was such a thick-headed character, he wasn't learning the lesson.
  - a. When the Lord asked Philip where they were going to buy the bread to feed the crowd, he should have answered, "Lord, You made wine at Cana and You fed Your children manna in the wilderness—do what You want. You have the power to make food to feed them."
  - b. It's interesting that Jesus had been healing all day long and Philip had been watching the demonstration of His supernatural power. But he still said, "It can't be done!"
8. Philip was a materialist—a man of practical, common-sense measurements. He was methodical and mechanical, with very little understanding of the supernatural. He was a facts-and-figures guy, always going by what appeared on the human level. **I PRETTY SURE I'M MARRIED TO A VERSION OF PHILIP...?**

### The third: John 12:20-22

20. Some Greeks were among those who had come up to worship at the festival. 21. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and made a request: "Sir, we want to see Jesus." 22. Philip told Andrew, and Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

### The account described.

- a. These Greeks devotees of Judaism heard about Christ and wanted to see Him, so they went to Philip to arrange a meeting. Now the reason was probably because of his Greek name
- b. Well, Philip may have been an approachable, warmhearted fellow, but he didn't take these Greeks to Jesus. Verse 22 says, " Philip told Andrew, and Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

## The attributes distinguished

9. This incident shows us that Philip was neither decisive nor forceful. Peter would have grabbed those Gentiles, dragged them into the presence of Jesus, and said, "Lord, here are some Greeks who want to see You." But not Philip—he had to check it out with somebody else first!
  - a. Do you know what was bothering Philip? He was still living under Jesus' command "Go not into the way of the Gentiles . . . but go, rather, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:5-6).
  - b. Philip didn't know if Jesus would see these Gentiles because he was always going strictly by the book. His vision was so narrow that he missed the message of grace. Yes, Jesus did come to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
  - c. He also said, John 6:37, "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*"
  - d. Unfortunately, Philip lacked the power to see beyond the specifics to the spirit of grace. He was always going by the book and analyzing everything, so consequently, he missed the full perspective of the purpose of Christ.

DO YOU KNOW ANYONE LIKE HIM? NO NAMES PLEASE JUST LET US KNOW ABOUT THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE HIGHLY ANALYTICAL, BY THE BOOK, PERSON(S) YOU KNOW.

## The fourth: John 14:8-11

8. Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father; that will be enough for us." 9. Jesus replied, "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been with you all this time? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10. Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I have spoken to you I don't speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me does his works. 11. Trust me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or at least believe on account of the works themselves. (CEB)

## The account described

10. The setting in John 14 is the upper room on the night of the final Passover Supper. Jesus was emptying His heart to His disciples since He knew that He was about to be betrayed, arrested, and crucified. Everything was coming to an end.
  - a. In verse 8, Philip enters the narrative and says, " Lord, show us the Father; that will be enough for us."
  - b. Look at Jesus' reply: 9. "**Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been with you all this time? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?**
  10. **Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I have spoken to you I don't speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me does his works.**
  11. **Trust me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or at least believe on account of the works themselves. (vv. 9-11)**

## The attributes distinguished

11. For three years Philip had gazed into the only face of God men ever saw—and he said, "Show us the Father." His spiritual vision was unclear and his faith was weak.
  - a. Somehow, the fact that Jesus was God didn't register in Philip's mind. He was ignorant, slow of heart, skeptical, and unconvinced.
  
12. The gospel of John shows us that Philip had a seeking heart and an evangelistic heart. But it also shows us that he was a man of limited ability, inadequate faith, and imperfect understanding, a man who fooled around with facts and figures, but missed the big picture of Christ's power and grace.
  - a. Philip's faith was limited by money, circumstances, and proof. He was pessimistic, reluctant, insecure, unsure, analytical, and skeptical—yet the Lord used him. In fact, someday he's going to reign over the tribes of Israel in the kingdom.

### A few added historical beliefs about Philip

Philip was from the area around Galilee (Bethsaida), but as his name in Greek means "lover of horses". There is no evidence that he was a Galilean Cowboy, but he spoke Greek. He was often called on for translations when the Greek Jewish/Christians were in the crowd.

Tradition tells us that Philip wound up dying as a martyr because he wouldn't deny Christ. He was stripped naked, hung upside down by his feet, and pierced in his ankles and thighs so that he would slowly bleed to death. He had only one request: that his dead body would not be wrapped in linen like the body of his Lord.

His ancestors at Modein, and all Israel mourned for him with great lamentation.

I still like the prayer intended for last Tuesday. It is a version of the "Peace Prayer" by St. Francis of Assisi, and I would like to end these last classes together by praying it as one united people.

Lord, in the midst of violence around us in the world, you have called us to be tools for Christ and instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. Make us to be instruments of your peace, for Jesus' sake.

Amen