

He knows YOU

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[0 : 0 0] us to look this morning briefly at this passage from verse 45 onwards to the end. Philip findeth Nathanael and saith unto him, we have found him of whom Moses and the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Then we have Nathanael's scepticism, if that is the right word, about whether or not this can possibly be the case, how could it possibly be from Nazareth, and then Jesus answering him when he comes to him, and Nathanael's complete change of art as to the identity and power and sincerity of Jesus. So we have here this is verse 45, Philip findeth Nathanael. Now, and what's the context of Philip finding Nathanael? Well, most of you will be aware of my own particular suggestion, my own particular understanding of this first chapter would be that all the two disciples whom John the Baptist sends to follow Jesus. From verse 37, the two disciples heard him speak, they followed

Jesus. One of them was Andrew, the other one is unnamed. Traditionally, the unnamed one is usually understood to have been John, the author of this, or rather the writer of this gospel account. But I would suggest to you, and I've suggested in the past, the evidence would indicate to my mind that in fact the unnamed disciple is Philip. Because we have when Jesus is addressing Peter, who Andrew brings to Jesus, and Andrew says to Peter, verse 41, we have found the Messiah, which is being interpreted by Christ. The day following, Jesus would go forward into Galilee and findeth Philip. Where does that come from? Where does Philip come from? Suddenly, he's being talked about as though we should already know who he is, and he says, follow me.

Philip's of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. So in other words, he knows them. If he's down there in that part of Judea, he's going to be around those that are from his own town. So he already knows them. The likelihood is he's already spent time with Andrew and Peter. Whenever we find Andrew in the gospels account of John, we find Philip as well. They're almost always together. We find them, for example, at the feeding of the 5,000. Jesus asks a question of Philip, and Andrew answers it. When in chapter 12 or 13, where the Greeks come seeking Jesus, they say to Philip, sir, we would see Jesus. Philip comes and finds Andrew, and Andrew and Philip together go and introduce them to Jesus. Likewise, in chapter 21, where we have the disciples who are going to go fishing, it runs through a brief list of the disciples. It names the sons of Zebedee. It names Peter. It names Nathaniel of Cana in Galilee, and two other disciples. Two other disciples who aren't named. Almost certainly, these two other disciples would be Andrew and Philip. You wouldn't find Peter without his brother. You wouldn't find Andrew without Philip, because throughout John's account of the gospel, that's where they are. So the suggestion from the evidence would tend to be that where there's Andrew, there would be Philip. That these two are together. Then Jesus, having conversed with them the day before, Andrew's already come with Peter to see Jesus, and then the next day, Jesus finds Philip. And that makes perfect sense in it. And also, Philip's own response to Nathaniel. Philip finding Nathaniel safe, and they're not, you'll know a guest who's just walked up to me, and who I have just encountered. He just spoke to me out of nothing, and he said, follow me, and I've gone and done it. No, he says, we have found him, of whom Moses and the law and the prophets did write. Just as Andrew said to Peter, you know, we have found the Messiah. We have found, you know, we, me and somebody else. No, I personally have done it. I and this other unnamed disciple, we have found. And

Philip, likewise, doesn't say, so-and-so met me, so-and-so caught me. He says, we have found exactly the same terms that Andrew uses to describe their encounter with Jesus. We have found him.

[4 : 0 0] Of whom Moses and the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Now, this indicates to us that Philip, and no doubt Nathaniel as well, are comparatively devout young men. They know what is in the law. They know the content of what Moses has

written. They know what the prophets have prophesied. They know about the prophet who is to come as described in Deuteronomy 18, who Moses prophesies about. They know the content. They know that there is this sense of expectation of build-up to the Messiah coming. And having sort of the scriptures, having laid the groundwork for this, they are primed and they are ready to meet with and to encounter and to receive that which the Lord is about to give. And we have found him. And Moses and the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

Now, this indicates to us, first of all, that whilst knowledge of the scriptures alone cannot convert anyone. You know, let's give the scribes and the Pharisees their due. They knew the scriptures, or at least they knew the head content of them. Jesus, of course, said that he had known the scriptures on the power of God, he says to the Sadducees, then, you know, he would have understood about eternal life. But it's perfectly possible to have a wonderful head knowledge of the scriptures, and still it does nothing to your heart. Still it does nothing to your spirit or soul. You know, our universities and lecturers and so on are quite often are stuffed with intellectual people who may know the original languages and the detail and all the nuances of how it's all written and scripted and so on. They know the content of the Bible, but they don't know the author of it. They don't know Christ. So knowledge of the scriptures alone will not convert his soul. Just in the same way as once a field has been cleared of rocks and there's been a dike built round it, it's been tilled and the soil's been turned and it's been fertilized and it's been prepped. Everything is ready for the seed to go into it, but the preparation of that ground of itself will not bring forth a harvest. You have to have the seed going into it. You have to have the seed going into the soil, the good soil that's prepared. You have to have the rain and the sunshine. You have to have the Lord bringing forth the growth. But a growth is far more likely in a field thus cleared and prepped and plowed and prepared and fenced than is or just scattering your seed and a bare moored inside. If the ground has been prepared, then the chance of the harvest is much greater. And so head knowledge of the scriptures whilst it does not convert is a wonderful benefit as a preparation for when Christ will encounter a soul or indeed if Christ will encounter a soul. It will never be to our harm or to our disadvantage. If only the Pharisees and the scribes and others had used their knowledge of the scriptures as indeed Paul came to use his knowledge of the scriptures to know, yes, it all makes sense. It all fits together in this man of Nazareth. It does not convert, but it is a great benefit and help. Philip and Nathanael are men who know the scriptures. We have found him of whom Moses and the law and the prophets did right. So far, so good. And then there's a problem. As far as Nathanael is concerned, there's a problem. Jesus of

Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Now, of course, Philip identifies him as the son of Joseph because legally and technically that's what his identity would be. Just as in the same way if a child is adopted by a family and all the legal documents are gone through, then it is their child in the eyes of the law in exactly the same way as though it had been a biological child of those parents. It has exactly the same status and value and rights as any biological children of that union do. So as far as when Philip says the son of Joseph, he's simply going like this is what everybody thinks. This is what everybody knows, that he's the son of Joseph. He doesn't know the full story yet. He doesn't know about Jesus' virgin birth and about conception by the Holy Ghost and the womb of Mary and so on. But despite the fact he doesn't know, he knows he doesn't need to have all the answers because he has encountered Christ personally for himself. Nathanael instantly picks up on what is the problem here.

Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Now, we sometimes take this and we think, well, this is just prejudice. This has got one Galilean to another, you know, like us saying, you know, can any good thing come out of Tarot or out of Ureger or whatever the case may be.

[9 : 07] Cana, from which Nathanael came, John 21 verse 2, tells us that Nathanael's from Cana where the wedding was in the next chapter and so on. And Jesus being then from Nazareth, they're about five miles apart, five, six miles apart, nearer than Tarot to us. So, you know, they're close and they're all in the gallery area. So, you know, he's not saying, ooh, scumbag Nazareth, you know, what could possibly come out of that? It's rather this was neighbours to him. He would have known most of the people in Nazareth. He would have been related to half of them. He's not so much rivals with Nazareth. He's not saying, oh, Cana's much better than Nazareth. But rather when he says, can any good thing, it is in the sense of, can that good which God intends to do, the Messiah, can this possibly be out of Nazareth? Out of an obscure little place like Nazareth? It's not just even that. But also, we turn a few pages, you know, we come to John chapter 7 at verse 40, where we see,

many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying said, of a truth, this is the prophet.

Others said, this is the Christ, the Messiah. But some said, shall Christ come out of Galilee? And again, they're not being snobby. They say, hath not the scriptures said that Christ cometh of the seed of David. And out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was. Now, we all know the story. We all know the fact of where Jesus was born and how it came about and how Joseph was descended from David's vine and so on. But the fact is, Nazareth was not in Judean territory.

Nazareth was only up in Galilee in the territory. Zabulim and Asher and all these others tribes that were round about that area. And Naphtali and Zabulim and all these tribes that had their areas around Galilee. That was the tribes that had their lands up there. It wasn't, the line of David wasn't based up in Nazareth. So they thought, how can it possibly be Nazareth? How could it possibly be Galilee? Hath not the scripture said that Christ cometh of the seed of David? Out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was there thinking? Micah, chapter 5.

You know, out of Bethlehem and the land of Judah, I have by no means the leech to the princes of Judah. Out of thee shall come a ruler to rule my people this way. So they know the scriptures and Nathanael knows the scriptures and this is what's puzzling him. He thinks, can this great wonderful thing God intends to do, how can it be Nazareth? How can it possibly be there?

And there's also the sense in which he thinks, this can't be right because it's too close to home. It's too local. When God does wonderful things, you know, he does revivals in other places.

[12:07] We read of, you know, the heathen coming in multitude in faraway lands. And we read about a revival that so-and-so got by the sky or the highlands or whatever. Yes, maybe in our own lands and islands, but you know, we're talking long ago. We're not talking now, locally, here where we are. How could it possibly be now? How could it possibly be here? The things that God does that always seem to be at a distance. They always seem to be somewhere else, or they always seem to be long ago. As far as Nathanael and Philip are concerned, this is right now. This is right here where they are. It's coming from their own home area. How could God possibly care enough to work in their own home area? Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? It's not just prejudice. It's not just skepticism, much less is it local village rivalry from another village five miles away from Nazareth. This is puzzlement by Nathanael. This is the concern that other people who know the scriptures are just not quite getting. It's meant to be

Bethlehem. It's not meant to be Nazareth. What's the problem? Now, as I say, we know the story, but they didn't. We know how it came to be Bethlehem and Nazareth. They didn't. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him. That's Philip's answer. You'll come and see. He doesn't say, well, actually, this is how it happened. And you know, I've got an answer for you, or we could get into a long debate about it, but he just says, you know, come and see. I haven't got the answers for you, he's saying, but come and meet somebody who will. Come and meet the man who will be able to answer your questions, who will be able to give you all that you need.

Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him and said, behold, an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile. Now, why would he say that if it was just prejudice on Nathanael's behalf? If Nathanael just said, Nazareth, did any good thing come out of Nazareth? If that was the case, Jesus could, not that he would be so gauche about it, but he could easily say, Cana, can anything good come out of Cana? You think you're better than us? You think your village is better than mine? I'll tell you something, boy. No, he didn't answer in those terms.

Because Nathanael is not being merely prejudiced. He's not being merely sceptical. He's puzzled. How can the Messiah be out of Nazareth? How can this good thing that God intends to do come from Galilee, where we are? In the first place, God doesn't seem to work as locally as that. In the second place, the scriptures tell us something different. How can God's scriptures be wrong? But I'm coming to see, like Philip says, I've got, yes, a knowledge of scriptures, but I've got an open mind. I'm prepared to be persuaded. This is a man with a genuinely proud heart. This is a man who knows what the Bible should be saying.

He knows what if God's going to fulfill his truth, what should be happening, and where it should be happening from. He doesn't quite understand how this all fits together. But he's prepared to have an open mind. And this is one reason I would suggest to you why Jesus says, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. Now, of course, there's lots of compliment in that statement. It's not just, oh, well, he doesn't have any deceit. He doesn't have any badness in him and so on. In that sense, he's not deliberately trying to deceive. But to be an Israelite indeed has greater connotation. Because, you know, as Paul wrote to the Romans, chapter 9, verse 6, you know, not as though the

word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel. Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children. But rather, the children of the promise are counted the children of

[16:26] God. These are not the children of God, the children of the flesh. But rather, in Isaac shall I seek be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God. But the children of the promise are counted for the seed. They are not all Israel, which are all Israel. Just because you racially or biologically belong to a certain people group, that doesn't make you an Israelite indeed. But Jesus is saying to the final, behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. This is one who is waiting for the Lord. This is one who is watchful. This is one who is devout. This is one who knows his scriptures. This is one who is prepared for the coming of the Messiah. But he's just not quite sure about the details here. An Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. And far from being flattered by this, you know, Nathaniel says, you know, what's like a very much more than that, I suppose. I don't know any guile. I am quite a good guy. But an Israelite indeed.

Again, he is puzzled. He knows his own heart. He knows what's in it. He knows what he's looking for, what he's waiting for, what he's praying about. So he says, well, how do you know me? Why are you saying this to me? What do you know about me that enables you to say this? Once knowest I me. Jesus answered and said unto him, before Philip called thee, when I was under the fig tree, I saw thee. Now, of course, we could theoretically be sceptical and say, oh, well, Nathaniel was sitting there under his fig tree and Jesus had the people of the wall when Nathaniel didn't see him. And he thought, ah, there he is. Right. Okay.

I know. As though he had somehow seen him from a distance when he wasn't expecting it or when he wasn't looking. That would be no miracle. That would be no big deal. You know, and whose fig tree is anyway, you know, the fig tree and the vine, this was a symbol of both peace and having returned to their own land, but also they became symbolic of where devout Israelites would come to meditate, to seek the Lord individually. You know, the synagogue was where they worshiped together, but individually, where a devout Israelite man would come and meditate and seek the Lord, there's this symbolic thing of under his vine and under his fig tree.

Micah chapter four, verse four, they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree and none shall make them afraid for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. Again, likewise in Zechariah chapter three, verse 10, we read, in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall he call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree. This is the symbolic place of meditation for Israel. Just like in the olden times, Isaac was out in the field meditating when Rebecca came with the train of camels and with the steward that was bringing his bride to them, to Isaac. He was out in the field meditating. Devout Israelites of that day would be under the vine, under the fig tree. The only thing is, they're not at home just now. It's not Nathaniel's fig tree if it was recent. And there's nothing to say that it was just that day or just the other day that Jesus had seen Nathaniel under the fig tree. It may be referring to something from his youth, or something years ago when he sat beneath this fig tree and solemnly dedicated his life to the Lord or solemnly set himself to seek the Lord.

We do not know the detail of what it is Jesus is referring to. All that we can see and see clearly here is that that which Jesus has put his finger on, I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you. When thou hast under the fig tree, I saw thee. And this is something that Philip doesn't pick up and say, oh yeah, right enough, when you were under the fig tree the other day, and Andrew and the others don't say, oh yeah, he's always on the fig tree, yeah, anybody could have seen him there. No. It doesn't make sense to anyone except to Nathaniel. This secret sign, secret message to his individual heart that somehow we understand from this, nobody else could have known this. Nobody else could have seen this intimate trust between Nathaniel and the Lord. Wherever the fig tree in question was, whenever the incident took place, before the Philip called thee, when thou hast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

[21:17] Nathaniel answered and said, oh then, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel. Now you might think, well, this is quite a turnaround. You know, a minute ago he was pretty skeptical.

Now suddenly he's, whoa, really convinced here. But one of the things we've got to remember is that Philip says to him, we have found him of whom Moses and the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph. He means we found the Messiah. Just like Andrew says to Peter earlier, you know, verse 41. We have found the Messiah, which has been interpreted by Christ.

And Philip doesn't say to him, you know, off you, he's over there, go and find him, or go and see him. But rather he says, come and see, I'll go with you. I'll bring you to him. You know, like again, going back to Zechariah chapter 8, verse 21, where they say, the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, say, let us go speedily to pray before the Lord and to seek the Lord of hosts. I will go also. And this is the encouragement. This is the sort of sharing in this desire that we are to have. Now, it's not to say to people, look, go. That's where you should go. But rather, come, let's go together. I have met him. I've seen him. I've been there. Come on. Let's go together. This is what Philip has said to him. This is what Philip is enthused with, that he has found the Messiah. So in Nathaniel's mind, it's not a question of, well, let's see who Jesus of Nazareth actually is. Is he a teacher? Is he a prophet?

[22 : 45] Is he a holy man? Is he some kind of new rabbi? Or has he great powers from God? There's not all this rainbow kaleidoscope of options. As far as Nathaniel is concerned, steeped in the scriptures as he is, Philip has either found the Messiah or he hasn't. It is either the Christ or it isn't. If it is the Christ, then they know that the Messiah is to be the Son of God. He is to be a prophet, a rabbi, teacher. And this is what he says, he addresses it as this prophet, this rabbi, this teacher, the Son of God, the goal between, between God and man, the priest, and the King of Israel in that spiritual sense. And once he is convinced that Jesus is what Philip says, and it's either black or white, it's either yes or no. It's not a range of options in between. Either he's the Messiah or he isn't.

And Jesus just says two things to him. He says, a holy Israelite indeed, in whom there is no rabbi. How does he know me? Well, before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. And this goes right to his heart. This is something personal, something intimate, something he thought was a secret, but hey, Jesus knows it. And it completely convinces him. And so the either or, it has become the definite yes, thou art everything for us. And thou art the Messiah, the Son of God, the King of Israel. Jesus hasn't said this, because I said unto thee, I saw the end of the fig tree, but he was done. Thou shalt see greater things than these.

And I don't see nothing yet. And he said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto you. And now he's not just addressing your family. He's addressing all the disciples. And we know this because the authorised Russian helpfully distinguishes between the singular, thee and thou, and the plural, you and ye. And so whom we got he, he saith unto him, verily, verily, I say unto you, plural. Hereafter ye, plural, shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. Now, Nathaniel calls Jesus the Son of God. Jesus, with great humility, takes unto himself only the title, the Son of Man. Although he is the Son of God, he only refers to himself as the Son of Man. Now this either or, he either has to be the Messiah, or he's not. Nathaniel has identified, yes, he is. Now what has happened here? As we've said, it is partly that Jesus has put his finger on something intimate and deep and personal, which Nathaniel thought nobody else knew. Whatever took place under the fig tree was clearly a personal transaction between Nathaniel and the Lord, which he had thought was secret. He had thought was known to nobody but himself. Wherever it took place, whenever it took place, clearly it was before Philip called him. I don't think we should take it that, you know, Philip went and found him, and then he was sitting under the fig tree. Jesus had seen him ten minutes earlier. Oh, maybe he's under the fig tree, as we said. This is something deep. This is something intimate and personal, and as far as Nathaniel had thought, secret. And yet Jesus goes right to the heart of the before Philip called you. When you were under the fig tree, I saw you.

I knew you long ago. It is the fact that he sees and he knows you personally. That is what changes for Nathaniel's heart here. Now, as we've said, when Nathaniel comes to Jesus, he doesn't have all the answers. He doesn't know all the truths. He still has this problem, but just a minute, Lord, you know, while we're here, I would like to ask you about this thing about Bethlehem and about Nazareth.

How does all this fit together? That all the answer to the fullness of time. For now, he has met the Messiah, and that is what matters. He has encountered Christ for himself. He has become convinced that this King of Israel, this Son of God, knows him, intimately, speaks to him, personally, knows him exactly as he is and who he is and all the secrets of his heart. Now, these three things we have to recognize and we have to reckon with, first of all, that Nathaniel never envisaged that such a work of God could ever occur so locally, locally to his own home environment. Can it possibly be Nazareth, five miles away from where I live, and God done this great thing within my

own locality? Can it possibly be here? Can it possibly be now?

[27 : 51] We're used to God doing great things far away. We are used to God doing great things way back in the past. Can it possibly be here? Well, all of us have encountered individuals, whether of our own generation or those of an older generation that's still within our lifetimes, whom we know beyond the shadow of our dad.

The Lord has been at work in their heart. The Lord has changed their lives. They shine with it. They're just full of it. Anyone can see this is not just an ordinary flesh and blood human being. They absolutely shine with the presence of the Lord within them. That person has been changed. Perhaps also we have encountered somebody that we knew before. Somebody that we knew before they were converted.

Somebody we rubbed shoulders with before. And we think, well, they can't be anything special. Come on, I used to know him when he was such and such. I used to know, we did this together, we did that together. I knew his father. He can't possibly be somebody special. God can't possibly be doing something in his life.

Changed, converted, you know, transformed. How can it be? I know this guy. It can't be him. And he can't be changed in this way. We have all known people who have been changed in this way.

[29 : 07] Despite the fact we knew them personally. Despite the fact maybe we knew their history and their grandparents and so on. We knew exactly what house they were born in and where they grew up. And still they were changed. They were transformed by the power of something the Lord did locally.

In our midst. With people we knew. Very close to where we ourselves were born or grew up. God is not just a God of far off. He's not just a God on the other side of the world or from way back in history.

He's a God right here, right now. Right in our own locality. And perhaps too close for comfort if this isn't what we desire or isn't what we want.

But the Lord is at work in our own local sphere. He is at work amongst those whom we will know personally and have encountered personally.

The very locality of God's work is no prohibition on its reality. God desires to work right where we are.

[30 : 19] Right in our midst. Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Can it possibly be this logo just five miles away? Can it possibly be so near to my own hometown?

Can it be here? Can it be now? The answer is yes. This is what the Lord does. This is how the Lord chooses to work. God is glorified.

And doing that which men consider to be impossible. The second thing is that just as Nathaniel has all these questions and anxiety.

Ah yeah, but what about just a minute? You know, it's meant to be Bethlehem. It can't be Nazareth because the scripture says this. And I don't understand how the Bible says this. And yet you're telling me that God is actually doing that.

This doesn't fit together. There are lots of things we do not understand. Now, there are lots of things that perhaps no matter how much we did into the depths of the scriptures, no matter how many nuggets of gold or precious stones we mine in its depths, there are still things we will not fully understand until we get to glory.

[31 : 27] But that doesn't stop it being true. You know, the Lord could easily have said, well, actually Nathaniel, sit down, and I'll tell you about how he was born. I'll tell you about how it came to be that my mum and the guy who I knew as my dad, you know, how they ended up in Bethlehem.

After all, it was all back in the days of Caesar Augustus and so on. He could have told them all that. He doesn't go into it just now. But he could easily have done it. And it would find a way in which God's word was actually true all along.

All the details we didn't understand. Because we didn't have the whole picture. We didn't see all the knowledge. And we thought, this can't be right. This can't be true. Because this is the case.

Not that. And yet the Lord had worked it all out with it. And there was a means by which it was all perfectly complete. And it was all 100% true.

There is that which we will not know. And which we do not know. Which does not necessarily mean it is not true. And it will not necessarily be revealed.

[32 : 35] Personally, I believe it will all be revealed. And it will be found to be 100% true. Because Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. The third thing is.

And as Nathaniel comes to Jesus. Still with all these questions. Still with all these things as yet unanswered. The one thing of which he becomes convinced.

About the truth of Christ's Messiahship. Is that this Messiah knows him. Personally. This Messiah whom he has never met.

This Jesus of Nazareth whom he has never encountered before. He sees him coming and he knows his character. He knows his past. He knows the details of his heart. He knows about victory. He knows about whatever went on there. He knows Nathaniel inside it. He knows him personally. And when he encounters Christ.

[33 : 33] He discovers that Christ has known him all along. And in the early place of it. So if we are thinking in terms of. Well I couldn't possibly commit to Christ.

Until I get some answers to this. Until I get some answers to that. Until I have searched the scriptures. And found and unlocked the secrets of this. This and this you're getting this. All the longer known that that's the case.

Come to Christ. Come and see. I will go also. As I say. Philip says. Come with me. Come and see. Meet Christ. Never mind about his people. Who will fail.

Who will disappoint you often. Never mind about his church. Which is filled with all the imperfections. Of the saints that are within it. Come to Christ. Come to Christ.

And meet with him. And as you meet with him. You will discover above all else. He knows you. He knows you perfectly. He knows you intimately.

[34 : 30] He knows every detail of your life. He knows you. And apart from all the other people. No doubt we love in our lives.

Our mom. Our dad. Our brothers. Our sisters. Our children. Our spouses. Whoever is closest to us. The person with whom we have to do. In all of our lives. The one person we cannot get away from. Is ourselves. We have to live our lives. Through our own eyes. Through the lens of our own experience. It's me. Myself. That I have to live with. Most of all. I am the person.

That I have to deal with. And everybody else. I have to interact with. Yes. But you know. I'm the person. That I got to live in this body. I got to go through this life here. I'm the one. Yes. I matter. In my own life. Yes. I have to. I have to. Spend that life. For other people too. But you know. Me is. In one sense. The center of my little part of the universe. Part of the Lord.

[35 : 25] Obviously. So the knowledge that this. Christ. This Messiah. Knows you. Go straight to the heart. Who you are.

What you are. What you've been. Where you've been. Everything you've thought. Everything you've questioned. Everything you've been uncertain about. He knows you. That makes.

An encounter with Christ. If nothing else. It makes it 110% relevant. To your life. It makes it vital. To your life.

Because nobody else. Knows you. The way that he does. Behold. An Israelite. Indeed. In whom. There's no. I have.

Whence thou hast thou me. Before that Philip called thee. When thou hast thou. To the victory. I saw thee. Bye bye. Thou art the son of God. Thou art the king of Israel. Every little secret of your life.

[36 : 19] He knows. Every part of everything you've ever done. He knows. That means. This God is relevant. This God matters in your life. Anybody that knows you that well.

Has got to matter. Has got to be worth meeting. Has got to be worth following. That is almost 100% certain.

To be true. Who they claim to be. God works. Locally. Where we are. There are questions. We do not know the answers to. But you come to Christ anyway.

And in the fullness of time. You will see. And it will be unfolded to you. It was all true. And it all fitted together. And it all made sense. And God was true to his word.

Into his scriptures from day one. And this God who is true. 100%. Knows you. 100%. This is why. You've got to come to him.

[37 : 17] This is why. You've got to come to him. Because whatever else happens. Between heaven and earth. It happens only through him. This is what the vision is about. It's a reiteration of Jacob's ladder.

In Genesis 28. You know. He sees this ladder going up to heaven. And angels ascending and descending. And he says. There's no traffic between heaven and earth. Except through me. Everything that happens in this earth.

Happens through me. There's Jesus. If you want God in your life. Then you trust in me. If you want to be known perfectly and intimately. You trust in me. Christ is the centre and soul.

Of all that happens. Between heaven and earth. Yes. We can sit in our hands. And we can say. Well I don't believe it. Nothing good comes out of Nazareth. Nothing good happens locally. Nothing good happens. That knows me.

That happens through me. And Philip says. Come and see. And because Nathaniel acts on that. He goes in faith. It's like Paul says. In the midst of a ship wreck. In Acts 27.

[38 : 16] For I believe God. That it shall even be. As he said it was. This is what we are to understand. It's what we are to. Likewise.

Encounter. Bethsaida is not a specially holy place. Bethsaida means the house of nets. So many fishermen lives there. Jesus says. Woe unto thee Bethsaida.

Woe unto thee Chorazin. Woe unto thee Chorazin. The mighty works have been done. In time and sight. That were done in you. They would have repented. Why haven't you? But even from the midst of Bethsaida.

The unbelieving. Dogged. Bethsaida. Bethsaida. The Lord has his people. And you might just as easily say. Woe unto you Harris. Woe unto you Scumpley.

Look at all the blessings you've had. Look at all the benefits you've had. But how few may come to Christ who they are. And yet some will do so. Just as Philip.

[39 : 11] Just as Nathaniel from Bethsaida. Are coming to Christ here. Because Christ works locally. In their area. Locally with people they know.

And the questions that they have. And that they don't yet know the answers to. Christ will reveal. But above all. When they come to him. They discover. They are known perfectly. They are known from the end to the beginning.

And so likewise are you. Whether you will come to him or not. Whether you know him as your saviour or not. He knows you. And up until now. He has waited.

And no doubt he will wait a little bit longer. And whether you come to him. Or whether you forbear. He will continue to know you. Every detail. From the beginning of your life.

To whensoever the end should be. This is a God who knows. This is a saviour. Who knows you. And wants you to know him better.

[40 : 11] That's it. Thank you. Thank you.