

Philip

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[0 : 0 0] Now as most of you all know, we've been looking in previous weeks, over the past couple of months or so, at those whom our Lord in the New Testament addresses by name.

And in some situations, it's in a post-resurrection scenario, as with Saul of Parsons on the road to Damascus. In some situations, it's like with Lazarus, who's actually dead when the Lord addresses him.

And most people are addressed by Jesus by name when he's living and in his earthly ministry. And that is the case today as we look at the Apostle Philip, who we read in verses 18.

Now in Philip, saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it suffiseth us. Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long time with you? And yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.

And how sayest thou then, show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in thee? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me.

[0 : 5 9] He doeth the works. So again, one of the things that is helpful about the distinctions we have in the authorised version is the distinction between singular and plural.

The thee and thou, for which it is so much criticised, of course, by modern versions, distinguishes that which is individual addressed speech from that which is plural. So where we have Jesus saith unto him, that is to Philip, have I been so long time with you?

That is plural, addressing all the disciples. Have I been so long time with you all? And yet hast thou individually, singularly, not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.

And how sayest thou then, how can you, Philip, say, show us the Father? Do you, Philip, thou, not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, you all, plural, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

So there's a mixture of Jesus addressing the disciples as a whole, but also addressing Philip personally and individually, of course, as we see here at verse 9, addressing him specifically by name.

[2 : 1 0] Have I been so long time with you, with all of you? And yet hast thou individually not known me, Philip? How could you, Philip, not know me after all this time?

And as we know from John's account of the gospel, of course, Philip is one of the earliest disciples called by Jesus. Most of you will be aware of my own personal theory that he is the unnamed disciple, along with Andrew, at the beginning of John chapter 1.

John, the popular and most normal interpretation would be that that silent, unnamed disciple is John, the author of that particular gospel account. But I would suggest to you, as we'll go through briefly, the evidence here that it would imply, the evidence would imply that it is more likely to be Philip.

I know we've done this in the past, but it doesn't give any harm to recap, because we need to get Philip's context amongst the disciples as a whole to see also this context in which Jesus is saying, have I been so long time with you, with all of you, and yet have you, Philip, not known me?

Philip, of course, is mentioned in all four lists that we have of the different 12 disciples, or 11 disciples it is by the time of the Acts of the Apostles. John doesn't make a list of the different disciples, but Matthew, Mark, and Luke do, and in the Acts of the Apostles we also have a list in chapter 1.

[3 : 35] In Matthew 10, of course, both Andrew and Philip are listed quite separately, as are all the different disciples. In Mark's account in chapter 3, Andrew and Philip are named side by side.

The same is true in Acts chapter 1, but not in Luke chapter 6. At the end of John's account of the Gospel, we have in chapter 21, this instance where the disciples decide to go fishing.

And we read in verse 2 of chapter 21, there were together Simon Peter, always named first amongst the disciples. Thomas called Bidimus, unusual to have Thomas so high up the list, that's 2.

Nathaniel of Cana in Galilee, that's 3. The sons of Zebedee, James and John, 4 and 5. And two other of his disciples, unnamed. Two other of his disciples.

Now, it is highly unlikely, in fact, so unlikely as to be almost impossible, that where Simon Peter is, in Galilee, at the seaside, his brother Andrew is not there.

[4 : 39] And it was the fishermen jointly with Peter. They were the ones who left their nets first and followed Jesus and so on. So where Peter is, we can probably safely take it that Andrew is too.

So of the other two unnamed disciples, why they're not named, we don't know. But it is extremely likely that Andrew is one of them. Where Andrew is, you almost always find Philip.

Therefore, it is extremely likely that Philip is the other unnamed disciple. If we backtrack a little, of course, through the Gospel accounts, we've got this chapter 14 that we read from.

Go back a little further to chapter 12. And we find here verses 20 to 22, the incident with the Greeks. Certain Greeks among them that came up to worship the feast.

There were certain Greeks. And the same came, therefore, to Philip, the disciple with a Greek name. Now, Philip, the name Philip means lover of horses. It is a Greek name that became popular in Palestine and Syria after the conquests of Alexander the Great.

[5 : 47] Because at the time when the Persian Empire was sort of winding down and was probably overstretched as well, Alexander the Great came in with this sort of fresh, you know, vigor and sort of military brilliance and just smashed everything in his path and made it all the way through to India and Afghanistan and so on.

And so the Persian Empire just crumbled under his onslaught. So part of what he took over was Syria and Palestine and down into Egypt. And at that time, the name of his father, Philip of Macedon, became popular amongst the Greek Empire.

So a lot of Greek language comes in. Remember the New Testament is written in Greek. A lot of Greek names come in. You know, you've got like Bartimaeus and so on and Bartholomew and others and Philip and Andrew.

They're all Greek names come in around this time, which is several hundred years, three, four hundred years, or a couple of hundred years before the New Testament times begin.

So the Greeks that come seeking Jesus, they seek out the disciple with the Greek name, Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee and desired and saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

[7 : 02] Now what does Philip do? Philip cometh and telleth Andrew. Why doesn't he tell Peter? Why doesn't he tell Matthew? Why doesn't he tell, you know, one of the Jameses or whatever? No, he comes and tells Andrew because Philip and Andrew are always found or nearly always found together.

They are almost certainly boyhood friends. Because where one is, the other is. They are both from the same township. They're both from Bethsaida. So Philip comes and tells Andrew, another Greek name.

And again, Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour has come, the Son of Man shall be gone by and so on. So there you've got the Greeks coming, seeking out Philip. Philip gets Andrew.

Andrew and Philip go to Jesus. We go back a couple of chapters and we find in chapter 6 where Jesus feeds the 5,000 in John's account, which is the only one, of course, that specifies the little boy having the five loaves and two fishes.

So we find in John 6 from verse 5, When Jesus lifted up his eyes and saw great company come unto him, he said unto Philip, When shall we buy bread that these may eat?

[8 : 07] And this he said to prove him, for he knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred penny worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. Now that's about two-thirds of a year's wages.

So it's not a full year's wages. Two hundred pence as opposed to three hundred pence. But it wouldn't be enough to feed all these people. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said unto him, There's a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what are they amongst so many?

Now who did Jesus speak to? He spoke to Philip. He didn't speak to Andrew. But Andrew is obviously right there, so close, within a year's shot, right beside Philip, that when Jesus asks Philip a question and sort of puts him on the spot of it, there's Andrew ready to help out.

Say, well, we've got somebody here, a wee boy with five roaves and two fish, but even that, that's not going to go far. Jesus asks Philip a question, and Andrew sort of comes in with a secondary answer. They're right there together, right beside each other.

Where the one is there, you find the other. Andrew and Philip together. And then, of course, we go back to chapter one, where we find that of these two disciples of John the Baptist, one of them is Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

[9 : 20] And verse 40, that's what we read. Simon Peter's brother. That's one of only two instances. The other at verse 44, where Andrew's actually named before Peter. But because Andrew is there, and Peter is not at this stage, that would account for that.

And verse 44, Philip was a bit saved in the city of Andrew and Peter. That is the only occasion in the New Testament when the two disciples being absent, named in the abstract, Andrew is named before Peter.

Now, word order is significant. Name order is significant in the New Testament throughout the Bible. Indeed, it is significant. So what we have is all these two disciples.

Andrew is definitely one of them. And they go and spend the day with Jesus. And then the next day, we read the following day, verse 43. Jesus would go into Galilee and find the Philip and say, I've done him following you.

Where does Philip suddenly come from? Why is Jesus suddenly seeking out this complete, total stranger he's never spoken to before? Well, of course, he does do that. Other times when he calls people to follow him, calls Matthew from his publican's desk and so on.

[10 : 24] So it's not unheard of, but he goes and finds him. He finds Philip. Now, it's a little bit strange in that context if he's a complete unknown.

But it makes perfect sense if he is one of the two people who has spent the entire afternoon with Jesus the day before. And whenever you find Andrew, particularly in John's account of the gospel, you find Philip.

It makes perfect sense that Philip is the other unnamed disciple at that point. Also, when we find, in verse 44, Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

And as we say, Andrew is named first there before Peter. Almost never happens. Why is Andrew named first before Peter? I would suggest to you because the subject of this verse 44 in John chapter 1 is not Andrew or Peter, but Philip.

And where Philip is, what is relevant to the naming of Philip is Andrew. Because Andrew and Philip are always found together. Peter, later on, he has more dealings with John.

[11 : 29] Peter and John went to pray. Acts chapter 3 and they heal the man at the gate of the beautiful temple and so on. And John, later on, yes, he's the one that runs to the sepulcher, to the tomb, with Peter later on.

But Andrew and Philip are always found together. So almost certainly there, we have in verse 44, Philip was of Bethsaida. He said, He's not of Peter, I know, but of Andrew and Peter.

Because Andrew and Philip go together. Now, where does that then leave us in the fact that Jesus is now speaking to Philip? He said, Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?

Andrew doesn't chip in here at all, just Philip. Philip, then, is one who has been with Jesus right from the start. And we're going to follow through on my own theory.

And even if we don't follow my theory, he has been there at least since the next day. Even if it was John that was with Andrew on the very first day when they said, Rabbi, where are you staying?

[12 : 29] And he said, Come and see. Then, by the very next day, Jesus actually goes and finds Philip. Either as a complete stranger or, because he knows him from the day before, and he tells him to follow him because he's going into Galilee.

And he goes off and finds Nathanael and so on. And he says to Nathanael, Before Philip called you when you were sitting under the fruit tree, I knew you. So Jesus himself has sought out Philip from the very, very beginning.

Have I been so long time with you, with all of you, and yet hast thou, you personally, not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.

How sayest thou then, show us the Father? Now, we could, of course, very easily, from our armchair position, take a swing at Philip and say, Oh, yes, well, of course, he shouldn't have been asking that at all.

Of course, he should have known that you can't see the Father. I mean, how could he expect to be given a vision of the Lord? When, you know, John chapter 1, go back to it, you know, verse 18, No man hath seen God at any time.

[13 : 38] The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. And likewise, if we were to look in 1 John, chapter 4, verse 12, it says, No man hath seen God at any time.

2 Corinthians 5, at verse 7, We walk by faith, not by sight. Why should we expect to be able to see the Father? Even Moses only saw his back parts as he went past on the mountain in a blaze of glory and all that he revealed to him.

He didn't show him his face. Nobody has seen the Father. Nobody's allowed on earth to see the Father. And yet, he desires to make contact with us.

He desires to be in touch with us and to guide us, to show us like the tire tread on the ground, to show us the paths by which we should go. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.

Now, sayest thou then, show us the Father. Have I been so long time with you? And yet, it's thou not known me, Philip. Do you not know that the Father reveals himself through me?

[14 : 44] Now, Philip, on the one hand, you could say, you know, where does he think he is asking for this? Of course, he shouldn't be asking for a sight of the Father. If he was asking for a sight of the Father, where would be the faith?

He doesn't mean it in that sense. But Jesus has all these strange explanations that he gives his disciples. And you know, as you read through them, you can forgive the disciples for not grasping that end of the stick right away.

Because sometimes Jesus talks in deep, spiritual things that are not easy to grasp. Especially if you don't yet know the full story and how it's going to turn out and how he's going to rise from the dead and how he's going to pour out the spirit on them.

I know he says it to them. He says it and says it and so on. But they just don't get it. It's like if you try to explain to a primary one child all the intricacies of, you know, geometry and algebra and trigonometry and so on.

And they don't get it because at the moment they're just at one plus one and two minus nothing makes two. You know, they're still at the very, very simple stage and you can tell them higher mathematics and six-year studies mathematics and all the rest of them and they just won't get it.

[15 : 59] But later on when they're older and it's been explained to them, it's been shown to them year by year and step by step it's been unpacked. Those who are mathematically inclined they'll get it. They'll say, oh yeah, I remember being told about this when we buy the primary one but they didn't get it then and the disciples didn't get it then and Philip still doesn't get it even then.

He thinks that by asking for the sight of the Father he is simply reinforcing Jesus' own authority in words. He says, well that's fine Lord, everything you're telling us it's great, you know, Jesus says, I'm the way, the truth and the life.

He says it to Thomas, no man cometh unto the Father but by me. If you'd known me you should have known my Father also and from henceforth ye know him and have seen him. And Philip will be thinking, well Lord, we haven't actually seen the Father.

So just show us the Father, that's fine. Show us the Father and it suffices us. Jesus said, I don't know if I've been so long time with you and yet it's that I've not known me. Start.

This is the whole business that Jesus is trying to convey to them. That it is not by the sight of the eyes but by the sight of faith that they are to walk the way that he leads.

[17 : 15] That they are to be brought through him, through Christ to the presence of the Father to glory itself. Now Philip is right to desire that sight of the Lord.

He's right to desire to be in the presence of the Lord. Because you know we read in the Old Testament Psalm 16 verse 11 that will show me the path of life in my presence.

In the presence of the Lord is fullness of joy. At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. And in the next Psalm 17 verse 15 As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness.

I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness. You might think oh well there that's David saying he's seeing the Lord. No he's not saying that he's seeing the Lord there and then.

but I will behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.

[18 : 11] And even in Psalm 16 thou wilt show me the path of life at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. David is trusting in what the Lord will do.

He is believing and trusting what the Lord will reveal. And the fact that it's not been revealed to him yet is not a problem because faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.

Or rather we might say not seen yet. But that trust it's like Job has told that my words when I've written that they were printed in a book they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever for I know that my Redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth and know after my skin worms destroy this body yet in my flesh shall I see God.

It is a future hope in which he trusts. He knows it will be in his same flesh. It speaks of the resurrection. But it is a future hope a trust they shall see.

They will know. Show us the Father. And it suffices of us. Philip's fault is that he is asking for it now as opposed to trusting by faith.

[19 : 26] Jesus and saying if you see me you have seen the Father. This is all you need. How are you going to get to be with the Lord? Lord we know not where the ghost how can we know the way?

I am the way the truth and the life no man cometh unto the Father but by me. It's not a long complicated torturous journey. Life is a long complicated torturous journey but Christ is not.

Abide in Christ and trust in Christ that he will bring you there. He will take you there. And yes of course there is so many depths and so many mysteries to know and to learn about the Lord Jesus Christ and perhaps we spend a lifetime perhaps we'll spend eternity plumbing those depths of that wondrous spiritual mystery.

But at the end of the day Jesus said you must become as little children. You must put your trust in him as a little child would do if you've seen Christ. That is enough.

Hebrews tells us chapter 2 verses 8 and 9 thou has put all things in subjection under his feet that is under the feet of man and that he put all things in subjection under him he left nothing that is not put under him but now we see not yet all things under him.

[20 : 43] we don't see all things under mankind's feet in the way they were at creation but we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

We don't see everything brought to fulfilment yet but we see Jesus saying I think yeah well actually we don't see Jesus. We don't see him with the eye of flesh. We don't know what he looked like.

Isn't this strange? or perhaps not so strange that in all that we know of Christ all that the New Testament reveals we never once have a physical description of Jesus.

We never have any image portrayed or picture told in words of what he looked like. I know that the knowledge of presence and of image and everything is of paramount importance to this celebrity mad shallow generation.

we desire presentation. We desire to look the part. We desire image. We desire looks. We desire everything to be how it looks great and we want to think what did Jesus look like?

[21 : 54] It doesn't matter what he physically looked like. What matters is what he was like, what he is like and that we have revealed to us.

God has made contact with us in the person of his son Jesus Christ. His witnesses have testified to his death and resurrection and through his spirit they have passed on that witness to others.

They have personally spiritually encountered Christ in each and every subsequent generation. They haven't seen him with the eyes of flesh. They haven't seen him with the eyes of their body but they know him with the eye of faith.

How I been so long time with you and yet I stand up no need for that. Do we not know Christ just because we can't see him? Do we not know the Lord simply because we've never physically set eyes on him?

That's what faith is all about. It is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. We walk by faith not by sight and we have sufficient.

[23 : 06] Christ gives us sufficient to go on. He says this is what God is like. This is what I am like. You want to know what the Father is like? Look at me.

And they could look at him physically and they think well that can't be what God is like. They would see a man like themselves. They would see a Galilean carpenter in the way that they were Galilean fishing and they would think well this can't possibly be God.

But they knew that what the Lord revealed to them was God in the flesh. And it wasn't his physical attributes. Isaiah tells us he had no form, no comeliness that we should desire him.

It wasn't because he was so handsome or tall or powerful or good looking or he died with so many social gifts and abilities. It was that the purity and goodness and love and forgiveness and grace and compassion of God positively shone through him into all the world and those who were themselves the poor and the outcasts and the despised and the downtrodden and the sin ridden and who knew their need they were drawn to him as to a magnet and they could not get enough of him because they knew that what the world offered them was only rejection and judgment and to be despised and to be judged and to be outcast but the Lord offered them was to be included in to be forgiven to be dignified to be given back their life again to have their sins which were many blotted out and washed away to be given new life in him he that hath seen me hath seen the father this is what God is like it doesn't matter as to his physical attributes you will see him soon enough if you're trusting and believing in him in fact in one sense we will all see him whether or not we trust and believe in him because if we are to be condemned we will see him as the judge upon the throne who sends us to a lost eternity so one way or another we will see

Jesus but how do we want to see him do we want to see him just for that last fearful glimpse before we depart to a lost eternity but we want to see him as the lover of our souls the friend of little children and sinners the one who says come up and sit with me in my throne just as my father sat me down on his throne this is what he says to them in revelation this is what he says to the lardy saints the ones that are so lukewarm that he's about to vomit the mouth but he still says to them come and him that overcomes I will cause to sit down with me in my throne I stand at the door and knock now somebody stands at the door and knocks you don't know who's on the other side of the door nowadays security cameras you can see on the screen who's at the door but in a normal situation somebody knocks at the door you don't know until you open it who's on the other side you might have an idea you might have arranged with somebody to come at such and such a time or two o'clock or whatever on a certain day and there's the knock on the door that must be so and so and you open the door but you don't know for sure until you open it who it's going to be now Jesus says I stand at the door and knock you can't see him until you open it you don't know what

[26 : 38] Christ is like until you prepare to let him into your life until you prepare to open the door to him have I been so long time with you with all of you it's a plural and Jesus is saying to the disciples and I would suggest to you he's saying collectively to whoever will listen have I been so long time with you because in truth he has been he's been there through all of your life he's been there from before you were born he's been there through every day of your infancy and babyhood and childhood he's been there on your first day at school he's been there when you went to your first job interview he's been there when you met your wife or your husband or your boss or whatever it might be he's been there in every stage of your life he's always been there but have you ever known him have you ever known him personally have I been so long time with you all of you and yet hast thou not known me he says Philip but it could be any one of our names put him there have we not known him have we not known who he's like have we not known who he is have we not known the character the nature the salvation that Christ freely offers to us even if seen me have seen the father if you want to know what

God is like look at Christ if you want to know how God is going to react to your life look at Christ if you want to know how God is going to react to your sin look at Christ if you want to know the solution to your sin look at Christ he that has seen me have seen the father the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself but the father that dwells in me he do the works in other words there's no discrepancy between me and the father I'm not saying one thing but the father disapproves of this is one of the things with false religion and with the problem of idolatry the idea that God is so bad and mean and so harsh and judgmental and the only way that we can get there is if nice good little Jesus will somehow work his magic and let us in to placate the angry bad God but then Jesus is so holy that really you need his mother to speak to him and to work their way into Jesus through the affections and then to get to God somehow through that that's a myth it's paganism that is idolatry

Jesus says there's no difference between me and the father I and the father are one he says in chapter 10 and verse 30 he that has seen me has seen the father you want to know what God is like you want to know what the father is like you look at Christ believe us thou not that I am in the father and the father in me the words that I speak unto I speak not of myself but the father dwelleth in me he doeth the works it's his words I speak there's no discrepancy between us it's his works that I do there's no discrepancy between us it's his salvation that I offer I'm not going out in a tangent here I and the father are one Jesus said verily verily I say unto you that is I say to you all he that believeth on me the works that I do shall he do also and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto my father and whatsoever he shall ask in my name that will I do that the father may be glorified in the son if he shall ask anything in my name

I will do it now that's a big promise you might think well that's not possible but I'm sure people have asked things in the past and not been granted them did they ask him in the name of Christ did they ask him in the knowledge that it's something that Christ has to give his blessing to Christ has to give his stamp of approval and authority to so it better be something worthy we're asking something that will be honouring to the Lord something which is of our deep spiritual need but ask ask in his name and he has promised that he will do it now you might be sitting there thinking oh well I'm not sure about that I don't know if that will work well I'm not really convinced of that if you don't ask you don't get if you don't spend an eternity wondering what if if only I had done so Christ has been there with you in your life from before you were conceived in the womb he is there through every day and every breath that you draw he is here in this house of prayer this day have

I been so long time with you and yet you stand up no name Philip or your own name or your own life inserted in there have you known me and if you know me then you'll know the father and if you know the father and you know me then you know the way that you must go and you know the way that we are leading you and you know that you can ask me anything isn't that what a loving parent would say to their child whatever your problems are whatever you've done son or daughter for goodness sake tell me if there's something you need don't go out and steal it don't go and take it from somebody else ask me for help ask me and I'll do it I'll help if I can at all and God always can if it's according to his will he always will do it if you shall ask anything in my name I will do it and as the father gives him commandment and he tells them to go on and go out and spread this word this is how this chapter ends

[32 : 25] Jesus saying as the father gave me commandment even so I do arise let us go out from this place but let's not go out the same as we came out let's go out knowing that the lord who has been with us every day of our lives and every step of the way and every breath that we draw is still with us that he wants to reveal what his father is like that he wants us to know him personally that he wants us to ask for what we need ask and it shall be given seek and he shall find knock and it shall be opened unto you so we can only be here for a time and we can only dwell on these things for a time but the witness and the world and the life the lord has called you to that awaits it and that's what the father says to him and that's what he says to his disciples and that's what he says to you arise let us go hands let us pray he hai hai