

Minster Bethel Congregational Church (MBCC)

13/06/2021 -- Philip - Disciples in Question 8

Philip- Out of his depth



Today is "Church & Chat"

A short church reflection with a hymn, reading, (children's activity), prayer, "thought for the week" and then a time to chat. If you need help to join please ask any deacon

All lockdown services can be found at: www.mbccs.co.uk

If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. **2 Peter 2:20**

Good morning and welcome to this week's thoughts.

Our first hymn for today is: "Knowing You Jesus"

[All I once held dear - Robin Mark - YouTube](#)

All I once held dear, built my life upon
All this world reveres, and wars to own
All I once thought gain I have counted loss
Spent and worthless now, compared to this

*Knowing you, Jesus
Knowing you, there is no greater thing
You're my all, you're the best
You're my joy, my righteousness
And I love you, Lord*

Now my heart's desire is to know you more
To be found in you and known as yours
To possess by faith what I could not earn
All-surpassing gift of righteousness

Oh, to know the power of your risen life
And to know You in Your sufferings
To become like you in your death, my Lord
So with you to live and never die

The reading today is John 14: 1-14 [John 14:1-14 NIVUK - Jesus comforts his disciples - 'Do - Bible Gateway](#)



When we are out of our Depth.....

Over the last few weeks we have already learned a little about Philip. We know from the calling of the other disciples that the day after Jesus first called Andrew, John and Peter, Jesus called Philip.

"The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."

Philip was the first one whom Jesus physically sought out and the first one to whom Jesus actually said "follow me." All the other's who are identified in John 1 have come to Jesus either on their own accord or were brought by their friends. Only in the case of Philip is it stated that Jesus took the initiative and "found" him.

This is interesting because all the other seem to be "larger than life." Simon Peter was destined to be a great man and probably would have been a leader in whatever setting he found himself.

Andrew, his brother, although not so bold, is constantly bringing people to Jesus.

Nathanael, is identified as a man completely without deceitfulness.

Yet it was not any of these that Jesus sought out. It was Philip, a completely ordinary man, who every time we see him seems to be completely out of his depth. He was a humble ordinary man who most of us can identify with. Philip's first reaction was to go to his friend Nathanael, with the news of Jesus and when Nathanael questioned "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip doesn't even try to answer but simply counters with the invitation "come and see".

I like the fact that it is not necessary to be able to answer every possible question about God before we can deliver service to Jesus.

"Come and see" is the same offer that Jesus had earlier made to Andrew and his friend when they had sought to question Jesus about who he was and where he was going Jesus said, "Come and see" (John 1:39).

It also was the response of the Samaritan woman who was saved by the well, she invited her friends, "Come and see a man who told me everything I had ever done" (John 4:29).

It is the same invitation given by the angels to the two women at the tomb, "Come and see the place where he lay." (Matthew 28:6)

It has been the invitation of Christ down through the ages, "come and see". It is still the invitation of the church. "Come and see! Come and see what Jesus is all about!"

Philip reminds us that although we maybe out of our depth, Christianity is about knowing Jesus. Not just knowing details about the life of Jesus, but KNOWING Jesus.

We also learned about Philip as we learned about Andrew on two occasions:

Feeding the Five Thousand – (John 6:5-7) and The Visit of the Greeks – (John 12:20-22)

Philip was a man of faith, yet like us, sometimes it was a weak faith. He had a habit of running everything through his mental calculator. Jesus asked Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

Sometimes Philip was too analytical for his own good. Jesus asks Philip a question not in order to find out information but John tells to "test him." But it would seem that by the time Jesus asked the question, Philip already had his calculation prepared. "Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little." Philip's calculations went something like this, "If we had a lot of money (which we don't) and if we could

spend it all on bread (which we can't), then there would not be enough to give everyone a little taste." I have no doubt that Philip's analysis and calculations were correct, as far as they went.

However, his calculations were incorrect because they do not take God into account. His calculation that it was impossible was his sole contribution to the solution of the problem. Once again we see Philip completely over his head. He seemed to have no idea how the problem could be solved.

The Visit of the Greeks – (John 12:20-22). Just a few weeks ago we heard how Philip took the gentiles to Andrew to be introduced to Jesus. They wanted Philip to help them in their quest to "see" Jesus. When they spoke of a desire to "see Jesus" it was obvious that they had more in mind than just catching sight of him. They wanted an interview with Jesus and looked to Philip to arrange it. Philip was naturally cautious and proved too hesitant when he had to make a move that he was unsure about. Could he, should he, bring Gentiles to Jesus? There was no precedent for introducing Gentiles to Jesus. He was presented with a problem that he did not know what to do with, so he took the case to the man he considered his mentor in the faith, Andrew. We know it all ended well, but once again Philip is shown as being out of his depth.

In today's reading we see Philip along with the other disciples in the upper room. As they take their last meal together Jesus is attempting to comfort their hearts over his imminent departure.

In this passage Philip said to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."

In all fairness to Philip, he is asking for what has happened before. Probably when he made this request, he had in mind the Old Testament examples of when individuals saw a vision of God.

Moses asked to see God's glory and God replied that he would make his glory pass before him (Ex 33:19).

Isaiah was another. His vision of God was of God high and lifted up and seated upon a throne (Isaiah 6:1).

Perhaps this is what Philip had in mind with his request, that would grant some such vision and it would clear away all of their difficulties. We can feel a little bit sorry for Philip at this point when Jesus replies in verse nine, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip?"

It reminds me when I sometimes jump in with an answer before I have understood the question and then feel really silly. I think that Philip must have felt this way. I wonder if Jesus was saddened by Philip's lack of understanding. Jesus responds to Philip by saying,

"How can you ask this Philip? Where have you been for the last three years?" Jesus continues with "He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves."

Instead of granting Philip's request or even attempting to explain why his desire is unwise or impossible, Jesus began to teach what it really means to see God. Jesus in his response makes it clear that what is needed is not a demonstration but a comprehension.

However, although Philip was often out of his depth, he was called to follow Jesus and through Philip and his simple questions we have the chance to comprehend and through that comprehension we can truly know Jesus and like Philip through truly knowing Jesus we can be instrumental in spreading that precious knowledge.

Our second hymn for today “Just as I am”

[Just As I Am, Without One Plea - YouTube](#)

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot;
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt;
Fightings within, and fears without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind;
Yes, all I need, in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Just as I am, Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now, to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Today's Pray:

Dear God. Thank you that like Philip when we are out of our depth you are there. Help us to “come and see” when you call. Help us to grow in our understanding of you and to share that knowledge with others so they can know you. – Amen.

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