

Come and See

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What if we saw through the eyes of one of the original apostles, Philip? What if there was a Christian Spirituality self-help book written on this very theme? Jesus simply asked Philip to "Follow Me" and Philip complied. Philip was open to Jesus' call. Are we? Could "Follow Me" be the title of a new book? Can you almost see Mary suggesting "Do whatever He tells you." Would the publication of such a book help Christian Spirituality become more understood and accepted? Would it help people grow spiritually? Unlike the spirituality books of today, certainly there would be much more credit given to God. Do you agree that the golden nuggets taught by Jesus can easily be applied to today's society? Would it cure some of problems people are having today?

Can it be said that Nathaniel (Bartholomew) had a closed mind when he stated, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" What if Philip had not asked, "Come and See?" Would Nathaniel have seen? Would he be an apostle and a saint today? Was it a spiritual awakening? Nathaniel was open to Philip's call, "Come and See!" Are we open or closed-minded?

Today, many of the lost could be found with so simple of a statement "Come and See." Can living apart from God be a spiritual darkness too? What would happen if we tithed 10% of our time to the Lord each day? It is only 2 hours and 24 minutes. Spend an hour in prayer, a half hour at daily mass and an hour of scripture is all one needs. We can only find out if we listen to Philip's words, "Come and See."

"Sir, we would like to see Jesus." Can Philip introduce us to his friend Jesus, much like he did with the Greek gentiles? What would you wear? What would you say? How would you prepare? What would Philip suggest? Communion? The Sacrament of Reconciliation? Prayer? Or all three, in ample quantities? What is more valuable - going it alone or having someone like Philip refer you? We know it as intercessory prayer. Isn't asking for help from a friend always a good idea? "Come and See," Philip would most certainly say. Like Philip, we must all follow Jesus.

We are all human beings. Why do most people forget the "being" part and just think and act "human?" Could a successor to Philip, Retired Auxiliary Bishop

for the Archdiocese of New York Patrick V Ahern be an example of “being?” You may recall his name, he wrote Maurice and Therese. He is dear personal friend. He clearly enjoys the present moment. At 87, he is quite forgetful. Rather than fret over it and have people suffer with him, he relishes it. It is quite a joy to be in his presence. He stops to admire the 100-year-old rose bush. He pauses later on a busy street and wonders aloud why God allows him to say hello to everyone. He enjoys going to pick up his suit at the cleaners, only to realize he never brought it in. His simple joy infects those around him. He attributes all his life’s many successes to receiving the Eucharist every day since his sixteenth birthday. Could it be said that if more were to receive the Eucharist each day, our lives would improve? Smiling, Philip would say, “Come and See.” Is it that easy?

Progressively, over these past two years, my wife has witnessed a profound change in me. She innocently asks, “What happened?” Prayer, communion, forgive and be forgiven is always my response. Probably more than anyone else, she has seen the change and enjoyed its fruits. But she finds it almost impossible to believe it is only that. Like my friend Philip would say, “come and see.” Jesus asked me to “follow him.” I complied. Mary gently instructed me to “do whatever he tells you.” I listened. My beautiful wife of 32 years is starting to hear Philip say “come and see.” She will then hear Jesus instructing her to “follow Him.” Anything other than God’s way is no way.

Another modern day living Apostle, Italian Archbishop Bruno Forte describes the Sacrament of Reconciliation this way: “God . . . creates a new heart in you, puts a new spirit in you, so you can live a life reconciled with Him . . .” Wouldn’t cleansing our soul be like taking a shower before we get dressed? Would you present yourself dirty to our Lord? After all, our visits are spiritual. Could it be said that after reading the quote of Archbishop Forte, you want to run to confession? Can you hear Jesus using the words he said to Philip: “Follow Me?” How many people would take up this call and begin their purgative process? “Come and See,” Philip would surely respond. Oh, to learn how to ask for forgiveness and be forgiven. Trying to do it “my way” just doesn’t work; many have yet to learn that “my way” is a song, not a life strategy. One can be free and clear of all anger and hatred. With no longer a need to condemn, no longer a need to gossip, no longer a need to offer opinions, and no longer a need to judge anybody. Like an oil change, you can get a new heart and soul at any time. “Come and see.”

At the last supper, Jesus tells Philip (and the rest of the disciples), "If you ask anything of Me in My name, I will do it." How many of us ask in prayer? How many of us pray? Time limits me to only recite part of a prayer I pray daily. Jesus speaks it to me. It is true, as it is real. "Give Me of your time, and I will do half and more of your work; Give Me of your thoughts, and I will enlighten your mind; Give Me of your will, and I will return to you My peace; Give Me of your **love**, and I will fill your days with joy." Could this simple, beautiful prayer, read with faith, change your life? For me, clutter left. Time appeared. Whenever I am busy, I pray more, not less. Philip would once again say, "Come and See." Fr. Shaughnessy, a friar at EWTN believes the best time to ask Jesus is as He enters through your lips in communion. He believes there is never a better moment. Can it be said we are "in union" with God for that period of time? "Come and See."

If anyone doubts that Philip is up to the task of helping us in today's times, our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI dedicated his entire address at his September 6th, 2006 audience speaking about Philip.

If Philip is good enough for Jesus, shouldn't he be for us? "Come and See."

(This was an oral presentation delivered on 10/21/06 as part of my fall 2006 coursework)
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