

Stage III. The Early Judean Ministry

B. The First Glorious Week of Disciple-Making

4. Day Four: The Fourth and Fifth Disciples Believe in Jesus

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #034

JN 1.43-51

43 The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. He found Philip, and said to him, *"I command you to keep on following me."*

44 Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. 45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote--Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

46 "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip.

47 When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, *"Look! This is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceitfulness."*

48 "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, *"I saw you while you were still under the fig tree, before Philip called you."*

49 Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel."

50 Jesus said, *"You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see much greater things than that!"* 51 He then added,

"Very truly I tell you, you will see 'HEAVEN OPEN, AND THE ANGELS OF GOD ASCENDING AND DESCENDING ON' the Son of Man."

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *the words of Jesus are italicized in red*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	Bethany, on the East Side of the Jordan River
Timeline	Mid-March, 30 AD (Month Two)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage III: The Early Judean Ministry
	B. The First Glorious Week of Disciple-Making
Title	4. Day Four: The Fourth and Fifth Disciples Believe in Jesus

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COMMENT:

Day Four in this glorious week abounded with four powerful sayings declared by Jesus, on the way to leading two more people to faith in himself... Philip, and Nathanael (disciples four and five). Follow these links to commentary and application on these four sayings of Jesus.

[#01](#) *"I command you to keep on following me."*

[#02](#) *"Look! This is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceitfulness."*

[#03](#) *"I saw you while you were still under the fig tree, before Philip called you."*

[#04](#) *"Very truly I tell you, you will see 'HEAVEN OPEN, AND THE ANGELS OF GOD ASCENDING AND DESCENDING ON' the Son of Man."*

In today's reading we want to see and understand that disciple-making according to Jesus is inherently a multiplication process.

Think through the process of evangelism that we have seen on day three and four. John the Immerser witnessed that Jesus as *"the Son of God, the 'LAMB OF GOD' who really takes away the sins of the world."* As a result of this witness, Jesus commanded two seekers, Andrew, and an unnamed person--probably John, the author of the fourth gospel-- to *"come and see."* They both believed in Jesus as the Messiah that day.

Having "found" the Messiah, Andrew immediately led his brother Simon to Jesus. The Messiah then brought Simon to saving faith. Don't miss this. Due to the Immerser's witness, the first two people believed; because of Andrew's witness, two disciples then became three. (This was all "Day Three")

On Day Four, Jesus himself "found" Phillip, and led him into faith. Phillip in turn "found" Nathanael, and invited him to *"come and see"* Jesus, who then led him into saving faith. Out of the first five disciples, Jesus only directly "found" Phillip himself. All the other disciples were introduced to Jesus by other believers. Even Phillip was a disciple of the Immerser before Jesus found him, so he too was influenced by the witness of another believer.

Let's sum up the progression of disciple-making so far.

John the Immerser witnessed to Andrew, John, Simon, Phillip, and Nathanael.

Andrew witnessed to Simon.

Phillip witnessed to Nathanael.

Jesus used the witness of John the Immerser, Andrew, and Phillip to personally lead all five of the first disciples to believe in him. This means that three generations of disciple-making were already evident in these first five disciples:

First generation: John the Immerser and Jesus

Second generation: Andrew, John, Phillip

Third generation: Simon, Nathanael

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The fact that Phillip repeated Jesus' earlier command/promise: "*come and see,*" to Nathanael reinforces the "multiplication" aspect of Jesus' disciple-making vision. From the first day of Jesus' evangelism, new disciples were already leading other people to faith, and they were repeating HIS very words in doing so. Like a seed, Jesus had sown his word... "*come and see,*" and now those words were sprouting as multiplied fruit containing more seeds in the mouths of his disciples...constantly bearing more fruit.

This is how discipleship works. First we believe in Jesus. Then we begin to become like him by doing what HE does, and saying what HE says. Jesus then uses that process to bring an ever-multiplying harvest of people to faith in him. This first glorious week of evangelism firmly established the principle that disciple-making is a process of multiplication... according to Jesus. This was his example, and expectation as well.

One of Jesus' final commands of his earthly ministry was the "Great Commission." (MT 28.16-20) Here the risen Jesus commanded the evangelism multiplication process as the ongoing mission of the Church. Jesus was the first generation. The Apostles and the rest of the 120 disciples that were present at Pentecost were the second generation. He commanded them to "*make disciples of all the nations,*" including the subcommand to "*teach them to carefully obey everything I have commanded you.*" This sub-command directed each successive generation of believers to train the next generation to continue the multiplication process, until all people in all the nations are reached with the gospel.

APPLICATION:

Jesus' plan for reaching all the nations, and every individual in the world with his gospel is based on multiplication. Each new believer should become a multiplying disciple-maker. Starting with just one believer, IF every Christian would lead just one person a year to faith in Christ, and that process were to continue with every new Christian through the multiplication process, everyone in the entire world could be evangelized in just 27 years! That is the power of multiplication growth.

See it here, in the process of doubling: $1 = 2 = 4 = 8 = 16 = 32 = 64 = 128 = 256 = 512 = 1024 = 2048 = 4096 = 8192 = 16,384 = 32,768 = 65,536 = 131,072 = 262,144 = 524,288 = 1,048,576...$

Every living thing has been designed by the Trinity to grow by multiplication in this manner, through the process of each cell dividing into two and continuing to double. Each of us began as one cell, and grew to a conglomeration of billions of cells through this multiplication growth, Jesus has wired it into our DNA. This is also his plan for the the growth of his gospel and church to include all the nations and people of the earth.

The doubling numbers presented above started with just one. It is sobering to realize that there are already about 2 billion professing Christians in the world today. If every one of us would lead just one person to faith this year, and every believer did the same thing again next year, the entire world would be evangelized in just two years. Just doubling two more times would do it. This is the power of multiplication.

Are you following Jesus in such a way that he is using you to lead other people to faith in him, who lead others in turn?

Specifically, have you led other people to faith in Jesus in your life? Have you guided them to "multiply" their faith by leading someone else to faith in him as well? Have you then made sure that your "disciple" leads their "disciple" to continue the multiplication by becoming a "disciple-maker" too? In Jesus' plan the multiplication from generation to new generation of disciples never stops growing until he returns.

These are sobering questions. They help us to see that merely witnessing is not enough to fulfill Jesus' plan. We must understand our mission to be multiplication of believers through disciple-making.

*What do you need to change in order to become a multiplying, disciple-making follower of Jesus?
When will you begin to do that?*