

Philip Saith Unto Him, Come and See

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As some of you know, and probably most of you, WMBI has, for the last two and a half years, given free time to me and this church. I have a microphone here in the study, which makes it convenient. I don't have to go down to the studios downtown. And I preach a half hour, 28 minutes to be exact. They take a minute to sign me on, a minute to sign me off, and I have the other 28 minutes to myself.

And in the arrangement, I made with this station is that I can preach anything I want to, and usually do anything I want to. They don't edit me, nor examine me theologically. I told them I would preach the deeper life, the spirit-filled life, the sanctified life. They said that's what we want. So, I've been doing it, best I could.

And now we come up to Letter Week on WMBI, and I am not a popular preacher. I don't have the looks for it, and I don't preach on the things that make people mad or delight them nearly to death. And you have to do one of two things. Either get into politics, make people very mad, or else chuck them under their theological chins and keep them happy. And I don't do any of those things.

So, the result is that I am not a popular preacher, either in my local congregations or on the air, and I am requesting that you write into the station. If we can at least get some letters from the Alliance people telling the good friends of WMBI that the half hour isn't wasted, that they'd like to see it continue. They want those letters, incidentally. It's very necessary they have them. For technical reasons, they must be able to tell the government, or that wing of the government that decides who does and who doesn't get a radio station, whether they're making good. And they want to know that.

And so, will you write in? A postcard will do. A letter, of course, is better than a card. But a card will do. Don't write a long epistle. Nobody has time for long epistles. People write me 12-page letters, and by the time I've reached the 11th page, I'm hanging on the ropes. Don't do that. It doesn't pay. Simply write them a nice letter, short half page or paragraph, and say we love WMBI, keep up the good work, and if you want to add, P.S., we like Talks from a Pastor's Study, and then they'll know it's from the Alliance.

Now, I have been in the first chapter of John since I am ashamed to tell you when. How long has it been? It's been a long time, but I can't help myself. The prologue to the Gospel of John is one of the most highly condensed and most glorious passages in the entire Bible, and I have gone slowly, very slowly, through it, taking it as I found it, and trying to find out what it said.

But I'm going to surprise you tonight by reading a whole long section, from verse 35 to 51, and then that will finish, we end at chapter 1. Let me read it. I wonder if you would like to help me read it, and we'll read responsibly chapter 1 of John's Gospel, beginning with verse 35.

Now, if we were like this little ten-year-old here in the green sweater, we'd just quote it. But most of us are forced to do a little reading as well as quoting. So, let's turn to John 1:35, and we'll read responsibly the rest of the chapter. Is everybody ready?

And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see.

They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone. The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

Now the most important thing about this first chapter, about the entire New Testament, is that a figure appeared. A man appeared and walked among men. And John explains that this man had been before the foundation of the world. That it was out of His utterance that the world came into being. And that He had existed before time was, and I believe before space was, and before matter was.

But this spaceless One came to space. And this timeless being came to time. He came to geography, so that you can pinpoint it on the map and know exactly where He was born, where He was brought up, and where He died, and the very hill from which He ascended into heaven. And He came to time. I notice here that the Holy Ghost has so checked, and rechecked, and double-checked, that it's possible to go into history and locate Him exactly.

Now in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontus Pilate, being governor of Judea, Herod, the Tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip, Tetrarch of Aeturia, and of the region of Trachonitis and Licinius, the Tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests.

Now that's pinning it down. He's placed in here a great many of identifiable historical characters. So that he's not simply born into a vacuum, or out of a vacuum, into a vague, timeless, historical past. But you can trace it down historically to a given point. Before that He was not. After that He was. There is the point in history. He came, I say, into time. And He came to geography.

And you will notice this, that He came to one of the smallest countries in the entire world, and yet, He hadn't been here but a brief time until that little country became the most important country in the world. He came to time, and it was only a brief while after that, that time itself was changing. So that only last week we celebrated the change from one year to another. And it dated back to the time when this figure appeared.

Now there had been great men in the world before He came. I shall not worry you tonight by reciting, even attempting to recite, the great men who had lived before He was born. But they had had Alexander, and Pompey, and Caesar, and God knows how many others who bore the sword. And yet He hadn't been here but a brief time until He easily stood higher than all of the great military leaders of the world. And no one even compared Him.

No one would even be intellectually, willing intellectually, to commit himself to a comparison between this One who came and any others who had come before Him. There had been great poets before His time, perhaps the chief among them being the great man who wrote the Odyssey, and some other, the father of modern, the father of poetry. And yet that man fades as the moon fades before the rising of the sun.

And no one would consider comparing Jesus Christ with Homer. There had been great sculptors, Phidias for instance, who chiseled his way into earthly immortality as he carved his mighty Job from the rock. And yet who knows anything about Phidias? Some of you will hear the word for the first time tonight, maybe.

But nobody hears Jesus' name for the first time who's ever been anywhere in modern civilization. This Man who walked among men, easily towered, not head and shoulders like Saul above others, but like a mighty mountain oak over the dandelions and grass beneath. And yet this man showed himself to be altogether a normal human man.

He was the manliest Man I think that ever lived. He was no hermit. There have been many honest men, and I am certainly not meaning to reflect upon them, who have withdrawn themselves from human society and hope by so doing to make themselves holy and pleasing to God. Our Lord Jesus never did any of those things.

I told a Japanese church the other night, Friday night, when I preached there to them, that there was a man by the name of Simeon Stylites who believed that he could make himself holy by separating himself from his fellow men. So, he climbed a pillar 30 feet high and stayed up there 30 years. And at the end of the 30 years, he wasn't any better. He was only older and dirtier.

And they have tried it by going into caves. They have tried it by separating themselves one way and another. But Jesus never did it. Jesus never had any faith in that heresy that you can rub off wickedness by touching it with your elbow.

And He never believed that you could rub off righteousness by touching it with your elbow. You don't take righteousness like you take measles, and you don't catch evil as you catch smallpox. It's something different, and Jesus knew it. And so, He could relax and be a human being. He was not an eccentric. There have been eccentrics.

I have been reading the writings, a little of the writings, as much as I with my feeble equipment am able to go into it, of Jacob Bain, the great German mystic. And I don't know what he talked about three-fourths of the time, and I think it's a duet. I don't think he did either. He was a bit of an eccentric. And William Blake, the great Christian English poet, was so eccentric that while he said beautiful and spiritual things, he sometimes used to commune with a fairy, which he claimed came and sat on his knee. He'd sit and talk to the little thing.

Well, God forgive him and bless him. He knew that there was a tooth out there, and he won't count it against him. He was a great Christian, but he was an eccentric Christian. But there was nothing eccentric about Jesus. Odd how that word eccentric has been used in machinery. You take a disc or a wheel, and if you go right to the center of it and bore a hole and put in an axle, and it'll spin perfectly smooth.

But if you put the hole in the disc a little off from the center, it'll jump around. They call that an eccentric. Well, that's human beings. They turn around all right, but they turn around a little jumpy. And I have met that kind of Christians. There are also many of them among the people of God. They're good people, and they're getting along, but you always have a feeling they're just a little bit off center.

But you can study the life of Jesus and read everything He said, and when you're through, you'll say to yourself, this Man was on center. There was nothing eccentric, nothing off center about this Man. He was a salty and sane and sound as the morning sun.

Well, then our Lord was no bookworm. There are Christians that you can tell they're Christians when you see them. They got big heads, usually lots of hair, and big thick glasses. And they will be able to discuss any spiritual subject from any standpoint. They're the religious bookworms.

Our Lord was not a bookworm, though He could read and write, and nobody knew why, because His father hadn't been rich and couldn't send him to school. They said, how does this man know writing and reading? He never went to school. He didn't have to go to school.

But He wasn't a bookworm. He didn't his writings, or then His teachings, which became later writings, did not smell of the study. He didn't begin by saying, as Professor so-and-so puts it, as Dr. so-and-so in that beautiful little treatise says, I always breathe a deep sigh and close the book when I come to that part.

But you never find that in the Lord Jesus' teachings. He spoke direct. He was in touch with God, and everything He said was as fresh and real and new as if never anything had been said before.

And then this Man was powerful, I don't have to tell you of the power. All nature bowed to Him. The sea and the waters and the wind and death and disease and the grave all gave way to the Son of God. And He proved Himself, went on to show Himself to be the purest of men.

Old **Thomas à Kempis** said, If thou wouldst have peace of mind, inquire not too closely into other men's matters. And I've tried to make that a rule of my life in recent years. Don't inquire too closely into, brethren, the lives of the brethren. Because if you do, you're going to be disappointed just as sure as you live.

We find a saint, we clap on to somebody, usually that comes from some other country, and we make a great deal out of him and boost him high, and we all but canonize him. In our hearts we do canonize him. But I have never found one that would bear too close investigation. Give every man a wide margin for his humanity's sake, and don't insist that he be as perfect as the Man about whom I'm speaking tonight.

He will be as perfect as that Man in that day. But up to now, the chances are there will be little wheels within wheels that will be off center a bit. But they get along, and God loves him, and he'll make it, and he's a good man, he intends well, and he's not wrong by choice, he's just that way. So don't be hard on him.

God told me that a long time ago, and you people may be glad he did. Because I was preaching some years ago, and the Lord took me aside and told me a few things. I wrote them down on a pad and kept them for years, kept them until I memorized them, and then I've lost the pad, don't need it, because I got it in my head. God said to me, now listen, you're preaching a standard nobody on earth can ever live. And not only that, you're preaching a standard you don't live yourself.

And third, give these people a chance. Remember, they're human beings. Remember, they're staggering up out of a catastrophe and a fall. And they're human, and treat them as if they were human. And I lay on the floor on my stomach and waited on God over that revelation as though it had come in some new book of the Bible to me, and that changed the whole color of my preaching.

So, let's remember that God's dear people can afford to be off center, but the Savior couldn't. He came in order finally to put us all on center, so that perfection will finally rule and wondrous spiritual symmetry all throughout the redeemed human race. But this man was pure. His life would endure investigation, and He was the kindest man.

Children came to Him, and widows came to Him, and harlots came and knelt at His feet, sick and tearful. And the outcasts came, and the publicans came, and everybody came, and everybody was welcome except the self-appointed big shots who knew it all. And they didn't get any welcome when they came, and they went away licking their wounds.

But there was a kindness about Jesus. You never have to be afraid that the Lord will snap at you. I meet some of God's people that are very spiritual people on the Lord's Day, but if pressure comes on, they get churlish.

But the Lord never was churlish, never a place in the entire Bible. He stood calmly and kindly and cut the heads off of the hypocrites. But He did it so kindly that the little boy hanging on to His robe never noticed what was happening. And the little girl that had come over and was looking up into His face never lost a smile off of her cute little face. He just kept looking. And the mother that was bringing her baby never went away.

He didn't do it the way some of us do it, cut a man down to his heels, but He just rolled His head and went on and said, Suffer the little children that come unto Me and forbid them not. The kindest of all men was this Man, this figure that appeared in time and space and walked among men.

This old one you know, but I'll repeat it right here that Dickens once, who was the master of pathos, was talking with some other literary figures and they said to him, Charles, what do you think, where do you think in literature the most touching, the most deeply pathetic thing can be found? Oh, he said, there's no question about it, the story of the prodigal son.

He said, there's something about that story that's poignant and pathetic to the point of tears, something wondrous and beautiful, and it's, to my mind, the richest in all literature. And that was simply tossed off in a little talk by the Savior. It was part of His life that you saw there. The tenderness of the boy coming back was a little picture of the heart of the man, Jesus.

Well, this magnetism of Jesus was beginning to be felt in the text which I have read. We have read together here, and it says they followed Him. And here were some coming along following Him in the text and He turned, and He saw them following Him and He said to them, what seek you? And they said to Him, Rabbi, where do you live?

Now, can you imagine that? Now, He simply took them off balance. They were just following Him because there was something about this Man that was different. There was a magnetism there that they felt in their hearts but couldn't put into words and rather by a sort of spiritual reflex, they started to follow Him.

He wanted to crystallize that and get some sort of action, get it permanent, so He turned and said, what do you want? And they said, where do you live? Now, they didn't mean, where do you live? They scarcely knew what they wanted themselves. And if you can show me or you can put me in touch with someone who's dissatisfied and doesn't know what he wants, doesn't know everything and hasn't been everywhere, but simply knows that he's dissatisfied, knows that there is a longing in his heart, an aspiration there, a kind of an instinct to migrate.

He's got it there like a goose with her wings clipped. He has this instinct to migrate. It's there, though covered and buried under sin and mostly not recognized, but it's in him there.

Jacob had it, old, crooked Jacob had that instinct to migrate. Abraham, his grandfather before him, had it. And he turned his old deaf ear up to God and heard, and God said, get out of your own country. And he migrated and got out and followed the gleam.

Now, you show me somebody like that and it won't, it isn't hard to lead him to the Lord. And if you turn on him suddenly and say, what do you want? He'll stutter and look embarrassed. He doesn't know exactly what he wants. He only knows that up to now he hasn't found it. This isn't it. They've shown him this and they've shown him that, but this isn't what he's looking for.

The instinct to migrate, the aspiration of the soul after eternity and the eternal life that lies there. And Paul said, lest you think I'm a liberal now, Paul said that people feel after Him, if your chance they might find Him. There's the groping after God.

Brethren, if that groping after God wasn't born into every man the first time, there never would be any second birth. That groping after God is called the prevenient grace of God. It is God working in a man, not effectually, but preveniently. It is that groping after God. And these fellows had it. They came following along behind Him groping and He turned sharply around and said, what do you want? They said, we don't know what we want.

So, the one bright fellow said, where do you live? Nothing you know. There was no question. What did they care where he lived? They weren't hunting a man's house. They were hunting their soul satisfaction. And all they knew, they said, where do you live? But He got them, and he said to them, come and see. And by extension, will you let that word see mean a little more than it might have meant at first there to Jesus and to those followers? He simply says, come and see.

Now, see, there, must mean more than simply look with your eyes. It means experience. He did not offer to these persons a book of rules. Thank God He didn't hand them a book of discipline or bylaws. And He didn't give them a rule for life, seven ways to make friends with your nerves, ten ways to relax successfully. He didn't give them any of those things and He didn't bring them under some authoritarian system telling them what they had to believe, feeding little theological ideas to them as a bird feeds worms to her young. They open their mouths, close their eyes and gulp.

And that's the trouble with fundamentalism today, brother. We have listened. We're not an authoritarian crowd. Usually we say the Catholics are, and others are that sort, who have catechetical schools and teach their children to make them believe it. And if they don't believe it, they'll send them to purgatory.

But you and I don't believe that. But nevertheless, we have our authoritarian system, and we ram it down them. And they've got to take it, and they take it on our authority. And that's why we backslide every generation.

That's why a denomination will start out, like the Alliance, for instance. It'll start out all fresh and alive, like a youth at the birth of the morning. And we'll start to make our journey. By the time we've reached the halfway, we begin to slow down. And long before the shadows fall and the sun sets, we're hanging on our cane. Because we've

slowed down because we've ceased to have personal spiritual experience and have begun to take experience as second hand.

Our Lord gave them not authoritarian religion. He didn't say, you've got to do this and believe this. He just said, come and see. And that word, see, means experience.

Some of you might say, now there he goes preaching experience. That's the trouble with that man. He preaches experience. I do not preach experience. I preach Christ. But I insist that Christ, rightly understood, will produce spiritual experience. And if He does not produce spiritual experience, the Christ you know is not the Christ of the Bible, or the Christ of the Bible is not known rightly unless you have experience of Him.

So, He offers Himself to human experience. And this word, come, is here. Now notice it, as I've pointed out before, come, in the Bible is not a journey for the feet, but it's a journey for the heart. You don't have to get up and move in the church. I'm almost made to smile sometimes when I see how we tie salvation down to localities and body postures.

I remember hearing, a fellow wrote me a letter and told me about a certain preacher that believed you had to be saved at an altar, and he was having a union meeting with another preacher and several others. But he said, I'm going to have to bring my altar to this meeting. He said, I was saved at an altar, and I don't believe that you can be saved any other way.

Another preacher said, well, then I'll have to bring my bed, because he said I was saved in bed. And he said, if you've got to be saved somewhere particular, I'll have to bring my bed. Well, you could go on. I knew a man that was saved in a cab, riding along fast. I mean, he was an engineer. Other fellow fell into a well upside down, said the best prayer he ever made, was standing on his head. There he was, asking God to get him out of there.

Now, my brethren, localities and body postures, that has nothing to do whatsoever; It's spiritual experience, and it's a journey not for the feet, but for the heart. You come to Christ inside your heart, not with your feet, but inside your heart.

And He said, come. And that coming, I would put it like this. First, there is consent. Do you consent that you want to come to Jesus Christ inside your heart? Having consented, do you decide to come? Having decided to come, are you determined you will come? Being determined to come, then are you coming? That's about all there is to it. Come, He said, come. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden.

I heard that text once preached on the street and gave my heart to the Lord as a result, and have been a Christian ever since. Come unto me, that word, come. I came, inside my heart, consented to come, decided to come, determined to come, and came.

Now, you come to Jesus the same as you come to everybody else. Sometimes people come to an altar of prayer or to a prayer room or somewhere to get spiritual help and instruction, which is perfectly legitimate and proper, and they can't pray, they're silent. But as soon as you make them see that Jesus Christ is a person, and that he has all the

attributes of personality, and you can talk to Him just the same as you talk to your friend that you're telling your troubles to, all their trouble vanishes and they begin to pray.

Jesus is a person, and you can talk to Him just as you could talk to your pastor or your Sunday school teacher or your friend. You can tell Him anything, say anything to Jesus you want to say.

Let me tell you this, both to those who are not yet saved and those who are Christians of some experience, remember this. Say anything to the Lord Jesus you want to say, as long as you're by yourself, and it doesn't sound irreverent. If you find the whole business boring, tell Him so. If you find His way hard, tell Him so. Tell Jesus anything that's on your heart, He won't be mad, and He won't turn angrily from you. Tell Him anything you want to tell Him, because He knows it anyhow.

Our friend Tom Hare gave me the best reason why he didn't particularly go out for a gift of tongues. He said, I don't need it. He said, when it comes to talking to God, I don't need to get tongues, because God knows what I'm praying about before I start.

And when it comes to talking to people, I managed to make myself understood well enough with the Irish tongue of God. So, he said, I personally don't need it. Now he wasn't being funny, he was just telling me in his good, serious way that he didn't need anything extra. He could communicate his ideas to God and man with the equipment he already had.

I think that's quite all right for Tom. Though I certainly don't object, and I don't wish to throw out a blanket indictment of any who might have had a spiritual experience, such as some of our friends claim where they spoke in tongues. I never did. I've never sought to. I don't want to.

But if anybody did, don't get mad and walk out and stomp down the stairs to show how spiritual you are and say, I'll never be back. Because if you've got something more than I got, thank God for it and don't condemn me. But the point is, I'm making there is, that you can go to the Lord Jesus just as you are, and talk to Him just as he is, and say anything you want to say.

Now if you'll remember that, coming will be a very easy matter for you. And he says here, now experience. He gives Himself, the Lord gives Himself to our experience. I mean by that that the heart has senses the same as the body has. O taste and see that the Lord is good. Either that is a wild figure of speech that's to be thrown out as being too visionary, or else it means something. I think it means something.

And I believe the Holy Ghost was saying, you've got taste buds in your soul that you can taste spiritual things with the same as you have in your mouth to taste food with. Taste and see that, and experience that God is good, for that's what the word, see, means there.

You don't see with your tongue. Taste and experience that God is good. And the children of the Lord have taste buds, and God is sweet to them. And we sing the little old ditty,

and He grows still sweeter than He was the day before. And we're perfectly scriptural in it, because Jesus Christ gives Himself to our taste.

And then we learn about Him having garments that take the smell of myrrh and aloes out of the ivory palaces. He gives Himself to our smell with a sweet fragrance like the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley. And He gives himself to our ears, because the Bible's always talking about our hearing from God. And He gives Himself to our spiritual eyes, because He says, look unto Me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.

Isaiah saw the Lord, and Moses saw the Lord, and John saw the Lord. They saw with their inner eyes, and John said, we've tasted and felt and touched and know that this is the Word of God come to be among us.

So, you have within your heart all the equipment you have in your body, only that it's spiritual equipment. And you can know God as accurately and as certainly with that inner spiritual equipment illuminated and aided by the Holy Ghost, as you can know nature around you by the five senses God has given you.

Therefore, you see, brethren, we're not asking people to come and commit intellectual suicide. We're not asking them to unscrew their head and put it on a shelf and say, I'm a believer, I don't have any sense. I'm a believer, I don't know anything. I'm a believer, I don't have to know anything. You can come with a perfect knowledge. That you have another kind of knowledge. It is the knowledge of the heart. It's the knowledge, come and see, come and experience, come to Him just as you are, and He will give you spiritual experience.

Now that makes some people very angry. When anybody stands up with a smiling face and says, I know the Lord is my Savior, they leap right on his neck and say, you bigot, you impossible intolerant fanatic, who are you to say that you know God? I don't know why they get so mad about it. They ought to be glad if somebody knows God, even if they don't.

But they get mad and say you're an intolerant fanatical bigot. You claim you know God, and by inference nobody else does. But the brother, if he's where he ought to be, he'll smile it off and shake his head and smile some more. He knows he knows God. We know that we know Him.

Now time's getting away, and I've got to take that second, come and see. Philip findeth Nathanael. After the Lord had found Philip, Philip had found the Lord. Then Philip found Nathanael, and Philip said to Nathanael what Jesus had said, come and see. Now Philip had come only a little while before.

I tried to find out from the Scriptures how far, and I can't, but just a little while, maybe a few hours before. And we don't know what happened to Philip when he came into an encounter with Jesus. It had only been a little while before, but he'd experienced something so wonderful, so satisfying, and so convincing that he had already passed the place where he doubted and questioned. He didn't need proof anymore. He had the answer.

I turn the radio on sometimes, and we're everlastingly asking questions. This is the day of questions and answers. One fellow asks them, another fellow who doesn't know any more than he does answers them. And that's supposed to be progress and civilization, and we're going somewhere.

Two blind Irishmen in a dark cellar hunting for a black cat that isn't there. But doubts and questions had all passed away. But remember one thing, Philip never could have thought his way into this sense of assurance, never. If he had known all the philosophical systems of the world, and had known all the religions of ancient times, and had known the law and the prophets, and that he probably did know, he never could have thought his way into this place of complete assurance.

You might as well try to dig your way out of Alcatraz with a burnt match, as to dig your way into the kingdom of God with that puny equipment you've got in your head. You can't do it, brethren. And Philip didn't try it, thank God.

He had an encounter with the Man who had been before the world was, and who gathered up in Himself wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, light and life and hope and peace and the essence of the Godhead, the fullness of the Godhead uncreated. And he came to Him as a child, Philip did. He had a quick, wondrous, illuminating and transforming encounter with Him, and then rushed to find Nathaniel, his friend, completely convinced and radiantly happy.

And he said, Nathaniel, I've got something to tell you. It's over. What's over, Philip? The search is over. What search? The search for God and peace in the Messiah. Hallelujah, I have found him whom my soul so long has sought. We have found Him.

And Nathaniel said, you found him? Who is he? He said, he's Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Nathaniel's face fell. And though he was a good, honest man in whom was no guile, he had a question. It was a question of pure prejudice. It wasn't even a theological question. It was a question born out of pure prejudice.

He said, Philip, you knocked the wind out of me when you said Nazareth. Nothing good ever came out of Nazareth. Look at the history of Nazareth. Nothing ever came out of Nazareth. And Philip could have entered into an argument there. He could have shown how learned he was.

He could have proved how tolerant he was and broad-minded. He could have lectured his friend, but he didn't. He said, come and experience. Come and experience. I won't argue religion with you, nor will I try to enlarge your narrow mind about the city of Nazareth. I have something better. I have found Him. Now, you come and taste, and you'll say the same thing.

Nathaniel came, and we don't know what happened exactly there, but there was one flash of light out of the heart of Jesus to the heart of the honest, though puzzled Nathaniel. And he said, Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God. Thou art the King of Israel. And Nathaniel was a saved man.

Here was Jesus walking along, saving them one after the other, without fanfare, without advertising, without the sound of the trumpet, without raising His voice in the street, just walking, this One who had come out of another level and plane of existence and walked into time and space, and took upon Him the body of a man and became a man among us. He walked in His glory. And as He walked, they came.

They came like little pieces of steel to a magnet. They came from everywhere. And as they came, they experienced. And as they experienced, their doubts all fled. Their theological problems were pretty well resolved. They had found Jesus.

I'll tell again the story of the Presbyterian preacher from the South. He went to New York when Simpson was their preacher. He got to listen to Dr. Simpson a few times and mingle with these people. He wrote back glowing letters to his friends down in the Southland about Dr. Simpson and the Alliance.

They wrote him back and said, watch it, Reverend. Watch those Alliance people. Watch their theology. He wrote back and said, their theology has all gone up in a blaze of doxology. And that's the best answer I know, brethren. You and I can have differences of opinion about this and that. And as long as there are two heads on four shoulders, there'll be more than one opinion about everything. Nobody expects us all to be leveled down and harmonized to a point where we don't have a thought of our own.

That kind of thing isn't spirituality, it's suicide. And nobody expects it. A man over here is an honest, serious-minded follower of the school of theology created by Calvin. I respect him if I don't quite follow him. A man over here follows the Dutchman Arminius, all right. I respect him if I don't quite follow him. I'm halfway in between having the time of my life. And I'm not worried about either side, but I'm not condemning either side. Because those aren't the points we agree on.

We Christians don't get together on the eternal decrees and free will and predestination. We say with a smiling face, you know what I found? I found Him whom the law and the prophets told us about. I found the Messiah. Come and see.

You say, you found the Messiah in the Salvation Army? Now wait a minute, don't you know that Salvation Army is a bunch of second-rate people who run around with tambourines and take up offerings? Put away your prejudice, brother. There's many a man in heaven tonight playing a harp that got saved on a street corner, kneeling beside a drum.

Put away your prejudice. He may come out of Nazareth, and sometimes I think he may. You know what I'm worried about now that I close? I'm worried for fear when revival comes, it's going to pass over us, people, and go to Nazareth. That's what I'm worried about. I hope it does. It is, I hope it gets to Nazareth.

But I think there's a lot of us so theologically respectable that the Lord can't do a thing with us. But there may be some people not so respectable. There's a Nazareth around every town somewhere.

And when the Holy Ghost sweeps in, I'm not sure He won't sweep in by their way of Nazareth. By the way of that ironclad denominational group that everybody thinks is too stiff, or that little mission down there that everybody thinks is too dumb, he may pass you up. You know too much.

I've all but given up hope that when revival hits the world, it'll ever come to the Alliance. We've trampled more light under our feet than most people have ever had. I heard one expositor say to a bunch of Alliance men, he said, you're corn-fed cattle with hay on your horns. He said, you've trampled truth under your feet. And he's perfectly right, we have. But I have a pensive hope that He won't pass us by. And I think we ought to sing, O Jesus, Jesus, hear my humble cry. When on others thou art calling, do not pass me by.

Watch out for your theological respectability. Watch out that you can't pray unless you're in a certain way with a certain position and you're dressed in a certain way. Watch it, brethren. God loves overalls and tousled heads and plain people. And He may pass you up, you're too slick.

Well, I think that's all I want to say outside of this, is that the best word for the soul winner was in the mouth of Philip. A true winner of souls never gets himself involved in arguments or theological discussions. He always says, you know what, I've found Him, come and experience. That'll do more and win more people than all your arguments.

Sometimes I think that questions and answers are only a subterfuge for unbelief and impenitence. Come to him and say, I have found Him, now you come and see. And they take a little trip inside their heart, just inside their heart, a little trip from over here where they live to over here where He lives. He receives them and nobody can explain quite what happened. But the result is, after that encounter, they're able to get up and say, well, I found Him too. Simple, I found Him. He of whom the prophets and of Mose did write. Hallelujah, I have found Him.

Could we sing that chorus again, brother? Hallelujah, I have found him, whom my soul so long had sought. All right. It's 253. We did sing it, but I think we could sing a stanza and a chorus again.

[Singing]

I disappoint some people because I don't press invitations. But you know, people get saved anyhow. They get saved anyhow. I don't press invitations. Somebody finds them, they get saved anyhow.

So, I'm not pressing an invitation tonight. But if you're hungry in your heart, I'd like to have you see me, see Mr. McAfee, see some brother or sister you know, and sit in the prayer room. If you can't find what your heart's looking for tonight, think it over seriously. And hear our invitation, simply come and experience for yourself. He's all we say He is, come and see.

Now we'll remain standing, and I think I see way to the rear and to the right my good and loved friend Dr. Whitmer of Fort Wayne Bible College. Brother Whitmer, would you

mind coming down and having a little prayer with us? We'll remain standing while Dr. S. A. Whitmer comes to lead us in a closing prayer.

Our gracious Heavenly Father, we are thankful anew tonight for him who is our Savior and our Lord. Oh God, we pray that we may press beyond just any conceptual knowledge of our Lord, and may He be the object of our love, our devotion, our adoration, and worship.

Will Thou be pleased to bless this Word of life and Truth to all of our hearts. And if there are those here tonight who do not know Christ personally, directly, immediately, may they find Him, whom to know is life eternal. How we thank Thee that in this day we can serve a living Christ.

May He go with us throughout the days of this week. May we walk with Him and talk with Him, and may He become increasingly precious to us. We ask Thy gracious benediction upon each one of us as we go to our homes and respective abodes.

In the name of our blessed Lord Jesus we pray. Amen.