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## Come, see, hear

### John 1.43-51

A short scene where Jesus finds Philip and he accepts Jesus' invitation to follow him straight away. Philip then finds Nathanael, but he is not so keen. Philip simply invites Nathanael to 'Come and see', to meet Jesus for himself and understand who he is.

Now read **John 1.43-51** see p.2 for text.

### A note on the passage

This is a story of two people encountering Jesus. Rather than try to persuade Nathanael that Jesus is the Messiah by clever arguments, Philip simply invites Nathanael to 'Come and see'. Some of us are like Philip and ready to follow straight away, while some of us are like Nathanael – full of questions and needing to see and hear for ourselves. Are you more like Philip or Nathanael, or somewhere in between?

# Come



Jesus said that he knew Nathanael because he had seen him sitting under the fig tree. The fig tree is a symbol of peace, and it was common to sit undisturbed under its branches to meditate or pray. Where do you find peace? What helps you come to God in prayer? Perhaps you could go outside and find a sheltered spot by a tree, or maybe set aside a comfortable space in your house. Work out what environment best helps you to come, hear or see God. If you can't find/create the right environment, use this image to help you find peace and spend time with God.

# See

Philip invited Nathanael to 'Come and see'. We may not feel like we have the opportunity to see Jesus in the way that Nathanael did. But we can see God at work, and we can learn more about God from what we see every day. Choose a household object – ideally, do this in a group with others, or share your thoughts with others – and use it to explain something about the way you see God, e.g. a colander – God filters out what you don't need so that you are left with the good things. Share your object and idea, and discuss the various ways we can see God and what God is like.

# Hear

Listen to the sound clip at [vimeo.com/406653924](https://vimeo.com/406653924). What do you hear?

In a poll, 53% of people reported hearing the word 'Laurel' while 47% heard the word 'Yanny'. Different people listening to the same thing hear it completely differently. Think about, or discuss with others, how different people hear God in different ways. What helps you to hear God? How do you recognise what comes from God?



**You will need:** an empty container or jar, sticky notes or squares of paper, pencils.

Each evening, look back over the day and think of any moments when you heard God's call, or were aware of God's presence in your life or the lives of others. Write or draw a picture of what happened on a sticky note, fold it up and place it in the jar, giving thanks to God for that moment.

If you ever go through a time when God feels far away or absent, dip into the jar and pull out a sticky note to remind yourself of when you felt close to God.

# WATCH

Watch the film *The Snowman* [U] or look at the picture book by Raymond Briggs. The snowman's life is in two halves – in the first, James shows the snowman his world and in the second, the snowman shows James his. They each invite the other to 'come and see'. Talk to someone about your ways of connecting with and hearing God and ask them to show you theirs. How are they similar/different? What have you learned from each other? (As this is the week of Prayer for Christian Unity – 18-25 January – you may like to talk to a Christian of a different denomination/tradition.)

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

**J**esus set off for Galilee. And when he arrived there, he found Philip. Jesus walked towards him. 'Philip,' Jesus said, 'follow me.' Then Jesus walked a little further.

Philip was surprised at the sudden meeting, so he ran to find Nathanael. Excitedly he said, 'I have found him! I have found Jesus, the Messiah, the son of Joseph from Nazareth!'

Nathanael just laughed out loud. 'What? From Nazareth? You are joking! Nothing good comes from Nazareth!'

Philip looked shocked. 'Of course it can! It is him. Jesus!' But Nathanael just laughed. Philip was disappointed with Nathanael's reaction and decided that there was only one way to change his mind. 'Come and see,' he said. Reluctantly, Nathanael agreed, and off they went.

As they walked towards Jesus, he saw them first. 'Look, here is a good and honest man,' Jesus said, pointing to Nathanael. Nathanael was astonished. Jesus seemed to know him already. 'How do you know me?' Nathanael asked.



Jesus smiled and told him, 'I saw you sitting under the fig tree.'

Nathanael was very puzzled. Jesus continued, saying, 'I saw you before Philip found you and called you to "Come and see".'

Nathanael looked at Jesus. Then he said to Jesus in amazement, 'You are the Son of God!'

Jesus replied, 'Do you believe because I saw you and recognised you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this. One day you will see heaven opened and the Son of Man coming in glory with angels around him.'

John 1.43-51

## Did you know?

- Nazareth is Jesus' hometown in Galilee.
- The various titles used in this passage: Messiah, Son of God, Son of Man, are all about Jesus.

## John 1.43-51 (NRSV)

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael

asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you." Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."