

The Men the King Chose, Part IV

Brandon Phillips

The King and His Glory / Apostle; Christ; John (son of Zebedee) / Matthew 10:2-4

In Matthew 10:2-4, Matthew deliberately names the twelve men upon whom Christ chose to build His church and advance His Kingdom.

Pre-Sermon Comments

Every man lives by faith, the non-believer as well as the saint; the one by faith in natural laws and the other by faith in God. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

Habakkuk 2:4 LSB

⁴ “Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.

Introduction

Hebrews 11:1 LSB

¹ Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Faith is to believe what we do not see. The reward of this faith is to see what we believe. ~ **Saint Augustine of Hippo**

Proposition and Outline

In [Matthew 10:2-4](#), Matthew deliberately names the twelve men upon whom Christ chose to build His church and advance His Kingdom. Today we will study two more:

- **Philip: A Picture of Growing Faith**

- **Bartholomew (Nathanael): A Picture of Sincere Faith**

Discussion Questions

Which New Year's resolutions mentioned in the sermon resonated with you most? Why?

Why do you think so many resolutions fail, even when the goals themselves are good?

The sermon distinguished between symptoms and disease. What are some “symptom-level” changes Christians often focus on? What would it look like to address the root instead?

Pastor Brandon said, “All of these resolutions rise or fall on one deeper issue—whether or not we actually live by faith.” What does it practically mean to “live by faith” in daily life? Where is that hardest for you right now—work, family, finances, fears, habits?

The sermon said faith is “not abstract—it’s lived out in real people.” Why is it important that Scripture shows us flawed, growing people instead of idealized heroes? How does that encourage you personally?

What comfort do you find in knowing that the apostles were “in process”?

Where do you sometimes feel discouraged because your faith doesn't feel “strong enough”?

What stood out to you most about the people standing outside Lord Congleton's office?

Why do you think so many hoped the promise was true but never acted on it?

How does this verse help explain the difference between the crowd and the old man?

What's the difference between hoping God's promises are true and being convinced enough to act on them?

The sermon emphasized: "The promise was real, but it was not indefinite." Why is delay often more dangerous than outright rejection? In what ways can hesitation reveal a lack of trust?

The old man "didn't understand everything, but he understood enough to come." Why is that an important description of biblical faith? How does that challenge the idea that we need perfect understanding before obeying Christ?

Philip is described as someone who believes Christ's promise but is still learning how deep it goes. Where do you see your own faith as genuine—but still growing?

What is one specific area where God may be calling you to move from hesitation to trust?

What would "coming inside the office," so to speak, look like for you this week?

Sermon Text

Matthew 10:1–4 LSB

¹ And summoning His twelve disciples, *Jesus* gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. ² Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him.

Review

Philip: A Picture of Growing Faith

Acts 6:5 LSB

⁵ And this word pleased the whole congregation, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch.

Acts 8:26 LSB

²⁶ But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, “Rise up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a desert *road*.)

John 1:44 LSB

⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

Philip’s call ([John 1](#))

John 1:43 LSB

⁴³ On the next day, He desired to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.”

John 6:44 LSB

⁴⁴ “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

John 6:65 LSB

⁶⁵ And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”

John 1:45 LSB

⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and *also* the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

Philip’s Practicality ([John 6](#))

John 6:1–4 LSB

¹ After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). ² Now a large crowd was following Him, because they were seeing the signs which He was doing on those who were sick. ³ Then Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He was sitting down with His disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near.

John 6:5 LSB

⁵ Therefore Jesus, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, said to Philip, “Where should we buy bread, so that these people may eat?”

John 6:6 LSB

⁶ And this He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was going to do.

Matthew 4:24 LSB

²⁴ And the news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them.

John 2:1-11 LSB

¹ And on the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; ² and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. ³ And when the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.” ⁴ And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what do I have to do with you? My hour has not yet come.” ⁵ His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do *it*.” ⁶ Now there were six stone water jars set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing two or three measures each. ⁷ Jesus said to them, “Fill the water jars with water.” So they filled them up to the brim. ⁸ And He said to them, “Draw *some* out now and take it to the headwaiter.” So they took it *to him*. ⁹ Now when the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom, ¹⁰ and said to him, “Every man serves the good wine first, and when *the people* have drunk freely, *then* the inferior *wine*;

but you have kept the good wine until now.”¹¹ Jesus did this in Cana of Galilee as the beginning of *His* signs, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

John 6:7 LSB

⁷ Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.”

If Jesus had asked about buying food only for the thirteen men in their own group, the answer would have been simple and practical, and Philip could quickly have given the answer. But he should have realized that, in His asking about feeding the entire multitude, Jesus’ question went far beyond the practical and implied the impossible. ~ John MacArthur

John 6:8-9 LSB

⁸ One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him,⁹ “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?”

Exodus 16:11-12 LSB

¹¹ And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,¹² “I have heard the grumbings of the sons of Israel; speak to them, saying, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread, so that you shall know that I am Yahweh your God.’”

John 6:10-11 LSB

¹⁰ Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed *them* to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish, as much as they wanted.

John 6:12 LSB

¹² And when they were filled, He said to His disciples, “Gather up the leftover pieces so that nothing will be lost.”

1 Kings 17:14-16 LSB

¹⁴ “For thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, ‘The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty, until the day that Yahweh sends rain on the face of the earth.’” ¹⁵ So she went and did according to the word of Elijah, and she and he and her household ate for *many* days. ¹⁶ The bowl of flour was not exhausted nor did the jar of oil become empty, according to the word of Yahweh which He spoke by the hand of Elijah.

Matthew 19:26 LSB

²⁶ And looking at *them* Jesus said to them, “With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

Philip’s Spiritual Dim-Wittedness ([John 14](#))

John 14:5 LSB

⁵ Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going. How do we know the way?”

John 14:6–7 LSB

⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me. ⁷ “If you have come to know Me, you will know My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.”

John 14:8 LSB

⁸ Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”

John 14:9–10 LSB

⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all so long and have you not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ “Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

John 14:11 LSB

¹¹ “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.

John 14:12 LSB

¹² “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do because I go to the Father.

Philip’s perseverance and ultimate usefulness

Matthew 19:28 LSB

²⁸ And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Bartholomew (Nathanael): A Picture of Sincere Faith

John 21:2 LSB

² Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the *sons* of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together.

John 1:45 LSB

⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and *also* the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

Nathanael’s Sinful Partiality ([John 1:46](#))

John 1:46 LSB

⁴⁶ And Nathanael said to him, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

Matthew, vols. 1-4: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Matthew 10:3a

The nature of prejudice is to turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to any truth that does not fit its preconceived and cherished ideas. Consequently, it is a common and powerful weapon of Satan. By appealing to various prejudices he often succeeds in getting a person to reject the gospel even before learning what it is really about. The prejudices of their man-made traditions blinded many Jews to the true teaching of their Scriptures and thereby led them to reject Jesus as the Messiah—despite His clear demonstrations of divine power and fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.

An Israelite in Whom There is No Deceit

John 1:47 LSB

⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said about him, “Behold, truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!”

Matthew 6:1 LSB

¹ “Beware of doing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

Romans 2:29 LSB

²⁹ But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

Matthew 23:27 LSB

²⁷ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.

From Where Do You Know Me? ([John 1:48-51](#))

John 1:48 LSB

⁴⁸ Nathanael said to Him, “From where do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

John 1:49 LSB

⁴⁹ Nathanael answered Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.”

John 1:50 LSB

⁵⁰ Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these.”

John 1:50 NIV

⁵⁰ Jesus said, “You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that.”

John 1:51 LSB

⁵¹ And He said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see THE HEAVENS OPENED AND THE ANGELS OF GOD ASCENDING AND DESCENDING on the Son of Man.”

1 Timothy 2:5 LSB

⁵ For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus,

Conclusion

Matthew 16:24–25 LSB

²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. ²⁵ “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Matthew 11:28–30 LSB

²⁸ “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. ³⁰ “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Faith is the accepting of what God gives. Faith is the believing what God says. Faith is the trusting to what Jesus has done. Only do this and you are saved, as surely as you are alive! ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Discussion Questions

In [John 1:43–45](#), what stands out to you about the way Jesus calls Philip (“Follow Me”) and the way Philip responds (“Philip found Nathanael...”)?

If you had to summarize Philip in one phrase from the sermon, what would it be? What about Nathanael?

Which man do you identify with more right now—Philip (growing faith) or Nathanael (sincere faith)? Why?

The sermon highlights that “Jesus found Philip” ([John 1:43](#)). How does that shape your understanding of salvation and discipleship?

How do [John 6:44](#) and [John 6:65](#) help you hold together God’s sovereignty and our real responsibility to believe?

Philip says, “We have found Him...” ([John 1:45](#)). How can both be true—God finds us, and we find Christ?

Why do you think Jesus tested Philip specifically in [John 6:5–6](#)? What might Jesus have been exposing or strengthening?

Philip’s answer is logical but faithless: “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.” What modern equivalents do we say today?

- “There’s no way the budget works.”
- “There’s no way this marriage can change.”
- “There’s no way I can break this habit.”

How do you distinguish between wise planning and faithless calculating?

In what area are you most prone to “do the math” and forget the Lord’s power?

Philip’s request ([John 14:8](#)) sounds sincere, but Jesus rebukes him. What does Philip’s question reveal about what he still didn’t grasp?

Jesus says, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” ([John 14:9](#)). What does that teach us about knowing God?

Where do you tend to demand “proof” from God before trusting Him? What would it look like to trust “because of the works themselves” ([John 14:11](#))?

What comfort do you find in the fact that Philip struggled, yet Christ still used him and promised him a throne ([Matt 19:28](#))?

How does Philip help you think about your own slow growth—without excusing sin, but also without despair?

Nathanael’s bias shows up fast: “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” What kinds of “Nazareths” do we have today—people or places we dismiss too quickly?

How does prejudice function spiritually? What does it keep you from seeing or hearing?

Philip doesn’t argue—he invites: “Come and see.” What does that teach us about evangelism and personal ministry?

Jesus calls Nathanael “an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit.” What does “no deceit” look like in a Christian’s life?

How is sincerity different from perfection? How is sincerity different from bluntness?

[Romans 2:29](#) describes an inward Jew. What would “inward Christianity” look like today (as opposed to outward performance)?

Nathanael’s turning point is Christ’s knowledge of him. Why does Jesus’ omniscience matter for faith—both as comfort and as conviction?

Nathanael confesses: “You are the Son of God...King of Israel!” ([John 1:49](#)). What makes this early confession so weighty so weighty?

What is the difference between being convinced by a sign and being converted by Christ?

Jesus promises greater things and speaks of angels ascending/descending on the Son of Man. How does this echo [Genesis 28](#) (Jacob’s ladder), and what does it teach about Jesus?

The sermon ties this to Christ as the mediator ([1 Tim 2:5](#)). What does it practically mean that Christ is the only mediator between God and man?

How does the reality of Christ as mediator reshape prayer, guilt, and assurance?

Philip's main struggle: calculation. Nathanael's main struggle: preconceptions. Which one is more dangerous for you—and why?

Philip is slow to “see” the unseen; Nathanael is quick to confess once he sees. What might each man teach the other?

If your faith is “in process,” what does growth look like this week: a step of trust, a step of obedience, or a step of humility?

What is one specific “two hundred denarii” situation in your life right now where you need to trust Christ beyond what you can calculate?

Who is one “Nazareth” person you've dismissed—someone you need to “come and see” again with humility?

What would a sincere, guileless response to Christ look like for you this week: confession, reconciliation, obedience, or witnessing?

The Gospel:

God

Created and owns everything

[Gen 1:1](#)—*In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth*

[Psalm 24:1](#)—*The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, the world and those who dwell in it.*

Is Perfectly Holy

[1 John 1:5](#)—*This is the message we heard from Him and announce to you that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.*

[Matt 5:48](#)—*Therefore you are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

Requires perfect obedience to His Law

[James 2:10](#)—for whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.

Man

Has broken God's law

[Rom 3:10,23](#)—there is none righteous, not even one...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Will pay the eternal penalty for his sin

[Rom. 6:23](#)—For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord

Cannot save himself by his good works

[Titus 3:5](#)—He saved us not based on works which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.

Christ

Came to earth both as God and sinless man

[Col 2:9](#)—For in Him the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form

Demonstrated God's love by dying on the cross to pay sin's penalty

[Rom 5:8](#)—But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us

[2 Cor 5:21](#)—He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Rose from the grave and is alive today

[1 Cor 15:4](#)—*And that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures*

Sinners

Must repent of all that dishonors God

[Isa 55:7](#)—*Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.*

[Luke 9:23](#)—*if anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.*

Must believe in Christ as Lord and Savior

[Rom 10:9](#)—*that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.*

Will you repent and believe in Christ?

[Acts 17:30](#)—*therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance God is declaring to men that all everywhere should repent.*

Don't hesitate to contact Pastor Brandon or Pastor Keith if you have any questions about this sermon or if you would like to know how to follow Christ.

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Additional Quotes

We believe that men are saved by faith alone, but not by a faith which is alone. They are saved by faith without works, but not by a faith which is without works. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Faith is both God's gift and man's act. The Lord is the author of our faith, but we ourselves believe. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Faith is nothing but believing what God promises or says. Whatever remarkable thing we read of happening in the Old or New Testament, we read that it was done by faith—not by works, not by a general faith, but by faith directed to the matter in hand. ~ **Martin Luther (Founder of the German Reformation)**

In the divine scheme of salvation the doctrine of faith is central. God addresses His words to faith, and where no faith is no true revelation is possible, "*Without faith it is impossible to please him.*" ~ **A. W. Tozer**

Faith in the storm is true faith! Faith in a calm may be, or may not be, genuine faith. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

The man that believes will obey; failure to obey is convincing proof that there is not true faith present. To attempt the impossible God must give faith or there will be none, and He gives faith to the obedient heart only. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

It is never our merit God looks at but our faith. If there is only one strand of faith amongst all the corruption within us, God will take hold of that one strand. ~ **Oswald Chambers (Lecturer and Missionary)**

Our faith is never perfect ... we are partly unbelievers. ~ **John Calvin (French Reformer)**

Faith says, "I cannot believe that he who has brought me so far is going to let me down at this point. It is impossible; it would be inconsistent with the character of God." ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Welsh Preacher and Writer)**

Faith is the refusal to panic. ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Welsh Preacher and Writer)**

Faith always shows itself in the whole personality. ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Welsh Preacher and Writer)**

Faith is a living, restless thing. It cannot be inoperative. ~ **Martin Luther (Founder of the German Reformation)**

Faith that is sure of itself is not faith; faith that is sure of God is the only faith there is. ~ **Oswald Chambers (Lecturer and Missionary)**

To trust God in matters of things unseen is not a matter of blind faith. It is not credulity. It is a reasonable faith. ~ **R. C. Sproul**

Faith for my deliverance is not faith in God. Faith means, whether I am visibly delivered or not, I will stick to my belief that God is love. There are some things only learned in a fiery furnace. ~ **Oswald Chambers (Lecturer and Missionary)**

Faith in God is a terrific venture in the dark. ~ **Oswald Chambers (Lecturer and Missionary)**

... faith is the gaze of a soul upon a saving God. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

Faith cannot stand unless it be founded on the promises of God. ~ **John Calvin (French Reformer)**

Faith brings a man empty to God, that he may be filled with the blessings of God. ~ **John Calvin (French Reformer)**

Faith is the first step in understanding; understanding is the reward of faith. ~ **Saint Augustine of Hippo**

Faith takes God without any ifs. If God says anything, faith says, "I believe it;" faith says, "Amen" to it. ~ **Dwight Lyman Moody (Evangelist)**

It is not the strength of your faith that saves you, but the strength of Him upon whom you rely! Christ is able to save you if you come to Him—be your faith weak or be it strong. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

The Bible recognizes no faith that does not lead to obedience, nor does it recognize any obedience that does not spring from faith. The two are opposite sides of the same coin. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

