

## **Nathanael (Bartholomew): A Leader of Depth and Honesty**

***(12) In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. (13) And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles: (14) Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew,... (Luke 6:12-14)***

-God is the great and ultimate leader. Jesus, the Son of God, chooses people to lead for Him under His authority and with His power. Jesus calls leaders, trains leaders, empowers leaders, and sends leaders out. Jesus' leadership team was diverse, but unified around and under Him.

-Simon Peter was the leader among leaders. He was a natural leader, a people person, bold, and a great communicator. Jesus had to teach him humility, love, and wisdom in order for him to reach his full potential as a leader.

-Andrew was a man who loved individuals. He knew God could use the smallest things to accomplish His great plans and purposes. He was a behind the scene's man who did the small things well.

-James was one of the sons of thunder. He was brash, bold, and needed to grow in overcoming some of his sinful anger. Jesus taught him and molded his character into a leader that He could use mightily.

-John was also one of the sons of thunder who Jesus molded into a man after Jesus' own heart. Eventually he was a man filled with truth and filled with love for God and people.

-Philip was an able administrator who was analytical, detail oriented, and a behind the scenes planner and organizer. He was a systems man that Jesus used in amazing ways.

-Bartholomew was an honest, sincere, guile free, un-hypocritical man. He was a man of meditation and contemplation. He was a man of depth and substance. He was a true Israelite who loved Jesus and people. He was a man that saw the supernatural power of Christ at work in his life and the lives of others.

-Bartholomew (the son of Tolmai) is also called Nathanael. He was from Cana in Galilee (Jn. 21:2). Church history and tradition says that he eventually died as a martyr after serving Christ as a missionary in Persia (modern day Iran), India, and Armenia.

***(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." (46) Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." (47) Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" (48) Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." (49) Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" (50) Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." (51) And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." (Jn 1:45-51)***

-God wants us to be people of honesty, sincerity, and truth.

-God changes our pride and prejudice through our close relationship with Him and our close relationships with other people.

-God strengthens us, deepens us, and meets us in our meditation and contemplation on Him and His Word.

-God does for His people what we could never do for ourselves through supernatural and miraculous means.

***(8) This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. (Josh 1:8)***

-True success in God's sight comes from reading His Word, studying His Word, memorizing His Word, meditating on His Word, and living out His Word obediently.

-God delights in and blesses those who obey His Word by His grace. We need to be careful to do all that God says from our heart.

-True prosperity and success comes to those who meditate on God and His Word day and night, morning and evening.

***(1) Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; (2) but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. (3) He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. (Psa 1:1-3)***

-The blessed life and person has nothing to do with the words of the wicked (unbeliever), the ways of wicked, and the plans of the wicked.

-The blessed life and person delights in God's Word and ponders it day and night (morning and evening).

-The blessed life and person is a deeply rooted, stable, and established person.

-The blessed life and person is a fruitful person with strong character, virtue, and productivity.

-The blessed life and person is living and life giving toward others. Their life is green and vibrant at all times.

-The blessed life and person prospers in all that He does. Before God, they always win, they always succeed.

***(14) In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches. (15) I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. (16) I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word... (23) Even though princes sit plotting against me, your servant will meditate on your statutes... (27) Make me understand the way of your precepts, and I will meditate on your wondrous works... (48) I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes... (Psa 119:14-16, 23, 27, 48)***

-We are to love and enjoy God and His Word more than we love and enjoy money. We are to meditate on Him and His Word with all our heart. If we find our hearts drifting we can confess our sins (even our heart attitudes), turn away from them, and seek the Lord first again.

-Even when people plot against us and attack us we are to first and foremost meditate on God's Word and not theirs.

-We should ask God to give us understanding of His Word in order that we might think about it and Him rightly, in order to live for Him faithfully.

-We will meditate on what we truly love. What is it that you really love? What is it that you spend most of your time thinking about?

***(5) On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. (Psa 145:5)... (5) My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips, (6) when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the***

*watches of the night; (Psa 63:5-6) ... (11) I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. (12) I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds. (Psa 77:11-12)... (1) I will sing of steadfast love and justice; to you, O LORD, I will make music. (2) I will ponder the way that is blameless... (Psa 101:1-2)*

-God is better and more satisfying than the best of foods. God brings more joy and delight than anything we could ever eat. This is why we should think about Him and let our minds be consumed with Him.

-When we remember history (personal and world) we are to think about what God has done and glorify Him for it.

-When we think about God's character and what He has done in the world and for us it should lead us to praise and worship, contemplation and meditation.

-Our praise and worship should lead us to deep contemplation about how we should live each day in full obedience to God.

*(26) Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure. (Pro 4:26)... (6) she does not ponder the path of life; her ways wander, and she does not know it. (Pro 5:6)... (28) The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things. (Pro 15:28)*

-It's wise to ponder where we are going to go and how we are going to live. This kind of thoughtful meditation will bring surety and stability.

-An unthoughtful life is a wandering, ignorant, foolish, painful, and destructive life that ends in eternal death and the lake of fire.

-Wise people think about what they are going to say before they say it. They meditate on God and His Word and speak out of a heart that is in the right place.

*(19) But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. (Luke 2:19)*

*(19) And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. (Acts 10:19)*

*(63) And Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening... (Gen 24:63)*

-Along with Nathanael (Bartholomew) there are other godly men and women of old who were known for their meditation: Mary, Peter, and Isaac to name a few.

*(1) After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. (2) Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee,... (Jn 21:1-2)*

*(1) And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. (2) The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; (3) Philip and Bartholomew;... (Matt 10:1-3)*

*(13) And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. (14) And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach (15) and have authority to cast out demons. (16) He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); (17) James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); (18) Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew... (Mr 3:13-18)*

*(12) Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. (13) And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew... (14) All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. (Acts 1:12-14)*