

“What Proof?”

John 1:43-51

Hello friend and welcome to *Hope for Today*. My name is J. Mark Horst; I'm your friend and Bible teacher. The program you're listening to is produced by Heralds of Hope, an international Gospel radio and literature ministry. Thousands are tuning in each week to receive spiritual nourishment and blessing.

You are listening to this broadcast in English, but we also broadcast in more than 20 other languages to some of the most unreached areas of the world. Places like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and more. Why do we do it? Because we have God's promise that His Word will not return to Him empty; it will accomplish what He sends it to do. And you know something, we have ample proof that His promise is true.

Recently, I learned of a small group of Christ-followers in the country of Libya who listen to our Arabic language programs. They contacted the producers of our Arabic language programs to let them know that our radio programs refresh and empower them spiritually. They reminded us that many people across the Arabic speaking world live in difficult situations like they do. But they wanted us to know that the radio programs help them to boldly proclaim the Good News of the Gospel and to be a light in a dark place.

I praise God for this report because these people are living proof of the power of the Gospel. They are undeniable proof that Jesus is who He said He is, the Son of Almighty God. Even though hostile governments may try to suppress the Gospel, it is still reaching the hearts of men and women, boys, and girls, and transforming them from sinners to saints. Hallelujah!

In just a few moments, Dr. Yoder will present today's teaching from the Gospel of John. But before he does that, let's pray.

Gracious Heavenly Father, we thank you and praise you for these listeners in Libya. We are thankful that they're being encouraged in their walk of faith by listening to the Bible teaching programs in Arabic. We're thankful that they're boldly proclaiming to others the Gospel that has transformed their lives. What a privilege to bless and encourage them in this way.

And now, Father, as Dr. Yoder comes to open the Word for us, I pray that you will open our hearts to the truth. I pray for my listening friend, that if he or she is still questioning whether Jesus really exists, that they would better understand this through today's teaching and that today

would be the day that they make that life-changing decision. Bring about that transformation in their life today I pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Now, here's Dr. Yoder with today's teaching.

Some people are too quick to accept anything that comes along. They don't ask for proof. They are like a bird flitting everywhere. Everything is attractive and they accept too quickly. Some are too slow to accept. They refuse to recognize proofs when they see them. It is a state of mind, a blocked, closed state of mind.

We ought to be careful. That certainly is true, but we ought also to be convincible. In other words, when the proofs are presented to us, we should then accept them, clearly, wholeheartedly and convincingly. In John 1:43-51 there are evidences that Jesus was the One they looked for,

43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

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

45 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.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

48 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.

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

50 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.

51 And he saith unto him, Verily verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

In this Scripture we can find clear PROOFS that Jesus of Nazareth is the one we look for, and I would like to point them out to you.

First, there is the proof By Jesus' Word.

He said to Philip, "Follow me." You will notice that Jesus is in Galilee when He said that. He found Philip there along the shore of the Sea of Galilee because his hometown, Bethsaida, was on the west shore of the Galilee.

First, I'd like to focus our attention on these two words that Jesus spoke to Philip, "Follow Me." There must be something compelling about these words or about the tone of the voice Jesus used because Philip without any hesitation followed Jesus.

Yes, I would say there is something compelling about those words when they come from Jesus. "Follow Me." And Philip followed. He was, as I say, from this town Bethsaida, the town of Andrew and Peter on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. But today there is nothing much there. The town is completely covered over with the sands of time but the word of Jesus to Philip comes through clear today. It's the same word, "Follow Me."

We find the second proof By Philip's Witness.

Philip was convinced. The word of Jesus convinced him, and Philip set out to find a friend. He found him, Nathanael, and he witnessed to him. "It's real," he said. "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." We have found Him.

I want you to notice how broadly Philip related Jesus to the Bible. He said Moses wrote about Him and the prophets wrote about Him. Indeed, they did! Philip's witness was exactly correct. He said then to Nathanael, "Come and see." Nathanael doubted. He could not understand how any good thing could come out of Nazareth. Nazareth was not a famous town in those days. It was the crossroads of the nation's alright because the trade routes passed close by. It was the crossroads of the Gentiles. And a man's town seems to be important, too, for Nathanael could not understand how anyone could come out of Nazareth who could be worth very much.

But Philip's witness, "Come and see," put the responsibility on Nathanael. He went on the basis of Philip's witness.

The third proof is found By Jesus' Wisdom.

When Jesus saw Nathanael coming, He commended him, “Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile.” Now that is an attainment. There is hardly any question about that. To have this kind of commendation, an Israelite, indeed, in whom there is no guile, this is outstanding.

Nathanael was puzzled until Jesus explained to him that He saw him under the fig tree. It so moved Nathanael that he cried out, “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.” He was right. The wisdom of Jesus convinced him, and he made a confession that was absolutely correct.

But Jesus had more instruction for him. Jesus told him he hadn’t seen much yet nor heard very much. “There is much more ahead, Nathanael. You will see greater things than these. You will see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man.”

My friend, this is a very serious consideration. Nathanael was convinced by the wisdom of Jesus. He knew him, and my friend, He knows you. Yes, He understands more about you than you understand about yourself.

Here are proofs enough for you! Jesus’ words to Philip come down to you, “Follow me.” I’d like to take His place and say to you, “Come and see.” I hope you will come so that Jesus will be able to speak to your heart like He spoke to Nathanael’s heart.

My friend, are you willing to consider the claims of Jesus your life? Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God? That was Nathanael’s confession, and it was very important. The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 10:9 and 10 that, “*if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and **believe in your heart** that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*” You see, confession with the mouth is very important in the process of becoming a child of God.

Now, if you were blessed by this teaching and would like an audio CD or a printed copy of it, just write and ask for the teaching “What Proof?” We would be happy to send a copy to you as soon as we receive your request.

The quickest way for you to contact me is to send an e-mail to mail@heraldsofhope.org. That e-mail address is mail@heraldsofhope.org. Or you may write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember, you can request a printed manuscript or an audio CD of this teaching, “What Proof?” I’d be happy to send one to you.

If you have questions about the Bible or how to live as a Christ-follower, we invite you to send those questions to us. We will take your questions to the Holy Scripture and find an answer. We want to help you grow in your understanding of God's Word and in your relationship with Him. So, write to us today. Here's the contact information again.

The quickest way for you to contact me is to send an e-mail to mail@heraldsofhope.org. Or you may write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember; you can request a free copy of this teaching, "What Proof?" It's available in print or on an audio CD.

And don't forget our Bible teaching programs are available to you all the time and any time at the website, twr360.org. That's twr360.org. Thousands are logging on to the site for spiritual nourishment and blessing. You can join them and be blessed too!

Now, I urge you to tune in next week as Dr. Yoder continues our study in John's Gospel with a question, "Do You Need a Sign?" And until then, keep looking for that blessed HOPE.