

### This Man Philip

Philip the apostle and Philip the deacon are two different persons. Like Andrew, he too is among the first to do personal service in the kingdom. It was he who found Nathaniel and refused to argue the point, whether any good thing could come out of Nazareth. His reply was "come and see." Here we have a fine insight into the character of the man. Let the facts talk. You come and see, then decide for yourself. This is good advice to us who would argue with sinners about the life and person of Jesus Christ.

He was a man of slow and deliberate mind set. He symbolizes those who reach decisions after much deliberation. He was well versed in the Scriptures of his day and was among those who waited for the Hope of Israel. He was of a generous sympathetic spirit. He was an honest and earnest inquirer after truth. John 6:5-6 shows how calculating Philip was. When Jesus asked him where could they get food for the people, he began figuring how much it would cost to feed them a little, not to mention a full meal. Again in John 12:20-22 when men wanted to see Jesus and asked Philip for information, he had to have help from Andrew. From this reading would you classify him as one of indecision and unwilling to assume responsibility? Can you relate an experience you have had with some one who could not make up his mind without asking advice?

In John 14:8 Philip wants Jesus to show them the Father. Here is indicated the slow working of his mental machinery. The church today is filled with Philips who cannot stand alone, who must be told what to do, who always miss the point. They too are useful in the

work of the Lord. "Slow but sure" is their philosophy.

The last reference we have to Philip is in Acts 1:13. No he is not the Philip that had the four preaching daughters, nor is he the one who baptized the eunuch. No, he is not the Philip who was the brother of Herod nor is he the Philip who was father of Alexander the Great. You may compare his worth as an apostle with the work of these other men of the same name.

Philip wrote no books as far as we can find. There is no record of any of his sermons. Like many good Christians who do their work and pass on leaving no illustrious path of glorious deeds, this humble apostle fades like a tired soldier into oblivion.

All that we can surmise about him is taken from the few references in the scriptures given. Reread each one for further insights into the man who was one of the twelve.

### For Further Study

1. In the light of your reading, what type of personality was Thomas?
2. Is he correctly branded when he is branded Doubting Thomas?
3. Pick out the character traits ascribed to him by the author.
4. What does the name Philip mean?
5. Compare the work of Philip the apostle with that of Philip the deacon.
6. Do you agree with the author that Philip was slow, deliberate and cautious?
7. Tell from your own experiences the character of a slow person and one who is aggressive, quick and decisive.
8. Which is an asset, the slow plodder or the fast hurried type?

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### Study IX

## Simon, the Canaanite

Judas Iscariot

Mark 3:18-19; Matt. 26:14-16

### Simon the Zelotes, the Man with a Record

This is Simon the Second, Simon Peter being the First. Here we have a man who had been identified with a movement that had as its aim the overthrow of the government. Today he would be a "leftist" and a "red." Luke 6:15 is the source of the name, Simon called Zelotes. The Zelotes party stood for the full recovery of Jewish freedom and the maintenance of distinctive Jewish institutions. This Simon was a man of high ideals and great enthusiasm for what he believed. The Zealot party rose in rebellion under Judas in the days of the taxing (Acts 5:37) some twenty years ago when Judea and Samaria were under Rome. Here Jesus calls such a man whose ideals of conquest were far different from His and sets out to train him in the use of brotherhood and goodwill as the means of achieving freedom. Simon was a political discontent ready to use force for the achieving of his aims. Carnal weapons of war must be displaced by spiritual weapons of love, peace and brotherly understanding. The party of reckless fanatical patriotism must give place for a party of gospel preachers.

At a glance it looks like a bad selection and a disregard for prudential wisdom to choose a man of Simon's background. Political suspicion was everywhere. An ex-zealot

was not a safe man to be an apostle of Jesus, for he might make the ministry of Jesus the object of suspicion. Matthew the publican and Simon the zealot, two opposites, belonging to the same group, seems incongruous. Yet the zealot could be the key man in reaching others of his kind. Here the tax-collector and the tax-hater must work together as members of the twelve. Simon the Jewish patriot had something that Jesus could use. His burning zeal needed the sobering touch of contact with a more noble character than the Judas he had followed. Simon made a great decision when he decided to accept the Jesus way of life and leave off the Judas way of rebellion against Roman authority. He wrote no books, left no messages and takes his place among the lesser lights of the kingdom. He is the symbol of hope to those whose past has been shady.

As a special project, make a study of all the Simons of the Bible and compare their life and work with that of Simon the Zealot. (1) Simon the son of priest Matthias. (2) Simon the father of Judas Iscariot, John 6:71. (3) Simon Peter. (4) Simon one of the Lord's brothers, Matt. 13:55. (5) Simon a Pharisee, Luke 7:36-50. (6) Simon the leper of Bethany. (7) Simon the Cyrean, Matt. 27:32. (8) Simon Magus. (9) Simon the tanner of Joppa.