

## Sabbath School Lessons.

June 16th, 1861.

## THE FIRST DISCIPLES OF JESUS.—

JOHN I. 35-31.

John the Baptist the next day after the events narrated in our last New Testament lesson, had only two for an audience; when he preached the same truth as he had done before, pointing at the same time to the Lamb of God. When he pointed Jesus out, he himself looked steadily at him, v. 36. Like ministers of Christ since his day, the more they look upon Christ the more successful are they in leading others to Him. He looked at Christ, pointed his two disciples to Him, and was honored by their becoming not only followers but apostles. What an honour it is to be the instrument in God's hands of bringing one to the Lord, who becomes a zealous and distinguished servant.

## THE TWO DISCIPLES.

The two disciples who were Andrew and John the Evangelist, no sooner had Jesus pointed out to them than they followed him, for the purpose of inquiry. Jesus anticipated their enquiries by asking them what they sought, v. 38. Rabbi is the Jewish title for Master, which they gave to their great men. John interprets the name, reminding us that he wrote after the Jewish polity was destroyed. To their question He answers, *Come and see*. This was the common saying of the Rabbis to their disciples.

Christ dwells in His Church, in His people, in His ordinances, and in His written Word, and whatever question any inquirer ask of Christ, He answers, *Come and see*. It is not see, and then come. It is not understand, and then believe. It is come and see, believe and you shall then understand.

They abode with Him that day, and next morning Andrew sought for his brother and told him that he and John had found the Messiah.

## SIMON PETER.

Andrew brought his brother Simon to the Lord Jesus. It was a lovely brotherly act in him to seek his brother out. Simon was the first fruit of Christ's public ministry, the first

one looked out and brought in by one of the future twelve. Christ said he would be called *Cephas*, which is an Aramaic term and signifies a stone. In the Greek it is Peter.

Christ's divinity is seen in his knowing Simon. "Thou art the son of Jona."

## PHILIP.

Philip was of the same town as the two other disciples, v. 44. He was not called to Christ by them, but by Himself. Christ was on a journey to Galilee, and He found Philip. He called on him to follow Him, to be a disciple, not an apostle.

*Bethsaida*. There are two places of this name mentioned in the New Testament. One was at the head of the Lake, and was called Bethsaida Julias. This one here mentioned was the town more commonly known where Christ wrought, and which was denounced with Capernaum for its unbelief. It was on the western side of the Lake, Philip findeth Nathaniel and brought him to Christ, v. 45-46, as the one of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write.

## NATHANIEL,

Is spoken of as of Cana of Galilee, chap. xxi. 2. Jesus was probably in that vicinity, chap. ii. 1. Nathaniel was convinced of the divinity of Christ from His Omniscience, v. 49. It is supposed that Bartholomew, who is found in the list of the twelve, and is named with Philip, was the same with Nathaniel, who is not mentioned otherwise in the number. So that Nathaniel was Bartholomew, which means the *son of Tolmai*.

The Lord Jesus called him an *Israelite indeed*, i.e. not nominally but really one of the people of God. In whom was *no guile*, i.e. no hypocrisy—as with the pharisees—no false profession. Nathaniel was found in *prayer*. He was under his fig tree engaged in secret prayer, and when he thought himself in deepest solitude, Christ saw him there. The effect of this information was the conviction that Christ was the Son of God.

As Nathaniel believed in Christ from small tokens of His divinity, our Lord assured him that he would receive larger evidences, v. 51.

*Learn 1*. Christ is known by his knowledge of our sins, circumstances and relationship, as in the case of the woman of Samaria, Peter, and Nathaniel.

2. Those who believe in Christ from the evidence they now possess will come to have greater evidence.

3. Those who believe in Christ are anxious that others should come to know Him.