



1362 US Highway 395 N Ste 102-200

Gardnerville, NV 89410

E-mail: [bill@liferesource.org](mailto:bill@liferesource.org)

Website: [www.liferesource.org](http://www.liferesource.org)

**Transcript**  
**Come and See**  
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Our title today is *Come and See*. The title comes from a scripture – John 1:45. Let’s read it.

**John 1:45-46** – *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 said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”*

So, Philip was, in effect, saying, “If you have any doubts about what I’m telling you, come and see for yourself. Make your own decision.” So, he did. He met Jesus and it changed his life for all eternity.

Now, those of you who follow *The Chosen* know that they have a tee shirt that they sell, and it says, “Come and see,” on the front of it. It’s a very common phrase and very quotable. So, it’s used a lot. In the Bible, though, this is not the only time the phrase is used. There are even more times when it’s implied. So, what’s the catchiness of this? What’s the point of God’s use of this phrase? What does it mean when God tells us to come and see? Well, that’s what we’re going to think about today – the story of *Come and see*.

The first point I would like to make is that, in various forms, this is all through the Bible. Let’s go to Malachi 3:10. God says:

**Malachi 3:8-10** – *Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ And God responds: In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. In other*

words, “Try it and see. If you don’t believe Me, try it for yourself. See if it works. What’s the harm?”

Here’s another one: Isaiah 58:13

**Isaiah 58:13-14** – *“If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father – who is he? Well, he’s the father of Israel. Israel today is the Church of God – for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”* So, keep the Sabbath and see if that doesn’t work for you – if that’s not true. It’s a challenge laid out to us.

Here’s yet another one. It’s in Matthew 6:31 – Jesus said:

**Matthew 6:31-33** – *Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles – converted into our talk today: the people who are not Christians – seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.* See for yourself if this isn’t true. Try it and see. Come and see.

So, it’s challenging. And yet, it’s not a command. It’s not controlling. It’s not arguing. It’s not preaching. It’s an inclusive invitation – a calling, a beckoning with a challenge to it. So why is that inclusive? Well, it’s inclusive because the one saying, “Come and see,” already has seen and believes. Nathaniel – he’d already seen the Messiah. So, he’s offering Nathaniel the opportunity to come and learn what he’s learned – to see what he sees. So, this offer is an offer to “Come like I came and see what I saw. Come and see for yourself.”

When the man who was healed of demons went to the Decapolis, as Jesus commanded him, and told people what God had done for him, it was an invitation from Christ, through this man, to come and see for oneself what God could do for each of them. It’s also – and it’s been implied already, but to just put it out front – it’s personal.

In the show, *The Chosen*, when Jesus is walking past Matthew’s tax collector booth, He turned and looked at him, and He said, “Matthew, son of Alphaeus, follow Me.” And, in the program, Matthew, who is much despised because he was a tax collector – who had turned against his own people and was collecting taxes for the Romans from them – and had a very low sense of himself because of that, his response was, “Who? Me?”

So, that pretty well helps us understand about the *personal* part of this – how personal the calling is. When Peter was invited to come and see – to follow Jesus – in the program – he fell on his knees and told Jesus he wasn’t worthy. So, there again, it required this very personal response from Peter, because it was a personal offer made to him.

When we get up each morning and ask God to take care of us this day – and that is a prayer that we can pray – that is an invitation to God to come and see what He will send to us – how He will buffer us, and guide us, and protect us.

Haven't you had those experiences where you look back and see how God was directing your life back in the past without you knowing about it? When I was six or seven, I remember asking my parents why we went to church on the first day when the Bible said the seventh. We were learning the Ten Commandments at church, I think. So, I came to the seventh day of the week. They told me that some Christians did, but they didn't explain why we didn't. Why I asked my parents that I can't really remember for sure, but that was a start of it. I also, about that time, heard the song, *Give Me That Old Time Religion*. Even at that young age, I was asking that question: Why didn't we stick with the old-time religion? I don't know why that seemed important to me. I mean, I wasn't that old, but I wanted to know about that. Yet, no one seemed to have the same interest. There were just all following the crowd, as far as I could see, and going down a path that wasn't according to the Bible.

When I got older – seventeen – I heard a man on the radio, talking about the truth of the Bible, rather than the wrong path. And I was urgently compelled to *come and see*. I got accepted to a religious school – Ambassador College – and I remember, after the first semester, I went home on winter break. I learned at college that there was a church of people that believed the way I believed – following the Bible, instead of just human reason. It was in San Jose – a scant twenty miles from where I lived. So, I called the pastor there, Denny Luker. I introduced myself and asked him if he could get me a ride to church. And he said he would. I was standing out in front of my house at the appointed time on the Sabbath day – Saturday – when a van – a van I'd seen all my young life – came slowly down the street and stopped in front of my house. It was driven by one of my neighbors, Larry Walton, who later became an elder in the church that I was to be a part of there. Small world. I remember feeling very isolated and alone that last year of high school as I learned all these things and had no one to talk to about it. There was not a single person that I knew that thought the same way about this stuff.

So, looking back, I think that isolation was working for me. I was incited to go and find the truth. I had to see for myself. I had to *come and see*. I'd never been away from home, never flown on a plane, always agreed with my parents, for the most part. And here I was going to a strange place for the first time in my life to meet people I'd never met before, and find *the truth*. And like Nathaniel, I did. I came to see. But by then, I was starting to see that it wasn't me, but that I was being directed, and that, if I wanted to know more, I had to *come and see* – something I had to do. It was a challenge. But I didn't realize it as that at that time.

So, what else can we observe about Philip's challenge? Well, it was evidence-based. Now, I have to stop and explain that a bit. When we're trying to prove something, there is research-based evidence and there is anecdotal evidence – that is, personal experience of people. Scientists

generally look down on anecdotal evidence, unless it is the same for *many* people. And they would know that because it's part of a research project. But even there they look down on it, because it's anecdotal. They want something you can measure. Yet, it's easy to fudge research – especially if some drug company is paying to get the results *they* want. The largest award in a civil suit in the United States in all our whole history of our whole country is against Pfizer for deliberately misleading the public with tainted research, which they paid for. So, what God is offering us is not that kind of proof. It's anecdotal. *Come and see*. Experience for yourself.

My friend, Guy Swenson, gave a sermon this past year at the Common Faith Network Feast of Tabernacles in Sandestin, Florida, about God's salvation plan in the Bible. He juxtaposed that with some commonly held human ideas – long venerated and entrenched ideas – of modern Christianity. One of the concepts he mentioned was that of original sin. He suggested that, for all the entrenchment and solidity of the concept in the minds of people today, there's really no solid biblical evidence to prove it. Yet, the concept persists – not because of biblical evidence, which is supposedly the foundation of Christianity, but because of longevity and commonality. Everybody believes it and has for a long time, so it has to be true. It's only when a person actually opens the Bible and studies it for himself that the truth comes out. We have to *come and see*. We have to crack that book and read it and see for ourselves.

Is it possible to be healed of leprosy? Well, science evidence-based studies tell us only antibiotics work. But, back in the Jesus' day, you could *come and see* what happened. If we do that today, they we're going to be surprised. Is this guy really the Messiah? Well, *come and see*. Is there a day of the week on which God wants us to rest from our labor? And is it the seventh day instead of the first? Well, don't take everybody else's word for it. *Come and see*. There's a challenge in there – in the Bible – for us there.

Some people say that Jesus is our Sabbath now. Well, you can't prove that out of the Bible. There's no where it says anything like that! It says, "Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath." But it doesn't say that He is our Sabbath, and so, if we believe in Him, we don't have to keep it. No way! So, don't take somebody else's word for it. Look into it for yourself.

There's an idea that anybody can prove anything out of the Bible. Well, that's true, *if* you really don't want to follow God. You can make it say anything you want. But when you look into the Bible for yourself, with the desire to do what it says and live by the words there, then you get a whole different view. Look at the proofs offered by both sides and *come and see*. Come and see what happens when you do that.

"Well, if I kept the Sabbath, I would lose my job." Well, maybe you would, but would you find a better one? Does God promise to take care? The only way to prove that is to *come and see* – try it for yourself. The kind of proof God offers us is not from a test tube or a study, but from the evidence of our own lives. And that's because He's going to deal His way with each one of us. He's not a God who works in flocks or herds. He works with individuals. He has the capacity to

work with each one of us, understand each one of us, know what each one of us needs. So, the only way *we* can prove God is to *come and see*.

So, since He works with each person in His own way, what He does in our lives is all that should matter to us. That's God's great personal relationship-based evidence. Keep the Sabbath and see what happens to you. Tithe and see what happens to you. I use those two because it's so obvious that there's a challenge there. But there is so much more.

In Mark's gospel, there are a couple of events that occur together that show us something about this *coming and seeing* business. Let's start in Mark 5.

**Mark 5:21-34** – *And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side – this was right after He had healed this man who was captured by demons - a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet and implored him earnestly, saying, “My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live.”* So, here we have a Pharisee – or, maybe not, but a high-ranking Jewish official, who oversaw a synagogue – who's heard about Jesus, but never met Him. In desperation – grasping at a straw – maybe even not with full faith – he goes to Jesus in a desperate attempt to do anything he can to save his poor daughter's life. So, he's come and what will he see? Well, it says: *Jesus went with him, and a great crowd followed him and thronged about him.* And while on His way to Jairus' house, in this chaotic crowd clamoring to see more, this happened: *And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. For she said, “If I touch even his garments, I will be made well.”* Now this woman had heard, but not seen, and still she came, not seeing, but believing. *And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, “Who touched my garments?” And his disciples said to him, “You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, ‘Who touched me?’”* So, He's not getting much help from them. *And he looked around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. And he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.”* So, she believed so much that she came. And when she arrived on site believing, she touched His garment and was healed.

So, now in the story, Jesus is still with Jairus, who carries on with Jesus to Jairus' house. And then this happens in Mark 5:35:

**V-35-43** – *While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, “Your daughter is dead. So, these people come out from Jairus' house to meet him on the way in and*

*give him the bad news. Why trouble the Teacher any further?” But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue – are you ready for this? – “Do not fear, only believe.” Do not fear, only believe. See, that’s what happens after *come and see* – the struggle to believe. Is it too late? She’s dead. “When we get to my house, will Jesus raise my daughter from the dead?” “Can it possibly be true that I can give away ten percent of my income and yet have more?” “Is it possible for me to stay employed and have a way to support my family if I take off every Saturday? If we have come this far in the account, now let’s see for ourselves what has happened. *And he allowed no one to follow him* – He didn’t want to have the house crowded with people – *except Peter and James and John the brother of James. They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly.* That was customary in those days. The family would gather outside and cry loudly. *And when he had entered, he said to them, “Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him* – in the King James, it says, “Laughed Him to scorn.” *But he put them all outside and took the child’s father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. Taking her by the hand he said to her, “Talitha cumi,” which means, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.” And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age) – a pre-teen – and they were immediately overcome with amazement. And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.**

So, what can we make of all this? Jairus came in desperation. He came and saw. And then he had faith. *Do not fear, only believe.* So, the best way to believe is to *come and see*. It’s a faith-building exercise.

When Philip asked Nathaniel to *come and see* – when he extended this challenge – Philip got to be a part of Nathaniel’s calling. Philip will have that forever, just like Nathaniel will. Isn’t that an amazing thing? Isn’t that such a great thing? Wouldn’t you like to be able to tell people to *come and see* and be an agent that God uses to build faith for them?

And here’s something else, too. *Come and see* is not just for when God first calls us. It’s a question for all our lives. Will God work His plan for us as we move through time? Well, His challenge to each of us is always, *come and see*.

Let’s look in Matthew 16:24:

**Matthew 16:24-27** – *Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.*

So, Jesus' disciples were men like you and I are – humans. And these twelve men believed Jesus, and dropped their lives, and gave up fishing, or tax collecting, or doctoring, or whatever they did, and followed Him. And that wasn't easy. So, when Peter asked Jesus specifically what they will receive, Jesus didn't put them down. Let's read about in verse 27 of Matthew 19:

**Matthew 19:27-30** – *Then Peter said in reply, “See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?”* Now, Jesus didn't say, “You're being selfish, or narrow-minded, or you're just a carnal human being.” It was a real question that deserved a real answer. And Jesus had a real answer for them. There *is* something that we will have. *Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.* So, in a sense, once we come and then see, we find that there is a direct promise for each one of us attached to seeing. You have to come and then you'll see.

So, I'm hoping that this will give us all something to chew on. It's such a simple statement: *Come and see*. But, like all God's promises, this one is backed with security we can't even imagine. It's so sure that all any of us has to do is *come and see*.

This is Bill Jacobs for LifeResource Ministries, serving children, families and the Church of God. Be sure that your coming and seeing will help you help the children of God's church. You're an example they look to.