

Can Any Good Thing Come Out of Nazareth

Genesis 49:13 - NKJV

¹³ “Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea; He *shall become* a haven for ships, And his border shall adjoin Sidon.

John 1:46 - NKJV

⁴⁶ And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”

Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

Introduction

Have you ever wished you lived in another place?

- On occasion, most of us have entertained that thought.
- Not only have we wished we could live in another city,
- Some have even wished they could have been born in another class or race.
- In many instances, it appears that those who are successful in life seem to have prestigious histories that have begun in some far away place removed from their rural existence or poor inner city neighborhoods.
- Our day dreams sometimes paint a picture of life the way we think it would have been had we been fortunate enough to have had a different history.

We have to dis-spell the myth that a person must be from "**somewhere else**" to make a significant contribution to the Kingdom of God.

One of the frustrations of people is the feeling that life would have been better if circumstances would have been different.

- Why wasn't I born to a rich family?
- Why couldn't I have the physical appearance of others?
- Why can't I do as well in my studies as others?
- Some people have even pondered the thought that life would be better for them if they had different parents and a different home.
- Some people have created a virtual fantasy world in which they attempt to appear more than they actually are.
- They invent experiences they have not known, and generally live a fabricated existence.

I know that our experiences in life may slow us down.

- And start our race with a more difficult course ahead of us.
- It doesn't mean that we can't win, but it does mean that we must have a tremendous amount of discipline and will power to achieve our goals.
- Even more than the person who runs the inside lane.

That's where God comes in the picture.

- Whether we are running the inside track or the outside lane.
- Whether we are born into poverty or to a life of relative comfort, the greatest achievement comes to those who put God first.
- Many have achieved some level of success without God, but those who let him control their lives have gone even higher than they could have imagined.

As Christians, we have come to know that God is able to lift us from obscurity to the pinnacles of success, if we will allow him to work through us to benefit his kingdom. Whether we were born in a mansion or a shack, there is no limit to what a child of God can do or where he or she can go. It's all in God's hand.

This text focuses on Nathaniel's question, ***"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"***

- The greatest understanding of the text comes from realizing that it is rooted in a history that began with Jacob in the Old Testament.
- Jacob had twelve sons: Levi, Simeon, Judah, Joseph, Issachar, Dan, Benjamin, Asher, Gad, Naphtali, Rueben, and Zebulun.
- These twelve sons all received an inheritance from Jacob who also added blessings to some of them.

Among the least of the inheritances is that given to Zebulun.

- Zebulun, remember him? He was the sixth and last child of Leah, whom Jacob was forced to marry after working seven years for her younger sister Rachel.
- He was told that his descendants would be those who would dwell by the sea, at ***the very edge of the land of promise.***

- Hundreds of years later, as the Children of Israel overcame slavery and marched into the Promised Land, the 12 tribes divided up the new land.
- In keeping with the blessings of Jacob, the tribe of Zebulun was given an area of land that was near the sea of Galilee.
- ***It appeared to be a very mediocre inheritance.***

While ***his brothers received inheritances that included*** mountains, fertile fields and pasture land that could support sheep and cattle.....

All Zebulun received was an address.

- A small area of land next to the sea that would not be able to grow anything or produce much profit.
- His brothers appeared the more prosperous.
- His family appeared the losers.

The land that Zebulun came to inherit was one of the most despised places among the people of God.

- His land was way in the north, way at the very top; his land was bordering the sea on one side, and Sidon of the Gentiles on the other side,
- It was a long way from Jerusalem where the king would come to live lives, where the leaders would come to reside.
- His land is far removed; perhaps once a year he would go there.
- Zebulun's lands reached on the one side to the Lake of Gennesareth and on the other to Carmel and the Mediterranean.
- On the south it was bounded by Issachar, whose inheritance lay in the great plain or valley of the Kishon; on the north it had Naphtali and Asher.
- It was remote from the center of government.

By any standard Zebulun was so far North that it rarely participated in tribal decisions, central government or other activities.

- For the most part, it was what we would consider "**backwoods**" or a "one red light" town.
- Moreover, it was assumed that those who came from Galilee or any of the cities of that area,
- They were generally considered what we would call "hicks," "unlearned," "uncultured" with little or no chance of achieving success.

At the least, those who were descendants of Zebulun were disappointed.

- What they had was very small.
- It was nothing to speak of, but it was theirs.
- It had been given to them by God himself.

The descendants of Zebulun took their small inheritance by the sea and turned it into a prosperous way of life, which profited from the sea.

- They became industrious in many ways that used the resources that were available to them.
- Although despised by the rest of the nation, they silently worked to being a successful existence for themselves, even while everyone else laughed.

One of its hard working families bore a child that would put their little area on the map!

- *The mother was Mary.*
- *The Stepfather was Joseph.*
- *The son who would make the town famous was Jesus. .*

When Philip spoke to Nathaniel under the fig tree about the Messiah, coming from Nazareth , a city in the land of the Zebulunites, it was funny.

Nothing good comes out of Nazareth -except that which has blessed by the power of God!

Philip's answer was simple "Come and see!"

Zebulun worked against the odds.

- The chances of succeeding in such a remote area were very low.
- Very few doubted that the tribe would even continue to exist let alone thrive.
- Yet, Zebulunites used what was around them and succeeded anyway.

This morning Many people face similar situations and are operating in very difficult situations.

- Some people feel abused and misused.
- They feel discarded and trampled upon so much that they feel like doormats.

It's difficult to think of yourself in any way but a failure when everyone seems to think you are a Zebulunite or a good for nothing!

- *Zebulunites, however, are overcomers!*
- *They achieve despite the odds!*
- *They excel despite their detractors!*
- *They make it to the top despite their critics!*

DISCIPLINE: Every Zebulunite needs discipline.

- This is the ability to force oneself to do what is necessary to overcome.
- It may mean forcing yourself to achieve.

WISDOM: Every Zebulunite needs wisdom.

- Wisdom goes beyond mere knowledge.
- It is the wise application of knowledge.

Someone said wisdom is knowing, "When to say yes, When to say no, when to hold on and when to let go!"

DETERMINATION: What Zebulunite can ever hope to achieve anything without determination?

- Determination is the unquenchable fire that fuels the quest for success.
- It is that inner push that resolves to go forward despite obstacles.
- If you put a Zebulunite in a boat that is sinking,
- he will keep searching until he finds a way to plug the hole and bailout the water or swim for the shore.
- He won't sit still and drown!

I'm telling you that those who go forth out of Nazareth must remember one truth,

- *When God blesses, it doesn't matter where we live*
- *Or the extent of our circumstance*
- *He's able to see it through.*

The Zebulunites didn't have much, but what little they had was blessed by God.

- When what you have has been blessed by God, it doesn't matter who you are or where you are from, **the power of God makes the difference!**

The POWER of GOD makes ALL the DIFFERENCE - - -

- All Moses had was a rod, but when it was blessed by God it turned water to blood and opened up the Red Sea !
- All Elijah had was a mantle on his shoulders, but when it was blessed by God it performed hundreds of miracles!
- All a widow woman had was an empty barrel, but when it was blessed by God, that barrel never ran dry.
- All the lame man had were two legs that would not walk, but when blessed by God those legs were able to walk!
- When Philip came to Nathaniel he said "come see the savior." Immediate Nathaniel wanted to know, where is he from?
- Did he come from Jericho , known for its high and lofty walled cities?
- Did he come from Bethlehem , riddled with many taverns and inns?
- Did he come from Emmaus, along whose road many great men have walked and talked?
- Did he come from Bethany , in whose gardens many pious and devout men have prayed?
- Did he come from Jerusalem , whose temple echoes the voice of God?
- When Philip responded that he was from Nazareth , the question responded, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth ?"
- Philip could only answer...come and see!
- Come and see and I'll show you a man out of Nazareth , who is making the lame walk again!

Come and see and I'll show you a man out of Nazareth , who is making the blind see again!

Come and see and I'll show you a man out of Nazareth , who is raising the dead!

Somebody here has been told that they will never amount to anything. Tell them "wait and see"

I know a man who came from Nazareth who specializes in doing the impossible! His name is Jesus and he is in the blessing business!

If you want to know what good can come out of Nazareth, come and go with me to my father's house!

Come and go with me...

To my father's house!