



NETCAST ORIGINAL DEVOTIONALS

Series: Knowing Jesus

Date: February 23, 2026

Scripture: John 1: 35-53

Title: To Be Known

Author: Esther Baird

Read: John 1: 35-53 (psst, there is an online Bible in the Netcast app)

Devotional:

Have you ever been in a crowd and heard someone yell, “Hey!” Anyone might yell it, but if it’s your child, your coach, or your best friend, you know immediately - - it’s for you. You recognize their voice because you know them, and they know you.

One of the ways we are designed as people made in God’s image is to be known. In this week’s devotional, we see how clearly and personally Jesus knew those he called. John the Baptist announced Jesus as the promised Messiah, calling him “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29) For Jewish listeners, this language pointed directly to Passover, to the lamb whose blood saved families from death in Egypt. But John was saying this Lamb would save not just for one night, but for all time. As people began following Jesus, he personally called some of them to be his disciples.

Take Peter. His given name was Simon, but Jesus renamed him Cephas, which is Aramaic for “rock,” which then translated into Greek is Petros, or Peter. Jesus intentionally renamed him, declaring that Peter would be the rock on which he would build his church (Matthew 16:18). This matters because Jesus knew Peter. He knew Peter would be impulsive, emotional, outspoken and even, in three short years, deny him. Yet Jesus also knew where Peter’s story was headed. The very traits that made Peter a mess at times would one day make him steady and strong. Jesus knew his whole life and still called him.



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Devotional cont.

Then there was Nathanael - - a skeptical, judgmental know-it-all who dismissed Jesus because of where he came from. But when Jesus revealed supernatural knowledge of him, and Nathanael was instantly convinced. Jesus knew him too. He knew that once this skeptic believed, he would be fully committed. Jesus then made this curious comment, he told Nathanael that he would see angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man. This was a reference to Jacob's ladder (Genesis 28), a reference Nathanael would have certainly known. And he would have also realized that Jesus was declaring that he, Jesus, was the connection between heaven and earth. God and humanity would be reconciled through Jesus.

This was the biggest news imaginable, given to someone who loved "knowing things." Jesus offered Nathanael something deeper than mere information; he offered him the truth of who he, Jesus, was and then called him to follow.

Sometimes our flaws feel overwhelming, and the parts of ourselves we'd rather hide seem impossible to escape. But Jesus knew Peter and Nathanael completely, and he knows us too. He sees our weakness, our mistakes, our sin and brokenness and still calls us. He takes our messy lives and weaves them into his greater story, creating something new (in him) in the process, for his glory.

This week when your life feels messy or like it's taken a wrong turn, ask yourself, are you following Jesus? Are you accepting his call to follow and know him more?



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Reflection Questions:

- Where in this passage do you see Jesus taking the initiative to truly know someone before they fully understand him? How does that shape the way you think about Jesus' knowledge of you?
- Peter is renamed before he becomes the "rock". What does this suggest about how Jesus sees our future, not just our present? Where might Jesus be calling something in you that you don't yet see?
- Nathanael begins as skeptical and dismissive, yet Jesus meets him personally and honestly. What doubts, assumptions, or judgments do you bring with you as you follow Jesus? How might Jesus be inviting you to move beyond them?
- Jesus tells Nathanael that he will see "greater things" than he can imagine. Where are you tempted to limit what Jesus can do - - either in your life or in the world? What might it look like to follow him with open expectations?
- In John 1, each person is invited with a simple call: "Follow me." What does following Jesus look like for you this week—in your relationships, decisions, jobs, or responses to challenges?

Notes:
