

Every night I pray for the kingdom of God to come. Sometimes, in my prayers, I go on and on about it; but usually I simply, if somewhat desperately, just use the short prayer Jesus taught us to pray. As such, I am one little one among millions who for centuries and generations, have been seeking the kingdom of God. But even if someone I greatly admire, like Bob Shelton or Richard Rohr, were to text me or email me that the kingdom of God had gotten a real foothold in, say, Baton Rouge, and were spreading rapidly from there, I would not believe it. So I sympathize with Nathaniel's skepticism.

Philip and Nathaniel were two among millions who for generations and centuries sought the coming of the Messiah. And while I can imagine Nathaniel's doubt, I can also feel at least some of the excitement Philip felt when he ran to his friends to tell them that he had found the One. He had found the One sought for centuries and for generations. He had found the One sought by millions before him, and thousands along with him. He had found the One promised long ago by God.

Sometimes, I wonder how Philip started that day, whether he started it any differently than any other day, whether he woke up with some sense of foreboding. I wonder whether Philip went through that day nervous and full of anticipation. But I think not. I think Philip woke up that day just like every ordinary day. I think that when he woke up that day, probably a low-lying hope sort of simmering down deep in his consciousness quietly, briefly revealed itself in that way that many of us experience, thinking that, really, ANYTHING could happen today! And I am pretty confident that, no matter how open he was to this ANYTHING that could happen, he pursued his usual agenda, staying alive, moving ahead, taking care of business.

That is what we do, we seekers. Pursue our agendas. Stay alive. Move ahead. Take care of business. But there remains that openness, an openness for God to intervene, an openness for God to reveal Godself in some new or profound way. And accompanied by that openness is, and always must be, a certain frame of mind that the Bible calls repentance.

True seekers seek out of a sense of deepest and greatest need. Such seeking is not the work of the human ego. In fact, such seeking has to work around, if not often against, the human ego. Such seekers are not seeking some advantage over others, some power over others, some preferential privilege over others, some secret knowledge or some magical deliverance from suffering or sin or even poverty. John the Baptist, for instance, was a pure seeker, one who forsook a life of privilege, power and wealth. John embraced poverty and did not flee from suffering. Indeed, John did his seeking out in the wilderness and among sinners and the forsaken. And John called the people to ignore the incessant demands of the ego and to join him in his life of repentance – to await a savior, a redeemer, but also a sovereign Lord.

And this is exactly what Philip had found – a savior, a redeemer, the sovereign Lord, and not a savior, redeemer and Lord just for himself (that's the ego speaking again!), but a savior, and a redeemer for the world, for all people, the Lord of ALL!  
Seek and you will find!