

# I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK: WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

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## John 1:35-51

35The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, 36and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!"

37The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. 38When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" 39He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. 40One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed). 42He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of

John. You are to be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

43The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." 44Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." 46Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." 47When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" 48Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you." 49Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" 50Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these." 51And he said to him, "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

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## REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?
2. Where are you from? Reflect on the places, people, and perspectives that have shaped your “origin story.”
3. How easy (or hard) is it for you to answer the question “where are you from?”
4. Nazareth was a poor, rural village. Archeological digs indicate maybe 50 dwellings, no school, no synagogue. The town is not mentioned in the ancient world until it pops up in the New Testament. No wonder Nathaniel is perplexed that the Messiah somehow grew up in this backwater hamlet. How might Jesus’ experience growing up in such a context shape his ministry and message?
5. Sometimes people make assumptions about us, just as Nathaniel did when he learned Jesus was from Nazareth. Has anyone ever wrongly assumed something about you? If so, what happened, and what was that like? How has that impacted the way you treat or talk with others?
6. How might the world be transformed by people sincerely asking and listening to the stories

that emerge from the question “where are you from?”

7. In a world still saturated with prejudice and presumption, how might the question “where are you from?” be difficult, even triggering, for some people to hear?