

HOLIDAY MESSAGES 2009
A REFLECTIVE GLANCE AT THE FAMILIAR
JOHN 1:43–49; 7:40–43, 50–52



The Heart of the Matter

Familiarity breeds contempt. So the old saying goes. We've all experienced a version of this truism—a long car trip trying to share the backseat with a sibling or even something as simple as eating one too many peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for lunch. The real danger with familiarity raises its head when it comes to the Bible and the life of faith—we who've been comfortable in the church for any length of time tend to forget the difficulty of believing in Jesus and standing up for Him in public. Let's meet two men in the midst of their own struggles over belief and think about how their experiences might challenge us in our relationships with the "strugglers" in our lives this Christmas.



Discovering the Way

1. Making the Commitment to Believe (John 1:43–49)

When presented with claims of Jesus as Messiah, Nathanael expressed disbelief, questioning the identity of Jesus, before eventually believing.

2. Having the Courage to Stand (John 7:40–43, 50–52)

Nicodemus, the Pharisee who had visited Jesus in the night, found himself needing to speak up for his faith to a group of skeptical Pharisees.



Starting Your Journey

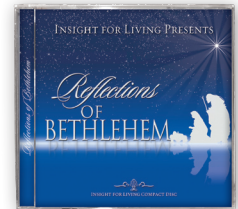
It's important that Christians give time to those who are struggling with their faith—to allow them to either think things through or to strengthen their resolve for Christ.



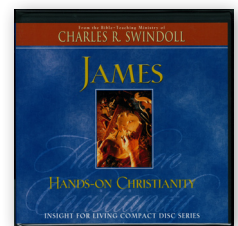
Tools for Digging Deeper



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