

## **Finding Life: The Call**

**2 Epiphany B    Jan. 16/17, 2020    Rev. Dr. David Gardner Tweed**

### **Gospel: John 1:43-51**

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

*In John's gospel, we read a more developed Christology than in the synoptic gospels. The opening chapter of John includes a catalog of Christological titles. In today's reading, this "son of Joseph"—the fourth gospel makes no reference to a virgin birth—is named Rabbi, Son of God, King of Israel, and Son of Man. It is as if Chapter 1 provides a summary of what chapters 2-21 will explore, how Christology was understood in the early second century. The titles move the hearer through time, from Jesus' childhood in Joseph's home to the Parousia at the end of the world. Even narrative details, such as Jesus' pre-knowledge of Nathanael, hint at his divine status.*

*For John, there needs to be no miraculous birth to indicate Jesus' divine identity, because he is the God-sent teacher, the one come from God to replace human kings, the ultimate fulfillment of religious hopes, and the divine judge glorified by angels at the end of time. Today's reading exemplifies why Christians need to know the Old Testament, for all the Christological titles adopt and alter imagery from the Hebrew Scriptures.*

*God calls. The many **call** narratives in the Bible testify that this God is the kind of deity who knows us by name and who calls us into new life. From today's readings, Samuel, the Corinthian Christians, Philip, and Nathanael have all been called into a new*

*identity. At baptism we are called both by our secular name and by our adopted name, Christian, that is, “of Christ.”*

*That the **heaven opens** is a biblical phrase based on the ancient idea that the sky was a fixed dome that separated the earth from the upper sphere of God. The synoptic gospels refer to the heavens opening both at Jesus’ baptism and at the end of time, when God will finally “descend” in majesty to bring an end of the cosmos as we know it. For us, this opening of the heaven can mean that in Christ, the separation between divine and human no longer exists. (Thanks to SundaysandSeasons.com)*

### **Some Bible insights:**

- 1) The Call comes in the normal routine of life
- 2) God is always extending an invitation to us
- 3) Once captured by God, there is a natural excitement to tell others.
- 4) There is often a cynicism, skepticism, or doubt to overcome re: faith’s invitation
- 5) It helps to be someone who can lower our pretensions, apprehensions, “shoulds”
- 6) God know us and can connect/lift up the specifics of who we are
- 7) God offers the promise of seeing/experiencing great things in life

### **Some Practical insights/practices:**

- A) Watch for how opportunities come to you and how you make yourself open to them – intersections of possibility
- B) God is always wanting to build a strong relationship, deepen connections with you and help you cultivate your experience of a fulfilling life.
- C) It’s OK to be excited by small, personal as well as BIG career, relational and meaningful things.....and to share those things with others.
- D) Get over yourself and the attitudes, thinking and especially the “Shoulds” that can get in the way of you discovering more than just “you” but also how God is calling you to be more fulfilled version of “You” and a very capable version of you that can be used to invite, attract and remind others of God’s presence in the world.
- E) Find someone who can help you discover all the parts of you; use tools like the Myers Briggs Types, DiSC and other psychological, spiritual instruments. See if their results make sense to you and interview others who know you to see if this makes sense to them.

- F) Find someone perhaps a spiritual director who can help you discern God's workings/connections in your life; perhaps complete a Spiritual Gifts Inventory to understand your spiritually oriented style/giftedness.
- G) Find time for quiet and/or reflection in order to increase the openness to hearing the Spirit's urgings/whispers/messages to you.
- H) Watch for and store up Grace Moments of life; write them down, laser image them, talk and repeat them as stories, etc.