

2 Epiphany

1 Sam 3:1-10 [11-20]

3 Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD in the presence of Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.

²At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. ³The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was.

⁴Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, "Here I am!" ⁵and ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down.

⁶And the LORD called again, "Samuel!" and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." ⁷Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

⁸And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. ⁹Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant hears."

¹¹Then the LORD said to Samuel, "Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which the two ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. ¹²On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. ¹³And I declare to him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God,^[a] and he did not restrain them. ¹⁴Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever."

¹⁵Samuel lay until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. ¹⁶But Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." And he said, "Here I am." ¹⁷And Eli said, "What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also if you hide anything from me of all that he told you." ¹⁸So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, "It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to him."

¹⁹And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. ²⁰And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the LORD. ²¹And the LORD appeared again at Shiloh, for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

Ps 139:1-6, 13-18

¹ LORD, you have searched me | out and known me;*

you know my sitting down and my rising up;

you discern my thoughts | from afar.

² You trace my journeys and my | resting-places*

and are acquainted with | all my ways.

³ Indeed, there is not a word | on my lips,*

but you, O LORD, know it | altogether.

⁴ You press upon me behind | and before*

and lay your | hand upon me.

⁵ Such knowledge is too wonder- | ful for me;*

it is so high that I cannot at- | tain to it.

¹² For you yourself created my | inmost parts;*

you knit me together in my | mother's womb.

¹³ I will thank you because I am mar- | velously made;*

your works are wonderful, and I | know it well.

¹⁴ My body was not hid- | den from you,*

while I was being made in secret and woven in the depths | of the earth.

¹⁵ Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb;

all of them were written | in your book;*

they were fashioned day by day, when as yet there was | none of them.

¹⁶ How deep I find your | thoughts, O God!*

How great is the | sum of them!

¹⁷ If I were to count them, they would be more in number | than the sand;*

to count them all, my life span would need to | be like yours.

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

¹²“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything. ¹³“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. ¹⁵Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶Or do you not know that he who is joined^[d] to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” ¹⁷But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. ¹⁸Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin^[e] a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

John 1:43-51

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 of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the

son of Joseph.”⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!”⁴⁸ Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”⁴⁹ Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”⁵⁰ Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.”⁵¹ And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you,^[m] you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

Message: Come See Jesus

Jesus has just found Phillip. We’re told absolutely nothing about that encounter, but it obviously had a significant impact on Phillip, because the implication of the scripture is that as a result, he tracks down his friend, Nathaniel and shares with him the revelation that he has already received: *“We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”*

Right away we learn something about Nathaniel: he is either naturally skeptical, or at least shares the popular sentiment that Galilee and Nazareth are a joke. Literature of the time suggest that Nazareth was used much like Poland and Norway have been used in our time – as the opening line for ethnic jokes. Our jokes begin, “There were these two Norwegians: Ole and Lena...” Theirs were more likely to begin with, “There were these two Nazarenes – Ole and Lena...”

The difference was that the disdain ran a deeper than making Nazareth the target of jokes; scholars really didn’t believe that any significant theological thought was to come out of this area. John 7 records that the religious leaders are in agreement: prophets do not come out of Galilee!

So when Phillip declares that they’ve found the Messiah and that it’s Jesus of Nazareth, he automatically responds, “Nazareth!? Can anything good come from there?”

And Phillip responds, “Come and see.”

Come and see...what?

and see...what?

The simple answer is *Come and see Jesus*.

But as is frequently the case, the simplest answer is also sometimes the most difficult to accept!

What Jesus are people to come and see? For Phillip the simple answer was, "This one! The one standing right here!"

But now, 2000 years removed from the days when Jesus walked among his disciples, the question, Which Jesus are people supposed to come and see?

The Jesus of our own construction?

- The Jesus that does nothing more than what we want him to do?
- The tamed down, Jesus that does little more than pat babies on the head? Is that who we are to invite people to come and see?

I'm reminded of the children in C.S. Lewis' book, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* when they are told about meeting the lion Aslan, who is the Christ figure in the series:

"Is (Aslan) a man?" asked Lucy

"Aslan a man!" said Mr. Beaver sternly. "Certainly not! I tell you he is the King of the wood...Don't you know who is the King of Beasts? Aslan is a lion – *the Lion, the great Lion.*"

"Ooh!" said Susan, "I'd thought he was a man. Is he quite safe? I'd feel rather nervous about meeting a lion."

"That you will, dearie, and no mistake," said Mrs Beaver; "if there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or just silly."

"Then he isn't safe?" said Lucy.

"Safe?" said Mr. Beaver; "don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."

We need to Come and See and invite others to do the same, but come and see not a tame, watered down Jesus.

- Jesus on his own terms, not ours!
- Jesus that comes to

- put our old sinful self to death through daily sorrow and repentance for sin and to raise people up every day – new creations in him through forgiveness.
- He does this by Calling sin, sin
- hold people accountable
- Because Jesus can't forgive us if nothing is our fault!

You and I need to come like Nathaniel comes:

- He came with the popular idea that Nazareth and Galilee for that matter, were a joke: nothing good comes out of them – certainly not a prophet (John 7:52)
- We all come with preconceived notions, but we need to come like he did – willing to see things and hear things that challenged those notions
 - We need to come With no deceit – not pretending to be something we're not! We're not God's latest greatest achievement in sanctification; we're sinners, and Luther would add to remind us "mighty ones" at that!
 - Jesus comments about knowing Nathaniel before Phillip called him under the fig tree. When you and I read that, we may be inclined to say in puzzlement, "What? What fig tree? Nobody said anything about a fig tree!"
 - Now, while I have no doubt that that is exactly where Phillip did indeed find Nathaniel, the significance of him being there goes beyond a simple location in time and space that Jesus was aware of. It's more than as if Jesus were to have said, "I saw you at the breakfast table eating Cheerios."
 - Being "under a fig tree" was more than a particular physical place
 - It was an idiom – a figure of speech that signified that the one seated there was a deep thinker, a philosopher, one who was willing to tackle the challenges of difficult ideas, concepts

We need to come - ready to see a Jesus that blows us out of the water – who comes with a level of power and majesty that angels are ascending and descending on him in honor and worship.

Come as you are, but don't expect Jesus to leave you that way! Nathaniel came with popular (false, but popular) ideas about Galilee, Nazareth, and anything coming out of either one of them! Jesus didn't tell Nathaniel, "There, there! You just go ahead and believe any of those deep,

religious sounding things you want! It's all good! Besides, it's what everybody else believes!"

No! Jesus told Nathaniel, "You just wait! You may be a deep thinker already, but you're going to see things, hear things, and encounter things that will blow your mind – maybe beyond your ability to comprehend right now: angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man! "

We're called to invite people to come and see

- come and see the source of a compassionate, life-changing, God
- but if we won't let him be the whole, complete Jesus for us, in us – how can others expect to see him as he wants to be for them?

Come see the God of the universe who loves us so much that he's willing to sacrifice his son's life so that he can give it to us!

Thanks be to God!