

Lent Devotional March 8, 2025

Scripture

John 1:43-51

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

Devotion

The Rev. Tara Woodard-Lehman '03

Today's passage opens with Jesus inviting Philip to "Follow me." Philip, in turn, finds his friend Nathanael and tells him about "the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

At first, Nathanael is skeptical and asks, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Philip seems to brush off Nathanael's low view of Nazareth and responds, "Come and see."

Philip doesn't clapback or correct Nathanael. He doesn't bombard him with information, bludgeon him with facts, or blame him for doubting. He refrains from heated debate and soaring rhetoric. Philip doesn't seek to proselytize or persuade. Instead, Philip simply invites Nathanael to "Come and see."

But before Nathanael has a chance to see Jesus, Jesus sees him. Jesus declares, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." Here, Jesus sees with a kind of holy double-vision. It's not merely sight. It's also insight. Jesus doesn't just look at Nathanael; he understands him. Once he is seen and known, the once-skeptic declares, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."

Today's gospel reminds us of whom we follow: a savior who sees us fully, knows us deeply, and loves us beyond what we can imagine. Because of Christ's immense love for us, we are encouraged to invite others to simply "come and see" for themselves.

Prayer

God of Grace,

Thank you for seeing and understanding us. Lend us clarity and vision as we seek to follow Jesus these Lenten days. Show us how to serve our neighbors in a way that makes them feel seen, known, and deeply loved. Amen.