**John 1:43-51 (ESV)**

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 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, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

**“I see, so I call”**

Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. How strange is our present age. We know so much, but we are left wondering what to do with what we know. More and more data keeps amassing each day that is its own kind of pollution. Who can grasp what it all means? As a result, we throw it on computers to manage the mess, which sounds reasonable. The internet has become the “go to” place for answers, so has it now become God to us? Robots have made life easier, but isn’t work something God designed for humanity to do? Artificial Intelligence seems cool, except what happens if it decides to leave us in the dust?

As we now settle into the Epiphany season, it is all about revealing. This goes beyond answers to math problems, medical research, or when best to grow crops. Epiphany seeks to reveal and make known that the person and work of Jesus Christ is God for us. Since we are only in a position to discover truth while God is truth, it means He must be charitable to us. The curse caused by the tree of knowledge of good and evil is just too much. No wonder St. John wrote his Gospel with the goal being, “….these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (20:31). The Lord knows us so perfectly that to know, confess, and admire His Word and ways has no end.

1. **What do we know?**
2. Philip called Nathanael, which means know God uses relationships.

* Those original disciples were followers of John the baptizer and lived in close-knit communities.
* Once Jesus called Philip to “Follow Me,” there was no way for him to keep quite.
* His witness to Nathanael was not a sales pitch, but stood upon scripture for this Jesus was, “whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote…”
* To know Jesus as the promised Savior was bigger than an experience, but the Holy Spirit’s relationship and work that came from God’s word.

1. Nathanael then confessed a surprising question to spice thing ups.

* It was not like Thomas who after the resurrection declared, “I will never believe, unless I see…”
* Instead, you can sense Nathanael’s’ amusing words, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"
* We treat life like a program figuring important people are rich, powerful people come from notable places and smart people know best.
* Yet, all wisdom and glory redirects to Jesus of Nazareth for He is God full of grace and truth not ashamed the lowly and despised.

1. Nathanael goes, but as for any, it is not by our own reason or strength that we come to Jesus Christ.

* Rather than attempting to answer his question, Philip just provided words of wonderment, “Come and see.”
* This was the same invitation Jesus had spoken to Andrew and Simon the day before who asked where He lived.
* Against the confusion today, “Come and see” is to let only Christ be at the front and center of His Church.
* Apart from Word and Sacrament, reason and strength will lead any away from Jesus to what our sinful eyes want to see.

1. **What does Jesus know?**
2. God sees true Israelites as those who know Christ.

* Thus, Jesus told Nathanael, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!”
* How often in the Old Testament, did Israel fall into deception because of darkened hearts that did not trust God?
* Nathanael was a true Israelite unlike others in Israel because he received baptism by John for the forgiveness of sins.
* Likewise, baptism into Christ is rightly to cling to the justifying work of Christ and know His good Word for our life against the deceptions.

1. God sees our life fully letting us confess Christ.

* In response to his question, Jesus supplied an answer more than what Nathanael considered possible saying, “Before Philip called you, I saw you.”
* Whatever he was doing “under the fig tree” whether praying or dealing with life’s problems, Jesus made it clear nothing was out of His sight.
* Plenty like to say, “You don’t know me,” but Jesus is God who knows everyone perfectly and under His tree of suffering no one is out of His sight.
* To confess Him as God and King is now to confess this crucified Jesus bought you at a price and joined His faithfulness to your very life.

1. God sees greater things to come so admire Christ.

* Revealing Nathanael’s life was a drop in the bucket to Jesus considering what they would see later of His glory.
* Like God opening heaven to Jacob, Jesus opened heaven and the angels of God surrounded the Son of Man given for sinners.
* Gadgets and gizmos entertain us, but God has greater things to give in Christ that far outlasts what this world can offer in glory.
* Heaven remains open because of Christ and He is better than a ladder but the comfort and strength for His Church and every Christian.

If knowledge and truth seem to be out of control, we heard in the introit, “Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie!” (Psalms 40:4) With our God-sized problem over knowledge, Epiphany reveals for us to know Christ and His Word. God seeks to govern us in His peace all our days. Church is a Greek word that means, “Called out.” Christ calls us out from darkness to be in His light. Organizations have sales pitch, while Christ offers and delivers in His Church the saving truth for all to believe. The Lord knows us so perfectly that to know, confess, and admire His Word and ways has no end. Amen. The peace of Christ that passes all understanding be with your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus to life everlasting. Amen.