

Second Sunday After Epiphany – Year B

1 Samuel 3:1-10(11-20)

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51



Jesus, where did you get to know me?

When Philip brought Nathanael to Jesus, Jesus said, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael, whether surprised or sarcastic, asked Jesus, "Where did you get to know me?"

Nathanael's question may be one that all of us have asked at one time or another. How can this all-powerful God who created the vastness of the universe (not to mention the seven plus billion people on earth) know *anything* about me? We may not have sensed God's presence in times of difficulty as we walked the path of life; unexpected, unpleasant things may have collided with our life, things that seem unfair, things that place an extra burden on us, things that make us wonder if God really knows what's happening in our lives. Does God really know *me*?

Whether Nathanael's question was one of sarcasm, doubt, or surprise, Jesus took the opportunity to help Nathanael grow in understanding. Jesus began his response with, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you to me." He could have just as well said, "I saw you buying fruit at the market yesterday," or, "I saw you playing in the street." His point was that God's presence is with us always; God is aware of our lives moment by moment, and has a deep, loving interest in every thought, word, and deed we have.

God's capacity for love is unending, and has no bounds. It stretches from the far edges of the cosmos to the innermost thoughts or concerns you may have deep in your heart. Nothing is missed; all is interconnected; every thought, word and deed is highly important to God.

Nathanael may have been surprised by Jesus' sensitivity and attentiveness, his mindfulness of the moment. But if he had really known the depth of care God has for us, he wouldn't have been surprised at all. The psalmist writes in 139, "O Lord, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down, and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely." And then the psalmist emphasizes, "For it was You who formed my inward parts; You knit me together in my mother's womb."

In his letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul reminds us, "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?" And he adds, "Anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him...your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you..."

If all of this is true, then how can God *not* know us?

In these readings for the Epiphany season, God reveals to us not only the immensity of power, but also the capacity for a gentle union with our very souls. In times of uncertainty or strife, we may interpret God's involvement with us as aloof or uncaring, but in the broader scheme of things, God promises to make things known to us, and make them right.

As the psalmist writes, "In Your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed. How weighty to me are Your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! I try to count them – they are more than the sand; I come to the end — I am still with You."

"I come to the end, and I am still with You." In other words, all will be well in the grand scheme of our life, which includes not only in this world, but also the one where our true home is – eternal communion with God.

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