

Matins, Jan 14, 2018

Texts. Ps. 139. 1-6, 13-18, 1 Sam. 3.1-10 (13-20), 1 Cor. 6:12-20, Jn. 1. 43-51.

Script. "Come and see", .... "You will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of God." John 1. 46, 51.

The song Byron Suderman taught us in in the Scriptures workshop these last two days is on the forefront of my mind. Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Ps. 119. 105. This is my prayer this morning.

Let us take note of the Reflection theme, Come and see--- heavens opened, angels, Son of God revered. In the Advent period we had MANY "Come and See" calls. Many: Mary, Joseph, Zechariah, wise men, shepherds. Do we see and hear God's call to come and see today? I found an answer to this puzzling question from Venessa Snyder-Penner two weeks ago, when she spoke of PRAISE to God being enriched and enlightened for her unexpectedly through a very new experience- contemporary guitar music of praise, of which, to that point, she was not fond of. I bear witness this morning, in finding Scriptures illumined in a new and very dramatic way, since early December, in asking God to rid me of constraints and restrictions from childhood, youth and adulthood, from my culture and if need be, my church community, so that I might see, in a refreshing way, God's word and way. This is such a joy! Richard Rohr says one is to be **stunned**, if one is to see and know God. And so, my prayer is that we be **stunned** this morning, not from me but from the Spirit of God.

Today's texts show that God's call to us, whether church or individual, is continuous. God's call is always, and we respond 10, 23, 60 and a 1000 times. Our texts reinforce this point.

The apprentice, Samuel, a very young boy, hears a "new" voice, while tutored by the godly man, Eli. Though living and sleeping in the temple, he does not "know God". God was not yet revealed to him. Our Christian homes in our childhood are no assurance that we have heard God's call. For Samuel, the call comes distinctly three times, eventually with a message to tell his own superior, Eli, that justice would come to the family of Samuel's aging mentor. This was a difficult task to hear, and a difficult task to deliver. Eli, a prophet was a man, flawed, and under God's judgement. For Samuel, what a call, .... and many more calls followed.

Much of I Cor. speaks about the soul, a smaller part about the mind or brain. A much smaller part addresses words about the body. It relates to sex, no surprise. Yep, God is interested in sex. This is true from Genesis 1. We have holy bodies, actual temples, which are the very abode of the Holy Spirit. These bodies may be easily contaminated. May our church recognize the keeping of our bodies. The sanctity of our body is more than sex. It relates to our eating habits. It relates to physical fitness. I am sure Ralph Brubacher, George Vanderschaaf and Bernie Burnet treasure this text.

The John text, much like the Samuel text, yields information of the calling of several people. In this case they are adults. Nathaniel initially poo-poops Jesus Nazareth origins. Belittling the origins of some of our immigrants, or the homeless, or the slow learner in school, is not justifiable. Great things have happened

from the rather simple origins many, such as Francis of Assisi and Mother Teresa. In reading this text I am now a bit more forgiving of hearing the bold words from a member of this community, who, when opportunity permits, identifies himself from New Hamburg. Why not? So Penn. Or Halbstadt in the Ukraine, or Scotland need not be to our shame.

The disciple Philip was no ignorant person. Even before minimal encounter with Jesus, he KNEW, from his study of the Law of Moses, Jesus was the ONE to come. Though a fisherman, he had already searched, and found this ONE to be the Messiah. Nathaniel recognizes the Christ immediately as the Son of God, as the King of Israel. He had insight. This recognition was affirmed when Jesus recognized him some 30 minutes earlier, sitting under a tree. Yet Jesus wants to take him a step further. Jesus wants the foundation of his faith to be solid and firm, as God does for each of us. As our reflection text indicates, Nathaniel and we are to see the opening of the heavens, the view of angels, the Son of Man.

God has a lot for us. God seeks personal encounters with us, as God did with Samuel, and Jesus did with several disciples. There is so much more for us. God makes continual calls. Our daily personal meditation is a key to this depth journey with God. God is waiting. God is calling. We openly receive Communion in fellowship with one another, in our response to this call of God.