**John 1:43-51**

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!” 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.”

**“Come & See”**

 Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. Have you ever noticed how much we live in a “cut and paste” kind of society? Cookie cutter homes go up one after another with suburban sprawl. Plug and play devices give a stress-free way with handling technology. A click of a button lets us share internet links, pics, and other information. We lock-in accounts and dates on calendars like setting cruise control. Even in school, kids learn formulas to punch into that graphing calculator. Yet, what may be a benefit in one way of life can turn out to be a detriment to another. You cannot cookie cutter marriages. Parents cannot raise each child the same way. A degree is not a plug and play guarantee for a job.

 The dynamics for life are more than a formula. This is especially true for the church. Rather than designing some model where believers just get punched out like a machine. We see the calling of Philip and Nathanael to follow Christ was unique and a face-to-face matter. God works in different ways to save sinners. The order and means we operate by do not apply to His Spirit that works when and where He pleases. This means the witness by the church is a holistic activity. As St. Paul says, “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 Cor 12:27). Yet, our diversity has a unified head. Christ dispels the darkness by the light of His saving Word.

1. **Comes and see how questions are bound to arise.**
2. This is what Philip had to face with Nathanael.
* He came with a straightforward kind of answer, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”
* The response was far less than exciting from Nathanael who said, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”
* Such a defensive posture is natural to sinners and even the disciples raised bigger doubts over the women’s witness about the empty tomb of Jesus.
* Nathanael remained in the dark for a Jewish Messiah from Nazareth was less than impressive.
1. Questions always fly in the face of witnessing.
* “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” is the kind of suspicion people carry around over a shrinking church in our society.
* Nazareth was a village of about 300 people and so the small and insignificant never impresses sinners. Let alone, it was full of darkened life of Gentiles.
* Yet, the greatness of man is foolishness to God for the light is and remains only in Jesus Christ.
* It all begins and ends with this man from Galilee, the Savior who works in the shadow of sinners, and the Lord who reigns in just the wrong places.
1. **Come and see then the only answer is to let Christ speak.**
2. The question by Nathanael did not dishearten Philip.
* Rather than taking it upon himself to justify God or explain more than what the OT promised. All he said was, “Come and see.” (Imperatives!)
* This invitation had no strings attached to lure or force, but simply let the Gospel stand on its own authority.
* Jesus took the initiative on seeing them saying, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” (Nathaniel not sinless, but sincere toward what God promised.)
* More than knowing him, what became clear was who oversaw all this calling of Nathanael for Jesus said, “I saw you under the fig tree.”
1. The Gospel of Christ can go to work in the most unexpected ways to remove our disheartenment.
* Philip teaches us to let the chips fall with what God wants to say to a person rather than being afraid or defensive against them.
* Not only is salvation by Jesus good, but it goes out to the most unlikely people like those in Galilee.
* Who does God want us to see? Is it the missing member none dares bring up? Is it someone new to the area with no ties to local family? Is it that person with tattoos people only talk about?
* We are to “come and see” how Christ speaks without distinction because His love looks upon any life for what it is so any can receive forgiveness.
1. **Come and see the wonderful way God’s grace goes with us.**
2. Something else good came out of Nazareth along with Jesus.
* A good confession came from Nathanael, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”
* The witness by Philp, the Word of Moses and the Prophet had fulfillment in what Christ said.
* Of course, true faith is never stagnant and why following Christ came with this promise, “You will see greater things than these...”
* Greater than His work in Galilee, they saw how Christ by the cross made a place of death into a gift of life that opened heaven.
1. The church would be a dark Galilee if it were not for Christ who goes with us!
* An unpopular people on earth by baptism belong to a great multitude in heaven having, “washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”
* Our daily life is strange to many for it begins and ends with repentance and faith to Jesus who forgives.
* A good confession of Christ we make together only to see Him take the initiative to care for us with His true body and blood.
* Loving enemies, bearing burdens, crucifying self is not foreign before this king who by His cross opened heaven so none be lost, not even you.

 On this LWML Sunday, “come and see” how missions is nothing other than the grace of God already at work in our lives. This activity is personal like the one-on-one Philip had with Nathanael. It means placing full confidence in Christ and His Word for all the questions. It redefines our purpose to see what can come out of Galilee rather than glory over Jerusalem. Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Come and see! Christ dispels the darkness by the light of His saving Word. Amen. The peace of Christ, which passes all understanding, be with your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus to life everlasting. Amen.