

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany January 14, 2018

Year B – the Gospel of Mark

**LUTHERAN**

# **LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY**

*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.  
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the  
rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

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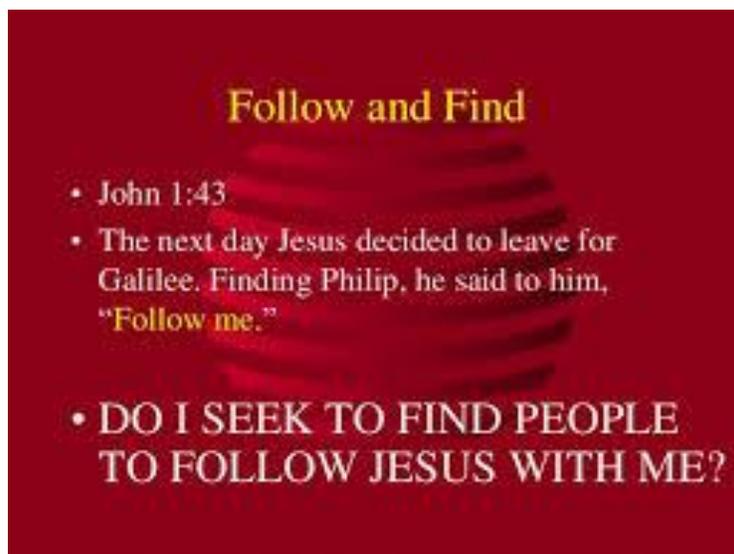
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**through Facebook at either “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”,  
“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

January 4, 2018 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134

*Presented as a part of the bible study/worship at a weekday service (currently on Fridays at 7:00pm) in a house church setting, bi-weekly at an assisted living site, St. Philip Lutheran Church, Cleveland (First Sunday of the month at 11:00am) and used by Lutherans in Africa. Contact [puritaspastor@hotmail.com](mailto:puritaspastor@hotmail.com) for details.*



<https://www.slideshare.net/garyvcarter/follow-me-and>

### **Hymn of the Day**

**Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 402 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) Not listed**

**“The only Son from heaven”**

A Lutheran hymn that made its way from the Worship Supplement to the Lutheran Book of Worship to Lutheran Worship to the Lutheran Service Book.

**“Cruciger, Elisabethe, née von Meseritz**, was the daughter of a family belonging to the Polish nobility. Her parents, suffering from the persecutions of these times, had been forced to seek refuge at Wittenberg. There, in May or June, 1524, she was married to Caspar Cruciger, son of a Leipzig burgess, who had enrolled himself as a student at Wittenberg in 1522. Cruciger, who was treated by Luther as his own son and accounted his most hopeful pupil, became in 1525 Rector of St. John’s School and preacher in St. Stephen’s Church, Magdeburg; and in 1528 was called to become professor in the philosophical faculty at Wittenberg, but, by Luther’s wish, was appointed one of the professors of Theology. Of his wife, who died at Wittenberg, May, 1535, little is known save that she was a friend of Luther’s wife, a lover of music, and an affectionate wife and mother (*Koch*, i. 281-285; *Caspar Cruciger*, by Dr. Pressel, Elberfeld, 1862, p. 76; *Allg. Deutsche Biographie*, xviii. 148, &c)...”

[https://hymnary.org/person/Creutziger\\_Elisabeth](https://hymnary.org/person/Creutziger_Elisabeth)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5PMOFJX\\_Nw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5PMOFJX_Nw) LutheranWarbler Kristine Dent 11 months ago (edited) “I would like to thank you for not only playing the hymns, but also for singing them so beautifully. I homeschool and each week we practice the sermon hymn for our church. I am not very good at holding a tune and so it is very helpful for us to sing with you. A lot of the hymns we find only have the tune, however, it is extremely helpful for us to sing along with someone. When we can't find the tune I record me playing the hymn on my flute. My 13 and 14 year old really like when we get to sing with you for the week. Thank you.”

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kd2IB6Un\\_gw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kd2IB6Un_gw) Bethany Johnson Melody played on a harp.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIIVKiGmWS0> Organist is Mark Peters. The prelude for hymn 402 in Lutheran Service Book is from Six Hymn Improvisations, Set 8.

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV) Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

**1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), the same reading (Next Week: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; RCL, the same reading)**

*“The opening chapters of 1 Samuel provide background for the institution of Israel’s monarchy.*

*After a narrative on the Hannah’s unlikely pregnancy (1 Samuel 1) and her accompanying prayer (1 Samuel 2), 1 Samuel 3 describes the call narrative for the Israelite leader.*

*The story is familiar to many of us. Eli is aged, both physically and emotionally from the parenting heartaches at the end of 1 Samuel 2. And as the young Samuel ministers under Eli, he hears God's voice three times. Upon finally realizing through Eli's direction that this was, indeed, the voice of God, he gives his stunning answer in verse 10, "Speak for your servant is listening." The word God to Samuel reveals the next phase of God's activity and in revealing to Samuel, his prophetic credibility is established..."*

[http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2305](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2305) **Roger Nam**  
Associate Professor of Biblical Studies, George Fox Evangelical Seminary, Portland, Oregon

## **The LORD Calls Samuel**

3 Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD in the presence of Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.

<sup>2</sup> At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. <sup>3</sup> The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was.

<sup>4</sup> Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, "Here I am!" <sup>5</sup> and ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down.

<sup>6</sup> And the LORD called again, "Samuel!" and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again."

<sup>7</sup> Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

<sup>8</sup> And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup> Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

<sup>10</sup> And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant hears." <sup>11</sup> *Then the LORD said to Samuel, "Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which the two ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. <sup>12</sup> On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. <sup>13</sup> And I declare to him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God,<sup>[a]</sup> and he did not restrain them. <sup>14</sup> Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever."*

<sup>15</sup> *Samuel lay until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. <sup>16</sup> But Eli called Samuel and said,*

*“Samuel, my son.” And he said, “Here I am.”<sup>17</sup> And Eli said, “What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.”<sup>18</sup> So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, “It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to him.”*

*<sup>19</sup> And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. <sup>20</sup> And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the LORD.*

a. [1 Samuel 3:13](#) Or *blaspheming for themselves*

“What does it mean to be called by God?

Is it something that happens only to a few, or is it part of our lives as Christians? Both the Old Testament and New Testament texts for this week focus on the call of God and help us understand God's call on our own lives...

There are several trajectories in this story. First is the ease with which we may miss God's call, or attribute it to a human instead. In speaking of their call, most people do not describe a major disruption in their lives. Instead they speak of a quiet, slow awakening—perhaps to a life of service or an injustice that needs to be addressed. Like Samuel, they often tell about a period of uncertainty regarding what they are being called to do or be. Also, Samuel needed Eli to explain to him what these stirrings mean. It often takes others in our lives to aid us in understanding the call God places before us.

A second direction is to focus on Samuel as the outsider in the narrative. Eli's sons are from the priestly line, and it is their birthright to serve in the Temple. Yet, they have not acted justly. They have used their position for personal gain instead of service to the Lord. Throughout the Bible, God does not always choose the expected ones. Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and David were all unlikely choices. Jesus calls fishermen and laborers to serve as disciples instead of the priests and prophets of Jerusalem. Power and position in the church or community do not guarantee a similar place in God's world. All, even outsiders, are given tasks in God's kingdom.

The third point of this narrative requires the text to extend to the end of the chapter. Ending at verse 10 misses the most important point of this chapter! Just as moving into the promised land did not guarantee a perfect life, neither does God's call to serve. God's words to Samuel were hard to hear and even harder to speak to others, for they involved judgment against Eli's own children. Like Samuel, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, God's call often involves working to change human systems that are broken, leading one down difficult paths.

God's call comes when we least expect it and often to those we least expect. God is always the God of surprises. We, as the church, need to be like Eli, encouraging everyone to hear the voice that calls them forth into all they are created to be. At the same time, we help each other to tell the truth, even when the truth is hard to hear.”

[http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=224](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=224) **Beth L. Tanner**  
Professor of Old Testament, New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, NJ

**Psalm 139:1-10: RCL, Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18 (Psalm 62; RCL, Psalm 62:5-12)**

*"In the conventional understanding, the Psalm in the weekly lectionary is chosen to meditate on the First Reading and, like that reading, to anticipate the Gospel.*

*In that case, the insistence that God has searched and known the psalm writer (the message and hope of Psalm 139, as noted by its use as a framework in verses 1 and 23) is used to reflect on God's calling of Samuel and to point toward Jesus' calling of Nathaneal.*

*Nathaneal quickly recognizes that Jesus' knowledge of him is knowledge available only to God and immediately confesses this (John 1:49). The preacher on the Johannine text will rightly see Jesus' access to divine knowledge (the knowledge confessed in our psalm) as another of John's proclamations that "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9) -- a true epiphany..."*  
*(continued after the reading)*

**Search Me, O God, and Know My Heart**

*To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.*

139 O LORD, you have searched me and known me!

<sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from afar.

<sup>3</sup> You search out my path and my lying down  
and are acquainted with all my ways.

<sup>4</sup> Even before a word is on my tongue,  
behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.

<sup>5</sup> You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.

<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is high; I cannot attain it.

<sup>7</sup> Where shall I go from your Spirit?

Or where shall I flee from your presence?

<sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you are there!

If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!

<sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the morning  
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

<sup>10</sup> even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me.

<sup>11</sup> *If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
and the light about me be night,"*

<sup>12</sup> *even the darkness is not dark to you;  
the night is bright as the day,*

*for darkness is as light with you. (continues through verse 24)*

Psalm 139 combines praise of, appeal to, and wisdom meditation on this God who knows all and who encompasses all. The psalmist admits to God, in effect, "You know where I live," which is to say, God can get at me as God wills and there is no place to hide. Normally, for us, the "I know where you live" line is seen as threat, and that certainly can be the case with God as well. Can

this possibly be good news? The psalmist obviously hopes that it is, but only because he, like the lectionary, can draw this intensely personal plea into the whole story of Israel with God. This is precisely not the Athenians' "unknown god" (Acts 17:23) -- or any other generic deity, from whom we would almost certainly want to keep our address and phone numbers unlisted. Can you trust an unknown God?...

Preachers should note that in order to understand the argument of this psalm they cannot limit their consideration to the verses chosen for the lectionary. The lectionary chooses verses for a particular purpose, but the preacher (if the sermon is genuinely to be on *this* text) must see those verses in their broader context. So, in this case, we really do need those unpleasant verses about hatred of the wicked...

In Psalm 139, though, the psalmist must not flee to God, God comes to the psalmist. There *is* no place to flee (verse 7), and in these verses the psalm becomes a meditation on God's amazing and incomparable "God-ness" (not unlike the meditations of Job) and a hymn of praise to the God who knows not only Samuel and Nathaneal but "me." The psalm proclaims a relationship with God that is profoundly personal, but never private. God knows me, cares about me, seeks me out, formed me in my mother's womb, knows me heart and soul, knows my anatomy inside and out -- but this is not "my" God as in a God of my choice; this is Yahweh, a God with a name and a history, the God who chooses Israel and me, the God who sent Jesus, the God who calls me not only to look within but to look without to see others wrongly accused and to call them brothers and sisters..."

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=1141](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1141) **Fred Gaiser**

Professor Emeritus of Old Testament, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn.

**1 Corinthians 6:12-20; RCL, the same reading** (*1 Corinthians 7:29-31 (32-36); RCL, the same reading*)

*"This Sunday marks some major transitions.*

*Up until now, our attention has been on the infant Jesus. We celebrated his Nativity, his presentation in the Temple, and the good news of the Word having come in the flesh. Beginning with this Sunday, however, we read in John's Gospel about the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry through the call of his first disciples.*

*There is also a noticeable shift in the Second Lesson for today. Previously the readings were primarily doctrinal, focusing on the significance of Christ for faith. But beginning with this Sunday, we encounter a series of readings from 1 Corinthians that consider Christian behavior.*

*It is generally thought that Paul founded the church in Corinth while he resided there for a year and a half (Acts 18:11), spanning the years 49 to 51 A.D. Sometime later, about 54 A.D., he wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:8, 19). Paul needed to respond both to reports of dissension and immoral conduct at Corinth (1:11; 5:1), and to an actual letter that he had received, in which the Corinthian believers asked a series of questions (7:1)..."*

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=225](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=225) **Arland J. Hultgren**

Professor Emeritus of New Testament, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN

## Flee Sexual Immorality

<sup>12</sup>“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything. <sup>13</sup>“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup> And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. <sup>15</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! <sup>16</sup> Or do you not know that he who is joined<sup>[a]</sup> to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” <sup>17</sup> But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. <sup>18</sup> Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin<sup>[b]</sup> a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. <sup>19</sup> Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, <sup>20</sup> for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

- a. [1 Corinthians 6:16](#) Or *who holds fast* (compare [Genesis 2:24](#) and [Deuteronomy 10:20](#)); also verse [17](#)
- b. [1 Corinthians 6:18](#) Or *Every sin*

“First Corinthians stands as a masterful example of a leader addressing a divided congregation and honestly critiquing the views of each side.

Prior to this passage, Paul repeatedly attempts to move people away from an attitude of "It's all about me" to a focus on the one who calls and saves them. He opens the letter with twenty references to God or Christ in the first ten verses. He frequently reminds them of the source of their lives (1:28-31; 3:6-7, 11, 16, 21-23; 4:7) as he addresses a host of competing positions.

Various factions in the congregation label others as wise or foolish, weak or strong; fight over who was the best pastor before the current one; bring lawsuits against one another; argue over sexual morality, whether it's better to be married or single, what makes a healthy marriage, what constitutes grounds for divorce, what are appropriate dietary practices; what is the correct understanding of resurrection and the afterlife; and on and on. When conflict becomes that pervasive, no conflict management plans have any hope of succeeding unless the people involved can move beyond self-absorption, step back, and see a bigger picture of a higher calling. Paul seeks to accomplish that...

"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body" (6:19-20). Again, Paul's words here have both individual and communal implications. In the original Greek, the pronouns in this verse are plural. Since he's addressing a community his words should be understood both as addressing individuals (each of you in this community) and the entire group (all of you together).

So, it is appropriate to understand this personally -- "my body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within me" -- and communally -- "this body of people, part of the body of Christ, is a temple of the Holy Spirit within us." What I do (or don't do) in my body matters. What we do (or don't do) as a body of believers' matters.

This takes us back to Paul's over-arching purpose in this letter, to focus our attention on the fact that our lives originate in Christ (we were bought with a price) and that we live not for our own sakes but for the sake of God's purposes. My individual body is not mine. It is God's creation to be used for God's purposes. The body of Christ -- congregationally, denominationally, and across the globe -- is not ours. It is God's creation to be used for God's purposes.

The fights, the desires, the pettiness, the selfishness that can consume us are all diversions from, perversions of that for which we were created. We were bought with a price, to glorify God in our bodies. This remains true for both individuals and groups. Paul calls the people back to the fundamental reality of their lives -- it's not "my" life and it's not "my" church. Only when an individual or a congregation gets that can they be free. And, if they get it, the freedom is glorious for each individual, for the congregation, and for God."

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=1168](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1168) **Frank L. Crouch**  
Dean and Vice President, Moravian Theological Seminary, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

## “The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 1st Chapter”

**John 1:43-51; RCL, the same reading** (*Mark 1:14-20; RCL, the same reading*)

*“In Lectionary Year B many of the texts are from the Gospel of Mark. However, on this Second Sunday after Epiphany, we are suddenly blind-sided with a text from the Gospel of John.*

*This will happen frequently during this year so we need to spend a few moments to reflect on the surrounding context where this text appears in the Gospel of John. This is a marvelous text to proclaim in this season of Epiphany...”*

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=1120](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1120) **Paul S. Berge**  
Emeritus Professor of New Testament, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.

*“The gospel reading for the second Sunday after the Epiphany is always taken from John: 1:29-42 (Year A); 1:43-51 (Year B); 2:1-11 (Year C).*

*In each year the Johannine text is a brief "interruption" in the series of Epiphany gospel lessons that are otherwise taken from Matthew, Mark, or Luke.*

*To their credit, these texts from John match up nicely with the theme of Epiphany. All three have something to do with the revelation of Jesus to Israel and the world. In year A, John the Baptist came in order that Jesus "might be revealed to Israel" (1:31). In year C, Jesus' miracle at Cana "revealed his glory" and consequently, "his disciples believed in him" (2:11). As for our present text, in year B, we get a hint of the glory of Jesus, later to be revealed in the resurrection, when Nathanael is told he will "see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (1:51)..."*

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=216](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=216) **Stephen Hultgren**  
Lecturer in New Testament and Director of ALITE, Australian Lutheran College, North Adelaide, Australia

### **Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael**

<sup>43</sup>The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, **“Follow me.”** <sup>44</sup>Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

<sup>45</sup> 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.”

<sup>46</sup> Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” <sup>47</sup> Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” <sup>48</sup> 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.” <sup>49</sup> Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” <sup>50</sup> 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.” <sup>51</sup> And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you,<sup>[a]</sup> you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

- a. [John 1:51](#) The Greek for *you* is plural; twice in this verse

“This text tells how it works: The Christian faith is passed from person to person. That’s how it started with Jesus, and that’s how it’s been for 2,000-plus years.

What was it about Jesus that caused people to believe in him and follow him with no evidence? We don’t know. Some might remember the old radio program “The Greatest Story Ever Told.” The appearance of Jesus was dressed up with music, so that before he spoke you heard violins in the background. Most assuredly that did not really happen. Jesus didn’t need background music to impress people. There was something about him that drew people to him...

What was there about Jesus to have this kind of effect on people? The New Testament gives us a slight hint. The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew concludes with the observation, “for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes,” a phrase repeated in the other gospels (Matthew 7:29, also Mark 1:22, Luke 4:32,36, John 5:27 and others)...

Read the Gospels and note the profound effect Jesus has when he meets people: the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21-28), the blind man at Bethsaida (Mark 8:22-26), the Roman centurion (Luke 7:1-10), the woman at the Pharisee’s home (Luke 7:36-50), Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), the woman at the well (John 4), the sick man at the Bethesda pool (John 5:1-9), the thief crucified next to Jesus (Luke 23:40-43), and the centurion at the foot of the cross (Mark 15:39, Luke 23:47) -- to name only a few.

People meet Jesus, and they are changed. Whatever their deepest need was, Jesus meets it. Then they tell others what happened.

And that’s how it has worked ever since. One person says to another, “I follow Jesus and invite you to do so too.” Later on as the church grows, parents bring their infant children to Jesus in baptism and then bring them up to follow him.

It’s always person-to-person.

Follow the story throughout the New Testament. An Ethiopian eunuch is puzzled by a passage in the Old Testament, and Philip “proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus” (Acts 8:35). Peter went to the household of the Roman centurion Cornelius and told them about Jesus, and “while Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word” (Acts 19:44), which was the breakthrough of the Christian faith to the Gentile world.

The spread of the Christian church across the world is the person-to-person story of the thousands of people who fanned out across the globe to tell the story about Jesus and what Jesus had done for them.

People become Christians because they have seen what the Christian faith has done for those whom they know. The saying passed down from the early years of the church still rings true: “See those Christians, how they love one another.”...

The Old Testament lesson carries the same message -- but with a twist. The boy Samuel was “ministering to the Lord” under the priest Eli, probably the equivalent of our youth serving as acolytes. God called him, “Samuel, Samuel,” and the boy naturally assumed it was Eli. When it happened again, Eli realized it was God calling and instructed the boy to say, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.” When Samuel heard God’s call the third time he responded as Eli had instructed, and God told him what message to deliver to Eli.

The pattern in the story is still person-to-person, this time God to Samuel, with Eli as the middleman so to speak, with Samuel then delivering God’s message back to Eli (1 Samuel 3:1-10, 11-20).

Our task as Christians is not to “prove” the truth of the Christian faith, although many scholars have written persuasively of the truth of Christianity. Our task is not even to persuade others to become Christian. Our task is to say, “Come and see.” Philip could have given Nathanael some of his own opinions. He could have said, “This Jesus knows a lot about the Bible.” Or he might have said, “There is something about this man Jesus that draws me to him.” Even when Nathanael expressed skepticism about “anything good coming out of Nazareth,” Philip might have listed some successful people from Nazareth.

But no: Philip simply said, “Come and see,” as if to say, “You don’t need me to advertise for Jesus; come and see for yourself.” Nathaniel came and saw for himself.

That now becomes our task, to tell people, “Come and see.” Come and see what Jesus has done and is doing for you!

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2314](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2314) [Michael Rogness](#)  
Professor of Preaching and Professor Emeritus of Homiletic, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN



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## THE MARK CHALLENGE – LECTIONARY YEAR B 2017-18

January Chapter 2, 3 63 verses completed \_\_\_\_\_

