

John 1: 35-51 (The Testimony of the Called)

- We can believe his account, because he and the disciples were eyewitnesses

Jesus begins to gather his disciples (vv 35 – 42)

- The second day of the new creation (The Baptist's inauguration mission)
- How do we reconcile this passage with Mk 1:16?
 - John: John points out Jesus to Andrew and some other disciple, and they start following him. Jesus turns around and sees them.
 - Mark: Jesus finds Simon and Andrew fishing, and calls them to follow him
- Simon becomes Peter
 - That he will strengthen his brothers (Lk 22: 31-32)
 - Significance of names in Jewish history, e.g Adam naming the animals, God giving his name to his people, Jesus asking the name of the demons before casting them out
 - A new name symbolizes God's ownership, transformation, a new destiny
 - Ex: Abram/Abraham, Sarai/Sarah, Jacob/Israel, Rev 2:17: a stone with secret name
- A small beginning
 - Kingdom parables (sower, mustard seed, yeast in a lump of bread)
 - The dynamical power of God has come into history and is growing
- Where are you staying
 - The warmth and graciousness of Jesus's response. The offer is made to us also.
- Messiah as King and Christ
 - John translates the word, so the secret of the Jews will be known
 - Anointed first taken to point to kingship, fulfillment of David's throne. Daniel applied it to a Redeemer, and thus the Jews came to think of Christ as their savior and deliverer.

The calling of Nathaniel (vv 43 - 51)

- Can anything good come out of Nazareth?
 - Philip was incorrect as to Jesus's father and hometown. But he spoke what was most important about him, that the prophets pointed to him.
- A true Israelite in whom there is no deceit
 - Israelite only used 9 times in NT
- Discursus on Jacob. How he went from Jacob to Israel is the point in Jesus's reference.
 - **Subjective transformation** the main feature of Jacob. Least ideal of all the patriarchs.
 - **Election** demonstrates God's sovereignty, the sole determinant of Jacob's well-being.
 - Yet Jacob deceives and schemes his whole life, and it leads him to the brink of destruction. At Peniel, he learns that **his true struggle is with God**. It's a prototype of Jesus's answer to the Syro-Phoneacian woman. God wrestled back with him.
- I saw you under the fig tree
- Heaven opened
 - Dream at Bethel: He's surprised to see that God is now attached to him in a personal way, even far from the land of his fathers, even as an exile. This leads him to make a vow. Jesus with Nathaniel implies that the communion with God illustrated by Jacob's vision had reached its ultimate fulfillment in him.

Questions for consideration:

1. What were the disciples seeking from Jesus?
2. What is the significance of Jesus giving a new name to Simon?
3. How does Philip describe Jesus to Nathaniel? What is Nathaniel's response?
4. Why does Jesus call Nathaniel an Israelite, and not a Jew?
5. What does Jesus mean when he says they will see Heaven opened?