

## **Second Sunday after the Epiphany Sunday, January 14, 2018**

**The Collect:** Almighty God, whose Son our Savior Jesus Christ is the light of the world: Grant that your people, illumined by your Word and Sacraments, may shine with the radiance of Christ's glory, that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### **Old Testament: 1 Samuel 3:1-20 read from the Lexham English Bible**

Now the boy Samuel was serving Yahweh in the presence of Eli. The word of Yahweh was rare in those days; visions were not widespread. And then one day when Eli was lying in his place (now his eyes had begun to grow weak so that he was not able to see) and the lamp of God had not yet gone out, Samuel was lying in the temple of Yahweh where the ark of God was. Then Yahweh called out to Samuel and he said, "Here I am!" And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, because you called me." But he said, "I did not call you. Go back and lie down." So he went and lay down. And Yahweh called Samuel again, so Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, because you called me." And he said, "I did not call you, my son. Go back and lie down." Now Samuel did not yet know Yahweh, and the word of Yahweh had not yet been revealed to him. Again Yahweh called Samuel a third time, so he got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, because you called me." Then Eli realized that Yahweh was calling the boy. So Eli said to Samuel "Go lie down. If he calls to you, then you must say, 'Speak Yahweh, because your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Then Yahweh came and stood there and called out as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, because your servant is listening." So Yahweh said to Samuel, "Look, I am doing something in Israel which will cause the two ears of everyone who hears it to tingle. On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken against his household, from beginning to end. I will make him know that I am about to judge his household forever because of the iniquity that he knew, for his sons were bringing curses on themselves, but he did not rebuke them. Therefore I swore to the house of Eli that the iniquity of the house of Eli would not be atoned for by sacrifice or by offering forever."

So Samuel lay down until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of Yahweh, but Samuel was afraid of telling the vision to Eli. Then Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son!" And he said, "Here I am." And he said, "What is the message that he spoke to you? Please do not conceal it from me. May God punish you severely if you conceal anything from me of all the words that he told you." So Samuel told him all the words and did not conceal anything from him. And he said, "He is Yahweh, he will do what is good in his sight."

And Samuel grew up, and Yahweh was with him. He did not allow any of his prophecies to go unfulfilled. All Israel from Dan to Beersheba realized that Samuel was faithful as a prophet to Yahweh.

### **The Word of the Lord**

#### **Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer**

1 Lord, you have searched me out and known me; \* you know my sitting down and my rising up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

2 You trace my journeys and my resting-places \* and are acquainted with all my ways.

3 Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, \* but you, O Lord, know it altogether.

4 You press upon me behind and before \* and lay your hand upon me.

5 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; \* it is so high that I cannot attain to it.

12 For you yourself created my inmost parts; \* you knit me together in my mother's womb.

13 I will thank you because I am marvelously made; \* your works are wonderful, and I know it well.

14 My body was not hidden from you, \* while I was being made in secret and woven in the depths of the earth.

15 Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb; all of them were written in your book; \* they were fashioned day by day, when as yet there was none of them.

16 How deep I find your thoughts, O God! \* how great is the sum of them!

17 If I were to count them, they would be more in number than the sand; \* to count them all, my life span would need to be like yours.

## **Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 read from The Message Bible**

Just because something is technically legal doesn't mean that it's spiritually appropriate. If I went around doing whatever I thought I could get by with, I'd be a slave to my whims.

You know the old saying, "First you eat to live, and then you live to eat"? Well, it may be true that the body is only a temporary thing, but that's no excuse for stuffing your body with food, or indulging it with sex. Since the Master honors you with a body, honor him with your body!

God honored the Master's body by raising it from the grave. He'll treat yours with the same resurrection power. Until that time, remember that your bodies are created with the same dignity as the Master's body. You wouldn't take the Master's body off to a whorehouse, would you? I should hope not.

There's more to sex than mere skin on skin. Sex is as much spiritual mystery as physical fact. As written in Scripture, "The two become one." Since we want to become spiritually one with the Master, we must not pursue the kind of sex that avoids commitment and intimacy, leaving us more lonely than ever—the kind of sex that can never "become one." There is a sense in which sexual sins are different from all others. In sexual sin we violate the sacredness of our own bodies, these bodies that were made for God-given and God-modeled love, for "becoming one" with another. Or didn't you realize that your body is a sacred place, the place of the Holy Spirit? Don't you see that you can't live however you please, squandering what God paid such a high price for? The physical part of you is not some piece of property belonging to the spiritual part of you. God owns the whole works. So let people see God in and through your body.

## **The Word of the Lord**

## **Gospel: John 1:43-51 read from the Modern English Version Bible**

The next day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip, and said to him, "Follow Me."

Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said

to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, as well as the prophets, wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

Philip said to him, "Come and see."

Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him and said concerning him, "Here is an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

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."

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." And He said to him, "Truly, truly I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

## **The Gospel of the Lord**

**Closing Prayer: On January 17th we celebrate the life of Antony an Abbot in Egypt**

**Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses***

In the third century, many young men turned away from the corrupt and decadent society of the time, and went to live in deserts or on mountains, in solitude, fasting, and prayer. Antony of Egypt was an outstanding example of this movement, but he was not merely a recluse. He was a founder of monasticism, and wrote a rule for anchorites.

Antony's parents were Christians, and he grew up to be quiet, devout, and meditative. When his parents died, he and his younger sister were left to care for a sizable estate. Six months

later, in church, he heard the reading about the rich young ruler whom Christ advised to sell all he had and give to the poor. Antony at once gave his land to the villagers and sold most of his goods, giving the proceeds to the poor. Later, after meditating on Christ's bidding, "Do not be anxious about tomorrow," he sold what remained of his possessions, placed his sister in a "house of maidens," (and early form of a convent) and become an anchorite.

Athanasius, who knew Antony personally, writes that he spent his days praying, reading, and doing manual labor. For a time, he was tormented by demons in various guises. He resisted, and the demons fled. Moving to the mountains across the Nile from his village, Antony dwelt alone for twenty years. In 305, he left his cave and founded a "monastery," a series of cells inhabited by ascetics living under his rule. Athanasius writes of such colonies: "Their cells, like tents, were filled with singing, fasting, praying, and working, that they might give alms, and having love and peace with one another."

Antony visited Alexandria, first in 321, to encourage those suffering martyrdom under the Emperor Maximinus; later, in 355, to combat the Arians by preaching, conversions, and the working of miracles. Most of his days were spent on the mountain with his disciple Macarius.

He willed a goat-skin tunic and a cloak to Athanasius, who said of him: "He was like a physician given by God to Egypt. For who met him grieving and did not go away rejoicing? Who came full of anger and was not turned to kindness?... What monk who had grown slack was not strengthened by coming to him? Who came troubled by doubts and failed to gain peace of mind?"

Antony died in 356.

**Let us pray:** O God, by your Holy spirit you enabled your servant Antony to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil: Give us grace, with pure hearts and minds. To follow you, the only God through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**