

Pastor Jon's Sermon from Sunday, 1/14/2024 based on Psalm 139, 1 Corinthians 6:12-20, John 1:43-51

### "God Fully Knows Us"

What does it mean to you that we have a God who fully knows us? Do you find that comforting or scary? But know also that we have a God who loves us in spite of ourselves and calls us in our baptism to follow and attract others to the faith.

According to Psalm 139, one of the most beautiful prayers in the Bible, we have a God who knows us completely. When we sit down and rise up. God knows every word on our tongue before we even speak it, every thought in our head before we think it, and every step we take before we even take it. Even before we are born, the psalmist says that God knit us together in our mother's womb... and that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. This is a message everyone needs to hear. You are fearfully and wonderfully made. How old are we when we tend to forget that?

Also, the psalmist reminds us that we are never out of God's reach. Our God who created us will never give up on us. In a part of Psalm we didn't read, even if we make our bed in sheol...which the Bible in is an abode for the dead or a land of gloom and deep darkness. Even God will find us there. Sometimes we do make our beds in sheol... and have to lie in them too. We will mess things up and have to face the consequences. But even God will find us there, call us to repentance, and offer us grace upon grace.

So, if we are fearfully and wonderfully made and God knit our bodies together in our mother's womb, God also wants us to take care of our bodies... because you only get one.

In our 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, the Apostle Paul reminds the Christian community that what we put into our bodies and what we do with our bodies matters. The food we eat and the things we drink can be good or bad for us. I love food, especially on Packer game days. Tailgating sets me back a week in my attempt to eat healthy.

Paul says your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it is to be used for God's glory in whatever you do. He says that we have

been bought with a price through Jesus' work on the cross and in the resurrection, we are therefore called to steward our bodies in a way that honors the Christian community and to invite others into the faith. Paul also cares how the early Christians and we use their bodies sexually. Paul tells the Corinthian Christians to shun fornication. Literally to continuously flee sexual immorality. The Greek word here is "pornea", where we get the term pornography. Sexual immorality would include sex outside of marriage, adultery, porn, and prostitution to name a few. The church should talk about these things today because of the unlimited access people have on their phones to unhealthy sex images and content. Those images when consumed can destroy your relationships and the communities you are part of.

Finally in our Gospel again we meet a God who fully knows us. In John 1, after the calling of the first disciples, we have followers of Jesus inviting other people to "come and see" Jesus for themselves.

Philip went and found his friend Nathanael and said, "We found him about whom Moses and the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." Nathanael said, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Nathanael got stuck there. He could only hear the human credentials of Jesus, that he was from the backwater town of Nazareth and the son of a carpenter.

But knowing Jesus means that you believe in his divinity as well... that he is God's son, God in human flesh, and the incarnated logos. That Jesus was in the beginning with God.

So, when Philip brought Nathanael to Jesus, But Jesus already knew him. Nathanael was surprised that Jesus already knew him. Jesus saw him under the fig tree before Philip invited him. I wonder what Nathaniel was doing under the fig tree. Praying, reading scripture, helping someone? Nathanael replied with a confession of faith, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the king of Israel!"

Nathanael went from "Can anything good?... to you are the Son of God." What a transformation from skeptic to believer.

We have a God who knows us completely and loves us even before we are born. We are named and claimed by Jesus in our baptism

forever. Do you know how important your role is in making Jesus known to others? It is our job as human disciples to make Jesus manifest to the world in all we say and do. We have a big job. Are you up to the task?