



DEVOTIONS FOR LIFE

Aldersgate Church ~ St. Louis Park, MN

Week of January 2, 2022 (John 1:35-51)

Prayers for Groups & Personal Devotion:

God who sees each one of us, and loves us before we have even begun to fulfill our potential, we praise you for who you are and who you enable us to be.

Lord God,
forgive us when we deny your image in ourselves or in others. Forgive us and make us more determined to look at one another with your eyes, eyes that love and heal and forgive as we are loved and healed and forgiven.

May we know your blessing resting on our lives this day and this week, and may we hear again your voice calling us your beloved children. And may we respond to your invitation to join your mission in the world. Amen.

~

God of all, you call Andrew, Philip, John, Nathaniel, Simon, Judas, Matthew, Thaddeus, Nathan, Dylan, Declan, George, (insert names from your household/family/community)-

Devotions for Life A LifeGroup Resource

The Story: John 1:35-51

Context: A quick review before we get to today's passage: Remember every Gospel differs a little as they each tend to have a target audience. John's target audience is Jews who have been excommunicated from their synagogues because they have chosen to follow the Jesus way. Keep that in mind as we look at themes in John of relationship, belonging, dwelling with one another, etc. Unfortunately, however, this target audience



has also led to a lot of antisemitic interpretations of John. For example, John uses the phrase "the Jews" a lot, which is not referring to all Jews. It is referring to specific groups of Jewish elite leadership that are, among other things, marginalizing Jesus-following Jews.

all invited by Jesus to 'Come and see!' All called and sent to tell the world about Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Thanks be to you, oh, God.
Amen.

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Acts of Compassion & Justice:

- This month we are collecting socks and underwear for Simpson Housing Services. As you have the means consider contributing to our efforts.
- Consider checking out homesforallmn.org and mnhomelesscoalition.org (two legislative agendas endorse and supported by Simpson Housing Services) to see how you can get active in ending homelessness in Minnesota.
- Simpson Housing Services has a great resource on their website for numerous ways to get educated about and active in these matters. Go to: simpsonhousing.org/who-we-are/advocacy/ and get engaged!



Reading the Story: Today's story is John's version of Jesus beginning to call his disciples. Remember, as always, that this is all part of one big story. Read it that way. As you read, take your time. First seek to merely follow the plot. What is literally taking place in this story? Making sure we understand the plot is especially important with a story like this one with lots of names and new characters. Then read it paying attention to what jumps out to you. Is there a word or phrase or idea that hits you? Note if there is a question you have about it? Ask that question, search it, and wonder about it. Finally, as always, ask yourself, "what is this story calling me to today?"

Questions for Discussion & Reflection:

- What does it mean for us today to "follow" Jesus? How do we do it?
- What do you make of this conversation between Jesus and his new followers (verses 1:38-39)? Why does what they're looking for and where Jesus is staying matter?
- Why do you think Philip responds to Nathanael's question (verse 46) with the same response Jesus uses in responding to the question "where are you staying?" (verse 38-40)? What is significant about "come and see"?
- Jesus sees Nathanael before Nathanael even knows it. What implications does this have on us and our relationship with God?
- Who calls Simon/Peter? Who calls Nathanael? What are the implications of this? What does it say about disciple making?
- What is belief? What does it mean to believe? How does belief work/function?
- What do you believe? What do you struggle to believe or doubt? Can we have doubts and yet still believe?

