



ALL SAINTS  
PRESBYTERIAN

Sermon Discussion Guide for All Saints Small Groups

“An Epiphany Calling”

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**Scripture References:**

Epiphany:

Isaiah 60:1-3  
Luke 24:32  
Ephesians 3:2-6  
John 2:11

Father/son relationship:

Luke 3:22

Time:

2 Corinthians 6:2  
Ecclesiastes 3:11  
John 9:4  
Psalm 90:12

Expectations:

Ephesians 3:20-21

Calling:

Ephesians 5:15-17

References:

Almost Christian – Dean  
A Call to Teenagers to be Free – Piper  
The Call – Os Guinness  
Every Good Endeavor - Keller

**INTRO Question(s):**

The Epiphany season forces a question on us. If we as a body of believers have experienced Christ being made known to us, what does this say about our expectations, response and ultimately our calling? Who are we called to be? What are we called to do with our time? Part of the narrative of the Epiphany is a dynamic that on each occasion when someone encountered Jesus, they immediately sought to help others know Him. They work to share this revelation and help others see Jesus. As a church body, does this resemble us? If not, what do we need in order to engage with others in this manner?

**Background:**

In 1 Samuel 3, approximately 1100 B.C., scripture says the word of the Lord was rare in those days. Visions of God were not as frequent and vivid as once had been. Without a king, everyone did what was right in his own eyes. Sound like a familiar time? It was a spiritually dark time as people tuned out the voice of God. Eli loved and delighted in God’s service, but failed to exercise authority as a parent over his children. Eli had low expectations for his ministry and children. His sons were worthless and engaged in moral failures. Eli’s ministry was a disaster and he was oblivious. He was asleep. Did Eli fear his own children more than the Lord? How could Eli be deaf to what the Lord was telling him? Today, we can allow God’s voice to be void of meaning...if we choose. The power of sin deafens our soul to God’s voice. We can become like Eli with eyesight fading into blindness both physically and spiritually.

In John 1, we see a different story of expectations. Nathanael held a common expectation that nothing good could come from Nazareth. Jesus appears to Philip and immediately wants his friend Nathanael to share this Epiphany! Jesus dismisses Nathanael’s low expectation and offers “you will see far greater things than these”. Nathanael displays our low expectations of Jesus. We can be far too easily pleased by things of insignificance. We can also learn from Philip and share in his excitement to bring others to know Christ.

**Discuss:**

1. **Time:** We are called to be good stewards of our time. Eli wasted much time and his children used their time to dishonor the Lord. How are you using time in your life currently? How can we hear God’s voice clearly to know how to spend our time wisely?
2. **Expectations:** We all have expectations for our time, relationships, children, retirement, work. What are they? Do your personal expectations reflect a small god or a sovereign God that can enable you to “see far greater things” than you currently experience? Do your earthly expectations align with an eternal mindset?
3. **Calling:** We can learn from Eli’s laziness and be awestruck by Jesus like Nathanael. God has work for each of us. He doesn’t need us but invites us into His calling with purpose by equipping us with natural talents and spiritual gifts. Are you aware of them? If not: Look out – Do not begin with yourself. Look out to the world. See the needs. Get to work outside your comforts and yourself. Look in – Determine what you are truly interested or gifted at doing. What gets you excited? How can you use your talents to serve God’s ministry? Look up – Last, ask for advice from God, trusted elders or people you respect in your life to illuminate your gifts and encourage you along the way. **Set some accountability standards to follow up this exercise.**

This is the Gospel. Jesus looked out of Himself from Heaven, looked into each of us as he became flesh and died on a cross for our sins and then looked up to our Heavenly Father to say “not my will but thy will be done” and conquered death to grant eternal life to us.

**Conclusion/Application:**

Father, remind us daily of the work You have for us. Give us wisdom to discern our talents, time and resources to advance Your Kingdom. Wake us from our slumber. Increase our expectations. May we live with the same excitement as Philip and Nathanael as we also have experienced Epiphany in our lives. Give us courage and boldness to proclaim this good news to all people so that we as Your people might share in the ability to accomplish far greater things than we could ever imagine on our own. Amen.

By: Blake Thompson

## English Standard Version (ESV)

### 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

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."

### 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

<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 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 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.

### John 1:43-51

<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, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."