

Have you ever googled your name? Not about you, but to find others that share your name. Interesting exercise but not probably worthwhile, so I did it too. People's names, their identity. Many ambiguous names in Scripture, like Chronicles chs. 1-9 filled with people's names, who are they, even common names repeat and now they all slip into the history of the ambiguous, not-remembered. But the Lord names His people. He knows every scape and stumble, every sigh and tear and laugh. Your name, your identity precious to your Lord, who engraves you on the palm of His hand.

Today the church throughout the world gives thanks to God for 2 disciples. What did they do, we have so little information, just a few words recorded in Scripture, yet our Lord names 2 ambiguous, seemly insignificant disciples among the 12, honors them to built His church foundation upon them, thus we honor them as fathers in the faith.

They don't even get a day in the church calendar all by themselves, yet what is true for them, true for you, found in the Christ who called them. Philip is the one who goes to Nathaniel, says **I have found the one whom Moses and the prophets speak.** Philips says **Come and see.** What an invitation for you to invite people here. **Come and see Jesus.** Also Philip speaks at the feeding of the 1000s and during Holy Week, he brings non-Jew Greeks who wish to see Jesus, and the gospel, **show us the Father.**

There 3 other James and a Philip in the book of Acts -other people with the same name. James is even James, the lesser. How'd you like to be known as 'the lesser' as there are more important people than you with your name.

Our Philip, James, disciples, just 2 ambiguous, obscure. Googling their names, your own name, is not helpful. You are simply an ambiguity to your name, identity of all the people born. We all have questions about our identity. Your identity is not from -you- as we see everywhere in this world. Your true, only identity, the only identity that matters is the one given you by the Lord. Your identity as a filthy, pathic, failure as a sinner and your identity as His, whom He makes holy. He named you in a way that began at the font.

How can you know the way? It's Him. But Philips says **show us the Father,** we all want more than just Jesus. Jesus gives a gentle rebuke; to know Jesus is not to enter into ambiguity, speculation, or what you determine -but the only certainty there is in all the world. All that we need to know is delivered to you. You have His compassion, mercy to give you all things in His name. Perhaps not now as you want things, but He answers all your prayers far greater than you desire, in ways you can't begin to see or comprehend.

I have people that come to me for pastoral counsel when making decisions. It's good because if you make the wrong decisions, its okay to blame it on

me. But at times questions, there with 2 difficult or good choices, should I pick A or B? Should I go right or left? I tell them with the highest level of pastoral care and confidence, "pastor should I go right or left?" And I tell them yes. That Isaiah reading. Right or left, walk in the way, there is no other way. Should I go east or west? Go West. Of course some decisions are better than others, so prayerfully discern, seek out wisdom. Yet, walk in His way. Live in your Christian freedom, that your foes are conquered by His death and resurrection. You know **the way, the truth**, there is no other, holding to His, this doctrinal truth, **the life**, no other life than the one He gives, living in His this sacramental life.

He names you no less than Philip and James the lesser. Your Lord so Calls you that you too are so honored to bear His name, walk in His way.

Do not live with regret. Your past is forgiven. He is here to forgive you bad decisions today. Be intentional to live this day, tomorrow. **Let not your hearts be troubled** He tells you. Now if a man named Robert tells you that, don't be a fool, you should heed it, but if a man named Jesus tells you that, you can stake your eternal peril in it and take each day as gift. He keeps you each day in His way. **Let not your heart be troubled.** That blessed Gospel, all tied to the Lord's Supper He institutes that night He speaks those words for you.

You are living in blessed times to confess His name, confess His way, His truth, His life in evil times. Do not take His gifts, this day, His works each day for you, for granted. All that the Lord has set before you. Embrace the good, embrace the difficult knowing that you live for, in, with unending communion with God, living in His blessed way; you have fathers named Philip, James, who are with your loved ones in Christ already at rest before His throne.

James, Philip, you -get your identity from your Lord, He marked you in the water of baptism. 100 years from now, there is very little chance anyone knows your name, much less chance anyone is interested enough to google your name. Do not measure your life by the world's ideals. You, seemly insignificant, unknown, not important to the world. But the Father knows your name, knows you, because the Son has delivered you. Called you, chosen you, you by name, unique, you, as special to Him as any saint ever born. He keeps you with all the saints, known, unknown, ambiguous or not, it is all given and shed for you, to have you always. **Let not your heart be troubled.** The Lord is risen!