

God works in and through all types of people, in sorts of situations. All we have to do is be faithful to who we are and use the gifts we're given.

Remember Eeyore the donkey from Winnie the Pooh. He's a sad, droopy-eared character who is forever losing his tail and resigning himself to the idea of going through life without it until someone finds it for him and pins it back on.

Even then he is never joyful over finding his tail, and even when he thanks them it's with a sort of 'Oh, well...' tone in his voice.

The melancholic temperament takes a serious outlook on life. They are people who tend to see deep significance in events, as if they were scenes in a drama, they may be more vulnerable to sadness than the sanguine; but they may feel things more easily and deeply. The melancholic can thrill at the wonder and beauty of the world, the goodness and love of those close to them, the depths of truth and wisdom, and the consolation of knowing God.

When Philip found Nathanael and says to him. "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael's response was "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?"

As far as Nathanael was concerned; there was no way something good could come from that city.

And yet here he was in front of him.

Sometimes we beat ourselves up, thinking that God is just looking to do the same. God couldn't possibly use me, I'm not like him or her, I don't have the same gifts or abilities, in fact I often don't see the good in anything.

It's never good to align ourselves with anyone, I sat that as someone whose done it since I was a child...it only serves to reveal what we don't have rather than what we do. Every personality trait has its flaws as well as its gifts...

Simon Peter was a coward, Nathaniel was judgemental, James and John were impulsive. Jesus knew how Nathanael felt about him simply because of his prejudice but he called him nevertheless.

All of us if we were honest with ourselves recognise our faults, or feel angry when others point them out. But irrespective of the genes that make us, the environment that shapes us, the gender or the personality traits that define us... God wants to use us...and there isn't anyone in this church that God doesn't want involved in building his kingdom.

So, friends...be that we have the traits and gifts of Andrew, of Peter, or of Nathaniel, let's ask ourselves:

'How had God made me and how can I use that to build his kingdom. **Amen.**

Epiphany 2 19.1.20 St Mary's Sanderstead St. James Riddlesdown

1 Corinthians 1:1-9 / John 1:29-51 'Who am I?'

A mum exhausted by her son's inability to do as he was asked said why can't you be more like your brother...

But I don't have a brother the lad exclaimed.

Exactly said his mum...

What makes us who we are is a combination of genes, nurture, social status, education, the food we eat, the experiences we gather and the choices we make.

By looking at someone of course gather allot about them, but what you can't do is know how they tick.

At one point there was just male and female then there was black and white, male and female, then there was class differentiation, black and white, male and female. Now there is Gender Non-binary, Trans, Gay, Straight, male and female black, white mixed race and more besides...

Society is constantly changing, trying it's best to figure out who we are, challenging us as to where we fit, who we are and what we are able to do.

When I was at college I had to do a Myers Briggs test, to determine what sport of personality I was, the answers would be able in some ways determine my personality type which would it claimed be helpful in discovering the types of people that I was most likely to find helpful or harmful, supportive or irritating and how this would help in ministry as well as help me understand why people act the way they do...

There are all sorts of these tests and you will most likely have done some of them yourself.

In this morning's gospel we read of 5 Apostles that Jesus called to follow him and how he knew exactly how to minister to them.

There are many different surveys which claim to be able to tell us who we are but there are were told, 4 personality temperament types and while most people have 2, there is usually one that is more dominant.

So, let's look for a few minutes at these personality types in light of our reading.

In verse 35 we read that, the next day John was at the river Jordan with two of his disciples. But when he saw Jesus coming towards him, he said to them "Look, the Lamb of God!

And so, to the first of our personality types. Some of us are Sanguine people, optimistic and positive in a bad situation.

It was the end of the road for John the Baptist, following Jesus baptism he would be arrested, put in prison and then beheaded...Andrew had been loyal, but now his master was gone and he needs to retain a positive attitude that helps him not to succumb to sadness, and anxiety.

It is interesting that Jesus turned around and asked them both what they wanted.

Many of us would consider that a bit rude, but they're response was to ask Jesus "where are you staying?"

John was gone, and they needed to be a part of something else and Jesus knew that they were the type of people that wanted, that needed to be included.

The 1st thing Andrew does after following Jesus is to go and find his brother Simon and tell him about Jesus. In fact, Andrew was always bringing people to Jesus, but he wasn't a part of the inner circle of 3 Apostles.

He was always in the shadow of his brother Peter; but he didn't let that stop him.

Some of us are only at our best when we are a part of something, we're not the ones in charge, and are often in the shadow, but that's where we fit best and were not being who we are and who God calls us to be if we try to be something else.

The second personality type is the Choleric sort...those who are purposed centred. This type of person has a strong inner drive and gets things done.

When Jesus saw Simon, he said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Peter."

The name Peter means "little rock". It was upon this rock that the church would be built. But Peter could be rash, he had in his mind what needed to be done and wanted to do it. Jesus you can't go to Jerusalem they're going to kill you...and yet he was the only one that got out of the boat and walked on water.

Peter was the one who would lead when he had been restored, and was the one to whom Jesus gave the keys of the Kingdom of heaven.

But he doesn't start out that way, Jesus challenges him to be more than he was on his own and to draw out from within himself the person he was gifted to be.

And some of us are just like Peter, we get frustrated when things stall, when we get or see an idea we're out of the boat and were walking where others fear to tread...

We want to get the job finished so that we can move on to the next one. But results are God's work not ours and we have to remember that were only required to do our small part, small at least in the grand scheme of God's eternal kingdom.

We often see in the life of Jesus a sense of calmness, a total lack of anxiety, of course Jesus being perfect had the best of all 4 personality traits whereas we being broken don't.

Phlegmatic people the 3rd of our personality traits are laid back and are naturally peaceful often having a whatever happens, happens type of attitude.

Years ago, a lady approached me to ask if I would visit her husband in hospital as he was dying and didn't know Christ.

I instantly wanted to run to the hospital and share my faith with the man before it was too late...but the man refused me, telling his wife he wasn't interested in any of that God stuff.

You can imagine her distress and mine. I telephoned a friend who annoyingly told me to just trust God and pray...

A few days later his wife rang, but her voice wasn't distressed, "I don't know what happened" she said, he just sat up this morning, said he knew he had to find Jesus, prayed and then died with a smile on his face."

It doesn't always happen that way, and we need our Peter's but it's ultimately Jesus who changes lives.

Sometimes we feel guilty, maybe even second-class Christians if were not the Peter's and the Andrew's, those who can blast out the good news with eloquence leaping out of the boat, emotionally charged at every opportunity.

But we are not second-class, we are just called to be something else, to declare the love of God to others maybe by the way we live as opposed to the way we speak.

William Booth who began the Salvation army was greatly stirred by the needs of the poor of London.

Seeing that most churches weren't doing very much to reach the drunks, addicts, prostitutes, and poor, he set out to reach them with what he called the 3 S's: soup, soap and salvation.

But in his 80s, his work began to be hindered by blindness and one day his son Bramwell gave him the bad news that he would never see again.

Booth replied, "God must know best. I have done what I could for God and the people with my eyes. Now I shall do what I can for God and the people without my eyes."

We don't always have to be a loud voice, or a visionary leader for God to use us, some us are called, to bring a calmness and solidness of faith that's found in deep rooted prayer.

I read a quote which said 'when people work, they work, but when people pray God works...'