

“The Call”

Pastor Gladwyn Turner
16/05/2010

Introduction:

God calls people into His kingdom. We all have something to do as far as that call is concerned. When Jesus walked the shores of Galilee He noticed some fishermen working on their nets and He called them. He called them purposefully. We note...

Matthew 4:18-22 *And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and followed Him. Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.*

In His call to these four disciples there is something of significance here. Jesus was first concerned with their following but that following had a purpose. It was to be fishers of men. These men already knew how to fish...it was their livelihood, they had been instructed from a very young age on how to read the sea, navigate of a night by the stars, how to read the weather from the clouds as well as repair nets. They were adept fishermen. Now Jesus says, I'm going to make you fishers of men. If you were Peter and Andrew wouldn't you stop and wonder what this is about? You would think catching fish I know about, but catching men...this is going to be difficult!

The point that Jesus is making is that when He calls us it isn't just because He likes the clothes we are wearing, it's not predicated upon your good looks, or anything that you are doing. The answer as we see here is because he has something that He wants us to do. For these guys it is fishing for men!

When God calls us we are called from something into something. Let's look at what we are called from.

1. Called from darkness into light:

There is a transference of allegiance when we come into the Kingdom of God. Previously we sought to do our own things our own way. With the transition into God's kingdom we seek to follow Him and adapt to His methodologies which are different to the way the world operates.

John 8:12 *Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."*

God's kingdom is in direct opposition to the devil's kingdom. The light He shines dispels the darkness which natural man prefers to walk in. Those things embrace lies, deception, stealing, covetousness, adultery, fornication, worship of other gods- the full list is given in **Galatians 5:19-21**.

We are called from these deeds which the Bible calls, fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, into something greater where we are no longer bound by those things which work death in our mortal bodies. The Bible calls this *walking in the Spirit* **Gal.5:16** in contrast to *walking according to our own lusts...* **2 Peter 3:3**.

God has a better way of life for us all. The measure of what we are is defined by what we say and do. What we do depends upon how much the light of His life shines within.

When Saul on the Damascus road was called it was to become the apostle Paul. He was called in a manifestation of light to bring the light of the Gospel to all. Its brilliance was blinding **Acts 9:3-9**. Note **verse 6**....*Arise go into the city and you will be told what you must do.*

Note the depth of options given to Saul here....*go into the city...* not many are there? *You will be told what you must do!* Not what you would like to do...not what is convenient to do...not what you will tell me what I need to do for you... I don't see Saul putting up an argument. You don't hear him say, "Hey God, you just blinded me!"

When we are called it is to surrender the will to another. That is what the call embraces, nothing more, nothing less, no pleading, no delaying.

Matthew 8:21,22. *Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."*

The term 'bury my father' is an eastern term meaning after I have fulfilled all my familial duties as a son; those duties including the burying of one's dead father. This was simply a delaying tactic, I will serve you when I am ready, I'll follow you later once I have lived a life of comfort and received all that I want from life. It's responding to a call on my own terms, not God's. We are called from into...

2. The call is voluntary:

When God calls us we can respond or chose not to. It is up to us. People are not press-ganged into the call of God. It's not like military conscription where you used to do jail if you failed to show up. You just do life after death, eternally in Hell. Your choice! You choose to come and you choose to stay if that's what you want. It's up to you! When Israel was about to enter the Promised Land God spoke to Moses and gave them specific instructions relating to how they were to behave in the Land. They had a choice to obey or not to obey those instructions. It was better for them to obey...

Deut 30:17-20. *But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away....I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess. I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life.... that you may obey His voice.... for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers...to give them."*

To chose to stay meant blessing. But you know God just didn't hand the land over to them, they had to fight for it every inch of the way. Sometimes, they had some very exciting divine help, especially fighting the Amorites, when the *sun stood still over Gibeon and the moon stopped till the people had revenge upon all their enemies*

Josh.10:13. At other times it was just a plain old hard slog. Scripture says...

Josh.11:19 *There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon. All the others they took in battle.*

You can choose to respond to the call and you can choose to fight the battle, it's up to you. It all depends wether you want life or death, cursing or blessing. When God calls it is up to us to follow. I have never seen God put a hook in anyone's nose yet to pull them to Himself.

3. The call is to active service:

Romans 1:1 *Paul a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the Gospel of God.*

There are three identifiable areas of calling here. However, I really want to reflect on just one i.e. “separated to the Gospel.”

What do we mean by a person being separated to the Gospel as part of his call? What do you understand by the Gospel? The Gospel as we all know is the Good News. So what is the Good News? The good news is the proclamation of the fact that Jesus has come to save, heal and deliver.

Isaiah 61:1-3 *"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."*

This was the same message that Jesus entrusted the disciples with.

Luke 10:1,2,9, *After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.... "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'*

We are here to be on active service for the kingdom of God fulfilling the call to proclaim salvation, healing and deliverance.

This is the call upon all our lives.

Questions

1. What did Jesus promise to do with those followers he first called from the shores of Galilee?
2. In reality, what is it that people have been called from?
3. When Saul was called how many options was he given in his response and how does this reflect upon our call today?
4. What does the term “bury my father” mean? How often have you felt that way in relation to God telling you to do something?
5. What are the consequences of not responding to the call?
6. In what way should the call of God be manifest in a person’s life?