

Introduction:

- *"The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus."* (Acts 4:13, NLT)
- I used to tell my boys as they were growing up, "If you can do anything else in life than this, (pastoring, preaching, full time ministry) go do it!"
- I want to answer this question: How can I know if I am called? Why is this important?
 - Christians need to realize they are more called than what they think they are.
 - Christians need to know how to answer this question when people are asking it.
 - Those who are being called need to understand how God calls.
 - To also clear up some confusion regarding the call of God on a persons life.
- Why is the answer to this question so important you personally? I can only think of one answer: On your worse day...you want to be able to go back to the last thing God spoke to you. God's call will keep you in the fight. Ie. For me it was in 2001 when it looked like we were going to lose our building. I was complaining and God took me to 2 Cor 1:8-10. My conclusion: "God if we lose this building I will still be here doing what you called me to... plant a church."
- Another thought is Feb 23, "The Send" Orlando Camping Stadium. It is about answering the call at many levels, which we will be looking at.
- Let's look at 'calling.' I think we have made it much harder than what it is.

I. Am I Called? To answer this...

A. Lets start with the definition of a disciple. A disciple is: (three parts)

1. A person who puts their faith in Jesus
2. Governs their life by Jesus teaching
3. And passionately pursues Jesus mandate-MAKE DISCIPLES!

B. The Great Commission:

1. *"Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.""* (Matthew 28:18-20, NLT)
2. Tim Franklin translation: "Therefore, whenever you go, wherever you go, however you go-MAKE DISCIPLES!!!
3. The Call of Christ is to make disciples. Are you called? Yes! Are you doing that?

II. A Look At God's Calling

A. God "Asks" *"Then I heard the Lord asking, "Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?" I said, "Here I am. Send me.""* (Isaiah 6:8, NLT)

1. In this context, God does not appoint anyone. He asks! He asks for volunteers!

2. Isaiah's response is beautiful, "Here I am!" "Here I am at your service!"
 - a) Hebrew is "Hinneh!" It is an interjection demanding attention... "Look!" "See!" "It differs from yeš in that it emphasizes the immediacy, the here-and-now-ness, of the situation" Weber, C. P. (1999). [510](#). R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr., & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed., p. 220). Chicago: Moody Press.
 - b) It may be used to point out things but most of the time it is used to point out people.
 - c) In 1 Samuel 3:4 Samuel answers God, "**Behold, Me!**"
- B. God "appoints" In Jeremiah, 1:5, Acts 26:16 He appoints.
 1. He appoints from before birth.
 - a) *"I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations."* (Jeremiah 1:5, NLT)
 - b) *"Now get to your feet! For I have appeared to you to appoint you as my servant and witness. Tell people that you have seen me, and tell them what I will show you in the future."* (Acts 26:16, NLT)
 2. Which is more important? The disciple? The volunteer? or The Appointed? NONE!
 3. The mission is what is important. The mission is what counts! Therefore it is not the one who signs up but the one who finishes/or "does" that counts! John 4:34 *"Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."* (John 4:34, NKJV) What's His work? Make Disciples!

III. A Look at God's Called - Heb 11

All were 'common run of the mill' believers in God. (Ordinary men.)

- A. By faith: Noah Gen 6:9. *"Walked in close fellowship with God."* NLT
 1. If you walk in close fellowship with God you will get called. Why?
 2. Because you are close enough to hear the desire of God's heart! I.e. The men who heard David say, "I want a drink from the spring." They went and got it! They were close enough to hear the desire of his heart.
 3. I.e. David was known as ... *"a man after my own heart."*
- B. By Faith: Abraham Heb 11:8
 1. *"He obeyed when called."*
 2. Not knowing where he was going...God never gives us the whole picture. You have to obey with the little you have. I.e. Florida church plant.
 3. *"Abraham lived in tents"* that missionary right there! Mobil, able to move with God.
- C. By Faith: Isaac, Jacob, Joseph
 1. Joseph had a dream.
 2. Time is not your enemy, when you are walking with God. It took over 22 years for Joseph to see the dream come to pass. BUT...There will always be urgency because of the mission!

- D. By Faith: Gideon - Gibbor hayil - Hebrew meaning "mighty warrior with resources and property!" Heb. 11:32. Ordinary guy trying to survive. But see how God sees him.
- E. By Faith: Moses Heb 11:27 "He kept right on going because he **kept his eyes on the one who was invisible**. Read that again! "Eyes on the One who was invisible."
- F. By Faith: We *"Therefore, **since we** are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, **let us** strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And **let us run** with endurance the race God has set before us. **We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus**, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne."* (Hebrews 12:1-2, NLT)
- G. By Faith: Acts 4:13-16
 - 1. *"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of our people,"* (Acts 4:8, NLT)
 - 2. It does not say, "Peter the called spoke." It was Peter the 'Filled!' One called to follow Jesus, as in a disciple.
 - 3. Ordinary men with no special training...other than...they had been with Jesus.
- H. Acts 9:5 *"Who are you, lord?" Saul asked. And the voice replied, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting! Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."* (Acts 9:5-6, NLT)
 - 1. Step one: obey the little that you have.
 - 2. Acts 9:10 Ananias is a disciple and he is sent to lay hands on Saul!!!

IV. Process of the Called Most generally how it works.

- A. The individual senses the call of God their life.
 - 1. You know in your heart it is where God is leading.
 - 2. You may or may not have verbalized that calling.
- B. People recognize the gifting to minister and bring confirmation to the called.
 - 1. Believers are drawn to you.
 - 2. People comment on your passion/gift or ability.
- C. Eldership/Ministers recognize and confirm the call of God.
 - 1. Acts 13:2 Holy Spirit said to Elders/prophets and apostles. The Holy Spirit said: That is key to calling!
 - 2. They help with timing and release.
 - 3. *"Among the prophets and teachers of the church at Antioch of Syria were Barnabas, Simeon (called "the black man"), Lucius (from Cyrene), Manaen (the childhood companion of King Herod Antipas), and Saul. One day as these men were worshipping the Lord and fasting, **the Holy Spirit said, "Dedicate Barnabas and Saul** for the special work to which I have called them." So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way. So Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit."* (Acts 13:1-5, NLT)