

CALLING [ALL TEAM]

Tuesday, November 10, 2015

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

- Ephesians 2:8-10

We are...

1. Called by Jesus
2. Called to Jesus
3. Called for Jesus
 - "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works"
 - "which God prepared beforehand"
 - "that we should walk in them"

But, we feel...

If we're honest, many of us often feel angst because we don't know what our calling is. It only feels real or manageable if we know what it is.

We know that even when God calls us, we don't know everything about that calling. He only shows us a part of it.

So, why do we feel this tension between what is known and what is unknown, with regards to our calling? There are several reasons why this can be so:

- If we know it, we feel like we have more control.
- We are afraid of "missing" our calling, if we don't know what it is.
- We are afraid of stepping into our calling.

-- EXERCISE --

» TAKE A 3X5 CARD: On one side draw a horizontal line in the middle, and in the top part answer this question...

"If you knew you could not fail, and you knew God would be with you in the midst of it, what is something you would want to do in the next 5-10 years?" [think big]

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How does God call people in the Bible?

Problem is most evangelical models for calling are built on the anomalies... Which isn't exactly helpful. Most of us won't be called like:

- Moses (burning bush)
- David (prophet comes to your house)
- Isaiah (epic vision)
- John (Jesus personally asks)
- Paul (knocked off his horse by God)

While we can learn a lot about calling by looking at these 5 examples, let's instead take a minute and look at Joshua and see what we can learn from his experience.

- He was not called dramatically like Moses (no burning bush for Joshua)
- In Exodus we don't learn much about Joshua, but some important images emerge. We never see him be "called" in Exodus, but we see God using him and forming him in some key ways.
 - Leading the Israelite army in battle, while Aaron & Hur hold Moses arms to secure victory (Ex 17:8-16)
 - On the mountain with Moses, as his assistant, when God's glory descends (Ex 24:9-18)
 - Lingering at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, after Moses leaves from meeting with God (Ex 33:7-11)
- Joshua isn't called until right before they Israel crosses over into the Promise Land, and God buries Moses on a mountain. His call doesn't come until over 40 years after the Exodus » Numbers 27:12-23 & Deut 31:14-29 (primarily verse 23)
- Look at what God tells Joshua as he begins to lead » Joshua 1:1-9

What do we learn from these examples?

- Calling is GIVEN by God
 - We don't create our calling, and we don't get to pick it. God gives it to us in his wisdom and grace.
- Calling is KNOWN by God
 - We might not know now what God is calling us to, but he knows. We can rest in his knowing.
- Calling is PERFORMED by God
 - God is the one who brings our calling into reality. It isn't up to us to just figure it out.
- Calling is SECURED by God
 - He holds our calling, so it is secure. We aren't going to simply lose it along the way. He keeps it secure.

But often we don't live like this is true.

First ask, what would I think and feel if God took that thing I feel called to away?

- Do we feel anger or angst?
- Do we feel relief?

How we feel in the asking of this question tells us something significant about how we view our calling and our identity before God. Calling can go wrong in two significant ways:

1) We can fold our identity into our calling (Ideal Self)

- Calling goes awry when it terminates on us.
- When we begin to see our identity tied to our calling, we will grasp at our calling for fear that in losing our "calling" we will lose who we are.

2) We can run from our calling (Shadow Self)

- Calling can create fear because of all those things in our hearts that we don't want anyone else to see.
- We push our calling away out of either fear or shame.

-- EXERCISE --

» *TAKE YOUR 3X5 CARD: Draw a vertical line in the lower section. On one side, write "Gold." On the other write "Shadow."*

What are things you see in what you wrote above that is connected to Gold. What are connected to Shadow?

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How do we walk forward?

We often are too consumed with knowing the destination that we fail to take the next step simply following Jesus. If we rest in the four truths that came out of our glance at Joshua, how do we walk forward into our calling?

- In Faith
- Obedience

-- EXERCISE --

» *TAKE YOUR 3X5 CARD: Take 15 minutes to get away from all distractions to pray, and ask God the following question. On the back of your card, write what you feel God telling you.*

"Regardless of what the future holds or doesn't hold, what do you want me to do now?"

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