

## Pick a C

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Today and in 2 weeks' time we are moving a little bit more

- To the practical application side of getting unstuck.

Today we are going to talk about Picking a "C."

- And in two weeks' time we will talking about how to develop the C ...
- That you have chosen.

## CALLING

Mark 1:16–20 <sup>16</sup> As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.

<sup>17</sup> "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." <sup>18</sup> At once they left their nets and followed him.

<sup>19</sup> When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets.

<sup>20</sup> Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Jesus was calling them to something new.

- He was calling them to that which God was doing in him ...
- And through him.

God was establishing his rule and reign on earth as it is in heaven ...

- In Jesus and through Jesus.
- And he would ultimately through Jesus open a door into a new world.
- So that humanity could be restored ...
- And people could be truly human again.
- And bear his image into the world.

Jesus was asking these guys if they wanted to join.

- In that which God was doing.

And v.18 says, <sup>18</sup> At once they left their nets and followed him.

They responded to the call and their lives would never be the same again!

The apostle Paul towards the end of his life ...

- Talking about this “call” about following Jesus ...
- And fulfilling his purpose in bringing about God’s new world said ...

Acts 20:24 <sup>24</sup> ... I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task <sup>[the call, the mission]</sup> the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God’s grace. <sup>[Everything that we have spoken about over here – board.]</sup>

What is Paul saying? I think he is saying ...

- That the moment I received my “marching” orders from God ...
- Fulfilling that mission became the pressing priority and desire of my life.

Whatever personal agenda I had ...

- Has given way to the marching orders I received from God.
- That is now the thing that matters above all else.

That is what I personally signed up for almost 25 years ago.

- A new life, a new purpose.

To be willing to go anywhere, do anything, give up everything.

- Become whoever it is that God wants me to become.
- In order to bear his image into the world.
- To reconcile people to him.
- To bring his rule to earth in my life and the life of others ...
- As it is in Heaven.

When you have a clear understanding of what is it that God is doing ...

- In Jesus and through Jesus.
- In his people and through his people.
- And what role it is that he is asking you to play in it all.
- Everything in your world will change.

When you truly get this “call” you will ...

- Give all the service that you can.
- All the time that you can ...
- All the money, prayers, efforts that you can.

Because you know that when you do what you are called to do.

- The forces of darkness will be pushed back.
- And Satan will be forced to give ground.

Is your calling sure?

If you are not sure about your calling, you are not going to make it.

- The journey is too hard.

You have to be able to get up in the morning

- And know that you are destined for this.

Where you can say, that I believe with all of my heart ...

- That God has called me to do this ...
- Until the day, I die!

When all else fails and it feels all uphill.

- If you can get up in the morning and still believe ...
- That God is calling to do this ...
- And that in some way or the other his hand is still on your life.
- You will make it to the end.

## CONNECTION

Nothing new here.

- We have spoken about this "C" a number of times.
- And will most probably have to be reminded of it till the day we die.

The scriptures that immediately come to mind on this front is Psalm 23

- We will just touch on the first three verses this morning ...
- And unpack it more fully next year in series ...
- That will be called, Slowing down to Pay Attention.

**Psalm 23:1–3** <sup>1</sup> The Lord <sup>[YHWH]</sup> is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. <sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, <sup>3</sup> he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

What is the focus of the Psalm?

- It is the Psalmist "connection" to The Lord, to YHWH

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not be in want. <sup>[He is enough!]</sup>

- HE makes me lie down in green pastures.
- He leads me beside quiet waters.
- He restores my soul.
- He guides me in the path of righteousness.

The Psalmist loving union with God, brought him peace.

- Even in the midst of difficulty.

Are you in loving union?

Signs that you are in loving union would be things like ...

- Being at peace, being content.
- Being joyful and confident.
- Having a kind spirit and gracious demeanor about yourself.
- Being patient and understanding.
- Being hopeful and faithful, loving and kind.

Signs that you are not in loving union, would be things like ...

- Irritability, Frustration, having a critical or judgmental spirit.
- Being joyless, being insecure, being discontent or apathetic.
- ...

If these things are currently status quo in your life.

- Connection and loving union is most likely the thing ...
- That you need to be paying attention to.

**CHARACTER**

What is Character?

- We looked at this a couple of weeks ago.

Character is the ability to consistently make god-glorifying choices with a god-glorifying attitude irrespective of circumstance, feeling or cost.

Again, we will speak a lot more about this next year.

- But the umbrella question would most probably be ...
- Is my character fully submitted to Christ?

Am I keeping pride at bay?

- I am pursuing humility.
- Or do I always know better (outwardly and inwardly).
- Doing things my way.

Do I pick the road of least resistance with confronted with difficulty?

- OR the harder one that will take me into a better future?

Do I take my thoughts captive and make them obedient to Christ?

- Or do I let Satan have a field day with my emotions.

Do I finish what I start?

- Is my yes, yes and my no, no?

Am I overcoming my fears and insecurities?

- Or am I letting them immobilize me and neutralize me?

Am I dealing with laziness in thinking, doing and planning?

What is my ability to ...

- Navigate my way through the highs and lows of life?
- Overcome personal discouragement?
- To maintain sober mindedness in a crisis.
- To keep my ego at bay at all times
- And to stay focused on life's mission.
- ...

You have to regularly take an honest look at your character.

- For your character can either be your best friend or worst enemy.

What I have come to realize over time.

- Is that most people that are stuck spiritually?
- Aren't necessarily stuck because of a heart problem ...
- But a character problem.

A lack of will, fortitude, resilience, of Grit.

A lack of the ability to consistently make God-glorifying choices ...

- With a God-glorifying attitude.
- Irrespective of feelings, circumstance or cost.

If you have a character problem don't ignore it.

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to help.
- Study it in the bible.
- Get help from others.
- Do whatever you have to do to deal with it.
- It is YOUR job. Your responsibility. Your future.

## COMPETENCE

Ecclesiastes 10:10 <sup>10</sup> If the ax is dull and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed but skill will bring success.

Even with a dull axe

Sometimes we get stuck because of skill issues.

For the first 19 years of my life ...

- I did not know how to read my bible.
- I did not know how to pray.
- I didn't know how to develop my character.
- I did not know how to deal with issues in my heart.

Yes, I had call problems.

- Yes, I had connection/ heart problems.

- Yes, I had character problems.

But, I also had some serious skill problems.

Someone had to teach me how to read my bible.

- Someone had to teach me how to pray.
- Someone had to teach me how to work on my character and my heart.

As since that day to this very day.

- I have had to work on developing different competencies.

Whether it is ...

- How to resolve conflict.
- How to raise kids.
- How to help others.
- ...

All of these issues if you don't know how to navigate your way through it.

- Can leave stuck spiritually.

Because, I am not able to resolve conflict, it will affect me spiritually.

- If I don't know how to speak my wife's love language ...
- It is going to affect both of us spiritually.
- If ...

## CHEMISTRY (or relational savvy)

**Jeremiah 17:9** <sup>9</sup> The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Knowing what affect you have on people?

- We can easily see others, but can't see ourselves.

**Proverbs 27:14** <sup>14</sup> If a man loudly blesses his neighbor early in the morning, it will be taken as a curse.

1. Self-Righteous Pharisee.
2. The mouse
3. The Know it all.
4. The Mono-toner.
5. Self-consumed and self-absored.
6. The control freak.

At the most basic level.

- How to Enter a Room – Be interested in people.
- Read the Room,
- Leave the Room.
- Being interested in people.

Don't fight with people.

**Acts 20:35** <sup>35</sup> 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "