



“I’m Getting a Call...Can I Answer it at Work?”

Living Your Vocation in the Day-to-Day

Focus: God has placed a call on our lives—and sometimes it’s a call that can be lived out alongside our existing “day job.” Many of Jesus’ disciples were fishermen by trade, and when they dropped their nets to follow Christ they were really transitioning into a different kind of fishing! Many of the skills that would have been useful out on the water—patience, persistence, teamwork, flexibility—would have translated well to the work of discipleship. Similarly, we often find that the gifts and talents that we currently use daily (leadership, administration, hospitality, prayer, music, teaching, etc.) are the same gifts that God will call us to use in Christian service.

General Comments:

- This sermon will—depending on the direction you and the Holy Spirit choose to take it—invite your congregation to ponder:
 - How you might already be living out elements of your call
 - How your current “day job”, family commitments, or volunteer work can be a pathway to deeper discipleship
 - How the gifts and talents you already use each day can be utilized for building the Kingdom of God
- As you prepare for this week’s sermon, continue to take time to touch base with anyone who might have expressed interest in the notion of call, or anyone who may be responding to an invitation to discipleship. Those ongoing conversations might shape your thoughts around this series in unexpected ways as you move forward!
- As with prior weeks, consider prayer walking through the sanctuary/worship space prior to the service. As you move through the sanctuary, ask God to speak to the people who will be in that space. Pay attention to any Holy Spirit “nudges” as you dedicate and pray for the space.
- Consider including the teaching points from the Proclamation section in the bulletin for further reflection.

Scripture Selection:

- Luke 5:1-11—The Call of The Disciples

Once while Jesus was standing beside the Lake of Gennesaret and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the

shore of the lake; the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.” Simon answered, “Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.” When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to burst. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’s knees, saying, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” For he and all who were with him were astounded at the catch of fish that they had taken, and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.

Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

Outline:

The following sermon has been structured to have the flow of an **AGAPE** sermon. For more on this, check out the model in the book [That’ll Preach: 5 Simple Steps to Your Best Sermon Ever](#) by Charley Reeb. The five steps are: (AGAPE) Anticipation—Gospel—Answer—Proclamation—Explosion. An outline is provided that includes research and preaching “helps.” However, it is heavily dependent upon the preacher bringing their own experience to the sermon.

- **Anticipation (Introduction/Hook)**
 - Think about a time when you had to suddenly drop everything and shift in a new direction. (Examples might include a medical or family emergency, the onset of labor, a global pandemic that totally changed the way we all did ministry, etc.) Consider:
 - What was this experience like?
 - What gifts and graces did God equip you with so that you could faithfully respond? What enabled you to drop everything and follow this sudden call?

- “Hook” your listeners with a question about discipleship and daily vocation. For example:
 - **How can I grow as a disciple in my “day job?”**
 - **What gifts do I already have, and how might God be calling me to further utilize them?**
- **Gospel (Scripture)**
 - Spend some time reading and contemplating Luke 5:1-11. Consider the following questions:
 - What do you notice about this text? Are there words or phrases that grab your attention?
 - Put yourself in Peter’s shoes—what would you be feeling in this situation? (Doubtful? Scared? Excited?) Imagine his internal dialogue during this experience. What would this sudden call to ministry feel like?
 - What does this text tell us about hearing and responding to God’s call?
 - Consider comparing this text to the disciple’s call stories in the other Gospels. (Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-20, John 1:43-50) What similarities and differences do you see?
 - Below are a couple of commentaries that may be helpful in guiding your unpacking of the Scripture:
 - From the [Center for Excellence in Preaching](#), by Rev. Scott Hoezee
 - Theology of Work has a [short commentary](#) on Luke 5:1-11. They also have a deeper dive into the [theology of vocation](#) that could be useful.
- **Answer**
 - Go back to the question you used in your “hook”. What wisdom can you glean from this Scripture as you attempt to answer this question?
- **Proclamation**
 - What is the “big takeaway” that you want to communicate to your hearers?
 - Consider incorporating the following points (you could share these in your bulletin, on your Facebook page, or other avenues as well):
 - Discipleship *can be a part of our everyday lives.*
 - Parenting and grandparenting *are avenues for discipleship.*
 - There’s no such thing as being “too basic”, “too ordinary” or even “too busy” to answer the call...because *some forms of call can be lived out in our most ordinary moments!*

- **Explosion (Closing)**
 - You've asked a question, you've turned to Scripture for an answer, and you've proclaimed the Good News—so now what? What are you inviting your congregation to *do* with the story of the disciple's call? This will be for you and the Holy Spirit to discern; below are just a few directions you might explore.
 - Invite your listeners to brainstorm three ways that they can bring a love for God and neighbor to their “day job” (which could be a paid vocation, a volunteer role, or a caregiving role.)
 - This might be an opportunity to invite someone (or multiple people) from your congregation to give a brief testimony about how they see their “day job” as a form of ministry. See the Interview Guide that is available on the [website](#).
 - Depending on your setting, you might consider transitioning from your message into an interactive prayer response. This would be a fantastic week to incorporate music from The Porter's Gate Worship Project, which has produced beautiful songs about discipleship and vocation. Check out "[Day By Day](#)", "[Your Labor is Not In Vain](#)", and "[Little Things With Great Love](#)".
 - Continue to extend the threefold invitation from last week: **Pray. Seek. Go.**
 - **Pray:** Invite your people to ask God to help them see, hear, or know what God's voice sounds like. Encourage them to use whatever words they might have for prayer. “God, will you help me to hear your voice?”
 - **Seek:** Pay attention to possibilities that open up or scripture that reveals what God might be saying to you. “I am paying attention to God's words for me by...”
 - **Go:** Reach out to a pastor, mentor, or trusted friend to consider what God may be calling you to do. “I think God might be...”