

The Real Jesus: Mark 1:9-20, Commission, Combat, Call- 1/9/22

Mark 1 ¹⁶As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ¹⁸At once they left their nets and followed him.

¹⁹When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. ²⁰Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

In our passage today we meet some fishermen from Galilee that Jesus calls to follow him. Notice that this call came with a cost- to leave their nets behind (leave their business, their careers) and leave their father (leave their family) to follow. For fans of the Matrix, this was their blue pill or red pill moment. **A significant calling always requires a significant cost.**

Think of a time you may have been called to something significant that you knew would also cost you something significant. Maybe it was a new job opportunity but in order to take the position you would have to move across the country and leave the security of everyone you know. Maybe it was serving in the military that would require you put your life at risk and leave your family months at a time. Marriage is like this. While it can be wonderful and beautiful, there is a cost to marriage (yeah a ring)...it requires sacrifice, giving up the freedom of singleness, independence...and there is a risk not knowing what may come.

What I have come to appreciate as I get older is that any true calling in life is going to cost you something significant. But it will always be worth it. If you go through life and you never take risks, if you aren't willing to make some sacrifices, you will miss out on the fullness that life has to offer, you will miss out on relationships and opportunities. The same is true spiritually. While salvation is a free gift that we don't earn. Following Jesus is costly.

Many people want Jesus in some way or another...but they want him on their own terms. They want him as an example, as an inspiration, to use for a political agenda, they want him only on Sundays or when they are in a bind, they don't want a Jesus that will cost them something significant. But a Jesus that doesn't require anything from you is a Jesus that can't change you. The real Jesus will call you to follow him as the highest priority over everything else. Just like these first disciples, He will call us to leave stuff behind. Your desires that don't align with his agenda for your life, your plans, self-centeredness, security, relationships. There are many things that Jesus has called me to leave behind to follow him over the years. Within the first month of following Jesus he called me to break up with my girlfriend and to leave my educational goals behind...and that was just the beginning. Now maybe you are here today and you are kind of on the fence about Jesus, or you may consider yourself a Christian, but if you are honest you are not really following Jesus. You may say, “Nate, you aren't building a great case here.” Well it is interesting that these fishermen didn't hesitate to leave behind their careers and family to follow Jesus. What did they know about Jesus that told them he was worth following? **Why is Jesus Worth Following?**

His Divine Commissioning

Remember last week, John the Baptist was the forerunner to Jesus who prepared the way for Jesus through calling people to confession, repentance and baptism. Jesus comes out to the wilderness to John. ⁹ *At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.* Now why would Jesus need to be baptized if there was nothing he needed to confess or repent of? Well I believe there are two reasons- one was to identify himself with us. Jesus identifies with the weakness and frailty of humanity. He's at home among sinners and his love compels him to identify with us. The second reason, is that his baptism was a sign of his divine commissioning for his public ministry as the Messiah.

¹⁰ *Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.* ¹¹ *And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."* Notice here all three persons of the Trinity are present at the same time. This counters the heresy of Arianism and modern-day Oneness Pentecostalism which says that there is only one person of God who shows up in three manifestations at different times. Here we have the Holy Spirit who comes as a sign of his empowerment for Divine Messianic ministry and the voice of the Father who commissions his Son and bestows His favor upon Jesus. John did lots of baptisms, but this never happened at any of the other ones...I've never had this happen at ours. This was utterly unique. This should give you and I confidence in following Jesus. Let me illustrate it this way.

If Todd and I were walking down the street and a few guys jumped us, no offense to Todd, but I'm probably trying to run away or giving them what they want...take my wallet. Not worth the risk. But if I'm walking with **Heavyweight Champion Francis Ngannou**? I'm suddenly willing to stand there...you want my wallet? Come and get it. [Slide] See if Jesus is just a good guy or a wise teacher or even a prophet, he might be worth getting advice from. He may even be worth adding him as a part of my well-balanced life. But making him my #1 priority? Sacrifice my goals, relationships, desires, my career...maybe even my life for him? I don't think so. But if he was sent by God the Father, if He was empowered by the Holy Spirit to have power over nature, heal the sick and the blind, raise people from the dead as the eyewitnesses claimed? If he is really the third person of the Trinity, God in the flesh? He's worth the cost to follow. And the rest of our study we will see over and over again Jesus revealing His identity as Divine King.

His Combat Preparation

¹² *At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness,* ¹³ *and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.*

Are you familiar with what the **Navy SEALs call Hell-week**? This is the fourth week of SEAL training, for 5 ½ days on a total of 4hrs. of sleep these trainees are mentally, emotionally and physically tested to the brink of surrender. Only a quarter of them make it through. [Slide] Well this was Jesus' hell-month. We learn from the gospels that Jesus was out in the unforgiving wilderness, fending off wild animals, fasting on an empty stomach for 40 days. And there he is tempted by the enemy, Satan. While we see Jesus' divinity in his commissioning, here we see his humanity. Because he is human, he is able to be tempted. Now temptation is not the same as sin. We can be tempted toward pride, toward lust, gluttony, any of you tempted toward

laziness on your snow days last week? Likewise, Jesus was tempted just like we are. While the first humans failed this test and every human since including all of us in this room, Jesus is the only one ever who passed the test. This is critical because if he succumbed to temptation, he wouldn't be qualified to be our sin substitute. That's the problem with every other false savior- every other religion, philosophy is built on sinful, flawed humanity. He is the one Scripture says, knew no sin but became sin so that we might become the righteousness of Christ. If Jesus is combat tested, and if Jesus paid the eternal cost of our sin, isn't he worth the cost to follow? Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe.

His Call to Eternal Impact

¹⁷ *"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you into fishers of people."*

Jesus completely flips upside down the purpose of their lives. These guys are spending their whole lives fishing for...well fish. Fish are nice but in the hierarchy value, they are pretty low, even lots of vegans eat fish. I mean in the animal kingdom it's dogs, horses, monkeys...fish are way down there, right next to cats...Is PETA watching? The point is however much of an impact fishing for fish could be, Jesus is saying, "I am going to train you for a vocation that is eternally significant." Because people matter to God. Every person matters eternally to God. They are made in his image with dignity and value. Jesus is on a rescue mission for people! And he was calling them to that same mission. These disciples could have never fathomed that they would be world changers and following Jesus would take them on an adventure to make an eternal difference, forever we would know their names and their legacy...but they would also not have expected to suffer and eventually be killed for following Jesus. Is Jesus worth the risk and the sacrifice? Well it depends how you are measuring that. If your measurement worth based on # of years lived, safety and avoidance of pain, comfort and money? No. But if your measurement is based on an eternal timeline and measurement? If you are measuring by lives eternally changed, eternal joy, eternal life? Well then what is the risk? You make it to 85 or 90 but you lived a safe, comfortable life with little eternal influence or significance but you have nothing. But even if you only live to 40, but gave your life to serve the Lord...you have everything. Jim Elliot died at 28 as a missionary to the Auca Indians. With the measuring tools of the world, we would say following Jesus wasn't worth it. But if you take Jesus' measuring tool, Elliot lost nothing. *"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."*

[Title Slide] The call of Jesus is costly. The cost may be sacrificing some desires and longings you have. It might cost you your reputation if you being publicly identifying yourself as a Christ-follower. Jesus may ask you to leave something significant to follow Him. But whatever it may be, it is always worth the cost. He the one who is calling you is the commissioned King. The one calling you has proven himself faithful and paid the price for you. The one calling you will give your life eternal significance as a fisher of people. How are you responding to his call? What is he asking you to leave behind to follow him on mission.

Jesus also has a call for our church to be fishers of people and it will cost us something. But it is worth it. When we paid off our debt, it was our intention to make the first priority becoming better fishers of people- serving and reaching our city. Our first commitment of our resources was hiring a Pastor of Church Mobilization and reallocating administrative resources toward

that same local outreach- Pastor Terry Foester who were are about to commission. We also set aside almost 200k to help seed this ministry. Is that risky? Yes, Is it sacrificial? Sure. We could have spent that on advertising, or just saving it for a rainy day...but this is the call of Jesus. And it is always worth it.

Pray. Transition to commissioning. Terry Foester, wife Libby and children Eli, Eden, Silas & Mercy. We value partnerships. We work together and have relationships with other churches in the area- we are all on the same mission together. Pastor Terry comes to us having grown up and discipled at Bethel Baptist church and many years in ministry and leadership at Sycamore Hill Church in Hockessin. And we are privileged to have his childhood Pastor, Gayle Ryle who will come up in a few minutes as part of Terry's commissioning and Pastor Jon Boulet of Sycamore Hill Church, a close friend and ministry partner for many years speak about Terry.