



# CALLING

## THE JESUS JOURNEY

As Jesus' influence grew over the early months of his teaching career, the number of "voices" began to multiply. These voices clamored for his attention and allegiance. We now know that he prepared for the challenge of multiple voices as we review the stories of his boyhood visit to the temple, the story of his baptism, and certainly in the loneliness and temptations of the wilderness. The voice in the wilderness uttered familiar, alluring words that leaders often face in dire circumstances: You need provision **NOW** (bread); you need protection **NOW** ("they will bear you up"); you need power **NOW** ("give you all authority"). When you have been preparing for thirty years, **NOW** is quite compelling.

Jesus flawlessly moved from a foundation of preparation to the fruit of promotion by sifting through all the voices around him. How? His preparation was focused on building the capacity and character that could mute distracting voices in order to magnify the divine one. With an internal radar that was on high alert for his Father's voice, Jesus was also able to discern and clarify "who" was calling him and "what" he was being called to do. Today, many men and women who seek to follow Jesus are distracted by numerous voices. This is why Lifework invites leaders like yourself on a journey to reflect and discern God's three main callings for you. They are *"God's summons that compels you to follow Him for His purposes."*<sup>1</sup>

His first calling is to **"come and see."** With the wilderness behind Him, Jesus returned to the same person and place where he had received the affirmation of His calling a month and a half previously. John the Baptist (JTB) was still baptizing and preparing his followers for

Jesus the Messiah. They, along with their brothers and friends, were curious and were searching for answers to their questions about the Messiah, and they were ready to respond to God's call, whether it came as a shout or whisper.

As Jesus approached them, JTB said to his eager followers, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" Upon hearing this, these marketplace leaders immediately started to follow Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" The disciples replied, "Teacher, where are you staying?" "Come and see," said Jesus.<sup>2</sup> This calling is for the curious. These leaders were ready to learn more about Jesus. He had come highly recommended by the leading prophet (JTB) with a vision of building a new Kingdom. His Kingdom, however, was not one of domination but rather transformation, where changed lives would change society. They needed to figure out, "Who is Jesus?" Over the following 12 months Jesus spent time answering their questions with both words and actions that were purposely done under the public radar. He built relationships fueled by their interaction and their investment of time with one another. JTB encouraged his disciples to move toward Jesus ... together. They were individuals who loved living and learning together! They had a common curiosity to find answers. Their curiosity was addressed and as a result, there was a natural progression to a second calling – "come follow me."<sup>2</sup>

**"Come follow me"** is not for the curious. It is for those who have had their questions answered. It is for those who have taken the time to be intellectually honest and are willing to humbly acknowledge that their way





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◀ of life leads to dead-ends, and that Jesus' way of life leads to a fulfilling, abundant life. This is a calling for those who wish to be personally committed. They are no longer curious; they are convinced. They wanted to live as Jesus would live.

This commitment that Jesus calls for requires both obedience and trust. His disciples might have understood such compliance because it was what they expected every day from their employees. Trust, however, may have been more difficult to comprehend because a calling is not always clear. It has elements of mystery and intrigue. What might be unclear in our teens might become clear in the years to come: "God's complete designs for us are never fully understood, let alone fulfilled, in this life."<sup>3</sup> When leaders follow Jesus, they are mysteriously led at times to places and people that will accomplish His plans and purposes. Obedience and trust in "the caller" are critical to clarifying a calling. There is no calling without a caller. The primary calling Jesus gave to marketplace leaders was a "who" – he called them to himself – and it is his primary calling to those who are following him today. Come follow me. There is, however, a secondary calling that centers around "what" we do.

"Come work with me"<sup>4</sup> is a paraphrase of the Biblical phrase, "Come follow me and I will make you fishers of men." Peter and Andrew were business partners with James and John and they all had much at stake as they considered allowing Jesus to influence their lives. It is one thing to be curious, and it's another to be personally convinced, but it's quite extraordinary to have your personal commitments affect all areas of your life, particularly your life at work. This calling is for

those who have professional conviction. They realize that the ultimate boss needs to be Jesus. Jesus was not shy about the fact that he calls us into a relationship in which he is the leader of all aspects of life. Most of his followers were sent back to their places of employment to use their unique and individual talents for his purposes. These "secondary callings" were their careers – the marketplace was their ministry. Jesus certainly had a love for marketplace leaders. He spent thirty years around his father's construction business. So as he began to model how to live and lead, he intentionally taught 87% of his parables in the marketplace context; 93% of his miracles were performed in the marketplace; and 100% of his team were marketplace leaders! No selections from the synagogue. In Scripture it's clear that Jesus is "the Caller" and ALL his callings are sacred, particularly those who are called to the marketplace.

Today, Jesus continues to call most of us to be his ambassadors in our companies and very few to be apostles in our churches. **Let's all follow Jesus no matter where he leads us!** ●

/ 1) *Follow the Leader*, by Steven French / 2) John 1:19-50  
/ 3) *The Call*, by Os Guinness, p. 52 / 4) Luke 5:1-11