

Theme: God has called us to Himself so decisively in Christ that everything we are, everything we do, and everything we have is transformed as we live our entire lives in response to His call.

I. Intro – A Series On Calling

- A. BRCC focal point for 2012
- B. Calling is central to this - and our walk with Christ
- C. Os Guinness - most important and common question
- D. But what exactly does it mean to be 'called'?
- E. Who has been called? Only pastors/missionaries?
- F. If others, what part of life includes 'calling'?
- G. Calling includes all of us - and all of life!
- H. Today's theme statement
- I. We will be covering how calling affects every area
- J. But today - the call to Christ

II. The Primary Call

- A. Jesus' decisive call to the disciples
 - 1. Jesus calls James and John (v21)
 - 2. They immediately leave all to follow (v22)
 - 3. Peter and Andrew - the same (vv18-20)
- B. The call - the fundamental reality for Christians
 - 1. Romans 1:6-7 - called to belong to Jesus
 - 2. Ephesians 4:1-4 - calling, called - 3x!

- 3. Hebrews 3:1 - share in the heavenly calling
- 4. 1 Peter 2:9 - called out of darkness into light
- 5. Jude 1:1 - those called, loved, and kept

C. We must keep the primary call primary!

- 1. Os Guinness - primary & secondary calling quotes
- 2. It is imperative that we keep the primary call primary
- 3. Before moving to our callings, we must focus on the call

III. Understanding the Call

A. The call is from God - not ourselves

- 1. Jesus called James & John (v 21)
- 2. Jesus called Peter and Andrew (v19)
- 3. Every verse we saw earlier - God calls
- 4. This is true of both primary and secondary call
- 5. A major problem today - Called - without a Caller!
- 6. A major problem today - we determine our own call
- 7. The call comes from God - we merely respond

B. The call is first and foremost to God - not something

- 1. James & John follow Jesus (v 22)
- 2. Peter and Andrew follow Jesus (v20)
- 3. The Twelve - appointed to be with Him (Mark 3:14)
- 4. We must walk with God first - and continually!

5. Only then can we be fruitfully called to other things

C. The call is all consuming and all demanding

1. James & John leave everything to follow (v 22)
2. Peter and Andrew leave all to follow Jesus (v20)
3. Bonhoeffer - When Christ calls a man... (quote)
4. Luke 9:23 - **all** followers must take cross & deny self
5. The call costs - and gives! - everything!
6. This is where true life is found - in God!

D. The call then sends us out to serve God & others

1. Follow Me - I will make you fishers of men (v19)
2. Not just a play on words - new purpose for life
3. Mark 3:14 - that He might send them out
4. This is the secondary call - flows from the first
5. Loving God leads to loving neighbor
6. We are blessed so that we might be a blessing
7. We will develop this more in future week

IV. Applying the Word

A. Have you answered God's call to be His follower?

1. This is the primary call for all of us!
2. Many try to find the secondary call alone - will not work
3. Every person was made to know, love, glorify and enjoy God

4. Have you heard and answered this call?

B. Do we realize this call never ends?

1. The call of God in Christ continues throughout life
2. This is the critical foundation for all other calls
3. The primary call undergirds all else in this series
4. God has an awesome call for every one of us
5. God's call touches every area of our life
6. God's call fills our life with purpose
7. But it begins with a call to radical commitment to Christ
8. Where is my passion for Christ?

C. Communion - Called To Christ Our Life

Called - To Jesus Christ

Matthew 4:18-22
September 16, 2012
Communion
Numbers 6:24-26

6 And you also are among those **who are called to belong to Jesus Christ**. 7 To all in Rome who are **loved by God and called to be saints**: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 1:6–7

1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the **calling** you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit — just as you were **called** to one hope when you were **called** — Ephesians 4:1–4

Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly **calling**, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. Hebrews 3:1

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of **him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light**. 1 Peter 2:9

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, **To those who have been called**, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ: Jude 1:1

Our primary calling as followers of Christ is by Him, to Him, and for Him. First and foremost we are called to Someone (God), not to something (such as motherhood, politics, or teaching) or to somewhere (such as the inner city or Outer Mongolia).

Our secondary calling, considering who God is as Sovereign, is that everyone, everywhere, and in everything should think, speak, live, and act entirely for Him. We can therefore properly say as a matter of secondary calling that we are called to homemaking or to the practice of law or to art history. But these and other things are always the secondary, never the primary calling. They are “callings” rather than the “calling.”

He appointed twelve — designating them apostles — **that they might be with him** and that he might send them out to preach Mark 3:14

When Christ calls a man, he bids Him come and die.
Dietrich Bonhoeffer The Cost of Discipleship

23 Then he said to them all: **“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.** 24 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.” Luke 9:23–24

He appointed twelve — designating them apostles — that they might be with him and **that he might send them out to preach** Mark 3:14

As a local church BRCC is called to encourage each member to realize the calling they have been given in Christ, to encourage devotion to Christ and His call upon us, and to equip and encourage believers to fulfill their calling in Christ. This entire process allows both individuals and the church to serve God and others, and in so doing to find the rich fulfillment of knowing Christ and helping others to know Him as well. - BRCC 2012 Focal Point