

## Follow Me, Part 3; Mark 1:16-20 0273-T

*Is there just really something about him that compels me to know Him that compels me to seek Him? And if not, then I need his call upon my life.*

Mark's point here is the absolute sovereignty of the call of Jesus upon their life. The absolute sovereignty, or you might put it this way, the sovereign magnetism of Jesus--that Jesus speaks to them, and they find it so compelling. They find it so irresistible, that they just drop their nets, they leave their families, they obey, and they follow.

It's as though Mark is beginning this theme here that he's going to follow the theme of Jesus, who's speaking as God, who can speak just like God, because Jesus speaks and things happen. When Jesus speaks, what he says happens.

Let's take a look at how Mark is going to develop this theme. Mark chapter one, verse 20, just a few verses later, Mark's going to relate this to us. But Jesus rebuked him saying, "Be silent and come out of him." That's the instance, there's just a follow, when the demon possessed man comes into the synagogue, Jesus says, "Be quiet and come out of him," and he comes out of him shrieking. Jesus says it Be quiet, come out, he does. Chapter four, verse 39. But he awoke and he rebuked the wind and he said to the sea, "Peace be still," the wind ceased and there was a great calm. Jesus spoke it, it happens. Chapter five, verse 41, taking her by the hand, he said to her, "Talitha kumi, which means little girl, I say to you arise", and she did. Chapter seven, verse 34. And looking up into heaven, He sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is be opened, and his ears were opened. Chapter 11, verse 14, and he said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And so it was with the fig tree. And then in chapter 15, Jesus is going to utter that cry from the cross, "It is finished," and then the curtain veil is torn.

You see, over and over Mark is showing us Jesus speaks. And what he speaks, happens, here, Jesus speaks, follow me. And it happens. You see how this is this is the sovereign call of the Lord upon them? This is the sovereign call of their maker. And Mark wants us to see it as just this, that this irresistible, compelling magnetism of this Man, Jesus just compels them to follow.

Now, if we as modern people are reading the story, what we're always going to try to do is we're going to try to invent some sort of psychological reason behind their following of Jesus in such a quick fashion, right? And so we're going to come up with all kinds of explanations as to why it was these men follow Jesus upon this sort of a drop of a hat.

Maybe they were just really tired of the fishing business. Maybe the fishing business just wasn't going so well as it has been, maybe there's more fishermen moving into the area, it's just getting much more competitive. There's not the same money as it used to be, you know, the fish it's getting harder to find fish. Now the fish population is dropping, maybe they're just tired of smelling like fish. Maybe they're just tired

of working with fish every day. Maybe things aren't so well at home with the wife. Maybe they're just looking for an excuse to start over somewhere else. Maybe they just want to be a part of something big do you see? We're going to come up with some sort of psychological reason to explain what Mark presents to us as explainable in only one way: the sovereign magnetism of this man, Jesus Christ. That his call upon them, so speaks to their hearts so compels them in their soul that they follow.

Now this sovereign magnetism of Jesus upon the disciples, as illustrated here, really is the bottom line for all of our obedience and all of our loyalty to our Lord. You know, you can reflect deeply upon all the reasons why you choose to obey the Lord. You can reflect upon all the reasons why you open your Bible and seek the Lord in the scriptures. You can reflect upon the reasons why you go to Him in prayer, you can reflect upon the reasons why you choose to obey. And if you're able to peel back all of those reasons and get down to the very bottom, underlying most essential, most foundational reason--if that reason is anything other than--There's just something about that name--then your reasons are deficient.

If your reasons have anything to do with fear, that God might be angry with me if I don't read my Bible. Or fear that God might not bless me if I don't pray, or concern over what your Christian friends might think of you, or a desire that God would bless you, and so you'll do this for him. If any of those reasons are part, or your most basic, fundamental reason for any way in which you seek the Lord than that is deficient. Because the only root, core reason that we have is the same reason the disciples follow Jesus, and that is his call upon your life.

There's something--this man, he called to me, and I had to follow him. He's in the scriptures, I have to seek him there. He communes with me in prayer, I have to commune with Him. That is a deep reason that all of us do well to dig down into our soul, and see--is that why I seek the Lord? Is that at the bottom of it all, is there just really something about him that compels me to know Him, that compels me to seek Him and if not, then I need his call upon my life.

Follow me.

So, he goes on a little farther, he calls James and son of Zebedee, and John's brother who in their boats, mending the nets, and they leave, and they leave Zebedee. Now Zebedee is interesting character to me, because this is the only instance in all scripture in which Zebedee is ever found. The name shows up in a number of other occasions. But just in reference to him being the father of James and John, this is the only place that Zebedee actually appears in the Scripture. And so the only time the man shows up in Scripture, he's being left--high and dry by his two sons. So, I've always kind of wondered about this fella. How did he feel? How did he feel about Jesus? Was he sort of irritated that Jesus would come and give his boys reason to leave work? You know, or was he frustrated at his sons? You know, you guys are always leaving when the work gets hard. What did--you always leave me high and dry? Can't just stay till we're done? What do you think you do when you can't leave all these fish to collect?

Or was he, perhaps envious? Did he wish that Jesus had called him? Was he resentful for Jesus placing this call upon their luck. You know, later on and all the gospels were going to meet his wife. A woman by the name of Salome, who follows Jesus. Remember, she's going to ask the foolish question: you know, Can my boys sit on your writing on your left?

But then also, she's going to be found somewhere else, she's going to be found at the cross, weeping and consoling Mary, the mother of Jesus.

So, why was it that James and John's mother followed Jesus, but we're not told that their father did? Just something to think about. Maybe he resented Jesus, for taking his sons away. Maybe hope that Jesus would call him to. Maybe he was overjoyed. Maybe he was thrilled that his boys would be called by the master. And maybe he just stayed home to support the wife, and the two sons that went to follow the Master. We don't know.

But here's Zebedee, left, high and dry with the hired servants in the boat. Now when I read that hired servants are left in the boat, I couldn't help but think of John chapter 10, verse 12, where Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep, the hirelings, they flee when the danger comes. But the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." I couldn't help it thinking, the hired servants stayed in the boat, the ones whom Jesus called, left the boat to follow him.

So, immediately called him and they left their father's Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and they followed him, their life will radically be altered forever from this point on. So, we can't help but see here, that Mark is showing us that the kingdom of God is a creation of God and God alone. The kingdom of God is solely God's creation. So, the response of that is these disciples--we should not interpret the response of the disciples as some sort of insightfulness on their part, some sort of intuitiveness on their part, some sort of realizing, hey, this guy's going somewhere! I'm going to follow him.

Instead, the glory of this call and the glory of their obedience is all Jesus. It's all him. It's all his Person. It's all His call upon their life. Because you know, Jesus places the call upon them, he says, you follow me, nowhere in the gospels--search the Gospels, and you will not find one instance of Jesus telling a group of people to follow him. Every call to follow him was to an individual. You follow me, you follow me, you follow me?

Oh, Jesus speaks to groups, he preaches to groups and he tells groups, you know—come, come unto me, all ye who are weak and heavy laden, and I will give you rest, come to me and take my yoke upon you. But to those on whom he places a call, he places that call on individuals, because he is building his kingdom. This is his work. Jesus is not hanging out a sign collecting volunteers--all who want to come and be a part of this kingdom, come and meet me here down by the shore of the Sea of Galilee tomorrow afternoon at four. He's not issuing a blanket call for a few good men.

Nor is he, as he uses this analogy of fishing for men, nor is he going to say something as foolish as lower assigned down in the water, say all the fish that want to come into my net, just swim into the net here.

Instead, even the analogy that Jesus uses, the analogy of fishing for men, is all about Jesus, doing the creating. Jesus doing the calling. Being a disciple of Jesus is a gift. It's not an accomplishment. It's his choosing. It's his gift.

So, he places this calling upon Simon and Andrew, James and John, and they are so compelled that they must follow. And as they follow, Jesus' called upon them is leave everything. Leave your families, leave your business, leave your source of income, leave your friends. Follow me.

So, notice just how drastically polar opposite that is, from oftentimes how we present the call to follow Jesus today in the modern evangelical church. Jesus' called upon these men was follow me, your following of me will have a drastic effect on your income. Your following of me is going to make a huge dent in your savings. Your following of me will cause strife between you and your family. It's going to create awkward situations between you and your loved ones. Follow me anyway.

And oftentimes we present this call of Jesus is really just the opposite of that, don't we? Follow Jesus and he'll fix your marriage. Follow Jesus and, and he'll fix your friendships and your love ones, follow Jesus and He will make your business succeed. He will make you successful in life.

Now I know that those things sort of ring in our ears is completely untrue. But the point is, isn't that often repeated today, in different forms in different fashions? Follow Jesus and he'll give you this, follow Jesus and you'll get that, follow Jesus in this workout. Instead, Jesus says, follow me. And you'll lose your income. Follow me. And you're going to be put in a very awkward situation with your family. Follow me nonetheless.

It's just like CS Lewis wrote, when he--CS Lewis, who of course, became a convert to Christ late in life, as an adult--and he writes this about the calling of Jesus, he says--This man, Jesus, were only given three options of who Jesus could really be. Jesus is either a man who is the equivalent of someone with some sort of mental instability, as Lewis says, on the level of thinking is that he's a poached egg. Or he is a man possessed by a demon. Or he's exactly who he says he is. Those are the only options. Lewis said that he did not leave open to us to option that Jesus might just be this wise, religious teacher. Lewis says Jesus didn't leave that option open to us because he didn't intend to.

Jesus didn't leave us the option of thinking of him as just some sort of wise religious teacher among others. Either Jesus is a raving lunatic, or he's possessed of a demon. Or he is the man whose call upon these men's life is irresistible and compelling to the point that they leave their nets. They leave their families and they see him as the treasure, as the Pearl of Great Price.

That's what the disciples sees. They see Jesus as the Pearl of Great Price, willing to leave whatever he may ask them to leave. Willing to follow Him, because He is the pearl. The Pearl wasn't the fishing boat, or the fishing business or the nets, or even the catch of the day. The Pearl of Great Price was this man who just called me to follow him. That's how the disciple sees Jesus, the true disciple is not one who just sits in the pew, maybe volunteers from now, now and again. But the true disciple is the one who sees God's called upon their life as a radical call to change everything. A radical call to put everything in our life on the altar. To say, Lord, if you wish this of me, it's yours. Lord, if you ask that of me, it's yours. Because you are my treasure. There is none that I have in heaven or on earth besides you.

That is the true disciple, as presented to us by Mark here in this gospel. Now, Jesus is not going to ask everyone to leave their families and to leave their homes. He's going to cast these demons known as Legion, out of the man and in the region of the capitalists, and that man is going to want to follow Jesus and Jesus is going to tell him, "No, you stay here." But nonetheless, the true disciple of Jesus is one who sees him as the great treasure and is willing to say, whatever in my life that you ask me as yours. Your sovereign rule knows no limit in my heart. You are the king and your kingdom is my heart. Your kingdom is my life. And I lay it all at your feet.