

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany – February 6, 2022

“... from now on you will be catching men.” (Luke 5:10)

A major question almost everyone asks is, “What should I do with my life?”

Perhaps Christians should not ask ourselves that question. The correct question is not, “What do I want to do with me?” but rather, “What God am I worshipping, and how is that God having its way with me?”

One of the most countercultural texts in the Bible is Psalm 100:3, “It is God who made us and we are his.” None of us is self-made, no one is forced to “make” your own self. What a relief to know God likes to make things; you don’t have to make yourself! In baptism God simply tells you who you are. Instead of spending your whole life trying to figure out what to be when you grow up, God tells you what you are meant to be and gives you the life you were created to live.

Not being self-made implies we are God’s property to be used as God pleases. We believe that God not only loves us but also calls us. In the Bible “calling” or “vocation” is discipleship rather than a career or employment. We are called to eternal life (1 Tim 6:12), fellowship with Christ (1 Cor 1:9), out of darkness into light (1 Pet 2:9) and into right relationship with God (Rom 8:30), but not to a career. Paul was a tentmaker (Acts 18:3), but he was not “called” to be a tentmaker. Tentmaking puts bread on the table. Paul was called to be an apostle; his vocation from God was to spread the good news.

Vocation does not come from your own personal needs, desires, or wants. It is not something waiting to be found by digging around in your ego. Vocation is what God wants from you! The talents God gives at birth are nothing compared to the gift of vocation. Simply look at Jesus’s mediocre, untalented, dull, even incompetent disciples to see that innate talent and inner yearning have less to do with vocation than God calling us and transforming our lives.

Jesus says, “Don’t ever forget: discipleship was my idea, not yours. You didn’t search for something fulfilling to do with your life and then choose me. I chose you. Why did I choose you? So that you could have a happier, more fulfilling life? Forget that! I chose you to go and bear fruit for me.”

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