

Answering God's Call

Former heavyweight boxing champ George Foreman said he named all five of his sons and two of his five girls some form of "George" so that when he called out "George!" someone would show up! Good plan- though I'm sure it got somewhat confusing at times.

The Old Testament has some interesting and informative accounts of various individual's responses to God *calling* them....

- Adam, after his sin, hid himself when God called to him, Genesis 3:9-10;
- Contrastingly, when God called to Moses from the burning bush, Moses responded simply, "*Here I am*," Exodus 3:4;
- When God called to the young boy Samuel in the still quietness of the night, he responded (as advised by the much older and wiser Eli), "*Speak, Lord, for Thy servant is listening*," 1Samuel 3:10; and,
- Isaiah, after being cleansed from sin (cf. Isaiah 6:5-7), heard the Lord say, "*Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?*" responded, "*Here am I. Send me!*" Isaiah 6:8.

I don't know if you've ever thought of it before or not, but there is no record of any of *the Twelve* disciples whom Jesus called refusing to answer favorably, drop whatever they were doing, and follow Him, cf. Matthew 9:9; 10:2-4ff; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:27-28; 6:12-16ff.

Before we continue, please understand that God no longer speaks to us audibly or individually today as He did in these examples. The reason for this is simple: God now speaks to us through His Son, Jesus Christ, and His gospel. Consider two passages in these regards. Hebrews 1:1-2, "*God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, **in these last days has spoken to us in His Son**, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom He also made the world.*" And, 2Thessalonians 2:13-14, "*But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. And it was for this **He called you through our gospel**, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" So "Yes," we are all "*called*" by God, but such is accomplished through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

All of this begs the question (perhaps somewhat obviously by now), "How are you responding to God's call?"

- When He calls you into account for your sin and to repentance, do you refuse to answer and seek to *hide yourself* from Him, as did Adam? You can't *hide* from God. Instead of trying to do so, you should *confess* our sins, and *repent* of them. "*Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead,*" Acts 17:30-31.
- When He calls you to become His servant to go and save, serve, and lead others to the *promised land* of heaven, do you respond, as did Moses, "*Here I am.*"? Understand your purpose. "*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His*

marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy,”
1Peter 2:9-10.

- When He calls to you regarding the course and dedication of your life to His purposes, do you respond, as did Samuel, *“Speak, Lord, for Thy servant is listening.”?* You must not only *listen*, but also *follow* Jesus in obedience. *“And why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? Everyone who comes to Me, and hears My words, and acts upon them, I will show whom he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation upon the rock; and when a flood arose, the river burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built,”* Luke 6:46-48.
- When He calls you to the difficult task of condemning sin and proclaiming His salvation to the lost, do you respond, as did Isaiah, *“Here I am. Send Me!”?* You can’t be a “closet Christian.” *“Beloved, while I was making every effort to write to you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints,”* Jude 4; and, *“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven,”* Matthew 5:16.

God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit is calling you to salvation and service in the Kingdom. How are you are responding to Their call?

(Philip C. Strong; Southport Church of Christ; 7202 Madison Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46227; online at southportcofc.org; email to mrpcstrong@hotmail.com)