



How Often Does God Call?¹

Ted Ward

A. Call: seems old fashioned, too mystical, too remote. Sometimes, missionary recruitment is more like a marketing campaign: short term, exploratory, experimental—“see if you like it”.

B. Examples of call in Bible:

Abraham—to a place he did not know

Moses—to a task he did not want

Elijah—to a life beyond his understanding “Here I am send me.”

Jonah—to a mission he feared “To Nineveh that great city”

12 disciples—to follow, in obedience

Paul—to put his religious zeal into the service of Christ

Many others—Hannah, Samuel, David . . .

C. How often? What sorts of calls?

Peter—not just once

1. The call to follow (Luke 5:11) —costs: giving space to Jesus, broken nets, sinking boats.
2. The call to affirm, to think for yourself. Matt. 16:13 “Who do you say that I am?”
3. The call to restoration, reassurance, John 21:15 “Do you love me . . . feed my sheep.”
4. The call to make disciples. Matt 28: 16-20
5. The call to open up to God. Acts 10:9 ff “Take and eat.”
6. The call to completely let go. Acts 10:19ff

D. How do I know if it is God calling?

1. Are you listening? To those who listen God gives responsive hearts.
2. Are you walking close to Christ? Satan’s deceptions are at hand: pride, envy, greed, control.
3. Are you willing to follow Christ? Submission of my appetites, desires, and efforts.

Phil 1: 21 “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

¹ Ted Ward. How Often Does God Call? Chapel Address: Columbia International University, Feb. 5, 1997