



Lesson 7: The God Who Calls You

1. At the close of episode 7, John the Baptist has some stern words for Nicodemus.

Scan the QR on the right to watch a video.



Can you think of a time when you believed something, and then realized you were totally wrong?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

Can you share more?

2. That experience of “waking up” to a new truth was something Simon Peter could definitely relate to. Moments before his encounter with Jesus, Simon had been sitting in his empty boat, shouting at God for abandoning him.

Yet now, with Jesus in his boat and a boat full of fish, Simon falls at Jesus’ feet, awakened to not just his unworthiness and lack of faith, but of the holiness of the One standing before him.

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Imagine for a moment that you are Peter in the boat. What would you be feeling?

- ☐ Joy
- ☐ Fear
- ☐ Shame

- ☐ Gratitude
 - ☐ Unworthiness
 - ☐ Awe
 - ☐ Self-consciousness
 - ☐ Other:
-

3. One commentator wrote, anyone inventing this story would have just had Simon kneeling in gratefulness, but this encounter with Jesus was more than that. In the presence of divinity there is a painful “psychological truthfulness of the sense of sin.” “The soul awakened only to conviction of sin is terrified. The soul that has found God is conscious of utter unworthiness, but fear is lost in love.” 1 John 4:18¹

As Peter realized that he stood in the presence of divinity, he was overwhelmed. Read what the 19th century author, Ellen White, had to say about this encounter:

“

‘The presence of divinity revealed his own unholiness. Love for his Master, shame for his own unbelief, gratitude for the condescension of Christ, above all, the sense of his uncleanness in the presence of infinite purity, overwhelmed him.. Peter fell at the Saviour’s feet, exclaiming, “Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”

...So when Isaiah beheld the glory of the Lord, he exclaimed, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” Isaiah 6:5. Humanity, with its weakness and sin, was brought in contrast with the perfection of divinity, and he felt altogether deficient and unholy...

Peter exclaimed, “Depart from me; for I am a sinful man;” yet he clung to the feet of Jesus, feeling that he could not be parted from Him. The Saviour answered, “Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.” If was after Isaiah had beheld the holiness of God and his own unworthiness that

he was entrusted with the divine message. It was after Peter had been led to self-renunciation and dependance upon divine power that he received the call to his work for Christ.”²

— ELLEN WHITE. DESIRE OF AGES, P 246.

4. Once we encounter Christ, we realize our own brokenness. Yet despite our brokenness, we also experience His power to make us whole, and a new chapter begins in our life! While you may not “feel” anything, all who encounter Christ are called into a new beginning.

Check out what this same Peter wrote later on in His life:

“*But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*”

1 PETER 2:9, NKJV.

In this verse, what is God calling us out from, and what is He calling us into?

“*There’s some kind of elevated status here, of royalty and priesthood, something big and lofty and amazing to live up to and live into: a royal priesthood, a holy nation. That word “holy” means distinct, different, completely other-than whatever is the norm.... And then Peter says this: “That you may proclaim the praises of Him who”—and here’s the word I want you to notice—“who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” The word “called” here is the word kaleo in the Greek. The word literally means to call or to name, **to call out of one identity into another identity, a shift from one name to another.**”³*

—TY GIBSON, “YOU ARE CALLED” (SERMON).

5. You may have heard the statement, “God does not call the qualified, He qualifies the called.” Is that true? Does it mean we have to throw our entire past out the window?

I like what David Asscherick has to say about that.

“**God calls the qualified AND qualifies the called. It's not either or, it's both. The most important thing is that we are humble and teachable. We don't want to be so full of ourselves that there's no room for God to work.**”⁴

—DAVID ASSCHERICK, “THE CALL BY THE SEA” (DA WITH DA VIDEO SERIES).

6. The Apostle Paul is another great example of someone who was called into a new identity. He was transformed from being Saul, the learned Pharisee who specialized in persecuting Christians, to becoming Paul, the devoted follower of Christ and preacher of the Good News of Jesus. Through his writings, Paul draws upon his knowledge of the scriptures and of Greco-Roman culture and literature of the day to reach out to both Jews and Gentiles with the truth about Jesus (see Acts 17:28, Titus 1:12).

Let's face it, no one is 100% 'qualified' to be called by Christ. But through the grace of Christ, Paul was given an updated identity that transcended his questionable past!

7. This is why Paul had some stern words for the Christians in Galatia. They had been called in grace, but were becoming 'bewitched' by a false gospel.

“*I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called (kaleo) you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel...*”

GALATIANS 1:6, NKJV.

If you read through the book of Galatians, you'll see that, rather than building the church on the concept of God's grace, the church of Galatia was starting to decide who could be part of it based on merit.

“The church was becoming a meritocracy like the world, and that meritocracy was ruling some out and incorporating others according to their worthiness. And so **the grace into which we were called was replaced with a system of earning God’s favor.** That’s bad news that God’s favor is to be earned. **There is one simple and profound reason why you can never earn God’s favor: because you already have it.** You can’t get God to love you any more than He already does because God already loves you with the totality of His love. There’s nothing you can do to make God love you less than He does, because the moment we find ourselves in guilt and shame and sin, the grace of God overwhelms our sin and we stand before God innocent.”⁵

—TY GIBSON, “YOU ARE CALLED” (SERMON).

8. Whatever our background, whether good or bad, **God still calls us by His grace and calls us to call others to that same grace.**

“There is no limit to the usefulness of one who, by putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God.”⁶

—ELLEN WHITE, DESIRE OF AGES, P. 246.

What are your thoughts after reading a statement like that?

- ☐ That’s a little intimidating. I feel so limited in what I can do.
- ☐ That’s exciting! I can’t wait to see what God can do through me!
- ☐ Other:

9. When Jesus called Simon to be a fisher of men, Simon was likely a little bewildered at what that meant. Yet as unworthy as he felt, Simon most certainly sensed that if the God of creation could call things into being, He could call Simon to whatever He desired Simon to be.

“*For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood firm.*”

PSALM 33:9, NASB.

“*...God, who gives life to the dead and calls (kaleo) those things which do not exist as though they did;*”

ROMANS 4:17, NKJV.

If you read the context of Romans 4, it's referring to when God called Abraham “The Father of Many Nations” before he had a single heir—and when his wife was already past childbearing age! And it was by faith that this childless patriarch accepted that title.

“*God calls those things which do not exist as though they did exist. It seems strange—something's either true or it's not true—but in the gospel, God proclaims things about us that are true in Christ. We're called innocent even though we're guilty, we are called righteous even though we're sinful. How can God say something's true that's not? It is because **there is power in the grace of God to make true that which at any current moment is not true. The gospel is a kind of prophetic word that foretells an identity that can become a reality.***”⁷

—TY GIBSON, “YOU ARE CALLED” (SERMON).

Scan the code on the right to watch a video.



10. People who are the closest to us can often see things about us that we don't see in ourselves. And all the more with God, who created us, formed us, and designed us! He knows exactly who He intended us to be. God sees what no one else sees, and this enables Him to speak our potential into a reality.

“*God’s desire for your life and mine is that we be restored to how we were created and intended to be—filled with happiness, joy, holiness, and flourishing. And we get that not by being apart from Jesus—it’s by being with Jesus. To go with Jesus, particularly when we engage with Him in his work in the upbuilding of the kingdom, is the only way to be changed from being a sinful human into the “best version” of yourself.*” ⁸

—ADAPTED FROM DAVID ASSCHERICK, “THE CALL BY THE SEA” (DA WITH DA VIDEO SERIES).

11. When God calls us, He wants us to:

- Withdraw from the outside world and only study the Bible.
- Go between the ‘mountain and the multitude’—to spend time with God but also with people and to share what we have learned with them. I desire to enter into a covenant with Him.

Like Simon Peter, Jesus first calls us to follow Him. He invites us to learn from Him and labor alongside Him as a ‘fisher of men.’

“*And he who seeks to give light to others will himself be blessed. “There shall be showers of blessing.” “He that watereth shall be watered also himself.” Proverbs 11:25. God could have reached His object in saving sinners without our aid; but in order for us to develop a character like Christ’s, we must share in His work. In order to enter into His joy,—the joy of seeing souls redeemed by His sacrifice,—we must participate in His labors for their redemption.*” ⁹

—ELLEN WHITE, DESIRE OF AGES, P. 142.

12. When we realize our need for God, God calls us by His grace out of darkness.

1. Into the light of His truth.
2. Into a new identity that encompasses all the joy and fulfillment He created us to have, and
3. Into becoming “fishers of men”!

How would you like to respond?

- ☐ I believe Jesus has called me into the light of His truth, in the Bible.
- ☐ I desire to continue studying the Bible through this series.
- ☐ I believe that Jesus wants me to experience a new identity in Him.
- ☐ I accept that new identity in Him and want to experience His new life of joy and fulfillment.
- ☐ I believe that Jesus has called me to be a “fisher of men.”
- ☐ I would like to pray with someone about my decisions. Scan here to connect to www.hopetv.org/shows/lets-pray.
- ☐ I still have questions about what I’ve learned today. Scan here to connect to www.hopetv.org/biblehelpdesk.



“Every one of us is completely undeserving of grace and forgiveness and love. And yet it is lavished upon us by God in Christ, and things begin to happen inside of us we begin to experience the effects of God’s grace... It is the fact that we are undeserving of His grace that most highly recommends us to God’s grace. He says you are exactly the kind of people upon whom I’m going to lavish my love!” ¹⁰

—TY GIBSON, “YOU ARE CALLED” (SERMON).

[1] *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges* on Luke 5:8.

[2] Ellen White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 246

[3] Ty Gibson, “You Are Called” (sermon). <https://youtu.be/R9akYQoSPI8?t=231>

[4] David Asscherick, “Chapter 25, DA with DA: The Call By the Sea” (video post). <https://youtu.be/XYXYX2FvmuQ?t=3157>

[5] Ty Gibson, “You Are Called” (sermon). <https://youtu.be/R9akYQoSPI8?t=1258>

[6] Ellen White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 246

[7] Ty Gibson, “You Are Called” (sermon). <https://youtu.be/R9akYQoSPI8?t=471>

[8] Adapted from David Asscherick, “Chapter 25, DA with DA: The Call By the Sea” (video post). <https://youtu.be/XYXYX2FvmuQ?t=2752>

[9] Ellen White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 142

[10] Ty Gibson, “You Are Called” (sermon). <https://youtu.be/R9akYQoSPI8?t=1107>