



# Follow the Cloud

September 7/10 – Valley Creek Church-Pastor John Stickl

## *Lesson #5 Scripture Verses from John's Outline*

“God is not just for you; He is with you”

Key Verse: Hebrews 4:16

2 Corinthians 6:18

Exodus 33:15 - 3:11-12

Psalms 16:11

Mark 3:13-15

Psalms - 27:4

John 6:63 - 10:4

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### Mark 3:13-15 (NLT)

Jesus Chooses the Twelve Apostles-<sup>13</sup> Afterward Jesus went up on a mountain and **called out** the ones he wanted to go with him. And **they came to him**. <sup>14</sup> **Then** he **appointed** twelve of them and **called them his apostles**. They were to accompany him, and **he would send them out to preach**, <sup>15</sup> **giving them authority** to cast out demons.

## Commentary Notes:

In addition to the accounts of the calling of specific disciples, There is an important point to be noted in [Mark 3:13-14](#), namely, that the Twelve constitute a special group within the community of disciples. **They are called to a distinctive form of service.** **(What is your calling and service to God?)**

The qualifications listed for Simon, James, John, and Judas in [Mark 3:16-19](#) are relevant here. One cannot help but wonder if there is both a certain irony and a certain promise in the name. Simon, as fickle and unstable as he will prove to be, is named The Rock, and one day he will live up to that name. Like him, our service to God in our workplaces, just as elsewhere in our lives, **will not be** a matter of perfection, **but rather one of failure and growth**. This is a helpful thought at times when we feel we have failed.

Just as Simon is given a new name, so too are the sons of Zebedee, referred to as the “Sons of Thunder” ([Mark 3:17](#)). It is a quirky nickname, and seems humorous, but it also quite likely picks up on the character or personality of these two men. It is an interesting point that personality and personality types are not effaced by inclusion in the kingdom. Our personalities continue to be part of our identity in the kingdom.

The issue of personality makes a significant contribution to our understanding of applying the Christian faith to our work. Most of us would probably say that our experiences of work, both good and bad, have been greatly affected by the personalities of those around us.

Often the very character qualities that make someone an inspiring and energizing colleague can make that person a difficult one. *A motivated and excited worker might be easily distracted by new projects or might be prone to quickly formed (and quickly expressed) opinions. Our own personality plays a huge role too. We may find others easy to work with or difficult, based as much on our personalities as theirs. Likewise, others may find us easy or difficult to work with.*

Personality gives us both strengths and weaknesses. To a certain degree, following Christ means allowing him to curb the excesses of our personality. Trying to be something we are not, in the sense of trying to fit a stereotype of what a Christian in the workplace ought to be like, can be highly problematic. Jesus, in any case, chose people with a variety of personalities as his friends and workers.

At such times, our responsibility as Christians is to be prepared to challenge one another in love, to hold one another to account as to whether we are truly operating according to the standards of the kingdom.

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Read the next phrase in verse 13, *“And He went up on the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself **wanted.**”* Jesus chooses His twelve the next morning **after a night of prayer.** “Summoned” has the feel of “separating from others, to come toward Christ.” The summons is calling them to be Christ’s, to belong to Him alone. **This was not a call for volunteers—not calling for a show of hands.** This is not—if anybody would like to sign up for apostleship, there will be a list at a table on the patio today.

**Jesus determines the call.** His summons overrides their wills. This unique relationship is not determined by their preferences but rather by His choosing. Discipleship was His choice, His will, the Lord’s sovereign purpose. Jesus chose them all in perfect submission to His Father’s will after spending all night in prayer with Him.

**The verb wanted is strong.** *He tells us Jesus wished to have these men, He willed to have this team, He desired each one. He was preferring these men, and **He had them continually in mind.** You’ve done this in ministry—I know I have. I see a young man, I am hoping he remains faithful, serves, grows, because I see incredible giftedness and future ability in Him—and I long to see Him trained, equipped and launched in ministry. So, like Christ, I have them in mind, and I desire great things for them.*

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*“And they came to Him.”* Jesus chose them, and they radically followed Him. Their response to Christ choosing them is to definitively **leave the uncommitted crowd and take their stand with Christ now as His followers.**

God calls all believers in a similar way. First, He calls you to salvation, apart from which no other call matters. Then He calls you progressively to more specific and expanding service for His glory.

Discipleship under Jesus is not what the disciples can do for Christ, but what Christ can “make” of the disciples. Our Lord did not choose us on the basis of what we are, but what He can make of us. Our Lord did not choose us on the basis of our merit, but on the basis of what we would become. **Our Lord is in the business of taking a nobody then, by His grace and transforming power, and making us into a somebody**

**1 Grow in their depth of God’s Word.** To know God’s, you will know God’s Word—know theology, know how to answer the controversial issues of our day.

**2 Grow in humility,** because pride is our biggest enemy

**3 Grow in faith** and trust of God under any circumstance

**4 Grow in passionate commitment** to Christ

*You see, you can impress people at a distance, but you can only impact them up close. Apart from the power of the Gospel and the Word of God, you impact people in direct proportion to your personal involvement with them. Many of us are far too removed from fellow Christians—even the lost we know, to really impact them for Christ. God says it is required of a steward that He be found not successful, well-known, funny, or a friend—but faithful.*

**To preach the good news of Christ—the message**

In verse 14, *“and that He could send them out to preach.”* First, they know Christ, then they preach Christ. First, they fellowship with Christ, then they talk about Christ to others. Intimacy precedes instruction. **Preaching is to be making a public proclamation.**

**Exodus 3:11-12 (NLT)**

<sup>11</sup> But Moses protested to God, “**Who am I** to appear before Pharaoh? **Who am I** to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?”

<sup>12</sup> God answered, “**I will be with you**. And this is your sign that **I am the one who has sent you**:

**When** you have brought the people out of Egypt, **you will worship God** at this very mountain.

**Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary**

3:11-15 Formerly Moses thought himself able to deliver Israel and set himself to the work too hastily. Now, when the fittest person on earth for it, he knows his own weakness. This was the effect of more knowledge of God and of himself.

Formerly, self-confidence mingled with strong faith and great zeal, now sinful distrust of God crept in under the garb of humility.

But all objections are answered in, Certainly I will be with thee. That is enough. Two names God would now be known by. A name that denotes what he is in himself, I AM THAT I AM. This explains his name Jehovah, and signifies, that he is self-existent: he has his being of himself. That he is eternal and unchangeable, and always the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever. That he is faithful and true to all his promises, unchangeable in his word as well as in his nature; let Israel know this, I AM hath sent me unto you. I am, and there is none else besides me. All else have their being from God and are wholly dependent upon him.

### Numbers 9:22-23 (NLT)

<sup>22</sup> Whether the cloud stayed above the Tabernacle for two days, a month, or a year, the **people** of Israel **stayed in camp and did not move on**.

But **as soon as it lifted, they broke camp and moved on**.

<sup>23</sup> So they **camped or traveled at the LORD's command**, and they **did whatever the LORD told them** through Moses.

### Hebrews 4:16 (NLT)

<sup>16</sup> So let us **come boldly** to the **throne** of our gracious God. There **we will receive** his **mercy**, and **we will find grace to help us** when we need it most.

### 2 Corinthians 6:18 (NLT)

<sup>18</sup> And **I will be** your Father, and **you will be** my sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty.”

### Psalms 16:11 (NLT)

<sup>11</sup> **You will show me the way** of life, **granting me the joy** of your presence **and the pleasures of living with you forever**.

### Psalms 27:4 (NLT)

<sup>4</sup> The **one thing** I ask of the LORD— **the thing** I seek most—is to **live in the house** of the LORD **all the days of my life**,

**delighting in** the LORD's perfections **and meditating** in his Temple.

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**John 6:63 (NLT)**

<sup>63</sup> The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing.

**And** the very words I have spoken to you **are** spirit and life.

**John 10:4 (NLT)**

<sup>4</sup> **After** he has gathered his own flock,

he walks ahead of them,

and they follow him

because they know his voice.

**John Stickl “Light Bulb” notes from his video notes:**  
**Repetition – Faith cometh by hearing AND hearing the**  
**Word of God**

- **You are as close to God as you want to be!**
- Jesus has already removed all distance and all separation between us and God.
- Salvation is God carrying us to Himself.
- Every next step takes us into His heart.
- Following the cloud is never about getting somewhere, it is about experiencing our God.
- Life is more about who you are with than what you are DOING.
- If Jesus is our Lord, we can hear His voice.
- **How to hear His voice:**
  - Slow Down – Quiet our noisy lives
  - Engage in the Scriptures-His voice will always align with Scripture
  - Seek Him-Go out of your way to create space for Him
  - Pursue Godly Relationships-Faith is contagious
  - Seek Confirmation- Does it align with Scripture?
- He will give us assignments bigger than ourselves to expose the insecurities we didn't even realize we had.
- Freedom is realizing that God is with us.

## Lesson #5 – Review Questions

1. In John Stickl video notes typed in this lesson; what 3 things were like “light bulbs” for you? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
2. In Mark 3:13-15 Answer the following:
  - a. Who was chosen? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. What did Jesus “do” prior His choosing the 12 disciples? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. What was Jesus going to do with the disciples after He appointed them as such? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. What did He give them in verse 15? \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. What does He give us? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you know what God wants of you in this verse (as servants and daughters and it is not “works” or “performance related”)? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
4. What does God say twice in Exodus 3:11? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What does God say He will do in Exodus 3:12? \_\_\_\_\_
6. In Numbers 9:22-23 what did the people do? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

7. In Hebrews 4:16, what are we supposed to do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What should be our hearts desire from Psalms 27:4? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Write out John 6:63: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. In John 10:4, what 4 things are taking place?
- a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_