

Experiencing Call #1

Monday, 2/2/09 – Read Exodus 3:1-12

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: This week we begin a new study series. Throughout the Bible, God CALLED people -- invited them into relationship and partnered with them to do extraordinary things. This week we'll take a quick overview of some of the stories of God's calling people. ... We need to be a little careful with these stories, though. It's easy for us to say, "Well, I've never had an experience like that" -- and then not see how it applies to us. So, we'll try to see what each story tells us about God's CALL, even though our own experiences are very different.

We start with Moses. Pay particular attention to the verses 7, 8, and 10. Notice that God is concerned for the people's suffering and is calling Moses to deliver the people from their slavery. ... Sometimes we wonder: How can I know if something really is God's call? Here is one of the tests: Does it respond to and alleviate people's suffering? ... Have you ever felt a desire to act because someone was suffering? Describe the situation. What did you do? Did you think of your desire to act as a call from God?

Tuesday, 2/3/09 – Read Exodus 4:10-17

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Sometimes people have a nagging hunch that there is something that God may want them to do. Have you ever felt that "nagging hunch"? ... The next thing that most people inevitably feel is resistance. It's not bad, really. It's just a natural human response to things that nudge us beyond our comfortable routines. Sometimes we think that we're unworthy. Sometimes we don't think we have the ability or the time or the energy. ... Have you ever felt resistant? Have you ever felt like there was something you needed to do, maybe something God wanted you to do, and you felt resistant? ... Describe the resistance. What was it like? What did it feel like?

Wednesday, 2/4/09 – Read Isaiah 6:1-8

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Today's reading is one of the Bible's most powerful and dramatic descriptions of a human experience of God. Some people do have dramatic extraordinary experiences like this, but most of us don't. ... Now notice the little dialog in verse 8. In response to God's question, Isaiah says, "Here am I; send me." ... Sometimes we feel something wonderful and powerful and we wonder: Was that really God I experienced? ... Here is another of the tests for authentic calls from God: Does an experience seem to move us into action? ... Can you remember a time when you "felt something" and the experience seemed to move you into action? Write down what you can remember of the experience.

Thursday, 2/5/09 – Read Jeremiah 1:4-10

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Moses complained to God that he could not speak well. Jeremiah resists by saying, "I am only a boy" -- that is, I am too young. ... What reason would you give, why God should not call you? Would you say, "I am too young" or "I am too old" or "I am not smart enough" or "I am not good enough" or what would you say?

Friday, 2/6/09 – Read Matthew 9:9-13

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Jesus called Matthew the tax collector to be a disciple; then Jesus ate dinner with many tax collectors. Among Jesus' contemporaries tax collectors were hated. They were despised as traitors and as greedy crooks. They collected taxes for the Roman army of occupation, and

they dishonestly collected extra for themselves. They were thought of as “bad people.” ... Sometimes we think that God only calls the good people. Sometimes we think, “God couldn’t call me; I’m not good enough.” ... Is there something in your life that you think disqualifies you from partnering with God? ... Read again verses 12-13 and rewrite them in your own words.

Saturday, 2/7/09 – Read Acts 9:1-22

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Sometimes people have experiences that turn their lives around. Seldom are they this dramatic, but Paul’s experience was a turning-point. Many 12-step people speak of “hitting bottom,” for them a real turning-point. ... Sometimes it happens in big ways, sometimes in almost imperceptible ways. Have you ever had an experience where your life turned around or “turned a corner”? Describe it.

Sunday, 2/8/09 – Read Acts 26:1-18

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Today we read another telling of Paul’s experience. But in this telling, coming years later, Paul can see more of God’s purpose. Paul now understands that he was called to share the Good News with the non-Jewish world. He was called to be an apostle to the Gentiles. ... Sometimes it takes time before God’s purposes become really clear to us. Sometimes it takes a long time. Have you ever had an experience like that -- where you became clear about God’s purpose for you slowly over time? Write down something about how the gradual realization happened for you.

My Faith Journal, February 1, 2009
Experiencing Call #1
Written on the Heart

What do I hear God saying to me today?

What action do I intend to take this week?

Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.