



CHRIST CENTRED • SPIRIT FILLED • BIBLE BASED

## BELLVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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# Called without knowing the destination

**Genesis 12:1-9**

**Matthew 9:9-13**

**~ Brent Russell ~**

- If someone walked up to you...a **stranger**
- And said "**Come with**" me what would you do
- A simple request...
- More than likely you'd come up with a complex question
  - **Where to?**
  - **How far?**
  - **Now?**
  - **Why?**
  - **Me?**
- We want all the **details**
- If you want to buy a car **do you believe the salesman** when he says that this one is the best
- **Nope we want to know all the details**
  - speed
  - engine size
  - performance

- **We love to know all the answers before we act**
- **We want to make sure we are making the right decision**
- **If we are looking for a job we want to know all the details**
  - Who is my boss
  - Who do I work with
  - What's the salary
  - What's the leave package like

***Genesis 12:1-9***

***Matthew 9:9-13***

- **We have two men who are called by God**
- One called by the **father in the OT**
- The other called by **Jesus in the NT**
- **Abram**
  - Becomes Abraham - father of a multitude
  - One of the great Patriarchs of the Jewish people
  - All who believe are called sons of Abraham in Galatians 3
- **And we have Matthew**
  - A tax collector - sinner
  - becomes one of the 12 disciples
  - Never mentioned again
- Both men are called by God in quite similar yet different circumstances

## **Destination : Unknown**

- **"Follow me"** said Jesus to Matthew
- **"Go to the land that I will show you"** says God to Abram
- Both men are **told virtually nothing** about where they are going to
- Matthew is told to follow - **leave everything you have and come**
- Abram is told to go to a land that God will show him - **no map, no compass, no directions**
  
- **The information given is on a strictly need to know basis**
- Like **soldiers** being sent on some secret mission information is given as and when it is needed
  
- It is not recorded that either of the two men questioned anything about this call
- **Simple obedience - Matthew left everything as it was and followed Jesus**
- **Abram left his father, his people and his land to travel hundreds of kilometers on foot to the land God would give him**
- Many people don't react quite the same way that these men do
- **People often begin the big questioning : how, what, when, where, why?**
  
- When God says to you "come follow me"
- Are you stepping out in faith or are waiting?
  
- Are we waiting to follow God only when we understand everything about Him
  
- **I want to follow but I don't understand this or that**
- **I would love to but first I want to know where you want me**

- **I want to know all the details**
- If we want to follow God we need to move with the information we have
- **Not all** the information - but **move with what we have**
- **It's a bit like a crossword** - you don't instantly know all the answers
- You may have 3 or four of them, then when you see the clues for other words and you have a couple of letters then you find the answer
- You have to move with the info you have got
- You need to move as far as you can and then wait for the next bit of info
- If you are going to wait for all the information you may wait a long time
- **This can apply to every area of your life**
- Jobs, relationships, money matters, serving in the church
- **We want Jesus to give us all the answers**
- But he gives us enough to **make the first move**
- **Imagine you are in a car driving along the freeway**
- And as you drive you see a sign - simply "Follow me"
- It does not tell you **the direction**
- It does not tell you **how far**
- It does not tell you **what the road is like**
- It just says "**follow me**"
- The trouble is too many are **waiting for the second sign**
- **We want more**
- We want all the info before we take the path
- So we begin to **scour the scriptures**

- And even there we find in 119 **"Your word is a lamp unto your feet"**
- A lamp does not shine very far up the path
- **It shows you just the next step**
  
- **You need to travel the road and take the turning to see the next sign**
- **You need in faith to take the turning**
- **You can wait for the second sign - it will often never arrive**
- **It is a step by step process**
- **As we are called - "Follow me" it is a step by step walking in faith**
- **We cannot and never will know it all**
  
- In fact Jesus says in **John 16:12** I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.
- **The Holy Spirit will not give us all the answers**
- But he will **guide us** into the truth
- step by small step as we move in faith

### **Out of the comfort Zone**

- **So both Matthew and Abram see the first road sign**
- **"Follow me"** said Jesus to Matthew
- **"Go to the land that I will show you"** says God to Abram
- **But perhaps we will not recognize the road sign**
- **How do I know that this is what God is calling me into?**
- **How do you know that this is the thing that God is calling you to do, to be or to have?**
- There are **many answers** but the one that is very clear in both men's stories is this...
- They were both **forced out of their comfort zones** in a radical way

- Both men were pushed into **situations that were foreign to them**
- **Abram is told "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go"**
- This has echoes of Luke "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.
  
- This is not like sending our children off to the UK to go and work
  - There is **no phone**
  - There are **no friends**
  - This is **hostile territory**
  - **Foreign in every way**
  
- And Abram follows because he clings to the promise
- He **clings to the promise "I will bless you"**
- **"I will bless you"**
- As he moved out of his comfort zone all he held before him was "I will bless you"
- As he was moved along the path God had set out before Him
- One sign at a time
- He clung to the promise "I will bless you"
  
- **Matthew was a Jewish tax collector**
- A Jew working for the Romans
- These men were **despised by the other Jews**
- They were even permitted to lie to these tax collectors so hated where they
- And Matthew like all tax collectors had to collect a certain amount of tax
- A certain percentage to give to the Romans

- **But anything above that he kept for himself**
- **Matthew is caught up in a life of sin and rejection**
- **Rejection by those around him - Rejection by his own people**
- **And sometimes it's easier to choose devil you know than the devil you don't**
  
- **Matthew is in a comfort zone**
- **Comfortable in sin - comfortable lying cheating and being hated by those he abuses**
- **And then he is confronted by "Follow me"**
- **A chance to change - to start again**
- **A chance to take a step in the right direction**
- **"Follow me" says Jesus**
- **At some point in your life you too are going to pass by this road sign**
- **"Follow me"**
  
- **And part of you is going to want all the information you can get about it**
- **You will want to know all the details**
  
- **The road you are on is wide, straight and smooth**
- **And Jesus is going to call you to follow the path of the unknown**
- **"Follow me"**
- **Take the road, don't wait for the second sign**
- **Take the turning**
- **Matthew was not given a promise like Abraham was**
- **He did not need it**
- **Jesus himself was the promise**
- **We don't need to know all the answers**
- **We need to cling to Jesus**

- **As we step onto the road as he calls**
- **As we are stretched** out of our comfort zones
- We don't have to know all the details
- But we need to **know Jesus**
- **We can trust that he will never leave us nor forsake us**
- **We know that we are secure in Jesus as he calls - "Come, follow me"**