

“God Still Calls”

Isaiah 6:8-10

9/20/09

God still calls us into serving Him—wherever and whomever you are. How will you answer?

“Whom shall I send?” is all God asks.

God doesn’t force Isaiah into anything.

God doesn’t twist Isaiah’s arm or give Isaiah some ultimatum: “Isaiah, you either do this for me or else...”

No, God simply asks, “Whom shall I send?”

I mean, God certainly showed up and made His presence known and got Isaiah’s attention. It was a little more than some still small voice or passing thought of Isaiah’s.

But Isaiah still had to make the choice for himself: Am I going to respond to God’s call or not?

We have some folks we heard from this morning who responded. In one way or another they heard God’s call to go and serve and they said, “Send me. I will go.”

This is something to celebrate today. Celebrate the fact that God is alive and well and still calls to us to go.

Celebrate the fact that there are still folks willing to go.

Celebrate the fact that there are lives now who have been touched by their work.

Celebrate the fact that you are here this morning hearing this, because in your hearing now you have a choice: Are you going to be attentive to where God is calling you to go?

Perhaps it’s not to another country or state. Perhaps it’s not something anyone will ever highlight in worship.

But God made you for a purpose—to love Him and love others. And the best thing in life is to live into that purpose.

As we have seen this morning:

God still calls.

God speaks to us. God makes the move toward us. You see, I think, right off the bat, the problem with talking about this is we hear the accounts of others in the Bible and think that they were something different than us. We think they were special in some way that God would certainly speak to them.

Of course God would speak to Mary—she gave birth to the Messiah! Of course God would speak to Moses—he led the Israelites out of Egypt of all things! Of course God would call to Esther—she was a queen and surely a courageous person as she saved her people from death. Of course God would call Paul to preach the Gospel everywhere—he was so bold and had such faith in God as he shared the message of Jesus Christ in Athens and Rome and so many other great places in history. Yes, and God called Isaiah—look at what Isaiah wrote and spoke and did, such awesome things for God.

We think, “God called those people because look at who they are! I am not like those people.”

God calls to us and how do you respond?

Fill in the space in your sermon outline with how you respond. Maybe it's: "Why would God speak to me? It would be silly for me to think that God would call to me, just an ordinary, average, no-name person in the world."

Or: "God doesn't speak like that anymore. God obviously spoke loud and clear to those people in the Bible, but He doesn't do that anymore."

But God does still speak. God is still alive and well and full of power and grace. God can raise Jesus from the dead; He can break into your life. How?

Listen to God.

In our time of prayer, when we are quiet before Him. That is why we must take that time everyday. God speaks through His Word, the Bible—that is why we must be in It everyday.

God works through His Holy Spirit, like a fire which burns within you, showing you what is right, perhaps placing an idea in your head for how to serve Him. Sometimes, like Elijah, God's comes in the still small voice, a little nudge, but we must listen. Listening begins with a relationship with God, knowing who we are listening to.

Listen to others.

God speaks through other people, who, like I experienced, used someone else to write me a letter encouraging me to use my life for ministry. Someone might encourage you or see something in you. Don't blow it off, but take it seriously.

In John 10:3, 14 Jesus says, "*He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out...I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.*"

God commissions us.

There comes a time in your life when God will say to you "It's time to do what you were born to do." God has a specific task for you to do. Maybe it's not speaking to the nations, or building an ark, or leading people through the Red Sea, but God has something specific He wants you to do for Him.

God says to Isaiah, "*Go and say to this people...*"

God says "you *will* go and you *will* say this, not because of you but because of Me. Not because of your power but because of My power. Not because you chose this, but because I chose you."

Moses knew this. God confronts Moses within the burning bush, catching Moses off guard. And God says, in Exodus 3:10, "*So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.*"

Moses had his excuses for why he couldn't do what God called him to do. So did Isaiah at first. So do we. But God says to you and me, "Don't say, 'I am only this, or only that.' Rather, say 'I am God's servant.' Don't say, 'I only live here, or I only can go there.' Rather, say 'I am placed here and there by God.'"

You can and will do what God calls you to do, not because of you, but because of God.

God confirms His call by filling us with His power.

"Then the Lord said, 'Whom shall I send?'..."

Maybe your response to all this is like: "Okay God, You called me out and assured me of all this, but now what do I do?" God calls you to a specific task, to connect with someone, to pray for someone, to reach the community somehow, to begin a small group, to take a risk for His sake, and now you are thinking to yourself, "How in the world do I begin and how in the world am I going to be able to do any of this?"

Jesus also said to His disciples in John 14:12, "*Very truly I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these.*"

All you got to do is believe. God confronts us with His Word, He created us for His purposes, commissions us to go, comforts us with His presence, and finally gives us His power to do what He calls us to do. He will not leave you hanging after all that and not give you what you need to do the job. God wants to use you, somehow, no matter how big or small it may seem to you, no matter how equipped or unequipped you may feel, no matter how important or unimportant you may seem. And be assured, God will give you what you need to do it.

What was Isaiah's response: Send me. Isaiah knew God, heard Him, got over his own fears, believed what God was saying and went for it. He stepped out in faith and acted.

God still asks the question. How will you respond? Amen.