

MEDITATION 27

Mark 3: 13-15

¹³ Jesus went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. ¹⁴ And he appointed twelve^[a] to be with him and to be sent out to preach ¹⁵ and to have authority to cast out demons.

“Jesus went up a mountain”... Mountains represent many things, but especially a more physical journey of ascent to get nearer to God. Mountains are also places where there is solitude away from the world so one can hear God.

Where do you go to be near God?... Where do you go to get away from the noise, the distractions, the interruptions?... God is always speaking... But how do we position ourselves to listen?... What do we do at different times intentionally so that we are present, undistracted and quiet within ourselves enough to hear?...

Jesus goes up the mountain, however, not by himself this time. **“He called to him those he wanted, and they came to him...”** Jesus is not going to do what he will do alone. He is inviting, no, calling some in whom he sees something special, to come along with him... Why these persons? What is so special about them?...

As we will see in the narrative to come, these persons will be named. But what makes them specially chosen by Jesus will remain a mystery. While every human being is special in some way, there are some who will become friends, some with whom we will have a special connection for any number of reasons and circumstances. Jesus wants to start a movement, and he needs a group of persons with whom he can begin to build this movement... They will become friends, and even as there will be tension, conflict and hurt along the way, the relationships will become stronger and deeper...

Who are those few persons in your life with whom you have built some real trust, earned through vulnerable sharing, genuine support, and compassionate listening and accompaniment over time?... Who has made themselves available to you that way? To whom have you made yourself available that way?...

As we will see, Jesus' call is to all of us, but each of us also has a role to play, a purpose unique to us... There is a plan for each of us and it unfolds throughout our lives even to our last breath... How may Jesus be calling you up to the mountain with him at this time of your life? How is Jesus calling you to get nearer to God, present and available to open your heart and listen?

“And he appointed twelve to be with him and to be sent out to preach and to have authority to cast out demons.”...

Why twelve?... Jesus is very intentional. Twelve is the number of tribes that make up the whole people of Israel. Jesus is beginning a new movement, a renewal of his people on a whole new foundation rooted in a new understanding of God.

But not only that. Jesus isn't interested in being the kind of Messiah upon whom everyone is dependent in some slavish, childish way. He wants to call people to do what he does and represent him in all his healing ministry in word and action. To open your heart to Jesus and to surrender your life to Jesus is to also be called by Jesus in all your relations and commitments. How may you be an instrument of his Spirit with your words and actions at this very time of your life, with all your limitations as much as your possibilities?...

PRAYER: We thank you, O God, for recognizing in us so much possibility. We know it's not the big things that often make the difference, but the little things, the things that often go unnoticed, the things that are also the more sincere revelations of our hearts as reflections of your love and grace...

We need to hear your voice, O God, and we need to create the time and space for that to happen...

We also need your constant strengthening as much as your challenging, your uplifting as much as your convicting, your forgiveness and grace as much as you're summons to choose to act with trust and courage...

Help us, inspire us and raise us up as we continue to listen to your call to us at this very time of our lives... In Jesus' name... Amen.