

All Around the Altar Service - 3rd May

"Being Called" – Cheryl Trice

Party Popper Introduction

Today our theme is Being Called and we are looking at Moses story of how he was Called by God and how God Calls us to into being with him. As Christians we often use the word "Vocation". The word vocation comes from the Latin word vocare - 'to call'. God calls us into being with him.

As we continue to think about the great mystery of Easter we reflect on new life. As we think about a new lease of life, we might consider doing something new, not just now, but maybe sometime in the future - we'll explore that thought later.

We all have gifts and skills inside us, which can be activated, set in motion, used to purpose.

Link to discovery - about self, about possibilities, about future, about faith.

The party popper is an object, which contains exciting bits, but has to be activated (**pull the string or imagine a party popper string being pulled**)

We all have gifts and skills inside us, which can be activated, set in motion, used for a purpose. Just like this party popper – it needed to be activated to release what was inside.

Reflect for a moment to yourself, share with those who gather with you the following questions:

How has God called you? – Do you feel called?

Are there new possibilities in the future of being asked to serve God?

Just like a party popper do you need to activate yourself to be "Called" to release what's inside?

MAIN INPUT

As we explore the story of Moses, the Bible speaks of working hard and not asking for any reward except to know that we are doing God's will. The Bible also speaks of everyone being given different gifts and abilities. Think of Moses in our reading, he felt unworthy, low in confidence, lacking in ability and God needed to reassure him several times to go and complete what God was calling him to do.

A vocation is a call from God to a specific way of life, Moses was to bring the people of Israel back to God – what a task – What a calling!! It's no wonder he felt over whelmed & needed reassurance several times.

When we are insecure we often lack a sense of belonging. This affects our sense of self-worth and limits us from being all God wants us to be. For most of us, our family will give

us that first sense of belonging, friends and church family do this as well. It is important to have a sense of belonging. We need to fit in, to be a part of a group where love is shared.

Each person is a gift from God & we need to establish an awareness of the fact that God calls each of us to serve Him and others and that He calls us to a specific vocation – even if we don't feel worthy of that calling, we need to have a real desire, the right motivation and fitness & fullness for life; God has given to every person gifts and talents to build up His Church and to make this world a better place. And he wants us to share our gifts and talents with others. We are called to be his hands, his feet, his voice into this community motivated by him not ourselves. That's what's at the heart of true discipleship, and that's a call for all of us, for all of our lives.

And.. What about those who don't seek the limelight and have a real servant spirit? Teachers, clergy, Drs, nurses, school caretakers, Lollipop ladies and men. Who do you know is like this? – Share (&/or) think of examples of people who you know who have been Called who are an inspiration.

Paul urged the Christians in Ephesus "to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph 4:1-3) This is our primary and on-going call: to become active and faithful members of the body of Christ.

An Inspirational Story

Nick Vujicic is an Australian who now lives in America

Nick was born without limbs for no medical reason, Nick also knew from an early age that he was different. His mother refused to see him or hold him when the nurse held him in front of her, but she and her husband eventually accepted the condition and understood it as if God had a plan for their son.

Throughout his childhood he was bullied for his tetra-amelia syndrome - but became a Christian and his faith got him through.

Nick believes it was God's plan for him to endure the bullying so that he could now inspire others.

But it wasn't until much later, after overcoming ignorance and discrimination to build what he calls a "ridiculously good" life, that he realized his mission: to use his "disability" to start conversations that change lives.

He has also never let his condition slow him down and now is married with 4 children and has spoken over **3,000 times** in more than **57 countries** on topics as varied as bullying, inspiring positive change, persistence and determination, and his own life story. No matter where he goes, he communicates one core message—that no matter your circumstance, you can overcome - He tells his message of Christian hope and love!

Thinking back to earlier in our service those questions I posed

How has God called you? – Do you feel called?

Are there new possibilities in the future of being asked to serve God & following and unleashing a vocation motivated by God?

God had to turn a bush into flames and a snake into a staff before Moses listened, let's not be like Moses was initially & learn to trust in God more, understand ourselves better, and come to know the path of life laid out for us by God. As Christians, we are all called to walk with Jesus, to consider the needs of the people of God and to serve the Church in individual ways – each of us being called, activating and unleashing what's inside given by God.

Our Calling & vocation will always involve us in change and movement, whether it be physical, spiritual, emotional or intellectual. Vocational people are people always on the move. Being "Called" requires action.

Amen.