

Refrigerator Notes 21 January 2017
"Jesus Calls Ordinary People"
Mark 1:14-20

1. This week's pericope comes from the Gospel of Mark, as Jesus continues to call His disciples in the beginning of His ministry;
2. Last week, it was Philip and Nathaniel who were called and this week Jesus calls four fishermen at the Sea of Galilee -- Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John
3. The text does not say so but it would appear that these disciples were hand pick given the fact there were about 300 fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee that day
4. Hand pick or not these men possessed no special attributes, except they were fishermen and were willing to follow an unknown man into an uncertain future
5. In fact, the twelve persons Jesus called to be His companions were ordinary men
6. I asserted that these twelve people chosen were much like you and me, and at their time of being chosen, they did not have a personal relationship with Jesus
7. There were times when His disciples often misunderstood Him and there were more times than not, they even hesitated to follow him
8. But in the end, these were those who would continue Jesus' life work after His resurrection; just ordinary people chosen to do 'exceedingly the extraordinary unknowingly'
9. An interesting fact that I pointed out about Jesus followers, they were from the Northern District of Israel as oppose to the Southern District where the capitol and temple were located in Jerusalem
10. Every one of the Jesus' disciples was chosen and called personally by Jesus, just as we believe that God calls each one of us
11. Often times, we speak of "God's call" being too narrow because God calls people into the vocation of ministries just as God calls people into occupations to serve where God chooses them!
12. As an example I used the character of Jonah from the Old Testament to illustrate how God called him to proclaim a message to the people of Nineveh; after trying unsuccessfully to avoid his calling, he finally arrives in Nineveh and delivers the shortest sermon in the Bible, an eight-word threat of destruction "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!".
13. Like John the Baptist who was called to prepare the way for Jesus, Jonah is being called to tell a nation to repent
14. The call of Christianity is to follow a man named Jesus Christ and repent. Doing this means that a Christian has an allegiance and loyalty to Christ, and seeks to emulate Jesus' behavior
15. If you aren't following Jesus, you are not a Christian. Jesus said in Luke 6:46, "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?" Part of following Jesus is listening to what He says in the Bible and living accordingly (attempting to live a righteous life)
16. Jesus is no longer here in the physical form, but he left us a figurative trail to follow with – the "Good News"
17. In 1 Peter 2:21, God says, "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in His steps." We are to live as Jesus lived. We are to endure suffering as Jesus endured suffering. We are to speak as Jesus spoke. We are to react to people as Jesus reacted to people.

18. "Follow me" is Jesus' invitation to and the promise of a new life. Please don't think this is simply about changing careers, disowning our family, or moving to a new town; it is about the freedom to be fully human and discovering God's divinity within us.
19. When Jesus says, "I will make you fish for people," He is describing the transformation of one's life, not simply a job of catching new members or followers, but in order for you change a life your life must have been transformed as well
20. Whatever your life is or however you spend your time, there is in that life Jesus' call to "Follow Him." "Follow me" is the call to participate with God in God's own saving works. It's the work of personal change and growth for those lives that you come into contact for the building of God's Kingdom
21. Ultimately, it's about letting go of our own little life, so that we can receive God's life. This letting go happens in the context of our everyday activities: work, school, families, paying the bills, running errands, fixing dinner, relationships, and by the way, trying to do the right thing. It happens in the casting and mending of our nets as we seek to better our lives through Christ Jesus' call to follow Him.