

...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembly together...but encouraging one another.  
Heb 10:24-25

Share the teaching  
Guard the sharing

# Male Call

## January 15, 2010—Disciples & Laborers—The Jesus Way

6:00 – 6:05	Coffee & Donuts—Opening Prayer
6:05 – 7:00	<p><b>“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”</b> —Jesus (John 14:6)</p> <p><b><u>Myth Busting</u></b></p> <p>1) The Laity Myth</p> <p>a) Priesthood of all believers</p> <p>i) Exodus 19:5-21</p> <p>ii) 1Peter 2:4-10</p> <p>b) Cultural influence</p> <p>i) We carry the “trained expert” imagery into our churches; we expect that to be effective for God we must have special training.</p> <p>(1) The story of a has-been:</p> <p>(a) Exodus 3:1-4-17</p> <p>(2) The story of a youngster:</p> <p>(a) Jeremiah 1:4-7</p> <p>(3) The story of a brand new believer:</p> <p>(a) John 9:1-34</p> <p>2) The Jesus Way</p> <p>As Christianity spread [in the mid-300s as Christianity became the “state” religion], and the church became more secularized, this realization of the costliness of grace faded ...The world was Christianized, and grace became its common property...On the outer fringe of the church was a place where the older vision was kept alive. Here men still remembered that grace costs, and that grace meant following Christ...Monastic life thus became a living protest against the secularization of Christianity, against the cheapening of grace...But the church was wise enough to tolerate this protest, to prevent it from developing to its logical conclusion. It this succeeded in relativizing it, even using it to justify the secularization of its own life. Monasticism was represented as an individual achievement which the mass of laity could not be expected to emulate...the church evolved the fatal conception of the double standard—a maximum and a minimum standard of Christian obedience.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Church history yields many examples of people who took spiritual disciplines to an unhealthy</p>

<sup>1</sup> *The Cost of Discipleship*. 46-47.

extreme, mortifying their bodies and shunning all pleasures. We rightly recoil from such extremes. Yet as I read their accounts now I note that these “spiritual athletes” were acting voluntarily, and few looked back on their experiences with much regret. We live in a society that cannot comprehend those who fast or carve out two hours for a quiet time, and yet honor professional football players who work out with weights five hours a day and undergo a dozen knee and shoulder surgeries to repair the damage they inflict on themselves in the sport. Our aversion to spiritual discipline may reveal more about ourselves than about the “saints” we criticize.<sup>2</sup>

3) Where to Begin the Jesus Way?—With a Jesus Question

a) Matthew 16:15

- i) Who is Jesus to you?
- ii) Shift in thinking
  - (1) Christ in my life, *or*
  - (2) My life in Christ

4) The Jesus Way—A Deep Look

For Christians who live in countries that inherit a Christian tradition, however thinned out, it is sometimes difficult to discern how different we are from the world. We speak the same language, eat the same food, drive the same cars, vote in the same elections. But we follow a very different leader, one who in virtually every detail guides us in a way of living that is counter to that of the world, a leader who not only leads us but tells us, without qualifications, “Follow me.”<sup>3</sup>

a) Imperatives of Jesus—Mark 1:15-17

- i) Repent: To change one’s life, based on complete change of attitude and thought concerning sin and righteousness<sup>4</sup>
- ii) Believe: Think to be true, to believe, implying trust<sup>5</sup>
- iii) Follow Me: Come here [to me]<sup>6</sup>

b) The Way...

i) As a metaphor

The simple fact is that life is mostly invisible, inaudible, and untouchable. Life may be ultimately inaccessible to our five senses, but without the evidence supplied to us by our five senses it would for the most part elude us. It turns out that the quickest

---

<sup>2</sup> *Reaching for the Invisible God*. 230-231.

<sup>3</sup> *The Jesus Way*. 17-18.

<sup>4</sup> Swanson, J. (1997). *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Greek (New Testament)* (electronic ed.). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *The Jesus Way*. 25.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 26.

<sup>9</sup> *How Does a Poem Mean?* 105.

<sup>10</sup> Wood, D. R. W., & Marshall, I. H. (1996). *New Bible Dictionary* (3rd ed.) (1232). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Matthew 11:28-30. *The Message*.

	<p>and most available access to the invisible by means of language is through metaphor, a word that names the invisible (or inaudible or untouchable). A metaphor is a word that carries us across the abyss separating the invisible from the visible...The writers of Scripture are all masters of metaphor...<sup>7</sup></p> <p>When metaphor is banished and language is bullied into serving as mere information and definition, as happens so often in our computerized culture and cultural religion, the life goes out of the language. It also goes out of us. When this reduction happens in relation to God and all that pertains to God, we end up sitting around having study and discussion groups in religious museums.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>With a few exceptions, every word traced back far enough is either a metaphor or an onomatopoeia [a word that sounds like what it is; e.g., zip].<sup>9</sup></p> <p>ii) <u>OT usage</u>: Apart from the obvious literal uses, there are a number of closely linked metaphorical ones. They derive from the fact that one on a public path becomes known and his goal and purposes are revealed by the road he takes.<sup>10</sup></p> <p>(1) Psalm 1 (2) Psalm 119</p> <p>iii) <u>NT usage</u>: In Matthew 7:13–14 (<i>cf.</i> Luke 13:24) we have the two ways in which man can walk contrasted.<sup>11</sup></p> <p>c) How does one learn a way of life? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.<sup>12</sup></p> <p>i) What role does one's own individuality play in following Jesus? (1) Psalm 136:13-16 (2) Pilot story</p>
	Closing Prayer
7:00 – ??	If you would like prayer, please come up front and one or more of us will remain to pray with you.

Further reading:

- *The Bible*
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. (1995). *The Cost of Discipleship*. Simon & Schuster.
- Ciardi, John & Williams, Miller. (1975). *How Does a Poem Mean?* Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Peterson, Eugene H. (2007). *The Jesus Way: A Conversation on the Ways that Jesus is the Way*. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Nouwen, Henri. (1981). *The Way of the Heart: Connecting with God Through Prayer, Wisdom, and Silence*. Ballantine Books.
- Shelley, Bruce L. (1995). *Church History in Plain Language*. Thomas Nelson Publishers.
- Yancey, Phillip. (2002). *Reaching for the Invisible God*. Zondervan.