

...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

## July 9, 2010—The Jesus Way—Our Journey

6:00 – 6:05	Coffee & Donuts—Opening Prayer
6:05 – 7:00	<p>“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” —Jesus (John 14:6)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Our Journey to Freedom<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Stages<sup>1</sup><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) Sons of Satan, slaves to sin, enemies of God (1) E.g.: John 8:34, 43-44; Romans 5:10; James 4:4</li><li>ii) Slaves, servants (bondservants) of God (1) E.g.: Romans 6:22</li><li>iii) Friends with God (1) E.g.: John 15:15</li><li>iv) Beloved of God (1) E.g.: Song of Solomon 7:10-12; Galatians 2:20; John 17:3, 21-24; Revelation 19:7; 21:2, 9; 22:17</li></ol></li><li>b) Our journey is one of discovering what we already have: a mystical oneness with God—John 14:16, 23</li></ol></li><li>2) God’s Will<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) God’s goal for us<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) Romans 8:29</li></ol></li><li>b) Our position with God<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) John 1:12</li></ol></li><li>c) If it is your desire, do you think God will let you remain in:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) The Master-slave relationship?</li><li>ii) The friend relationship?</li></ol></li></ol></li><li>3) Slave Mentality [The people of Israel during the Exodus] had a slave mentality...To be sure, they did not return to Egypt because God and Moses would not let them, but they remained slaves in their minds nonetheless. They finally perished in the desert...<sup>2</sup><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) We come to God out of slavery to the world, so it would seem natural that we would come to God initially with a slave mentality; however, God is calling us</li></ol></li></ol>

<sup>1</sup> These are my (Mike’s) characterization of our relational journey with Jesus.

<sup>2</sup> *The Man who Wrestled With God.* 96-98.

from our slave mentality and into a relationship of beloveds. He is wooing us with love to leave behind our slave mindset and to move toward friendship and finally a beloved.

b) **Our journey with Christ is to become who we already are: God's beloved.**

4) Jesus' Calling to Peter

*When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love [agapao] me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love [phileo] you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love [agapao] me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love [phileo] you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love [phileo] me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love [phileo] me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love [phileo] you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."*

(John 21:15–17, ESV)

*Agapao—love, beloved*

*Phileo—treat affectionately, befriend*

- a) Why did Jesus change the question the third time?
- b) Why was Peter grieved?
- c) What is your answer to Jesus' three questions?

5) Our Perspective

a) Our Fear

To work toward wholeness is to live as a free person...But it can be frightening to live as a free person. There is always a part of us that prefers to live the life of a slave to the life of freedom...If we are free we must act in a mature way, accepting responsibility for our happiness or unhappiness, success or failure...It often seems easier to remain a slave. Then we can complain about our condition, blame our failures and unhappiness on others, and avoid the burdensome responsibility of freedom.<sup>3</sup>

If we are honest, I think we have to admit that we will likely try to sabotage any movement toward true freedom. If we really knew what we were called to relinquish on this journey, our defenses would never allow us to take the first step. Sometimes the only way we can enter the deeper dimensions of the journey is by being unable to see to see where we are going.<sup>4</sup>

b) Dangerous consequence

There is a dark side to this matter of spiritual growth, for it will not be denied. If we insist on turning it aside, once we have been called upon to make this inner journey, it may turn negative and destructive. The same process that can lead to wholeness and consciousness

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 96-98.

<sup>4</sup> *The Dark Night of the Soul*. 72.

<sup>5</sup> *The Man who Wrestled With God*. 96-98.

	<p>can also poison us and destroy us if we try to avoid it. Many people find themselves in Moses' predicament: only when they are forced into their journey, out of fear of the consequences if they do not go, do they begin their process of...development.<sup>5</sup></p> <p>6) And Us?</p> <p>a) Where are you in your desire to follow Jesus? Are you happy being a slave? A friend?</p> <p>b) What are possible consequences of desiring to remain in a slave or a friend relationship with God?</p> <p>i) One consequence is that God as stops telling us what to do as a slave we can substitute church authorities or legalism as our new master so that we can remain 'comfortable' receiving commands—see the Pharisee's attitude.</p>
7:00	Closing Prayer
7:00 – ??	<b>If you would like prayer, please come up front and one or more of us will remain to pray with you.</b>

Further reading:

- *The Bible*
- Au, Walkie and Noreen Cannon Au. (2006). *The Discerning Heart: Exploring the Christian Path*. Paulist Press.
- Barry, William A. & William J. Connolly. (2009 rev.) *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*. HarperOne.
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- Friesen, James G. et al. (2004). *Living From the Heart Jesus Gave You: The Essentials of Christian Living From The Live Model*. Shepherd's House, Inc.
- Foster, Richard J. (1998). *Streams of Living Waters: Celebrating the Great Traditions of Christian Faith*. HarperSanFrancisco.
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- Haase, Albert. (2008). *Coming Home to Your True Self: Leaving the Emptiness of False Attractions*. IVP Books.
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- Nouwen, Henri. (1981). *The Way of the Heart: Connecting with God Through Prayer, Wisdom, and Silence*. Ballantine Books.
- Ortberg, John. (2010). *The Me I Want To Be*. Zondervan.
- Payne, Leanne. *Restoring the Christian Soul*. 1991. Baker Books.
- Peterson, Eugene H. (2007). *The Jesus Way: A Conversation on the Ways that Jesus is the Way*. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
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- Sanford, John A. 1987). *The Man Who Wrestled With God*. Paulist Press.
- Schwartz, Christian A. (2009). *The 3 Colors of Your Spirituality*. ChurchSmart Resources.
- Shelley, Bruce L. (1995). *Church History in Plain Language*. Thomas Nelson Publishers.
- Tozer, A.W. (1986). *Men Who Met God*. Christian Publications.
- Yancey, Phillip. (2002). *Reaching for the Invisible God*. Zondervan.