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Choosing the High Call

As a minister, I've had the privilege of performing many funerals throughout the years. I know that may sound a bit morbid, but it is an honor to be asked to host a ceremony that helps a family through a difficult time, and to celebrate a person's life. Some funerals are harder than others though; there is a vast difference between a person who lived their life for themselves and one who has served the Lord with their life. Many people wait too long before they make a switch to yield their lives to God's will. In fact, many Christians miss it. Usually, it comes down to a moment where we decide to follow Him instead of our desires. I'm curious what people might say about me at my funeral, but more than that I am concerned about what God might speak to me as I enter heaven.

Throughout the years as I've grown up, I've found myself becoming more aware of spending eternity with God. Because of this, I have also found myself desiring more and more to live entirely for Him. I believe that each of us must come to a place where we make a full commitment to give our lives for Him. I know that we must choose each day to yield to God, but it all begins with an initial determination, like a starting line. When that moment comes, it's between you and Him and is a very personal decision that is based on your relationship with the Lord. For me, it came when I was spending alone time worshipping the Lord. I was in my early twenties, and the Lord had continued to pull me into having more private time with Him. My friends began to call me "the hermit" because I needed to stop much of my social activities to free up time for God. It was during one of these sessions that I felt the Lord come into the room. It was as if He sat right beside me on my bed. In my spirit, I heard Him ask me a question.

He said, "I need you to choose if you will be a normal Christian or if you will choose the High call for your life." I knew the verse He was referring to was from Philippians 3:13-14 "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Up until this point I had thought of the high call as achieving the highest level of ministry possible; as in I would be a world-famous preacher. So when God asked me that question I jumped as saying I choose the high call, but before I could say it He showed me what it truly meant. I saw an image of me spending my future in prayer and fasting and pursuing Him more than ministry. I saw a life of laying down everything including my right to direct my own steps. I answered back to the Lord that I could not see myself living that lifestyle. "I can't find inside of me the desire to lay my life down, but even with that, I want please you Father, and if you help me, I choose the high call." That was all He needed from me, a decision that allowed Him to intervene in my life. I didn't realize it at the time, but this was my starting line to begin a life of being in His will. Yes, there are choices each day to obey, but I believe each of us needs first to have a powerful moment of making a decisive decision to walk down His path for our life. To walk down the path of obedience requires getting on the road.

Too many believers confuse day to day hearing with a life of obedience. They wander around trying to hear God for right then, but they have never had the experience of a beginning. I've watched a number of good people try to replace the ability to hear in the spirit with letting God actually direct their life. Living life in His will is a much deeper walk than developing the ability to listen to the spirit. It is a costly price towards our pride and our flesh to be on God's path, so much so that it will require receiving strength from Him. Paul explains this in Colossians 1:9-12 "For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light."

God has a crossroads for each of us where He meets with us and asks if we choose to be on His path for our life. Paul had his moment on the road to Damascus; Peter had His moment when Jesus yelled out to them on the ship to follow Him, Elisha had his moment when Elijah threw his cloak towards him, and even Jesus had his moment when He obeyed to be baptized by John.

If we are not careful, we can miss that original decision and never experience a life of commitment to God's will. For many believers, He is their savior but not their Lord. Time can go quickly, and it's very easy to become swept up with the test and trials in life, so much so that the time to decide our life commitment to God can pass us by before we know it. One preacher said to me "Alan, be careful because one day you're seventeen and the next day you are seventy!" We don't have to wait for Him to come to us, we can choose to draw near to Him and let Him know our heart is to place our future in His hands.

I often wonder what will be spoken of at my home going; I've already decided that I want it to be in a tone of celebration to remind everyone how much joy I'll be having in heaven. Prayerfully, you and I will live our life full of days and years until old age with the only question being; how will we impact the earth while we are here? What people might say about you is one thing, but the most crucial question is what He will say to you as you stand before Him. Let's get on the right path, His path; so that we can hear those beautiful words from Him. "Well done my good and faithful servant!"

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