

## **Bible Readings**

### **Isaiah 6:1-6**

#### **Isaiah's Commission**

**6** In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. <sup>3</sup> And they were calling to one another:

"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty;  
the whole earth is full of his glory."

<sup>4</sup> At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

<sup>5</sup> "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty."

<sup>6</sup> Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. <sup>7</sup> With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."

<sup>8</sup> Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"

And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

### **Matthew 4:18-25**

#### **Jesus Calls His First Disciples**

<sup>18</sup> As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup> "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." <sup>20</sup> At once they left their nets and followed him.

<sup>21</sup> Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, <sup>22</sup> and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

### **Jesus Heals the Sick**

<sup>23</sup> Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. <sup>24</sup> News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralysed; and he healed them. <sup>25</sup> Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

Sermon

14-Feb-21

**Jesus Calls (Isaiah 6:1-8 and Matthew 4:18-25)**Intro

- We're continuing our series on Matthew's Gospel
- We'll look at the Isaiah passage first and then Matthew chapter 4
- Let me pray first...

When someone phones you - how do you **answer the call?**

If I don't know who is calling - I usually say "*Paul speaking*"

If I know the caller - I say "*G'day Fred...John...George*"

Some people answer - by **giving** their "number" - my mother in-law does that

Others might say "*How can I help you?*"

Apparently, people in **other countries** have **different ways** of answering the phone:

In **Germany** - they answer by giving their surname?

In **Russia** - they say "*I'm listening*"

The **Spanish** say "*Speak*"

People called by God also **answer in different ways**

When God called Moses from a burning bush - Moses said "**Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?**" (Exodus 3:11)

When God called Gideon - Gideon said "**I am the least in my family**" (Judges 6:15)

Is God calling you?

How will you answer God's call in your life?

Let's see how God calls Isaiah in our OT reading - and how Isaiah answers the call...

[Please turn to Isaiah chapter 6]

God Calls Isaiah: (Isaiah 6:1-6)

- Isaiah had a **vision of the Lord God in Heaven**
- God was **seated** on a **throne**

[PowerPoint 1-Isaiah Vision]

- And **God is so huge** - that the **train of his robe filled the temple**
- And Isaiah sees these amazing heavenly creatures - **six winged seraphim** - who call to one another - about how holy God is
- Their **voices were so loud**, the **doorposts** in the temple **shook**
- How does Isaiah respond?

- See v5 - He **admits how unholy and how unclean he is** - in comparison to the holy holy holy God
- But then **something amazing happens** - v6 - one of the **seraphim** brings a **burning coal** from the **altar** in the temple and **touches Isaiah's lips**
- Amazingly **this action** - **cleanses Isaiah** - the **guilt of his sins** is taken away - and his sins are atoned for - it's like the coal being from the altar where **sacrifices for sin are made** - comes and **takes away Isaiah sins**
- Here we have a picture of what Jesus can do - He can **purify us from our sin** (John 1:17) - through His death on the **cross**
- It's like the **seraphim puts God's Words** in Isaiah's mouth
- So, God says in v8 - **Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?** [**the us** indicating the Trinity is involved in this calling]
- Look how Isaiah responds - "**Here I am, send me!**"
- **What changed** for Isaiah?
- He **felt unclean initially** - but an **encounter with the Lord God** - changed everything - that **encounter has transformed him**
- For us - an **encounter with Jesus** - when we come to believe in Him - **transforms our lives too**
- Isaiah can't help but respond to God's call
- **God doesn't call people who are qualified** - he **calls people who are willing to go** - and **God will do the rest**

Now we'll look at Jesus calling four men in Matthew's Gospel and we'll see how these men answer the call

Please turn to **Matthew 4, verses 18 to 22**

### Jesus Calls Four Men (Matthew 4:18-22)

- **Jesus** comes walking beside the **Sea of Galilee** and calls **Simon Peter** and his brother **Andrew**, who were **fishermen**

### [PowerPoint 2-Follow]

- Jesus's words are concise "**Come follow me**"
- If we were to **analyse Jesus' life** - it would reveal that when Jesus speaks **things happen**
- For example, ...
- When Jesus turned water into wine - He simply said "**Fill the jars with water**" (John 2)
- When Jesus calmed a storm - He simply said "**Quiet! Be still!**" (Mark 4:39)
- When Jesus healed a disabled man at a pool - He simply said "**Get up! Pick up your mat and walk**" (John 5)
- When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead - Jesus simply said "**Lazarus, come out!**"
- **We shouldn't be surprised** - that when Jesus speaks - **things happen**
- Remember Jesus is described as the Word of God - in **flesh** form (John 1:14)

Cast your mind back to **creation...**

- How did God create things?
- Just by simply speaking!
- How does Jesus make things happen? Just by simply speaking!
- What does this say about Jesus?
- It says He is not just a man - but He's also God - and He can do things that only God can do!
- So, when Jesus says "Come, follow me"
- Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John, **can't help but respond**
- Is it surprising they just followed without questioning?
  - It **might seem surprising** when we first look at it
  - But **Jesus' presence is charismatic** - there's something amazing about Him
  - Also, according to **John 1:29-42** - the men had already met Jesus
  - And **Luke's version** of this same story that Matthew tells us here - **describes a miraculous catch of fish** - just before Jesus calls Simon Peter - that would certainly have convinced the fishermen to follow Jesus
- And **Jesus has a job for them to do - instead of fishing for fish - He says they will fish for people - that is - catch people for Jesus - get people hooked on Jesus - catch people and put them in the net for Heaven**

Why would Jesus choose fishermen?

Why not religious people who knew the scriptures?

The trouble with the religious people of the day was they thought they knew it all - and had nothing to learn about God - and they weren't teachable - they had closed minds - and they thought people who were **disabled or sick or poor** were cursed by God and weren't allowed in His Kingdom.

So, instead Jesus chose humble fishermen

Why?

- a. Fishermen were busy people; they didn't sit around doing nothing. If they were not out in the boat fishing, they were sorting their catch, preparing for a catch, mending their equipment. The Lord needs busy people who are not afraid of hard work!
- b. Fishermen have to be courageous. They face many trials and storms. Catching people for Jesus, requires courage. It requires facing difficulties and even helping others with their difficulties.
- c. Fishermen have to be patient - waiting for the fish to turn up. It certainly takes patience to tell people about Jesus. Sometimes people aren't interested or it may take some time for people to fully believe what we're saying about Jesus. All this takes a great deal of patience.
- d. Fishermen must be prepared and have skill; they learn how best to catch fish. Catching people for Jesus, requires preparation and skill too; it requires praying for opportunities and praying for God to give us the words to say.

- e. Fishermen must work as a **team**. **Teamwork** is needed to catch people for Jesus (like our Jaffa & Xcelerate team, the team of SRE teachers, our Pastoral care team and our team of Sunday School teachers)
- f. Most importantly fishermen need faith. Fishermen cannot see the fish and are not sure if their nets will enclose the fish. They cast their nets in faith. As we reach out to people to share the Gospel; we need to step out in faith - and rely on God to bring the people and the opportunities.

### Fishing for People (Matthew 4:23-25)

- Once Jesus' has called the disciples - to fish for people
- He's going to teach them how to fish for people for the next 3 years

### [PowerPoint 3-Ministering]

- So, Jesus teaches in the synagogues - v23 - because the Jews of Israel need to be taught about God and why He sent Jesus, the Messiah.
- So, Jesus proclaims - the **Good News**
- What is this Good News?
- Well, it **implies** first off that **there is bad news - which there is - we all sin and we all die one day**
- But the Good News is - **God sent His Son, Jesus**
- The Good News is - He **calls everyone to repent** of their sin and **turn to back to God** - and **follow Jesus**

- The Good News is - Jesus came to **fix the punishment for our sin** and rebellion - by giving up His life on a **cruel cross**; and the Good news is because **Jesus died - we are forgiven.**
- And the Good News is - Jesus **didn't stay dead but rose 3 days later** - and so as long as we believe in Jesus - we have eternal life - and we've been caught in the net that carries us to Heaven
- In His ministry, Jesus also performed miracles - healing diseases and sickness - this **brought fame** even amongst the non-Jews - the Gentiles of Syria, and they brought more sick people for Jesus to heal.
- **Jesus' ministry amongst ordinary folk and amongst the Gentiles - made it clear that Jesus came for all people to be saved - not just one race, not just for the religious but **also** for those who are sick, diseased, disabled, broken - they are all **equal in Jesus' eyes!****
- The **miracles** Jesus performed **helped people to believe.**
- Sometimes people won't believe unless they **see a sign or a miracle** (like **Thomas**) - in v25 we see large crowds followed Jesus because they'd witnessed His miracles and believed His teaching
- And sometimes people's minds are made up and closed - and **no amount of miracles will convince them**

- The **miracles** Jesus performed also gave a picture of more Good News - the **Good News that Heaven is a place where there's no more sickness and disease and disability - only peace and joy - and the forever presence of God**
- So, what are we to **learn from the calling of Isaiah** and the calling of these 4 **fishermen?**

[PowerPoint - 4 Heading]

### Application

[PowerPoint 4a - unclean]

1. #1 - When God calls - there needs to first be an **admission of how unclean we are in our sin** (as Isaiah admitted) - and **then there is a cleansing because we believe Jesus can do this.**

[PowerPoint 4b - immediate response]

2. #2- When God calls - we see from Isaiah - and from the four fishermen that Jesus called - that an **immediate obedience** is required. Isaiah says "**Here I am, send me!**" - and the four men - immediately followed Jesus. **Are we prepared to answer God's call by saying "Here I am, send me!"?**

[PowerPoint 4c - let go of something]

3. #3- When God calls us to follow Jesus - we may have to **leave something behind - let go of something** - let go of our former life - **change our priorities. Jesus** has to be our **first priority** not our **last resort**. For example, if you're a Christian and your job is an accountant; then first and

foremost, you are a Christian who just happens to be an accountant - not an accountant who happens to be a Christian. Christians **make time for Jesus in their life** - and **make time to serve Jesus**.

[PowerPoint 4d - ignoring Him?]

4. #4- Is God calling you for something specific? And **you're ignoring that inner voice calling you?**

Maybe God's calling you to teach SRE/Scripture but you have 101 excuses -

I have to get up early, I don't really like kids, I don't have the time to do the training? I'm too old?

Maybe God's calling you to teach Sunday School? But you don't want to miss the sermon - well it's on our website and Facebook and YouTube

Maybe God's calling you to serve on the roster? But you can't be bothered - let someone else do it, I've done my bit over the years?

Maybe God's calling you to sharing your faith with someone, but you're putting it off - and you're saying surely God doesn't want to save that person?

Maybe God's calling you to say sorry to someone but you've been putting off because it's a bit awkward admitting you were wrong?

Maybe God's calling you to forgive someone - but you've been too stubborn, after all you were right and they were wrong? What about showing some grace towards them?

Whatever God's calling you to do - it **requires a response**.

Pray about it, **listen** to God's voice and **respond** today!

[PowerPoint 4d - let go of something]

5. #5 - Whatever our calling, it **must also** involve being "*fisher of people*" - **catching people for Jesus**. The wonderful thing is - **God will equip and prepare us - for this job - just like Jesus equipped and prepared the disciples** for their job of fishing for people!

When Jesus sent the disciples out in Matt 28 - **He promised** He would **always be with them**, to the very end of the age (Matt 28:20)

And in Acts 1:8 - **Jesus promised** that the **Holy Spirit would go with them as they fished for people**.

How do we fish for people?

Well, we are **only limited by our imagination**.

On Friday night at Jaffa - we **told the children this same story of Jesus calling the disciples to fish for people**.

So, we **decided to get the Jaffa children to fish for more Jaffa children** to learn about Jesus. We went for a walk and **delivered invites** to all the houses in **the surrounding streets**.

You see, **catching people for Jesus**, is something we can all do - we just need to **think about our own context** - a simple chat, a simple invite is all it takes.

## Conclusion

One final thought - let me remind us of what **Jesus saw when He walked through the towns and villages in Israel.**

Reading from **Matthew 9:35-38**

[PowerPoint 5-Conclusion]

<sup>35</sup> Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. <sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. <sup>38</sup> Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

What Jesus saw was **lots of people who were lost** and didn't know the Lord.

That's what we have in our community too.

Many many people who don't know Jesus - and they're like lost sheep.

As Jesus said - the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.

So what do we do? We pray to the Lord of the Harvest, to send out more workers into His harvest field.

Is God, the Lord of the Harvest - **calling you** to teach **SRE, Sunday School, serve on the roster, pastorally care for someone, share your faith...**

**Please friends, don't ignore God's calling!**

Let's pray...