

The Calling of the Twelve (Luke 6:12-19)

Introduction: We all face many decisions in life.

Some decisions are easy such as: Do I brush my teeth? Should I change my clothing? Do I eat?

Other decisions can be extremely difficult and even life altering based on the circumstances: What job do I take? Which college do I attend? What house do I buy?

In our text today, Jesus is faced with an extremely important decision about what men to choose. The men he chooses will spread His message to the world after His death and ascension. While Jesus is God and knows everything, He was completely dependent on the Holy Spirit in everything. Therefore, Jesus leaves us a pattern to follow.

Thesis: You can't control life!

In our text today we will see 4 steps of how Jesus made an important decision.

1. Jesus retreated
2. Jesus petitioned
3. Jesus focused
4. Jesus decided

Proposition: We must exercise an attitude of constant prayer.

Significant points to consider:

1. The stress Jesus placed on the choosing of the 12 for their apostleship
 - a. He spent all night in prayer to God (dependance)

2. The beginning stage of the founding of the Church.
 - a. These men will witness the resurrection and be messengers of the Gospel.

Transition: When Jesus was faced with a big decision, he dealt with it in 4 steps.

1. Jesus retreated

- "he went out to the mountain"
 - Jesus changed his setting and environment to that of solitude.
 - Familiarity can breed apathy whereas changing a setting can bring a level of excitement and alertness.
 - We have so much "noise" these days. Technology can be a great blessing but also a big distraction.

Here in Northern MN, one does not have to go far to be in solitude or as Jesus experienced, "the wilderness"

Transition: If you're facing a big decision, don't just consider "retreating" but also "petitioning".

2. Jesus petitioned

- "To pray"
 - Jesus purpose for retreating was prayer. He was not on a leisure vacation for "me time". He had an important decision to make and needed to be in a place that helped accommodate dependance on God.

Illustration: Remember the last time you "roughed it"? We call it camping. Typically we load up the car with things that we might need as we will be away from our comfort zone. We load up the RV or car with food, clothing, necessities and escape into the wilderness for a short time. Camping can be an exercise where a person spends a small fortune to live like a homeless person!

Point: Jesus was not on a camping trip. We are not told that he even took anything with Him.

- Elsewhere he told the disciples, “Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” 32 But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” 33 So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him something to eat?” 34 Jesus said to them, **“My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.** 35 Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. 36 Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. 37 For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ 38 I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor” (John 4:31-38, ESV).
 - Jesus went to God with this need. He didn’t run to other means for help. He went straight to His Father.
 - We must always run to the Father in prayer.
- The Apostle Paul says, “do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6, ESV).
 - We have spiritual dyslexia sometimes when we “are anxious about everything and pray about nothing”
 - Let’s remember to God in prayer about everything especially the big decisions.

Transition: So far, Jesus retreated and petitioned but look what else he did.

3. Jesus focused

- “He continued all night”
 - There would be minor distractions in a wilderness/mountain setting.
 - Cut out as many distractions as possible and if need be, retreat to a place of solitude

Illustration: I’ve had some experience with Christian summer camps. The ones I’ve dealt with have a common rule. No technology. A camper is not to

bring walkmans, CD players, technology of any kind for the week they are there. Monday and Tuesday are the worse because the camper is going through 'withdrawal' but by Wednesday has forgotten he even owned such devices. Camps cut out distractions so that the camper can "focus" on the Word of God and prayer.

- We can also discipline ourselves to 'cut out' distractions so we can "focus" on what is needful "sitting at the feet of Jesus" through being in God's Word and prayer.
- Luke records later about continual and constant prayer (Luke 11:1-13).

Transition: Jesus retreated, petitioned, focused and finally decided.

4. Jesus decided

- "When day came, he called his disciples and chose"
- Mark adds, "those whom he desired"
 - The psalmist says, "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4, ESV).
- Proverbs says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6, ESV).
 - Jesus didn't wait for a voice or seek silly signs.
 - He depended on God and made a choice.
 - **Argument:** "Does that mean that I can just pray and make a decision?" Not necessarily. In our text, Jesus was not cavalier with this decision. He labored all night in prayer. Have you ever labored 1 hour in prayer? Jesus worked all night in prayer and made his decisions.
 - The choice of the 12 was made only AFTER seeking God's guidance. This became the pattern in the local church of Acts (Acts 13:2; 14:23;

The heart aligns to God's heart when we labor in studying God's written Word and prayer.

The Apostle John said, “whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked” (1 John 2:5-6, ESV). Jesus Christ is our ultimate example of obedience to the will of God. When faced with any decision exercise an attitude of prayer. If you are faced with a huge decision, take these steps modeled by Jesus.

Important Note: Jesus was God and you are not. I say that because nowhere in Jesus life does he seek counsel from anyone.

The Apostle Paul wrote, “Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! 34 “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” 35 “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” 36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen” (Romans 11:33-36, ESV).

2 additional Biblical steps:

1. Seek biblical counseling.

- “Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed” (Proverbs 15:22, ESV)
- “Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety” (Proverbs 11:14, ESV).
- “for by wise guidance you can wage your war, and in abundance of counselors there is victory” (Proverbs 24:6, ESV).

The wisest sinful human that ever lived was Solomon and yet he stressed the importance of many varied opinions in decision making.

2. Ask God for wisdom

- “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways” (James 1:5-8, ESV).

Ask God for wisdom without already having your mind made up. If you already have your mind made up, don't mock God by asking Him for wisdom. Asking in faith means that you 100% loyal and ready to follow. If you have a 'plan B' than you are a double-minded man and completely unstable.

Application:

“What are you going to do with your sin?”

- Biggest decision in your life.
- Jesus Christ died on the cross for sin, was buried, and was raised the 3rd to according to the Scriptures. You you have not repented and trusted Christ then I invite you today to come to Jesus!

“What decision is on you plate right now?”

- Will you take these steps modeled by Jesus and found right out of God's Word?
- Jesus was faced with an extremely important decision and was completely dependent on the Holy Spirit. He made His important decision by: **retreating, petitioning, focusing, and deciding.**
 - Additionally, you can **seek biblical counsel** and **ask God for wisdom.**
- You must exercise an attitude of constant prayer.

You have 2 options:

1. Reject God's Word and make your own decision.
2. Receive God's Word with humility and obey.

Since you have no control over life, I invite and encourage you to humbly receive God's Word today and obey.