

THE BIG IDEA: Jesus calls us out in order to send us in.

The Take-Off

I've always wanted to be in an exclusive club. Maybe you have, too.

In fact, a major part of any successful marketing strategy to gain mass appeal is showing the masses that they may not be the right people for what's being marketed.

An example? How do the Marines market? The _____.

And it works! Why? Because everyone wants what not everyone can have.

You know this is true. You buy something and it's unique, and you show it off with pride until you find out someone else has the exact same thing. Suddenly, you're not quite as happy about it, right?

Now, hold on to that idea, because today we're going to read a passage in Luke 6 that will start out seeming like that.

We're going to meet a group called "apostles" and while we could focus in great detail on who they were and what they were called to do as far as being the leaders of the early church, we'll have other passages in our journey through Luke that will allow us to do that.

So for this morning, I want you to remember what we just talked about, because as we walk through a handful of verses, that group of 12 men is going to sound very exclusive.

But what I think we'll learn is that it was a unique group in purpose more than an exclusive group full of pride.

Let me read Luke 6:12-19. Then, I'll share the Big idea with you and make a few observations about how this section of scripture can apply to us even though none of us are going to experience being called by Jesus as one of the original 12 apostles.

Let's read.

Ok, Big Idea time. Again, we're not focusing specifically on the 12 apostles, but looking generally at principles for us **Jesus calls us out in order to send us in**.

I don't think that this concept of Jesus calling us out needs to be explained much, but let me at least give you some solid "it's in the Bible" references:

- The word translated "church" in the NT is the Greek word "ekklesia" which means "called out ones" (it also means "a gathering" - can you guess where we got our name??)
- That word - "ekklesia" is used 115 times in the KJV
- 1 Peter 2:9 - we've been called out of darkness (not the word "ekklesia" but does contain the 2 words that make up "ekklesia")

So, it's a pretty conventional understanding throughout the years that the church is called out - we see that here in our passage - but we also see that we're called out in order to be sent back in.

John 20:21 - we're sent by Jesus in the same way as Jesus

So this week the question that I want to address is this: "What happens if we lean too far into one or the other?"

A. W. Tozer was famous for the simple saying that "truth has 2 wings" and we'll see that so clearly in today's passage.

1. If we only focus on being called out...

- a. I'm sure there are a number of dangers that we could face if we leaned too far to the "called out" side, but let's focus on two.
- b. First, we run the risk of escapism
 - Escapism is just a big word that sums up the declaration "I'm safe!!"
 - It's never a bad thing to be saved from bad things, but often we can fall into the trap of believing that God has called us out from a dangerous, sinful world in order to make us safe
 - We'd never want to go BACK into the scary world because we like being safe
 - But as we'll see, Jesus didn't save us to keep us safe
 - This plays right into the hands of the 2nd danger...
- c. Elitism
 - If escapism says, "I'm safe!" then elitism says, "I'm separate!"
 - Now, a quick word of balance - we are called to be separate (2 Cor. 6:17)
 - In fact, the word "holy" means "set apart"
 - But elitism is the extreme- the "if I get too close to bad people, their sin germs will get on me" fear
 - The Pharisees ran into this danger
 - What started out as a pursuit of a holy God became a retreat from unholy men

2. If we only focus on being sent in...

- a. What if we lean too far too often on the “sent in” side? Again, there’s probably a number of dangers, but I see 2 very clearly.
- b. First, we can be offended by others not going with us
 - This is when we ask the question, “Where is everybody?”
 - I remember going to youth group and being surrounded by tons of teens until we had a service day
 - My youth pastor was wise enough to tell us that we shouldn’t be surprised by that
 - Our job was to serve well even if we served alone
 - We’ll see this clearly in Luke 10, but for now, recognize that it is way to easy to begin to feel like martyrs as we serve and lose the honor of serving
- c. Second, we can be blended with the others we’re going to
 - This is when we ask the question, “How can I look like everybody?”
 - Sometimes we’re too embarrassed by God’s standards, and we compromise so much that it’s hard to tell how we’re any different from the world we’re being sent into
 - Leaners to this side will quote 1 Cor. 9:19-23 while forgetting that Paul also wrote the verse we read earlier about coming out and being separate
- d. Clearly, it can be confusing, and perhaps another quote from A.W. Tower might help:
“Many of the doctrinal divisions among churches are the result of a blind and stubborn insistence that truth has but one wing. Each side holds tenaciously to one text, refusing grimly to acknowledge the validity of the other. Lack of balance in the Christian life is often the direct consequence of overemphasis on certain favorite texts, with a corresponding under-emphasis on other related ones. Let’s use both wings. We’ll get farther that way.”

The Landing

Let me close this morning by suggesting 2 guardrails that can keep us from veering too much to one side or the other. Remember what guardrails do. They don’t prevent accidents; they warn us of impending accidents if we don’t take action.

The 2 guardrails are STORIES and MISSION

Stories (our testimonies) remind of of what we’ve been saved from, what we’ve been called out of

- 1 Peter 2:9 - we’ve been called out of darkness and into WONDERFUL light!
- 1 Cor. 6:9-11 - but that is what we WERE!!
- Ephesians 2:12-13 - we were foreigners, now we’re FAMILY!
- If you’re in Christ, you’ve got a story to tell, and telling it often reminds us (and others) that we are changed

Mission reminds us of what we’ve been saved for, why we’re being sent back in

- Mission keeps us from just being a social organization
- Mission keeps us focused on the call to preach the gospel and make disciplers
- Again, John 20:21 - as the Father sent Jesus, Jesus sends us
- Mission keeps us from forgetting that those who are rescued make the best rescuers
- Found people find people

Jesus calls us out in order to send us in.

You’ve been saved from the crowd in order to be sent back to the crowd.

So tell the story of your salvation, and don’t forget the mission behind it, because now, it’s your mission, too.

Let’s pray.