

THE CALL OF THE SEA...THE CALL OF GOD...THE CALL TO YOUR PURPOSE...ALL IN

“There comes the baffling call of God in our lives. The call of God can never be stated explicitly; it is implicit. The call of God is like the call of the sea, no one hears it but the one who has the nature of the sea in him. It cannot be stated definitely what the call of God is to, because his call is to be in comradeship with Himself for His own purposes, and the test is to believe that God knows what He is after.” Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*

The call of God on a man's life is a call to adventure and purpose. As Oswald Chambers says so well, “it is like the call of the sea” ...a call to venture from your comfort zone and the safety of the status quo...the *samo-samo*. If you have ever walked along a beach and gazed out at the ocean you may have sensed the *vastness* as well as the potential adventure out there, “on the wide, boundless ocean”.

When I was a young naval officer, I had the good fortune to be at sea with an “old salt” and we would often talk at sea about *the sea*. His eyes would take on a gleam as he explained that ships were created to be at sea, not tied up in port by mooring lines. The safety of the shore could never be traded for the adventure of the open sea and visiting foreign ports. In his view, mooring lines were “unnecessary”, as they restrained the ship from fulfilling its purpose.

I have noted over the years that many of our men are drawn to the safety of shore or to the security of mooring lines in a safe port. There is no spirit of adventure in them to “cast off” from the safety of the church building. My “salty shipmate” of so many years ago *had the nature of the sea in him*. So, just in being around him, I found myself answering *the call of the sea* in spirit. Rather than being overly conscious of new dangers and the potential peril of the sea, I gained a respect and appreciation for its vastness and beauty, like the spectacular sunrises and sunsets I later viewed all around the world.

Over the years, in being around those men who have answered the call of God, I have noted they also *seem to have the nature of God* in them. Such men have influenced me to continue answering the call of God in my own life. As Chambers said, this call of God is not explicit, but rather comes in a way that does not use words. Maybe we should give this approach a “go” in ministry to men...train men “to long for the boundless ocean” of following Jesus.

Adventure surely awaits any man in 2023 who chooses to answer the call and follow Christ. Just like the first disciples who rejected the safety of shore and got in the boat with Jesus, we men can still do just that... we can be “all in”! The only way to live this adventure with all its danger and unpredictability is an ongoing intimate relationship with God. “*The baffling call of God* is like the call of the sea, no one hears it but the one who has the nature of the sea in him.” Fantasy Land is at Disney World...where are you?

“Not that I have already...arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. One thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. All of us who are mature should take such a view of things.” Apostle Paul, *Letter to the Philippians*

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