

Good morning. This is Colonel Stephen Morris and it is my privilege to greet you this morning in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

Today is a very special day across the Japan Territory as today we focus our attention on the Calling which Christ lays on our hearts.

I realize that we are not all called to Officership, but as Christians we are all called to ministry and today I want us to focus our attention on God's calling on our lives.

I want to share from Mark, Chapter 1 and also want to ask some questions for you to consider today and throughout the coming week.

As a fourth generation Salvationist I am proud of my Salvation Army heritage, but really did not want to be a Salvation Army Officer.

As a young man I was convinced that God could use me better in other ways rather than serving as a Salvation Army Officer.

I was saved as a teenager and began to build my own plan for my life which I hoped would be God's plan as well.

As I matured spiritually I reached a point when I realized that I wanted to follow God regardless of what I did professionally with my life.

When I entered a relationship with Jesus which called me to a life of holiness I remember deciding that from that point on, if God made it clear for me what his desire was for me and it was different then what I had planned I would always follow His plan for my life.

It was a few years later that God made it clear to me that He was calling me to serve as an Officer/ Minister for Him and although I was shocked, I felt like I had made the decision to follow His leading in my life years before.

Only years later can I look back and realize how God had my life in His hands every step of the way.

And now I thank God that I followed Him when His leading became clear for me.

As we look into Mark chapter 1, we find that Jesus recruited and called his initial disciples because He saw in them the four attributes He looks for in all of His followers.

I want you to listen to these four traits and ask yourself if you have what God might need to serve as a Salvation Army Officer.

おはようございます。救い主イエス・キリストの御名にあってごあいさついたします。

今日は、イエス様が私たちの心に語っておられる声に耳を傾ける、特別な日です。

皆に士官の召命がある訳ではないかもしれませんが、すべてのクリスチャンは主の働きに召されています。

マルコ 1 章を共に見て、みなさんに考えていただきたいことがあるのです。

私は救世軍人 4 代目です。誇りではありますが、私自身は士官にはなりたくありませんでした。

別の方法で神様に用いてもらう方がいいと、若い頃は確信していました。

十代で救われ、自分の将来計画が神様の思いと一致すればいいと思っていました。

しかし霊的に成長する中で、どんな職業につくかよりもまず、神様に従いたい自分に気づきました。

イエス様と結びつき、聖潔の人生に導かれる時、もし自分の立てた計画が神様の思いと違うなら、これから先は、神様が示してくれた道に従う方を選ぼうと決心したことを今も覚えています。

その数年後に士官の召命を示された時は驚きました。けれど神様の計画に従うと決心した数年前に、もう選択の決断はしていたのだと思いました。

後で振り返ってみて、神様が私の人生を着実に導いておられたことを実感します。

神様に従う道を選べたことを感謝しています。

マルコ 1 章で、イエス様が弟子となるように招いた人には、4 つの要素があることが分かります。これは神様に従うすべての人に求められることです。

救世軍士官として神様に仕えるための 4 つの要素を皆さんは持っておられるでしょうか。

Jesus was looking for men that would respond to the call of salvation. (vv. 14, 15)

As good Jewish leaders these men were aware that a Messiah would eventually be coming, but as fisherman, they would have had no reason to believe they would be a part of the kingdom building.

I think it is key to notice, all of those disciples he accepted, not one of them were religious leaders of that day.

You see, it was the religious leaders who were the most critical of Jesus, not supportive.

They had come up from generation to generation where people didn't dare challenge their superiority.

But they were so religious and pious, there were of little use to Jesus earthly ministry.

Oh that we not be just today's version of the Religious leaders of that day.

The religious leaders didn't see the need for their own salvation – they didn't recognize their own sin.

The initial characteristic of a ministry follower of Jesus is the recognition of our own sin and the need of a savior, who could only be Jesus Christ.

This is a requirement for every believer, and is essential for those called into ministry as well.

Have you realized your own sin and come to realize that Jesus' death and resurrection is the only payment which can cancel our sins and allow us to lead lives through the presence of His Holy Spirit?

No. 2 Jesus was looking for men that would obey His commands.

Their education didn't qualify them. Their intellect didn't impress Him. Their knowledge of any particular subject never got Jesus' attention.

He was simply looking for men who could see and experience the power of Jesus and follow His commands for them.

Remember, Jesus was a carpenter who was recruiting fisherman by saying I will make you fishers of men.

He's taking them for the skills they had but for His purposes those skills would serve as only a backdrop of their lifelong ministry.

They understood the process of fishing yet had no idea how Jesus would train them differently.

Remember when Jesus asked how the fishing was going and it wasn't going well and he instructed them to put the nets out on the other side of the boat?

まず、救いの招きに応えるということです。14節と15節。

ユダヤ教の指導者はメシアの到来を認識していました。しかし漁師である彼らには、自分たちが御国建設の役割を担うとは信じがたかったでしょう。

イエス様が招いた弟子たちには、当時の宗教的指導者はいませんでした。

宗教的指導者こそ、イエス様を批判した人々でした。

彼らの持つ特権意識を問題視する人は何世代もいませんでした。

しかしその宗教熱心さはイエス様の働きには何の役にも立ちませんでした。

私たちもその過ちを繰り返すことがありませんように。

自分の罪と、そこからの救いが必要なことに彼らは気づきませんでした。

イエス様に従う者に必要な最初の要素は、自分の罪に気づき、救い主であるイエス様を求めることです。

すべての信仰者にとって、特に働きに召されている人の必須条件です。

あなたは自分の罪を知り、その赦しにはイエスの死と復活しか清算する道がないことを知っておられますか？聖霊の導きによって生きる道はそれ以外にありません。

二番目に、イエス様はご自分の言葉に従う人を求めています。

どんな教育を受け、どんな教養があるか。どんな特別な知識をもっているかは関係ありませんでした。

ただイエス様の力を目撃し、イエス様の言葉に従う人を求められました。

大工であったイエス様が漁師に対して、「人を取る漁師にしよう」と言ったのです。

彼らを現状の姿のまま、神様の目的のために用いようと主の働きに招かれました。

彼らは漁の知識はあっても、イエス様の働きについては何も分かりません。

まったく魚が捕れない時、イエス様が舟の反対側に網を下すように言われた出来事がありました。

It wasn't the skill of fishing that they lacked, but Jesus already knew where the fish were to be caught.

And in much the same way, whatever skills you have already developed through a professional career or through education or ministry . . . all of that will be utilized for His Kingdom.

But even if you haven't had those experiences, Jesus will equip you if He has called you.

He will prepare you for you to be effective in His ministry.

No3 Jesus was looking for men who would follow wherever He led. (v. 18)
Come Jesus said, follow me. At once they left their nets and followed him. They eventually followed Jesus for much of his 3 years of ministry here on earth.

But I believe part of this requirement of being willing to follow was to ensure that they would remain with him even after His death and resurrection.

For it was only after that that His Holy Spirit came upon his disciples and it was necessary for them to be present, where Jesus had instructed them to be in order to experience the continuation of Jesus ministry through the Holy Spirit.

They followed him across the countryside, to the cross and remained as His ministry to others until the end of their lives.

I may be old school, but this is why I don't believe we are called into ministry for a time, but for a lifetime.

Once my calling is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ so as many as possible can be saved and spend eternity with the Savior . . . what other calling could ever be more important or lasting than that?

God has intended that we each one are engaged in His Kingdom Building ministry for our lifetimes, It is THAT IMPORTANT.

And finally, fourth, Jesus was looking for men who were willing to put Him first. (vv. 19, 20)

I find in ministry, often when God is calling his children to something specific, like officership, these four are agreeable to most, but this last one is the one which seems most challenging. I want to help you with this one today.

彼らに漁の技術がないのではなく、イエス様は魚の居場所をご存知だったからです。

同じように、皆さんが今までに培ってきた経験や知識も、すべて神様の御国建設のために用いられるのです。

そして未経験なことも、イエス様の招きがあれば、必要を備えてくださいます。

良い働きができるよう整えてくださいます。

3番目にイエス様はご自分の後に従う人を求められます。(18節)

「私について来なさい」という言葉に、弟子たちは従いました。約3年間、イエス様の地上での働きに伴ったのです。

従うことに忠実かどうか、イエス様の死と復活の後にも重要な意味を果たしました。

聖霊が弟子たちに下ったのは、復活の後の出来事です。弟子たちがイエス様の指示どおりに集まることが不可欠でした。聖霊によってイエス様の働きを継続するために。

弟子たちはイエス様についていき、十字架を経験し、生涯の終わりまで従いとおしました。

私たちが招かれる働きは期間限定ではなく、一生涯を通じたものです。

一人でも多くの人にイエス・キリストの福音を知らせ、魂が永遠の命にあずかる。それ以上に重要な、永遠の価値がある召しがあるでしょうか。

私たち一人ひとりが、人生をかけて御国建設に携わる。それが神様の願いです。それほどに重要なのです。

そして最後に、イエス様は神様を第一とする人を求めています。(19, 20節)

神様が具体的な呼びかけをされることがあります。士官の召命もそうです。

その際、この4番目の要素が一番困難に感じることでしょう。ですので特に触れておきたいのです。

I believe there are no accidents in Scripture and even the way the scriptures have been arranged for our reading are important to me.

I don't believe it was an accident that this passage we are reviewing today comes immediately after the ministry of John The Baptist.

He served as the very best example of one who intentionally put himself, his needs, his desires after that of Jesus Christ.

He had quite a following of believers and disciples and often they would ask if he were the Isaiah or if he were the messiah.

If anyone were to have the right to be selfish in his ministry and keep it going it would have been John the Baptist.

But he understood that he served only as the one who prepares the way for the messiah. Verse 7 makes that clear:

“And this was his message: After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.

I baptize you with water but He will baptize you with The Holy Spirit.”

Somehow, the biggest threat to Satan is an effective follower of Christ.

And often, Satan works hard to convince us that Our way, our plan, is equal or better than God's plan for us.

We can justify our own preferences over what God is calling us to do only if we believe either that we know better than God, or His calling must be false.

We are incapable of solving our own sin problem, only Jesus made a way for our sins to be forgiven.

And in very much the same way, God makes it clear that His way is perfectly planned for our own good.

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

聖書には偶然はなく、どういう順番で書かれているかも大事な意味があると信じます。

今日の聖書箇所はバプテスマのヨハネの記事のすぐ後に記されています。

ヨハネは、自分の必要や願いよりも、まずイエス・キリストを第一にした人でした。

自分に従う弟子も群衆も大勢いて、人々は彼をエリヤかメシアかと問いました。

ですので、自分のしている働きに誇りと欲をもって進めることもできた人でした。

しかし自分はメシアのために道を備える者にすぎないと明言しました。7節

「彼はこう宣べ伝えた。『わたしよりも優れた方が、後から来られる。わたしは、かがんでその方の履物のひもを解く値打ちもない。わたしは水であなたたちに洗礼を授けたが、その方は聖霊で洗礼をお授けになる。』

サタンにとって、キリストに従う人は大きな脅威です。

なので私たちを説得してきます。自分の計画の方が神様の計画よりも良いのだと。

自分の考えが神様に勝っている、神様の声が嘘なのだ、そう信じ込んで、自分の選択を正当化するのは。

私たちはイエス様なしで自分の罪の問題を解決することはできません。

そのように、神様は私たちにとって最善の計画を立ててくださっている方です。

エレミヤ書 29 章 11 節

わたしは、あなたたちのために立てた計画をよく心に留めている、と主は言われる。それは平和の計画であって、災いの計画ではない。将来と希望を与えるものである。そのとき、あなたたちがわたしを呼び、来てわたしに祈り求めるなら、わたしは聞く。わたしを尋ね求めるならば見だし、心を尽くしてわたしを求めるなら、わたしに出会うであろう、と主は言われる。

Now, let me close with this. God has a plan and a purpose for The Salvation Army in Japan just as He has a plan for you.

However, if God has specifically called you to serve in The Salvation Army, and you decide to go your own way, The Salvation Army and our ministry will be less effective without you than with you.

God's plan to call allows Him to impact the lives of those closes to you and when we go our own way He has to work out something which wasn't the original plan for us.

And lastly, the future of The Salvation Army rests with you.

Soldiers, officers, Junior Soldiers, bandmen, pianists.

Surely the uniqueness of The Salvation Army is a valuable opportunity for God's will to be fulfilled in Japan.

If you have sense God's calling on your life before or perhaps today for the first time, be in touch with your officer to discuss the specifics of how to follow God's perfect plan for you.

And we will be sure to help you find the way to fulfill God's calling in your life

I pray for the Salvation Army in Japan today.

I pray for each person hearing my voice through translation.

I pray that if God has called you to officership or anything of ministry specific that you would have a heart that is open to God's leading and you would today confess that and share with your officers or someone you trust.

God has placed a calling on my life I need to be preparing for that calling.

And we will be supportive in praying for you and bringing together the pieces necessary for you to fulfill God's calling for your life.

Let me pray for you today.

Our Heavenly Father, as I have this map of Japan behind me,

it serves as a reminder of your calling on the people of Japan

And the impact that those have gone before us have made for the Japanese people.

We thank you for Yamamuro, and many others that come through history we thank you for the impact that they had because they had been willing to answer your call and to be officers and soldiers and evangelist for you and for the Japanese people.

あなた個人に対してと同じように、神様は救世軍にも目的を持っておられます。

神様が救世軍で仕えるように声をかけておられながら、あなたが自分で別の道を選ぶなら、救世軍はその分、効果的な働きができないことになります。

神様の計画は近しい人にも神様の感化を与えてくれるものです。私たちが別の道を選ぶならば、神様は元の計画とは違う備えをされることになります。

救世軍の未来は皆さんの手に託されています。

兵士、士官、ジュニアソルジャーの皆さん

神様は御心が日本に成されるために、救世軍を用いてくださいます。

神様が自分に声をかけておられると感じる方は、どうしたら神様の完全なご計画に従うことができるのか、士官の方と話してみてください。

あなたの人生に対する神様の召しが成就しますように。

日本の救世軍のために祈ります。

またこのメッセージを聞いておられる方、主の働きに携わるよう神様に招かれている方々が、神様の導きに心を開くことができるように。心に示されたことを、士官や信頼できる人に分かち合えるように。

神様の招きに応える備えができるように。

神様のご計画があなたの人生に成就するよう、必要な状況が整えられますように。

お祈りしましょう。

父なる神様、この日本の地図を見る時に、日本の方々に対するあなたの召しを思います。先達者の残した感化を覚えます。

山室中将をはじめ、歴史を通じてあなたの召しに応じて、士官、兵士、伝道者として、日本の人々にあなたのことを伝えた働き人のことを感謝いたします。

We pray, Holy Spirit, you would be working in the lives of all across the country that you might specifically call people into the ministry of the Salvation Army as local officers, as envoys and as officers.

Because we believe the purpose of the Salvation Army has yet to be fulfilled in Japan

We pray this believing. For it is in your name we pray, Amen

I have been reading this book by Gunpei Yamamuro and I am so glad that he answered the call to become saved and to serve his life for others, his countrymen so that you and I could come to know Jesus personally.

Who is the next, for the next generation to serve as an Officers of the Salvation Army

I am praying for you

We love you, and we look forward to seeing you soon.

God bless you.

聖霊様、どうか人々の人生に働きかけて、救世軍のミニストリーに携わる下士官や士官を呼び起こしてください。声をかけてください。

日本において、救世軍が果たすべき役割があると信じます。

信じて、御名を通して祈ります。

この本を読んでいて、山室軍平中將が救いと献身の招きに応答したことに感謝しています。そのおかげで、イエス様を知ることができた大勢の魂がいます。

次世代に、救世軍士官として仕えてくださる方はいるでしょうか。

皆さんのことをお祈りしています。

お会いできる日を楽しみにしています。

主の祝福を祈ります。