

Answer The Call: Graduation Sunday

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A little over 2 years ago, I joined the staff here at Wellspring

Before I moved into the role of student minister, I was the worship minister here at the church, but agreed to help with the Junior and Senior small group on Wednesday nights.

I had one class of seniors when I started and I was late in the game when it came to getting to know them, but the jrs in that group were great and I loved getting to walk with them as a part of that ministry.

But that sophomore class that would move up, the seniors you just saw, that is a class that is always going to stick with me.

They, like myself, had a more unique experience when it came to Wednesday nights.

I had the privilege of being their small group leader for about a semester when CIY, our summer event for high school students came around. Roni and I had this group of High School Jrs we were put with us for the week, who would be seniors that fall.

I will never forget the moment that it hit me. The moment I heard the call so clearly to pursue the student ministry position. We were at CIY and we were about to go white water rafting, and while we waited for a bus to come get us and take us to the drop point, I was playing cornhole with Hayden Guthrie, Cole Barnhill, Nate Baynes, and Gianni McGlasson, and I was just laughing. I couldn't tell you what they were saying or stupid thing I was saying, but there was this clear moment of: *I really love hanging out with these dorks!*

Not just those students but all of them. That day it became clearer to me that there were unturned stones and opportunities in this ministry I needed to check out.

Then the bus came to pick us up, and we made it 20 minutes down the road towards the drop zone for the rafts, and on this little 2 lane highway through the hills just outside of Cleveland Tn, and a Mt. Dew truck miles ahead of us turned over or wrecked but blocked the road. The school bus in the middle of July that

we were on sat still with about 60 students with no AC for what felt like days, I think it was pretty minor and ended up being like 45 minutes, but still.

In that small amount of time in the back of that bus, any sane person would have taken that as a clear no to the call I had felt just before that trip, but that experience filled me with such joy and built relationship and made it even more clear that this was a call I needed to investigate.

- I got to tell this small group that I was going to be their student minister, and that day was special
- The decision to move to students was, in many ways, terrifying.
- Worship Ministry was my plan, I loved it, I had no original intention of making such a drastic change, but When the call came, I couldn't ignore it. And now on the other side of saying yes to that call, I see God's Goodness and faithfulness in ways I could not have known without being your student minister.
- IT was not, and in many ways still is not the easiest road I could have chosen to be on. But it doesn't mean its where God was leading me.

- There was another prominent young leader we find in the old testament who had to make some big decisions in the midst of big changes in his life. His name was Moses. If you don't know Moses or you know the name but not the story, here are the SparkNotes:
 - Moses was Jewish and born during the time when the people of Egypt enslaved the Jewish people.
 - Moses was hidden as a baby and sent away to be safe from the Egyptians, and the Egyptians found him and raised him as their own. Not only that but Moses was taken into the royal family. He was raised and treated as an Egyptian prince.
 - Moses, though he was born to be a slave, ended up having the most comfortable life he could have had. With all the riches and power that would follow.

Moses saw a Jewish individual being mistreated by an

Egyptian and intervened. There was an altercation

Moses had to run away.

He began to answer this call and then it cost him his comfort.

Moses ran to the wilderness and after a while found a man who offered him

work on his land. Moses began working for him and then eventually married

his daughter

All of this opportunity fell into Moses' lap

It was all very convenient.

Until one day Moses was outside and he saw this burning bush

Wasn't weird to see a bush on fire, it was weird that it didn't burn up and stop

Moses went

Talked to God, took his shoes off upon holy ground

God told Moses to go back to Egypt, the place he had run away from, and speak on behalf of his people, the Jewish people.

Moses found a lot of reasons to say no:

- Not good enough
- Scared,
- Etc.

But one thing I believe is that Moses did not want to go because he had everything he needed. He had a convenient life and lifestyle that would be there waiting for him. He had already given up extreme comfort, now why would he walk away from a life that is so convenient?

I think its because You never would have heard of Moses the shepherd. But you have heard of Moses the Man who led God's people.

Moses, even though he went kicking and screaming at some point, decided not to settle. Students that is my advice to you this morning:

Don't settle for comfort.

- Leave this bubble you have been in and see the world
- Take risks and try new things and say yes to God
- Moses could have had the most comfortable life imaginable in Egypt. But God doesn't lead us to comfort.
- Don't settle for

comfort. Don't settle for

convenience.

- Lots of you have great opportunities and scholarships and things that you have worked really hard for, and that's great, but don't say no to God when he leads you because you have your own plan made up and it makes a lot of sense.
 - o Moses could have stayed with his new family working his father in laws land, but God doesn't lead us to convenience.

God does not lead you to comfort, and God does not lead you to convenience, God instead will lead you to the calling.

Answer The Call: Graduation Sunday
Andy Hudelson
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I had been misled my entire life

I remember it like it was yesterday

Seven years ago this month

We were at a graduation party

For some friends of ours

The dad got up at one point

To thank everyone for coming

And to say a few words about his oldest daughter

And he got choked up

And while he worked to compose himself

I looked down *my* row

At *my* four daughters

And *I* got a little choked up

One had just finished her sophomore year of HS

One had just finished her freshman year of HS

I realized that I had been misled

And now – having celebrated 4 graduations in 5 years

This month is not for them

I mean fine, let them have their name on the cake

But graduation is for the parents

So Rob talked to them

Let me talk to you a sec

Do you ever feel like parenting is like climbing a mountain?

Well, if that's true

You're almost to the top of the mountain

You're almost to the finish line

Now, in some ways, I can tell you

In some ways, your parenting never ends

You get to the top of the mountain

Only to see peak after peak ahead of you

But in other ways
 In other *significant* ways
You're almost to the top of the mountain
 You're almost to the finish line

Rob spoke a moment ago
 About Moses answering the call
 To follow God
And it's easy to see how your kids
 Our students
Get to those moments in life

But Moses was also a parent
 A parent to 2 million
 Whiny... disobedient... stubborn children
And much like you
 Moses – in his parenting
Had to climb a mountain

We first see Moses climbing a mountain
 To get the 10 commandments
If you're going to climb the parenting mountain
 You've got to connect with God
You've got to get the Words of God
 Into your kids life

Why did Moses have to climb?

Exodus 19:20 says,

The Lord descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up

Could God not have come to the bottom of the mountain?

 Why did Moses have to climb?

We don't know

 But I think God was painting a picture

If you want to lead your kids

 You've got to work to get God's Word

 In their life

Moses had to climb up the mountain to get it

Actually

If you read those chapters closely

He likely climbed Mt. Sinai 6x to deliver them the tablets the 1st time

It was work!

For parents of younger kids

You'll be to this day in about 15 minutes

I want to challenge you to

Work to get God's Word in your kids' life

You'll feel like it's an uphill climb

You know why it feels that way?

Because it *is*... an uphill... climb

Do it anyway

Climb the mountain to connect with God

Climb the mountain to get God's Word in your kid's life

For parents of graduating seniors

It's not too late for you

Bring God's word into the discussions you have in the next three months

Make finding a church

Or a Christian campus ministry

One of the biggest priorities

Move in weekend

Ask them about *their new* church

When you're asking about classes

Work... to get God's Word into their lives

So that was the first time

(Or the first six times!)

We read about Moses climbing a mountain

Do you remember the second event?

This is a funny parenting story

He was up on the mountain with God

Forty days and forty nights

And Exodus 32 says:

Exodus 32:7-10 - Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, 'These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.'

"I have seen these people," the Lord said to Moses, "and they are a stiff-necked people. Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation."

This is a great picture of parenting

God says

I've had enough

And Moses pleads with the Lord

Not to destroy the people

Not to let His anger burn against them

Amy and I had that same conversation

Just the other day

So God calms down

And Moses goes down

Exodus 32:19 - When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, *his* anger burned and *he* threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain.

#Parenting

So because Moses loses it

He has to go up the mountain... Yet again

Six times to get the Word

The first time

And then he has to

Do it again

That's parenting

You have to do it again

And then do it again... and again... and again

When your kids fail

Climb the mountain again

When *you* fail

Do it again

When you're at the end of your rope
Do it again

That's the picture
Of parenting
You just have to do it again

That's the second occasion
Of Moses climbing a mountain
But there's also a third

We'll end with that picture

For forty years
He's lead the people
Sometimes he's lead them well
Sometimes not

#Parenting

Deuteronomy 34:1-4 - Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah, across from Jericho. There the Lord showed him the whole land... Then the Lord said to him, "This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it."

Moses climbed the mountain the third time
To watch his kids go on... without him
#Parenting

Parents, you've climbed the mountain
Again... and again... and again
To bring God's Word *to them*
And to bring *them* to God's Word
And now you're standing at the top of the mountain
Yet again
And you're looking at the land
They're going to receive
It's a good land
A blessed land
A land with a lot of opportunity
But also a land of obstacles and pitfalls

And they're going to go into that land
Without you

That's parenting

This is the moment you've prepared them for
This is the reason you've climbed the mountain
So many times.

But you're not sending them alone
Because God is going with them

Student

God longs to go with you
Let God go with you

For 18 years

Your parents have climbed the mountain

Now it's your turn

To do the climbing

It's a lot of work

I know

It requires discipline

We know

There will be times

When you'd rather stay at the bottom

And hang with your friends at the party

We've all been there

Do it anyway

Climb the mountain

To bring God into your life

When they went into the Promised Land

They took the Ark of the Covenant with them

What was inside that?

The two tablets

Representing the Word of God

Aaron's staff

Representing the power of God

And the jar of manna

Representing the provision of God

Do you see them there?

I mean, this is not an actual picture

This is just off Google

Student – when you take these next steps

Remember to take God with you

Remember to take:

The Word of God

It's still true

It's still relevant

It still can be trusted

Take the Power of God

Pray

And ask for His wisdom

He promises to give it to you when you ask

And ask God for His understanding

Like the Israelites

You've never been this way before

And remember that God will provide for you {The Provision of God}

Jesus is sending you out into the world with a mission

And He promised to be with us when we go... always

Always

I think it's amazing

The picture Scripture gives us

Of the Israelites going off

With the Ark of the Covenant

To take the land God was giving them

While Moses and God

Watch together

From the top of Mt. Nebo

Student, know that no matter where you go

No matter what you do

No matter what stupid mistakes you make

Or amazing accomplishments you achieve

Know that we're looking out at you

From the mountain that we stood on
When we released you to the Promised Land
Otherwise known as stupid college

And know that God longs to go with you
To guide you with His Word
To lead you with His power
And to provide everything you need along the way
Climb the mountain, student
This is true for all of us
Make climbing the mountain to commune with God
The most important priority of your life
And you will achieve
Great... things...