

“Matthew”

Fall Series 1

Lesson 11

“Matthew 9:1-38”

Objective: To understand the message that Matthew meant to convey to his audience and then to come to understand what that message means for us today as those living in the 21st century. We will seek to ascertain what this message means and to determine how we are intended to live our lives as those who are disciples of Christ in our modern context, in light of the message it contains. We will place special emphasis upon application.

Materials: I will begin by examining carefully the Greek text of Matthew, examine other early translations such as the Syriac Peshitta, various modern translations, and any other sources relevant to the historical setting of the first century Roman world that can help us to understand the original meaning. I will then examine early interpretations and understandings and examine commentaries and modern interpretations to enlighten our understanding, help us make application to our current situation.

Procedures

1. We will begin by examining the text from the Greek text.
2. We will examine the contextual setting and seek to understand as much as we possibly can about the historical, cultural, and social settings, in order to understand the message Matthew intended and that God still intends for us.
3. From here, we will seek to find out how to best apply the words of Matthew, for the early disciples, then to our modern contextual framework as disciples of Jesus.
4. We will seek to understand the attitudes that we are called to have as disciples and to reflect not only the actions that are the calling of a disciple, but also to learn how to form our attitudes and thoughts in order to reflect our calling as followers of Jesus Christ.

Lesson

In the last chapter, the people of the region of the Gadarenes asked Jesus to leave their region. Jesus does not argue with them, debate, or refuse to go, He complies. When asked to leave Jesus leaves. We need to be aware of this fact in our own lives. Be careful what you ask for you may get it. At 9:1, we find Jesus returning once again to familiar territory, in Capernaum, responding to a request to heal a physical complaint.¹ It is perhaps not surprising that the initial appeal to Jesus often begins with the pursuit after something physical, something more closely aligned with the current kingdom of this world. Even today, it so often remains the same, people seek Jesus for relief from their physical pain, from their fear of the current uncertainty in their life, or because of their deeper emotional pain. In a manner reminiscent of seeking after a doctor, a psychiatrist, or a counselor, people come to Jesus because they feel a need. In this current account, Jesus will begin to address this issue of felt needs and

¹ R.T. France, The Gospel of Matthew, in The New International Commentary on the New Testament series (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), p. 343.

seek to divert the focus elsewhere; to matters of greater importance, and greater longevity.

This story begins as others have begun before it, but then the narrative will take a surprising turn as Jesus initially offers the forgiveness of sins rather than healing of the paralysis. The healing turns out to be a subplot that is made secondary by the more primary issue; the forgiveness of sins.² How often is it the case that people seek relief from a symptom of their illness rather than a cure for the source of their illness. It is not the man who is paralyzed who takes exception to the actions of Jesus, but the legal experts, the scribes, who accuse Jesus of blasphemy. They do not believe that Jesus, as a Man, has the authority to forgive sins. They understand this to be the sole purview of God. How close they were to the truth and yet still so far from understanding it.

At 9:4, we are informed that Jesus knew the thoughts of their minds. Jesus accurately diagnoses the situation and challenges the evil, the wickedness, of their hearts (*πονηρὰ - **ponera***). How interesting that Matthew uses a word that we now use to describe sexually explicit thoughts and materials.³ Here


² R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 343.

³ "Pornography," "pornographic."

Jesus connects their concerns that He is committing blasphemy with the evil from within their own hearts. In their efforts to protect God, they demonstrate that their motives are not pure and sincere, and Jesus calls them on it. They are not just ignorant or naive, they are wicked, evil in their thoughts. The reaction of the crowd to what Jesus will do this time is not one of amazement, but one of fear (9:8 - *ἐφοβήθησαν - ephobethesan*)⁴.

Their response to the actions of Jesus actually demonstrates that the audience understands the major issue here, it is the matter of “authority” (*ἐξουσίαν - exousian*). Their fear does not repel them or drive them away from God it drives them to praise (*ἐδόξασαν - edoxasan*) God. This word that is translated here as “praise” has a primary meaning of to “think,” or to “imagine.” I am not sure what they think, or imagine, but somehow these thoughts, these imaginings, are understood to focus on the goodness and the greatness of God. This is a word that speaks of something that is unusually fine and deserving of honor. Because of the words and actions of Jesus God is praised, He is honored. Surely, in this we can see the task that is set before us as servants

⁴ From the word that gives us the English word “phobia.”



of God. We are called to do and to act in such a way that God is honored and glorified. As you think about the day that is set before you each moment is this your objective for the day?

In the midst of the level of understanding that is present in those witnessing this event there is still a level of misunderstanding. Surely, it is the case that despite our best efforts there is also a level of misunderstanding on our part. They still fail to comprehend that Jesus is more than just a man. The cure of the man here is related with a minimum of detail. This challenges us to recognize that the focus of Matthew's account here is upon the response of the crowd. Matthew wants us to recognize that in the midst of the crowd's response, are the beginnings, the first steps, in understanding more fully the nature of the mission of Jesus, He came in order to bring the forgiveness of sins to those that are broken and crippled by its effects. Though their understanding still remains far from perfect, it is a good start.

At 9:9, we come to the account of the calling of Matthew, a tax-collector and sinner. In this startling and shocking account Jesus asks a member of one of the most hated and despised

groups within Israel to come and follow Him as one of His disciples. Tax-collectors were considered to be traitors, sympathizers with the enemy. Matthew would have been responsible for collecting a variety of taxes levied by Herod Antipas, a puppet king of the Romans. There is almost always found along with the title tax-collectors, the term “sinners” (ἁμαρτωλῶν - *hamartolon*⁵). This pairing of terms shows how society regarded tax-collectors in society as sinners more than merely hated for their betrayal of society, they were also considered to be those who had betrayed God. For Jesus to call such a man to be a disciple is a daring breach of etiquette, and a likely, very calculated snub to the conventional ideas of what was considered to be respectable and acceptable to God. It is not merely the Pharisees and legal experts that might be expected to balk at this choice by Jesus, even ordinary people would likely balk at this selection by Jesus of someone to stand as one of His disciples.⁶

However, the calling of Matthew did have the effect of bringing Jesus into contact with other tax collectors and sinners.

⁵ cf. Matthew 9:10, 11, 11:19; Luke 15:1; 18:9-14.

⁶ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 351.

This very calculated move on the part of Jesus clarifies the focus of His mission.⁷ Though it is the case that only Matthew is called as a disciple we see from verse 10 that Matthew bridges the gap to enable Jesus to make contact with “many tax collectors and sinners.” These people joined Jesus and His disciples at the table. To share in table fellowship with someone who is considered to be a sinner is considered to be inappropriate, especially for someone who is considered righteous, and also especially for someone who is considered to be a rabbi. It will not take long before those that are skeptical, or even downright opposed to Jesus, begin to question why Jesus eats with tax collectors and sinners.

At 9:12, we are informed that Jesus was made aware of this questioning of the Pharisees. Jesus does not ignore their accusations, but addresses them in a way that calls attention to the mission of Jesus. Jesus came to help the “bad,” the “ill” (*κακῶς* - *kakos*). In the connection that Jesus makes with the need for a physician it is likely that we should understand Jesus as making reference to those that are in some sense ill. Sin makes us ill. Those that sin do not have a healthy soul. At 9:13 Jesus will seek

⁷ Luke states the purpose of the mission of Jesus as: **For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.** NRSV.

to inform people regarding the nature and focus of His mission. Jesus challenges His listeners to understand something of the nature of God and His dealings with His people. Jesus quotes a passage of Scripture from Hosea 6:6.⁸ In the Greek text, the word for “mercy,” *ἔλεος - eleos* is used to translate the Hebrew word *Hesed* (חֶסֶד) that can mean “kindness,” or “goodness.” A long way down the list of meanings for this word in Hebrew is the meaning “mercy.”

This word can and frequently does express the idea of covenant faithfulness in the Old Testament, and if you will note the translation of the Revised English Bible of Hosea 6:6⁹ the translators choose to translate the Hebrew word *Hesed* (חֶסֶד), a word most commonly translated as “to show kindness,” or “concern for someone who is in serious need as “loyalty.” There is no real direct connect between the word *ἔλεος - eleos* and the concept of “covenant faithfulness” or “loyalty,” but with the Hebrew word *Hesed* (חֶסֶד) this is certainly a proper conceptual

⁸ **For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.** NRSV. **For I require loyalty, not sacrifice, acknowledgement of God rather than whole-offerings.** REB.

⁹ **For I require *loyalty*, not sacrifice, acknowledgement of God rather than whole-offerings.** REB.

framework. Either way we translate this word here we still come back to the reasoning for God is to desire covenant loyalty to Him that is rooted in His mercy. Why does God desire mercy from his children? If the children of God are to bear His image into the world then they would be expected to convey and display the attitude and the ways of God. Over and over again we find God showing mercy to those who do not deserve it and absolutely would never have a way of earning from God. On what basis then does God demonstrate mercy? On the basis of His covenant faithfulness, His loyalty, on the basis of His *hesed* (חֶסֶד) on the basis of His mercy, His compassion (ἔλεος - *eleos*). These ideas and concepts are intertwined and interlocked in a way that challenges us to be merciful and loyal.

Jesus seeks to teach people the nature, the origin, of their hope for salvation. It rests in the covenant faithfulness of God, in the heart of His great mercy and compassion.¹⁰ The message of Jesus continues to powerfully and coherently align with the message that God has been trying to communicate to His people

¹⁰ Exodus 34:6-7 **The LORD passed in front of him and proclaimed: “The LORD! The LORD! A God who is compassionate and merciful, very patient, full of great loyalty and faithfulness, 7 showing great loyalty to a thousand generations, forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion, yet by no means clearing the guilty, punishing for their parents’ sins their children and their grandchildren, as well as the third and the fourth generation.”** CEB.

generation upon generation. Those who believe they need no help will not accept the help that God offers. This is another reason that humility is a trait that God highly prizes and encourages. The proud, and the self-sufficient, perceive that they have no need of God. They are beyond His help until their heart is humbled and they come to recognize their need for God, and His amazing mercy and loyalty is beyond their reach, their understanding and does not touch the reality of their great need.


At 9:14, there is a shift away from questioning Jesus about eating with tax collectors, to a challenging of the reasoning that He does not follow the traditional routine of fasting. This time those questioning Jesus are not the Pharisees, or the experts in the Law, but the disciples of John. In their questions is the hint of their disapproval. They choose to focus on the ways that Jesus does not fulfill their expectations of the Messiah. They have an image and an expectation of what the Messiah will look like, act like, and Jesus fails to meet those expectations. This time, the disciples of John will align their practice with that of the Pharisees, and they will actually hold them up as a positive example of righteousness. As always, Jesus is ready with an answer to their question.

He responds by telling them that the festivities associated with a wedding are those of celebration, of joy, and of hope, for the future and thus provide a very natural image for the new life in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 22:2-13; 25:1-12). In this imagery, the bridegroom represents Jesus (cf. John 3:29¹¹). With Jesus, and His ministry, that joy is not a future hope, but something that characterizes the whole of Jesus' earthy ministry in the present reality. At Matthew 11:18-19,¹² there is a similar contrast made between John's asceticism and Jesus reputation as a glutton and a drunkard. Fasting does not fit naturally into the setting of joy and celebration of Jesus, as the bridegroom still being present.¹³ For those of you that have fasted for any extended period of time one can understand why fasting is not associated with joy and celebration. It might be the case that the ending of a time of fasting might illicit joy and celebration, but not

¹¹ **It is the bridegroom who marries the bride. The bridegroom's friend, who stands by and listens to him, is overjoyed at hearing the bridegroom's voice. This is my joy and now it is complete.** REB.

¹² **For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' 19 Yet the Human One came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunk, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is proved to be right by her works."** CEB.

¹³ R.T. France, The Gospel of Matthew, p. 356.



the actual fast itself. Fasting will return when the bridegroom departs.

At 9:16-16, Jesus will pick up the theme of a new and joyful pattern of religion which is not compatible with the old traditions represented by the fasting regimes of the Pharisees and the followers of John.¹⁴ It is hard for people to let go of traditions and accept change. It is in most areas of human life that change comes slowly and usually takes a good deal of convincing. One of the reasons for government is to regulate the rate of change. Rapid change causes great consternation and anxiety for people. The message that Jesus brings will challenge the old traditions and therefore those traditions must be put aside in order to make way for a new way, a piece of new cloth, a new wineskin. Jesus tells them that change has arrived. The old traditions will be swept aside and a new way has come.

At 9:18-21, we come to another account of a miraculous healing by Jesus. The account begins when a “ruler” comes and kneels before Jesus petitioning Him to come and raise His daughter from the dead. He requested that Jesus come and place

¹⁴ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 356.

His hand upon His daughter. This is now a third group of miracles that will further extend the range of afflictions which must bow to the authority of Jesus. Even death itself must flee in the face of the authority of Jesus. Each of the three miracles that follow will introduce a new element of understanding. The women with the hemorrhage reflects on overcoming a long-standing and therefore, presumably incurable, condition. There is also in this miracle the element of addressing the purity laws. It is of interest that it is only in this instance that Matthew will use the term “salvation” (*σώζω - sodzo*) for a physical healing.¹⁵

Blindness and dumbness are then added to the instances of severe disability that are cured. The blindness is attributed directly to a physical healing, while the dumbness is attributed to demon possession and is cured by exorcism. Each of these instances of deliverance are given without providing a great deal of detail. With this final triad of miracle stories Matthew will bring to a close his quite comprehensive collection of miracle stories designed to demonstrate the authority of Jesus in chapters 8-9. In the midst of this focus on authority, it must not be missed

¹⁵ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 359.

that there is a greater focus and that is the overriding note is not one of focus on hard power, but upon deliverance and joy. As people are set free from danger, from disease, from demonic powers, they are called to share with Jesus in enjoying the “new wine of the kingdom of heaven.”¹⁶ They are called to celebrate the beginning of the new creation of God.

As we come back to 9:18, we are confronted with a ruler who comes and kneels before Jesus. This is a man who is distraught and mourning the loss of his daughter who has just died. The ruler knelt and pleaded with Jesus to come and place His hand upon her so that she might live. On what basis does he have this expectation? “We have been given no basis in the narrative so far for such an assumption; like the “faith” of the centurion in 8:8-10 it is entering uncharted waters. It is therefore surprising that whereas the faith of the woman is commended in v. 22 and that of the blind men in vv. 28-29, the word is not used of this man’s even more remarkable ability to see beyond a natural impossibility. The facts are allowed to speak for themselves.”¹⁷ Another surprise in this account is the request of the ruler to lay

¹⁶ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, pp. 359-360.

¹⁷ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 362.

His hand upon his dead daughter, therefore asking Jesus to become ritually unclean by touching the dead.¹⁸ It is perhaps the case that the ruler sees the touch of Jesus as capable of cancelling out not only death, but also of cancelling out the impurity associated with death. Jesus agrees to go with the ruler.

While on the way to raise the daughter of the ruler, a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years came up behind Jesus and touched Him. How desperate she must have been, but what faith she expresses as she believes that all she needs to do is touch Jesus and she will be healed (verse 21). At 9:22, Jesus turned and saw the woman and He told her “to be of good courage” (*θάρασει - tharsei*), He then informs her that her faith has “saved,” or “healed” (*σέσωκέν - sesoken - from the basic verb σώζω - sodzo*) her. The usage of this word may reflect the perspective, on the part of Matthew, that the restoration to normal life of this woman, who had previously been “unclean” because of her issue of blood, is being reflected in language of “salvation.”¹⁹ I wonder, what are our perceptions of “salvation?” Is it just relief from the physical, or is

¹⁸ Numbers 19:11 **The person who touches the dead body of any human will be unclean for seven days.** CEB.


¹⁹ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 363.

there a spiritual element to your perception of “salvation,” “to healing?” Surely, it is significant that the healing of Jesus for this woman, who has suffered for such a lengthy period, is done with such immediacy. Jesus brings relief to those that suffer and endure hardship, pain, and rejection.

At 9:23, when Jesus gets to the house of the ruler the actions of mourning have already begun. It was the custom of this period that the funeral would take place the same day as the death. The people have already begun to gather in preparation for the funeral. Loud wailing is customary on such occasions, and is very typical of the culture.²⁰ For Jesus, who is about to raise the girl back to life, the mourning, and the wailing is inappropriate, so He orders the mourners to go away, and tells them that the girl is only asleep.²¹ The text of Matthew literally says, “they were laughing” (κατεγέλων - *kategelon*) at Him. Despite this, Jesus sends the crowd away, He goes in, touches her and the little girl was raised up (ἠγέρθη - *egerthe*). Needless to say this was big news, and news regarding what had happened spread throughout

²⁰ cf. Jeremiah 48:36; Mark 5:38; Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 3.9.5

²¹ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, the Word Biblical Commentary series, Vol. 33A (Dallas TX: Word Books, Publisher, 1993), pp. 249-250.



the whole land. Imagine how the family rejoiced at this moment. Now they understand why the mourning was inappropriate; this is a moment to rejoice and praise God not to mourn.

At 9:32, a man who was unable to speak was brought to Jesus and He exorcised the demon and the man began to speak. Once again we find the crowds being amazed by what they saw Jesus doing. Some, however were not impressed. The Pharisees expressed their opinion that Jesus had cast out demons by the power and the authority the ruler of the demons. In contrast to the crowds, the Pharisees had already begun giving a negative evaluation regarding Jesus and His miracles.²² How often it is the case that good actions bring criticism, for no apparent reason, other than jealousy and evil within the heart of the critic. We are not informed here of any response from Jesus to the charges made by the Pharisees.


At 9:35, we are informed that Jesus travelled among all the cities and villages. We are specifically told that He would teach in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom. He continued healing every disease and every sickness. It is here that

²² Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, p. 257.

we are told specifically that Jesus had “compassion”

(*ἐσπλαγχνίσθη - esplagchnisthe*) because the people were maltreated, molested (*ἐσκυλμένοι - eskulmenoi*) and “helpless” literally as one thrown to the ground (*ἐρριμμένοι - errimmenoi*). They are like sheep without a shepherd, at risk because they do not know where to go, or what to do. They are prone to attack, and vulnerable to any predator that might come along. Their helplessness, and vulnerability, brings out the compassion in Jesus.

At verse 37, Jesus speaks of the great need of the people. This comes just prior to Him sending out the twelve on a mission. Jesus refers to the needs of the harvest and the fact that the workers are few. He challenges the audience to plead with the Lord of the harvest to send out workers for His harvest. Jesus challenges them to continue to appeal to the source of the kingdom of heaven. This concludes this section, that comes at the end of the sermon on the Mount, with the mighty acts of Jesus presented to those learning about the ministry, the authority, and the compassion of Jesus. The words and the actions of Jesus challenge those who see and hear the miracles and the words of




Jesus to see a new way, to become something different than they were, to answer the calling of God to become His children, to trust in Him and to rejoice at His mighty works. The challenge of transformation and change still stands for us today. Will we see the world as merely physical, as filled with evil, and life as something to be lived with gusto getting all that we can from it, or will we begin to see the world as Jesus saw the world? Jesus knew the dangers and that there was much evil in the world, but He chose to focus on God and the breaking in of His power to begin transforming, changing that world to become like the kingdom of heaven where His will and His power were obeyed and brought compassion, mercy, blessing and true justice.

Do you believe this? Do you demonstrate this by the way you treat others, by the way you set the priorities in your life, by the focus that you have? Jesus is still calling His disciples. Will you choose to follow?

Synopsis

Jesus will challenge people to see that the focus of His ministry is greater, more decisive, and more persuasive than just healing the sick, raising the dead, and driving out demons. Jesus will make it clear that He comes to challenge the source of evil and He begins doing this by forgiving sins. For those that are open to change, open to new possibilities, the words and actions of Jesus elicit fear and praise for God.

Jesus calls Matthew, a tax-collector and sinner, to be His disciple and receives criticism for this from the Pharisees. This opens up the opportunity for Jesus to clarify His mission, which is to seek out those that are sinners and who actually know it. He also tries to teach them that God prefers mercy over sacrifice. We also find out that the disciples of John the Baptist are critical of Jesus and aligned with the practices of the Pharisees when it comes to the practice of fasting. Jesus takes the opportunity to clarify more, for those that are paying attention, who He is, and His mission of initiating the new era, when the kingdom of heaven begins to come into being on earth as it is in heaven.



We are finally introduced to a series of four miracles that will demonstrate the power and authority of Jesus. One, the raising of a young girl from the dead, another, healing a person with a long-term issue of blood, another, the healing of two blind men and finally, an exorcism that allows a man to speak. Once again Jesus will receive criticism from the Pharisees, this time for driving out demons. We are also told that Jesus has compassion for the crowds because they are helpless and troubled. Jesus challenges them to plead with the Lord of the harvest for workers. We see the stage being set for a conflict between the Pharisees and Jesus

Main Points

- Jesus reveals his authority to forgive sins.
- Jesus challenges people to stop filling their minds with evil.
- Jesus calls unhealthy people to be His disciples.
- God desires mercy not sacrifice.
- Jesus initiates that which is new and replaces the old.
- Jesus highlights the role of compassion in His mission and the need for workers in the kingdom.

Questions

1. Why do you think the forgiveness of sins is important?
2. Which would you prefer the forgiveness of sins or to be cured of paralysis? Why?
3. Why do you think the legal experts found the words of Jesus regarding the forgiving of sins to be insulting to God?
4. What are some ways that people fill their hearts with evil thoughts?
5. Which do you think is easier, to forgive someone's sins, or to heal someone of paralysis?
6. Why do you think that fear and praise of God are connected?
7. How do you feel about tax collectors today? How would you feel about them if they were collecting taxes for someone that did not represent your interests, such as a foreign power?
8. Why do you think that Jesus was criticized for eating with tax collectors and sinners?
9. Who do you think are people today that are viewed with hatred and disgust in the same way as tax collectors were in Jesus' day?
10. What does it mean today for us to pursue mercy and not sacrifice?
11. Who are the righteous, who do not need saving?
12. What is the purpose of fasting?
13. Do you think that people should fast today? Why, or why not?

14. What do you make of Matthew 9:15?
15. Why do people hang onto traditions with such tenacity?
16. Do you think Jesus challenges the traditions of His day? Why do you not think that He did this?
17. What do you think the words of Jesus say regarding traditions today?
18. How significant do you think it is that Jesus raises someone from the dead?
19. Why do you think Jesus heals people?
20. What do you think “faith” has to do with the healings of Jesus?
21. Why do you think Jesus warns people not to tell others that He healed them?
22. Why do you think people do not honor the orders of Jesus to keep quiet about what He has done for them?
23. What does the ability of Jesus to have authority over demons say regarding who He is?
24. Why do you think the Pharisees are critical of Jesus?
25. What challenges you to have compassion for others?
26. Why is compassion important?

To Take Home

What is Important to know?

It is important to know that Jesus has authority over life and death, everything in between and more. If Jesus is pleased with us nothing else really matters. So often we seek to please ourselves, or others in our orbit. What really matters is pleasing Jesus. As Jesus sought to please the Father through His thoughts and actions we are challenged to please Him, to serve Him, to become like Him. What are some ways that you remind yourself of this goal each day?

Where is God in these words?

God is in these words exposing the agenda of this world and its hypocrisy. At verse 9:3, we are told that the legal experts found the fact that Jesus forgave the sins of this man, and then healed him, which was done as a demonstration of His authority to forgive sins, insulting to God. Doing good and forgiving sins were considered by them an insult to God. It makes you wonder what perspective they had on God, or perhaps it was the case that they had another agenda. How is it possible for us to discern the agenda of our own heart?

What does any of this mean for how I live my life?

The words, and the actions of Jesus challenge us to see the world in a different light. Jesus asks the legal experts, why they filled their minds with evil thoughts. Sometimes it is the case that excuses are made for the evil that people do. It almost seems that if there is an excuse, people are somehow exempt from responsibility for their actions. We live in a time when people fail to take responsibility for their own actions. Do you believe that God will hold you responsible for your own actions, or do you think you will be able to mitigate your sentence because of your circumstances?

What is the word of God calling us to do?

The word of God is calling us to follow Jesus, to become like Jesus, to think like Jesus. Jesus calls disciples from all walks of life. Most were very ordinary people, but because of the calling of Jesus they would become extraordinary human beings. They would become faithful to Jesus even unto death. What is the calling of Jesus challenging you to do with your life?