

Calvary United Methodist Church  
June 2, 2019

**GOD'S CALL**  
Dennis Helsel, Laity Leader

**Children's Message:**

Luke 18:15-17

Good morning. My name is Dennis Helsel and if you look at the choir, the woman cringing is my wife. It's great to be with you here today and hopefully I'll keep it simple so that we can get out on time. Somebody told me in the first service that my children's sermon was longer than my sermon. But please understand, I am not ordained, I love the Lord, and hopefully he will use me to give you an example that you can practice and take home with you. At 2:50 this morning He woke me up and said "Some of your slides are wrong." I would have liked to have slept a little longer, but we didn't. And as you know, and I'll tell the children, all good children's messages are just the preliminary for the main message. It is a good lead in. So if I have done my job, you will have to listen to the children's service, no napping. The other piece is have fun today and may your walk with the Lord be enhanced.

I deliberately talk from down here, because our focus should be on Christ, our focus should be on the cross, and if I walk back to the back, I apologize to you that sat in the back hoping you would never have to look at me.

So, with that, how about the children. Could I have some children? I know I am a strange person up here, but...oh, good. Oh, great! Now the other good piece about this, if you are in your second childhood, you are welcome to come up too. Okay. Ah, come on up. The bad thing about being old is I don't think I can get up after this. Okay.

Well, today we are going to learn something about what God tells us to do and we are going to try here. But first we are going to look at this message because you know you play a very important part in the Bible. And everybody can read this, but basically what it says is if you don't come to the Lord as children, as simplistically, because you see things very easily. You don't look for deeper meanings. And Christ recognized that. And the important thing on that slide is he said: Mark this: Unless you accept God's kingdom in the simplicity of a child, you'll never get in. See, you have a great role because you are modeling for us over 29.

Well, I ask you what flossing is, could you tell me what flossing is? Flossing. Okay, you are doing there. (Child speaks.) You are doing good. I'm going to let you do it again. Wait a minute. Okay, let's look at this, see if you can relate to this.

(Video)

To most of us, flossing is not dancing. Are any of you good flossers? Who flosses every day? Well, he's going to do it. Anybody want to...you just show up and do, show him your great

skills, ok. There we go. Good job. Ok, you don't work with children or animals. Well, okay, there we go.

Well, to us over 29, flossing has a whole different meaning. As a matter of fact, Ibukun can tell you that flossing every day helps your teeth and keeps decay away. So, I owe it to you to show you another flossing video, so this is what we older people think of when we hear flossing:

(Video)

Ok, as we, and this is a commercial up there, but dentists tell us if we floss daily, we are better off and our teeth are better off.

Well, the Lord tells us to do something daily, ok? And we are going to see it right up here. The Lord tells us something to do daily. Well, you know what? You are giving away my whole sermon, but that's pretty good. But here's what I am going to say: The Lord told us to ploss...P L O S S. Do you know what an acronym is? Have you heard that word? What? (Child speaks.) Well, that's right. You take words and you take the first letter of the word and you make a word. So, you won't find this in the Bible, but, well, the Lord tells us daily to do something. He tells us to ploss...P L O S S.

Now, the older folks are going to have to stay away during the real message to understand and you are going to have to tell some of these youngsters what the P, the O, the L, the S and the S are because they are going to demonstrate to you the L. What do you think the L is? (Love.) Love, good. And it follows our scripture that you are to do something right here, first Timothy 4:12 tells us this. And it says: Don't let anyone put you down because you are young. Do you know what "put you down" means? Don't anybody tell you you can't do anything when you are young. Don't let anybody say you are not good enough. And he says: Teach believers with your life by word, by demeanor, by love, by faith, by integrity. By love.

Now, we are going to demonstrate because God, the Lord, told us we have to love and the interesting thing is children bring love into the world far easier than older people like 29s and older like me. And we are going to demonstrate that.

Okay, I need a volunteer. This is audience participation. No, the adults have to come up and then you are going to get to do something. I need somebody, not faking it, but naturally. As we age, as we get over 30, our mouth starts to droop. I am not telling you something you don't know, but it does. So, I need a volunteer. You can do this at home, you won't be hurt, but would somebody like to come up that has a drooping...mouth? My wife is cringing back there...she just crawled under the chair. Would somebody like to volunteer? I really need a volunteer? Oh, don't make me pick, now you are going to...here we go. Out of love. She says: I'm not going to let this bald guy hang himself. And I didn't ask, but I did touch her back.

Okay, now, put your natural...okay, she is going to turn around and naturally, her...so you stay right there. I have to talk to the children a second. Come on up here. Okay. When I say the word love, go up and hug her. Okay? When I say the word love. Okay. Now, we are hoping this works, okay and don't fake. Here we go. Love! Great job, children! Thank you very much, you did great.

Can you not be hugged by a child and not change that look? If you can't see love in the hugs of children, then we are wasting our time here in the church.

Now, in honor of that, we have some things, your normal things. Everybody can take...can everybody take one of these. Don't leave though because we have something else. Ok, we have somebody flossing up here while we are going. Don't leave quite yet, here we go. Now, thanks to dentists, we have floss so that the young people can know. Now, the interesting thing, on the back of this it says "PLOSS". So, the children are going to ask you what the P is, what the O is, the S and the S, but every one of the children are going to get this.

And if after the sermon you would like one, because of the graciousness of Ibukun, we have plenty, maybe not for everybody, but you can take one home and keep the container that has the word PLOSS. Okay, here you go. We are done. Okay, I know you love me but we are done. You can go back. (Adult speaks.) Okay, I'm glad there are people that always help me. Okay, you can follow if you are going to go. If not, go back and remember to ask your parents after we are over.

**Message:**

Matthew 4:18-22

You know I can tell you for certain, certain deodorants you don't want to use, because I am sweating like a stuffed pig. I don't know if you have ever seen a pig sweat, but it's an ugly sight.

But thank you for staying. The choir could only take one service of me and they left early. The warned me that they were going to do that.

Now, I realize I have two minutes and 36 seconds to bring this message. I don't know if I can do it that fast, but I am going to try. The other thing is I understand there are commitments and we have things so if during the sermon your time ends, get up, just don't wake the person next to you, okay?

Now, you may have noticed the ushers do something they usually don't do. They were frisking for rotten tomatoes or tar and feathers before you were coming in. The interesting thing is that bringing the message you have something to look for. There is a book out there that says: things to look for if your sermon is going bad. When I pause for dramatic effect, several giggled. This one is always true and I saw it. There were parents who ran out when junior church was going on. Mothers pinched their babies because you have to take care of a crying

baby, you can't have it in the church. The ushers were handing out refunds. My cell phone rings and I answer it. The interesting thing is we deliberately, Pastor Bob in his infinite wisdom moved the offering before me. This church, we need our money and he was afraid that after I talked that you might be inclined not to give today, so we got your money so we are happy.

My wife made me put this up, just so you understand. She likes this church and we've been run out of churches before, so she made sure that I put this disclaimer up there.

But let's begin with the Gospel reading. It is a familiar passage: Matthew 4:18-22:

In this we start out with the call to Simon and Andrew: walking along the beach of Lake Galilee, Jesus saw two brothers, Simon, later called Peter, and Andrew. They were throwing their nets into the lake. It was their regular work. Jesus said to them, "Come with me, I'll make a new kind of fisherman out of you. I'll show you how to catch men and women instead of perch and bass. They didn't ask questions, but simply dropped their nets and followed.

And we go on and he now calls James and John, verses 21 – 22: A short distance down the beach they came upon another pair of brothers, James and John, Zebedee's sons. These two were sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, mending their fishnets. Jesus made the same offer to them and they were just as quick to follow, abandoning boat and father.

The Word of the Lord. I think we are supposed to say something. This is the Word of the Lord. I'll say it again. I confused you, I left out the word "this." Okay.

Have you ever thought: what if God had a cell phone? Most of us in this room are over 30 and probably can remember the world without cell phones. I moved a football team to Japan to play a game; didn't have a cell phone. It's amazing what we did without. And now cell phone invade our world and it's a good thing, but it is interesting. You have three choices when you get a phone call. When you hear your cell phone ring, the first one is do not answer. Maybe you look at the number and think I am going to block them because it might be somebody who is trying to sell you something or it might be a relative you don't want to talk to. Secondly you do not answer, you let it go to voicemail. And thirdly, you answer. Basically that is what you can do.

Well, here's what happens now that we have cell phones, because with cell phones we are out in public and if you answer, if you answer, your expression, where you might have done it in the privacy of your home, now in public your expression of what you hear on the phone is for everybody to see.

So, if you answer, maybe your face looks like this. We know what she is thinking. We know what he is thinking. We know what she's thinking. I finish with one that everybody can real-

ize because it is either a grandmother and grandfather or a father and mother and they probably are talking FaceTime with their grandchildren or their children. Amazing.

Well, what happens if that phone said on it when you looked at it it said: God calling? God calling. Well, we would like to think that that would be our response if we looked at our phone and we saw God calling. It's a thumbs up experience. Why is it a thumbs up? Well, if you answer His call you get a chance to talk the walk with the Lord. All of us have a personal relationship with the Lord and here you can actually hear his response on the cell phone. But the interesting thing is if we saw the word God on our phone, God calling, most of us would come up with one of the reasons that we are not...answering God's call...not. Why? We think we are not qualified. I can't be a disciple! I can't be somebody that serves the Lord because I am not qualified.

Well, another reason that comes up real quick is too busy. In today's age, we are pretty busy, seeing grandkids on weekends, hunting, everything you can possibly do now on Sunday takes away from our time with the Lord.

Well, another is great reason is we are not convinced that it is really God calling. Now, this is going date me, but I can remember listening to an old record that said: Noah, this if God calling. Right... Now, that dates me, if you don't understand that ask somebody that looks older than me.

And there is another great reason we come up. We choose not to make talking the walk with God the priority. We just don't.

Well, then here comes that age old one that we are going to talk about and try to dispel very quickly: We are afraid of what He may ask. Remember the Old Testament scripture? The two ladies were fearful of God so they didn't kill the male child because they were fearful. And throughout the Old Testament, there is fear. It enters in. And I don't know about you, I'll speak about myself. If I look at a cell phone and I see "God calling" I'm probably going to be worried: what is he going to ask me to do? Because I'm not sure I'm prepared. But the interesting thing to this all, and I am going to summarize, I am going through quick, but these are the reasons you saw and we are going to talk primarily about what He may ask.

Well, where could we find out what He might ask? Any idea? This is participatory. You are allowed to participate. Just elbow the person next to you first before you do it. You know, many people would say: I don't know. Where can I find it? Well, Steve gave us a clue: Where do I turn? It's the Bible. It is clearly in the Bible what you are supposed to do and it's all he's ever going to ask. Now, you probably sit and say: How is he going to bring PLOSS into this because that's exactly the Lord wants you to do. He wants you to PLOSS every day. He wants you to PLOSS every day and this is a promise: If you PLOSS every day your walk with the Lord will be greater, more meaningful and you will smile a lot more.

If you need a visual, PLOSS, it is an acronym. What is the P going to be? Pray, okay we get pray to sneak in there. But you know what? This is scripturally based. The story of the persistent widows in Luke 18: 1-8, in verse 1 it becomes very clear: Jesus told them a story showing that it was necessary for them to pray consistently and never quit. If that isn't praying daily, I don't know what is. PLOSS: Pray.

Well, the kids gave away this one. What is L? (Love.) We epitomize love with hugging. Try hugging somebody and not watch them smile. The kids did it and I thank you, I thank you because your reaction when they snuck up on you was perfect because that's what it is: hugs from children are fantastic. Hugs from adults are fantastic, but children bring out the children in us. And it's scripture based: Matthew 22: 37-40. You can read it, but it says: Love your God with all your heart, all your passion, all your prayer and second, love others as well as yourself. These two commands are pegs. Everything in the law, everything in scripture in the New Testament is based on love.

So, now you know: P – pray; L – love. And now we are going to go to this letter. Anybody want to hazard a guess? Obey. See, you didn't need me to come bring this message, you just needed a little reminder. Okay, but again, is it scripturally based? Absolutely! If you love me, notice IF you love me, you will obey what I command. He's not going to ask anything more than you to Pray, Love, Obey.

Well, that brings us to S. This one is a little tougher because we have 2 Ss. Wow! Serve. He asks us to serve. It is scripture again, feet washing the ultimate example. We did this in my home church that I was baptized in, foot washing was always a part of communion and let me tell you, having people coming up with dirty, smelly feet and washing them is a humbling experience, emotional and humbling. Well, again it is scripture based: help and give without expecting a return. Help and give without expecting a return. You'll never, I promise, regret it. Our Father is kind: you be kind. Again, the Bible tells us what we are to do daily: PLOSS: Pray, Love, Obey, Serve.

What's the last one? What's the last S? Surrender? I like that, but there's even more. What do you associate with disciple? Share. Good job. This one is a little longer, but in Matthew 5: 14-16: God is not a secret to be kept. How many of us take the Lord into our hearts and trap it there because we are afraid we might lose it if we share the stories about Christ. We are afraid that we might lose our relationship. If I make you like berries, you don't think I am going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I put you there on a hill top on a light stand shine. Share.

Okay, real simple, the Lord tells us, this is all He is ever going to ask. The cell phone rings. You answer it. He's going to tell you five things, none of them are difficult. He is going to tell you to PLOSS daily, Pray, Love, Obey, Serve, Share. How simple can that be? That's your message. That's your challenge, whether you want to answer the phone or the call from the Lord. To climb mountains, he is going to ask you to Pray, Love, Obey, Serve, Share.

Our Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you. We are so blessed having you in our lives. Just as we take care of our teeth, may we always realize that you are not going to ask much of us. Scripture tells us you want us to pray, you want us to love, you want us to obey, you want us to serve, you want us to share. That is our purpose as a Christian. Amen.