

When God Calls, You Better Show Up!

Scripture used: Romans 12:1-2 (NIV)

OVERVIEW

Big Idea:

Skip Vaccarello, one of the Elders at NBCC and someone who has been a Christian high-tech executive for decades, shared about ways we can discern God's calling for our lives. He emphasized that we all have a common purpose, to glorify God in all that we do, and a common mission, to share with others about the love of God through Jesus with our words and with our life. But we are often called by God to accomplish our mission and purpose in different ways in different seasons of our lives, and Skip used stories from his book, *Finding God in Silicon Valley*, to demonstrate 5 ways that God can speak to help us discern our calling.

KEY POINTS

- 1) **God talks to us via closed and open doors.** Skip used his own professional life as an example. In 2008, he was invited to lead a midsize high-tech company. He was hedging his bets between many different priorities. When the Board of Directors decided NOT to retain his services, it prompted him to start blogging which eventually led to him fulfilling a sense of calling to write his book. God closed the door on him in order to open another one.
- 2) **God talks to us in pain.** CS Lewis said that God whispers to us in pleasure, but screams in our pain. Skip used the example of lawyer Reggie Littlejohn who worked for a prominent firm and did pro-bono work on behalf of Chinese Christians who were persecuted in their homeland and requested asylum in the West. Reggie overcame infertility and cancer; she studied the Bible; and heard the call to serve. She founded the non-profit Women's Rights Without Frontiers to expose and oppose forced abortion, gendercide and forced sterilization in China. She has testified to various parliaments and government ministries, and her organization has impacted millions with her advocacy.
- 3) **God talks to us through our passions.** Our own NBCC partner Tunde Sobomehin started StreetCode Academy in East Palo Alto with a passion to teach technology skills to at-risk youth so they could "hack, hustle, and design the future". His organization now gives hope and future to hundreds each year.
- 4) **God talks to us through prayer.** Neil Ahlsten was a UC Berkeley and Princeton educated engineer at Google who was overcome by the Spirit during prayer. He developed a leading Christian prayer and meditation app (Abide) that now helps millions engage with God in prayer.
- 5) **God talks to us through promptings and whispers.** Victor Ho was a Goldman Sachs and McKinsey alumnus who came to San Francisco to interview with private equity firms. But, despite a lack of equity and programming skills, he instead sensed God's call and started FIVESTARS, an online loyalty platform for local merchants. Victor runs it on biblical principles, and gives significantly to charitable causes.
- 6) **Everyone's calling has something in common.** Calling starts with following Jesus. When we are in relationship with God, then God, who is our Creator, is able to fulfill his plan and purpose in our lives. Living our calling isn't easy, though. Calling involves sacrifice, risk, faith, and obedience, which is seen in all of the stories that Skip shared. But for every one of us, when we trust God with our calling, we will have God-ordained impact in our world and for eternity.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - What is your own current sense of calling? Where do you struggle with the question of calling?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - How might God be revealing your calling to you? Which of the ways that Skip shared about are ones that you'd like to reflect on further? What are the biggest challenges to actually taking a next step to fulfill your calling?
- 3) **DO** - What is a small next step that you can take to move in the direction of your sense of calling? Who might you share your next step with?