

Mark 3:7–19

“I have come to Appoint”

Being Somebody

Who do you want to be?

In the 1990 sci-fi movie *Total Recall*, the main character *Douglas Quaid* is living life but something is not right. He’s got a good job, plenty of friends, life is good, but something is missing. So he goes searching for answers and says at one point, *“I want to do something with my life, to be somebody.”*

Douglas Quaid speaks for the human race. Nobody wants to be a nobody; we all want to be a somebody. To have purpose. To do something meaningful with our lives. Who am I? What am I here for? Am I who I should be? What is my purpose on this earth?

I want to show you this morning that our passage answers those questions when we look carefully at what is going on. Five Cs to help us be the somebody we were created to be — to understand our identity and purpose.

Created. Chosen. Commissioned. Close. Community.

1. Created

The Bible makes clear that God created us for Himself. Out of everything He made, the *only* creatures He made to relate to Him are human beings whom He made in His image, just as children are to relate to their parents in whose image they are created. Because God made you, you’re of intrinsic worth. But just as children can reject their parents, so humanity has done with God.

And life apart from our Creator is horrible which we've seen this as we've been working through Mark. We've met afflicted human beings tainted by sin who are sick, possessed, experiencing rejection, excluded from community, lost, hopeless and in desperate need of salvation. Human beings with broken humanity.

Yet we've also seen Jesus who shows us true humanity. And how everyone who comes in humility to Him for deliverance from sin, Satan, sickness or sorrow, has been redeemed. Those who submit to Him are re-created back to a fuller humanity; they're restored to truer humanity closer to God's original good design and purposes.

Life apart from God is not good, it is wrong, it is horrible; but life under God is good, right, it is wonderful.

Now, whether or not the huge crowds in v.7 realise all of this about Jesus — who knows — but something has drawn them to Him. And they come not just from Galilee, but from all over Israel. *Even* non-Jews from Tyre and Sidon travel some 150 km or so to get to Jesus. But these crowds are so dangerously big, that to avoid being crushed, Jesus requires a boat be ready, should He need a swift exit.

If anything, the crowds reflect humanity's longing to be made whole. And the Bible confirms this, that apart from Him, no single human being, you and I, will ever be nor find wholeness. So don't go looking to find yourself in anything or anyone other than Him.

You and I are created by God, for Him, to live with Him. To find yourself you've got to lose yourself to Him first. This is foundational.

2. Chosen

Second, submitting yourself to your Creator, means you are **Chosen**.

One of the things I dreaded at high school was waiting to be picked for a sports team. I wanted to join in but waiting to be picked was agony. Lanky, spotty, insecure, socially awkward teenager wondering: *Will I be picked at all? What if I'm picked last? Is anyone going to be my friend?*

One of the wonders about Jesus is that He chooses every single one of His followers out of love. When He calls them they come, like sheep to their shepherd. People don't find God; He finds them. *"You, follow me."* Notice v.13, Jesus heads up a mountain, then *calls to Him those whom He wanted, and they came to Him.*

Now why does Jesus choose us? In Deuteronomy 7:7–8, God declares to His people, *"I called you not because you were better or larger or greater than other nations, but simply because I chose to set my love on you."*

Likewise Jesus, God in the flesh, calls His disciples out of His sheer love and grace. They weren't chosen for being *'top of their class'* — for they were: slow of understanding (4:13); hard-hearted (8:17); cowards (16:8). They were called on the basis of God's undeserved grace, not their merits.

Christians are chosen people, not 'choice' people. This is humbling but wonderful. We have incredible security because Jesus' love for us (like a parent's for children) is not based on our performance, strength, qualifications, bloodline, abilities etc. but on a relationship He has decided to have with us.

This self-understanding is at the very root of what makes Christians different. Christians care little for what others think of them, for they know God loves them and has chosen them. Knowledge of His love is the fuel that empowers them, the engine that drives them, the G.P.S. — God Positioning System — that guides them to their eternal destination with Him.

3. Commissioned

So we've been **Created** by God and if we trust Him it means we're **Chosen** by Him, but now what? Well He **Commissions** us. And what for? Part of God's grace is that He gives us great work to do. Our job description, is seen in v.14–15.

In these verses Jesus appoints 12 men to the task of being *apostles* — literally 'sent ones', His delegates — who are i) *to be sent out to proclaim the message*, and ii) *to have authority to cast out demons*. He calls them in order to send them out to do essentially what He was doing Himself. Jesus goes from flying solo to putting together a team who will with Him, in His power, with His authority embody the kingdom of God.

Pharaoh does this in a way with Joseph in the Genesis reading we had. He transforms Joseph, a Hebrew slave, into his son. Gives him his signet ring, fine clothes and jewelry so Joseph looks like him. He gives Joseph his authority with the task of making sure his people do not go hungry — Joseph is to bring them salvation. To top it all off give Joseph a new name. And out of this new identity, new authority and new name Joseph operates. That's pretty much what Jesus does with those He calls to Himself: new identity in Him, new authority from Him, new names: *sent ones, Christ-ians*. Out of this we operate.

Back in Exodus 19:6, God chose His people to be a *kingdom of priests* — a priest being someone who brings people to God. All the people were called to this by God. Likewise Jesus appoints His disciples to bring salvation.

And how do we do this? We communicate God's truth and show His love towards others, putting to use the gifts of the Spirit God has given us, to draw / urge/ convince / plead / challenge / encourage people to come under God's perfect king Jesus. So we are not really Jesus' disciples unless we too are also *sent ones* in some sense. We cannot come to Jesus simply

to have our needs met, but to serve Him in the world as His agents of His kingdom.

What privilege the Almighty Creator God has bestowed on us. He designs, saves us, restores us, then sends us out to represent Him to others that they might have their humanity restored by Him. In Ephesians 2:10, Christians are reminded that God created, chose and commissioned them for Himself,

*For we are God's workmanship, [literally His works of art]
created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared beforehand,
that we should walk in them.*

Created. Chosen. Commissioned.

4. Close

Fourthly, **Close**. What do I mean? Look carefully at the text in v.13–14 to something someone drew my attention to last week. The verses read, *Jesus went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him — so He is with His disciples — And Jesus appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him...*

Now why does Mark tell us in v.14 the disciples are **with** Jesus when clearly he's already told us that in v.13? He's making the point that in order for them to fulfill their commission they have to remain **with** Jesus. Jesus is not just a one-stop shop to fix you up then off you go, but a permanent fueling station for you to keep coming back to in order to function as His disciple.

For Jesus doesn't call the twelve together to meet with Him as business partners might, but to be **with** Him. This is a call to intimacy. And how do you grow in intimacy / closeness in any relationship? You simply invest in the other.

Friends invest in each other. Likewise in marriages, husbands are to invest themselves into their wives and wives into their husbands. So it is with God. He invests His whole self into us... and our part? If we decide not to invest back, we simply won't experience intimacy with God. But when we put God at the centre of our lives things will change.

Have you ever experienced God's love? When you meditate upon His Word, His promises, how He loves you so so much through His Son, you have experienced times being enfolded by Him — by some glorious heavenly power which words cannot begin to describe, when His love courses through you in ways you didn't think possible as your whole body is filled with so much joy you feel like you're going to burst.

If you never experienced anything like this, I suggest you make time meditate on God's promises and swim around in them, letting them surround you. Or maybe you haven't experienced Him because you're not obeying Him? You can do something about that. Or why not this evening, look up at the night sky and picture how huge the cosmos is and how small you are, then bring to mind Gods promises from His Word to love you.

Experiencing God and His love is something He promises to His people in Romans 5:5, *God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.*

So be with Jesus. Stick close to Him. Giving yourself wholly to Him will help you discover who He has made you to be.

5. Community

Lastly, did you notice how Jesus calls twelve to Him?

So? We must see ourselves being called into a community, not just an individual relationship with Jesus Christ. No disciple can be with Jesus

without at the same time being with other disciples. It's obvious, but we need reminding of this often because we live in such an individualistic culture and we default to being individualistic. Jesus never called one person to Himself but a people.

Back in the Old Testament, God had made a promise with His people that they would be His — He makes a covenant with the twelve tribes of Israel through Moses. Now in the New Testament, Mark is showing us Jesus — the one greater than Moses — who has come to establish a new, redeemed people for God. Moses brought God's people out of a land of slavery into the promised land; Jesus brings, with men and women He's chosen to involve in His work, people out of darkness into His eternal light.

So... How can I be somebody?

Who am I?

God's Creation. Made to know Him. You'll only find yourself when you begin here.

How can I be sure?

God assures all who trust in His Son that He has chosen them. His Word confirms He loves His people who hear His voice and follow Him.

What am I meant to do?

He's commissioned you to serve Him; to make Him known to others.

How will I do as He has asked?

Stay close to Him. Be with Him. Experience Him. Allow His love to enfold you and to work through you.

I don't think I can do this!

You're not alone. He's placed you into His people, a community, God's family, brothers and sisters in Christ to encourage you and who are there for you to encourage. So persevere with them into eternity.

Let's pray...

Everlasting God,

*you **created** us and have made us for yourself,
and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.*

*Bring to our minds often that out of your love you have **chosen** us
to be yours **to serve** your glorious majesty.*

*Keep us **close** and strengthen our resolve to walk with you in your light,
knowing your will, obeying your will, rejoicing in your will.*

*Draw us closer **to one another** for we are your people
called to be salt and light in your world,
that you might, through us, draw many to yourself.*

We ask all this for your glory, and yours alone, Amen.