

## Our Lenten Journey – Session 4

### Calling OR Comfort?

#### Choose Your Moves Wisely!

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Resource: *It All Goes Back in the Box* by John Ortberg

**It All Goes Back  
in the BOX...**

#### Introduction:

***If there is a challenge in front of you, a course of action that would cause you to grow and that would be helpful to people around you, but you find yourself scared about it, there's a real good chance that God is in that challenge...***

***If you're not facing any challenges too big for you, if it has been a while since you have felt scared, there's a real good chance that you've been sitting in the chair too long. -- John Ortberg***

#### DVD – **Calling OR Comfort?**

#### Note-taking

- The \_\_\_\_\_ chair is the most dangerous chair in the house.
- *You can't just \_\_\_\_\_ there.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ never calls with an \_\_\_\_\_ assignment!
- You were made for \_\_\_\_\_. God is more concerned with your calling than your comfort.

1. Why is the EZ chair the most dangerous chair in the house? What have you discovered about getting too comfortable in life, and how has that affected which moves you take in the game of life?
2. Why are we inclined (at least initially) to say “NO” to God when He extends a call? What kind of assignments does God call His people to do? What encourages us to say “YES” to God?
3. What did you think and feel when you heard the story of “Johnny the Bagger”? What has he learned about life, calling, and choosing his moves wisely that you can apply to your life?

*Every time we make a choice – what we will eat...who we will spend time with...how much we will give...what we will do after work or on the weekend, we take a “turn” in life. Our life is the sum total of all of our life's choices, so we ought to choose our next moves wisely.*

4. Recall the biblical account of *Daniel in the Lions' Den* (Daniel chapter 1 & 6). Daniel is referred to as “a champion of making wise choices.” What were some of the wise choices he made and what were the results of those choices? What lessons can we learn from Daniel?

*When God calls someone to accomplish a mission, the task is almost always bigger than anything the person can imagine doing, so accepting God's call is a bold move that represents a*

*giant step/leap of faith. What encouragement do the following passages provide, and how does each one help you to accept the challenge of taking bold steps/leaps of faith?*

**(Psalms 9:10) Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.**

**(Psalms 27:1-3) The LORD is my light and my salvation-- whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life-- of whom shall I be afraid? {2} When evil men advance against me to devour my flesh, when my enemies and my foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. {3} Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident.**

**(Psalms 37:23-24) If the LORD delights in a man's way, he makes his steps firm; {24} though he stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand.**

**(Psalms 55:22) Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall.**

**(Psalms 56:3-4) When I am afraid, I will trust in you. {4} In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me?**

**(Romans 8:35-39) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? {36} As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." {37} No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. {38} For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, {39} neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

5. You were made for mission – a calling. What is yours, and how well is it represented on your calendar's squares/days of the months?
6. Who knows you well enough to help you identify what God is calling you to do for Him and His kingdom and loves you enough to challenge you when you shrink from God's mission? Invite that person to pray for you and hold you accountable as you respond to God's calling.
7. What are the obstacles preventing you from stepping out in faith to answer God's call? What are your fears and in what ways are they holding you back from God's calling?

**To Do:** *Pick an area where you can take action and choose to honor God in that area. **Never give up your Spirit...Never yield emotionally...**Take godly action and discover meaning in your suffering, remembering, **when you resolve in your heart to honor God, He becomes involved in your life in ways you cannot even think or imagine!***

**(Daniel 1:1-14) In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. {2} And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god. {3} Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring in some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility-- {4} young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. {5} The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service. {6} Among these were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. {7} The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego. {8} But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. {9} Now God had caused the official to show favor and sympathy to Daniel, {10} but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you." {11} Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, {12} "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. {13} Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." {14} So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.**

**(Daniel 1:15-20) At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. {16} So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead. {17} To**

these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. {18} At the end of the time set by the king to bring them in, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. {19} The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. {20} In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.

(Daniel 6:1-14) It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps – governors, to rule throughout the kingdom, {2} with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. {3} Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. {4} At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. {5} Finally these men said, "We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God." {6} So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said: "O King Darius, live forever! {7} The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions' den. {8} Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered--in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." {9} So King Darius put the decree in writing. {10} Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. {11} Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. {12} So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: "Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or man except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lions' den?" The king answered, "The decree stands--in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." {13} Then they said to the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day." {14} When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.

(Daniel 6:15-23) Then the men went as a group to the king and said to him, "Remember, O king, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed." {16} So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!" {17} A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of

the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation might not be changed. {18} Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep. {19} At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. {20} When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?" {21} Daniel answered, "O king, live forever! {22} My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king." {23} The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.