

Ordination for Jon Cnanavan

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[0 : 00] Join me in Mark chapter number one. It's always a blessing when you hear a story about somebody following Jesus. As a follower of Jesus, that should be all of our favorite stories. It's especially nice when you have friends who are moved, when they share the story of their family following Jesus.

And it's one of the great blessings of the world to have friends like John and Amber who are following after Jesus and motivating other people. So, John, I count our friendship very dear. In Mark chapter one, verse 16 through 18, Jesus calls some people to follow him.

And I'm thankful they were the first of the stories we hear, but it's not certainly the last. Verse 16, now as he had walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers.

And Jesus said unto them, come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and they followed him. I'm grateful that your family made a decision to follow Jesus that you shared about.

I'm glad that you individually both made a decision that you would follow after Jesus. You responded to the gospel message. And in deciding to follow Jesus, you decided that you would forsake your nets.

[1 : 03] The things that you know about, the things that are comfortable, the things that are more predictable to follow after Jesus as you have chosen to do. Tozer said in a prayer, and I hope it would be true of all of us, he prayed, make me ambitious to please thee, even as a result, I must sink in obscurity, and my name may be forgotten as a dream.

How does a person pray like that? It's a person who decided they're going to follow Jesus, so forsaking of their nets is an easy thing to do because of the prize of getting to know him better. On ordination, there's a lot of things we could say about forsaking and following, but I want to look at a few words between those, from the time that he told them to follow and the time that they left their nets.

And it's these six words where Jesus told them, he says, I will make you to become. I found that one of the most reassuring things in all of life and all of the ministry. There's a lot of things ahead of you you don't know about and you're not even supposed to know about right now.

There's things about raising a family. There's things about planning a church. There's things about being a husband that God has called you to do, and that's down the road, and you can be certain that God will make you things that he would have for you to do.

And first thing, I'd like to remind you of two things here, and it should be quite obvious, John. But first, you ought to remember Jesus knows what he's doing, all right? That's an important thing to remember right now is that Jesus knows what he's doing.

[2 : 25] You knew this on the day that you put your faith and trust in him. You've known this at the crossroads of life in your testimony when you had a choice between choosing your own way or going the way in which God wanted you to go.

You knew his way was best, and you knew that when you surrendered to go to New York, that God knew what was best for you, and he knows what he's doing, and he can be trusted. On this day where these fishermen, professional fishermen, caught no fishes, Jesus told them to cast your net on the other side, and they could have looked at him and said, you're a carpenter.

What do you know about fishing, right? But they would quickly learn Jesus knows what he is doing. And so it's an utterly unprecedented catch-a-fish-in-a-location that seemed hopelessly unproductive the night before.

Pastor alluded to it in the ordination council, and it's true of all of our missionaries. It's true of everybody who desires to do a work of the Lord. You're going to find people that are going to tell you it doesn't work in this location.

We have tried that before, and it's just not going to work. We've tried in that borough. We've tried in that city block. We've tried that type of ministry, and we caught no fishes. But you and I both know that Jesus knows what he's doing.

[3 : 31] So when Jesus says, cast his net in any part of town, any type of ministry, you say, yes, sir, and you can follow him, and you can trust him to cast your net and find an unprecedented amount of fish in an area where people send.

Fish could not be caught. I also want to remind you that not only are you being sent out from here, but we know that you're sent out of here following Jesus, and that's what matters, is that you would follow him to New York, and that before you decided that you would follow him to New York, Mark 3.14 says, And it ordained the twelve that they should be with him, that he might send them forth to preach.

The first invitation Jesus gave to you, and Amber was to him, and it was to follow him. Before it ever got to New York, you made a thousand decisions that you're going to follow Jesus, and this is just the next of a series of decisions that you would make.

We know to some extent God is sending you, but we don't know exactly to whom yet. We will quickly learn about a borough, you know, between a few of them. We'll first learn of a borough. Am I saying that right?

A borough? All right. Sounds like a donkey when I say it, right? That's also a borough. And we'll first learn of a borough. Then we'll learn of the name of a town that we probably never heard about. Then we'll learn of a street corner. Then we'll hear the name of a family.

[4 : 42] And then the next thing you know, up on this screen, there'll be a family that you're baptizing, and you'll be standing there. And then they will say, when God called them out of this church, that's who he was calling them to.

That's who God was sending them to. And a church will form, and your family will be raised in it. That church won't just be something you start, but it's something that you'll live in, and you'll grow in, and you'll love, and young people will grow up, and they will love it.

And as soon as they get old enough, Jesus will tell them they can go out and do the same, and more churches will be started. And so Jeff already said, Ephesians 2 to 10, you've been created unto good works.

And following Jesus, he leads you in the good works. Then he tells us in 2 Timothy 3.16, that through the scripture, that you will be thoroughly furnished for all good works. And the reason this is true, that God will lead you in the good works, and he's going to thoroughly furnish you in the good works, is because he said he will make you to become.

So after he said, follow me and forsake your nets, he took on the responsibility to make you everything that he needs you to be. New York City needs somebody that looks like Jesus, and needs a couple that models the gospel, and needs so many things, and we can rest assured today that our God in heaven has made a promise to us that he will make the canavans what he needs them to be, the work that he has called.

[5 : 58] He desires some good works. The Bible tells us in 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy, that the work of an overseer, of a pastor is a good work, and the work of an evangelist is a good work. And those are two things that he has made you to do.

And at different times, he will do both of those works. So today, as the usher get prepared to receive the offering, today as we focus on the following and forsaking your call to do for the sake of the gospel, let me remind you of these wonderful words of Jesus, I will make you to become.

Heavenly Father, thank you for the work that you have done in their life. Lord, thank you that this is available to every one of us, that you have made us as new creatures unto good works.

And that, for the Canavans, Lord, you have a group of people in New York City that their good works will encounter, and they'll hear the gospel. And people will get to share stories of how a couple of Canes shared the gospel, and now it's spread like a wildfire throughout their family, as we have seen with this one.

Lord, you have made them for something wonderful. And Lord, we trust you with them. We trust that you will look over them, that you will guide them, and you will protect them. And Lord, we have a responsibility to them as a church, to hold the rope, and to give, and to encourage.

[7 : 10] We know that it's you, Lord, and you alone that will make them to become all that you would have them to be for the work in front of them. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Take your Bible and turn with me to Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 11.

It's always exciting that the Lord lets us see so many different people be ordained and sent out to the gospel ministry. And I think that's exciting. I'd like to just say a word to you as a church before I say a few things to John.

We have a great responsibility. We have a great privilege because who else sees so many people ordained and sent out like you do? Good night, it's revolving door around here, isn't it?

They come and they go and that's God's great blessing on us. But you know, they need you and they need fellowship. They need people to stay in touch with them.

When you walk out of a place like Vision and you walk into a place like New York City and you're alone and you don't know anybody and no one cares about you and everybody's against what you're doing, a phone call would help.

[8 : 22] And so I would just challenge you all to take to heart that John and Amber are going to need you. We don't want them to be disconnected. We don't want them to be disconnected.

We don't want them to be disconnected. I'm going to go preach at a black church. I'm going to get y'all going sooner or later. And so let's be careful to do that. I'm glad that different folks are being Yoke Fellows when they need that.

I put on my, I actually put on my to-do list to contact my Yoke Fellow every week because that's the way I'll keep it up with it. There's too much going on and too big a life to keep us hopping.

So I'm challenging you to stay in touch and to do that. God's been real good. By the way, this has, you know, it's been a pretty bad year. It's called COVID.

Most exciting thing that ever happened. But did you see all God's doing, how he's answering prayer? Did you hear that Top Everdine got a visa? Did you hear that Austin Till got a visa? Did you hear that Cannon Bloom's got a business working that's liable to get a visa into his country?

[9 : 31] And I'm just saying God is still greater than all the garbage a devil can throw. And God's doing it. It's been a hard year though. Churches have closed their doors this past year because of COVID and they were discouraged.

Mysteries have quit. Quit. And it was discouragement with some of them that caused them to quit. And so we just got to pray and always watch to make sure that we're doing the right thing.

John, just because we're going to pray over you in a minute, I want to just say a few things to you. Can't say anything more than probably what I said in the other room or what you've heard so many times out of the same redundant classes.

I'm like a broken record. Mark Coffey was back here and in one of the classes he said, he's not saying anything he didn't say 20 something years ago.

It's the same stuff all the time. I appreciate that. I thought I was growing every now and then. He said, nope, said all that stuff all the way back there. So John, it's going to be redundant.

[10 : 36] I do think you've been greatly blessed. I mean, I saw Amber and I was like, what's she doing to him? I said, hey man, right there. Good night.

I mean, we all marry up, but you, I mean, you really, I mean, what can I say? And just pick it on you there, buddy. Don't get too mad. Amber liked it.

So, and then look how God gave you a baby. I know Trent mentioned that already, but I think God's been so good to you.

And I don't know how many of y'all know it, but the Cannavans have India, Ireland, south of Atlanta, and New York. Did I leave anybody out? All in the ministry out of one family that just a generation ago, just a generation ago was lost.

And the, one of the brothers was in Okinawa, I think you said it in there, and got saved. John, I know we don't feel like this. It's hard for anybody in the ministry to believe this or feel this, but it's in the scripture.

[11 : 42] I just wish you'd underline it in your Bible. And I want you to remember this, how important this is. He gave some, these are gifted people. And he lists people like me and you.

The whole thing that God does is built around a local church. Everything God does is built around a local church, which is a fancy way of saying a local assembly.

God's people have to assemble. That's what a church is. One of the dumbest things I ever hear is when somebody will say, don't go to church, go be the church. That's like saying, don't go to the assembly, go be an assembly.

That's pretty hard to do by yourself. And so, we need a church. They need a church in New York City. They need a church that will love them and teach the Bible to them.

And God picked you. I don't think I deserve it. I don't think you deserve it. I don't think any of us deserve it. But at the same time, God blessed us and picked you and he gave you to do a work.

[12 : 46] Verse 12, it's for the maturing, the perfecting of the saints. It's for you to go up there and first things going to have to be done is you've got to get some people saved and God's going to make sinners into saints and then you're going to mature them and you're going to help them do the work of the ministry and his body is going to be built up.

So I'm going to give you five words and then we'll just pray over you. Number one, I want to remind you just to go and be spiritual. Go be spiritual. Acts chapter 20 and verse 28, I use it in the other room with you.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves. I challenge you to be very careful to seek the Lord and honor God and always be looking for him. I challenge you to live in the spirit, to walk in the spirit.

I remind you in verse 28, he made you an overseer. It's God that made you. It says, over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers.

So God picked you, God made you and you have a job and that's to feed his people that church that he will start up there. I just want to challenge you to keep working on a deep spiritual life.

[14 : 01] Since I've been doing this full time for almost 48 years, I will tell you that it's not that easy. Somewhere along the way you start thinking, man, I read my Bible through a bunch.

I preached a bunch and I know what I'm doing and then you start getting lazy in your spiritual life. I just want to challenge you to be spiritual. Number two, I want to challenge you to be strong in the faith.

Be strong in the faith. I'll read you some verses. I will spend just a little more time here than I do on either of the rest of these. But in chapter 9 and verse 23, Jesus said, if you can believe, if thou canst believe.

And that man said, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. I just want to challenge you to be strong. You're going into a strong hole of the devil. You're going into a place where Satan has ruled and reigned for a long time.

You're going into a place that's extremely wicked. It's not wicked because they're worse people than anybody else. It's just that they've not had a whole lot of people. and I would say, I want to ask you to be believing.

[15 : 13] The Bible says in Luke chapter 12 and verse 29, neither be ye of doubtful mind. So no doubting. No doubting. It's easy while you're on deputation to think that I'm good.

And all the church has been telling you how great you are. But after a few months in New York City, you might not feel that way. But we don't live doubting lives. We don't live doubting lives.

The Bible says in Matthew 13 59, that the work depends on God moving. And I think it's so, I love these verses. Matthew 13 59, he said, he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

And what's amazing, that is like astonishingly amazing that he said that. God chose not to do things and it wasn't because God couldn't do things, it was because they wouldn't believe God.

Be strong in faith. Go into a bad place, so believe. And everybody tells you not to believe, you just keep on believing. In Mark chapter 6 and verse 5, he said, he could there do no mighty work.

[16 : 21] That's amazing. How in the world could you ever say that God, Jesus, God in human flesh could do no mighty work. Verse 6, and he was shocked.

He marveled because of their unbelief. And John, I'm asking you not to let that happen. Don't let God look down and say, John, I had big plans for New York City. I really want to do something big.

But since you don't believe me, have at it by yourself. Don't let that happen. Stay the course. Nothing worthwhile happens quickly.

nothing worthwhile happens quickly. There's a very good chance you may go a long time before you start seeing much results. And we don't have time to go through it on an ordination.

I need to be through in four minutes, so I'm not going to make it. But do you realize when he told them about trees in the Old Testament, he'd say, you plant that and you don't get anything to eat for three or four years. That's ridiculous.

[17 : 21] There's fruit that next year. But God's like, no, no, don't eat that fruit. Just wait. Fruit's coming. Or on the sixth year, he said, no, you harvest good because you ain't getting anything next year. I don't want you harvesting just whatever grows on its own.

The next year you get to plant again. God takes time. Stick. Stick. Be steadfast. Abound in the work of the Lord. Number four, stress the system.

Told you a thousand times, I'll repeat to you, the process, not the product. The process, not the product. But I want to say this to you.

Don't compare or compete. Don't compare or compete. Second Corinthians 10, 12 says that they comparing themselves among themselves are not wise.

And you'll look across town and that other y'all have it going or you'll look across the country and that other y'all be doing it or you'll look at another mission field and you'll be comparing and you're not to compare and you're not to compete.

[18 : 23] Why would I be in competition with my own teammates? I'm not in competition with my own teammates. We're fighting the devil. Don't compare, don't compete. And then before I leave that, work don't want.

So you know what? The whole goal is that you would do what you're supposed to do and not sit around wanting stuff. and that means that you're raising cattle on the farm as a kid growing up.

I can remember more than one time one cow would push another cow off in a ditch and she'd die with a calf. She fell in this gully, got shoved in this gully and I'd be the one that it's my job to count the cows.

I'd go find the cow and come tell daddy and he'd just be like, yeah, well, nothing we can do about that. We'll drag that and off and burn it. Let's do our job.

You got to do your job. And the last one, there'll be no success without a family. And I am begging you to take care of that wife and daughter that God's given you. If you don't rule well your own house, if you don't raise your children right, you shouldn't be in charge of taking care of a church.

[19 : 39] So I'll just say this, family devotions, Doc. I don't know how many times I've said it, but family devotions. Disciple your wife and your daughter and you dedicate time to them.

A man just told me in the church, I just got through preaching that, he was the pastors, the founding pastor's son-in-law. And he said, I knew everybody would say I only got a job because he was my father-in-law, so I got here before everybody and I left after everybody.

And I worked hard on all of them. He said, I about lost my family. Don't do that. Just do your job. Take care of your family. I said it to you in the room there and I'll say it again.

Man, have fun. Enjoy life. Serving God's a blast. And if anybody's happy on the planet, it ought to be us. All of God's children ought to be happy, but those of us that get to work in it every day all day long, we ought to be happy.

We ought to be fat and sassy. That's how Eli got it. You know, you have to think about Eli got fat and fell off and broke his neck. But you know, man, he's living right in the middle of the offerings. I mean, they bring it in.

[20 : 50] He's eating offerings, enjoying life. He's having a blast. That's who we are living on the high side of what God has for us. Father in heaven, I pray your blessings on John and Amber.

And I just pray God you'd show your power in a real way in their life. I pray God that you would use them beyond anything any of us could ever expect. God, I'm praying now for the men that will be saved in that church.

I'm praying God for the young man that you will call forth out of that church to pastor that church and other young men that you will call forth to go start other churches. And I'm praying God that you'll do something in New York City that will just magnify your name and make you greater and greater and greater in our minds.

I love you and I thank you for the privilege you have of being here tonight. I just pray you would continue to work. Now God help us as a church, help us as a church to do our job and love this man and be there for him and I'll give you praise and honor and glory in Jesus name.

Amen. Now I preach with an iPad so whenever these dingbats text I see their text. And so John Canavan, John and Amber Canavan do not have a yoke fellow.

[22 : 06] Do I have a motion? Who's going to be their yoke fellow? I can't hear you. Trent Cornwell is going to be here. I saw it. I already knew the Holy Spirit already told me it.

That's ridiculous. I got a block at where he can't send me text messages. So you just got you a yoke fellow and he'll be in touch. Would you come up, John? And all of those, all of you that are ordained men and would like to participate in this if you're ordained as a deacon or as a minister of the gospel, you can come and line up.

We're going to pray over them. They'll be singing a song and we invite you to pray over John and ask God's blessings on him and on the ministry he has. And then by the way, afterwards, if you didn't sign the Bible or the certificate, we'd like to ask you to do that.

I'll come back up here right quick and Miss Amber, you come stand with him also with your husband. We, uh, we have the ladies meet with the wife each time and then we give them a Bible because man can't do it without a good wife.

So it sure is different. If you didn't have your wife, I don't know what you'd do. And so there's a Bible for each of you. Make sure you give the right one the right Bible. She'll be preaching his messages. And then there's a certificate and it's we've read them enough.

[23 : 30] Y'all know what they say. And he gave you the money. That was a mistake. It's not that much. They'll let her have it. Uh, so y'all stand over a close where they can get pictures of you.

Get over there. We'll all stand close enough. And then I'd like the family to start moving this way. Uh, all the John and Amber's family, if y'all would come this way, we'll get a picture with you too.

Would y'all come right quick and, uh, glad you're here. And you want to introduce your family?

Where's a microphone he could use one of you guys and you want to introduce them all to everybody John? Cause look, night looks like you brought a whole church with you.

Take them to New York and we'll have a church going day one. Amen. All right. So this is my wife, Amber. This is my brother, Jimmy, my brother, Sean, his wife, Suzanne, my brother, Matt, his wife, Collie, my brother, Chris, his wife, Brianna, my sister, Elena, her husband, Clint and Caroline behind.

[24 : 35] And then here's my mom and my dad. That's a pretty good testimony.

Amen. Praise the Lord. That's wonderful. All right. Uh, thank you very much. Y'all make sure you get a picture so you have a good memory of your family together on a special night for John and Amber.

All right. Thank you, John. Why don't you introduce whoever else is here with you tonight? Y'all can have a seat. I know you, you have some other people here. Let's stand close.

That mic on the pulpit. It'll work. I think Melissa Smith back there. And, uh, where are they from? They're, they're from down the street from where I live in Ackworth. Okay. All right.

And then, uh, Steve Burrell, the pastors, uh, faith Baptist church in Jefferson, Georgia. Okay. Is that it? That's all the friends you have. Didn't take long to name them. Isn't God good.

[25 : 43] Amen. One generation ago, all them people are up here with no gospel in that family. That's the power of the Holy spirit of God.

That's the power of the word of God. And it didn't just make a change. It made a real change. I mean, it called people out to the ministry. That's a wonderful thing. And we are so honored for that.

I'm looking forward to Sunday and I hope that you'll come. We're in a gracious words of the Lord Jesus Sunday and and Luke chapter four. When Jesus gets through speaking, they're shocked because he talks about the year of Jubilee and he stops just short of the condemnation.

And when he sits down, they go, those are gracious words. I thought what rabbis usually say, those are gracious words. That's pretty sweet. Those are gracious words, words full of grace.

And so we're going to look at that Sunday morning and Sunday night. We'll have a split session. Hope you'll be here for that. And, uh, they'll explain to you, but we're supposed to try to get a friend to come Sunday.

[26 : 47] Go ahead. Go ahead.