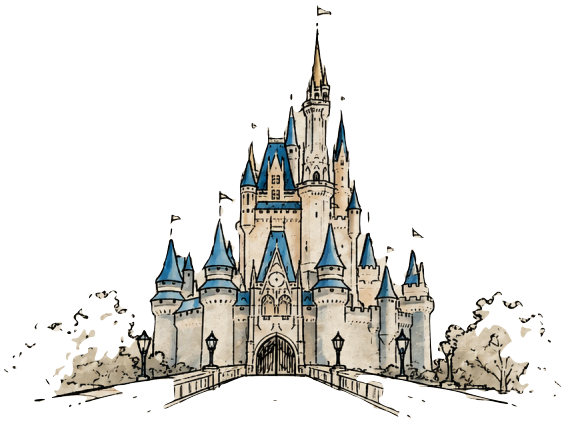
GOD DIDN'T CALL ME TO DISNEY

My case against over-spiritualizing how God uses us.

I have a confession to make.



I'm pretty sure I've told people that God called me to Disney. In fact, I'm almost certain I've said it more than once.

But the longer I've lived this story, the more I've questioned whether that's actually what happened.

There are three things that have always drawn me to Disney. Interestingly enough, none of them have much to do with the movies. I wouldn't even consider myself a Disney fan in the usual sense.

The first is the imagination and determination of Walt Disney. I've always admired his ability to envision what could be and his determination to make it happen.

The second is the creative spirit of Disney Imagineering. I love the way imagination becomes something you can actually walk into and experience.

But the third, and by far the most important, is the Cast Members.

They're dreamers and doers. People who come from all over the world, bringing their personalities, creativity, ambitions, and stories with them. I've always connected with that. I understand their world because I was a Cast Member myself decades ago. I get them. I enjoy them. I love being around them.

Those three affinities were a big part of why I wanted to move to Disney. I didn't need a supernatural experience to convince me that I wanted to be there. I already knew.

And I had a plan.

I was going to plant a church for Christians who worked at Disney. It made perfect sense to me. I loved the place, I loved the people, and I saw an opportunity to create a community of believers who shared that world.

But then something happened that I hadn't anticipated.

I was sitting on a bench at Magic Kingdom one morning, watching Cast Members arrive to start their shifts, when I sensed God saying, *"They are why I brought you here."*

And I realized He wasn't talking about the Christians who worked there. He was talking about the Cast Members who didn't know Jesus.

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I had moved to Disney because of what I loved. I had arrived with a plan for what I wanted to do. But only after I was there did God begin revealing a purpose I hadn't imagined.

Looking back, I can see how He used my affection for Disney to draw me somewhere He had something else in mind.

And that has caused me to rethink some of the ways we talk about **calling**.

We dress our affinities in Sunday clothes and refer to them as a *"calling."*

I'm not sure we need to.

I've met people who are convinced God has called them to Disney. And I don't doubt that God can direct someone to a particular place. Scripture is full of stories of God doing exactly that.

But I wonder if we've made the whole idea of calling more complicated than it needs to be.

You love Disney. You love the people who work there. You see an opportunity to serve Jesus in a place you genuinely enjoy.

Wonderful!

Why isn't that enough?

Why do we sometimes feel the need to attach a divine directive to something we already love? As though our interests, abilities, experiences, and affections aren't legitimate reasons to take a step forward.

We've developed an entire vocabulary around finding our calling. We want to know what God has called us to do, where He's called us to go, and how we'll recognize it when we get there.

And because we want to be obedient, we wait.

We pray. We seek confirmation. We look for signs. We ask God to open doors. We wait for peace. Then we wonder whether we've heard Him correctly, so we start the process all over again.

Meanwhile, life is happening all around us. People are right in front of us. Opportunities are sitting within reach. There are gifts we could be using, relationships we could be building, and good things we could be doing.

But we're still waiting for our calling.

Here's something worth considering.

What if God has already told us enough to get started?

Jesus has called us to follow Him. To love God and love our neighbors. To seek His Kingdom. To make disciples. To serve one another. To be faithful with what we've been given.

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None of those instructions require us to know where we'll be living ten years from now.

Proverbs 16:9 says, ***"In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps."***

I love that. We make plans. We take steps. And we trust God to direct us along the way.

It doesn't mean every plan we make is right or that every desire we have comes from God. Our desires need wisdom, discernment, and sometimes correction. Following Jesus doesn't always take us somewhere comfortable or enjoyable.

But neither does faithfulness require us to sit still until God gives us a detailed itinerary.

Sometimes the very things we love offer clues about where we might begin.

Who do you genuinely enjoy being around?

What kind of people do you understand?

What places make you come alive?

What opportunities keep catching your attention?

What gifts and experiences has God already placed in your hands?

Those aren't necessarily divine instructions. But they're worth paying attention to.

That's what I've been learning through these years with Cast Members.

I couldn't have imagined what Cast Member Church would eventually become. The dinner tables, the friendships, the conversations about Jesus, or the relationships that would stretch across continents. None of that was part of my original plan.

I went because I connected with certain things about Disney. I started with a plan to plant a church for Christians. Then Jesus opened my eyes to a plentiful harvest I hadn't learned to see.

And everything began to look different.

One relationship led to another. One conversation opened the door to another. Sometimes we moved forward. Sometimes we waited. Sometimes what I thought was the next step turned out to be something entirely different.

There was no master plan that anticipated all of it. There was Jesus. There were people. And there was the next opportunity to be faithful.

So, if you're waiting for God to reveal your calling before you do something meaningful with your life, I'd encourage you to reconsider what you're waiting for.

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Do something you love.

Go somewhere you love.

Spend time with people you genuinely care about.

Follow Jesus there.

Pay attention to the harvest.

Look for the clues of His Kingdom already at work.

And be willing to change direction when He leads you somewhere unexpected.

You don't have to manufacture a spiritual explanation for every decision. You don't have to know how the story ends before you begin living it.

Sometimes the next step really is that simple.

If you've always dreamed of living in Hawaii, in the mountains of Colorado, among the bustle of New York City, or somewhere else, **go**. You don't have to turn that desire into a *"calling."*

Just be faithful to Jesus along the way.

And if Jesus wants to redirect you, He knows where to find you.

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