

The Calling

By John Cospers

This skit was first performed as part of the closing mass event for CHOSEN, the 2007 National LCMS Youth Gathering.

CHARACTERS

Theo- A Christian musician

Kim- A Christian teen called to study law

David- A Christian working in a coffee house

Linnea- A popular girl in crisis

The Voice

The setting is a coffee house. It's a warm place with couches, tables, and a bookshelf with a hodge-podge of books, including the Bible. David is clearing mugs and plates from tables. Theo sits on the couch, cleaning his guitar. Kim sits beside him.

THEO: Be honest, guys, what did you think?

KIM: Theo, it was amazing.

THEO: Really?

KIM: Really, really. I loved it. That new song you did is definitely a keeper.

THEO: I'm still not happy with the third verse.

KIM: I wouldn't change a thing. But then, I'm not the musical one.

THEO: How about you, David?

DAVID: Hmm?

THEO: The show, did you enjoy it?

DAVID: Your show? Ha, not in the least.

KIM: David!

DAVID: Sorry, Kim. He asked for honesty.

THEO: I did, and I appreciate it. You wouldn't mind elaborating a bit, would you? Was it the song selection? My singing?

DAVID: Oh no. You're a talent, man. Really. Trouble is, you come in here singing and playing the way you do, the place gets filled with annoying teenagers who don't tip.

KIM: Careful, you're still a teenager too.

DAVID: I'm mature enough to make a judgment like this. Young people today do not know how to tip.

KIM: Gosh, I'm going to miss you guys. Are you working tomorrow? We need to hang out one last time.

DAVID: Here til 6.

THEO: I'm free, but I'll be packing up most of the day.

KIM: That's right! You're leaving soon too.

THEO: Tuesday afternoon. Mom and Dad are driving me.

KIM: Off to Bible college, where the boys all wanna be preachers and the girls all wanna marry one.

THEO: It's not like that, Kim.

KIM: The ones I've visited? Sure feels like it. I could never do the Bible college thing. Could you, David?

DAVID: I'm not sure I could do the college thing.

THEO: Go ahead, make fun of me. I don't envy you the temptations you'll face on the number two party campus in America.

KIM: That's not an invitation for trouble, Theo. It's a call to missions, to spread the gospel from the Sociology building to the coed dorms and every place in between.

THEO: I'm sure you'll find time for both.

KIM: Sociology and coed dorms?

THEO: Evangelism and trouble.

KIM: Like you won't cheat curfew for some late night Taco Bell runs?

THEO: The creative artist needs fuel in the wee hours of the morning. What's he going to eat, grapes?

KIM: So long as you get what you want out of that school, I don't see the harm.

THEO: Exactly. You both know how long I've been praying about where to go to college.

DAVID: Sixth grade. Which is not at all obsessive.

THEO: I just wanted to be sure about God's call on my life.

DAVID: That you did. I never saw a guy struggle so much over a decision.

KIM: Neither did I. Which is how I ended up taking the path I took.

THEO: Into the secular world, full of heathens and sinners.

KIM: To the best law school in the state. When some wise guy decides to pass a bill saying you can no longer sing songs about Jesus, you'll be glad to have a constitutional attorney at your disposal to defend your religious rights.

DAVID: Lawyers for Jesus. I'm sorry, I still think it's an oxymoron.

KIM: Hey. You gonna let him talk to me that way?

THEO: He has a point.

KIM: Your legal fees just went up.

THEO: Promises, promises.

Theo packs his guitar away.

DAVID: You know I'm joking, right, Kim?

KIM: I sure hope so.

DAVID: I am, I am. And I'm excited for both of you. I'll miss you, but a lot of prayer went into your decisions, and I know you'll both be successful.

KIM: As will you.

DAVID: Yeah. The rate I'm going, I'll still be a barista when our ten year reunion hits.

KIM: God's got a plan for you. You'll find it.

DAVID: I don't know about that.

THEO: Why not?

DAVID: Well the way I figure it, some of us are meant to lead, and others to follow. You were called to lead people to God in worship. You were called to be a defender of the faith. Me? I'm just the guy who makes sure your coffee is fresh.

KIM: That's not true.

DAVID: No, it is, and it's okay. I accepted long ago that I'm not one of God's elite.

THEO: There's no such thing as an elite Christian. We're all called to serve, and each person is vital to the kingdom.

DAVID: So say the megachurch preachers with their self-help books.

THEO: So says the Bible.

DAVID: Not my Bible.

THEO: Last I checked, we both had the same translation.

KIM: Theo's right, David. God's calling isn't for a privileged few. It's a privilege we all share.

DAVID: A privilege? It's too much responsibility.

THEO: David, we've been given a gift we could never earn on our own. God has saved us from sin, and he wants us to be ready to share that gift with others. It doesn't matter if you're a minister or if you work in a coffee shop. God needs all of us ready and willing to share the gospel wherever he leads us.

DAVID: (shrugs) Well, hey, you guys are the experts on this. Maybe you're right, and God will call me to do something noble. Until then... I think I'll leave the heavy lifting to you all.

KIM: You could also pray about it.

DAVID: I suppose. But I'm in no hurry. I mean, what if God calls me to Africa?

KIM: Okay, Mr. Melodrama. Have it your way.

DAVID: I'm just saying.

Theo pulls a few sheets of paper out of his guitar case and hands them to David.

DAVID: What's this?

THEO: A little something for later.

DAVID: Uh oh. Is this a Bible study?

THEO: Just a little something on 1 Peter. I've had it with me the last three years as a reminder of what I do.

DAVID: Well, I would hate to separate the two of you.

THEO: Take it. Put it away, and let it sit some place safe. If a time comes you want to visit what the Lord says about being called, pick it up and read it.

DAVID: I appreciate it, Theo.

Theo gets up from the couch and picks up his guitar.

THEO: Any time. You ready?

KIM: I guess. Promise you'll hang out tomorrow night?

DAVID: What possible conflicts would I have?

KIM: Good. (hugs David) Good night.

DAVID: Night you guys.

THEO: See ya.

Theo and Kim leave. David goes back to cleaning. He slows, and stops, turning to look at the Bible study notes on the table. He looks away, going back to work. Linnea walks into the store. Instinctively, David walks to the counter without noticing who it is.

DAVID: Can I help you?

LINNEA: Gimme a sec.

DAVID: Well, hello, Linnea.

LINNEA: Hi... David, is it?

DAVID: Yeah, David. How's it going?

LINNEA: Oh, it's going. Can I have a tall grande mocha, heavy on the whipped cream?

DAVID: Anything to go with it?

LINNEA: No, I think that's enough fat grams.

DAVID: Three-fifty-seven.

Linnea and David exchange money.

LINNEA: Been working here long?

DAVID: Since January.

LINNEA: How do you like it?

David starts making her coffee.

DAVID: (shrugs) I'm not headed anywhere this fall. Interpret that any way you want.

LINNEA: Staying home, huh?

DAVID: When you don't know what to do with your life, there's no point in spending twenty grand a year, is there?

LINNEA: No, I suppose not.

DAVID: I guess you'll be headed to Beantown pretty soon.

LINNEA: Beantown?

DAVID: You're going to Boston College, right? Cheerleading scholarship?

LINNEA: Changed plans.

DAVID: Changed plans?

LINNEA: I decided I really don't like Boston.

DAVID: (knowing this is a bad joke) Aw, come on. It's the place where everybody knows your name.

LINNEA: Exactly my problem.

David hands her the finished coffee.

DAVID: What do you mean?

LINNEA: It... (shakes her head) Long story. You really don't wanna know.

DAVID: Well, I...

Linnea's cell phone rings. She looks at it and grunts, annoyed.

LINNEA: Excuse me. (answers gruffly) Hello?

Linnea walks to a table and sits. David watches her go sit down, then returns to the table he shared with his friends.

LINNEA: I'm out... Drinking coffee... Why are you being so nosy?

David picks up the Bible study Theo left, and grabs the Bible off the bookshelf, opening to 1 Peter.

LINNEA: I'm fine, Mom... No... No!... Because I don't want to discuss Boston College!... Would you like it if I asked you to discuss the decision you and Dad made last weekend?

DAVID: (aside) Sounds like someone has issues.

LINNEA: I know he's moving there with HER. That's the single biggest reason I don't want to go... Because as much as I'd love to see my father, I can't stand to see my father with another woman!

DAVID: (chuckles) Sounds like a job for Dr. Phil.

David reads as the Voice speaks. The Voice can be David (pre-recorded), Theo, or another voice representing Peter.

VOICE: "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

DAVID: What?

VOICE: "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

DAVID: Oh, I know you're not talking about me. I'm a lowly coffee boy, and she's...

LINNEA: Mom, high school's over, okay? It's not like I'm going to graduate college with a bachelor's in cheerleading and go out and be a professional cheerleader... Even the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders have to have "real" jobs... Because Kirstie and I looked into it! That's how I know...

DAVID: (shakes his head) Nah, this is not for you. It's just that good ol' Protestant guilt.

VOICE: "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."

LINNEA: I don't know what I want to do, Mom. Okay? I've just lost all interest in school... (crying) Gee, I don't know. Your parents getting a divorce might have something to do with my losing hope.

DAVID: Oh boy.

LINNEA: Maybe that is selfish of me to say. But it's no more selfish than you refusing to work it out for mine and Kendra's sake.

David flips through to the next passage.

DAVID: I'm not hearing this.

LINNEA: I don't wanna talk to a counselor. Okay?... No, Mom. You don't understand. No one does.

VOICE: "Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God."

LINNEA: I can't talk to you any more, Mom... Because I'm too angry!... Maybe I should, but it's not going to be with you... I don't know who. I don't know when... I guess I'll know when it happens... Sure, Mom. I love you too.

Linnea hangs up. David looks to heaven.

DAVID: So what is this? This is the part where I go over to the girl who was so far out of my league, we never talked through ten years of school? It's like that TV show. "Save the cheerleader, save the world." Well you picked the wrong guy. I'm not a counselor, or a theologian. I'm just a guy in a coffee shop who, granted, knows how to listen and can feel his way roughly around the Bible. What do you expect me to do?

There's a pause – no verbal answer.

LINNEA: You ever have one of those days, David? When it seems the whole world's out to destroy you?

David looks down at the Bible.

VOICE: "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms."

David gulps loudly.

DAVID: All right. I don't know how this is going to turn out. She's not exactly an open-minded spiritual thinker. But if you think I'm your guy...

David turns to Linnea.

DAVID: Sounds like you're having one of those days.

LINNEA: You have no idea.

DAVID: (hesitates, then says) Tell me.

Blackout.