

Weekly Reflection – Calling is the Road, Purpose is the Destination

Purpose

We are the creation. God is our creator. We were created for God's purpose. That purpose is to glorify God. Man was created from the beginning in God's image that we might display God's glory.

- Isaiah 43:6-7, Colossians 1:16, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Matthew 5:14-16

The exciting part of this is, that the way we give God the greatest glory is by enjoying Him, being amazed by Him, receiving gifts from Him. When we receive gifts from Him, we praise and glorify Him, when we enjoy Him, we are honoring and glorifying Him. We have been created for an extremely amazing purpose, to glorify God by enjoying Him forever.

Purpose vs. Calling - What is the difference between purpose and calling?

To accomplish our purpose, God gives us a means. The purpose is to Glorify God and the means is our calling. ***"I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do."* (John 17:4 ESV)** Jesus glorified the Father by accomplishing the work or the call that the Father gave Him. Calling is the road you take to get to purpose. Purpose is the destination. In Christ, we all have the same destination (God's glory), but we have uniquely different roads to get to this destination (our calling).

Calling

***"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."* Ephesians 4:1-3 ESV**

- Paul says, "I plead with you to live a life, the one life you've been given, worthy of the calling that you have from our God."
- You were created for a reason, given a calling, a divine calling.
- Now, when you think about this, if you own it and you recognize that you've been genuinely set apart by God, gifted by God, and called by Him to make a difference. That puts a little weight on your day to day, doesn't it? Because if you're called by God you might wonder, well, what if I miss my calling?
- In other words, what if I was supposed to go to college instead of work, or work instead of college? What if I was supposed to take that job and not this job? What if I was supposed to live in that location and not this one? What if I was supposed to go to that church and not this church?
- If God is calling me, chosen me for something special. What if I miss my calling?
- If God has called you? What are you called to?

Number one, God calls you to salvation.

- ***"But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."* 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 ESV**
- Before God ever calls you to a job before He ever calls you to a ministry God calls you to Himself. Before you ever even worry about what God has called you to do with your life, you must first receive this first call to salvation. This is the foundation of your calling, to be saved by Jesus Christ.

- Don't ever let that become old news and I think the way we keep it from becoming old is by remembering,
- I love what the Apostle Paul said, ***“For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 ESV***
- We need to remember where we were when we were called to salvation.
- This is encouraging because when you look at who God calls to salvation, He calls those who are untrained, those who appear unqualified. Those who look unprepared. He calls those that the world would call spiritual nobodies to make a difference in this world.
- I love the old saying that God doesn't call the prepared. God prepares the called.

Number two, He calls you to be holy.

“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,” 2 Timothy 1:8-9 ESV Paul doesn't emphasize a task or a job. What he said is God saved us and called us to live a holy life. The term holy is a term that essentially means to be set apart. It means to be different from this world. This is a call to sanctification, or to become more like Jesus. In other words, as you follow Jesus, you don't look like the world you don't act like the world you don't think like the world you don't behave like the world. You're not driven by the things that other people are driven by because you've been set apart by God, called by Jesus, infused with the power of the Spirit of God to live a holy life.

We need to embrace the truth that calling is about who you are before it is about what you do. When God calls you, He's calling you to a who before He's calling you to do. It's a who before a do. You're called to be holy. We glorify God, our purpose, by living a holy life. We enjoy God the most when we live holy lives. So, when you recognize you are called by God, a better question than starting with, “What am I called to do?” A better question is, “Who am I called to become?”

Number three, He calls every single one to service.

- ***“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 ESV***
- ***“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:” 1 Peter 4:10 ESV***
- He calls you to use the various unique gifts that He's given you, placed inside of you, to make a difference in the church and in the world.
- It may be very specific. It may be very broad.
- ***“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” Colossians 3:17 ESV***
- Whatever you do, whatever you say, wherever you are, you do it for Jesus.
- Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 5:16, ***“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”***

- I'm pretty sure at this point we want to know, so what's my calling to serve, what exactly is it, what exactly are the good works I've been called to do?
- You can take all the aptitude tests and spiritual gifts tests you want but if you haven't fully received the first call of salvation and if you haven't fully embraced and stepped into the second call of living a holy life, set apart for God then you will never be able to step into the call to serve in a way that glorifies God.
- I really believe that too often we spend way too much time and energy trying to figure out the third piece, what am I called to do, and way too little time really focused in on who am I called to be.
- What I have found to be true most of the time is that when I fully embrace and step into the call to become who God called me to be, holy, set apart, like Jesus, obedient to what I know to be true; I find myself doing the things God has called me to do. And my life glorifies God.

The question is not, do I have a purpose, yes you do, to glorify God with all of your life. The question is also not, do I have a calling, yes you do, first you are called to salvation, to God, second you are called to a holy life, a life set apart for God, to become more and more like Jesus, and you have been called to serve and make a difference in this world for the glory of God. The question is, will you receive your calling, will you step into your calling?