

Called to His Purpose

Introduction

In this series we are looking at the basic requirements and understanding for one to ministry in the Name of Jesus, that is, under His authority in legitimate functions ordained by God. In our first lesson we saw that the beginning of ministry is with the Holy Spirit. He is important enough that Jesus told the disciples who had been walking with Him for over three years to wait in Jerusalem until they received the Holy Spirit, who would empower them to be witnesses.

In our previous lesson we saw that to minister properly we need to have a correct reference point in God. We determined that this reference point is Jesus, who, in the viewpoint of the Father, is the focus of the Father's intention of summing up all things in Him. *“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.”* (Romans 11:36 NASB)

In this lesson we will begin to look at how we fit into the plans and purposes of the Father as He reveals His Father's heart to us and as He teaches us of His paternal theme.

Called According to Purpose

There is a general call of God that is through His grace. We have been called out of darkness and into the light. We have been called out of sin and into holiness. These are only an example of many of the things that God has called us out of. This is all done by His own provision and grace.

who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, (2 Timothy 1:9 NASB)

Not only have we been called according to grace but we have also been called according to His own purpose. That is, our calling relates to and is integral to God's purpose. He is working everything after the counsel of His own will and plan.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10 NASB)

The works, which God has for us to perform, have been prepared ahead of time. These are the works of God not our works. The flesh has no place or purpose in doing the works of God. The works prepared are directed toward our part of fulfilling God's purpose. They are not dead works but are alive by the Holy Spirit.

God spends more time preparing us as the worker than He did in preparing the works for us to do! The preparation process is necessary because the natural man cannot do the works of God, which can only be done by the empowering of the Holy Spirit. We need to learn how to yield ourselves to His preparation process in order to be able to do the works that He desires and has prepared for us.

It is Finished

We have examples of this in Jesus and in Paul. Jesus made two “it is finished” statements. The second one was on the cross and related to the completion of the sacrifice of the Lamb. It was absolutely necessary and had to be completed for our atonement. The first one was just as important and it related to Jesus' purpose of ministry. Jesus speaks of the work that was prepared for Him.

"I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. (John 17:4 NASB)

When Jesus made this statement during His prayer to the Father (the true Lord's prayer), the cross was still in the future. This relates to His ministry, His work, specifically, the development of the Twelve and their preparation to carry on His work after receiving the Holy Spirit.

Paul made a similar statement when it was about time for him to die.

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; (2 Timothy 4:6-7 NASB)

He had completed the work given to him by the Lord. The works prepared before hand for him were now completed to the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.

Called to Work

Work is part of God's intention for us. He has prepared the work for us before hand and now calls us to do it. Even Adam did not get to goof-off but was given work to do—name the animals, tend the garden, subdue the earth, etc. All things created by God have purpose and function. Nothing is useless.

We are called to work. Not only now but that is our future in the Kingdom also. The idea of floating around on clouds and playing harps all day has no basis in the Scriptures. The future Millennium Kingdom and the New Heavens and the New Earth only have a place for those who are capable of doing the work of the Lord and have given themselves to accomplishing His work.

Calling involves His purpose and our role in it. We are *born* into the family of God but we are *called* to the work of God. It is important that we see the difference. The work that we accomplish according to His purpose is His inheritance in us. We talk a lot about our inheritance in Him but forget that He has an inheritance in us.

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, (Ephesians 1:18 NASB)

when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed--for our testimony to you was believed. To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, (2 Thessalonians 1:10-11 NASB)

There is a hope associated with our calling that we need to know: when He is glorified in his saints, *He will be admired in all of them that believe*. This is Jesus in His saints as the One New Man to be admired by all of heaven and earth.

This is a heavenly calling and a holy calling. We are called according to his own purpose given before the world began.

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession; ([Hebrews 3:1 NASB](#))

who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, ([2 Timothy 1:9 NASB](#))

This is demonstrated by who and how God calls. Those called are truly according to His own pleasure and not according to any aspect of the flesh so that no one can boast before God.

but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. ([1 Corinthians 1:24-29 NASB](#))

While God doesn't change His mind about our calling, it can appear that way. It is up to us to make our calling sure or steadfast. This requires that we do certain things in order not to fall. We have to yield to the preparation process.

for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ([Romans 11:29 NASB](#))

Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. ([2 Peter 1:10-11 NASB](#))

[*For further study concerning being called and chosen see the April 2009 issue of Present Truth "Called, Chosen, Faithful".*]

The High Calling

From the viewpoint of God's purpose we need to recognize that some are not only "the called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28), but some are called to a "high calling", KJV or "upward call", NASB and NKJV.

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. (13) Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I

do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, (14) I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:12-14 KJV)

The “high calling”, in Paul's case, involves completing that for which Christ Jesus called (apprehended) him. He continually pressed toward this high calling, which we already know that he achieved because he said that he had completed his course. Can we say the same?

What is the difference between being “called” and the “high calling”? We are all called to be sons of God and to do the work that a son would do for a Father. I submit that the “high calling” involves our participation in the purpose and plans of the Father. That we develop a father's heart and begin to appreciate the Father's perspective.