

Calling and Purpose

A New Life of Spirit Led Ministry to Others

Because God calls us into relationship, we have not one, but two magnificent purposes to discover: 1) the joy of knowing Him intimately and 2) the unique way He designed us to be of loving service to others. These pursuits supply endless fascination! If our life is not characterized by discovery and adventure, we are probably missing the mark on both counts. As we enter more deeply into our purpose, convergence carries us ever closer to destiny.

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 3:14 ESV

Double Duties, Double Delights

There need never be a dull moment walking with Jesus. He has given us two engrossing and fascinating assignments: He calls us to His side to a) know and love Him and b) love and serve others. These two “great” commands actually describe our calling, our purpose, our assignments and our destiny. We may think of them as duties, but they are also intended to be our delights. Nothing could be more heart-expanding and joy-inducing than to pursue these two great callings.

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."
Matthew 22:37-40 ESV



These are certainly commands, but they are also promises. If you look far enough into the future you will see by eyes of faith that one Day this will be eternally true for all of us who make it home to heaven. We will become the people who know what it is like to fully and fantastically love God with our whole heart and who love the entire Body of Christ that He is calling into His eternal family. That's our destiny! God has decreed that He will accomplish it for us: we “shall” enter into the perfection of love which heaven fulfills. How much of it will we enter into in this life? That depends upon our willingness to go for broke, betting the farm on Jesus and living for Him, rather than for ourselves alone.



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A Missing Key to Loving Others

Unquestionably, loving God is our Number One assignment—it is the “great and first” command. To learn how to do it and how it is graded daily, please see [Two Passionate Purposes](#). Since this section is on ministry, our focus here is on the second commandment, loving our neighbor as ourselves. Right away we can see from the Lord’s description that one key to actually loving others depends upon how we love ourselves. Many of us don’t love for ourselves! Truth be told, we are angry, frustrated, demanding and impatient with ourselves. This cannot help but spill over into the way we treat other people. If you need help learning how to love and accept yourself the way God does, then please see [Love Thyself](#) at our sister site, [Healing Streams](#). Once we learn to love ourselves the right way, we no longer need others to meet our emotional needs. This sets us free to love and serve them with no strings attached, just as God does us.

Now we can focus on what it means to love our neighbor. Having a heart full of love for others is a good thing. However, that really won’t do our neighbor any practical good. All it takes is one look into the sea of lost, hurting humanity around us to realize that other people need help and lots of it. If we have any love at all, we will want to be part of the Rescue. Some need to be saved by coming to know the Lord; others need physical, emotional and material assistance. Every individual and every people group needs help of some kind.

Called with a Purpose

There’s no end to human need! This makes it easy to begin, but how do we find where we can best be of service? We probably all have a sense that God has us here for a reason, a special purpose. Usually this is completely misunderstood. Nothing could be more important to the Lord than that we enter into our high calling of knowing Him—that’s our greatest delight and highest purpose. Just the same this isn’t what people usually mean when they say, “I know God has me here for a reason.” They’re thinking of some way of being of service to humanity. That’s why our first step into our calling and purpose needs to be discovering what our Number One reason for being here is and understanding how to pursue it. Jesus has already warned us that until we get that one in place everything else will be out of order. With that sizable piece in place we are ready to look at the rest of the puzzle.

Our calling by God includes a form-fitted way of serving Him in the lives of other people. Some people have a sense of what that is from an early age. They just “know” they want to be doctors, farmers or musicians, etc. and never waver from that goal all their lives. Even unbelievers who don’t know the Lord or want to know Him, may have this sense of direction which comes from God. They just won’t say it’s a calling, because that implies that there is a God who has a claim on them and they don’t want to answer His call. But what of us who know that our God is gloriously Alive, can speak for Himself, and has a great plan for our life? Sometimes we can wander in the wilderness for years, never discovering our special purpose. That seems so unfair!

Signs Pointing to Our Purpose

Fortunately, there are ways of finding out what our special purpose is. These are tried and proven ways, but none of them are guaranteed to work on their own apart from God. The Lord is sovereign. He has His own ways of dealing with us and He knows only too well how quick we



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are to wriggle off the hook. What hooks us in terms of service is wanting to know our special calling and gifts. Of course, He wants us to know those things too, BUT He also may be interested in helping us learn how to be guided by Him while He has our attention. Additionally, He may want to check out the true level of our surrender to Him, as in “God I will do anything for you, but...” If you want to walk with the Lord, you have to get off your “buts”!

1) Nudges

What tugs at your heart? In your head you may have all kinds of ideas about how humanity needs to be helped. The Lord is far more interested in growing love, so look to your heart. What situations of human need actually move you to tears, or to deep feelings of compassion? Jesus Himself was often moved to specific ministry on the basis of compassion for the human suffering He saw. Therefore, we can expect that God will draw us into our fields of harvest the same way. Learning the way of the heart does not come easily to many Westerners. That’s why seeking our calling gives the Lord such excellent teaching opportunities. (See [Contrasting Head and Heart](#)).

2) Drawings

What people group(s) are you drawn to? Paul had a dream in which a man called him to come to Macedonia. God still calls us to people groups, though the ways we hear it are varied. People groups come in all sizes and shapes. Those with an evangelist’s calling will constantly be thinking about people who need to be saved. They may narrow it down even more with their concern for unsaved people of a certain region, ethnic group, or age group. Other people will find themselves thinking about how kids in the inner city could be helped, if someone would work with them during after school hours. Or, you may just love talking with the “old folks” and only need to see some practical way to link up your heart attachment with something that looks like service.

3) Gifts

What gifts are you discovering? As we try our hand at various ways of serving people we inevitably discover what we are good at (and not so good at). Let your strengths lead you. Things that come easily to you are a sign of prior giftedness from the Lord. So is affirmation from the people you work with as well as from the ones you serve. Other people will notice and affirm gifts operating in you that you might be totally unaware of. These in turn will point you towards your ultimate main channels of service. This is why it matters less where we start serving, than that we start. Once we get going the Lord can more readily steer us. For more on this see [Gifts, Fruit and Talents](#).

4) Guidance

Are you learning [the way of guidance](#)? We have not just been given a Book to follow, as helpful as that is. Our guide in life is none other than the Lord Himself. Jesus still calls us to follow Him, just as surely and as intimately as the original invitation came to those first disciples in Galilee. Jesus may have dropped out of sight—we don’t get to see His steps as they did—but in exchange He has given His Spirit to live within us. Entering into the fullness of our calling, inescapably means entering into the fullness of [New Life in the](#)

[Holy Spirit](#). Learning to be guided by the Holy Spirit is, therefore, essential for the pursuit of our calling.

Convergence

Making all of this come together is the Lord's work. Our part is to be surrendered and committed to Him, to be courageous at following His guidance, and to listen in a searching way to our own heart. Deep is calling to deep. If we keep answering the call, He will lead and draw us through many unforeseeable events which will both grow and guide us. Eventually, God willing, we will emerge from all the training into a season in life where our gift set comes together with our sense of calling. Our destined purpose draws near!

In this season—it's called convergence—*work actually becomes play*. We end up doing what we have been designed by God to do best and may even get paid for it. Amazing. But be forewarned, one study found that only a very small percentage of pastors could say that they were experiencing convergence. Most felt that they had not entered into the best use of their gifts or had somehow become sidelined along the way. These are the people we expect to have the surest sense of calling!

Don't let anything discourage you. You are not them. It all hangs on just how far you want to go in following Jesus. Be determined to go the distance, to the last measure of sacrifice and surrender, and He will lead you into the promised land of convergence and destiny.

More to Explore

[The School of the Spirit](#) There are lessons of the Lord which can be described in a classroom, but can only be imparted by the Spirit in the school of daily life. Being trained for ministry includes character development and spiritual growth, so expect "on the job" training to continue no matter what you are doing. That means leaning to survive trials and eventually thrive in the midst of them. Fortunately for all of us, our Teacher is also our Comforter and Best Friend!

[Talents, Fruit and Gifts](#) The Lord gives talents and natural abilities to everyone as a way of getting us started in life. You don't have to be a believer to be a receiver of these—just develop what you notice. As believers, though, it helps to know the limits of these natural abilities in the spiritual life. Wiser still would be to shift our attention towards cultivating those gifts and fruit which are unique to we now are in Christ as His new creations.

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Scriptures on Calling

For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Romans 11:29 ESV

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... He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption. 1 Corinthians 1:26, 30 ESV

To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power. 2 Thessalonians 1:11 ESV

Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:10-11 ESV

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For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, *[Matters of the Heart](#)*. Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.



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