

The Preacher and the Call of GOD

Rick Piña

Introduction: This lesson is designed to provide the Ministers of Faith Outreach Christian Life Center a biblical understand of the Call of God upon their lives; enabling them to operate in Purpose-Driven ministry.

The Basic Call of all believers: There are some scripture that clearly delineate the fact that all Born-Again believers are “called” for a specific purpose. Let’s take a look at a few:

(Eph 1:18 KJV) *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.*

(Eph 4:1 KJV) *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.*

(Heb 3:1 KJV) *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.*

A Predestined Call:

(Eph 2:10 NLT) *For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

God predestined us. He literally pre (before) destined (ended) us. He before-ended us upon the basis of His fore-knowledge of our decisions. The bible is clear that “whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved,” the fact, however, is that God already knew who would. Based upon this foreknowledge, He setup a design and a plan for our ministry.

Let’s look at some biblical examples:

Moses: Read Exodus 3:4-22 (v.10 KJV) *Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.*

- This was a specific call for a specific purpose. The mission was clear and Moses was used for that and exactly that. Notice that his call was not to lead the people out of Egypt **and** in to the Promised Land, but rather to just bring them out of Egypt. Although we attribute the fact that Moses was not used to lead the nation of Israel into Canaan to his disobedience (striking the rock twice), we can see that God already knew what he would do and destined him accordingly.

Jeremiah: Read Jeremiah 1:4-10 (vv.4,5 KJV) *Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*

- God made it clear to Jeremiah that he was sanctified (set apart) and ordained a prophet (to speak God’s Words) before he was ever born. Jeremiah wound up fulfilling these words with his life.

Disciples: Read Mark 3:3-19 (vv. 13-15 KJV) And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. and he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.

- Read this passage clearly and then read the Book of Acts and you will realize that the disciples fulfilled exactly what Jesus had ordained for them to fulfill:
 - They spent time with Jesus
 - He sent them forth to preach
 - They were used of God to heal the sick
 - They were used of God to cast out devils
 - All of which was described in this text

Paul: (Romans 1:1 KJV) Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God. And (Galatians 1:15,16 KJV) But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace. To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.

- We will look at Paul a little closer in the rest of the lesson, but it is clear that God called him for a specific purpose and he fulfilled that call throughout the years of his life. That is why Paul could later say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished [my] course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim 4:7). He completed the course that set destined for him by God. All of the people in the world were not saved yet, there were still people who were oppressed, the gospel had not traveled the entire world; but he could confidently say that he had finished **HIS** course!

The Call is from God:

The Call to preach must not be controlled by the church, even through the elders of a local church are expected to confirm the call -- (1 Tim 4:14 RSV) Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the council of elders laid their hands upon you. In the final analysis, the call to preach is the sovereign initiative of God in the life and experience of the one who is predestinated to fulfill that role.

You should be "compelled" to preach, so much so that nothing should be able to stop you. *If discouragement, disappointment, or delay cause you to forfeit your call, then you may not have ever really received a call from God. For those of us have been truly called, to forfeit the call, is to forfeit our destiny.*

Augustine said, "God does not choose a person who is worthy, but by the act of choosing him he makes him worthy."

Let's look closely at Paul's Example:

(Galatians 1:15,16 KJV) But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace. To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.

1. The Nature of God's Call to Preach: (v15) it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace.

The verb separated means to mark off by bounds. In this context it connotes the divine action of setting apart man for the work of the gospel. In the preceding verses, Paul has been recounting his past life. With a heavy heart he has confessed his fanaticism for the Law. In fact, it was because of his unenlightened zeal for the Law that he had become such an arch persecutor of the church. He destroyed local assemblies. But in spite of all of this, it pleased God to call him into the service of the gospel. Paul never got over this. It was such unmerited favor and unspeakable grace! Paul could only put forth two explanations for this divine activity:

a. God's Eternal Call of Grace: *it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb.* To the Apostle, God's call was not an unpremeditated event. Before time was determined, Paul was in the mind of God. Note the significance in the phrase "separated... from my mother's womb." Before Paul could think, speak, or act, God had marked him out as a chosen vessel to preach the gospel to the Gentiles.

Wiersbe says, of Jer 1, "You will be what I want you to be, go where I want you to go, and say what I want you to say. I supervised your conception, I consecrated you, and am now ordaining you." He then adds, "If God called you, believe what HE says and obey HIM. You may not feel up to it, but your adequacy comes from God, not from yourself." ***Our answer and our attitude as preachers should be -- Anywhere, Anytime, Anyplace, Here I am Lord, send me!***

A.J. Gossip tells how Alexander Whyte faced his ordination in his first church. In his message to his people, Whyte declared that all through time and eternity God had been preparing him for them and them for him, and then, prompt to the minute, He had brought them together.

This my fellow ministers, is God's eternal Call of Grace!

b. God's Effectual Call of Grace: *"God... called me through His grace."* The Eternal Call became the Effectual Call when Saul initially encountered the Living Christ.

- i. **Saul saw the light:** *(Acts 9:3 KJV) And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven.*
- ii. **Saul heard a voice:** *(Acts 9:4 KJV) And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*
- iii. **Saul made a choice:** *(Acts 9:6 KJV) And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

The Nature of the Call is summed up in the fact that God has predestined preachers before the foundation of the world, but the eternal call is made effectual in our collision with our destiny!

Passion vs. Purpose:

The ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the highest call and the most awesome responsibility on the planet. You must do with conviction, courage, and passion. This passion, however, must be tied to your purpose. All though we may all be called, we may all be called to different things. Just because you have a 'passion' for something, it does not mean that it is part of your purpose. A good example of this is found in the 16th chapter of the Book of Acts:

(Acts 16:6-10 NIV) Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Paul was full of passion, but his passion had to be controlled and directed by purpose. God did not call us to fulfill every mission that we 'feel' passionate about, but rather to live a Purpose Driven life and to be led of the Spirit in all things – especially ministry!

Understanding that our destiny and God's provision are inter-twined is critical. It is true that God is God is a God of provision. He is Jehovah-Jireh, "The Lord Will Provide." He provides everything, but He provides it after you begin the work of your vision and your purpose. *Your obedience to your vision will unlock God's provision.* Your pursuit of something that does not line up with your vision, will cause frustration and hinder God's provision.

Dr. Myles Munroe explains it this way:

"If you pursue the wrong assignment, you're going to need things you can't get, because the provision isn't there unless the vision is yours. It's someone else's assignment, and he has his own warehouse. Sometimes, people make demands on God that He can't supply because He can't give us what doesn't belong to us. Again, knowing God's will for your life is the key to your prosperity."

If Paul had disobeyed the Spirit and went to Asia anyway, he would have done so out of flesh and would not have seen a manifestation of the glory of God. When we align ourselves with our destiny and our purpose, then God's anointing will freely flow in our lives. If we are not lined up with our destiny and purpose, then we will go through the 'gospel motions,' but never have any results. *Activity does not guarantee productivity!*

2. The Knowledge of God's Call to Preach: (Galatians 1:15,16 KJV) "God... called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me." Now we come to the heart of things. Those words, "His Son in me" are the dynamite! They correspond with "Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:20). We will address this "knowledge" in two ways:

a. The Revelation of the Indwelling Son: (v.16) "His Son in me." The conscious knowledge of the indwelling Son of God is the indispensable "inner witness" of God's call to preach. It is true that every Christian can say, "Christ lives in me," and that the outliving of the indwelling Christ should be the goal of the Christian life. But for the preacher, those words, "His Son in me" have far reaching implications. For Paul, the gospel was Christ. The knowledge of the call of God is directly related to the ministry of the Son of God!

Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones affirms:

"The preacher is a man who is possessed and he is aware of this. I do not hesitate to make this assertion. I would say that I only begin to know something about preaching on those occasions when, as it were, I am looking on. I am speaking, but I am really a spectator. I am amazed at what is happening. I am listening. I am looking on in utter astonishment, for I am not doing it. It is true preaching when I am conscious that I am being used; in a sense, I am as much a spectator as the people who are listening to me. There is this consciousness that is outside me, and yet I am involved in it; I am merely the instrument and the vehicle and the channel of all of this."

If this is the Spiritual sense of the call, what are the biblical **"tests"** of the call? There are at least five to prayerfully consider:

1. **Do I meet the qualifications of a preacher, as set forth in the Word of God?** When God called Paul to be a preacher, he clearly delineated what was involved and required. See (Acts 9:15-16, 20; 22:14-15; 26:16-18)
2. **Have I the witness of the Spirit in my heart that God has called me?** The Same Holy Spirit who witnesses with my spirit that I have been Born-Again, also witnesses with my spirit that I have been called by God to be a preacher. See (Ro 8:14; Gal 1:15,16; II Tim 1:8-11)
3. **Has the gift of the preacher become evident in my life and service?** 1 Corinthians 12:7 states that "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for profit of all." The Revised English Bible renders this "In each of us the Spirit is seen to be at work for some useful purpose." This "manifestation" is not human ability alone, but rather the indwelling and directing power of the Holy Spirit.
4. **Has my church recognized and confirmed my preaching gift?** 1 Timothy 4:14 and II Timothy 1:6,7 give a significant object lesson in the divine/human recognition and confirmation of a person's gift and ministry in the early church (also see Acts 13:1-4).
5. **Has God used my preaching gift to the salvation of souls and the edification of the saints?** Writing to the Corinthians, Paul could affirm with confidence, "You are the seal of my Apostleship in the Lord" (I Cor 9:2). Can you point to converts or disciples and say the same thing?

3. The Purpose of God's Call to Preach: (Galatians 1:15,16 KJV) **God... called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen.** The Purpose is simple and specific. We are called to preach Christ and His message of the Kingdom!

a. We Must Preach the Gospel: The gospel is wholly apart from man's philosophical ideas, scientific methods, or religious efforts (see 1 Cor 1 and 2; Gal 2:15,16; 6:12-15).

i. **We must be Faithful in our Preaching:** (Gal 1:6-9 KJV) I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. Paul uses a special word to describe those who had soon changed their position on the fundamentals of the gospel. He calls them “turn coats” because, under pressure of the Judaizers and the perverters of the gospel, these Galatians had espoused a “different gospel.”

ii. **We must be Fearless in our Preaching:** (Galatians 1:10 KJV) For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. In the light of these solemn words that Paul boldly asserts, the matter of “fearless” preaching becomes a must for the authentic preacher. We live in a time where peer pressure along – not to mention satanic opposition – tempts us to compromise. Popularity, power, and position are often times prized higher than the quality of integrity.

iii. **We must be Fervent in our Preaching:** (Galatians 1:23,24 KJV) But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me. With the same fervency and fury that he used to attempt to destroy the church, he was now being used of God to build the Body of Christ. This was now a “sanctified” fervency that caused people to glorify God. G. Campbell Morgan calls this, “Truth, Clarity, and Passion!” *If you are not passionate about your preaching, who is really going to listen?*

b. We Must Reach the People: (Galatians 1:15,16 KJV) God... called me... that I might preach him among the heathen. Is it possible to preach without reaching people? This is one of the greatest problems of our churches today. We have television broadcasts, radio broadcasts, church services, and we are not reaching the people. **How many people have you talked to about Jesus and Faith Outreach since you have been a member here?**

In many ways, we have become keepers of aquariums instead of fishers of men. A preacher who is satisfied with feeding overstuffed Christians week after week while the heathen are going to hell, never really understood his or her call. The call of God is to preach the gospel “to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Not to undermine the Shepherd/Teacher’s responsibility to feed the sheep (John 21:17), but just rather to remind us that the responsibility does not end there. The purpose of this call is to preach the gospel to reach the people.

Is there any thrill that can compare to opening blind eyes? To helping the lost find their way?

Samuel Chadwick, the noted Methodist preacher stated, “*I would rather preach than do anything else in the world.*”

Augustine said, “*A preacher would have to condescend to be a king.*”

Paul said, (I Cor 9:16 NLT) **For preaching the Good News is not something I can boast about. I am compelled by God to do it. How terrible for me if I didn't do it!**

Conclusion:

- The preacher must have clearly received a 'call' from God for a specific purpose.
- God's provision is tied to God's purpose.
- God does not provide where He does not guide. God does not feed where He does not lead.
- We must minister in accordance with that Purpose and not merely our Passion.
- If God has called us, He will prove the call with a manifestation of His glory and approval upon the work.
- Preach the Gospel to Reach the People – to the glory of God!