

LESSON ESSENTIALS

LEADERSHIP LIFESTYLE

LESSON 7: LIFE CALLING AND THE POWER OF PURPOSE

We all want our lives to count for something. We see the great sacrifices and mighty deeds recorded throughout scripture and through the lives of godly men and women who have gone before us.

The desire for purpose and significance is great. But it can be overwhelming and threatening if we take all the responsibility upon ourselves.

1 Thessalonians 5:24 gives us this great foundation of appropriate confidence upon which to rest when we consider calling and purpose: “He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.”

No matter what phase of life you are in, you can serve the Lord in a great calling, and you do have a powerful purpose for which to live.

No matter how unqualified you feel you are for the task at hand, the Lord will equip you. Sometimes our calling seems to be outside of our natural abilities and we feel ill-prepared to do this work of the Lord. Have no fear! If He has called you, He will equip you.

History is full of examples of godly men and women who have lived boldly for Christ. Men and women who sacrificed greatly for the sake of the gospel are certainly inspiring and encouraging as we consider our own walk and our own ability to live out our live calling. However, you cannot simply 'dream up' your calling, or invent some great purpose for which to live. No: as men and women of Christ, we need to be looking to Him for His call and His purpose on our lives.

Scripture makes it clear that there is a general calling to which all believers must attain. Looking at the commands of scripture, the descriptions of godly living, and the spiritual gifts in all their beauty form the basis of the general call on the lives of all believers. However, there is a specific call that the Lord places on an individual so that he can fulfill the role for which he was created.

Unfortunately, there is often a drive within each of us to try to 'impress God' with our big purpose and our big plans of serving Him in the way that we think is best, instead of trusting Him to make it clear where He is working and, by humble faith, joining Him in that work, whatever it is.

When identifying and considering our calling, it is crucial that we remember a few common truths:

1. No matter what the calling is, if the Lord has called you to it, He will be faithful to do it in you, with you, and for you (1 Thessalonians 5:24).
2. No matter what phase of life you are in, you can serve the Lord in a great calling, and you do have a powerful purpose for which to live. Whether you are just starting in a new career, staying at home with a busy young family, beginning a new academic adventure, or any number of other phases of life, the Lord can and will use you right where you are. There are always people who need to know Jesus everywhere we are. Do not feel like you need to 'wait to start' living for Christ. Right now, wherever you are at, the Lord will use you for His kingdom.
3. No matter how unqualified you feel you are for the task at hand, the Lord will equip you. Sometimes our calling seems to be outside of our natural abilities and we feel ill-prepared to do this work of the Lord. Have no fear! If He has called you, He will equip you.
4. No matter how very qualified you feel you are for the task at hand, the Lord is still the one doing the work. His Word reminds us that He is the one who works in us the desire and ability to do His will (Philippians 2:13). Whatever His calling is on your life, and no matter how comfortable you may feel doing it, stay humble realizing that it is the Lord who holds all things together (Hebrews 1:3), including your gifts and abilities. Do His calling in His strength

and for His glory (1 Corinthians 10:31) and you will be most fulfilled in that calling, living for a grand purpose!

5. No matter how long you successfully function in His calling, remember that when we walk in step with the Lord, His yoke will be easy and His burden will be light. His calling on your life may be intimidating. It may be exhausting. It may put you in danger, or may cost you more than you can imagine. And yet, the Word promises that He will give you rest as you serve Him (Matthew 11: 28-30).

Ultimately, the specific calling of the Lord on your life will be a grand adventure! It is unspeakably precious how the Lord deals with all of His children individually and uses us for His grand design! It is helpful for us to keep our work in perspective of eternity. The Word of God tells us that the greatest purpose of our life is to live with our eternal home in mind – our heavenly citizenship – and to live life now in such a way that the Lord is glorified and that we obtain the reward of being with him (Philippians 3:13-14). Now that is something worth living for!

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IN REVIEW

- We ought not to imagine or invent our own calling, but seek out the Lord's will for our lives.
- While we must function in the general calling of godly living (as do all believers) we must also be diligent to work at the specific calling the Lord puts on our lives.
- No matter how we feel about the calling the lord gives u, we must remain humble and Christ-focused, serving Him in His strength, in His way, and for His glory, with an eye to His eternal purposes.

HAVE YOUR SAY

- Have you become aware of the specific call of God on your life? If not, ask a trusted godly mentor to pray with you and to seek the Lord for His direction. The call is often given to you from the leading of the Holy Spirit but then is confirmed by godly people around you.

- Are you serving in your calling already? If you are feeling weary and heavy-laden, take time to pray for the rest that the Lord promises to His servants. Ask for godly counsel from those who know you to see if there are ways that you are serving that is not in yoke with Christ. Realign your work with His purpose as necessary.

- Are you seeking your own glory in how you function in the Lord's calling? Ask Him again to fix your eyes on Him and on His purpose so that you can find the strength and joy in service as you glorify the Lord with your life.

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