

Hebrews 5.1-4

The Calling of God

Perhaps the most wonderful and mysterious aspect of the Christian life is the awareness of the calling of God. The idea that we have been chosen, selected by God; not only for salvation, but to participate in His great work is awesome to consider. The fact that God is perfectly capable of completing ALL of His great work without our aid makes the fact of His calling all the more strange and wonderful; for it makes His calling all of grace TOWARD us!! This truth necessitates some adjustment in our thinking. For we must not think of the calling of God in our lives as something optional, or small. It is the centerpiece of everything we are guides everything we do. No aspect of our lives is uninfluenced by the calling, but rather every aspect of our lives is shaped by and for this calling. Do not think for one second that only those who are called to preach are called of God, no matter what your vocation, no matter what your "place in the world", if you belong to Him, you are called of Him. Period.

I. THE SOVEREIGN CALL

God calls whom He will to whatever He chooses.

a. Every call shows the power and sovereignty of God in choosing whom He will

i. The Opponent

Acts 9.1-9

ii. The young

Jeremiah 1.5-10

iii. The aged who should understand and don't –

John 3.1-11

b. Prior to the call, there is NOTHING of merit in anyone.

1Corinthians 1.26-31

c. Often, prior to the call there is nothing of ability, desire or even raw talent for the calling.

Exodus 4.10-11

Jeremiah 1.6

Amos 7.15-16

Matthew 10.1-4

d. God prepares, equips and empowers whom He calls.

i. He providentially orchestrates our lives to lead us toward His calling.

ii. He blesses His calling by preparing our hearts so that we desire what He ordains.

1. Inclines our hearts towards the calling

2. Improves and even creates out of nothing the natural abilities we lack to fulfill what He has ordained

3. Gives us special and specific gifts to be able to fulfill what He calls us to

iii. This is also followed by the outward recognition of others that this calling is true.

e. We must acquiesce to this calling if we would know His peace

- i. We must not try to run away - Jonah
- ii. We must not grow weary in the fulfillment of our calling –

Galatians 6.6-10

iii. We must not quit once we have begun to do the work unto which we have been called –

Luke 9:62

But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

iv. We must be content with our own calling.

1Corinthians 12.12-22

1. Not envious of another's place or gifts
2. Not seeking to change our circumstance because the way is difficult or seems fruitless
3. Seek to understand the will and calling of God to which we are called to that we might fulfill it completely.

II. THE PRESUMPTIVE CALL –

The greatest work imaginable is empty if we try to do that to which we are not called

a. We must never seek to engage in the work of God to which we are not called. Guard against this by exercising:

i. Humility

Acts 9.8-9

ii. Prayer

Acts 9.10-19

- iii. Confirmation from God's Spirit, the church, other believers, your own desires, the development of your gifts.

Acts 9.20-22; 26-27; 13.1-3

- b. We must always seek to know the will of God for our lives, so that we are moving towards what His calling is
 - i. He is more than capable of changing our plans, our lives, our understanding and our will... and make no mistake, HE WILL!!
 - ii. Set yourself to know the scripture, for there is where you will meet God every time. That is where He will teach you and that is where He will correct your thinking.

2Timothy 3.14-17

- iii. Discipline yourself for Godliness, remember that God is always more interested in what He is doing IN you than in anything He is doing through you. HE DOES NOT NEED YOU!!! –

1Timothy 4.7-8

- iv. Set yourself to understand the times and your place in them. –

1 Chronicles 12:32

of the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command;

- c. Conversely, we must not allow our own fears to keep us from obeying that which we do already understand.
 - i. If you don't know all the will of God, obey that part which you DO know. - that will surely keep you busy enough.
 - ii. Seek counsel and wisdom from other like-minded believers, who will counsel you according to the wisdom of SCRIPTURE.

III. THE KING'S CALL –

God has an overarching purpose in all of His callings. His purpose will always stand

Philippians 1.15-18

- a. We must see the intention of God to advance the Kingdom through whatever He calls us to do.
- b. We must not despise our own calling or place in the grand scheme of things
- c. We must understand, believe and act in such a manner that demonstrates that we are building this invisible kingdom. Our lives actually matter and what we do actually matters. Even if the clear connections are not obvious to us.

IV. THE SUPREME CALL

It is the greatest of honors to be called to serve the people of God

a. Directly - as in the church and her offices. “If God has called you to preach, do not stoop to be a king!” CHS

b. Indirectly - as in the daily service that you each render unto the body. This is the greatest of goods and will advance the kingdom of God in ways you cannot begin to appreciate, but which will be made clear in the fullness of times.