



HELPING MEN LIVE LIVES OF INTEGRITY AND HONOR

HOAW Newsletter

The only legacy worth leaving is the godly legacy we live out daily and leave in the lives of others. Legacy is the sweet-smelling aroma that lingers in the lives of others long after we're gone from this earth... *Titus 2:11-14*

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Our Personal Calling

by Dr. Greg Bourgond

Calling is a confusing concept for ministry leaders and followers of Jesus Christ. Does God **call** a person to a specific role or a specific location or a specific church or a specific ministry organization? To be sure, God can do whatever He wants. He can certainly **call** us to any role, location, church or organization.

But more often than not we are free to choose any of these within God's permissive will based on His purpose and function He ordained for us before we ever came to be. As long as it doesn't violate His commands or moral law we are free to choose.

We are "**called**" to serve the purpose and function He designed for each of us specifically.

First of all, we are **called** according to His design. Your pre-ordained wiring will shape your personal calling. When God superintended

your formation in your mother's womb and set the number of days you would walk the earth, He embedded your calling in your soul.

Secondly, we are **called** to serve a function rather than a role. Our function includes spiritual gift(s), natural abilities, acquired skills, personality temperament, leadership style, values, and ministry principles—collectively they represent the function we are to serve rather than the place, location or role we might embrace. Your life purpose (Ephesians 2:10), committed passion, and planned trajectory will inform your calling.

Third, God may open multiple avenues, options, or opportunities where the full expression of our designed function can be exercised. This would certainly include a consideration of a place, location or role.

Fourth, under the umbrella of God's permissive will we are free to choose the avenue, option, or opportunity that will provide the context where our purpose and function can flourish.

Fifth, God **calls** us to properly steward our designed function. Again, God can do whatever he wants and can **call** us directly to a role, a location or a church for that matter. But, in my humble opinion, this is an exception to the rule. The rule I speak of is that God **calls** us to serve the purpose and function for which He has designed us.

In **1 Corinthians 12:4-7** we have what I **call** the gift package. *"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. NIV"*

Notice first that the Trinity is involved (**Spirit**, Jesus our **Lord**, and **God** the Father).

Secondly, to each of us has been given a 'manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.' In **1 Peter 4:10** we read that "*each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.*"

Thirdly, there are different kinds of **gifts**, different kinds of **service**, and different kinds of **working**. Gifts, service, and workings comprise what I **call** the gift package.

- **There are different gifts.** The list of possible gifts can be found in **1 Corinthians 12:8-10**, **Ephesians 4:7-13**, and **Romans 12:3-8**. Each believer is given one or more gifts at the moment of conversion to help the body of Christ become more like Christ in our thoughts, words, and deeds.
- **There are different kinds of service in which the gifts can be expressed.** This could include avenues of expression such as roles or occupations, or settings or contexts such as churches, location, or ministry organizations.
- **There are different kinds of working.** When one is faithful in the expression of their gifts in the avenues the Lord provides for such expression, they will enjoy a measure of godly effectiveness as they seek to serve the Lord faithfully in accordance with their gifts and opportunities he offers them.

Let's look at the possibilities...

For instance, a spiritual gift of teaching might find its full expression in graduate education at a seminary or as a Sunday school teacher in a church. Likewise, the

gift of leadership might find its full expression as a ministry director in a parachurch ministry organization, as a small group leader in a church, as a trustee on a church board, or as a senior pastor of a church, or as a project manager or entrepreneur.

In summary, God **calls** us to ministry in direct correlation with our servant's profile - spiritual gifting, talent, temperament, passion, spiritual maturity. He may **lead** us to a particular location or expression of our **calling**. In the former He is the initiator, in the latter He is our partner.

Ben Patterson, in his book titled *Serving God*, draws a distinction between vocation and occupation. He says the word vocation should refer to our **calling**. Occupation, on the other hand, refers to our work. Christians can have many different occupations, but just one vocation. In other words, we are **called** to one vocation which can be expressed in many occupations *or locations*. He further makes a subtle distinction between **Calling** (vocation) and many **callings** (occupations).

According to Nelson's Bible Dictionary - Vocation is a **call** or an invitation to a profession or way of life. But in theological discussions, the word vocation is not used in reference to the professional trade which one pursues. Vocation refers to the invitation God has given to all people to become His children through Christ's work. This vocation, or **calling**, does not come to people because they deserve it; it comes strictly as a result of God's GRACE (**2 Timothy**. 1:9). However, it is up to the individual to decide whether he will accept and act upon the vocation.

The framework suggested above is applicable to spiritual gifts. In **1 Corinthians 12:4-7** we read, "*There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different*

kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." We may have one or more gifts, that don't change, but how those gifts are expressed and the effectiveness we enjoy in the expression of those gifts varies.

Gary Friesen, in his book *Decision Making and the Will of God*, proposes that under God's permissive will we have the freedom to choose alternatives without the fear of missing the *dot* in God's will. Unless God intervenes or the word of God gives clear direction, we are free to choose from many possible alternatives. He **calls** this the *way of wisdom*. Four principles are espoused.

(1) In those areas **specifically** addressed by the Bible, the revealed commands and principles of God (His moral will) are to be obeyed.

(2) In those areas where the Bible gives no command or principle (non-moral decisions), the believer is free and responsible to choose his own course of action. Any decision made within the moral will of God is acceptable to God.

(3) In non-moral decisions, the objective of the Christian is to make wise decisions on the basis of spiritual expediency.

(4) In all decisions, the believer should humbly submit, in advance, to the outworking of God's sovereign will as it touches each decision.

In summary, we are **Called** (or set apart) for the ministry of the gospel - our vocation. Secondly, we express our **Calling** in one or more **callings** - occupations. Thirdly, we may be *led* to a particular situation - setting. Our **Calling** is initiated by

God, our *calling(s)* is our response to His gifting, and we may be led to a particular situation - setting. In the last scenario we are free to choose without fear of penalty for *all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.*

EVERYONE A MINISTER

We've been created for ministry.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

We've been saved for ministry.

2 Timothy 1:8-11 So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life-not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

We've been called into ministry.

Ephesians 4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. **1 Peter 2:5-10** you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." Now to you who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone," and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message-which is also what they were destined for. But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

We've been gifted for ministry.

1 Peter 4:10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. **1 Corinthians 12:4-7** There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one

the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

We're commanded to minister.

Matthew 20:26-28 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." **Colossians 4:17** "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord." **Ephesians 6:7-8** Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free. **Hebrew 9:14** How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

The body of Christ needs my ministry.

1 Corinthians 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. **Matthew 9:36-38** When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few."

We are called to be ministers of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:16-20 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.

RESOURCES

Check out **The Store** on our website (www.heartofawarrior.org). There are downloadable resources you can use to lead a group through Phases I, II, or III, Foundations of a Warrior, and Bible Study Guidelines.

Websites for Men

Heart of a Warrior Ministries
www.Heartofawarrior.org
 Church for Men
<http://churchformen.com/>
 Resolute
<https://beresolute.org/>
 Life Way Men
<https://blog.lifeway.com/leadingmen/>

Men's Fraternity
<http://www.mensfraternity.com/>
 Man in the Mirror
<http://maninthemirror.org/>
 Men with No Regrets
<http://www.menwithnoregrets.org/>
 National Collision of Men's Ministries
<http://ncmm.org/>
 Every Man's Battle
<https://newlife.com/emb/>
 Iron Sharpens Iron
<http://ironsharpensiron.net/>
 Ransomed Heart Ministries
<http://www.ransomedheart.com/>
 Band of Brothers
www.bandofbrothers.org/
 Man Up God's Way
<http://www.manupgodsway.org/>
 Iron Works
<http://www.ironworksmen.com/>

OTHER NEWS



www.heartofawarrior.org/journeys/

Until middle January, there is still room for you who live in the area to join the group. If you are interested, please contact me at HOAWMinistries@aol.com.



Donations

As the year closes out please consider giving to Heart of a Warrior Ministries. HOAW Ministries needs your financial support. Our ability to help men live God-honoring lives depends on the resources we can use to that end. Simply go to the donations tab on heartofawarrior.org. Thank you for being a subscriber.