

CCM Celebration

Theme: "All Are Called"

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Introduction

If you are questioning what a "calling" is, the Institute for Faith, Work and Economics states that God's calling is "the truth that God calls us to himself so decisively that everything we are, everything we do, and everything we have is ...lived out as a response to His summons and service."

Mark 16:15 "He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

1 Corinthians 7:17 "Nevertheless, each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches."

What keeps us from fully embracing our calling?

There are many reasons. We are going to discuss 8 during our time.

REASON ONE: I Have a Past

Have you ever tried to tell the LORD why you are NOT qualified for what He is calling you to do?

- a. Moses ran away

Exodus 3

11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" **12** He said, "But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

- b. Guilt and shame

REASON TWO: Experienced Rejection

- The now infamous Lance Armstrong once said, "A boo is a lot louder than a cheer."

- Rejection is one of the devil’s favorite tools to use against people. He’s always going about planting seeds of rejection, but the devil is a liar because he really has no power over us when we know who we are in Christ.

a. Moses, Pharoah rejected him many times

Exodus 4

Moses Given Powerful Signs

4 Then Moses answered, “**But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, “The Lord did not appear to you.”** **2** The Lord said to him, “What is that in your hand?” He said, “A staff.” **3** And he said, “Throw it on the ground.” So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses ran from it. **4** But the Lord said to Moses, “Put out your hand and catch it by the tail”—so he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand— **5** “that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.” **6** Again, the Lord said to him, “Put your hand inside your cloak.”^[a] And he put his hand inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous^[b] like snow. **7** Then God said, “Put your hand back inside your cloak.” So he put his hand back inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, it was restored like the rest of his flesh. **8** “If they will not believe you,” God said, “or listen to the first sign, they may believe the latter sign. **9** If they will not believe even these two signs or listen to your voice, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground, and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.”

b. Joseph with dreams

How do you deal with Rejection?

1. It’s not about you!

Don’t take it personal. If your conscience is clear. If you believe you have stayed faithful to the LORD then it’s not about you. It’s about the gift, the calling, the anointing you carry and not everyone is ready for YOU.

Luke 10:16

“The one who hears you hears me, and the one who **rejects** you **rejects** me, and the one who **rejects** me **rejects** him who sent me.”

2. When rejected, REMEMBER you are in good company? Jesus was rejected too

3. “Should I stay or should I go?”

“If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.”

What does this mean? LEAVE AND LEAVE IT THERE! Do not carry the rejection with you. Leave it there. It is not yours. You do not own it and you cannot let it own you!

REASON THREE: I Have Sin in My Life

Does sin negate the calling of God in our life? Absolutely not! However, God wants to DEAL with the sin in our life. He has made a way to deal with ALL sin.

a. David, adulterer

Psalm 130:3-4

3 If you, O Lord, should f_orget iniquities,
O Lord, who could s_tand?
4 But with you there is h_eavy forgiveness,
i_n that you may be feared.

b. Isaiah

Isaiah 6

Isaiah's Vision of the Lord

6 In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train[a] of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one called to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”[b]

4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 **And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”**

6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 And he touched my mouth and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”

How Do we take care of sin?

Proverbs 28:13

13 Whoever x_onceals his transgressions will not prosper,
but he who y_ou confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

Jeremiah 6:14-16

Living Bible

14 You can't heal a wound by saying it's not there!

1 John 1:8-9

8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

REASON FOUR: Comparison (1:1 comparison)

- a. I'm too...
 - i. "Old", Genesis 17 (Abraham and Sarah)
 - ii. "Young", Gospels (Mary, mother of Jesus)
 - iii. "Weak", Judges 6-8 (Gideon is in the weakest clan and the least in his family)
 - iv. "Earthly, not spiritual" (the first 12 disciples called by Jesus himself)
- b. Peter asked about John the Disciple
.John 21:20-22 ESV "Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, " Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?" Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!"
- c. Pastor Steve Furtick says, "The reason we struggle with insecurity is because we compare our behind-the-scenes with everyone else's highlight reel." We are comparing the worst in ourselves with the best of others.
- d. How do we break this comparison thing? STOP IT! Spend your energy on asking Holy Spirit to reveal what you need to improve or increase in yourself rather than watching others.
- e. Because we are looking at ourselves so closely, we notice every single flaw.

REASON FIVE: I Have Flaws/I'm not good enough (looking at my deficiency)

- a. Paul, thorn in his flesh

2 Corinthians 12:5-10 (ESV)

5 On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses— **6** though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth; but I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. **7** So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, [a] a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. **8** Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. **9** But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all

the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. **10** For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

b. Moses, stutter

Exodus 4

10 But Moses said to the Lord, "Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue." **11** Then the Lord said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? **12** Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak." **13** But he said, "Oh, my Lord, please send someone else."

REASON SIX: Fear

a. Ananias, go pray for Paul the Christian killer (*Acts 9:10-19*) **10** Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." **11** And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, **12** and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." **13** But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. **14** And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name." **15** But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. **16** For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." **17** So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." **18** And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; **19** and taking food, he was strengthened.)

b. Esther saving the Jewish people (Esther 4)

Sometimes to overcome fear, we have to realize it is really the fact that we just don't know what to expect and if God is really calling us.

REASON SEVEN: Uncertainty

a. In 1 Samuel 3, the boy Samuel learns how to listen for the Lord through his mentor, Eli. He needed someone to tell him it was the Lord! How we want that!

b. Gideon, wool with the dew

1. Judges 6:17: "Give me a sign that is really you talking to me."

2. Judges 6:37 "...I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand as you said."

It is okay to seek confirmation. We should make sure we have trusted prayer warriors and intercessors that pray into our callings. I do know from personal experience, however, that looking for signs is just a rouse covering up our real thoughts. Really, we are thinking, "That sounds too hard."

REASON EIGHT: It is just too hard

- a. Israelites crossing to the Promise Land
- b. Disciples, not enough food for everyone

I don't want to give up me, my flesh, my comfort, etc

Rationalization: "Someone else can/will/should do it"

Exodus 4:13 - Moses after he had exhausted all of his excuses.

13 But he said, "Oh, my Lord, please send someone else."

Closing

"God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called."

Romans 8:35-39

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? **(OR our past, or rejection, or forgiven sin, or comparison, our flaws, our fears, or uncertainty, or difficulty)**

36 As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." **37** No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. **38** For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, **39** nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 11:29

29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

Irrevocable - not able to be changed, reversed, or recovered; final.

Vocation -> Vocare (latin) - TO CALL

Irrevocable -> Revocare (latin) - CALLING cannot be RECALLED