

Calling



(EVERYONE HAS ONE)

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not according to our works, but according to His
own purpose and grace which was given to us in
Christ Jesus before time began.”*

2 Timothy 1:19 (NKJV)

EVERYBODY HAS A PURPOSE – EVERYONE HAS A CALL

It is time to discover together God's calling and purpose for our lives because it says in His Word - the Bible - that He has a purpose for everyone's life. Each of us just didn't "happen" to be here on earth, and we are not just taking up space. Many people wonder why they are alive and why they are here.

We may have gone to church for years and still not know what our calling and purpose is. It is not until we open our Bible and begin to understand God's Word will we begin to know the answer. As we read and pray, God will begin to show us that there really is a purpose for everyone's life; even our own.

2 Timothy 1:9 (KJV) tells us: *"who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,"*

Who has – means **HE HAS** already done it. Has, is past tense. He did it, *"Before the world began."* (KJV). The Bible tells us that satan's program (and he has one for each one of us if we want to accept it) was "from the beginning". *"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning..."* 1 John 3:8 (KJV) God's program for our lives was even "before the world began".

BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN

"Before the world began," God knew the hour and the day in which each of us would be living. He even knew we would be reading this.

"Before the world began," God had a purpose and a calling for each of us.

In looking to understand what our own calling may be, we sometimes look at the lives of others, and instinctively know they are not doing what God has called them to do. We know they are not at the place where they should be.

There are scriptures throughout the Bible about men of God who strayed off course even though they started out with God. How do we avoid that pitfall? One of the most powerful forms of help is to pray the scriptures and pray them daily to keep us where God wants us to be. Then we can do what He wants us to do and be what He wants us to be so that we can bear fruit.

HIS WILL, WILL MANIFEST IN OUR LIVES AS WE YIELD COMPLETELY TO HIM

His calling for our lives becomes clear as it gradually unfolds day by day. We begin to see God working His will in our lives because we learn what it means to yield to His will. As a result, we begin to see how He manifests Himself in our lives. God's Word is His will. The more of the Word of God we have in us, the more clearly, we will see His will for us. His Words will become our words. As we speak His Words, we see them shaping our lives, ordering our day, causing us to look to Him in everything that is happening in our lives.

As we internalize the Word of God, it settles into our innermost being, and the Word of God becomes the guide behind the way we think, and behind everything we do. When we begin to read the Bible, not to support what we may already believe, but rather to open ourselves to whatever the Holy Spirit wants to show us; God's purpose and calling for our lives begins to be revealed.

ONE WITH HIM

In Christianity, we are separated from one another by our "religious doctrines". However, Jesus prayed (John 17:21) that we would be one with Him and the Father. We find this unity and oneness as we begin to understand what the Bible is saying.

In His Word, we become one with Him; and if each of us becomes one with Him, we become one with each other, "*...members one of another.*" Ephesians 4:25 (KJV)

WE CAN FIND OURSELVES IN THE WORD OF GOD

In Matthew, John the Baptist was quoting from Isaiah 40:3 when he said, "*For this is he [speaking of himself] that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness...*" Matthew 3:3 (KJV)

He had found himself in the Word of God. He came back into town as someone different. He did not come out of the denomination of the Pharisees or the Sadducees; did he? Why? Think about it. By relying on the Holy Spirit and the Living Word of God, he found himself in the Word of God. He found his calling, and his purpose.

The same thing is found in Luke when Jesus was reading Isaiah 61:1.

He said, ***“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me”*** Luke 4:18 (NKJV) He found the place where it was written, and He began to profess that scripture. He said to them, ***“Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”*** Luke 4:21 (NKJV)

This is a powerful revelation for all of us. Each of us can find ourselves in the Word of God and the purpose God has for our lives.

Most people do not do that. Instead, when they feel God drawing them by His Spirit, they feel they must attend a Bible College. Usually when they attend, they appear at graduation wearing the Bible College label and trained with the doctrine and the traditions of that denomination.

However, there are those who immerse themselves in the Word of God and rely solely upon God’s promise to reveal Himself in His Word. These believers know that it is the responsibility of the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us into ALL truth (John 16:13). These believers are the ones who will reap the rewards of the promises. ***“...he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”*** Hebrew 11:6 (NKJV) We know that ***“...God is no respecter of persons”*** as said in Acts 10:34 (KJV)

Romans 8:28 (NKJV) says, ***“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”*** We are called, ***“according to His purpose.”*** When are we most effective? **It is when we are where God wants us to be and doing what He wants us to do.** That is so important, and I think very few people ever truly find out how to do this.

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:29-32 (NKJV)

ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL TRUTHS IN THE WORD OF GOD

We are called according to HIS purpose. Surely this is one of the most powerful truths in the Word of God. ***“For the gifts and calling of God are***

without repentance." Romans 11:29 (KJV). When we read this verse in the Amplified Classic Bible, it is even more powerful: *"For God's gifts and His call are irrevocable. [He never withdraws them when once they are given, and He does not change His mind about those to whom He gives His grace or to whom He sends His call.]* Romans 11:29 (AMPC) He does not change His mind. However, there is a sad part to this verse. What if someone is called to be an evangelist and they never fulfill the call on their life? That person will be judged according to his choice. Can you imagine facing God and hearing Him say, "You never did what I told you to do." *"All things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."* 2 Corinthians 4:15 (KJV)

I believe the day we receive Jesus Christ into our lives, God begins to work in us to mold us, shape us, and bring us into the area where it works out for His good. *"for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."* Philippians 2:13 (NKJV)

I have asked men in jail if they would have ever given their heart to Christ, if they would have ever been sent to jail. Their answer is no. Think about that. Is this what it took for them to get to know Christ? We need to realize that every day God is trying to tell us something. What is it? Often He is trying to tell us, "Trust in Me." He wants us to grow in wisdom, knowledge, and understand Him and His ways. I went to church for years, but when I got filled with the Spirit of God and began to read the Word of God by the Spirit of God; it had a whole new meaning. *"(for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls),"* Romans 9:11 (NKJV)

WE NEVER REALLY KNOW THE FULLNESS OR THE HAPPINESS OF GOD UNTIL WE FIND OUT WHAT OUR PURPOSE IS

I believe all things work together for the good of them that are called. (Romans 8:28) All things. Everything that has happened in our lives and is happening now in our lives is for preparing us for God's purpose.

I believe in the spiritual realm we take a step, then we take another step, then we take a big step, and soon we come to a wall. This is where God wants us to climb up and over. We could just stand there like one of those little mechanical toys that keep beating against the wall; and that

is how we sometimes find ourselves in the spiritual realm. We just keep bucking and bucking against the wall. However, if we get quiet enough to listen, we might hear God say something like this, “No, come up hither. Come up a little higher.” We must focus on what God wants to teach us. I want to share in context the scriptures that really transformed my life and made me realize that God has a purpose for us.

HE HAS A PURPOSE AND CALLING FOR EACH OF US; HE HAS SOMETHING FOR EACH OF US TO DO

Everything I try to teach you is what is available, how to receive it, and then what to do with it in each of your lives. It is one thing to be teaching and stressing a certain topic, but it is of no value if one does not know how to get a hold of it spiritually. Anytime I teach on a certain topic, I try to teach how to get a hold of it spiritually so that it can be applied to our lives. That is the most important part. We must learn how to put the Word of God into action in our lives. It is of no value if we just know what the Word of God says and do not do it!

Before my life changed, I had been through several religious programs, but I would still walk around asking, “Why am I alive? Why am I living?” (I know I have said this before, but we need to focus on this because it is significant.) This is where many in the Generation-X are today. They think they just accidentally happened along taking up time and space. That is the enemy at work keeping us deceived from hearing what God has said.

I then began to read this context in Ephesians, and I said, “WOW, there really is a purpose! My life is no accident.” *“In Him we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things in accordance with the plan of His will,¹² to the end that we who were the first to hope in the Christ would be to the praise of His glory. In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of the promise, who is a first installment of our inheritance, in regard to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory. For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I*

pray that the eyes of your hearts may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints," Ephesians 1:11-18 (NASB)

In verse 18, the word **"know"** means to know as sure as you know your name and your address. This shows that you should know what the hope of His calling is that well!

WHAT IS THE HOPE OF MY CALLING?

The first time I ever read the book of Ephesians by the Spirit of God, I absorbed this. I have prayed these verses every day since. That is why I can quote almost the whole book of Ephesians verbatim. Why? It is because I have prayed this every day. What is the hope of my calling? I am no accident. My parents may have said I was, but I don't believe that. I believe God's Word, not their words. I'm half kidding, and I'm half serious. When we realize we are no accident, it can change our lives forever. Some people say, "I don't even know why I'm here." It is no accident that any of us are here. God wants everyone to know this.

It is given in scripture after scripture, and we need to understand this and say, "Wait a minute, I have a calling. Praise God! God does have a purpose for my life. Glory to God!" It will change our outlook to the extent that we will want to be in unity with God's vision for our lives. It will help us develop a desire to see what God's purpose is for our lives.

"There is one body, and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling" Ephesians 4:4 (NKJV) You see there is only one hope of your calling. When I first got rearranged and changed, back into the Word of God, and back into God's will, I asked, "God, why didn't I get a hold of this when I was younger?" That was not God's plan. He knew I would have to go through all the things I did to get to a place where I would really hunger for Him and realize that the traditions of men were not working for me anymore.

BIGGEST REASON PEOPLE NEVER FULFILL THEIR PURPOSE AND CALL

I had to have a hunger for Him with all my heart, all my mind, and all my soul. Look at Philippians 3 to see Paul's attitude toward this. This is one of the biggest reasons that keep people from getting into their calling, and one of the reasons that short circuits the believer.

"...forgetting those things which are behind..." Philippians 3:13 (KJV)

The enemy likes to beat us up with our past by bringing to our remembrance things that we have done. Can you imagine what thoughts went through Paul's mind such as, "You killed Stephen. You are never going to fulfill God's call on your life."

Paul said in I Corinthians 15:9 (NKJV) *"...I am the least of the apostles...not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."* Paul saw himself as the least of all saints. He never exalted himself. What is in your past that the enemy is trying to hold against you and using to try to keep you from going forward in God? Some people don't seem to have that problem, but some do. The Word of God says, *"having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross."* Colossians 2:14 (NKJV)

When the enemy says, "Look what I've got against you," at once remind him what God says. He has wiped it out, and it is gone forever. He died for ALL our sins, the ones back then and the ones now.

"Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;" Acts 3:19 (NASB) It is a pretty simple program; we just need to realize this as a basic spiritual fact. This is where I think many of us fail.

WE ARE NOT JUST SUPPOSED TO GO TO CHURCH AND SIT IN A SEAT, WEEK AFTER WEEK, YEAR AFTER YEAR WITHOUT EVER REALIZING THE CALL THAT GOD HAS FOR US

Oh, it's Easter again! This is what too many of us have done with our lives. Somebody asked me years ago what I felt would be the saddest thing if I died tomorrow? I said, "That I didn't fulfill my calling." That would be my biggest regret. I'd still get to go to heaven, I'd still get all the other goodies, but I wouldn't have been able to fulfill God's calling on my life."

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13-14 (KJV) Paul never quit pressing, pressing, pressing toward that mark, towards that call that God had for him. In verse 12 Paul said, *"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect"* Philippians 3:12 (KJV) He didn't say,

“Man, I’ve already got this thing now that I’ve made it up here.” He never said that, and he never quit pressing.

In Hebrews it says “...*let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us*” Hebrews 12:1 (KJV) You see your life is a race. Why is it so important to run in this race with all we have? “*Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.*” 1 Corinthians 9:24 (KJV)

I told somebody the other day, I’d rather be a door opener, a floor sweeper, or a toilet bowl washer in heaven, than a water boy in hell. Give me the least of the least jobs in heaven whatever it is. I sure do not want to be on the other side. There is a hell to shun and a heaven to gain. This is what Paul is referring to in this verse in 1 Corinthians.

Many times, we watch somebody and say, “I could do that in the body of Christ.” We need to check and see if that is what God is telling us to do. We can all do something that someone else is doing, yet we must realize -

**IT IS ONLY WHEN EACH PART OF THE BODY BEGINS TO FUNCTION
AS GOD HAS CALLED THEM TO FUNCTION
THAT THE BODY BEGINS TO DO WHAT IT IS CALLED TO DO**

When we were having meetings in Vegas, I told all the musicians to pray, and when they came to the meeting, to play what God told them to play. When we can do this in a service, we will see the Holy Spirit run the service. We had three different groups from three different churches. The songs they played all tied together and always fit with the message. The Holy Ghost will not write a check and pay bills, but if everybody will pray and listen to the Spirit, everything will work together in unity and harmony. Isn’t it interesting how we can get six to eight different people together and all our messages hook together perfectly? This happens when we go to camp meetings and minister. How does God do that? We do not give a theme for the meetings, but we do all listen to the same Holy Ghost. He knows what He has planned. When everyone gets there, He even puts us in the right order. The Holy Ghost is always allowed to be in charge so that God’s will and purpose can happen at those meetings. He wants to do the same thing in all our meetings if we will allow Him to do so.

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. (Verse 18, really it should be the crucifixion.) For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” 1 Corinthians 1:18-21 (KJV)

The same thing is said in Titus. *“but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;”* Titus 1:3 (NKJV) He manifested His Word. How? It was manifested through preaching; to the world, this is foolishness.

THEY WERE IGNORANT AND UNLEARNED, BUT THEIR FRUITS INDICATED THEY HAD CERTAINLY BEEN WITH JESUS

“For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:” 1 Corinthians 1:22-26 (KJV)

Notice here in Acts what it says about the disciples. *“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.”* Acts 4:13 (KJV) The people could see they were ignorant and unlearned men, but they knew they had been with Jesus. I like that scripture. Some people say, “I was with this ministry for nine years, and I was with this ministry for ten years.” All I want to hear is that they have been with Jesus. I’d rather have that said about me. Wouldn’t you? I don’t want to build my foundation upon another man’s foundation but on the foundation that He has for me for His purpose and calling in my life.

“but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the

wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the insignificant things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no human may boast before God. But it is due to Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written: "LET THE ONE WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD." 1 Corinthians 1:27-31 (NASB) Praise, God in Jesus name!

For more context that it is essential for us to look at let's go to 2 Peter. What I want really stress is verse 10. This all builds up to what we must hear and is particularly important.

"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,³ for His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. Through these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world on account of lust. Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in Your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they do not make you useless nor unproductive in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the one who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choice of you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;" 2 Peter 1:2-10 (NASB)

Look again at verses 2-3. *"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, for His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence."* How do I get grace and peace multiplied unto me? It comes through the knowledge of God. The only place I am going to get that knowledge is from the Word of God. Only then may we increase in the knowledge of

Him. Our calling refers to all that deals with the knowledge of Him.

"...if these things be in you, and abound..." 2 Peter 1:8 (KJV) Grace and peace are increasing in us, and abounding in us. These are things that we need. Three times this passage talks about the knowledge of the Word. The Word itself tells us why it is so important; so that we won't be unfruitful, and we won't be barren. Remember what He did to the fruitless fig tree? He cursed it. I do not want to be fruitless. Do you?

GIVE DILIGENCE TO MAKE YOUR CALLING AND ELECTION SURE

When I got saved, God didn't just plug in a video and show me my predestinated plan. We each must develop a diligence and say, "I want to fulfill my calling." I run into so many people who want to start at the top; but it doesn't work that way. We must start somewhere and do whatever it is that God directs us to do. We must be that example. We must start that pattern of being willing to serve as God calls and directs even if it is cleaning the bathrooms each week. Read verse 10 one more time. *"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:"* 2 Peter 1:10 (KJV) When we receive this truth and believe it, we will do it. Then God can begin to perfect us for His purpose and calling.

In Colossians Paul wrote, *"And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it."* Colossians 4:17 (KJV) This involves freedom of will. God doesn't make anybody do anything. We know the devil comes in, kicks the door open, takes over our life, and if we let him, will eventually destroy it. God does not work that way. That is why Jesus said, *"...Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Yours, be done."* Luke 22:42 (NKJV)

JESUS ALWAYS PRAYED FOR THE WILL OF THE FATHER TO BE DONE. THAT SHOULD BE OUR PRAYER ALSO; WE SHOULD DESIRE GOD'S WILL.

The only times I have ever really messed up is when I didn't ask God to see if something was His will. I remember one time my buddies went to a Bible College course. At the time I had money in the bank, and I had the time, but I said, "I have to pray and read the Word to see if God would have me go." They laughed at me. We had been together for months doing diligent Bible study. We would dissect the Word and do in-depth

word studies. They thought that was the funniest thing when I said that. I woke up the next morning, got prayed up, and put the Blood of Jesus over myself and over the Bible. I said, "God, I want Your divine direction and Your will about whether You want me to go to Bible College. It might be Your will for me to go, but I want to know from You what You want me to do." God gave me 27 scriptures that morning on why He did not want me to go. That's pretty simple. Many of the ministries I know today are off-course and not working because it had just seemed so right to go to Bible College at that time in their life. Every time I have ever done something without seeking God's will, going to the Word, praying, and reading the Word, it has not worked. "In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths." Proverbs 3:6 (NKJV)

There have been times when I was seeking God's will that I did not know where to go in His Word. Then I would pray, and God would tell me where to read. However, I do not believe in just opening the Bible and saying, "Okay, God, show me what to read." I just might open to where it says, "Likewise, go kill yourself." That's too iffy and chancy. I am not saying God does not work that way, I am saying that it is better to learn how to diligently pray and seek God through His Word. Do you see what I'm talking about? We need to find and seek God's divine direction through the Word and the leading of the Holy Ghost.

When I go to evangelistic meetings, I pray and read the Word all day long. I don't know what I'm going to say. I have absolutely no idea. Sometimes I have said, "God, just give me one scripture." Many times, there are scriptures that will just speak to me as I am reading the Word. Scriptures that I just "know that I know" are speaking to me. Usually those are the ones that the Holy Spirit will burst out of me. When that occurs, you can just see what happens. These are the scriptures the Holy Ghost is using to hit home with the people. Isn't that awesome? That is the evangelistic way to teach because you are reaching everybody along these lines. Someone there may be afraid of dying and you share *"With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him My salvation."* Psalm 91:16 (NKJV) Praise God, they are delivered. That is how powerful the Word is. The key is learning to let the Word of God speak to us and then through us.

In Colossians we see how Paul got his orders: *"Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for*

you, to fulfill the word of God;" Colossians 1:25 (KJV) He said, I am made a minister by the dispensation (calling) of God. Do you see what I am referring to? He was called by God.

Here in Acts is where Paul receives his heavenly calling. *"But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;"* Acts 26:16 (KJV)

REVELATIONS OF JESUS CHRIST BREAK TRADITIONS

I went through Paul's ministry again, and again, and again. What happened? He was let down a wall in a basket. Why? It was because right before this event happened, he went straight way and preached, "Jesus is the Son of God" in the synagogue. (Acts 9:20-25) Of course, they all wanted to get rid of him. Then he spent three and a half years in the desert. What happened in the desert? He received a revelation and found himself in the Word of God, I can prove that to you. In Galatians 1:12, he said, *"Neither was I taught it by men but by revelation of Jesus Christ."* He received a revelation knowledge of Jesus Christ that he was to reveal to other people. This is what God has called me to do, and with His help, I am going to do it.

"But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. ¹⁷ I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' ¹⁹ "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision," Acts 26:16-19 (NKJV) The word appear as used here is the same word for revelation or to reveal knowledge.

In verse 18, Paul does not say they are going to have faith in Him, but the faith that is in Him. That is revealed knowledge. Paul was not disobedient to that heavenly vision of turning the people from darkness unto light, or from the power of satan unto God. Who was keeping them bound in their religious situation? It was satan; who would just as soon

they would forever stay Pharisees and Sadducees. He didn't want them to find out the truth. The new dispensation had just opened. The response of the religious people was, "Oh, no, we like this old one."

God told Moses, "Go out there and speak to the rock." Instead, Moses went out and struck the rock. (Numbers 20:8-11) He was stuck in his tradition, and he could not break that old habit.

"Wherefore, holy brethren partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." Hebrews 3:1 (KJV) The word consider means to fix your mind on intently until you see clearly. In other words, God is saying for us to fix our minds on the Word of God until we can see Him, until we know Him, until we know that we know, that we know, that we know, that we know HIM!

FOLLOWING IN HIS FOOTSTEPS; OUTSIDE THE CAMP

Some people may say, "Well, that was Paul. He had the heavenly calling; the heavenly vision." I do not believe that is why he was able to fulfill his calling. I think the reason is given in 1 Peter. *"For you have been called for this purpose, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you would follow in His steps,"* 1 Peter 2:21 (NASB) Jesus is our example, and we are to follow in His footsteps. What is that example? He found Himself in the Word of God by spending time there. He was not raised by the religious Sadducees and Pharisees. The book of Hebrews says it was outside the camp.

"Therefore, let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach." Hebrews 13:13 (NKJV) This is a powerful statement. Some personally believe Jesus was raised by shepherds and wise men (who were the only ones who knew He was born). They were the only ones who knew where to find Him. He must have been raised by them. The learned men were astounded by the wisdom that He had as a child. The Bible says, *"...the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him."* Luke 2:40 (NKJV) He was not born with all wisdom and all knowledge, like some suppose. There are too many scriptures which say He was not. *"though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered."* Hebrews 5:8 (NKJV) He learned obedience by the things He suffered; He was not born with obedience. We must decide if we are going to believe the Word of God over traditions and doctrines of men.

THOSE WHO ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD; ARE THE SONS OF GOD

I was caught in a situation in Mexico where the whole village was in a demonic situation. Nothing was working, and all these people were there. The old traditional things did not work. There were people out in the street, in the yard, and in the house. I asked, "God, what is going on? I don't want to look like a fool. You know these people want to see the power of God happen." The Holy Spirit spoke to me and told me what was happening. He said, "This young man is not possessed, He is bound; look behind you." I turned around and God began to reveal things to me. We eventually got the victory, but had I not listened to the Spirit of God I would have left there looking stupid.

The local Satanists of that village, who wanted to see us defeated, had set all this up, I believe. If not, why were they all there? However, I had learned how to listen to the Spirit of God and those plans were defeated. I really feel badly that I didn't just walk in the door and begin by praying and asking, "God, what do you want me to do?", instead of acting in the natural way I had always done. That is what Moses did. He did what he had always done and hit the rock to make the water come out. However, that is not what God told him to do. That is why we need to learn how to listen to the Spirit of God. Since I knew how to hear the Spirit of God, there was a major breakthrough. God doesn't always work the same way every time; He's not that kind of God. He is always moving on. He is doing something a little different all the time. I believe God is walking forward.

We are to walk in the Light as He is in the Light, (1 John 1:7) walk in the Spirit as He is in the Spirit, walk in Love as He is Love, and walk in Truth, as He is Truth. Walking is a forward motion. We can't just stand in the same place and hang out. I pressed in, and really moved on the calling that God had for me. I never left Him alone; so, when He moved, I was ready to move with Him.

POWER IN PRAYING THE WORD OF GOD

I have always prayed the scriptures. I often pray, "*no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways.*" Psalm 91:10-11 (NKJV) I used to pray that to combat sickness and disease. I remember one time I was about to make a wrong turn in my life, and God locked every door, and I could not move. After everything changed, I asked,

“God, why didn’t you let me make that wrong move?” He said, “Because you pray Psalm 91:10-11 every day.” I said, “What’s that got to do with it?” Then, I quoted the scripture to myself. “...*He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.*” I never even thought of that part of the scripture. I had been praying something that was keeping me in line with God, and I was trying to do something different. I was trying to derail, but God kept me on track. That is why we need to pray the Word of God. Not only does the Word of God change other people’s lives with its seeds, but it also combats the enemy and works in our own lives to keep us on a positive track!

ABIDING IN OUR CALLING

“Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called”. 1 Corinthians 7:20 (KJV) Abide means to take a dwelling place. We need to abide, dwell, live, and stay in the calling that God has given us. Whatever it is, let us abide there. *“Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it.”*²² *For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord’s freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ’s slave.*²³ *You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.*²⁴ *Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called.”* 1 Corinthians 7:21-24 (NKJV)

In Romans it says, *“So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”* Romans 14:12 (KJV) Who are we going to give an account to? God!

We just talked to a guy the other day that runs a large organization. He had so much faith and trust in his organization. Then his son was in an accident and died. Someone asked this man, “Did you call out to the organization, or did you call out to God?” He said, “Well, I called out to God.” Why didn’t he call out to the organization? When things are matters of life and death, we seem to automatically know where to place our trust and faith. Sometimes, God will allow situations in our lives to remind us about where we need to place our faith.

So many times, I see everyone run to the pastor instead of to God. As a pastor, people often come to me, but I am not God. I can pray with you. I can give you scriptural direction, but you need to go call on God.

WE NEED TO LEARN HOW TO GO TO GOD WITH CONFIDENCE, BASED UPON HIS WORD, AND PRAY IN FAITH

*“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, **we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.**”* 1 John 5:14-15 (NKJV) Every so often we need to check to see what we may have allowed to become a god in our life? Do we have the right perspective about spiritual things? The head of Christ is God, and the head of every man is Christ. That is God’s divine order.

EVERYBODY HAS A PURPOSE. EVERYBODY HAS A CALL

We are not accidents. Each of us has a purpose looking for an appointed time to manifest. There are more scriptures that deal with our calling than deal with our purpose. We need to press into the Word of God for an understanding about this. Begin to pray Ephesians 1:17-19 and Colossians 1:9-12. I mean, pray it, and mean it when you pray it.

One morning I woke up and heard the Spirit of God say, “I want you to drive over to this town and go to church.” I had never been to that town or that church before, but I went. A lady was there from Texas. She got up and did this deal, and I began bawling and crying. She was sharing about everything God had been dealing with me about. I had to walk out into the big lobby because I was bawling and crying. The Holy Spirit said, “That’s what I have called you to do.” I finally got it.

When we really press toward an understanding, God will bring it to us. He will have people call you, and you won’t be able to get away from it. It will become a broken record until you get it. We should want to know exactly where He wants us to be.

Let’s read the prayer in Colossians. This is one of Paul’s prayers, and we need to pray this also. I pray this over everybody that I can think of. I pray it constantly. I don’t just pray this for myself. I pray it for other people as well.

“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with

joy; ¹² giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light." Colossians 1:9-12 (NKJV)

Now let's read the prayer in Ephesians. These prayers are not just for us to read, they are for us to pray.

"that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power" Ephesians 1:17-19 (NKJV)

WHEN WE BEGIN TO PRAY THE WORD OF GOD, WE BEGIN TO DESIRE TO DO AS IT SAYS!

Ephesians 3:10 really hit me strongly. This is the eternal purpose. When we get a hold of our calling and everybody gets plugged in to the Head (Christ), we begin to listen to the Head and begin to function and do whatever it is God wants us to do. It's not just a program for "me". It is for everybody - all of us doing something for God.

Paul said, *"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh..."* 2 Corinthians 5:16 (KJV) The only thing God will allow me to see is the Spirit of God in somebody. I know that other people can do something for God that I cannot, and I want them to do it. I will not be jealous when they do.

"so that the multifaceted wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.

Ephesians 3:10-12 (NASB)

THIS ETERNAL PURPOSE IS THAT THE CHURCH WOULD WAKE UP AND REALIZE THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD

There are principalities and powers that are warring against this purpose, not only us as a body, but warring against each of us individually. That is why Paul never ceased to pray for people. This is what Paul's attitude was. It should be our attitude also.

When we see somebody become newly saved, we need to pray. Why? To keep those principalities and powers from entrapping them and pulling them away from God's will, God's desire, God's call and God's purpose in their lives.

EVERYBODY HAS A CALLING; EVERYBODY HAS A PURPOSE

This is all talking about the eternal purpose that the church has not reached yet. We need to pray the Word of God. His Word says, *"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord."* 2 Corinthians 12:1 (KJV)

'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. Acts 2:17 (NKJV)

WE SHOULD SAY, "I WANT TO PRESS IN, AND KNOW HIM MORE".

Paul said in Philippians, *"[For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly], and that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection [which it exerts over believers], and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed [in spirit into His likeness even] to His death, [in the hope] That if possible I may attain to the [spiritual and moral] resurrection [that lifts me] out from among the dead [even while in the body]."* Philippians 3:10-11 (AMPC)

That was Paul's whole purpose. More than anything else, he wanted to know God. Every day, we should be increasing in the knowledge of Him. As we increase in the knowledge of Him, we receive more of an understanding of what He has for us to do. *"who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,"* 2 Timothy 1:9 (NKJV)

PRAYER:

Father God, in Jesus' name, we come before Your great and mighty throne. Father God, we thank You that You have a determined purpose and call upon every one of our lives. We thank You that we are Your chosen, chosen, chosen children. As sure as in 1 John 3:8, You revealed Jesus' calling, and that His purpose was that He might destroy the powers and the works of Satan. God, we know that this is Your ultimate purpose for every one of our lives. As we learn to overcome the world and the flesh, then we will overcome principalities and powers. Let us realize how important each person is in the Body of Christ, not just those here in our body, but everyone throughout the world.

We thank you, Father God, that as we ask You, we can grow in wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of You. I ask You God, to begin to reveal to my brothers and sisters, the calling that you have upon their lives. God, begin to reveal to them, and birth within them what it is that they can do that nobody else in the world can do, just as sure as our DNA is not the same and our fingerprints are not the same. God, You said, let each of us esteem the other better than himself. I pray that each person will see the urgency that You have upon their lives and that we will press through and give diligence to make our calling and election sure in You, so that everybody finds themselves in the Word of God.

God, we thank you for that wisdom and knowledge and we pray this in Jesus mighty name.

Amen

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*“Finally, brethren, pray for us,
that the Word of the Lord
may have free course,
and be glorified, even as it is with you.”*

2 Thessalonians 3:1

“So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed”

Acts 19:20

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