


Lesson 4: Understanding God's Call

The personal call to ministry can be confusing. There are no Damascus flashes, no handwriting on the wall, no angels appearing with cryptic messages. So what is it? What is God's call of individuals into ministry? How does it work and how can you know for sure?  This Bible study will address these questions. Bring your notes to school as we will discuss this topic together.

Section 1: Understanding the Call of God

Is there a common calling for all believers? Yes! In the following verses, discover and write out how the passage reveals that all believers are called to...

Salvation (Romans 8:30)

Sanctification (2 Timothy 1:9)

Service (2 Corinthians 5:20)

What IS a call from God? The definition we use is, "An identifiable spiritual purpose or objective for your life." If that is true, what critical question is answered for you by understanding God's calling on your life?

To what does God call people? *How* does He call people? What *means* does He use? Look up the following verses and record the answers to each. For the second column, write “P” if God called that person to a specific place, “L” if to a life-long ministry, and/or “T” if to a specific task. The first one has been completed for you.

Biblical Character	Called to: (write each letter that applies)	God’s call came by means of...	What was the specific thing that God asked this person to do?
Noah <i>Genesis 16:13</i>	T	God's audible voice	Build an ark
Moses <i>Exodus 3:10</i>			
Samuel <i>1 Samuel 3:1,ff.</i>			
Solomon <i>1 Kings 2:1, ff</i>			
Nehemiah <i>Nehemiah 1:3-4</i>			
Esther <i>Esther 4:13-14</i>			
Ezekiel <i>Ezekiel 1:1, 3:10-11</i>			
Jonah <i>Jonah 1:1</i>			
Andrew <i>Matthew 4:19</i>			
Paul <i>Acts 9:15-17</i>			

After completing this exercise, what conclusions do you draw about God's calling upon people's lives?

Rather than a burning bush or a voice in the night, the "call" today may come like Nehemiah's, as a burdened heart, or like Paul's, from God through the words of a believer, or perhaps God has spoken to you through His Word. Regardless of how He called you, He has planted a desire to use your God-given gifts and abilities to further Kingdom-building here on earth. Seriously considering where He would have you serve is a response to the will of God.

Section 2: Your Personal Call to Ministry

How *do* you know God's calling on your life? Think through the following, look up the passages, and write your answers.

Have I spent time in prayer over this?

Prayer should govern all aspects of a believer's life, so it is not unrealistic to begin discerning God's will for service in prayer.

Has God used any particular passage of Scripture to call me to His service?

Since God speaks to us today through His Word, He may use a Scripture passage that addresses the very area of ministry that He is calling you to. If He has, write those Scriptures below and explain why those direct you.

How important do I sense this ministry is?

Study Philippians 3:14, and meditate on the meaning of "high calling." The answer to this question may complete the statement, "*I'd rather go to heaven, but I'll stay here because...*"

Do I have the approval of my spiritual leaders?

Study Acts 13:1-3. Consider the role of spiritual leaders in the calling of Paul and Barnabas, and think about how this model can relate to you and give you direction.

Have I seen God use me in this?

Read John 15:16. This passage adds another perspective to knowing the calling of God on your life.

End this study with a personal statement that indicates what you believe God is calling you to, and why you believe that, based upon what you have learned.