

Called and Gifted

By Mary Kane

*"To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice
and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.
And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them;
and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice."*

John 10:3-5

Before we begin our study today, let's take a moment to pray. Please ask God to reveal any sin that you might have on your heart then ask for His forgiveness. Now ask our merciful Father to fill you afresh with His Holy Spirit and open your heart to the wisdom of His Word.

Please read Mark 1:16-20.

What were Simon, Andrew, James and John doing when Jesus called them?

They were going about their usual work, having an ordinary day, and then Jesus showed up. Did you notice that none of the men saw Jesus coming, but that Jesus had to call to them to get their attention? Neither was Simon, Andrew, James or John traveling around the countryside looking for Jesus so they could join Him in His work. Rather, Jesus sought the brothers and called them to follow Him; it was His idea.

Please fill in the missing word from verse 20:

"And immediately He _____ them, and they left their father Zebedee..."

The word *called* in verse 20 in the original Greek is *kaleo* which means "to call by name, to invite, to give a name, to bear a name, to command or

Please be blessed by this next definition of *kaleo*, “used of the one whom God declares worthy of the calling which He has commanded to be given to him and therefore fit to obtain the blessings that are promised in that call.” Perhaps like me, you have not lived a perfect life; you’ve made mistakes that you bitterly regret and believe they have disqualified you from affecting your world for Christ. According to the definition, however, God has declared you *worthy* for the work of your calling and you will receive a blessing when you accept His calling. This blessing cannot be obtained when following your own plan for your life. Please keep in mind that when we follow God we will encounter trouble, suffering and hardship but there will be blessing as well. If you reject your calling, you will miss blessing of God.

As we dig deeper into the Greek word *kaleo* we discover that it is derived from the primary word *kello* which means “to urge on.” Imagine Jesus, standing on the shore calling to the disciples, inviting them to join Him in His work, *urging* them to accept His offer of salvation. Imagine further, Jesus calling to you; urging *you* to accept His salvation.

Notice that when Jesus called James John, Simon and Andrew, He did not urge them to accept His gift salvation and then leave them on the shore once they made a decision. Jesus called them to leave their present circumstances and *follow* Him. Like the Disciples, Jesus did not save us and then leave us to pass the time until His return. He has called us to join Him in His work. The call of God is not for a moment, but for a lifetime. What then are we to do with this calling upon our lives? What is the call of God all about? Let’s look at a few Scriptures and see what we can learn about the calling of God.

Please read Ephesians 4:1-3.

According to these verses, how are we to walk?

We are to walk worthy of our calling. The word *walk* used in this verse refers to a way of life or how a person acts, behaves, thinks and conducts himself on a daily basis.

What would a life look like if it was lived worthy of the calling of God?

It would be a life marked by truth, peace, strength, purity, holiness, service and integrity.

Please look up 2 Timothy 1:9 and record the word use to describe the calling of God.

The call of God is a holy calling. In this case *holy* means something set apart for use by God, something that is pure. Thankfully this calling does not depend on our own works but on the grace and purpose of God.

According to 2 Timothy 1:9, when did God determine your calling?

Before time began God determined to call *you* to join Him in His kingdom work. Knowing all your mistakes, flaws faults and sins—knowing it all—He has called you (and me) to be used by Him for His glory.

Whom has God called (1 Corinthians 1:26-27)?

Glory—I fit! God has called the weak, the foolish and the despised!
Thankfully, God has infinite strength, wisdom and grace; we need not supply any of our own.

Now that we know that we have been called by God what are we to do with our calling? Please look up the following verses and record what we are to do with our calling:

Matthew 28:19-20:

1 Corinthians 14:12:

1 Corinthians 10:31:

Titus 2:14:

In order for us to accomplish all the things listed above, God has given us different gifts such as teaching, preaching, shepherding, mercy, worship, musical abilities, organizational skills, hospitality etc. Our job is to figure out how to make disciples, edify other believers, do good works and bring God glory with the gifts that He has given us.

What gift/s has God given you?

How can you use the gifts you've been given to:

Make disciples:

Give God glory:

Do good works:

Build up other believers:

It has been given to all believers, not just pastors or ministry leaders to be highly effective and influential within their ministries. Our influence is only limited by one thing...

Please read Romans 12:6 and record in the space below what we are limited by.

We are only limited by our faith. This is both exciting and scary! This verse has been stretching and challenging me for the past few weeks. How God might use me if I would only step out in faith? I have a step I need to take that I am preparing for at this time. How about you?

How is God calling you to step out in faith and use your gifts?

Perhaps you think that because of your past that God does not want to use a man or a woman like you. I've struggled through the same issue and it is a lie from the enemy. God will not only use you *in spite* of your past, He will use you *because* of your past. Think of all the glory that will come to God if by your witness others learn that they too can overcome abuse, immorality, lying, cheating, stealing, addictions or adultery. Good always conquers evil, God always wins and the enemy always loses.

In closing, be blessed by looking up one more verse.

Please write Romans 11:29 in the space below.

God has never regretted and never will regret that He has chosen, called and gifted you to serve in His kingdom. He loves you. Follow Him always.

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