THE CALL IS FOR YOU (ROMANS 8:28-30)

TAKEAWAY:

God loves you and has called you for His good purpose.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

We’ve all wrestled with the questions, “Why am I alive?” and “What am I supposed to be doing with the rest of my life?” To answer those questions, to live out your purpose, you must understand that God has called you and that His Word helps you know how to fulfill that calling.

GOSPEL CONNECTION:

God doesn’t give you a calling because you earn it or deserve it. His calling in your life is a gift of grace through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:6).

INTRODUCTION

- Do you ever wonder why God created some things? What do you wonder this about?

- Has there ever been a time in your life when you wondered about your own purpose in the world—why God created you? Explain.

- How would you answer someone who asks, “Why did God create me?” Would you need to know that person specifically, or is there one answer to that question for every person who has ever existed?

- This six week series is called, “What On Earth Am I Here For?” What is one question you have related to that topic?

For the next six weeks we’re going to explore God’s Word to learn the answers to those questions about why God created us and what we’re supposed to do with our lives. The fact is, God has called you. The Bible says you have already been called and you have been called according to His purpose. We’re going to take a look at what the Bible says about the implications that this truth has in our lives.
UNDERSTANDING

> Ask a volunteer to read Romans 8:28-30.

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

- Who is doing all the work in these verses? How does this fact encourage you regarding the question, “What am I supposed to be doing for the rest of my life?”

- Read Galatians 1:6. Why is it critical to know that your calling is a gift of God’s grace? What is the danger in thinking that you, because of your winsome personality, intellect, or giftedness, have something to do with your calling?

God loves us simply because He created us. He doesn’t call us and then send us off in our own intelligence and ability to live out His purposes. We couldn’t, even if we tried. Neither could we live out His purposes in our own power even if we were the smartest, most gifted people in town. We are made holy the same way we are saved from hell—through the inexhaustible grace of God. Only by trusting in His power over and against our own, can we glory in Him and move forward in our pursuit of Christ.

- Read Galatians 1:15. How does Paul’s statement that God, “set me apart even from my mother’s womb” speak to the fact that God’s calling in your life is an act of grace? How does it speak to His love for you?

- Which part of Romans 8:28 is harder for you to come to terms with: that you are included in the promise that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him, or that He has called you? Why?

- What does it mean that God has called you, “according to His purpose”?

Pastor Jeff explained it this way, “You were made by God and you were made for God. God’s calling is about His plan for your life, not your plan; His dream for your life, not your dream; His purpose for your life, not your purpose or your parent’s purpose or your boyfriend’s purpose or your husband or wife’s purpose. It’s for God’s purpose for you life.”
• Read Ephesians 2:10. What are some good works God calls all of us who follow Jesus to do? What are some unique good works God calls us as individuals to do? (Use specific examples from members of the group.)

> Ask a volunteer to read 1 Timothy 1:12-13.

He considered me faithful, putting me into service, 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; 14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus.

• Paul wrote that God chose to use him, “even though... How would you finish that same sentence? God considered me faithful, putting me into service, even though I....?

• If your sin and mistakes don’t change your calling, then does that mean you can live however you want, sinning freely, and God will still use you for His purposes? Explain.

Remember what Paul wrote in Galatians 1:15: God “set me apart even from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace.” Paul knew this to be true even though Paul had gone on to persecute Christians and fight against God. Paul was set apart long before God blinded him on the road to Damascus. However, Paul did not join God in that calling and purpose until He repented and came to saving faith in Jesus Christ. God called Paul, and Paul’s role was to simply answer. God has called you, and your role is to answer Him, too.

APPLICATION

• From this week’s study, how would you answer the question, “What on earth am I here for?”

• Is it possible to answer God partially? To pick up His call to salvation but to ignore His call to follow Him? What are some ways you are tempted to do this?

• What would change in your life this week if you were to answer God’s call fully?

PRAYER

Thank God for the gift of His calling, chosen for you before you were even born. Thank Him that your calling is not for anything meaningless, but for His great, eternal purposes. Confess your tendency to ignore His call, and thank Him that He continues to call you anyway. Ask Him to help you fully answer His call this week in the ways you think, speak, and act.
COMMENTARY

Romans 8:28-30

8:28. Who are those who love God? Paul defines them as those who are called according to His purpose. The “called” are all Christians (vv. 29-30). The promise of this verse is that God orders everything for believers so that all of life’s experiences work together for our ultimate good. Not everything is good in and of itself, but God uses everything for our good (vv. 35-36). Jesus taught us that God’s sovereign care for and guidance of creation covers even the death of a sparrow and the hairs of our head (Luke 12:6-7,22-34).

8:29-30. God has a plan that spans from eternity past to eternity future. Those He foreknew refers to those whom God set His electing love upon in eternity past. Predestined means that God planned from eternity that “those [whom] He foreknew” would become like Christ through spiritual rebirth. Called is the “effectual” call in which God opens our heart so we can hear His voice (see Acts 16:14). Justified is God’s act of declaration that we are “right” in His sight because Jesus paid our penalty and we received His righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21). Glorified is the final stage of our salvation.

1 Timothy 1:12-13

1:12. Paul offered his personal testimony as a contrast to the false teachers and leaders in the Ephesian church. Paul’s words matched his life; his manner corresponded with the truth. When our character and lifestyle harmonize with our beliefs, we become a powerful example of God’s truth and reality. Paul was an example to all believers, and specifically to Timothy and church leaders, of how life and doctrine must complement each other.

Paul began his personal testimony by directing attention to Christ. Whatever Paul was able to point to in his life as exemplary was because of Christ Jesus. Paul had an amazing life of powerful ministry for God. His life and work brought about tremendous results for God’s kingdom. Even so, Paul knew it was because of God from start to finish. He was the giver of power and strength.

Paul had demonstrated faithfulness throughout his ministry, and in God’s economy this resulted in greater ministry and responsibility. God knew Paul would be faithful and so put upon him the great responsibility of taking the gospel throughout the known world. So Paul gave thanks, because he knew that who and what he was came from God. Paul did not select his role in life. God clearly and specifically called him (Acts 9:15). He was appointed by God.

1:13. Paul had not always been a missionary in Christ’s service. Looking back at his life, he described himself prior to his conversion as a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent opponent. One first meets Paul (then called Saul) at the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:57-58; 8:1). While an angry mob surrounded Stephen, throwing rocks at him until he was battered to death, Saul witnessed the execution with approval. Here is blasphemy, persecution, and violence from the hands of Saul. He opposed the work of God; he was contemptuous of Christ. He harassed the people of God. He was brutal, having people imprisoned and perhaps killed for their faith in Christ the Lord. Even so, he received mercy (Acts 9).