



Surrendering to God's Plan: Discovering Your Divine Purpose

By: Terri Walker

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In "Equipped & Ready," I discussed God's callings for Moses, Gideon, and Jeremiah and how He worked miraculously through each of them despite their initial hesitations. But what if you haven't heard from God on your calling. What if you don't even know your purpose? Maybe you spend a lot of time thinking and praying about what it is God has called you to do and you've come up short—no answer and no idea where you "fit" in His Kingdom. Perhaps you feel stuck and maybe even insignificant.

Before we go further, I want to state that purpose and calling are two different terms that I use here. We all have the same purpose, but a calling from God can be unique to an individual.

I used to spend a lot of time, even as a child, wondering who I really was. I would look in the mirror and literally ask aloud, "Who am I?" At that time, I didn't know how to connect my identity with the One who made me. It wasn't until later that I realized I could not truly know myself if I did not know God through Christ. He was the true light that I needed.

As a young adult, sometime after having given my life to Christ, I went from wondering who I was to wondering what God's calling was for me. Believe me, I prayed and asked God but went for a long time without a bonafide answer. And during the wait, I admit I felt discouraged.

At the root of wondering who I was and what I was called to do was the question I think everyone ponders at some point in their lives: Am I of any value? We can question our value on a general level, or make it specific to the different roles in our lives—Am I of any value in my family...at school...on my sports team...at work...in my local church? (Yes, we can even wonder if we have value in the body of Christ). As I began to diligently study His Word, I discovered what I needed to know:

- 1) I needed to first understand my purpose,
- 2) I needed to trust God to communicate His unique calling for me, and
- 3) I needed to know that neither is about me.

There are three Scriptures I want to share that are a constant source of encouragement and direction in my life as it relates to my purpose AND calling. The first is found in Deuteronomy:

...loving Adonai your God, paying attention to what he says and clinging to him — for that is the purpose of your life! Deuteronomy 30:20 (CJB)

The purpose of every human is to love and obey God. ALL OF CREATION exists to glorify its Creator. That is why you were created and whether you fulfill it is up to you. In Deuteronomy 30, Moses presented the Israelites with the choice of life and blessings as a result of loving and obeying the Lord, or the choice of death and curses by doing things their own way, without surrender to God. It was up to them, but Moses reminded them their very purpose was to cling to and obey God.

Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. Ecclesiastes 12:13 (NIV)

The author of Ecclesiastes (presumably King Solomon) writes that “I set my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven” (Ecc 1:13). In so doing, he discovers much to be shared about the perplexities of life. Ecclesiastes is a testimony about all that he learned through observation and experience. He provides what I call “the Conclusion of all conclusions” in Chapter 12 verse 13, which plainly states the essential role of being human—honoring God and obeying His commandments.

Knowing your God-given purpose for life should dissolve any internal struggle about your identity or value. This knowledge shines light on where you are to direct your focus (it should be shifted towards God); however, you can get sidetracked by spending time and possibly even money trying to figure out your calling. God always initiates any calling or specific assignment upon your life (as per the pattern set in Scripture); and although it's absolutely good to ask and pray on it, there is no need exhausting yourself or your resources about it. This leads me to the third and final Scripture.

Human being, you have already been told what is good, what Adonai demands of you — no more than to act justly, love grace and walk in purity with your God. Micah 6:8 (CJB)

After God states His case against Israel for their evil lifestyle, Israel wonders what they can bring to God, what sacrificial offering would be considered good enough to atone for their sins. The prophet Micah tries to open their eyes by reminding them what God requires: a lifestyle that reflects His goodness—justice, kindness, and humility. Love God and love others. This is how we all are called to live out our lives as believers. This means more to God than any sacrifice we could ever give to honor Him.

In today's culture, where notoriety (and influence) is king, believers can be affected by thinking that a calling from God should cause us to shine and maybe even bring us fame or fortune. And if it doesn't, that may cause us to feel worthless or discouraged. We must not measure our value according to the world's standards, nor should we attempt to place value (whether low or high) on any assignment from the Lord. Any calling from Him should bring Him honor and glory. The life you live through and for Christ should always magnify Him, not you. **(Should the axe glorify itself over the one who chops with it? Should the saw magnify itself over the one who moves it? Isaiah 10:15 CJB)**

More Scriptures for Encouragement:

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

1 So I, the prisoner for the Lord, appeal to you to live a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called [that is, to live a life that exhibits godly character, moral courage, personal integrity, and mature behavior—a life that expresses gratitude to God for your salvation], 2 with all humility [forsaking self-righteousness], and gentleness [maintaining self-control], with patience, bearing with one another in [unselfish] love. Ephesians 4:1-2 (AMP)

...that I am Adonai, practicing grace, justice and righteousness in the land; for in these things I take pleasure," says Adonai. Jeremiah 9:24 (CJB)

