

Your Life's Work

by Arthur Vess

Arthur Vess emphasizes the importance of recognizing and obeying God's call in one's life for true fulfillment and purpose.

Scripture: Isaiah 6:8, Jeremiah 1:5, Matthew 4:19, Acts 9:15, 1 Corinthians 1:26

Topics: "Gods Calling", "Faithful Obedience"

Description

Arthur Vess preaches about the importance of recognizing and obeying God's call for your life's work, emphasizing the need to be in a right relationship with God and willing to go or stay according to His will. He highlights the honor and fulfillment that comes from following God's call, even in the face of opposition and challenges. Vess uses examples from biblical figures like Moses, Abraham, Elijah, and the Apostle Paul to illustrate how God calls and equips individuals for specific missions or service, often through unique and miraculous circumstances.

Transcript

Next to your surrender to God, comes Your life's work. "I'll live for Him who died for me:How happy then my life shall be." If God has a special mission or call for you, you will never be happy or prosperous without obeying that call. Keep busy and faithful to God in your own home and community, and if God wants you in some special field or service, He will call you in His own time and way. Your call may be like or unlike that of others, but say yes to God, and He will continue to say yes to you, whatever others do.

Every normal child or young person has a desire or longing to be and do something worthwhile in their life here on earth. When the writer was about six or seven, a county superintendent of Public Education visited our public school, and while speaking said, "Out there before me in that group of children, there may be a great lawyer, preacher, congressman or president wrapped up in one of those little coats." My chest almost heaved, and something in me said, "I hope that I will be one of them."

The nature, character and conduct of the individual, plus the influence, council and example of others about them, have much to do with one's conduct and destiny. Many follow the occupation of their parents or other influential persons. But those who are called of God, to some special field of service, have special and added privileges and responsibilities in choosing their life work.

Some have very definite and outstanding calls or commissions from God, while others make a more gradual and ordinary approach. Most of God's outstanding men have had a definite, if not unusual call and

commission from God. It requires faith in God and willingness to hear and heed the call. While we may realize our own inability to obey the call, we must also realize God's ability. God never calls us to do anything that we cannot do with His assistance. He does call us to do things we cannot do in order that He may do them through us.

God uses various methods and modes to call different persons, depending on their nature, circumstances, etc. The task is always too great for us without God's help. He called Noah to build an ark out on dry land. God ONLY sees the future. He can change or reverse natural laws and human circumstances to accomplish His will.

Abraham was called to leave his homeland, and go out into a strange land. "And he went out not knowing where he went. By FAITH he sojourned in the LAND OF PROMISE." By heeding God's call, and venturing out, he became one of God's great heroes whose life and influence lives on today. Abraham was the father of the Faithful. All God's great men have launched out "BY FAITH." -- See Heb 11. We have reviewed Moses' choice to yield to God, now let us review his call.

Moses was called from the back side of the desert by the miraculous, burning bush. When he saw the bush burning, he turned aside to see why the bush was not consumed, when God spoke to him and said, "Moses, Moses," he answered, "Here am I." Then God spoke to him and commanded him to take off his shoes, "For the place whereon thou standest is HOLY GROUND." "Oh, how sacred and holy is the place where God Himself calls and commissions His servants. Then God told him that he was sending him to deliver His people from Egyptian bondage. Moses, realizing how terrible the task, pled with God, "Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh, to challenge him?"

Moses had to say goodbye to all the honors and pleasures of this world in order to obey God. Listen: "By FAITH Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, CHOOSING INSTEAD to SUFFER AFFLICTION with the PEOPLE OF GOD, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Those called and commissioned of God must part from all conflicting earthly interests, plans and ambitions before they can wholly follow God. Moses had to say goodbye to the throne and live in the wilderness, but GOD was with him. We must say no to the world before we can say yes to God. When we have God, we have everything, the source of every thing we need. What prompted and enabled him to REFUSE and then CHOOSE the way of afflictions. Pharaoh and his throne soon perished, but Moses lives on with Christ today. It is better to live forever, than to be buried under a pyramid. "I have made my choice forever"; I'll take the narrow way that leads to eternal day."

Next, we see how Joseph, the dreamer, became Israel's redeemer, by being willing to become a slave and a prisoner. Great men and saints are made in the furnace of affliction. Then comes Elijah, that great and fearless prophet, who was fed by ravens and from the starving widow's meal barrel. Without fear, he marched right into the face of old Ahab, his civil and religious leader, and denied his charges against himself, and threw the charges right back into Ahab's own face where they belonged. Then he challenged Ahab and all his false prophets. The "MAJORITY" did not win out. God's great independent man, Elijah, mocked the multitude of false prophets right to their faces, and then built an altar to the true God, and prayed right out in the open at the time of the evening sacrifice, "Lord GOD OF ABRAHAM and Israel, let it be known THIS DAY that THOU ART GOD in Israel, and that I AM THY SERVANT, and that I have done ALL THINGS, AT THY WORD. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may KNOW that THOU ART THE LORD GOD, and that thou hast turned their hearts back again." "THEN THE FIRE OF GOD FELL and consumed the sacrifice,

If more of our older and younger preachers would challenge the Jezebels and Ahabs of our day, the fire would fall on our altars and sacrifices as in the past. Only those who are willing to stand alone with and for God are worthy of His and our confidence and trust. God's great independent men have molded history, in Church and State.

Later Elijah challenged and rebuked Ahab, called Elisha to take his place, and went soaring into the heavens, while his mantle and double portion fell on Elisha. In the days of Jesus Christ, on the Mount of Transfiguration, Elijah met with Moses and Jesus Christ in a special conference concerning Christ's death and resurrection. I imagine that he forgot all about his battles and abuses from old Ahab and Jezebel on this occasion. He might have remembered about the race he ran away from Jezebel, when tired and worn out, and how God prepared him a special meal which lasted forty days and nights.

Well, young friends, if you are not willing to go the whole way of the cross and wait for your reward at the Resurrection of the Just, you are not fit nor prepared to preach the Gospel of Christ in the face of a frowning world, and a back-sliding church. But take courage, Jesus Christ will soon be here, and we shall follow old Elijah and the Son of God and Man up above the treetops, where old fashioned "True Holiness" will be popular forever. "The God that answers by FIRE, LET HIM BE GOD." Elijah did not have any furnished parsonage or stipulated salary, but God miraculously provided for his life and health.

Elisha, Elijah's successor, was found plowing 12 yoke of oxen when Elijah passed by and cast his mantle on him. He sacrificed two of his oxen and followed old Elijah until his mantle and double portion fell on him. Then he went out from the plow handles to challenge men and devils for God and truth. Back through the centuries, God has chosen men and women from all the common walks of life to preach to the masses, "the common people." Divine wisdom, power and might are God's greatest defenses and the devil's greatest foes. Human talent, and wit and wisdom are good in their place, when under the anointing, but do not take the place of God's great power and glory, fresh from the heart of God. Our great preachers and evangelists have had to depend on God for their wisdom and power, every day and hour.

The great Apostle Paul received his life and commission from Jesus Christ on the Road to Damascus, where God found His man, and His man found God. After his miraculous conversion, he took his post graduate course in the Arabian Desert where he unlearned all his past bias and hatred for Jesus Christ and true Holiness. He returned and went up and down the world proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, "With the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." Reversing his former notions, he challenged all types of men and devils, and declared Jesus Christ to be the Son of God. He challenged kings and rulers, traveled on land and sea, prayed the lightning and thunder down on the jail house, made three great missionary journeys, stood before kings and governors, defending himself and his stand for God through Jesus Christ. He was miraculously delivered from mobs, rolling seas, and stone piles, while he wrote over half the books of the New Testament, challenging every false doctrine, then and now; proclaiming the power of the Resurrected Christ to save souls from sin and hell. He went through many great afflictions which demonstrates his love and loyalty to God through Jesus Christ who marvelously and miraculously delivered him from death and destruction. In our language he must have had the "persecution complex" when he testified: "In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft; of the Jews five times I received forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice suffered shipwreck, at night and day have been in the deep (sea). In journeyings, in PERILS of waters, in perils of robbers, in PERILS by MINE OWN COUNTRYMEN, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in PERILS by the sea, in PERILS by FALSE BRETHREN; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often. in hunger and thirst, in fastings oft, in cold, and nakedness.

Besides those things which were without, that which cometh upon me daily, every day, the care of all the churches. Who is weak and I am not weak? If I must glory, I will glory in mine infirmities." Later he said, "I will glory in mine infirmities that the POWER OF CHRIST MAY REST UPON ME. Therefore I TAKE PLEASURE in reproaches, in necessities, in persecution, in distress for Christ's sake: for when I am WEAK, then am I STRONG." No wonder he lives on today. How many of us have gone through such trials? The apostle Paul did not have the "persecution complex", as his enemies said, but he was persecution-conscious and God-conscious.

Young friends, you may not have to go through all that Paul went through, but you will have the same devil to battle with, and the more you fight him, the more he will fight back, but God will bless you. But PRAISE GOD, "He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day." Again persecution not only proves, but IMPROVES our love and loyalty to God. It gives God an opportunity to prove his love and power for and in us, in delivering us from our foes.

We have given you this glimpse of the great prophets and preachers of the Gospel to inspire and inform you that God is able to bless you and make you a blessing, if you heed the call and give God your all.

How To Recognize Your Call

Now for a few suggestions as to how you may recognize and obey the call of God to His great harvest field which is white unto harvest. "The harvest is great, the labourers are few" and the time is short.

1. First, be sure of your right relationship to God; that your life is completely yielded to God, and that His Spirit dwells within your heart. It is easier to understand God when we are close to Him. If you drift back away from God, your call will become unreal and indefinite. Many who once felt the call, and have backslidden, do not feel it nor God much any more.

If you have drifted away from God and decide to come back to God, you will likely meet the call of God as one of the conditions of His acceptance of you.

2. You must be willing to go or stay, if God is to have His way. Many good Christians have a battle over heeding the call because they do not feel able for the task. None of us are able, but God is able to make us able. The One who calls you, has all wisdom and power. Let Him do it through you. Our weakness gives God an opportunity to manifest and demonstrate his strength and power, in and through us.

3. The devil may tell you that you will be wasting your life in the service of God; but remember that God's call is the highest honor that can come to any soul. When the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, calls you for His ambassador, this is the greatest honor known to man, though we are all unworthy.

If you miss the call of God, your life will be a miserable failure. No one is ever happy and successful outside of the will of God. You must be "Ready to go, ready to stay, ready to do His will."

4. At times your call may be more real than at others. One of my students came to me and said that she was having a battle over whether she was called to be a missionary. I said, "Georgia, how do you feel when you pray about the call?" With tears in her eyes, she said, "I just can't pray unless I am ready and willing to go." I replied, "This is the sure evidence that you are called of God as His missionary."

5. You cannot always listen to your friends and loved ones, unless they live close to God, and are willing to give you up and let you go. Even your Christian friends do not always sense your call. You are the only

one to whom God can make it personal and real.

My father wanted me to be a business man; my mother wanted me to be a public schoolteacher; I wanted to be a lawyer; but God wanted me to be a preacher of the everlasting gospel. I minded and obeyed God, and had all of our dreams fulfilled. My father's dream was fulfilled in that I am a business man, representing the greatest business Firm and business Corporation in the World. It deals in the most valuable and priceless merchandise in this old world, even precious immortal souls. "What shall it profit a man, IF he shall gain the WHOLE WORLD and lose his own soul" and other souls charged to his account? Mother's dreams were fulfilled in my being a teacher not only in public schools, but many years in Christian schools, training ministers, missionaries and Christian laity for winning souls to Christ. Then my dream of being a lawyer has also been fulfilled in a wonderful way. You say, "How?" Well I have the privilege of representing and pleading for souls at the great throne of Mercy and Grace where all must be tried and pardoned or condemned forever. Well, praise God, it pays to serve Jesus, whatever the cost, in whatever field God may honor and call you. "The harvest is great, the labourers are few" and the time is short, and the reward is eternal.

6. Another indication that you are called to some special field of labour will be that other godly, consecrated people may often recognize your call. Others should be careful not to call others, but should encourage them in every way.

7. Another indication of your call will often be that you have special gifts and talents which help qualify you for such service for God and others. However, this may not always be evident at first. God can give you your talents after your first or second birth, or even later on. Just keep committed and indifferent to every thing but the will of God. "All things work together for good to them that love the LORD and WHO ARE CALLED according to HIS PURPOSE." Do not give up because the devil abuses, accuses and tries to discourage and defeat you. The devil always denies every thing that God says. His accusations and abuses may be an indication that God has called you into His harvest field. All of us seem to fail at times, but if we are true to God, we never fail. "Love never fails." The devil always tells us that we are a great success or failure. If you have special gifts and talents, qualifying you for your call, be careful not to depend on these, instead of on God. In first Corinthians 13:1-3, we have a record of those who demonstrate their gifts. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not love, I am become as a sounding brass and clanking symbol." The demonstrations of all our human talents are empty and worse than vain without God; but glorious and great, when used of God to His glory and the salvation of souls, and not to our own gain, honor, and promotion.

8. Providential openings and calls for our service may also be an evidence that we are called. However, some times God's servants are cut off from their God-called appointments by men and devils.

The great Apostle Paul said, "I would have come unto you, but satan hath hindered me." There may be times when those to whom you minister may evidence your call by their willing response to your messages and services. However, there are also times when those to whom God sends you, may be dominated by the devil, and oppose what God calls you to preach and do. Backslidden, worldly minded churches will not encourage or tolerate your sound preaching. "For the time will (has) come when men will not ENDURE SOUND DOCTRINE, but will heap to themselves teachers with itching ears." Keep prayed up and obey God, and He will make the way clear, if not always easy.

Let us all remember that our reward is at the resurrection of the just, "For he had respect unto the recompense of reward." Human praise and honor may be short and empty, but we can succeed without either. We all need God and others, but if God be with you and for you, who can be against you?

When the writer was a small boy, four years old, he was alone over on the brow of the hill, when a holy atmosphere settled down all around him, and he could see multitudes of upturned faces, gazing at him with hungry hearts for the words of life. Too, he could feel the words of truth and life flowing out of his heart, like he has felt many times since, while pouring out the gospel to hungry souls in churches, camp meetings, class rooms, conventions and through the printed pages. This was his definite call to ministry, never to be forgotten or ignored. Yours may not be like his on the outside, but it will be the same on the inside when the Holy Ghost speaks to you in terms recorded in your own conscience and heart.

"Woe is me if I preach not the gospel of Jesus Christ, the power of God unto salvation"; but there is a more blessed response than the woe, and that is the joy of being workers together with God in the greatest task known to humanity. If you want to live on after you are dead, LIVE for GOD and OTHERS. Obey the call one and all, Whether it be great or small. Let nothing come in between, For the harvest fields to glean. When earthly things are all past With a stormy deadly blast, Then eternal things will rise, AS OUR EVERLASTING PRIZE.

The calling to God's work should not be temporary or occasional. Some times under an stirring missionary message, one may feel the powerful impulse of the speaker, creating a desire to pour one's life into the missionary work, particularly the field being discussed and presented. One may be moved by the appeal and need of the field in particular or general, and long to go to that field of service, yet when the appeal dies down, that feeling or temporary impression may die out. God may use such appeals to awaken and call an individual to that great harvest field, but that temporary appeal alone is not sufficient evidence of the call.

As one walks and talks with God in the secret chamber, the call may become more real and personal when all other voices but the voice of the Spirit are still, if God is in it all. The call must become a permanent and a real part of one's life if it is a special, Divine call of God. If one does not have a sure and certain call from God, when he or she gets on the trying battle field, the inspiration may die out and leave one in discouragement and despair. Another one of my students, in a class in History of Missions, stated that to see the need was sufficient for the call to foreign mission work. Later he went to the foreign field, but soon returned home again. The call must be definite and permanent, with God's sanction and approval.

God can use the most limited and helpless when they are wholly given up to Him. He has all wisdom and power, and can impart it to those yielded to Him. Some one has said, "The world has yet to see what God can do with one who is wholly and completely given up to Him."

The ends of the world are upon us. Any thing can happen any day. Never has there been a time when our young people have so little to look forward to so far as this old world is concerned. The only place of sure service and permanent reward is in the service and kingdom of God and for poor, lost souls.

When the undertaker takes over, and our loved ones and friends look on us, the greatest comfort that can come to them will be that we have given our lives for God and others. All earthly honor and gain is vain and empty, and soon gone.

Doubtless, Jesus Christ is soon coming. Let us "Occupy till He comes," and be faithful to that everlasting kingdom which will ride out over all earthly kingdoms which soon must perish. Those who live for God and others can and will live on, here and in the eternal ages, stretching out ahead of each of us. "Christ has no hands but our hands To do His work today; He has no feet but our feet To lead men in His way; He has no tongues but our tongues To tell men how He died; He has no help but our help To bring them to His side."--
Annie Johnson Flint

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