

Called by God

by Larry Zook

This sermon emphasizes the importance of heeding God's call and living a life of holiness and purpose.

Duration: 1:11:01

Scripture: Psalm 37:4, Matthew 11:28, Matthew 16:24, Matthew 28:19-20, John 10:3, Romans 1:20, James 4:8

Topics: "Divine Calling", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of setting our affection on heavenly things and pursuing the high calling of God. He encourages everyone to recognize that God has a personal call for each individual, regardless of the size or significance in the eyes of others. The speaker urges listeners to faithfully serve God in whatever capacity they are called, whether it be in mundane tasks or in more visible roles. He shares a testimony of his own transformation from a life of chasing worldly pleasures to being called by God and experiencing a complete change. The sermon concludes with gratitude for the message and testimonies shared, highlighting the need to be separate and seek the things that are above.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

This message is not copyrighted and is not to be bought or sold. You are welcome to make copies for your friends and neighbors. If you would like additional messages, please go to our website for a complete listing at www.charityministries.com. If you would like a catalog of other sermons, please call 1-800-227-7902 or write to Charity Ministries, 400 West Main Street, Suite 1, AFPA, 17522.

These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Greetings to every one of you this morning in the precious name of Jesus, that blessed Lamb of Calvary.

I greet you in His name. It's for His sake that I'm here this morning. And I trust it's for His sake that you've gathered here to worship with the saints that the name of our dear Jesus might be lifted up.

Truly, He is worthy for us to bow at His feet, humbly at His feet I bow. I do bring you greetings also from Zion Christian Fellowship in Wellman, Iowa. And just give you our greetings in the name of Jesus.

It's the same Lord we serve wherever we are. And truly, He is worthy to be praised this morning. It was a bit of a last minute decision for me to come for this week of Bible school, but I praise God that He opened the way for me to come.

And I do look forward to the things that He has this week for myself as well as the young people. And it brings back many memories as I reflected on the time I was that age, from the years fifteen through twenty. And I'm sure I may even refer to more of that here in the message.

This morning to open up the message, to introduce it, I would like to read a number of scriptures. I won't give you the title immediately, but I have a number of scriptures here that speak to the subject. They all have a common theme, and they're mostly just single verses, sometimes two or three, but they all have one common message.

And I would like for you to listen, and you will quickly pick up, I'm sure, what the message is in these verses. And I do want the power of the Word of God to impress it on your heart. And that's why I'm reading these verses.

I won't even give you the references necessarily. I'm just going to read down through a number of verses. The first one I'll start with is in John 10.3, the words of Jesus speaking of Himself.

To Him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear His voice, and He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful that ye would walk worthy of God who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory.

For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto He called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. By faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out not knowing whither he went. But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood and holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make

you perfect, establish strength, and settle you according as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. Through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue.

And the last one, Revelation 19.9, And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. God is calling this morning.

You have been called by God. And that is the title of my message, Called by God. And if you were listening this morning thus far in the opening, God was calling.

God is calling each one of us. And I trust as I preach the Word of God this morning and as you were listening to these verses, that God will call you and continue to call. For some of you, the message this morning in the opening may have been a call to salvation.

For some of you, it may have been a call to a deeper walk with God in your own personal life. And perhaps God is calling you to lay everything else aside and spell out for God in all of your life. But there is a call on your life.

And this message is going to apply particularly to young people, but it's good for all of us because I am still hearing God's call. And I trust I will as long as I live to hear God's call. And I want to say yes.

And I encourage you today to say yes when God calls you. I have five main points here in this message that just show us different aspects of God's call. I know God has called me in a number of different ways and in a number of different circumstances.

And I believe He will continue to do that. So, some of these different ways apply to you at different times of your life, but all of them are things you need to be aware of about God's call. We need to always say yes when God calls.

The first point I have is that God calls us out of darkness. One verse I read there in 1 Peter, that He are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. And that's the first point this morning, is that God calls us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

And I call that the call to salvation. The call to salvation. God called me to salvation when I was 15 years old.

And that's when I was born again, because God called my life at 15. And I'd like to tell you today, if you're 15, it's not too early to give your heart to God. I should have started earlier.

Today, I know of 15-year-olds who have their hearts set to serve the Lord God. They have made their calling and election sure. They have been born again and are serving God to the best of their strength.

I know of other 15-year-olds who have yet resisted God and have not been saved. But I'm telling you, it's not too early to begin. You can start even before, long before you're 15.

But I'd also say it's not too late, if you're far past 15, to give your heart to God and to answer His call to salvation. God calls us out of darkness. Oh, we heard this morning about the darkness that people sit in.

They know they're going the wrong way, but they have no one to tell them the right way. God is calling out of darkness, out of sin, out of a life of just sold out for self and following the flesh. And God is calling us out of that, out of darkness.

Yes, there is much distress, turmoil of heart and conscience, as we heard from the lesson to the children. The conscience pricks us, tells us when we're going wrong. But oh, the darkness that we're under if we have not yet heeded God's call to salvation.

And as I was listening to the young people here, and they were saying about these people who had never heard the right way. And I think of how often God has called us and shown us the right way. And woe be to us if we neglect to heed that call.

And don't listen when God calls us. Why should God call us 20 times when He hasn't called them once? Will God's Spirit always strive with man? No, God wants us to answer His call. Today is the day of salvation.

God is calling us out of darkness into His marvelous light. The second point I have is that it is a holy calling. Let me just read a few of those verses again.

But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. And again, He says, who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling. And I'd like to lift up that fact that it's a holy calling.

It's a calling away from the carnality that we find ourselves in in the old man. He calls us to a holy life. It says that God has not called us to uncleanness, but unto holiness.

We no longer live after the lusts of the flesh. The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles. But now we serve the living God.

And we put away the works of the flesh and live for God. It's a holy calling. And I call that God's call to sanctification.

God doesn't want you to wallow in a half-hearted Christian life and a defeated life. God is calling you to a purity of life, a holy way of life, willing to put away the flesh and sin and serve God with all your heart. The third point is that this calling of God is an upward call.

It's a heavenly call. I'd like to read from Philippians 3.14. He says, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. That term, high calling, has the thought of an upward calling.

And in Hebrews 3.1, he tells us, wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. And I'd like to urge upon you this heavenly calling. It calls us away from this earth and the things that bog us down and ensnare us.

And I so appreciated what the Cooper family shared there in a young man who gets caught up in the pursuits of life and he forgets the realities of life, the true spiritual and eternal realities, and rather gets caught up with that which is temporal. But you know the things that are seen are temporal and they will pass away. All of these things that we hold so tightly at times, the material things, you know we've been reminded if you've been hearing the news that those go up in smoke very quickly.

They will not last forever, so let's not set our heart on them. But let's serve the living God. It is a heavenly calling.

And I'd just like to urge you, especially young people in the early years of your life, set your sights on a heavenly calling, not on this earth. I was so blessed by the young people sharing this morning about their labors in Africa and the heart they had to preach the Word of God. I would have loved to see that when I was that age.

It would have been worth traveling a thousand miles to see it and hear it, the testimony of those who are sold out for God. And I would urge that for all of you. You don't have to go to Africa to have that same heart, but just know that God is calling you to a heavenly calling to lay aside the things of this earth and to press into the work of God, wherever He calls you, whether it's here or abroad in some other nation.

But God is calling, clearly calling. I say don't settle for a life with no purpose or vision in spiritual realities. There is much in so-called Christianity today which seems like Christianity just becomes something like a hobby.

You just sort of do it when it suits you and when you have time. But that is not what God is calling you to. He's calling you to sell out your life to serve Him with all of your heart, soul, strength and mind for all of your days.

Leave behind the foolish and frivolous things of life. Don't fill your mind with the novels that are so easily picked up today, but fill it with the Word of God. You will never regret the time you spend memorizing this Word.

It becomes rich and it makes an impact on your heart that will never go away if you do it by the Spirit of the living God. Make it a part of your life. Memorize that Word, and like David said, that Word that's hidden in your heart will cause you not to sin against God.

You will be able to, like Joseph, when he was faced with a grievous temptation, he said, How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? And when you hide this Word of God in your heart, that same reality is there. That Word stands as a shield when you're tempted. How can I do this thing and grieve my God? My God says I should do thus and so, and you have that Word hidden in your heart.

In your youth, set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. And I think, oh, what more I could have done for God if I would have seen that example in my youth. You know, of setting the affection on heavenly things.

And I can't blame others. I can only blame myself for not seizing it and going with it, but I just urge all of you, set your affection on heavenly things and go for the high calling of God, not a low calling, a high calling of God. The fourth point I have is that it is a personal call.

This call is personal for every one of us. Don't think that God will just pass you by and let the big jobs go to someone else. God has something for every one of us to do.

Whether it's big or small in the eyes of man is not what counts, but it's what your calling of God is. And when you do it faithfully, God sees that as big things. It may not look like a lot to men, but you must have your heart set to serve the living God all the days of your life, and God will fill your life with fruitful things and opportunities to serve.

And I'd like to spend a good bit of time on this point here, a personal call of God. Let's just read again this verse from John 10, 3, where Jesus said, And to him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice,

and he calleth his own sheep by name. Did you get that? By name, God calls them and leadeth them out.

God knows your name, and God has a purpose for your life. Don't doubt it, my friend. Don't doubt it.

If you're here and you're not saved, God is calling you, first of all, to salvation. And if you're here and you are saved, and perhaps in your youth you're wondering, well, what is God's call on my life? What major work does God want me to put my hands to? And those are good and valid questions for youth to be asking. God does have a personal call upon each one of you for a work that he has.

And I'd like to talk about that a bit, because God wants you. The call that I'm sounding forth here by the preaching of the Gospel, the call that came from the testimony of the young people this morning, it's not just for the group, it's for you as an individual. God is sending out His call for you.

And I say, sit up and take notice, because God has a good plan for your life. It is a personal call, and it is also a call that is according to His purpose. And that's an important point.

God calls us, not after our own will, and not after our own works, but according to His purpose. Let me read that again in Romans 8, 28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

We've been called to His fellowship. He calls us to walk worthy of that vocation. And it seemed to me I had another verse on that, but I don't have it marked here.

But it is according to the purpose of God. It's not according to our own works, but it's according to His purpose. Now, youth particularly may ask themselves, what is God's purpose for my life? I'd like to take you now to 1 Samuel, if you would turn with me to that passage there in 1 Samuel chapter 3, where God called Samuel.

1 Samuel chapter 3, beginning at verse 1 through 10. And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days, there was no open vision.

And it came to pass at that time when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim that he could not see. And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep, that the Lord called Samuel, and he answered, Here am I. And he ran unto Eli and said, Here am I, for thou callest me. And he said, I called not.

Lie down again. And he went and lay down. And the Lord called yet again, Samuel.

And Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, Here am I, for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son. Lie down again.

Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him. And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, Here am I, for thou didst call me.

And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, Go, lie down, and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

And the Lord came and stood and called us at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak, for thy servant heareth. And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

And so on. Here is this familiar passage of Samuel being called by God. God had a personal call on Samuel's life, and he called him by name.

Now you may not hear an audible voice of God, but that doesn't mean that God isn't calling you. But here Samuel was privileged, and there are some who have been privileged down through time to hear an audible call from God. Even to this present time, occasionally some will hear a call from God.

But not everyone does, and that doesn't mean that you have not been called by God. I'd like to note a few things in Samuel's life here. First of all, Samuel was dedicated to the work of the Lord.

You recall the story of how his mother prayed for a son and promised that he would be dedicated to the work of the Lord if God would just give her a son. And God granted her request and gave her a son, and she brought him to the temple. And it says here in the first verse, And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli.

Now it does say in verse 7 that Samuel did not yet know the Lord. He didn't know Him in a personal way. But he did serve the Lord before Eli as he was helping there in the temple.

He was ministering to the Lord, and he was dedicated to the Lord. So when God calls you with a personal call, after He has called you to salvation, and you have dedicated your life to serve the Lord, then you can hear the specific calls of God on your life. Whether it be with an audible voice as Samuel or just through the admonition and teaching of your parents, elders, and godly men, God calls in many different ways.

I believe it's important for young people not to get discouraged either by not seeming to hear a clear voice from God. And as I'm speaking, you may be saying, well, if God would just give me a clear audible voice and say something clearly from heaven, then I would gladly do it. But I'm just not sure.

I don't understand exactly what He wants me to do. Well, let me give you some examples from my own life. I, from a very, or quite early age, felt a call of God to preach.

That someday I would be standing here behind the pulpit preaching the Word of God. It was just an impression that God gave me. But you know, in the years from that time on as I was growing up, gave my heart to the Lord and served Him in a number of ways, it was quite a few years before I was ordained to the ministry.

And there were numerous times in those years when I thought, it'll never happen. And those thoughts may come to you too. You may find, or it seems that your way is blocked, but let me assure you, if your heart is set to serve God and you pour out your life in service wherever He gives you opportunity, at the right time, God will open the way for you to serve in that special way that you feel He has called you.

So don't sit around thinking that you've got a special call and I'm not going to do anything until I have that opportunity. No, God wants you to learn many things in the school of life. And I had to learn many things.

The other thing I'd like to mention is that even when you have a special call, even when you're serving God, you may not hear it directly from God, but you may hear it through the counsel of your parents, your

elders, your brothers, sisters in the Lord. And there are times when you simply need to go and ask. I had just recently a major decision in my life that I had prayed about much, could not get a clear direction from the Lord on it directly, and I went to my brothers and said, here is the question, here is where I'm at, what shall I do? And they gave me counsel.

And that will be true in your life too, many times. Yes, God calls sometimes directly, but other times He calls by the counsel of Godly people, those whom He has placed over you or around you to help you. Don't think you'll get away from it.

Don't think that, well, if I haven't heard it just directly from God, then it's not quite as important as the ones that have been set before me by my parents and so on. Just set your heart to serve God and God will open the way for you. But don't be afraid to ask other people too.

What do you think God wants me to do? Another thing I'd like to encourage you with is to set your mind to serve God with whatever comes your way to do. And I'm talking here even about the ordinary things of life, the work, the labor that you do. You'll never know yet what God is calling you to and what your life's experiences might be, how God will call you and the things that you will need to know in the areas that God calls you.

Some years ago I was teaching in school and you know if you've taught young children how sometimes they get discouraged with their lessons. And I would try to encourage them, you'll never know what you need to face in life. Some of these things that you study, your math, your English and so on, you say maybe now you say, well, when will I ever use it? What good is that? But I would try to encourage them, you know, God may call you to something and you don't know what you might need down the road.

Some of the front line work for God is taking the Gospel to those who have never heard. And in many cases that means translating the Word into their language. It means learning a new language and being able to speak to the people.

And you need a good grasp of language skills in order to do that. I know God's grace is there, but I tell you, in your youth while you have opportunities, seize them to learn what you can for God. Now there's a big difference between being caught up in your work and in your job and looking at that as fulfillment in itself.

That's the wrong focus. Have your focus to be serving the Lord God and this is only a stepping stone to take me where God wants me to labor. And that will get your priorities in the right place and you not get caught up just serving and living for yourself.

My grandmother at about the age of 70 or thereabouts began her writing career. I don't know the exact age. It may have been in her late 60s when she began writing and for a period of about 10 years she wrote about a half a dozen books that have blessed many people, myself included.

Challenged me powerfully. 65 years old. You know what she told me? She said, I only went to the fifth grade in school.

I couldn't go any further. I would have loved to go further, but I couldn't because of the circumstances in my life. But she said I had a very poor grasp of English and she said it's been a real struggle writing these books because I didn't learn the English that I wished I would have.

And it took me much labor, but God gave her grace to overcome that and she wrote, well, I'm saying take every opportunity because you don't know what God might call you to. You maybe need to study your English. Maybe you need to work in your dad's shop for a while.

Maybe you need to work at home serving your mother with young children. Young people, you don't know what God might call you to, so set your hand to do what God places before you and do it with all your might, seeing it as a stepping stone for where God wants to take you. It's not wasted time.

It's not wasted years. Samuel had a special and specific call of God by name, but note that it came early in his life and it wasn't until years later that he actually had a public ministry where God really used him. The Apostle Paul was struck down by a light and a voice from heaven and God called him to be an apostle to the Gentiles.

He said that several times. Called by God to be an apostle. But you know, even though he was immediately used by God briefly, yet it was about fourteen years before his ministry really started and God took him through a real school of God in those fourteen years before he was able to minister effectively to the Gentiles.

God is taking you through school. Don't be discouraged if not some big ministry has opened in front of you, but set your heart to serve God with all of your heart, soul, strength and mind. And one more thing, set your mind that you're going to serve the Lord even if no big thing opens up and God can use you.

You say, well, when some big ministry opens up then I can really be used of God. But you know, it's those who are faithful in the little things that are then prepared for the big things. God will pass by those who sit idle.

That testimony has been seen over and over. God just passes by those who sit idle and is looking for those who have sharpened their swords, who have made their feet ready by laboring in many small ways. And I would just encourage you then to set your mind to do what God places before you, even if it's mundane, even if it's thankless, caring for aged parents, caring for children, working in the local church, serving.

Wherever God calls you, just set your mind to serve and say, Lord, I'm here to serve you all the rest of my life. I don't care if it's big or little, I'm going to serve you. And you would be amazed what doors God will open for you.

God has a call for you. It's a personal call, but it comes for those who are willing and have been preparing themselves for the work. Time would almost fail us, like the writer of Hebrews said, speaking of the faithful, time would almost fail us to speak of all those who were called to some great work of God and yet spent years in preparation for it before they were ready to be put in that place.

There was different things that God wanted to bring them through. So put your hand to your task and do it with faithfulness and with zeal. But the other side of that is, don't see that as the end of itself.

See that only as a stepping stone for where God wants to take you. Now going to point number five, in this call of God there is a prize. There is a prize.

I'd like to read again that passage in Philippians where Paul said, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Yes, there is a prize for this high calling. God is not unrighteous to

forget your work and labor of love, but He will surely repay it.

It may not be in this life, but it certainly will in the next. And Paul said, I press toward the mark for the prize. And in this pressing we need to lay aside the weights that might beset us.

We need to lay aside the hindrances and press. That's an action word. Pressing into the kingdom.

Pressing into the work of God. I press toward the mark for the prize. Paul was able to say at the end of his days, he said, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, the one who has seen all my life, the one who has judged all that I have done, the one who judges every action to see whether it was done for the will of God and the glory of God.

The righteous judge at that day will give me a crown of glory, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing. Set your sights on that heavenly crown, that prize that Paul had. His sights set on, and he was able to press into it.

And you know his life, it was not an easy one. He was beset by trials, oppressions. He was stoned.

He was shipwrecked. He suffered greatly in the flesh, but always his spirit, even though pressed out of measure, his spirit was to serve God. Many years into his ministry, when he was called to give an account before the king, he said that God had called him to be a minister to the Gentiles.

And I can't quote the whole thing there, but he said this. He said, I have not been disobedient to that heavenly vision. And oh, that that might be your testimony, that you have not been disobedient to the heavenly vision that God has set before you.

Even the vision that God placed before you this morning, and the testimony of the young people there. If God set a vision in your heart this morning, don't be disobedient to that heavenly vision, but go after it with all your heart. There is a prize, and Paul saw that prize clearly.

And it's set there before us. To all who would faithfully run the race, we can also be partakers of the prize. And I'd like to read again, Revelation 19, 9. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.

That's the picture of after this life, we are called to that marriage supper of the Lamb. And I'm so glad I've been called. I'm not worthy to have been among the called.

But I praise God that I have been called. I had the opportunity to hear the call. And all of you today have had the opportunity to hear the call.

And I just pray that this week, as God calls you, as He surely will, He surely will call you. And I trust that as you've gathered, especially you young people that have traveled from a distance, the fact that you've come here would tell me that you are sensing that God is calling you to something higher in your life. Something higher and more than what you have now.

And I say, go after that with all your heart and listen to God's voice calling you. Because He will, and He'll continue to call. If you've not been saved, He's calling you to salvation.

If you have been saved, He is calling you to sanctification, to a holy calling. And God also has a personal call in your life. He has a ministry and a work that He wants you to do.

And then be encouraged that in the end there is a prize and a blessing for those who are called in Christ Jesus. So I commend to you God's calling, God's high and holy calling. May God bless you.

Thank you, brother. God's call. God's call.

It's a subject I have meditated upon in my Christian life from time to time. And it's one that I have found often humbles me to think that God would call me. That He would incline Himself and open the door to life with Him by calling to you and I. And I know it has something to do with God revealing Himself to us too.

And God does that in different ways. Through His Word, through the preaching of the Word. The Bible says even the heathen are without excuse because they see the call of God in the heavens.

The handiwork, the signature of God. In our day here in the New Testament church day, the call of God has gone out to all men. And that we can go and preach and give the call of God all over the whole world like we heard this morning.

But that doesn't exclude us here either, does it? And the call of God is strong here as well. That universal call that God is offering to you and I today to come. Come unto Him.

And like He said today, the call is not only to the person that doesn't know Jesus Christ, but also to the Christian. That call is still there too. To go deeper.

To go further. To know the things of God. To sell out.

To know what it is to yield totally and fully. Sometimes that call almost seems harder, doesn't it? In its own way. So may God bless these words to us that have heard it this day.

It's a right message. It's a good message as we begin Bible school to meditate on that and think on that and be open. And I trust you dear young people that are here this morning that that is the place you've allowed your heart to get to.

And if it's not, I challenge you to let your heart get to that place to receive and to hear the call of God. Because you will hear it this week. Here.

But you need to hear it here as well. In your heart. In your soul.

It will be given this week. I guarantee it. It will be given.

So will you open your heart this week? Today? Will you receive what God has for you? And I don't know what it is for you. You come from all over the country. Different backgrounds.

Different situations. Different family situations. But the call of God is universal.

It can pierce right into your situation and speak to you today and the rest of this week. May God do that. Amen.

Well, I was blessed this morning by all the things God brought our way, weren't you? Amen. From the Africa teen to children's lesson. The Cooper family and then the message here, the Word of God.

So many things God has for us. We are a blessed people. We should be a thankful people, shouldn't we? Thankful people.

Well, we probably have a little time here to open it up. If you have something to share about the message this morning or some way God has touched your heart or testimony, that would be a blessing for others to hear. If you raise your hand, then one of the ushers would get a microphone to you.

Amen. I thank God for the messages this morning and just wanted to share a little bit from a biography that I've been reading about a young man that was in preparation to go on the mission field. And the striking thing about his life was that he never made it to the mission field.

But he became ill, very ill, and passed away during the latter part of his preparation. He actually was overseas at a training station. And so in his mid-twenties, that was the end.

But the beautiful thing about his life was that he had so taken seriously his preparation and his service along the way that his life was not at all wasted. And as a matter of fact, so many lives that he had touched along the way, as people heard that he had gone on to glory, many, many were convinced by the Spirit of God to go and take his place. And so it's a beautiful thing.

And I just want to say amen to that, to serve where we are in the little things. And God can make much of that. So thank you very much.

Amen. Praise God. The message this morning really touched base with me.

I've only been saved about 14 months, gone 15 months. I was on a downward spiral into drugs and chasing the flesh and not minding the Lord or hearing what he had wanted to say to me. Till one day the voice got so loud when it came down upon me and he did call me out.

Changed everything in my life. Totally broke every bone in my body and created a new man in me. It was nothing in this world could have ever done that to me or for me.

Things that I chased in this world, they were fruitless. There was no eternity there. But since God has taken me and put my eyes upward on eternal things and created a new man in me, only God could do something like that.

It was something of a supernatural event in my life. It superseded everything that I had going in my life. God got complete control of me and got my full attention and changed everything in my life.

And now to the day that I ask him, Lord, take from me the things that I don't need of this world. Believe me, he took everything. I walked around for months with just three cushions and a blanket and a Bible and he showed me that's all I need to get by in this world.

And believe me, brothers and sisters, that was all I needed. I was quite a happy guy. I used to drive a new Lincoln Town Car.

I had my own business. I had new vans and a pocket full of money that I just frivolously wasted whenever and however. He took all that from me and showed me exactly what I needed.

And all I needed in this world was to separate myself from this world and to put my eyes upon him. He had given me back the years that the locust had eaten, given me back the love for people, the joy and the peace that I once had that I thought was never obtainable again. But through the mercy and the grace of my Father gave it all back to me in spades.

What a wonderful time it is to be alive in Christ today with him, working for him in my eyes upon him and walking in the light that he provides to me. I just want to thank him this day and let these young people know out there today to keep your eyes upward because there's nothing in this world that's going to satisfy you and that's the truth. And when he does call you, pay attention, be mindful.

He may not call again. Listen to him. When he calls you, do his will.

Say, Lord, Father, what will you have me do this day for you? I've asked him one time. I said, Lord, I says, send me to the place where your Christians won't go for you. Fully devoted to my Father, everything upon his order.

And believe me, he doesn't wait long to answer. He doesn't wait. He's not going to keep you waiting.

Sometimes he says, well, pray, pray, come back, come back, come back. Other times he acts immediately and put me on the streets preaching his gospel for 14 months now, praising his name, glorifying his name, putting the word out there to the homeless and to other people that need some faith or something in their lives that's solid and sound, something that can bring back the joy and the peace of life itself. As only God can.

I want to praise him today for that. Praise the Lord. Amen.

Thank you. Brother Mark? Yeah, I wanted to say thanks to everyone that prayed for me last week. It's a good week with just clearing some things with some of my family.

And I do want to hold to that, that a vision I have of seeing them one to the Lord and seeing the ones that already are, just have a deeper walk. And I wanted to, I guess you could call it a confession, a change I've made. There's a man named Keith Green that most of you know is a, was a contemporary Christian musician and certainly dealt with against his life.

I still respect what he was, was about. There's a, I guess a radical element of him that, that really kind of draws me. And his music though was, was simpler in the world.

Sometimes I, I wonder exactly how God worked through it and I don't know, but it's, it's just a real dangerous realm for a Christian to be in. And it's not a life changing thing for me. I'd only listened to him maybe, I guess three or four times in this past year.

But it is a, both for your soul and I think the people that watch you, it is a, it's a dangerous realm to be in to, to settle for, for something that, you know, that's not quite pure, which is, I really think what it is. So, like I said, it's not a life changing thing for me, but it's something I really think I needed to make clear before all of you here that know me and they meet me in the course of life. And I also just thank for the other testimonies that have been shared today and for the, just the whole service, the message and, and Brother David's family as they, they shared and really, I guess, gave me a new, new meaning of just being separate, of really seeking those things which are above.

Amen. Okay. Steve.

Yes, I was really blessed by the message, but I just want to praise God this morning. I want to bless His holy name. And I would just like to testify that God called me.

Amen. And when God came and called me, He spoke to me sharp. And I just want to thank Him for the mercy He had on my soul.

How long and patiently He waited, but one day He just came and He said, this is it. You are my child. You are my child.

You will turn your life. And He led me to the place where I got on my knees and there was grace. Through the blood of Jesus, He saved me by His grace.

Amen. I just want to thank Him. I want to bless Him.

He's real. He is alive. Hallelujah.

Bless God. Amen. Praise His name.

He is real. Yeah. David.

In my own life, God's been, uh, He's been working over this whole doctrine again of, uh, the sovereignty of God in the call of men, as I've been working through the book of Romans lately. And as I listened to Larry's message this morning, and I think there's one thing that I should share that would be good for all of you. I know there are a lot of young people in the room today that will be doing business with God and that's what we've come to do.

But the call of God in the word call, there is an invitation that requires an answer. That's right. The call of God will not do for you what you are not willing to agree to.

You know, I grew up under that doctrine. I bless God for my upbringing, but the doctrine of eternal security and that sovereignty of God that reaches down and takes a man against his will. I'm sorry, it's not true.

Jesus Christ has an invitation and the father is sending out an invitation to those who will come to the marriage supper of his lamb, of his son. And you can be busy about other things and you can neglect that invitation. And though the invitation, the call of God is open to you, if you're waiting for God to grab you and do a work in your life that you're not willing to do yourself and you're not willing to agree to and say, yes, God, I'm going to step out and take a step of your faith, it won't happen.

And I just want to add a little emphasis if I could. You know God's going to speak to you this week, like Rick says. I encourage you, I challenge you and would even, what can I say, I mean, don't sit and say, I hope God does something in my life this week.

Rather say, I hope I hear the voice of God because I'm sitting here planning to say yes, when he does. Do you know the difference between those two? One puts the responsibility on God and you'll go ten years waiting for God to do a work in your life. I would challenge you, be ready to say yes when God says, David, I'm calling you to do this.

You be one who says, yes Lord, I'm going to come to the wedding supper. Amen. Yes, okay, back here.

Okay, go ahead over here first. Yes, I was just reading in Matthew 7 this morning and first of all, I woke up and I was praying, you know that God would answer our prayers and I just thank God that he does answer our prayers and many times we don't believe or think he might not answer our prayers and we don't know why, but I believe that God wants to answer our prayers. I'm going to read a couple of verses here.

Matthew 7, verse 7, I'll start there. Ask and it shall be given you. Seek and he shall find.

Knock and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh, receiveth. And he that seeketh, findeth.

And to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. For what man is there of you whom his son asked bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them. For this is the law and the prophets.

And I just, you know, if I being evil and my son asks for bread, will I give him a serpent? No. And much more so our Father which is in heaven, if we ask good things of him, he will grant our petition. And I just pray that God will take us at our word.

There's many prayers going up this week and we're praying, you know, for Bible school and Bible school students themselves are praying and we are praying. May God take us up on our prayers because, I mean, we pray and we ask for good things. I pray that God will take us at our word and answer our prayers, you know, because, you know, if we seek God, we are seeking God, and we cry out and we are desperate.

We even pray to be desperate, you know. Will God hear our prayers? Will we believe him? And even through our foolishness, he will answer our prayers. So I just, that's my heart that God will take us at our word.

Okay, Brother Steve. Okay, I thank the Lord this morning for the message and it was a blessing. I thank the Lord for saving my soul many years ago and that I did answer the call for salvation and also for the calling on my life.

I thank the Lord for that. I wanted to say thank you to the effort of church for the blessing that you've been to us, for the love that you've shared to us in the food shower a couple weeks ago. Thank you so much and God bless you.

We're just happy to be a part of you here. Thank you. Amen.

Thank you, Brother. Okay, Steve. Amen.

Brother Steve Waldner's testimony just brought to mind, brought to recollection the time when God called me and the reason I wanted to share it was that the specific words that I heard again and again and again were not maybe what you'd expect, but the Lord just kept saying to me, what are you waiting for? What are you waiting for? And I can't remember how many times that the Lord spoke, what are you waiting for? But I sat in message after message and I don't know what was preached, but that was what the Lord said to me. What are you waiting for? And so I guess I wanted to encourage everyone that if the Lord speaks in a sentence that maybe you're not expecting, we still should answer that call. And I rejoiced that I finally realized what God was saying and I said, amen, God, what am I waiting for? Amen.

Amen. Okay, there's one over here. Yeah, I just wanted to thank everybody for what they've, the encouragement everybody's been to me here and as I get ready to go back to Idaho and I just want to thank the church for being here to show me how a church works and how a church can work and work together and the love that operates through a church and I just want to thank y'all for that and thank the

Lord for having a church here that is shedding forth the truth and the light.

I also want to thank the Lord for his leading in our lives that if we put ourselves to do the little things in life that we can do, just may not be the big things that the Lord will bless. I just want to encourage all the young people to, things in the home or wherever, just to do their best and that's the best place to learn to serve the Lord. Thank you.

Amen. Thank you, brother. Our prayers go with you as you go back to Idaho and trust that God will lead you what he has for you to do there.

There was another hand in the back here. Patrick, was it? Okay. Yes, I'd just like to say thank you to all of you.

This church has been such a blessing to us from the first time I came through the door with a big brick wall in front of me determined to get a tape and get out and God just took that and threw it down the steps and said, leave that outside. But you've been such a blessing to us, such an encouragement and I know Georgina would say the same thing. I just wanted to testify.

I've been pretty sick earlier this week and it was really something for me. I was making life miserable for everyone around me because I was miserable and I just felt like God said in everything, give thanks. And I said, well, how am I supposed to do that when I'm this sick? And I just knelt down and I said, Lord, I don't feel thankful, but thank you for this sickness.

If there's something you want to teach me. And almost immediately I started getting better and ever since then, but by now I'm fine. Yesterday was the first day it was completely back to normal, but I just want to praise God and thank him for his salvation and his healing and for everybody here.

You've all been such a blessing. God bless you. Amen.

God bless you, Patrick. Thank you for being teachable and open while you're seeking God. Amen.

All right. Do we have another hand? Okay, down here. Yes, I'm just very grateful to be here this morning and I just say I'm here by the grace of God.

So I encourage all of us young people to seek after God, to, I don't know exactly what to say, but to simply seek God and ask him to sanctify us and ask him to use us. There's a time in my life this winter where I didn't think I would be here, especially not given some responsibility here. And I'm just thankful for the mercy of God and that he drew me out of all my troubles.

And I was blessed this morning with just what the Cooper family shared. It helped me renew my vision for the people that I witnessed to on a regular basis in a local town there back home. And I'm just blessed with what God is doing in his church here and in Africa.

I just continue to serve the Lord. Praise the Lord. Thank you.

I think we'll maybe have a song now, Brother Earl, and then after that we have some announcements and some directions for this week, but also for a fellowship meal we'll be having here this afternoon. So let's have a song first.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/3/SID3848.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/larry-zook/called-by-god/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net