

How Precious Is Our Calling?

PREFACE

How many of us could say confidently that God surveyed the earth and saw us and said this person is full of wisdom, knowledge, passion, faith and potential for Godliness that I must call him or her to repentance and have them in my family. Despite how you answer that question we are very precious in God's sight.

AIM

Mal 3:17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day **when I make up my jewels**; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. {jewels: or, special treasure} (KJV)

*We are God's special treasure. **Why is that so?***

Rev 1:5 And from **Jesus Christ**, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto **him that loved us**, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

6 And hath **made us kings and priests unto God** and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Rev 5:9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and **hast redeemed us to God** by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

10 And hast **made us unto our God kings and priests**: and we shall reign on the earth.

BODY

SPECIALLY CHOSEN

Just to keep us humble in our own sight, what does God reveal about the people he has called to serve and love him now?

1Cor 1:23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a **stumblingblock**, and unto the Greeks **foolishness**;

Without a special ingredient, basically, both Jews & Gentiles had no idea what the Christ story was all about.

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, **Christ the power of God**, and the **wisdom of God**.

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that **not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:**

27 But God **hath chosen the foolish things of the world** to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28 And **base things of the world**, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. (KJV)

*I have heard ministers expound that God does the calling and we do the choosing and if you really consider what this is saying, it is insinuating that the good people, the righteous people, the people prone to Godliness, accept the call. I feel that this concept is in error. The scripture clearly says God does the calling and God does the choosing. **Yes, we must acknowledge the knock and push the door ajar. God wants free moral agency.***

Rev 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, **I stand at the door, and knock:** if **any man hear my voice**, and open the door, **I will come in to him**, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. (KJV)

Consider the context of this scripture. It is talking of people that already know God and are now going astray. Christ is talking to a Christian church, not the unconverted or the stranger to God, however, it demonstrates the spiritual order of conversion.

Rev 3:14 ¶ And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; {of the Laodiceans: or, in Laodicea}.

These people already know the gift and have tasted the incredible gift of freedom. God warns us to take seriously our calling:

SEVERE WARNING

Heb 6:4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

BACK TO OUR CALLING

If we believe that we are in this privileged position because we were righteous above others, we are not thinking according to God's word. Let's use Paul as an illustration.

The apostle Paul was one of the most fanatical, hated despots of his time. You probably could align his character with that of Hitler. He was on the opposite side, the losing side. God side swiped him, made him look foolish, took away his income and his eye health by blinding him and put him in a position that no person could deny divine intervention. The only reason that those who accompanied him did not flee from Paul or destroy him, was their intolerable fear of him and the evil religious system he worked for.

*This man did not repent because that is what he desired. God brought him directly to repentance by leaving him no other course of action.
How many stories have you heard from Christians of some mind bending dramatic event that stopped them in their tracks and was a tool in bringing them to repentance.*

Philippians 3:3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and **have no confidence in the flesh.** **No confidence in human achievements!**

4 ¶ **Though I might also have confidence in the flesh.** If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I **count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord:** for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them **but dung**, that I may win Christ,

9 ¶ And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the **high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**

GOSPEL OF INCLUSION (I will speak about this in another sermon)

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but **he that believeth not is condemned already**, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

21 But he that doeth truth **cometh to the light**, that **his deeds** may be made manifest, that **they are wrought in God.**

God, in myriads of locations in His Word, spells out both sides of any concept for example, life-death, obedience-disobedience, salvation- eternal death, belief-unbelief. This is not meant to make us believe that God is writing off billions of people, as many Christians believe. Until people are given a chance at a fair judgement the simple fact is that their life is technically (in a spiritual sense) over.

There are ZERO conditions on this gift. All one has to do is to believe and accept Christ as our Saviour. If we earn God's gift by our former righteousness, goodness, holiness or works of charity what does that make the gift. Simply a payment of wages for works.

Think about it, would you work for a boss for 45 hours and your boss says I have a gift for you and he then presents you with your rightfully earned wages. You would not be happy to receive your pay as a gift and be overjoyed because of the gift of your wages. NO! you earned the money you received under a worker contract and you would end up in court if your boss did not pay for your works of labour.

Am I saying that there are no works required. No, following our election and calling our works of love, kindness, obedience and devotion show our immense appreciation of God's gift of Grace and eternal life. Let's ask James.

James 2:14 ¶ What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? **Can faith save him?**

James 2:20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that **faith without works is dead?**

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?

23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.

24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

26 For as the **body without the spirit is dead**, so **faith without works is dead** also. (NKJV)

The simple fact is that if faith has us sit on our hands and do nothing it is not really the gift of faith that God provides, as His faith stirs to action and motivates to good works. Faith is a powerhouse from God and a driving force of transformation and change.

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and **ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even **as many as the Lord our God shall call.**

The fact of who has the calling responsibility is clearly acknowledged by God.

John 1:12 But **as many as received him**, to them gave **he power to become the sons of God**, even to them that believe on his name: {power: or, the right, or, privilege}

13 Which **were born**, not of blood, **nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.**

*Did you grasp what was just said that our spiritual birth was **NOT OUR DOING!***

John 12:44 Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for **I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.**

- **Look at this amazing statement above.**

1 John 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 He that **hath the Son hath life**; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; **that ye may know that ye have eternal life**, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

14 ¶ And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: {in: or, concerning}

15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

2 Thess 1:11 ¶ Therefore we also pray always for you that our **God would count you worthy of this calling**, and **fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power**,

12 that the **name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you**, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. (NKJV)

2 Tim 1:6 ¶ Therefore I remind you to **stir up the gift of God** which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

7 For **God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind**.

8 Therefore **do not be ashamed** of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the **power of God**,

9 who **has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works**, but according to His own **purpose and grace** which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,

10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has **abolished death** and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

INDENTURESHIP OF LIFE

Daniel and his friends had an indentureship under King Nebuchadnezzar which almost cost his life if it was not for God intervening and giving him knowledge of the dream.

We have an indentureship under the God of eternity, the King of the universe and beyond.

How seriously do we take our calling?

Heb 3:1 ¶ Therefore, **holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling**, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, **Christ Jesus**,

Heb 3:7 ¶ Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice,

Heb 3:12 **Beware, brethren**, lest there be in any of you an **evil heart of unbelief** in departing from the living God;

13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we have become **partakers of Christ** if we **hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end**,

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE WHEEL?

The next verse was a part of a warning by God to Israel, however, it reveals a simple truth. God could simply dispose of them as a potter smashes a marred vessel, that he is unsatisfied with.

Isa 64:8 But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; **And all we are the work of Your hand.**

OUR SPECIAL ELECTION

2 Pet 1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the **knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,**

3 as His **divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness,** through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

5 ¶ But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,

6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

11 for so **an entrance will be supplied** to you abundantly **into the everlasting kingdom** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

WE ARE GOD'S HARVEST

James 5:7 **Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.** Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the **precious fruit of the earth,** and hath long patience for it, until **he receive the early and latter rain.**

8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

This is a reference to the first fruit harvest of God's people, depicted by the day of Pentecost and the large fall harvest or ingathering of the Feast of Tabernacles.

We are the "precious fruit of the earth" and God wants us to be proud of what he is accomplishing in us, however, He does not want us to be overcome by earthly pride.

Just as God's desire is for Israel to reveal Him to the world as a Godly physical nation (see below), which will happen in the Kingdom (on this earth), we are to reveal God to the world, spiritually and to commence the vast harvest of mankind.

- *Read Ezekiel 37: to 39: The House of Israel is resurrected back to a physical existence to learn God's way and qualify for God's Kingdom.*

CONCLUSION

Philp 3:13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,

14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

15 ¶ Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

17 ¶ Brethren, **join in following my example**, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.

18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame-- who set their mind on earthly things.

20 For **our citizenship is in heaven**, from which we also **eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ**,

21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. (NKJV)

1Cor 6:19 Or do you not know that **your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you**, whom you have from God, and *you are not your own*?

20 For you **were bought at a price**; therefore **glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's**. (NKJV)

Our life is not our own to squander or while away. We are indentured to the Almighty God for a service now and in the future, which transcends anything we can imagine.