

CALLED AND ACCOUNTABLE

Unit 1: Why Does God Call Us?

Memory Verse for the Week

And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

[Colossians 3:23-24](#)

• **Essential Truth for the Week**

- No one can adequately come to knowledge of God's truth, for themselves or for others, without a thorough commitment to the place and authority of God's Word (the Bible). It is in the Scriptures that God has chosen to reveal Himself and His will for our lives.
- As a person approaches the Bible and opens its pages, he or she comes face-to-face with the Author—God! The Holy Spirit is present to open the mind and heart of the child of God to an immediate Word from God for his or her life ([John 14:16-17](#); [John 16:13-15](#); [1 Corinthians 2:10-16](#)).

- Without this commitment to encounter God in His Word, one is left to human reasoning alone—something that will never lead to God or an understanding of His Word.
- This entire study is based on the assumption that the reader is committed to meet God in His Word and respond to Him in this encounter.
 - *God called individuals into a special relationship with Himself to use them to accomplish His purposes.*

- **Day 1: God's Word Reveals God and His Ways**
- The entire Bible bears witness to the truth that God, from eternity, chose to work through His people to accomplish His eternal purposes in the world.
- He could have worked everything by Himself, just as He worked in creation, but He chose not to do it that way.
- Rather, the Bible tells how God called individuals into a special relationship with Himself so that He could use them to accomplish His purposes.

- When God was about to destroy every living thing from the earth because of sin, He called Noah to Himself, and through Noah, preserved his family and enough living creatures to begin to populate the earth again ([Genesis 6-10](#)).
- When God wanted to establish saving faith (salvation) for all mankind, He chose Abraham to be the one He would shape to be a sample of that faith to the end of time ([Genesis 12-22](#); [Hebrews 11:8](#)).
- When God was ready to deliver His chosen people from bondage in Egypt, He called Moses to Himself and sent him to be the one through whom He would accomplish this task ([Exodus 3](#)).

- God calls individuals He can trust to be the instruments through which He will accomplish His eternal purposes, especially His purpose to save those who are lost.
- **Do you think God wants to use your life to accomplish His eternal purposes?**
- Yes
- No
- I don't know
- **What are some things you can "build" into your life so that God can trust you and use you in His work? Check all that apply.**
- Daily Bible study
- Daily prayer time
- Fellowship with other believers
- Being a part of a local church
- Accountability to other believers

- Of course, God wants to use your life to accomplish His eternal purpose in this generation!
- However, there are times when God looks for someone to use, but does not find anyone who is willing or living in a way that God could trust them with His work.
- When God does not have someone who will allow their life to be used, it will often have serious consequences. One well-known example of this is found in Ezekiel 22:30-31

- This is a most solemn truth, revealed by God—to us—so each of us must take seriously any invitation of God to be His instrument in saving others. This may be to share about God's love to our family or our neighbors, or to take part in a mission project.
- *The eternal destiny of others may rest in our response to God's invitation and call. He will also hold us accountable for our response to His invitation.*

- Read [Ezekiel 33:1-20](#) to see the awesome message and accountability God assigned to Ezekiel. Where has God placed you as a watchperson?
- Can you see how God has placed you as a watchperson in your home?
- Has God placed a warning on your heart for those around you?

- One of the most significant illustrations of hearing and responding to God is found in the life of Mary, Jesus' mother. God's eternal purpose was to bring a Savior into the world, and through that Savior to bring His great salvation to every person.
- He found the one through whom He would choose to work—Mary, a quiet servant girl. An angel from God announced God's purpose through her.
- Then came her amazing and wonderful response: "'Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.' And the angel departed from her" ([Luke 1:38](#)).

- And God did what He said He would do! Impossible to man, but possible with God ([Luke 1:37](#)).
- Mary had a heart that was "perfect toward God" and God "showed Himself strong" on her behalf ([2 Chronicles 16:9](#)).
- This has been God's strategy from eternity, and still is—with each of us today.
- God's Word consistently reveals this strategy of God, for our instruction in our day. The eternal destiny of multitudes hangs in the balance and God watches our response.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

- God chooses to work through His people to accomplish His eternal purpose. He desires to use each of His children as watchmen in their families, workplaces, communities, and throughout the world.
- **List some areas where God is using you to accomplish His eternal work.**
- Have you arranged your life so that when God comes to you, you are ready and available to Him? If you would have to say "No, my life is not really in order to be used," then take time now and ask God to show you what changes you need to make so that you are available for His service.

- **Day 2: Called: Not for Time, but Eternity**
- In understanding the call of God in our lives, it is important to realize that God did not make us for time, but for eternity.
- We were created in His image. This includes immortality (living for eternity). Jesus Himself declared constantly that the ones who believe in Him will have eternal life:
- Genesis 1:26-27; John 3:15; John 10:27-28; Ephesians 2:6; Romans 8:17;

- **Matthew 6:19-20**
- **What are some things that would be considered "eternal things" or "treasures in heaven"?**

- **What are some things that would be considered "perishable things" or "treasures on earth"?**

- **Looking at the two lists that you have made, where have you been investing your time and energy... on eternal pursuits or worldly pursuits?**

- Such incredible truth causes the Christian to pursue eternity, using "time" as God's gift in this pursuit. Therefore, every Christian must seek to use the whole of his or her time, to fulfill the call God has placed on their life.
- God's call is His invitation to invest in eternity by making our lives available to God when He calls and letting God work His eternal purposes through our lives, for God's glory!

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

- God's purpose is for you to live with eternity in mind and not merely for "time."

- **Think about this past week, and consider how you invested your time. Make a list of the major activities you participated in, then place check marks beside the things you did that have eternal value.**
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- **Time invested in people can have eternal significance. Ask God if there are people around you whom He is inviting you to encourage or disciple. Write down their names and ask God how you can minister to them this next week.**
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- **Day 3: The Call of God Requires Character**
- God's goal for each believer is "to be conformed to the image of His Son" ([Romans 8:29](#)). "Image" can be understood as "characteristics."
- God is seeking to develop the character of His Son Jesus in each of us. As God does this in our lives, we become better instruments to be used in His kingdom work. One of the characteristics of Jesus was His faithful obedience to do all that the Father asked of Him.
- Romans 8:29; Hebrews 5:7-9; John 5:19; John 7:16-19

- The result of Christ's obedience was that the Father brought eternal salvation to the human race through the Son. As God's people are obedient to make their lives available to God in the same way His Son was available to Him, God will work through them to accomplish His eternal purposes.

Based on these Scriptures, describe Jesus' obedience to the Father:

- Jesus obeyed the Father in every area of His life. He only did what the Father told Him to do; He only spoke when the Father told Him to speak; He only taught what the Father told Him to teach. Remember that God desires to create or build this same obedience into your life.

- He wanted His disciples to be "set apart for God," as He was set apart for God. This is God's eternal purpose for each of our lives also, in this our day. This is a very serious and eternal purpose of God, to be worked out in our lives, as it was in Jesus' life.
- So God is seeking to develop in us the character of His Son.
- **Romans 8:28-30**

- This truth carries with it so much of the "why" of our being called of God. Such character is developed through our relationship with Him as He works out, in our life, His eternal plan of redemption.
- He calls us into a relationship with Himself, so that in the relationship we can come to know Him and experience His working in us and through us.
- In that relationship, and only there, does He develop character in us in preparation for an eternity with Him.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

- God is seeking to develop the character of His Son Jesus in each of us. This is His eternal purpose. He would do through our lives what He was able to do through His Son.
- John 17:1-26
- **List the characteristics Jesus prays that God would develop into His disciples. For example, in [verse 3](#) He prays that they would come to "know" God and Jesus Christ.**

- Jesus lives to intercede for us—He is praying for you! ([Hebrews 7:25](#); [Romans 8:27, 34](#)) You might have noticed in [John 17](#) that Jesus wants our lives to glorify Him ([verse 1](#));
- He wants us to accomplish the work He gives us to do ([verse 4](#));
- He wants us to manifest (display) His name to those He gives us ([verse 6](#)); and He desires that we become "one" with God in the same perfect union He has with God ([verse 21](#)).

- **Day 4: Conformed to the Image of Christ**
- The entire process of developing Christlike character in every believer begins when God calls us to Himself in a relationship of love.
- He first redeems us from our sin, forgiving us and cleansing us and setting us apart for Himself. He places His Son in us ([Colossians 1:27-29](#)), and His Son begins to live out His life in us ([Galatians 2:20](#)), until each believer is "perfect [i.e., complete] in Christ" ([Colossians 1:28](#)). Paul told the Galatians, "until Christ is formed in you" ([Galatians 4:19](#)), he would labor with God tirelessly on their behalf.

- *To them God _____ to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is _____, the hope of glory. [Colossians](#)*

[1:27](#)

- *I live by faith in the Son of God, who _____ me and _____ Himself for me.*

[Galatians 2:20](#)

- *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus _____ from the law of sin and death. **Romans 8:2***

- The relationship of love that God initiates in believers continues throughout the rest of their lives. God develops us, equips us, and takes us on mission with Himself into our world. God is not willing that any should perish, in any generation or in any part of the world.
- Throughout the Bible there are many persons God called to Himself. We could study any one of these persons and see this eternal purpose of God unfolding. The disciples that Jesus called to Himself provide a clear example. As Jesus called His disciples, He said, "Follow Me!" And they immediately left all and followed Him.

- First, Jesus knew that each had been given to Him by the Father. At the close of His life, as He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, He affirmed it this way: John 17:6-8; John 17:18
- Second, Jesus knew absolutely that it was His assignment from the Father to prepare these men for the Father's eternal purpose.
- That purpose was to take the good news of His great salvation to the ends of the earth. This purpose would happen after His assignment was completed to reconcile the world to God through the Cross, the Resurrection, and the Ascension.
- John 20:21

- For the entire three and one-half years of Jesus' ministry this is what He did. He took the disciples with Him as He taught, preached, and healed. He revealed to them the Father, and the Father's purposes—and the disciples believed.
- When Jesus returned to the Father, He sent the disciples into the world, in the same way the Father had sent Him into the world ([John 17:18](#); [20:21](#)).
- The "Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" were in their hands ([Matthew 16:19](#)). They would be working with the Father and the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to fulfill the Father's purpose to redeem a lost world to Himself.

- This was the Father's way, and is still the Father's way, in each of our lives who believe in His Son, Jesus Christ.
- The Father calls us to His Son and gives us to Him. Jesus is still entrusted with receiving us from the Father and giving us eternal life ([John 17:2-3](#)).
- He continues teaching and guiding each believer, molding them as the Father has instructed Him until each knows the Father and responds to Him.

- Just as the early disciples experienced a relationship with Him, the more one responds, the more God uses that individual to go with Him and His Risen Son on a redemptive mission to the ends of the earth.
- As the disciples obeyed the Lord in this relationship of love, God turned their world upside down ([Acts 17:6](#)).
- All through history, God has continued to do this, and desires once again in our generation to do this same work of love.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

- Remember that God reveals His purposes to work through those He calls, and He is doing this in your life also. You have been given to His Son, and His Son knows what the Father has in mind for your life—in your world.
- **Write one example of how God shaped your life in the past for an assignment He gave you.**
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- **Is God shaping your life to be more like his Son currently? If so, write down how God is shaping your life.**

- **Day 5: Called, Because He Loves Us!**
- In the mind and heart of God so much is at stake when He calls a person! His call to us is not merely so we can go to heaven when we die, but so that we can begin knowing Him, walking with Him, and serving Him from the time of salvation and throughout eternity.
- He desires a relationship with those He calls—a love relationship!

- Jesus is the pattern of love for us. He first loved us, drew us to Himself, adopted us into His family through salvation, and sent the Holy Spirit to reside in us so that we could experience and share His love with others. Jesus describes His love for us plainly in [John 15:9-17](#). Matthew 22:37-40
- **Jesus said that He loved us in the same way the Father loved Him. He tells the disciples to *abide* in His love. How can we *abide* in His love? (John 15:10)**

- **What is the result of keeping His commandments and abiding in His love? ([John 15:11](#))**

- **When we obey Him, we will abide in His love and we will experience His joy to the fullest measure. Jesus describes a new relationship He will have with His disciples. How does Jesus describe this new love relationship? (John 15:15)**

- **Reviewing Week One**
- Look back over this week's lesson. Pray and ask God to reveal one (or more) statements or Scriptures that He wants you to understand, learn, or practice. **Write it on the lines below.**

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

- He chose us because He loved us! In the mind and heart of God so much was at stake when He called you.
- Think back over the last few weeks or months. Would you (or someone close to you) be able to describe your life as a life that *abides in love*?

- **Reword the statement or Scripture into a prayer of response to God.**

- **What does God want you to do in response to this week's study?**