

CALLED AND ACCOUNTABLE



Unit 3: Who Are the Called?

Memory Verse for the Week

*The eyes of the LORD run to and fro
throughout the whole earth,
to show Himself strong on behalf
of those whose heart is loyal to Him.*

[2 Chronicles 16:9](#)

Essential Truth for the Week

- Every believer is called to "walk worthy of the calling with which you were called" ([Ephesians 4:1-3](#)).

- **Ephesians 4:1 (NIV)**

¹ As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

- **Ephesians 4:2 (NIV)**

² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

- **Ephesians 4:3 (NIV)**

³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Day 1: All Are Called

- You may still be asking, "But just who are the called? Are they a special group of persons? What about my life? Am I called too? How would I know? What would it sound like?"
- *Unfortunately, as we have made a difference between clergy and laypeople, so we have made a difference between the specially called and the common believer. All are the called!*
- And sincerely your heart may be saying, "Lord, I do love You! I do belong to You! I am Your servant, and I truly want to serve You. But Lord, am I really called to be on mission with You in my world? Lord, just who are the called?"
- The differences lie not in whether we are called or not, but in the nature of the assignment given by God. But every believer is one who is called by God, for Him to be free to accomplish His purposes in them and through them!

- Let's look briefly at some Scripture passages that assure us that every believer is called. In [Exodus 19](#), when God created a special nation through whom He would bring salvation to the whole world, He said:
- [Exodus 19:4-6](#)
- He said they would be a kingdom of priests—not a kingdom with a priesthood. Each and every one of them would be priests unto God. The Levites would be the ones assigned to train and equip the entire nation to walk with God as priests unto God so He could fulfill His purposes to save the nations of the world through them. This same truth is stated in the New Testament.
- [1 Peter 2:5](#), [9-10](#)

- Notice how Paul addressed the people of the church at Rome.
- *Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ.*
- [Romans 1:5-6](#)
- **What does Paul say he received grace and apostleship for?**
-
-
- Yes, it was for obedience to the faith. There is little question that those who receive salvation from God have at the same time released themselves to the call of obedience that comes from faith. They go hand in hand.
- When you received Christ into your life, did you understand that at that same moment you were releasing your life to be used anyway that God would choose?
-
- **As you have lived out your Christian life, describe how you have released your life for His kingdom purposes.**
-

- Each believer is called of God and is to function before God and a watching world as a priest unto God. God, therefore, promised that He would enable every believer to function this way by the empowering presence of His Holy Spirit.
-
- **Read [1 Corinthians 2:10-13](#). What does the Holy Spirit know about the things of God?**
-
- **According to [verse 12](#), why have Christians been given the Holy Spirit?**
-
- Read Acts 1:4-8
- The Holy Spirit has been given so that we can know what has been freely given to us by God. As you live out the call of God on your life, the heavenly Father will shape your life and provide all you need to follow Him. As He provides for your life, the Holy Spirit has been assigned to help you recognize and experience all the provision of God for your life.

- *God eternally planned that every believer would be spiritually equipped to both know and do the will of God, as He would reveal it to each one.*

- **THOUGHT FOR THE DAY**

- There is no separation or distinction in the call of God between leaders and regular Christians; all Christians are called to a saving faith, and in this call, all must release their lives to God for His purposes.

- **Read [1 Corinthians 1:26-31](#) and answer the following questions.**

- **According to these verses, what are the qualifications to the called of God?**

- **Why does God choose/call the foolish, weak, base, and despised things to use as His instruments?**

- **Have you ever excluded yourself from service to God because you did not feel qualified? Based on this passage, do you think that God could and does desire to use your life in His kingdom?**

Day 2: Completeness of His Call

- Have you noticed the extensiveness and completeness of God's call and God's equipping of all people—sons, daughters, young men and women, and old men and women? This includes your life, too!
- *Their abilities or skills were not as important as their relationship with God.*
- [Psalm 78:70-72](#)
- It is also interesting and encouraging to realize that throughout the Bible most of the people God calls and works through mightily are what we today would call an everyday believer. They were very ordinary people called and enabled by God to work with Him in their world.
- Their abilities or skills were not as important as their relationship with God. Their heart relationship of love and trust in God always determined how much God was able to do through them.

- David was a shepherd and God chose him for a special assignment, in which God would guide His people through him.
- Let's look at Amos:
- [Amos 7:14-15](#)
- [Luke 5:1-11; Acts 4:8-22](#)
- Peter was a fisherman, and all the other disciples were what we would call "just ordinary people"—until God assigned them roles in His kingdom where He would work through them mightily to accomplish His purposes. This has continued to be God's way to this very day.

- Let's take a look at some ordinary people that God called and used in extravagant ways from the Scriptures.
- Read [Joshua 2:1-14](#). In [verse 1](#), how does the Bible describe Rahab?
- How did God use Rahab (the harlot) to accomplish His purposes for Israel?
- Rahab and her whole family were saved when God gave the city of Jericho to Israel. She was an ordinary person who recognized God's activity in His people ([verses 9-11](#)), and God used her life in extraordinary ways. Notice that Rahab is listed in [Matthew 1:5](#) as the mother of Boaz in the genealogy of Jesus. She is also described in [Hebrews 11:31](#) and [James 2:25](#) as a woman of faith.
- Read [Colossians 4:14](#). How does [Colossians 4:14](#) describe Luke?
- Luke was a physician who accompanied Paul in his tour of Asia and Macedonia (see also [Acts 16:10-13](#), [20:5-6](#); to Jerusalem, [Acts 21:1-18](#); to Rome, [Acts 27](#), [28](#), [2 Timothy 4:11](#), [Philemon 24](#)).
- *The key is not our talents, but the cultivating of our heart so that when God does work through us we can turn and praise Him and let others know that it was God who accomplished the work.*

- How ordinary is your life compared to God's special assignment for you? Remember the Scripture from Day One of this week ([1 Corinthians 1:26-31](#)). He chooses the ordinary and the ones that the world would not choose so that when He has completed His work, He alone will receive the glory. **THOUGHT FOR THE DAY**
- No believer should let fear of failure prevent them from responding fully to the call of God. Everything needed for life and godliness has been provided and is immediately at work in every life that obeys God's call.
- [2 Peter 1:2-4](#)
- Write down some of the things that God has provided to help you fulfill "all things that pertain to life and godliness."

Day 3: Jesus Equips the Called

- You may be thinking that you are not equipped to do this. Remember, in [John 17](#) Jesus revealed to us that the Father gives our lives to Jesus for Him to develop and teach us. For what purpose? To make us useful vessels that His Father can use to save a lost and dying world. In His significant prayer, Jesus said to the Father:
- [John 17:4](#), [6-8](#), [22-23](#)
- *When Jesus called the first disciples, He assured them of His responsibility for their lives: [Mark 1:17](#)*

- **Whose responsibility was it for the disciples to become fishers of men?**
- **Jesus**
- **Disciples**
- Jesus would be the one who, under the instruction of the Father, would teach the disciples of the kingdom of God that they would soon give their lives for as fishers of men. The disciples were simply responsible to stay with Jesus and learn and practice what He taught.
- [John 6:39](#)
- All of the Gospels record how Jesus taught, trained, guided, encouraged, empowered, and fully equipped His disciples for all the Father had in mind to do through them. How has Jesus been equipping you for all that the heavenly Father has in mind for you?

- **Look over the past year and write down specific ways that Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, has been equipping you. How has He:**
- **trained you:**
-
-
- **guided you:**
-
-
- **encouraged you:**
-
-
- **empowered you:**
-

- *Our living Lord has accepted your life from the Father and is at work "making you to become" all God wants you to be.*
- [John 17](#) reveals just how thoroughly Jesus prepared them for their mission in their world. Your life and mine are included in that very prayer in [John 17](#).
- As Jesus said, "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word" ([John 17:20](#)). So you need not be concerned that you are not fully prepared to be of use to God.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

- Our living Lord has accepted your life from the Father and is at work "making you to become" all God wants you to be.
- Spend the rest of your time today praying. Thank God for all of the times He trained you, guided you, encouraged you, and empowered you. Be specific in your prayer and don't be surprised if the Holy Spirit doesn't reveal even more of the Father's activity to you as you spend time praising and thanking Him.

Day 4: You Are Important to God!

- Each one of us is important to God! We are ordinary people who love God with all our hearts, and who know that the call to salvation is also a call to be laborers together with God in our world.
- As we respond to the call of God and yield to Him, He powerfully accomplishes His purpose to save a lost world through our lives. God seeks out those who are willing to "stand before Him on behalf of the land."
- *God seeks out those who are willing to "stand before Him on behalf of the land."*
- [Ezekiel 22:30-31](#)
- If He cannot find a person to "stand in the gap," the land and the people are destroyed. But when He does find someone who will go for us, He is able to save multitudes of people.

- When Jonah finally obeyed God's assignment to take His message to the people of the great city of Nineveh, the king and all the people responded with immediate and thorough repentance, and the entire city was saved. This was the heart of God, and it waited on the obedience of an ordinary child of God.
- We may not understand why God chooses to use individuals and often waits on their response before He responds, but that He chooses to work through people is clear. If we have been unwilling to be "the one" that God could use as His instrument, then we must ask ourselves, "What could have been if only I had responded immediately to God's invitation to join Him, and His heart, for the lost?"
- We can get caught up in our own world and not recognize that there are people whose lives hang in the balance as God waits on our response to Him.

- Esther was a very ordinary woman. But she had "come to the kingdom for such a time as this" ([Esther 4:13-14](#)). Her response was vital to the heart of God for His people.
- Their lives and destiny hung in the balance, and in the hand of Esther. She literally risked her life, but God worked through her to save His people. And we know of her life and deed to this very day.
- Many other women were just as vital. Hannah brought forth the great prophet, priest, and judge, Samuel. Deborah saved God's people from their enemy ([Judges 4, 5](#)). Elizabeth and Mary were available to God for the bringing of John the Baptist and Jesus. And Mary Magdalene was greatly used of God, one day at a time, to minister to Jesus and His disciples, and was therefore greatly honored of God.
- Can you call to the Lord and say to Him what Isaiah said?
- [Isaiah 6:8](#)

- Often people look at Isaiah's response and feel that it is only for "sending me" to a great task. However, God is looking over your home, church, community, city, and beyond when He asks *whom shall I send? Whom shall I send* into the schools or the soccer and football fields?
- *Whom shall I send* into the community center, the hospitals, and the business place?
- We need to be reminded of another Scripture that reads:
- [2 Chronicles 16:9](#)
- **What is God looking over the earth to do, according to this passage?**
-
-
- **Does this surprise you that God is looking for someone to use and work in to display His strength to a watching world? What do you think the Lord sees when He looks at your life?**
- **Could He describe your heart as being loyal to Him? Do your actions reveal a heart that is loyal to Him?**

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

- You can never fully estimate the value of your life to God. To God, eternity is always at stake! Your obedience releases the fullness of God in accomplishing His purpose to redeem a lost world and even to inaugurate eternity in His fullness of time.
- **Do you sense that God is looking over your life and asking you to go with Him to touch your world? Do you know of some areas that He has been asking you to serve but you have not responded? How is He sending you, as a child of God, to be involved in His work?**

Day 5: Taking a Spiritual Inventory

- Now is an appropriate time to do what I call "taking a spiritual inventory"! Such an inventory is necessary for every sincere believer!
- Too often Christians want to have, for example, the "faith of Abraham." But they do not realize that it took God about forty years to develop Abraham's character to the point where he would immediately respond to God's command to offer his only son, Isaac, as a "sacrifice to God." During those years of development, God often reviewed His covenant with Abraham, found in [Genesis 12:1-4](#).
- He also brought Moses constantly before Him to remind him of Moses' walk with God. He did this with David as well, and in [Psalm 51](#) we see the major changes David had to make to "restore to [him] the joy of His salvation" ([verse 12](#)). And Jesus had to take His disciples aside constantly to explain how their continuing lack of faith was affecting their relationship with Him.
- *To Him alone are we accountable. Therefore, it is before Him and in His presence that we must stand for a spiritual evaluation—done by God.*

- God must take each of us aside regularly, remind us of His call in our life, bring to our remembrance all He has said to us ([John 14:26](#)), and help us see how we are responding to His shaping and guiding of our lives.
- A spiritual inventory must be done in the presence of God! He alone has lordship in our lives. To Him alone are we accountable. Therefore, it is before Him and in His presence that we must stand for a spiritual evaluation—done by God.
- You may sense that He is saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in a little, I can now give you more!" Or you may sense God is grieved, and is exclaiming, "Why do you keep calling Me 'Lord! Lord!' yet never do anything that I say?"

- Paul assured believers that they could stand face to face with God, with "no veil" in between them and God. But he said that when they stood face to face with God they would be "transformed into the same image from glory to glory" ([2 Corinthians 3:18](#)).
- When a believer is face to face with God, there is an automatic "inventory" taken by God—Christlikeness! When we stand before God we become very aware of our own lives.
- Do you remember Peter's response when He met the Lord in his fishing boat in [Luke 5](#)? "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man" ([Luke 5:8](#)).

- Isaiah had a similar response when he met God in the Temple as he stated, "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts" ([Isaiah 6:5](#)).
- Both of these men ultimately were used of God, but when they met the Lord they saw themselves as God saw them and they submitted their lives to God.

- This standing before God comes when we, with transparent honesty, bring ourselves before the "washing of water by the word" ([Ephesians 5:26-27](#)). The regular reading and study of God's Word is a must for every believer.
- Prayer also brings us into God's presence, where God changes our ways into His ways and we cry out as Jesus did, "Not my will, but Thine be done!"
- In summary, here are the important ingredients of a "spiritual inventory":
 - Do it before God.
 - Do it with His Word and with prayer as your "plumbline" or standard.
 - Do it with transparent honesty.
 - Do it thoroughly.
 - Ask the right questions:
 - Am I a believer?
 - Do I therefore know that I am called by God?
 - Does this include being on mission with God?
 - Does my life give constant evidence that I have released my life fully to Him?

- **THOUGHT FOR THE DAY**
- A spiritual inventory must be done in the presence of God. It is God alone to whom we are accountable.
- Take time now to fill out your spiritual inventory on pages 100-101.

- **What do these inventory questions reveal to you?**
- **Reviewing Week Three**
- 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.**
- **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?**
-
-
- **Review this week's memory verse and prepare to share it with your small group.**

- **My Spiritual Inventory**

- Date:

-

- As you consider your life, list key events in which God has clearly directed you.

-

-

- Now, as you look back over the last year, can you see areas in which God has been working in your life?

-

-

- As you reflect on God's activity in your life, list adjustments you have made in order to join Him in His activity.

-

-

- Should the Holy Spirit remind you of some "unfinished" business (something you have known that God wanted you to do, but you never adjusted your life to obey), write it below and make a commitment to quickly adjust your life so that you can obey in this area.
-
-
- Take time to ask the Lord to show you what He thinks of your life and of your obedience to Him. What is His response? Be ready to make adjustments in your life in order to respond to His perspective of your life.