

Theme: Our primary identity comes from God's call placing us into Christ, but He has also given each of us individual calls - a particular mixture of desires, gifts, talents, responsibilities, relationships, and opportunities that we receive from God and develop and nurture throughout life to allow each of us love and serve God and our neighbor.

I. Intro – Story or Topic

- A. Story of young politician who converted
- B. Wanted to leave politics to become pastor
- C. His pastor talked him out of it - called by God to politics
- D. Politician was William Wilberforce, pastor was John Newton (Amazing Grace) - Led to abolition of slavery
- E. What is our calling? (Theme)
- F. How does my calling affect my relationship with culture?

II. The Primary Call - Salvation in Christ

- A. God has called us into Christ (1 Cor 7:18, 20-22)
 - 1. God called us to Christ (1 Cor 7:18, 20-22)
 - 2. This is our chief identity (1 Cor 7:18-19,21-22)
 - 3. Last weeks message (Gal 3:28)
- B. This is the primary calling each of us has
 - 1. The call of being a Christian is central
 - 2. This call affects every other calling we have in life

III. Our Individual Calls - Our Place & Gifts

- A. Defining our unique calls (or vocations) - see definition
- B. Understanding our individual calls

- 1. God assigns each a place in life (1Co 7:17)
 - a. Serving God in our situation - 1 Cor 7:20-22
 - b. We do not necessarily change vocations when we become a Christian
 - c. If we can change our place - that is ok
 - d. But do not fret if you can not
 - e. Christ transforms our situation (1 Cor 7:22)
 - f. Situation includes family, job, friends, resources, opportunities, etc.
 - g. Luke 3:12-14 - serve God in many spheres - not just church ones!
 - h. William Wilberforce did not quit politics to preach - thank God!
 - i. Serve God where you are (1 Cor 7:24)
- 2. God gives each of us responsibilities in our situation
 - a. 1 Cor 7:3 - fulfill marital responsibilities
 - b. 1Ti 5:8 - care for family or worse than infidel
 - c. Slaves/masters; citizens/rulers; church leaders/members
 - d. Every life situation & role brings responsibilities
- 3. God gives each of us gifts to serve Him and others
 - a. 1 Pet 4:10 - each has gifts; serve others
 - b. 1 Cor 10:31 - glorify (& enjoy!) God through gifts
 - c. 1 Pet 4:10 - use gifts to serve others

- d. Mark 12:30-31 - Love God, neighbor - linked
- e. Col 3:23-24 - serve others - serving Christ - even slaves!
- f. 1 Pet 4:10 - administer/steward grace gifts
- g. We can develop and grow in them

IV. Applying the Word

- A. Do we see that every believer is called by God?
 - 1. The most important call is into Christ!
 - 2. But we have each received a unique call as well
 - 3. Not only church workers are called - all Christians!
- B. Do we know our particular call?
 - 1. Each call has many individual facets
 - 2. Look at the definition - call has many components!
 - 3. Each of us has many vocations
 - a. Spouse, parent, employee, artist, citizen, neighbor
 - b. Church member, leader, CPC volunteer, Scouts, etc.
 - 4. What is my particular way of serving God and others?
- C. How well am I cultivating and fulfilling my call?
 - 1. To whom much is given - much required! Some have great resources, opportunities to serve God, people
 - 2. Am I developing my gift as best I can?
 - 3. Am I using my gifts the best I can?

- 4. Am I fulfilling my responsibilities - or chasing fantasies?
 - a. I can't forsake responsibilities to chase fantasies
 - b. Be faithful where we are - God gives more

D. My calling and the culture

- 1. Church not really called to directly transform culture
- 2. Individual Christian in their callings transform culture
- 3. But most can not directly transform whole culture
- 4. Power of personal culture making choices
 - a. Many complain about attack on traditional marriage - and then fail in their own families!
 - b. Many complain about Church's lack of influence - and then do not attend faithfully
 - c. Your daily & weekly actions have power to change
- 5. Serve faithfully in our spheres, God will bless
 - a. Mom making meals - shaping culture of family
 - b. Dad coaching little league - shaping cultural lives
 - c. Faithfully attending church - shaping our world
 - d. Serve neighbors - changing culture one act at a time

E. Prayer for God to fill and use us

The Call, Christians, and Culture

1 Corinthians 7:17-24
 Mark 12:28-34
 January 9, 2011
 Prayer
 Number 6:24-26

Our primary identity comes from God's call placing us into Christ, but He has also given each of us individual calls - a particular mixture of desires, gifts, talents, responsibilities, relationships, and opportunities that we receive from God and develop and nurture throughout life to allow each of us love and serve God and our neighbor.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28

The individual call of God refers to the particular mixture of desires, gifts, talents, responsibilities, relationships, and opportunities that we receive from God and develop and nurture throughout life to allow each of us love and serve God and our neighbor.

12 Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?" 13 "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them. 14 Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?" He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely--be content with your pay." Luke 3:12-14

The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. 1 Corinthians 7:3

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 1 Timothy 5:8

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." Mark 12:30-31

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Colossians 3:23-24

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