

Know Your Calling

Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.

Colossians 4:17

Your ministry, or calling, is the purpose of your life - the reason you exist. It is what God has in mind for you to do and be. It is the accumulation of what God has invested in you so far through gifts and abilities, heredity and circumstances, and through experience and the choices you have made.

There are four important components to understand that help you to clarify your ministry vision and focus your calling: Message, Voice, Audience and Results. Understanding these pieces will help guide you in your vision, dreams, plans and objectives. It is well worth the time and investment to discover the truth for these.

The Message

Your message is the one thing you represent. It is the God-given truth that states what you stand for and live for. It is focused like a laser and fits you like a glove. It is the one thing that you want to pass on to your children. It is your purpose and your defining characteristic. Living your message is the “sweet spot” of your life.

Your Voice

This is how you communicate the message. When you have “found your voice” it means you know the most effective way to share your message with others. Often this is represented by a spiritual gift, such as teaching, leadership, administration, helps, encouragement, service or giving. Your voice might or might not be consistent with your current role or title; and it might be a method you have yet to develop. Consider things that you “do” and things that you “be”; but remember that just because you can do or be something does not mean you should. Test for consistency between your message and voice. You probably have more than one voice, but you do well to identify your primary voice.

Your Audience

These are the intended recipients of your message. They are able to hear your voice and understand your message. Sometimes it helps to narrow your target audience to get a clearer picture of your message. Clarity and focus offset dilution and diffusion.

The Results

These are the expected outcomes when your audience hears your message. Results can indicate how well you are delivering the message. Results also serve to encourage you in the pursuit of your calling. They are the fruit of your ministry. Test your actual results against your expected results as one way to make sure your message is on point.

Know Your Calling

What is the ministry which you have received in the Lord? Using just the first chapter of Colossians as a guide, answer the following questions in respect to the Apostle Paul. Then ask God to help you answer the same questions for yourself.

Step 1: What is your message?

Apostle Paul:

Your message:

Step 2: What is your voice?

Apostle Paul:

Your voice:

Step 3: Who is your audience?

Apostle Paul:

Your audience:

Step 4: What is the expected outcome?

Apostle Paul:

Your results:

Colossians 1

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, ²To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

³We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints— ⁵the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel ⁶that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. ⁷You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, ⁸and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

⁹For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. ¹⁰And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully ¹²giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. ¹³For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. ¹⁷He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

²¹Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²²But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— ²³if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

²⁴Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. ²⁵I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— ²⁶the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. ²⁷To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

²⁸We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. ²⁹To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.