

CALLING

This week, a young man asked me, “When did you decide to become a pastor?” I answered, “I didn’t decide, God did.” As with any God-given assignment, you must first be “called” before you can fulfil it. Pastoring a congregation is a “calling” and not a career move. This principle can be applied to everyone in the Body of Christ. We must all have a sense of destiny in everything we do. Twice in the opening chapter of the Book of Ephesians reference is made to predestination; in verse 5 it says, “*Having **predestined** us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself,*” and then in verse 11 it says, “*Being **predestined** according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.*” I believe these statements reflect the divine order of our “calling.” First, we are predestined to be sons and daughters by Jesus Christ and then we are predestined according the plans and purposes of God. Notice that our calling is birthed out of a relationship – we are sons and daughters of God.

Isaiah 43:1 confirms the intimacy God shares with His people, “*But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel: ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have **called** you by your **name**; you are **Mine**’.*” What an awesome statement! When God looked down the corridors of time and called you by your name, He was in fact beckoning His own family. You belong to Him and that is why your “calling” is so personal. No other son or daughter in God’s household has been predestined to do what God has purposed for you to do. God called you with something distinct and unique in mind. Therefore, the matter in question is not whether you are “called,” but rather, whether you respond to that calling.

Remove the thought from your mind of expecting God to come and force you or plead with you to fulfil His plans and purposes for your life. When the Lord Jesus called His disciples, He did it without overwhelming pressure from the outside. The quiet, yet passionate, insistence of His “follow Me” was spoken to men whose very senses were already receptive (Matthew 4:19). Remember, to be “called” of God is to receive a personal and exclusive appointment or invitation from Him to serve Him in a particular way. But it’s then left up to you to respond to that calling.

To end, I’d like to encourage you with a scripture... “*Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, for **He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it**” (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24). Never be afraid to chase after your calling, for He who has “called” you is faithful, and He will equip you and work with you until its been accomplished.*