

THE GOSPEL CALL

Joe Slater

God has charged us with the responsibility of taking His saving gospel to the world. By means of the gospel, God calls sinners to salvation (2 Thessalonians 2:14). Consider some truths about this calling:

It is a **high** calling. *“I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 3:14). Paul refused to allow worldly concerns or his sinful past to tie him down. God calls us to make progress, to improve, to become better than what we are now. He calls us to be more like Jesus each day.

It is a **hopeful** calling. Paul prayed that the Ephesians might know *“the hope of His calling”* (1:18), and emphasized that they had been *“called in one hope of your calling”* (4:4). The hope of eternal life (Titus 1:2) ought to motivate us to persevere and to evangelize. Worldly people expend vast amounts of energy pursuing lesser hopes; why should not God’s people strive to *“lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called”* (1 Timothy 6:12)

It is a **holy** calling. (God) *“called us with a holy calling”* (1 Timothy 1:9). That is, we are called into a life of holiness. Thus Paul told the Romans (1:7) and the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 1:2) what kind of saints (holy people) they are: *“called saints.”* The word “called” is not a verb, but an adjective. Paul is not saying merely that they are referred to as saints, but that they are saints by calling; God has called them to holy living.

It is a **heavenly** calling. Christians are *“partakers of the heavenly calling”* (Hebrews 3:1). Whereas the Israelites of old were called to inherit the land of Canaan, we look forward to sharing in God’s rest in Heaven (Hebrews 4:1-10). Through disobedience, many Israelites

forfeited their inheritance. With their fate as our warning, *“let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest”* (4:11).

It is a **humble** calling. *“For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called”* (1 Corinthians 1:26). We are not saved because we are so smart, so good, or so aristocratic. To the contrary, the gospel tells us that we are lost in sin, and that we must humble ourselves before Jesus and put our obedient trust in Him in order to be saved.

The calling of the gospel is a humble, heavenly, holy, hopeful, high calling. Let God use you today to call someone to salvation!

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TAKE TIME TO VISIT SHUT-INS

I’ll visit her another day;

I just can’t take the time

I’ve other things to do this day;

I know she’ll be just fine.

After all, my elderly friend

will not be expecting me.

And aren’t there lots of other friends

whom she will get to see?

But I will go another time.

It doesn’t have to be this soon.

Wait! Doesn’t Paul say, **“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith”** (Galatians 6:10)?

I really do have time, so I go.

And this lonely lady warms my heart so.

When I leave refreshed

She looks me in the eye and softly says,

“You know I love you.”

I say, “And I love you, too.”

Dear God, You know I do.

I pray with her. I give her a hug.

It would be the last one.

Another week, and I hear the message:

My friend’s life on earth is done.

I’m so glad that I took the time

To visit this elderly friend of mine.

--Alma Lindsey Mitchell (Athens, AL)

via *Christian Woman*

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The Plastic Years

They pass so quickly, the days of youth,

And the children change so fast.

And soon they harden in the mold,

And the plastic years are past.

Then shape their lives while they are young.

This be our prayer, our aim:

That every child we meet shall bear

The imprint of His name

--Martha Snell-Nicholson

(via House-to-House/Heart-to-Heart)