

Faithful to the Call of God

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Ephesians 4:11,12

And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ

Here are five different ministries wherein God gives a definite calling into full-time service — calling someone apart to serve Him. These ministries are the callings which God has set in the church. They are the gift of God in operation, not someone's own idea in choosing a profession.

When it comes to the call of God, many don't understand what God is calling them to do. Others think they are called when they're not.

My Call into Ministry

When God called me into the ministry, He left no doubts in my mind that this was His will for my life. I never experienced such dealings as when God dealt with me about His call into the ministry. The more I got from God, the more I seemed to want — it tasted just like honey to my soul.

One night, I was in a service where a preacher's wife testified of God's dealings with them to set themselves apart and enter the ministry. I just knew that woman was talking to me! It seemed so real to me as she testified. Every word she spoke seemed to set my soul on fire to take up the call of God upon my life.

I went home that night, and God began to move. As my wife and I lay on our bed praising the Lord, His love began to well up within my heart. I didn't know what to do with it. I tried to tell God how much I loved Him, but words couldn't describe it.

All at once, there was a beautiful vision right before my eyes: I saw a multitude of people holding their hands up and crying out to the Lord for help. The Spirit of the Lord plainly spoke, "Whom shall I send?" In an automatic response from my heart, I said, "Lord, send me!" And then the vision left.

I felt like I could get up and go out right then, but God still had more to do to get me into the place where I really knew He was calling me.

The next day I went to work. When I entered my store, I went into the back room and began to pray, but I couldn't concentrate. My mind was on God's dealings in my life. I prayed for a

season, yet there was no peace as I searched and searched. I left the store and drove up into a mountain. I parked the car and walked into the woods. There I sat on a log for a long time, praying and seeking God, but I still couldn't seem to make connections; something was missing. I knew God was dealing with me, but I just couldn't get to the bottom of what was troubling me. I stayed up on that mountain for quite some time.

Finally, in the afternoon, I went back down to my store to call my wife. I told her I was having difficulty keeping my mind on work. As I related how God was dealing, she said the same thing had been happening to her! The Spirit of God had been telling her, "You're going to preach the gospel. You're going to heal the sick. You're going to cast out devils."

When I said, "I think it must be God calling us into the ministry," it brought peace to both of us. We seemed to clearly understand it was God dealing with us to take up His call. We fixed it in our minds and continued to pray and seek God about it, wondering what God was going to do next.

Finally, the Lord sent a man of God to our house to stay overnight. God spoke through this man and confirmed what He had been dealing with us about. He gave us a message in prophecy: "I'm not going to send you to a Bible school. I'm going to put you into a situation where I'm going to train you for the ministry by My Spirit."

The prophecy went on to tell how long this preparation would take: "It might take a day; it might take a week; it might take a month; or it might take a year. It's all up to you. It's what you do that is going to govern how long it will take for you to get into the ministry."

This is true for anyone who is called of God: You govern just how long it takes to get prepared. It's your own fault if you drag your feet and hold back. It's your own fault if you don't have faith enough to step out and trust God.

Getting Free to Take Up the Call

Let me fill you in with a few more details of how God worked some of these things into my life, enabling me to launch out.

Right after God called me, He showed me a vision of myself: In this vision, there was a yoke around my neck. Strings went out from it in every direction. They were tied to all kinds of things! Wherever I turned to go, there was a string attached that kept me from going to do what I knew God wanted me to do. In the midst of this vision, I saw a hand extended down to me. It held a great big pair of shears. When they were handed to me, the Lord said, "If you cut the strings, I'll break the yoke."

In other words, God was showing me that I was yoked to the world, yoked to my business, yoked to so many things. I couldn't go anywhere to serve God.

Well, that was the end of the vision. What did it mean in light of the call of God upon my life? I was so tied down to business that all of the strings would have to be cut before God could break the yoke, setting me free to serve Him.

I began to see what those strings were tied to. One thing was the telephone. If I went home for lunch, I'd have to answer the phone anywhere from five to ten times. The same thing happened when I went home for supper. There wasn't an idle moment. I got up early in the morning and would be on the go until late at night.

My business certainly kept me in bondage. It took time to get those strings cut and to come to the place where God was able to break that yoke of bondage from my life. I didn't sit around and take this thing lightly, but obeyed God from my heart.

This is where many make their mistake. They want to launch out and go forth with God, but they let everybody and their brother hinder them. They hold back and listen to those who tell them it's not God.

People told me I couldn't launch out, but I obeyed God. Many told me I'd starve to death (that was the impression they must have had of what Jesus did with His servants).

Obedient to the Heavenly Vision

We have to stop and consider what is involved when we take the step of faith to go into the ministry. We have to be obedient to that heavenly vision. Look at the life of the Apostle Paul. Notice how earnestly he emphasized the point of obeying the heavenly vision.

This is where I stand today. I know God called me. There is no doubt about it. Therefore, I can obey that heavenly vision; I can move on in faith and in confidence, knowing God is with me.

I didn't have much faith in those early days. I was only beginning to walk the walk of faith. How much easier it would have been if I had the faith I have today. But I didn't. God's grace, though, was sufficient to bring me through each test of faith. And God will do the same for you.

Settle it in your heart and mind that you're going to do that thing which He really wants you to do, and He will give you the grace to do it. Yes, God will give you understanding. He'll break the yoke to free you to serve Him. He'll give you courage to rise up and launch out. And He will never fail you as you walk the road of faith with Him.

When God revealed this to me, I immediately endeavored to get out of business, going to every one of my clients and telling them they'd have to find someone else to work for them. I told them right out that I was going into the full-time ministry.

I had been in business for over five years, running two businesses from early morning until late at night, and I had a lot of irons in the fire. How do you stop something that puts such a demand

upon your life? Many of these people were hard to convince. Within two or three days, they were calling me for help.

But God had called me, and I knew I had to rise up and obey Him. It took a little season to get all the strings cut, to sell all the inventory and get the business transferred. Yes, it took awhile to get things to where I could apply myself to the call of God, but the day finally came when the yoke was totally broken.

Then the Lord said, "I want you to put your house on the market." I put it up for sale immediately. For a season, we waited on the Lord to move. Then the agent called: Someone wanted to buy right away!

Here I was, facing an unknown situation. I didn't have an open door to go into, yet my house was being sold, and God hadn't told me any place to go!

Led and Taught by God's Spirit

God soon told me exactly what town to move to. He was putting me in the position where He could really train me by His Spirit. He wanted me where I would have an opportunity to get alone with Him each day.

There were a few country folk there who had fixed themselves a place to hold church. That little building was in a cow pasture, way out in the farm country. They had it all blocked up underneath with railroad ties. It wasn't much to look at, but it was a place where they could worship God together.

We had been affiliated with that small church, and God said, "In exactly three months, I'm going to set you in as pastor of that little church."

I didn't know exactly what God wanted me to do except that He had said I would be the pastor in three months. So, I marked the date down and checked off the days as they went by. And in exactly three months (right to the very day), God opened the door and set me in that small church as their pastor.

I wasn't prepared for the ministry, yet this small flock needed a pastor. They needed someone who would take time to search out a message from God's Word and feed their hungry souls.

God opened this door so I would have time to learn the Word of God from the Holy Ghost. I was given the opportunity to get alone with God, day after day, to be trained for the ministry. He dealt with me about getting prepared and getting into His Word, and I began to make it a practice of seeking Him daily until He had saturated my soul for that day.

Long before daylight, morning after morning, I would start to seek the Lord. I would get up by five-thirty and head for the church, and I would stay there until I had satisfied my soul that I had my portion from God that day. It didn't matter how long it took.

I stood up behind the pulpit so I wouldn't fall asleep if I wanted to. As I stood there, God would expound His Word to me. He taught me by His Spirit, giving me understanding.

Those were precious days, but it took a diligence to obey God and get up each morning. I had more blessings from the Lord in those days. I'd go to that old church, and when I opened the door, the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me. I'd enter that church rejoicing and praising God. After several hours of prayer, I'd take my Bible and go from chapter to chapter with the Lord.

I want to go on to express to you how to get into the place where God really wants you to be. I've already mentioned how God led me into a place where He could teach me His Word. I also told you that He trained me by the power of the Holy Ghost. The message I preach today I didn't get out of books; I learned it out of the Word of God as the Holy Spirit taught me. This was the most enjoyable experience I have ever had. It lasted for nearly two years, day after day.

I found out what it meant to pray through. I would get alone with God long before each day really got started. Before anything else could get in my mind, I'd get alone to seek the Lord. I found out what it meant to have answers to prayer, as I developed a faith in God and gained a knowledge and understanding of His Word. I didn't have any reference books. All I had was the Bible. I wanted to receive the message as it was found in God's Word. I wanted a pure message, as it came from God Himself, that I might preach and declare a message that wasn't tainted by men's ideas.

Certainly this is what God wants. He wants His message to go forth. He doesn't want a message of ideas, or philosophies, or quotes from great men. No, He wants a message that declares the pure Word of God.

The precious months that I spent in that church changed my life. Like Ezekiel of old, I was truly eating God's Word. It was just like honey in my mouth. As I received the message of God to preach unto a lost and dying world, I began to grow strong spiritually. The message that I preach and teach today is the very same message that God taught me by the Holy Spirit in that little church.

In the original prophecy that God had given me, He said it might take a day, a week, a month, or a year. How long do you suppose it took me to get out of business, sell my house, and move into this place?

I went as fast as I seemingly could go. I put my whole heart into it. I didn't endeavor to do anything else except what God had called me to do, yet it took me nearly six months to get everything straightened out. And then I had to wait three additional months before God set me in as pastor of that small church.

Spiritual Dream or Vision

One morning, my wife and I were in the bedroom seeking God. After we finished, I sat on the edge of the bed, and, all at once, I fell back onto the bed. In a moment's time I was fast asleep, and God showed me a vision or spiritual dream:

My wife and I were sitting in the back seat of a car, going down a straight road. As far as the eye could see, that road was straight and narrow. Nobody was driving this car; it was going down this straight road by itself.

This signified to us that the Lord was going to take us down a straight and narrow road. Now keep in mind that we were being taken *down* this straight and narrow road — not up. We went down this road for a long time. We kept remarking how straight and how narrow it was.

That was the first scene, and then the scene changed: We were not in the car any longer; we were way down in a pleasant valley. Like two little children, we skipped along beside a crystal clear stream.

All at once, the scene began to change again! As we skipped along, I felt a hand reach down and take hold of my hand. It lifted me up, as my other hand held on to my wife, bringing her right along with me. We seemed to go up and up for quite a long way. Then all at once, we settled down on a huge rock. We were being firmly planted right on the top of that rock. Then I woke up.

The Interpretation

I began to wonder what this could mean. What was the interpretation? What was God trying to reveal?

After praying about it, I went to the same man who had prophesied about the time it would take to get prepared. I told him about the vision, and he gave me the interpretation:

God was revealing to me that He would take my wife and me down a straight and narrow road where He would clean up our lives to go forth and serve Him.

I want you to know something: If you're going into the ministry, you need to clean up all aspects of your life. You can't be a servant of God and live a haphazard life. You can't be bound to the world or to the things of the world.

Now, God was going to have to get the love of the world out of us. He had to bring us to the place of consecration and dedication, where we would stand to follow on with Him. We had to be brought to the place where we would learn faith day by day.

The Fulfillment

Well do I remember the many days we traveled down that straight and narrow way, as God worked to clean up our lives. We came to the place of believing God for the very next meal. We had to depend on God to feed our family. We had to learn to live by faith and not grow weary as we obeyed the Lord.

I also remember when God brought us to the green meadow and the crystal clear stream. Our souls were really being fed. We were in a fruitful place of growing in the Spirit and going on with God.

Then the time came where God took us by the hand and lifted us up. He planted our feet on the solid rock, where we would not be moved. Believe me, if you're going to be in the ministry of Jesus Christ, you must get your feet planted on a firm foundation. Then you won't be shaken by every wind; you won't be moved by those around you; you won't shake over every little trial.

It takes a work of God's grace to put that boldness and that anointing and that fire within you. When you have been planted on the rock, you will stay true to the Lord year after year after year. You won't shake every time someone else shakes. When God's grace is abounding in your life, you won't give in to pressures.

I think of some of the hard trials God took us through to get us into such a place of standing.

One afternoon, the pressures got so strong that we felt we couldn't take any more. Yet down in our hearts, we wanted to go on. That was a turning point in our lives. That afternoon, we fell down on our faces before the Lord. In a firm dedication, we prayed, "God, we don't care what it costs! We are going on at any cost. We are going to do what You told us to do. Lord, we'll stand faithful even if we have to starve to death! We refuse to back down. We've dedicated our lives to serving You, and we're going to stand firm."

That was the bottom of the valley in the vision. We had come to the end of going down. From that day on, we began to feel God lifting us up out of those despairing times. God had tried us. He had proved us, to see what was in our hearts, and He found that it was in our hearts to go on. So, He began to take us on further.

I'll tell you, your heart is going to be tried many times. God is going to find out if you want to be faithful to His call. He will know that you mean business with Him when you endure trying circumstances and still have it in your heart to continue on.

The Importance of the Word of God

Let me say something to you who are called of God. If God should choose to train you as He did me, don't fear to step out in obedience. But if He chooses to send you to Bible School, that's where you should go. It's up to you to seek out God's leading for you. Either way, you have to get the message of God's Word rooted and grounded in your heart. There isn't any alternative. If

you go without that message and you go unprepared, you're not going to be very effective in what you do. You won't be prepared to meet the challenge or to help anybody.

Yes, if you are called of God, you have to surrender. Let God lead you as He will. Don't be afraid to step out in faith and trust in Him.

Ezekiel 2:3-8

And He said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against Me: they and their fathers have transgressed against Me, even unto this very day. For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. And thou shall speak My words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious. But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that which I give thee.

When Ezekiel met the Lord, he knew he had the call of God upon his life. He knew that God had called him apart to go forth unto a rebellious generation. But God warned him not to rebel: Whether they would hear, or whether they would reject what he had to say, Ezekiel was to speak the Word of God unto them.

God dealt with Ezekiel as He prepared him to get ready for the call that was upon his life. We see here one of the greatest spiritual lessons found in the Bible concerning the call of God: When you really get down to business and study God's Word, it becomes so sweet to you.

I know that some think the Word is bitter. It is hard to them. It bothers them, and they resist it. But when your heart's desire is to get down to business with God, His Word becomes sweet to your soul.

In the study and preparation of getting ready to go forth, the Word will be like a twoedged sword. It will cut both ways, penetrating sharply as it enters in.

Hebrews 4:12

For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Have an Up-to-Date Testimony

First of all, the Word is going to do a work to straighten out your own life. As you apply yourself to study the Word, it will straighten out your thoughts and ideas. The Word will bring

you to the place where you'll live by it: You'll talk it; you'll preach it; you'll think it; and you'll apply it to your daily life.

As you give yourself to the Word, it will find its proper place in your life. Then, and only then, can you effectively declare the gospel unto others.

II Timothy 2:6

The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.

Before you can go forth for the Lord, you must be a partaker of the fruit. Before you can preach a message on divine healing, you must learn to believe God to heal you. Before you can preach God's power and God's blessings, you must experience how His power can work to bless your own life.

It's not enough to stand off at a distance and quote what has happened in the past. You need to have an up-to-date testimony of God's might and power at work in your life. You can tell about the great things recorded in the Bible, such as how God opened the Red Sea, but you should also have a testimony of what God has done today in your own life.

This is what will really build up faith in the lives of those you minister to, building courage and strength in their lives, that they might trust God for their own needs.

The Importance of the Spirit

II Corinthians 3:6

Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

We're living in a day when there's need for a strong ministry. We are called to be not only ministers of the letter but also of the Spirit. Think of the balance between these two: a ministry of the letter, and a ministry of the Spirit.

If there is no ministry of the Spirit when the Word is preached, it becomes hard and dry. It won't accomplish the work it was intended to accomplish.

But when you have a ministry of the Spirit as well as of the Word, there is a manifestation of the gifts of God. In this, you will certainly see a ministry that will reach many people, causing many to hunger for more and more of God's Word.

John 14:12

Verily, verily, I say unto you. He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall be do also; and greater works than these shall be do; because I go unto My Father.

If there is no moving of the Spirit in church, it isn't long before the services become dry. It's not that the Word isn't being preached, but the ministry of the Spirit is missing that can quicken the Word.

Yes, there has to be a ministry of the Spirit, working hand-in-hand with the ministry of the Word, to effectively accomplish what God wants done.

Look at the example of Jesus. See how He went about in the ministry of the Spirit. The gifts were constantly in operation: the sick were healed; the dead were raised; the lepers were cleansed; devils were cast out; and the Word was preached.

Yes, as Jesus combined the ministries of the Word and of the Spirit, He had a powerful ministry.

This is what I would say to you who are hungering and seeking after God, feeling the call of God burning in your heart and soul.

Proverbs 13:4

The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

It's not enough for you to think about getting a knowledge of God's Word. You must apply yourself daily to digging in the Word, and you must seek out the power and infilling of the Spirit.

I wouldn't advise anyone to go into the ministry without being filled with God's Holy Spirit. Jesus said we would receive power after that the Holy Spirit was come upon us.

Here's something for you to stop and consider. Before you step out into the ministry, be sure you've received this endowment of power from on high. Otherwise, all you'll have is a ministry of the letter. If you're filled with the Holy Spirit and stepping out to serve the Lord, thank God you've gone that far. But you'll still have to press in and seek out the particular gifts that go with the ministry God has given you.

Every ministry has accompanying gifts. And every Spirit-filled minister can have those gifts manifest in his ministry. All he need do is to seek them out.

If we want a ministry of the Spirit, wherein these great works are done, we must press our way into being filled with the Holy Spirit. And we must also press ourselves into studying the Word of God.

With these two combined (being filled with the Spirit and having a working knowledge of God's Word), we will be effective in winning many souls to Christ.

Don't Run Ahead of God

One thing many try to do is to run ahead of God before they have the message or the anointing. We can see an example of this in II Samuel 18: Absalom had risen up and tried to take the kingdom out of his father's hand, and now he had been slain.

II Samuel 18:19

Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the LORD hath avenged him of his enemies.

Joab was preparing to send a message of Absalom's death to King David, and this young man Ahimaaz was eager and willing to run and bear the news. Here was someone who was eager and willing to do something, yet he was held back. He was told not to go. Why did it have to be this way?

Well, Ahimaaz didn't have the message. He didn't see the action, so he didn't really know what had happened. Yet, we notice that he wanted to run — even without the message.

II Samuel 18:20,21

And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day: but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead. Then said Joab to Cush, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cush bowed himself unto Joab, and ran.

I want you to know something: When God calls you forth, He is going to give you the message. It will be planted down deeply in your heart and soul. You'll find yourself getting filled up with the Word of God, and you'll have something to run with.

This young man, Ahimaaz, was a fast runner. My, he outran the runner who had the message!

And this is true with many today. The one who doesn't have the true message always seems to get there first. They seem to outrun those who have the real message of God. But after they get there, they don't have much to say, because the message isn't down in their heart and soul.

II Samuel 18:22,23

Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cush. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready? But howsoever, said he, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cush.

When you are called of God, it's not how fast you can run that is so important. It takes time to get prepared. No matter how God calls or how He chooses to train you, it's still going to take time. If God chooses to train you by His Spirit, it will take time. It won't happen overnight.

And if He sends you to Bible School to give you the message, it will still take time to get prepared.

No matter how you go about it, it will involve a certain amount of time.

Take Advantage of Opportunities

You can be busy in the ministry even while you're yet getting prepared. There is no need for anyone to just sit idly by waiting. You don't have to sit down on a log and wait for God to roll a pulpit in front of you. Did you ever think of preaching at a nursing home or on a street corner? I was actually pastoring a small church while I was preparing. Yes, I was pastoring a small flock, busy helping others, while getting prepared for the future.

Part of the preparation is to evangelize right where you live. Let God use your life right where you are. Let the opportunities of each day be used to His glory. If you have a genuine gift of God in your life, He'll make room for it.

There are many wonderful opportunities where you can be used of God. Those who really want to reach the lost are out there, preaching and witnessing wherever they find needy souls. What better pulpit could you get to reach the lost than to go out and preach to those who will gather around to listen?

Too many are sitting idly back instead of getting down to business right where they live. They aren't faithful to do those things that will really help others. They just sit and wait for an opportunity. Yes, they sit and wait and wait and wait and wait — and wait some more!

Don't be like these who sit by, waiting for someone to call them to get behind a pulpit to preach. They sit back complaining there is nothing to do.

If you take advantage of the opportunities around you, you'll be prepared for a greater work. As you are faithful in small things, God will put greater things to your trust.

Count the Cost

When you think about going into the ministry, you're thinking about being one of the Lord's disciples, one who will go with Him wherever He may lead. And if you're going to be His disciple, you have to put Him first and foremost.

Luke 14:26

If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

Notice that Jesus uses the word *hate*. Why did He use such a strong word? When we put others ahead of the Lord, it's as though we loved them more than we love Him. When we can't let go of them to serve the Lord, really putting Him first, it's as though we hated Him and loved them.

It's got to be the other way in our lives. We must put the Lord first in all things. Our loyalty to Him must come first and foremost.

Many who want to be disciples bear the cross of having a mate who doesn't want to serve the Lord. There are many who have such a cross. They have opposition at home every day, but they have to take a stand if they're going to serve the Lord.

This is an area where it would be so easy to compromise for the sake of keeping peace at home. But if you're going to obey the Lord, there is no room for compromise.

Now, I'd like to talk to you parents who have a child that is called of God. What are you doing for them? What are you doing for that child who tells you they feel God is calling them to serve Him?

When your child has the call of God upon their life, get behind them. Use all your prayer power to help them get prepared to fulfill that call. I want you to know that, as a parent, you have the responsibility to help your child. If you don't want them to go back on God, then you'd best stand behind them and encourage them in the ways of the Lord.

Many have told me they felt the call of God when they were young, but nobody took the time to encourage them; nobody tried to channel them into fulfilling that call. Others testify that they were called years ago, but because of their own deliberate neglect, they haven't taken up that calling.

Now, you who are called of God, I would exhort you to take it upon yourself to count the cost — lest you start and never finish. Unless you count the cost before you begin, you may want to give up when the pressures get strong and you find it requires something of you to get prepared.

Acts 20:24

But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

I'll tell you, your heart is going to be tried many times. God is going to find out if you want to be faithful to His call. When you endure trying circumstances and still have it in your heart to go on, God will know that you mean business with Him.

I encourage you to stand up with the faithful. Stand up with the chosen, and launch out in faith. Obey God's leadings in your life. Take courage and trust God. He'll fulfill His call in your life. Obey from your heart, and He will bless you. Do what He tells you to do, and He will lead you forth.

Give Yourself Fully to God's Call

Now, there's one thing about the call when God places it upon your life: He never takes it back.

If God has been dealing in your life, grab a hold of it and pull yourself up by it. Those words that God spoke to you are living words. He wants you to believe them, to embrace them, and to

take His challenge to heart. Don't doubt God's call for one moment. Be assured that when He talks to you, He will bring to pass what He says.

But you must do your part. Don't kid yourself by thinking you can fulfill the call of God with a popcorn prayer life: that is, kneeling down to pray and then popping right back up again.

Soon you'll learn, as I did, that prayer is the most important part of your life. If you don't learn to pray, all you do for God will have been done in vain. If you don't pray, you won't get any answers. God won't respond to you because there is nothing to respond to! What He has promised won't happen, because you won't claim it.

If you feel the challenge of God upon your soul, take full advantage of your prayer life. Press in. Get in tune with what He desires for you.

He is throwing a challenge out to you: Give yourself wholly to it.