

The Believer's Calling

I. Introduction & Definition

A. English terms

1. Call (v): *to command or request to come or be present. to summon to a particular activity, employment, or office.*
2. Calling (n): *a strong inner impulse toward a particular course of action especially when accompanied by conviction of divine influence. the vocation or profession in which one customarily engages.*

B. Greek terms

1. καλέω ^{#2564}: *to call, to call aloud, to name.* Used 148x in the NT.
2. κλήσις ^{#2821}: *a calling, invitation.* Used 11x in the NT (Rom. 11:29; 1st Cor. 1:26; 7:20; Eph. 1:18; 4:1,4; Phil. 3:14; 2nd Thess. 1:11; 2nd Tim. 1:9; Heb. 3:1; 2nd Pet. 1:10).
3. κλητός ^{#2822}: *called, invited, divinely selected and appointed.* Used 10x in the NT (Matt. 22:14; Rom. 1:1,6,7; 8:28; 1st Cor. 1:1,2,24; Jude 1; Rev. 17:14).
4. ἐπικαλέω ^{#1941}: *to call, call upon, invoke.* Used 30x in the NT (Acts 2:21; 7:59; 9:14,21; 22:16; (25:11,12,21,25; 26:32; 28:19 all for Paul's appeal to Caesar); Rom. 10:12,13,14; 1st Cor. 1:2; 2nd Tim. 2:22; 1st Pet. 1:17).
5. προσκαλέω ^{#4341}: *to call to, to call to one's self.* Used 29x in the NT (Acts 2:39; 13:2; 16:10).
6. ἐκκλησία ^{#1577}: *a called body, congregation, assembly.* Used 114x in the NT.

C. God's calling is an invitation which must be volitionally responded to (Jn. 2:2; Lk. 7:39; 14:7,8,9,10,12,13,16,17,24).

II. Development & Application: God's calling of believers.

A. Our salvation experience is a calling from God (Matt. 9:13; Mk. 2:17; Lk. 5:32; Rom. 8:30; Heb. 9:15).

1. This salvation calling establishes us as called saints (Rom. 1:6&7; 1st Cor. 1:2; Jude 1).
2. The salvation calling is for Jew & Gentile—one body in Christ (Rom. 9:24; 1st Cor. 1:24).
3. We need to consider our calling, and continuously appreciate the gracious manner by which we were called (1st Cor. 1:26).
4. The believer's life is a life of hope because of our calling (Eph. 1:18; 4:4).
5. The believer's walk ought to be worthy of our calling (Eph. 4:1; 2nd Thess. 1:11).

B. Our salvation calling is associated with election (Matt. 22:14; 2nd Pet. 1:10; Rev. 17:14).

C. The sphere, nature, and purpose of our salvation calling.

1. God calls us to Himself (Acts 2:39), into His own kingdom and glory (1st Thess. 2:12).
2. We are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28).
3. We are called into fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ (1st Cor. 1:9).
4. We are called to peace (1st Cor. 7:15; Col. 3:15).
5. We are called by grace (Gal. 1:6), and through grace (Gal. 1:15).
6. We are called to freedom (Gal. 5:13).
7. Our call is an upward call (Phil. 3:14), that we may gain the glory of Christ (2nd Thess. 2:14).
8. Our call is into a sphere of sanctification (1st Thess. 4:7).
9. Our call is to a present possession of eternal life (1st Tim. 6:12).
10. Our calling is a holy calling (2nd Tim. 1:9).
11. Our calling is a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1).

D. Our spiritual gift and ministry is a calling from God.

1. Spiritual callings often entail a departure from temporal work (Matt. 4:21; Mk. 1:20).
2. Such gifts and callings are irrevocable (Rom. 11:29). ἀμεταμέλητα ^{#278}: *unregretted.*
3. Specific fields of ministry also become particular callings (Acts 13:2; 16:10).
4. Spiritual calling into ministry is an honor and glory for God to sovereignly bestow (Heb. 5:4).

E. Our temporal life circumstances and details are also callings from God.

1. Racial status, socio-economic status, & marital status (1st Cor. 7:17-27).
2. Geographic will (Matt. 2:15; Heb. 11:8).

III. Summary & Conclusion: Peter's epistles highlight the aspects of our calling in Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III of the Christian Way of Life.

- A. Phase I (Salvation): We are called out of darkness into His marvelous light (1st Pet. 2:9).
- B. Phase II (The believer's walk in time): Believers are called for the purpose of undeserved suffering (1st Pet. 2:21), resulting in blessing (3:9).
- C. Phase III (The believer's position in eternity): Believers are called to His eternal glory in Christ; perfected, confirmed, strengthened, and established (1st Pet. 5:10).
- D. Every calling of God is by His own glory and excellence (2nd Pet. 1:3).