Galatians, Pt. 2: Gospel Calling

Overview

Most of us have a complicated relationship with work. Some of us work just wanting to get paid and get to the weekend. Others of us are so driven that our work becomes integrated into our identity. All over our world, people struggle with not finding work, being unable to work, or just hating the work that they do. Our relationship with work is something every single person is going to have to wrestle with.

Scripture invites us to look at what is under our work, though. Instead of just working to live, what if we were created with purpose? A calling on our lives that we are created to live into? Scripture tells us that every person is designed with a personal calling on their life. A calling that further's the kingdom of heaven and brings healing and harmony to the world around us. Calling is a God-given revelation of our place and work in God's kingdom for the sake of others.

Or put simply, ***Calling is what God has created you to do.***

We will take time to read Scripture about someone who received and knew their calling: Paul the Apostle.

Discussion

- How would you personally define calling? Why might it be important? Why or why not?
- Have you thought about your calling? If so, what do you think it might be today?
- What might an invitation into living your calling lead to?

Scripture Reading: Galatians 1:11-24

Read Galatians 1:11-24 aloud. Pause briefly and sit with what has been read. Then, invite someone else to read the passage again.

In this passage, we see Paul beginning his argument about why he is qualified to communicate the Gospel, and why his is the true Gospel, not the Judaizers'. His Gospel specifically is that anyone who repents and puts their faith in Jesus is a part of God's Family. He reveals three reasons for his qualification.

- He *did not* receive it from any human (especially the Church in Jerusalem).
- He *did not* make up the Gospel that he is preaching.
- He received his ***Calling*** to preach this Gospel from God, through Revelation.

What we see is that the core reason Paul can preach the Gospel, the reason he has the authority to say what it is, is because he has a calling he received through revelation after being saved. Paul did not choose it; he was not convinced. Paul's calling is given by ***revelation*** (the unveiling of a truth we could not know without God showing it to us).

We are all saved into the family of God. We are all called on mission for the kingdom of heaven. Only by God's work and revelation in our lives.

Paul is an excellent example of this.

1. What observations can you make about Paul's salvation and calling? Work together to make a list of observations you see within the passage.
2. When it comes to calling, we should not confuse it with our job. A calling is not what we are paid to do, and it does not need to be "religious" (pastors or missionaries are great examples). Our calling is something God has called us to do. (Teach, care for children, encouragement, sharing the gospel to a specific group of people). In light of this, what other callings might people have?
3. Finally, our Gospel is only given by God revealing it to us. We do not choose it; we do not manifest it. It is slow revelation and preparation before we usually learn it and begin living into it. What could it look like for you to begin learning it from God? What might you begin to do?

After finishing the questions, take a couple of minutes to hear one another's prayer requests. What needs, desires, or lost people in our lives need praying for? Then take a couple of moments of silence to bring yourself present to God. Take time to begin praying for one another and those who need the prayer.

Practice for the Week Ahead

The Practice for the week ahead is to go on a prayer walk to talk to God about what you may be created to do. Mark out time at least once a week that you can spend 15-20 minutes just to walk your neighborhood, favorite park, or somewhere in nature. Make a plan on your calendar for when this will be. Most people find early morning to be the best time for this. Then, on the morning of your walk, offer a simple prayer as you begin. Something like “Father, I desire to know how you have created me to live into your kingdom. To work in your kingdom. Would you begin to reveal the calling you have placed on my life?” Then take your time in quiet to walk. Notice the thoughts that come to mind. Write them in a notebook afterward. Look for where patterns might be emerging. Where God may be revealing parts of the calling he has for you.

Close in Prayer

Before you end your time together, pray. Ask Him to begin revealing His calling on each of your lives. Take time to bless one another for the week ahead.