

August 2, 2020 James Gallaher Where Hope Comes From

I Corinthians 12:14-26

During this Sabbath season, our focus is hope. Webster's definition of hope: a desire accompanied by an expectation of fulfillment. This hope moves us beyond wishful thinking.

Our world today seems void of hope - having no expectations of a greater thing to take place in lives because there is no purpose in their lives. If there is no purpose then it's difficult to find hope. Hope is birthed from purpose.

Paul emphasized purpose and calling in **verse 14** *For the body is not one member, but many. One body. Many members. Many functions. Coming together to fulfill a purpose. Each member is called for a purpose. All parts are important. When we are not working according to our purpose, then we are ineffective in fulfilling the call God has placed upon our lives. We cannot substitute each other's parts. When we focus on other's callings, it creates competition within the body and that produces disunity and lack of community. When we neglect what we are called to do, it reduces our purpose and thus our hope.*

What has God called you to do? Do you substitute the "me calling" to the "we calling?" Freedom Fellowship Church has a corporate purpose but to be successful, we need to each heed the "me calling" before the "we calling." Everyone has a call of God individually and that comes first. We'll never be effective if focused on what God has called someone else to do... What has God called **you** to do?

Verse 26 *And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.* If one part is not working or broken or limited, the entire rest of the body has to compensate.

There is a call on our lives and our giftings are unique to our calling and life. What God has called us to is irrevocable. Will we surrender them to use for His glory? Will we heed the call?

Jeremiah 29:11 *'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'* Have you questioned what God's call is for you? Are you feeling insufficient for the call? Go to the One who knows your future. Would we go into the future if we knew what it was and that it would be hard? **Psalms 37:23** *The steps of the righteous are ordered by the Lord.* Notice it is not the entire path but step by step. **Psalms 119:105** *His Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.* We don't have to know the final outcome as long as we know the One who does. We can take confidence in knowing the One who is leading us. Seek Him when we are looking for our purpose.

Mark 1:35-38 Jesus made it a habit of getting alone with the Father. He needed time away from the noise around Him. People were pressing in and there was a constant pressure of being told what to do. It's like that today. We get distracted by the media and noise today. We get emotionally unavailable as we become bombarded. Our purpose can get drowned out by the noise. Jesus would go away to a solitary place - choosing to separate from the pressure and noise to get clarity of purpose. Jesus pursued places of peace. Are you pursuing places of peace in order to gain clarity of purpose?

The most important calling is our own. No one else is equipped to do what God called “me” to do. Be what God called us to be. Sometimes we fight to become something that we are not. **Verse 18** *But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.* God has placed us here at this place. There is no mistake. Where God calls us, He equips us. The call feels bigger than what we can do. We can’t be or do on our own. **Mark 10:27** *Looking at them, Jesus said, “With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.”*

There is difficulty in letting go. There is struggle to admit insufficiencies in what God has called us to do. But there is a glorious release and amazing peace that comes when we surrender to His call. Jesus came to do the will of His Father – not His own. **John 6:38** *For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*

The beginning of purpose starts with Jesus call to “follow Me.” What does God want me to follow Him in today? Is it control over our lives? Is it the uncertainties of life? Is it releasing a child? **Matthew 16:24** *Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.*

What does it look like when Jesus would go to the Father to pray? What does it look like in our own lives to spend time in prayer? Are you looking for your call? Come and pursue it at the Prayer Meeting on Wednesday nights (7pm). Pursue places of peace so that God can speak to us. Be intentional in prayer. Have you been ashamed to pray? Prayer comes out of a relationship with Jesus, out of a belief, out of a depth, out of a trust that God meant what He said.

Our calling comes when we are in relationship with the One who put that calling on our life – Jesus Christ. Purpose comes when we have a relationship with the One who has called us.

Pray for and build a relationship with Jesus today:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God. I believe that on that cross You took my guilt, my sin, and my shame and You died for it. You faced hell for me, so I wouldn't have to. And You rose again to give me a place in Heaven, a purpose on Earth, and a relationship with Your Father. Today, Lord Jesus, I turn from my sins to be born again. And now, God is my father, Jesus is my Savior, The Holy Spirit is my helper. And Heaven is my home. Amen.

Different seasons can leave us feeling confident or questioning the call. If you don’t know the purpose or call, God wants to tell you His call and purpose now. Do you need confirmation that God called you? Need confirmation that God still wants to use you? Need confirmation that God calls you son or daughter? Need confirmation that God will get you through this time? Ask Him! He is a good Father – giving good gifts to His children. Expect. His purpose never fails.

How is the world without hope today?

Do you know the call of God on your life? Do you ever have doubt with it?

Can you explain the call of God that gives purpose and how that purpose then leads to hope?

What is the difference between hope and wishful thinking? Can we explain this to others to spread the Good News?