

TOPIC: Your Ministry Calling

Brothers and Sisters, it might strike you as odd, but can I challenge you to pray about your **calling into Christian ministry** for such a time as this? Many times, we've thought of the many "very knowledgeable" men and women that have a lot of head knowledge but resisted full submission and faith to Christ before the Rapture. Are you one of these? Have you fully committed to Him now? If so, you are a new creation according to 1 Corinthians 15:22. Don't be surprised if you begin to see things differently in your life...especially now.

If you were completely caught unaware by the Rapture, or chose to defer your decision for Christ, or ignored those around you pleading for you to come to faith, **there is still hope for salvation!** It is never too late to serve Jesus and to finish well—yes, even in these dark days. So, brace yourself: those of you that have a lot of knowledge and experience **MAY** be the very beginning of a new move of God during the Tribulation period! You might very well be the future leaders needed to continue to disciple a new group of believers in your sphere of influence. Sure, you can cower in fear in these days, but you shouldn't, because that's not aligned with the Word of God. I would like to take a personal moment to share what Paul writes in 2 Timothy 4:6-8 "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; ⁸ in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing." These verses are MY favorite; I wonder, will they be yours, too? Never have these words been more appropriate to pass on to you than now.

In 2nd Timothy 2:17 it says: "for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."

In Isaiah 11:2 it says: "The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him--the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and strength, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD." See that? It's not fear of man, or our circumstances, or all that's happening in these days that we need to fear! **We fear the LORD only.**

I'm aware that we opened our presentation on the subject matter of fear, but what we are talking about now is not a contradiction. The difference is in what (or better stated) WHO to fear. So, let's explore this further. What does it mean to "fear God?" When the Bible refers to the "fear of the Lord," it means having a deep respect, reverence and awe for God's power and authority. Rather than causing someone to be afraid of God, a proper "fear of the Lord" leads one to love Him. As if to underscore this, Jesus says in John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled; do not be afraid." **Those are words of love from the Lord Himself.** In Romans 8:15 it says: "For you did not receive a spirit of slavery that returns you to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The term "Abba" is better understood as "Daddy". It is a term of familiarity and endearment, just like when you were a small kid, and you skinned your knee and then reached up to a parent to plead for their help and comfort.

So, in overcoming your fear, it's completely possible (and even likely) that you will feel this surge of commitment and desire to serve the LORD for the rest of your life during the Tribulation. If you are serving the Lord when everything is so hostile around you—one thing is for sure, you will surely become an outlier. It is risky to have a Biblical worldview and a determination to finish well. You will have to do two things: manage risk and manage fear. Both of these are mitigated by your growing faith, belief, and trust in the LORD. The remainder of your life is in the Lord's hands, be it one more day, or all the way through to the end of the Tribulation to witness firsthand the 2nd Coming of Christ! No matter the length of time that has been given to you, use every day wisely and live for the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. At the end of your life, remember, it's just the beginning of your true citizenship in Heaven. **But for right now, there's work to be done! So, I'm going to challenge you right now: are you called into a special role for such a time as this?** Let's review what the Bible says about serving.

First, let's understand that there are different leadership roles and functions involved. Look at what it says in Ephesians 4:11-13, "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to **equip the saints for the work of ministry**, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Now listen carefully, you are in the Tribulation period now, not the Church Age which ended when the Rapture occurred. Some of these roles may or may not be possible in the same way as before. Likely, they will not be. For example, we don't imagine traditional Churches being started at this point, but what about small groups meeting secretly and privately in a home?

We believe that Christ followers will be underground soon, if not already.

So, follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit in ALL YOU DO as it is more important than **EVER** for you to do so in these, the last days. You must discern what He desires for you to do. Never in all of human history has the following verse been more true than it is now, in these difficult days: In Matthew 10:16 Jesus says: “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves.” It was true of us before the Rapture through the centuries of Christian and Jewish persecution and it is doubly true of you now. Under the heading of general principles for those that are called—look at 2 Timothy 2:15: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” That means making sure you understand the correct meaning of the Bible and handle it literally and reverently in all you say and do. There are many, many resources on this Rapture Kit that will help you understand the Bible and help you with your ministry calling!

Also understand the profound truth of Romans 10:13-15: For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” **YOU can share your faith in Christ** and although you have to be careful and wise, it is possible to have an eternal impact with your family members or those in your circle of influence or even random people you meet. Pray diligently as you communicate with others because it’s not going to be easy...and potentially it will be life threatening. But understand what Jesus said in Luke 6:22 “Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize (reject) you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man.” **We are to steward that blessing for the benefit of others.** Just a few verses later, in verse 27 it continues: “But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.” This will be an important decision for you: will you bless and not curse? Will you love those that persecute you? I pray it is so for you.

Look at how intense and focused you must be by reading what it says in 2 Corinthians 6:3-10 about enduring hardship for the sake of the Gospel. “We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: **by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left.**” As it says in Hebrews 12:2: keep your eyes on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

And, if you are young, don’t think that you cannot serve the LORD, because 1 Timothy 4:12 admonishes: “**Let no one despise you for your youth**, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.” *You have a vital role to reach those of all ages, but potentially and especially, those in your own age group!*

As you pray about what the LORD would have you do in your role during the Tribulation, know that you stand on the shoulders of all those that have ministered the Gospel in past centuries. Consider for a moment that their sacrifices, example, and bravery have laid a strong pattern for you to imitate. It says in Hebrews 13:7 to “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. **Consider the outcome of their way of life and IMITATE their faith.**”

We are all encouraged to finish well, to complete what the Lord has individually and collectively called us to do. In Acts 20:24 it says: “**But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, IF ONLY I MAY FINISH MY COURSE and the MINISTRY THAT I RECEIVED from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.**” Did you catch that? It says do not count your life of any value or as precious to yourself. Wow! Talk about clarifying priorities. The Word of God is encouraging us to realize that our Citizenship is in Heaven and that our longing is to be **FOREVER WITH THE LORD**, to be reunited with loved ones, and to know and become a part of our forever family. This will take some courage to pray through, but we don’t see that we should solely and/or exclusively prioritize our own life, hiding in the foothills or in a cave or a bunker somewhere. What good are we as ministers of the Gospel if we do that? We must look out for the REAL NEED: to bring those you encounter the life altering and eternally significant Gospel. It’s the Lord’s responsibility to manage our risk. So, HE manages risk, WE’RE supposed to “testify to the Gospel of the grace of God.” I do urge you to fully comprehend these words. Beloved, follow the leading and prompting of the Holy Spirit in all matters!

Now, there is some very important guidance in 2 Corinthians 4:1-18. “Therefore, **having this ministry [i.e. your calling]** by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's Word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.” **But note that although we share the Good News that Salvation is found in none other than Jesus Christ and that there is still hope for eternity in Heaven, NOT ALL WILL RECEIVE IT.** Look at how it continues, “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the god [Satan, little “g” god] of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the Gospel of the Glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.” *So, you can't be discouraged by people rejecting the message of Salvation and Hope in Jesus.* Many will reject and mock and scorn, and maybe [listen to me] report you to the authorities because the World System in that day will be very severe and punishing and hateful of Jews and Christ Followers...even unto reporting them to the authorities for execution. Sadly, they may even be incentivized to do so! It's possible that your own family members might betray you for a handful of money and benefits. Be careful in all matters but know that our goal is to champion the cause of Christ.

We must be ready to share our faith. Even if that means taking a crash course in the Word of God and reading many of the materials (both eBooks and videos) that will help you in this Rapture Kit resource. In 2 Timothy 4:1-5 it says “I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: **PREACH THE WORD; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.** For the time is coming when people WILL NOT ENDURE sound teaching but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions and WILL TURN AWAY from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. **AS FOR YOU, ALWAYS BE SOBER-MINDED, ENDURE SUFFERING, DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST, FULFILL YOUR MINISTRY.**” This must sink deeply into your heart and mind...because it doesn't get any clearer than that!

So, consider this: even before the Rapture, these were critical exhortations to **US**: your Brothers and Sisters that are already with the Lord today in Heaven. For you—those of you in the Tribulation now—there will be an acceleration of “unity” and “love” and “let's all just get along” messaging. This is a false hope, a false peace. What the World System wants to APPROVE OF is any belief system or practice that seeks to **AVOID** the reality of Jesus Christ and the **ABSOLUTE TRUTH** found in the Word of God. Unfortunately, there will still be plenty of false teachings to sort through. Be a good Berean—that is to say, know the Bible, know the important doctrines of the Bible, and never waiver (even for a moment). Stay strong and cling to the Word of God as your sole AUTHORITY!

You must RESIST CONFORMITY with the World System. In Romans 12:1-8 Paul encourages us with these words: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. **DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD**, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.” Although we are separated now, both those that died in Christ prior to the Rapture and those that were alive during the Rapture are all waiting for you in Heaven! **WE ARE YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS AND OUR LOVE FOR YOU HAS NO LIMITS.** We know that you will be facing the most critical time of your life and there are situations and circumstances that are too horrific for us to anticipate so as to help you. But LOVE BASED ON JESUS UNITES US IN A COMMON BOND of being born again and ready for Heaven, the Millennial Kingdom, and for our Eternal State in the New Jerusalem and New Earth!

Before concluding this segment, I want to quote from a dear Brother-in-the-Lord, a man that has had a profound impact on my life. Listen to what he wants to say to you today:

Beginning of quote: “We live in an age where people believe mental acknowledgment that there is a God is sufficient. Others teach that a few good deeds are adequate to assure God will accept us into heaven. However,

James distinguishes between those who merely believe, and those who **believe and act or DO** – the second group are True Believers.

James 2:19 notes that it is not enough to believe. James writes, “...even demons believe, and they shudder.” In chapter 2, James clarifies that **True** faith must be accompanied by good works (James 2:14, 20, 22). Jesus said it this way:

“Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away...He who abides in Me, and I in him, **bears much fruit...**” (John 15: 1-2, 5).

No one will want to be “ashamed” (1 John 2:28) or found lacking (Matthew 7:21-23) on Judgment Day. So again, the key question is, what will Jesus be looking for at the judgment?

Revelation 21:8 provides a glimpse at the answer by presenting a list of those who will not enter the Kingdom of God without the saving work of Jesus Christ. The list, predictably, includes sorcerers, idolaters, murderers, and the unbelieving. What many may be surprised to learn, however, is that in Rev. 21:8, the #1 answer to the question, who will not be accepted into the Kingdom of God, is “**the cowardly.**” End of quote.

In praying about your own ministry calling, may those words swell in you a deep resolve to obey and serve the LORD God Almighty. You will **NEVER REGRET** doing so. Our next topic will cover our responsibilities to communicate the Gospel to others...to become actively involved in a massive “second-chance” rescue effort during the Tribulation period. It will include tips and techniques that you should keep in mind.