

TAKE THE CALL: "Destined to Be"

INTRODUCTION

- **Key Idea:** Many believers are not operating **out of a sense of calling**. Their lives are **busy** but they are not sure that their lives are **meaningful**.
- The Christian life is not so much a **choice** on our part as it is a **calling** from God (1 Cor 1:24, Jude 1:1).

THE ELATION (2 THESSALONIANS 2:13)

- In verse 13 Paul pivots from the **bad news** of the coming apostasy to the **good news** of God's mercy in the Thessalonians' salvation.
- **We ought always to give thanks to God for you** (v.13): Thanksgiving was Paul's response to both the *will of God* (1 Thess 5:16-18) and the *work of God* in salvation (1 Thess 1:2-3).
- Paul expresses the joy of any Christian leader in witnessing the spiritual growth of the people of God.

THE ELECTION (2 THESSALONIANS 2:13-14)

A. The Eternal Choice

1. *Beloved* – this word is in the perfect tense, indicating completed action in the past with continuing results.

"God's electing purposes -- past completed action -- has ongoing results, which leads to their belief in the truth in the agency of the Holy Spirit." (De Courcy)

2. *Chosen* – This word is in the middle voice, meaning "He chose you for Himself."
 - The same Greek word is used in the Septuagint to describe God's sovereign choice of Israel in the Old Testament (Deut 7:7-9).

"Ah! sir, the Lord must have loved me before I was born, or else He would not have seen anything in me to love afterwards." (John Newton, quoting a Christian woman who defended the doctrine of election)

B. The Effectual Call

- The Bible does not present humanity running towards the door of salvation and knocking on it with a desire to come in.
- The Holy Spirit "sets us apart": opens our blind eyes and makes us alive to the things of God.

C. The Evangelistic Challenge

- The *means* of salvation is the preaching of the gospel (Rom 10:17).
- God's method for saving His chosen people is for them to *hear the gospel presented by another human being*. **Election and evangelism are married.**

THE EXHORTATION (2 THESSALONIANS 2:15)

- God's choice of us in eternity past should produce in the life of the believer **resoluteness** and **steadfastness**.

THE EXPECTATION (2 THESSALONIANS 2:16-17)

- God gives us His "**eternal comfort**" – "*everlasting consolation*". Don't lose hope in the end of the story!

Sermon Application Questions

May 9, 2020

PERSONAL RESPONSES

1

Pastor Philip observed that many men do not operate with a sense of calling. Their lives are busy, but they are not sure that their lives are meaningful.

“The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.”

How would you evaluate your life in light of this statement?

What is the difference between a life that is **merely busy** and a life that **operates out of a sense of calling**?

2

The Bible refers to Christians as “**the called**” (1 Cor 1:24, Jude 1:1).

As Pastor Philip explained, “The Christian life is not so much a choice on our part as it is a calling from God. . . *the most meaningful part of your story begins before you were born.*”

Ponder the truth that God has loved you in eternity past. How does this perspective shape our understanding of “calling”?

What happens when we view “calling” from a purely man-centered perspective?

DIGGING DEEPER

1

Take some time and reflect on some of the key passages related to this week’s sermon. Ask the Lord for help in making application of these truths to your life.

Romans 8:33

Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect?

Ephesians 1:3-4

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

2 Timothy 1:9

who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began

Read **2 Thessalonians 2:13** with a view towards personal application.

This verse presents **the doctrine of election** as the grounds of our thanksgiving for other believers.

2

Evaluate: How much of your prayer life is characterized by **giving thanks** for other believers (versus *complaining about or criticizing* other believers)?

How does the doctrine of election produce thanksgiving for other believers?

(Hint: think through this concept especially in relation to believers you may struggle with loving).

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Robert Murray McCheyne wrote after witnessing a soul come to faith in Christ:

“The precious tidings that a soul has been melted down by the grace of the Saviour. How blessed an answer to prayer, if it be really so! . . . Lord, I thank Thee that Thou hast shown me this marvelous working, though I was but an adoring spectator rather than an instrument.”

1

When have you had the joy of being a “spectator” of the work of God in someone else’s life?

Describe in your own words the joy you experienced in ministry.

How does this joy motivate us to continue to serve Christ?

When William Carey wanted to take the gospel to the nations, he was told: “*When God is pleased to convert the heathen, he will do it without your aid or mine.*”

2

This statement is an example of the heresy of “Hyper-Calvinism”, which seeks to divorce the truth of **election** from the truth of **evangelism**.

Name one person in your life whom you desire to lead to Christ. Perhaps you will make a commitment to pray for that person this week and look for opportunities to share the gospel.