

Titus, pt.1, 10.19.08

Your Calling In Life

Intro

1. What is your calling in life? Both specifically & generally.
 - a. Specific calling story

I want to die the same way Wilson Bentley died.

Wilson grew up on a farm in Jericho, Vermont, and as a young boy he developed a fascination with snowflakes. *Obsession* might be a better word for it. Most people go indoors during snowstorms. Not Wilson. He would run outside when the flakes started falling, catch them on black velvet, look at them under a microscope, and take photographs of them before they melted. His first photomicrograph of a snowflake was taken on January 15, 1885.

Under the microscope, I found that snowflakes were miracles of beauty; and it seemed a shame that this beauty should not be seen and appreciated by others. Every crystal was a masterpiece of design and no one design was ever repeated. When a snowflake melted, that design was forever lost. Just that much beauty was gone, without leaving any record behind.

The first known photographer of snowflakes, Wilson pursued his passion for more than fifty years. He amassed a collection of 5,381 photographs that was published in his magnum opus, titled *Snow Crystals*. And then he died a fitting death—a death that symbolized and epitomized his life. Wilson "Snowflake" Bentley contracted pneumonia while walking six miles through a severe snowstorm and died on December 23, 1931.

And that is how I figured out how I want to die. No, I don't want to die from pneumonia. But I do want to die doing what I love. I am determined to pursue God-ordained passions until the day I die. Life is too precious to settle for anything less.

Mark Batterson, *Wild Goose Chase* (Multnomah, 2008), pp. 15-1

- b. The general calling we all have
2. Titus the person
 - a. Convert of Paul - 1.4
 - b. Man of conviction - Gal.2.1, 3-5
 - c. Companion of Paul who brought him comfort - 2 Cor.7.6, 8.23,

d. Caring heart – 8.16 – 19

3. The location of the author – Island of Crete. Paul probably left Timothy behind in Ephesus & took Titus to Crete where he left him to oversee all the churches on the island.
4. The purpose of the book – Pastoral letter; practical instruction of what he should do & teach the Cretan churches
5. Read 1.1–4: Truth packed, very difficult to translate, a tightly compacted theological paragraph, which is translated differently by every Bible translation. This was the common way of opening a letter during Paul's time. Let the reader(s) know who you are. It was also a way of substantiating Paul's authority with these young churches. Paul had recently been to Crete and left Titus there to establish the church. Paul wanted them to know who he was.

A. We are God's slaves sent out by Jesus...(Paul says these things of himself, but they are true of us too!)

a. Slaves

- i. Ro.6 – slaves to sin formerly; now slaves to God. You will be a slave either to God or sin. Remember a slave receives His master's inheritance. Slave to sin receives the inheritance of rejection & destruction; slave to God receives the inheritance of acceptance and true life.
- ii. Bond-servant: from Jewish custom is one who served another b/c of a financial obligation at the 7th year on Jewish calendar his debt was canceled. But some slaves decided it was best to remain a slave to their former owner so they voluntarily sold themselves into slavery to serve another – Ex.21.

1. Likewise we were slaves to sin & then became voluntary slaves to Christ to serve his purposes and build his kingdom. It's not about you! We belong to God!
2. You aren't the slave of an employer/company or parents or spouse, but a slave to Christ first & foremost. As his slave, you serve his purposes

which is to obey those in authority over you,
serve the needs of others...

b. Sent out – apostle. I don't believe Paul is trying to make a huge statement with this, but rather emphasizing his call as a "sent out" one. He was commissioned by the early church and "sent out" to establish the message of the gospel.

i. We have been sent out too! You weren't called to "settle." Be content with your condition & position with the Lord. (from Cliff's message) You are a faith pioneer; always moving and looking for the next adventure with the Lord.

1. How do you know you've become a settler instead of a pioneer? If your Christian life is boring, mundane and you have little enthusiasm for the things of God. Your life the pioneer who came down from the mountains and decided to settle down and take it easy.

2. You have been sent out as a pioneer to conquer challenges, beat back demons, and advance God's kingdom. You have been sent out.

ii. We have a responsibility to fulfill... a message to live and tell... a love to show & give... & power to reveal & confront.

1. We are to live naturally, supernatural lives – story of Taylor praying for Melinda

2. Ike, Rita & Katrina recovery – what would those places look like w/o Christian, churches and ministries responding to those needs.

3. You are an apostle!

B. ...to proclaim the message of faith & truth to others...

a. The message of faith. It is unclear if he is saying the message of faith is to be proclaimed to the unbeliever or the believer or both.

i. Evangelism – to proclaim faith

1. Oikos strategy/Outreach value

2. Bringing the Kingdom involves both show & tell. We may be good at showing, but what about telling. When was the last time you shared your faith with someone. Sharing our faith may involve a gospel presentation, or you may be like a billboard that simply drops faith into a conversation...that is sharing faith.
 3. The guy with the red truck with all the Scriptures on it...he's telling a whole lot more people about Jesus than I am. We may not have that guy's personality, but we do share his calling!
 4. We pray, "God show me who you want me to share my faith with today." Why don't we just assume that he wants us to share our faith with everyone? Let's instead pray, "How do you want me to share my faith with the person standing before me?"
- ii. Encouragement – to encourage another's faith
1. Paul did that with this letter to Titus. Titus needed direction and Paul provided.
 2. 2 Tim.4.9–18: Paul is about to die for his faith and he needs encouragement.
 3. Who needs encouragement in your life? Whose name keeps popping up in your mind/conversation? Who do you keep running into around the community? Encourage them in the faith.
 4. Brian Martin's encouragement to me, b/c he was listening to God. He simply asked the Lord, "Who can I serve today?" God gave him my name & I needed help with figuring out how to put up a gate on my back fence.
- b. The message of truth – the importance of truth

- i. What is faith? Trusting in the truth that God has given us. The message that we have is truth. There's major battle over truth today
 - 1. Major battle in America over truth in the college campuses...there was a major battle in the Garden over truth, "Did God really say...?" The Devil at Js' temptation twisted truth. During the end times, many with turn from the truth.
 - 2. Battle in your mind - you know what he says about relationships you are in; you don't think you can make your car payment & tithe; you're not sure that child/son will ever turn to the Lord; your not sure your father will ever listen to the truth.
 - 3. You can trust the Word. When you live in fear, worry, or doubt, you're saying that you don't trust the Words of God.
 - a. God wants to release a supernatural impartation of faith to trust His word.
- ii. To know how to live a godly life. This is the aim of Biblical truth! Why do you need to be grounded and living in the Word? So you will know how to live a godly life.
 - 1. Give the Word a little room & it will remodel it. Treat it like a text book and it will educate you. True it like an inspirational novel and it will inspire you. Treat it like a living, breathing, supernatural reality and it will bring life and transformation to you.
 - 2. One of our goals this year is to expose ourselves to the Word so that we can live a victorious, Christian life.
 - a. ABF Emphasis is about getting into relationship with other believers and exposing yourself to the Word.

b. How the message of truth is producing godliness in one family – Ill of the Rumseys

C. ...at this God appointed time.

- a. Paul says the gospel of Jesus was introduced at the strategic time of the Lord. There were several key factors that made it the appointed time:
 - i. Greek was spoken by everyone.
 - ii. The Roman Empire was spread the world over so a person could move from one place to the next with no major hinderance.
 - iii. Travel was possible all over the world b/c of the great roads Rome constructed
 - iv. The 1st century world was in relative peace so missionaries could travel in safety
 - v. The Jews and others were expecting the Messiah.
- b. You need to understand that you are living at just the right time. You may not understand why you were born and what your destiny is, but you were born according to God's timing. He has called you to speak the message of faith & truth to others.
- c. You are not an accident and the only one who wishes you were dead is the devil. You are a threat to him. You are a constant reminder to him that he has lost and will be sent to Hell. He wants you to think that your life is useless or pointless. He wants you to believe that you are a failure and you'll always be one.
- d. Whereas God has plans for you. They are good plans which will give you a hope and a future. If you will look to the Lord wholeheartedly, you will find Him. He will make himself known to you. He doesn't hide from his kids. You are living at the God appointed time!
- e. Beth Brannon's testimony – she could've grown bitter and angry; but she has experienced the Lord during this difficulty.

f.

Conclusion:

- “it is by the command of God our Savior that I have been entrusted with this work for him.” (verifying the deity of Jesus)
- Paul’s call into the ministry. Acts 9.15
- Our call into the ministry. It is by God’s command that you have been appointed to do this
 - i. Mt.28.18f.
 - ii. Acts 1.8

The Lord’s Supper commission – this is a recommissioning to carry the message of faith & truth to others at this God appointed time.