

How do I know if God is calling me to a ministry?

Context: A stainless steel foundry that allowed flexible work hours so several Christian college students could work their way through school.

Our section of the foundry was briefly shutdown, and we were heading down to the old, hot, and filthy grinding section of the stainless steel foundry that we had all gladly left. The unsaved guys asked: “How can you guys be happy and joking as we go back down to the pit???” (We were caught off guard.) “Oh, you thought we worked for the Foundry. No, no, no, we work for God, the Foundry just pays us.” They thought we were loony, but we were filled with joy.

#1. God has called all believers to service and ministry. No one gets a pass. No one gets to just sit and take without giving back to their community and local body of Christ. Of course physical, mental, amount of time, and circumstantial issues come to play. But let’s not look at reasons we don’t have to serve, but rather where we can. There are 21 different passages where every Christian is command or expected to “do good.” Be practical and helpful in your community, regularly.

“All y’all go and make disciples of each people group around the globe, baptizing them ... and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19-20 What’s the definition of a “Disciple”? A follower.

“Follow me and I will make you ...” Matthew 4:19

“God gave some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor/teachers to equip the BODY **to do the work of the ministry.**” Ephesians 4:11

“Whoever wants to be my **disciple** must deny themselves, take up their cross and **follow** me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.” Matthew 16:24-25

Ephesians 4:16: “From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as **each part** does its work.”

What is Jesus’ baseline command, last command given? **Make disciples** of all people groups, by going, baptizing, and teaching to obey everything Jesus said.

There might be limits on whether we can be a Pastor, Deacon, Sunday School Teacher, or Youth Worker. But there is NEVER a limit on whether we can be **making disciples.**

#2. Helping our local church work toward this end:

Where should I start to think about serving God?

Psalms 37:4 – Delight yourself in the Lord and He’ll give you the desires of your heart. Seek His face and His heart for **your** circle of contacts and influence. Ask Him how you can invest in these people for God’s glory and their good.

A passion for or Ambition towards a ministry is honored: 1 Timothy 3:1ff: “If anyone sets his heart on being an Overseer, they desire a noble task.”

The spiritual and character expectations for those in full-time ministry are very serious, but not the least bit unusual for the everyday believer. 1 Timothy 3 / Titus 1

Titus 1:6: “An elder must be blameless, **faithful to his wife**, a man whose children are trustworthy and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.”

Titus 1:7: “Since an overseer manages God’s household, he must be blameless, **not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.**”

Titus 1:8: “Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, **who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.**”

Which of these would keep you from allowing someone to serve as a Sunday School Teacher, Nursery Worker, or Youth Worker not to have?

#3. Spiritual Gifts: Your calling and gifting go hand in hand. If you can’t shepherd people and teach, you’re not called to preach, period.

God often uses us to help in areas of ministry/service where we do not feel strongly gifted. (My Deb served for years in Children’s Ministries - Nursery, Sunday School teacher, etc.) The prayer request God commanded of us is to pray for God to send “Workers” into the field, not specialists. We are usually more fruitful in areas that match our gifts, but others are often blessed when we help in love. Galatians 5:6

#4. God's Call on our lives: We still use the Reformation Era term, "**Vocation.**" The idea was - we were always serving God. God's calling on our life for service might be as a farmer, blacksmith, milk-maid, plumber, teacher, grandparent, mom, dad, or pastor. They were still God's calling on a Christian's life as an arena in which to serve God.

One Evangelist was hit with this statement right before he went up to preach. "I just hate it when preachers preach just for the money." The evangelist came back that night and shared the statement with the whole church and applied it. God hates it when we do any job just for the money. "I hate it when truck drivers drive just for the money"... We're supposed to be serving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, all the time, wherever we are, at whatever work pays our bills. Some of us get paid to serve God through his Church. For others, God pays them through a different work.

We, at Colon Baptist Church, are too small to run AWANA or any of the other programs our Baptist Churches are familiar with. But, you know what we're not too small to do? Write the first three things that come to mind down on a slip of paper. We're not too small to . . .

- love one another, pray for one another, edify one another, honor one another, or work together to disciple one another, to help others fix their eyes on Christ. And those type of things are what we're called to do. We are commanded to make disciples who make disciples.

The Author of the Book, "Making Disciples One Conversation at a Time," was teaching at a Bible College and set up a regular class project. (Page 179) The Class was split in half. Half the class was to write out how to take 10 families and plant a church. The other half was to take 10 families and figure out how to disciple them (to make more disciples.) The saddest thing was, the two lists almost never overlapped.

#5. What would it mean to make disciples?

Think of it in these three steps:

- 1. Invest in One towards a redemptive relationships, praying for gospel conversations,**
- 2. Walk with One for building one another up, and**
- 3. Follow someone as an example for your life and ministry.**

Invest in One: Figure out what you like to do and then how to do it with unsaved people. If you don't have unsaved friends and contacts, you'll never have someone to lead to Christ from personal ministry. And, it's those with whom you've spent months or years investing in for Christ, who will want you to lead in the next step.

Step Two: Get a decent discipleship workbook and walk through it with your new convert, or any friend who has never been discipled. Going through a good curriculum is encouraging; but even more important, it's a good excuse to get together. The real change comes when "life-on-life" helps deal with real life issues with someone you/we trust. Change happens with accountability.

Most of our Church members have never been discipled and, so, they're immediately at a loss on what that might mean. A good Bible curriculum helps fulfill the command to "teach them to obey everything I've taught you." Life-on-life disciple-making allows you to actually ask if they're obeying yet.

For step three: You may be able to ask an older Christian to help you grow to be more like Christ and be productive in making disciples. If you're older, you may have to utilize books to have great thinkers, biographies, and heroes to help us obey Paul's command in Philippians 3:17: "Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do." Philippians 4:9: "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."

Where do I start as I look at trying to serve God? Ask your pastors and other ministry leaders where they need "workers" to help. (Matthew 9:38 - Pray for God to send "workers.")

Look around you for any opportunity to do good and so let your love for Christ shine.

Think about with whom you could walk through a disciple-making workbook to help one another grow; and start learning what it would mean to help someone start from scratch.