

HELMI MEDIA

YOU ARE CALLED!

A n k i S a n d v i k

You are called!

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CONTENTS

1. You are called!.....	4
2. The believer has many callings.....	8
3. The body of Christ.....	11
4. The importance of staying in the calling.....	14
5. The diversity in the Kingdom of God.....	15
6. How to know your calling.....	17
7. What is important in our calling?.....	22
8. Timothy – an example.....	26
9. Called to be a disciple.....	28
10. Callings to the ministry gifts.....	31
11. Reward in Eternity.....	35
12. Summary.....	36

1. YOU ARE CALLED!

There is a wonderful truth for you as a believer - your Heavenly Father has called you with a holy calling and entrusted you with a mission, which is unique and specially designed. This calling is for every believer, not only for those in full-time ministry in the Kingdom of God. The task means that God not only believes in you but also that He gives you a huge responsibility. Nobody can fill the place the Lord has intended for you. It may seem too big, but the good news is that God has given you all the equipment and help you need to carry out everything He has called you to do.

”Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began” (2 Tim.1:9).

Many believers have a keen interest in the calling and also ponder on their personal calling. After becoming a believer in Christ, there is often a longing not only to get to know Him but also to carry out the calling He has given. Sometimes

there is the wrong idea that there is a special calling only for preachers and for those with noticeably big tasks. But the truth is that God has a plan and purpose for everyone. In Jeremiah 29:11 we can read *"For I know the thoughts I think toward you, says the Lord thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope"*, and in Eph. 2:10 *"for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them"*.

The calling means that we have a mission to accomplish. The Bible compares the mission with a race in which we should run with endurance (Hebr. 12:1) and also finish it (2 Tim. 4:7). When you are reading this scripture a question often arises: "What is my race and how can I start and finish the race?"

It is important to emphasize that we should choose the high calling instead of choosing something that feels attractive and interesting at the moment, but which is not God's plan A. An important question we should ask ourselves every now and then is: "Am I in God's plan - both regarding time and

location or should I change my course?” Every one of us will become the greatest blessing in the Kingdom when we choose to step into the task God has prepared for us. In the short term we can achieve success and good results also outside the will of God. Both in the short run and in the long run there is no better place to be than in God’s perfect will, even if we don’t see all the results and fruits we would wish to see. Sometimes we are surrounded by adversity and even feel forgotten by God, but there will always be a way out of every hardship and the Lord has promised never to leave us or forsake us (Hebr. 13:5).

There are times and moments in God’s plan, one of them a time of preparation, which is extremely vital. During this season the Lord is preparing us for the time to come by testing our hearts (1 Tess. 2:4), for example, to see what our motives are and where our focus is. Without this time of preparation we would not be mature enough to step into our mission.

The calling always starts by entering the Kingdom of God. If you are not quite sure that you are a child

of God, your first step is to receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord. A prayer you can pray to be saved is found on the last page of this booklet.

2. THE BELIEVER HAS MANY CALLINGS

When the Bible speaks about the calling, many areas of our lives are involved and these areas, by no means, conflict with each other.

Our first and foremost calling is being **called into fellowship with the Lord.** *"God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9). "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17:3).* We should never be so busy serving the Lord that we forget our first and most important calling. The Lord is longing for a close and intimate fellowship with each one of His children. Everyone is of the same value to Him and there are no favorites nor black sheep. Nothing will touch His heart more than when we as His children take time to seek His face and spend time with our heavenly Father.

We are also called to be **kings and priests** (1 Peter 2:9). This is about worship and intercession. In praise and worship we can express our gratitude, and in intercession we can exercise our spiritual authority when we pray for others - both for individuals and nations.

We are also called to become **more like Jesus** - to think, speak and act like Him. This will be a reality when we renew our minds (Rom. 12:2) and allow the Spirit of God to transform our inner beings, and also let the love that is poured into our hearts flow out to others (Rom. 5:5). The Bible mentions spiritual maturity, which means to become more like Jesus and to grow from being a spiritual baby with a big ego, to become a spiritual adult with greater concern and responsibility for others.

Often when speaking about the calling, we think about the **mission and task in the Kingdom of God**. In John 17:4 Jesus prays for Himself: *"I have glorified You on the Earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do"*. Jesus being our example, this statement also concerns us. We glorify the Father by starting and completing our

mission. We can also see this in John 15:8 where Jesus says: *"By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, so you will be My disciples"*.

The task involves both the believer's calling (the ministry of reconciliation), which is the same for everyone (Matt. 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18, 2 Cor. 5:18), and the specific personal calling (1 Cor. 3:5-8). The believer is primarily called to be a disciple and spread the Kingdom of God wherever he is going. Everyone is called to be part of the great Commission. Our commission "go and make disciples of all nations" is not only about traveling to remote nations and ethnic groups, but also about reaching those living in our neighborhood and those we are in contact with in our everyday lives. We can contribute to the Commission in many different ways - by praying, giving and going, all according to our possibilities.

When God calls us to a mission, He also gives the skill and the equipment. Our part is to accept the call and to start taking steps in the direction the Lord shows. Some are called to serve full-time in a congregation or do some other Christian work,

but most believers are called to serve as Christians in secular occupations or at home. God needs Christians in every sector of society. We need to realize that one is not less called by God if the mission mainly is secular work. You are of greater use when you accomplish the task entrusted by God in society rather than do something in the Church you are not called to do. Irrespective of your chief occupation, you are called to be a light in the darkness (Matt. 5:14-16) and also to participate in Church work.

3. THE BODY OF CHRIST

The Bible describes Christians as the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-31). The Body functions best when every member is in the right position and performs its given part. We could compare this to the natural body - if a kidney tries to function as an eye, it will be really difficult to see. And if the whole body would be an eye - how could we then hear? According to 1 Cor. 12:18, God sets the members in the body as He pleases and those members which seem to be weaker are all the more necessary (1 Cor. 12:22). This will counteract

a proud attitude and exclusivity in the stronger members; a sense of inferiority and being of no use in the weaker parts.

The body has many members, but it is nevertheless one body. One cannot survive outside the body - this is valid both of the physical body and the body of Christ. In the natural body those parts that are not in use will become weaker. This can be noticed when a muscle is inactive for some time. The body feels good when it is active. Endorphins are released in the brain and this gives a feeling of satisfaction and pleasure.

God's will is for everyone to accept his part with joy and be a faithful steward and servant in his specific mission (1 Cor. 4:2). I have never heard my toe tell me: "I would like to be a kidney instead", but the toe is completely happy with its given position. Each part in our bodies will most successfully cope with the task it was created for. If, for instance, my kidney should type on a keyboard, the result would be much worse than if my fingers do it. It is the same in the Kingdom of God. We will achieve the best results when we are doing what God has

called us to do. This may mean that we don't persist in doing things somebody else has been called to do. No part of the body, the ear, for instance, will say: "Oh, it's so hard! Now I have to receive sound waves again", but it will be natural to do what it was created for. Jesus says in Matt. 11:30 that His yoke is easy and His burden is light. That happens when we serve God led by the Holy Spirit.

We need to accept God's master plan - He knows what is best! God sees the diversity and He sets the parts together as He wishes. The eye cannot tell the hand: "I don't need you", but there is wonderful teamwork in the body. If we think that we can cope on our own, pride easily comes sneaking in. Real humility is to acknowledge the need for others. The natural body also shows care for its members. If my foot is ill, the other foot does not demand a long walk. If I get the flu the leucocytes attack the virus helping the body to recover.

God hates division. This happens in the body when cancer cells divide, taking space from other cells and thereby destroy them. Activity of some cells will bring suffering for the whole body. Also

when one part is honored, it means that the whole body is honored. At the distribution of prizes after a competition you will never hear that a medal is given to the athlete's leg or arm, but it is given to the whole person.

Christ is the head (Eph. 4:15). The body cannot live or function without the head. Every member of the body is dependent on orders from the head - in the natural body either via the nervous system or hormone system. In the same way every part in the body of Christ is dependent on the head, Jesus Christ.

4. THE IMPORTANCE OF STAYING IN THE CALLING

When a believer steps into his calling and is obedient to the heavenly vision (Acts 26:19) it has consequences not only for the individual but also for others both inside and outside the body of Christ. People get help and the believer experiences an inner satisfaction. Jesus says in John 4:34: "*My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work*". Food fills our inner parts and

gives pleasure. Without food one becomes weak - in the natural as well as and in the spiritual realm.

The vision has a positive effect on our motivation. A person who is motivated experiences life as much more exciting than a person who does not have his eyes focused on the goal. The danger of being spiritually unemployed, with all its consequences, is less when we have something to live for. One of the consequences of spiritual unemployment is that we start to seek our satisfaction in something else but the will of God, and we can more easily be drawn from the wonderful life in the presence of Jesus. In Proverbs 29:18 it is written "*Where there is no revelation (vision in some translations) the people cast off restraint*". Serving God is a privilege that also gives satisfaction.

5. THE DIVERSITY IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

As stated earlier everyone is called. God gives different tasks regardless of background, age and personality. Abraham was 75 years old (Gen. 12:4) when the Lord called him to move to

another country. Many people of this age consider their main task in life already being accomplished, and the thought of leaving his country forever or in another drastic way change the course of life, can feel strange. But as long as we live in this world, we can still serve the Lord. In Genesis 29:17 we can read that Leah's eyes were delicate, but her sister Rachel had a beautiful appearance. The expression *delicate* is understood in different ways, but it seems that Leah did not have the same beauty as her sister. God does not look at the outer appearance when He distributes tasks, but He is interested in the heart (1 Sam. 16:7).

Other examples of biblical persons God has used are: Elijah, who had suicidal tendencies (1 Kings 19:4), Zacchaeus, who was not popular (Luke 19), Moses, who did not want to talk (Exod- 4:10), Joseph, who had problems with pride (Gen. 37), Jonah, who was disobedient (Jonah 1:3) and David, who was a murderer (2 Sam. 11). All of them were people with attitude problems and weaknesses, but God could use them all the same. For instance, it is said about David that he was a man according to God's own heart (Acts 13:22). God is not looking

for perfect people, but those with open hearts and willingness to be changed according to the will of God.

God is calling both highly educated people and those without a formal education. He calls the shy and the introvert as well as the charismatic and the extrovert. He calls Christians of different ages, therefore nobody is too young or too old to serve the Lord. God chooses whom He commits with a mission and He calls both men and women. In the Bible we can read about women serving as preachers such as Priscilla (Acts 18:2, 24-26) and Phoebe, who was a deacon and leader in the Church (Rom. 16:1-2). Legend has it that one of the first martyrs was Tekla, a woman who had won and baptized many people for the Kingdom of God.

6. HOW TO KNOW YOUR CALLING

The question many believers ask themselves and others is: "What am I called to do?" The Bible helps us concerning this matter. According to Galatians 1:15 the calling was put inside us before

we were born, but we are not always aware of it. In Philippians 2:13 it is written that God works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. We often have an inner assurance and feel drawn in the direction where our calling is. In Proverbs 20:5 it is written "counsel in the heart of man is like deep water. But a man of understanding will draw it out". This means that we through prayer can know what's inside us.

One of the tasks of a spiritual leader is to help believers find the right path, but also give them space to grow and mature. Sometimes it may take time before we can step into our task. In Galatians 2:7 it is said that people readily realized what Paul and Peter were called to do, that is, the mission (the grace, the anointing) is recognized when somebody is functioning in the area he is called to.

A prophecy can confirm something in our spirit, but we should be careful not to build our calling only on a prophetic word. Sometimes we can pick up in the spirit what God wants to do in the Church, but it may not be our personal task. A prophecy is a big blessing, but we need to check that it is in

accordance with the Bible, and that we understand the message in the right way. Prophecies are brought forth by imperfect people, so even if God speaks, a messenger can (intentionally or unintentionally) add his own thoughts. We should never let a prophecy alone be the reason for our calling.

God can show the task in different ways - the most important way is the inner confidence, which should be according the Word of God. Here are some questions you can ask yourself:

- What am I willing to do for the rest of my life? "*For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable*" (Rom. 11:29)
- What am I willing to lay down my life for (Luke 9:23-24, Luke 14:28), and am I ready to change my course and the circumstances I sense compelled to do?
- In what areas do I feel joy and peace and what am I drawn towards?
- What is always there and where do I have the inner witness of the Holy Spirit? (Rom. 8:14)
- Where do I sense the grace, the inner ease and the flow?

A calling usually starts in the small and unseen things. It can be compared to a conceived egg cell in a pregnant woman. In the beginning it is invisible for the surrounding world and only the woman knows the tiny embryo that is starting to grow inside her. A good piece of advice is to protect the calling by not telling everyone about it. After a while people will notice what has started to germinate and grow. When God spoke to me about my task I did not tell anybody. During the first mission trip with my Church, my pastor asked me if I would like to testify in a service, and he introduced me according to the calling God had spoken to me about. It was a glorious confirmation that I had understood God's word correctly.

During the pregnancy changes happen and the mother-to-be lives in a time of preparations. On one hand, the parents start to make plans for the birth of the child more actively, and on the other hand, there are changes in the woman's body. It is not always easy for her, she may feel nauseous and experience difficulties to move as easily as before. Also spiritually similar changes take place. We step into an important phase of preparations. The

spiritual resistance can increase more than before - our enemy, Satan, wants to abort what is growing forth.

The timetable is important, a baby born in the right time is best equipped to meet the challenges of life, but a premature baby is weak. In the same way the timetable of the calling is vital. A spiritual premature believer is weak. We should stick to God's timetable even if we sometimes want to rush into something God has shown us. When the baby is born it is also important not to forget the dad, because sometimes we are so busy with our calling that we forget the first and most important thing - the fellowship with the Father.

Sometimes, especially during the time of preparation, we can do something other than our main calling. It is often a useful training period when God is pruning and equipping us for the times to come.

An important issue to emphasize is that the calling is always about God's work, not our own work
"Unless the Lord builds the house, they labour in

vain who builds it” (Psalm 127:1). In John 3:27 the Bible tells us ”... *a man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven*”. Nobody can choose his own calling. The Lord is the one who chooses and our part is to accept and take steps in the direction He shows us.

7. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN OUR CALLING?

God’s wish is that everything He had planned for you will be accomplished and that you will be successful in your task. He wants the best for you and for those people to whom He has called you. The call is always about being a blessing to other people. You are most successful when you function in the God given gift and in the love God poured out in your heart.

The calling can be compared to a race in which we start, run and finish after reaching the finishing line. To finish the race we must be prepared and well-trained (1 Cor. 9:25). Other contributory causes are the inner motivation, having our minds set on the finishing line and being encouraged by

the crowd and other athletes. In long distance races the runners take turns to lead the group and help each other to be able to run and not quit. Because sometimes when we run in a race we get lactic acid in our muscles and we start to doubt whether we will have enough strength to finish the race.

When running our race we need to follow the rules: *”And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules”* (2 Tim. 2:5). Which are the rules and factors that are important in our calling?

- a) All we do is genuine because the Spirit of the Lord has touched our inner beings. We have a strong inner life with God and out of it we serve God and people. We are also aware that we are fully accepted and loved in Christ and we are not serving in order to become more accepted or appreciated.
- b) We have a deep commitment both to Jesus and to whatever He asks us to do. We are willing and obedient to fulfill the mission regardless of how many results we get, which difficulties we face or how visible our mission is. We have

no agenda of our own, but deep in our hearts we can honestly say "not my will, but yours". Jesus is Lord in our lives indeed.

- c) Our motives and intentions are most important. Sometimes we may do the right thing, but the motives are wrong. We need to be careful not to use our God given gift for selfish motives, to get attention, to become famous or to get financial advantages.
- d) We are aware of the danger of becoming proud when God is using us in His ministry. God likes a humble heart (1 Peter 5:5-6). Humbleness means to be dependent on God and be willing to give Him the glory.
- e) Our aim is to have an excellent spirit, to be like Christ; live according to the Word of God and be led by the Holy Spirit. This means to be faithful in the least, that is to be faithful in what is another man's, and also to be faithful in the financial realm (Luke 16:10-12). A true character is developed by faithfully serving in the small and hidden places. Neither should we compare ourselves to others, because everyone is needed and every gift is given by God.
- f) Our willingness to live in a time of preparation

while we are being rooted in the Word and growing spiritually. In the Bible, there are many examples of times of preparation; Jesus was 30 years old when He started His official ministry, Paul was in the desert for many years, during which he got revelation of the Word, and David was trained for years when he was looking after the sheep. It may even be dangerous to be put in a position without being prepared. In 1 Timothy 3:6 Paul writes about a spiritual leader: *".. not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride.."* It can be compared to how dangerous it is for the heart to run a marathon race if you are in bad shape.

- g) We are rooted in a church as it gives us protection, strength and the possibility to be equipped. Alone you are not strong. We need strong leaders who give us wisdom and who help us to find the right path. A church is a spiritual home where we can grow according to the spiritual nourishment we get and according to the possibilities to serve and help others.
- h) We are not turning left or right from our given path. It is said about Billy Graham, the evangelist, that many people have tried to get

him do other things than the task of being an evangelist; run for the presidency in the American elections, for example. But Graham knows his calling and he is obedient to God and few others have won as many people for the Kingdom of God as Graham himself has won.

The Bible encourages us *"Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble "* (2 Peter 1:10).

8. TIMOTHY - AN EXAMPLE

In the Bible we find a diversity of both good and less good examples. A good example is Timothy, one of Paul's closest co-workers. In Philippians 2:20-22 Paul writes *"For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel"*.

Paul points out that Timothy showed care for others out of a pure heart without hidden motives. Out of such a heart God's unconditional love can flow (1 Tim. 1:5). An honest and clean heart is precious before God. He is testing our hearts with the purpose for us to change and become more like Jesus. *"But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts (1 Tess. 2:4).* Paul encourages Timothy to be diligent to present himself approved to God (2 Tim. 2:15) and as we can read in Philippians, Timothy also had passed the test and was proven. We are called according to God's decision, but we are the ones who choose to be a vessel for honor (2 Tim. 2:21) and to walk worthy of our calling (Eph. 4:1).

In his letters to Timothy, Paul encourages his co-worker to be one who is an example of the fear of God and contentment (1 Tim. 6:6). Contentment is to have a grateful attitude in different circumstances in life (1 Tess. 5:18) and the strong inner confidence that in Him nothing is impossible (Phil. 4:13). Paul also emphasizes that we should be respectful towards God and people. We are living in a society

where honor has decreased and because of this it is so important for us as believers to show respect. Basically it is about the attitude of the heart. God appreciates it when we honor our parents, elderly people, leaders, co-workers, employees and all others.

The Lord called Timothy, like everyone else, with a holy calling (2 Tim. 1:9). He was encouraged by Paul to guard and stir up the gift the Lord had committed to his trust (1Tim. 6:20, 2 Tim. 1:6). The same statement is true for every Christian. Timothy was not promised an easy and comfortable life, but he was reminded that he had been given a spirit of power, love and a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7) so he was able to carry his suffering according to the power and understanding God gave (2 Tim. 2:7). The same promises are given to us.

9. CALLED TO BE A DISCIPLE

Every Christian is called to be a disciple. A disciple receives his master's teaching and is a doer of the Word (Matt. 7:24-29, James 1:22). Jesus says: *"If you abide in My Word, you are My*

disciples indeed” (John 8:31). The Word is the foundation of the disciple’s faith and life and he passes on the Word to others. It is all about a way of life; to receive from God, be changed and then help others.

A disciple hears as a learned one (Isa. 50:4), with an open and soft heart and a willingness to be changed. The heart of a disciple is good soil in which the Word bears fruit. A disciple has a servant’s attitude and is like his Master who came to serve, not to be served (Matt. 20:28). A disciple grows in maturity and responsibility after starting to serve in the small things.

In Luke 14:25-28 we find that big crowds were following Jesus. In the big crowd you can be an anonymous Christian and experience wonderful miracles and wonders, but still keep your distance to Jesus. A disciple draws near to his Master and thus he will be more exposed. A disciple is willing to pay the price of following Jesus wholeheartedly. *”And whosoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple”* (Luke 14:27). In John 6:60-66 many disciples left Jesus, but Peter

said: *"Lord, to whom should we go?"* A disciple is ready to leave everything behind. Jesus says in Luke 14:33: *"So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple"*. This is not about not being allowed to own things, but if Jesus so wishes, you are even willing to give up everything and follow Him, because everything God does in our lives is for our and other people's best.

A disciple has fellowship with disciples he has not chosen himself, something that is possible because of God's love poured into his heart. In John 13:35 Jesus tells us: *"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another"*. A disciple is also trained in order to train others. The job description for a disciple is found in the Great Commission: *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age"* (Matt. 28:18-20).

A disciple who is trained by his master may experience blood, sweat and tears, but he has also many privileges. Jesus taught speaking in parables and when He was alone with His disciples they could ask questions, and Jesus would help them to understand the parables (Mark 4:10, Mark 10:10). In Luke 6:13-16 Jesus chose 12 apostles from the group of disciples, not from the big crowd. The disciples had ringside seats when Jesus was performing miracles and they could watch Him closely day after day. Jesus washed the disciples' feet (John 13:5) and He revealed Himself to them after He had risen from the dead. It may be more comfortable to be part of the big crowd, but life will be much more exciting when you are a disciple of Jesus.

10. CALLINGS TO THE MINISTRY GIFTS

The Lord calls some of us to the five-fold ministry. *"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"* (Eph. 4:11-12). Here we can

see that the saints, i.e. all Christians, have a ministry and some are called to equip other believers. God chooses who He calls to different tasks, it is not up to us to choose our own ministry.

Those who are called to the ministry gifts have great responsibility because they influence many others both through their teaching and their lives. As stated earlier one should go through a time of preparation in order to be mature enough to exercise the spiritual authority and the trust that come with the ministry. It is always tragic when a preacher intentionally chooses to live in contradiction to the Word of God, because it will have far-reaching and deep consequences. Moreover, a preacher should always keep his message in accordance to the Bible.

A preacher has an anointing for preaching on his life, which others will recognize (Gal. 2:7). Some characteristics of the different ministry gifts are:

- a) **The apostle** is one who is sent (*apostolos* in greek). The apostle usually functions in one or several other ministry gifts and he often

has an international or national ministry. He starts and lays the foundation of churches and establishes the spiritual leadership. In the ministry of an apostle there are signs, wonders and mighty deeds (2 Cor. 12:12). In the Bible we can see many examples of apostles, Paul, for instance.

- b) **The prophet** often preaches under the inspiration from God. He could be sharp and point at sin and unrighteousness with the purpose of getting people to turn around and give their lives one hundred percent to the Lord. Visions and revelations are common. There is a distinction between the ministry of a prophet and the prophetic anointing. Every believer can prophesy, but the ministry of a prophet belongs to the five-fold ministry. Music could be important while the prophet ministers. An example of prophets in the Bible is Agabus (Acts 21:10).
- c) **The evangelist** is the one who reaches furthest away and he loves to be among unbelievers. Of course he also inspires and equips believers. His sermon is often simple and about the core of the gospel - what Jesus

did on the cross and how to be born again. The gifts of healings, the working of miracles and the word of knowledge follow the ministry of an evangelist. In the Bible we find Philip as a good example of evangelists (Acts 21:8).

- d) **The pastor** is the shepherd who cares for the sheep. Often his ministry is local, but of course he can minister in other places as well. Usually the pastor preaches and teaches on various topics in order to give all kinds of food to the sheep. He protects the sheep in the spirit realm and he shows the direction for the congregation. God has given him a vision for the local church and he both inspires and delegates, so the church will be a place where different gifts can function. One example in the Bible is James (Acts 15). The expression shepherd is not used about James, but scholars consider him to be the leader and pastor of the first church.
- e) **The teacher** often has a deep revelation of the Word and he teaches systematically and with structure. Those listening to him can feel spiritual "satisfaction" and get clarity and revelation of the Word. In the Bible, Barnabas is mentioned to be a teacher (Acts 13:1).

Preachers can function in many of the ministries mentioned above and the boundary is not always clear. The ministries complement each other and every one is needed.

11. REWARD IN ETERNITY

One day in Eternity every believer will stand before the judgement seat of Christ and be accountable for how he has used what God entrusted him with, and which motives he has had in the ministry for the Lord (2 Cor. 5:10). The reason is that the Lord wants to reward him (1 Cor. 3:8). We don't serve God to get the reward, but our ministry is based on what Jesus has done for us and our response to Him. We will get our reward because of His generosity. But what will we be able to answer when we stand before Him and He asks us: "Did you follow My plan for your life or your own plan?"

In Matt. 25:14-29 three servants were entrusted with different amounts of talents (gifts). When two of the servants gave account, despite the amount of talents, they get exactly the same response:

”Well done, good and faithful servant, you were faithful over a few things. I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord”, but the third servant who had chosen to hide his talent did not get the same positive response. God rewards faithfulness and obedience, not the amount of fruit. Bigger ministries only have bigger responsibilities.

In 1 Cor. 3:9-15 Paul writes that we, in the grace of God, build on God’s foundation, but our work is rewarded depending on how we have built. Gold, silver and precious stones represent eternal values, but wood, hay and straw represent our own work and these will not remain. Our salvation is only built on what Jesus has done for us and our ministry cannot influence that.

12. SUMMARY

As a conclusion once again, it can be emphasized that you are as much called as every other Christian. God needs you to be able to fulfill what He has planned. He wants you to be successful in

your task and be a great blessing to many people. The biggest success you can have is to be in God's plan A for your life and you are able to say like Paul, the apostle: *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing"* (2 Tim. 4:7-8).

THE PRAYER OF SALVATION

Heavenly Father, your Word says that if I confess with my mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in my heart that God has raised Him from the dead, I shall be saved (Rom. 10:9-10). Now I turn away from my own ways and ask you, Jesus, to come into my heart. I confess you as my Saviour and Lord. Thank you that I now become a child of God. Thank you, Lord Jesus!





