# THE GOSPEL PREACHER

***God’s Calling & My Thanks***

Many men (and in our new world order – many women) are claiming to have been “called” by God to the work of preaching. Their belief that the Holy Spirit somehow gives them a clear “sign” that they have been called into the ministry is the unspoken rule among most denominations and ecumenical churches. These churches want to be certain that those leading their church have heaven’s approval. After all he / she will be the “pastor” who leads the “flock” to heaven. Even though there is no scriptural basis whatsoever of any special “calling” from God by way of a heaven-sent “sign,” it has become the accepted standard from church boards and committees before hiring him / her. While it is certainly true that the apostles were specially chosen men appointed by Christ for the ministry (Acts 1:15-26), and that Paul had a special “call” to preach (Ac. 9:15), the only calling found in scripture that I can read about are these:

Every **Christian’s** Calling: “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of *the calling with which you were called*” (Eph.4:1); “He saved us and *called us with a holy calling*” (2 Tim. 1:9)

Every **Church’s** Calling: “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, *to which also you were called in one body*; and be thankful.” (Col. 3:15)

Every **Confessor’s** Calling: “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, *to which you were also called* and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.” (1 Tim. 6:12)

But I never received a special “calling” to preach the gospel. However, once I determined I wanted to use my God-given “*gifts*” (please study Rom. 12:3-8) to be used by my Lord to be a “*laborer in the gospel of Christ*” (I Thess. 3:1), to “*preach the word*” (2 Tim. 4:2) and to “*do the work of an evangelist*” (2 Tim. 4:5) then I determined that my life would be as Paul’s: “*I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls*” (2 Cor. 12:15). I’ve never looked back.

It is right for you to ask of me, and any man who labors in the gospel, what is expected of him. Let me explain what I believe the Bible teaches about this great work.

***Preacher***

The word literally means “a herald or proclaimer.” Biblically it means one who publicly stands to proclaim for all to hear an important message from God. In colonial days of America when an important news item was discovered and needed to be broadcast, a herald would stand in the public square and cry out for all to hear the needed message. Picture Noah, “*a* ***preacher*** *of righteousness*,” crying out for the sinful world to be saved from the flood (2 Pet. 2:5).

God’s “good news” (gospel) must be spread, and He needs men who will proclaim to a lost and dying world that there is a Savior for all men! Paul said “*I was appointed a* ***preacher****… a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth*” (1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11). This great man also told us why there is a great need for preachers: “*How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a* ***preacher***?” (Rom. 10:14). Those questions demand answers. A man can’t call unless he believes. He can’t believe unless he hears. He can’t hear without a preacher. The context is speaking specifically about inspired preachers like Paul, but we must have men who will tell the world what Paul and other inspired men said. We need preachers!

***Evangelist***The word evangelist means “giver of good tidings; messenger of good news”. Paul charged Timothy to “*be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an* ***evangelist****, fulfill your ministry*” (2 Tim. 4:5). This description gives us an inside look at just what this man actually does. He must ever be on the alert (“be watchful”) and willing to suffer (“endure afflictions”) in order to diligently labor (“do the work”) until every soul is taught (“fulfill your ministry”). This is no small task a man undertakes. His shoulders must be strong, his mind sharp, his resolve firm, and his faith steadfast to the end. There can be no quit in him. Make no mistake, sounding out the “good news” can be treacherous. “*Blessed are the peacemakers*” is often followed by “*Blessed are the persecuted*” (Matt. 5:9-10). We need evangelists!

***Minister***

The word means “servant; one who serves.” But please note, this is not your typical denominational concept of one who is a minister to people, but instead is one who is a minister of the gospel. Paul brought this point out emphatically in Colossians 1:23 when he said they had heard the gospel “*which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a* ***minister***.” He instructed Timothy to “*be a good* ***minister*** *of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed*” (I Tim. 4:6). Observe, a minister is a servant of Christ, indoctrinated completely in the words of faith. His job is to know the gospel, then serve the people by giving them this truth that will set them free.

**Thank You!**

I owe so much to so many. I have been blessed to do the work of an evangelist in local churches in Macon Georgia, Brandon Florida, Danville Kentucky, Marvell Arkansas, Port Arthur Texas, and for the past almost 35 years (come April 30) in New Hope Minnesota. Everyone of these churches has impacted my life for both time and eternity. I could never give back even a tithe of what you have given to me.

All I can say to each of you is what Paul said to churches to which he labored: *“and the God of love and peace be with you. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all”*

I love you… dearly. – Rick