

Rock Solid Renewable Rhythm – Calling

BLOG

August 2011 – Let’s take a quick glance over the shoulder to see where we’ve been.

You may recall that a couple months ago, I rolled out a BHAQ (Big Hairy Audacious Question). It went like this: Is it possible to be more passionate, more energized, and more productive for the Kingdom... *a year from now?*

Sound familiar?

It’s an important question, for sure. You know it like I know it: All too often we are sucked into a mode of life stamped SURVIVAL. Or maybe on a good day we are upgraded to SUSTAINABLE. But how many of us live in the land of RENEWAL—a place where we actually anticipate the prospect of being more alive for God and His plans and purposes twelve months from today?

That’s what I want.

And I suspect you do too.

In chasing down this BHAQ, we pulled to the side of the road to talk about three spiritual practices that God is using in my life to move me closer to this renewable rhythm of life. Practice #1: SABBATH. Practice #2: SOLITUDE.

Today we talk about Practice #3: CALLING.

What is “calling”? If you punch in “calling” at Dictionary.com you get a laundry list of definitions. Soup to nuts. Some of it helpful. Most of it not. So what are we talking about here?

You were created not as an end point, but as a part of an unending plan of God. Legacy flows from what you determine will be the most meaningful contribution of your life.

–Tom Patterson

Allow me to lead up to a definition by telling you that I am a student of “calling”. I study it. Read about it. Reflect on it. Believe in it. And in many ways I could serve as the proverbial poster child for it. (Just ask me what the discovery of my calling has meant in my life’s journey).

Now when it comes to definitions, I might be more than a few points off the standard deviation. Truth be told, while some folks collect coins, I collect definitions. (A well-worded definition shoots a rush of adrenaline straight through me!). So in my studies of CALLING,

the best definition comes compliments of Erik Rees in his book *SHAPE*. It goes like this:

Your Kingdom Calling is way more than a career. It is a special commissioning from God to make a significant difference on this earth.

Every Christ-follower has a calling—a special commissioning from God to make a difference on this earth.

As a teenager, I read a book that carried the title *For This I Was Born* that had considerable impact on me. The author of the book was a man by the name of Louis Talbot. Born in Sydney, Australia in the late 1800s, Dr. Talbot was one of the senior pastors at the historic Church of the Open Door in Los Angeles, CA—the church where I grew up. He was the second President of Biola College (its seminary would later be named after him—Talbot School of Theology). He was a pastor and friend to my family, dedicating my parents as infants and speaking at my grandfather’s memorial service. AND he was a man who knew his CALLING as evidenced in the title of his book, and more importantly, by the life he lived. Louis Talbot had no doubt about God’s call on his life.

To know your calling is to know your “sweet spot”. Your sweet spot is simply the intersection of God’s PURPOSE, your PASSION, and your PROFILE. Let me unpack that in brief.

God’s PURPOSE is described in Christ’s wrap-up words to His followers in the final chapter of the book of Matthew (the Great Commission). Your PASSION is what uniquely fires you up. What energizes you. What makes you mad. What makes you weep. What makes you say, “this cannot stand!” And your PROFILE is that wonderful and customized blend of your gifts, strengths, talents, personality, etc.

This sweet spot, this calling is what I give myself to—without reservation. It is MY part in GOD’S grand story. And when I’m living in it, I experience unmitigated joy and fulfillment. And energy.

(By the way, practically speaking, the discovery of your calling is a journey of many steps and more importantly, one of many conversations with the Author of the One who formed and fashioned you. In taking this journey, I have found Tom Paterson’s book, *Living the Life You Were Meant To Live*, to be very helpful).

So what’s YOUR special commissioning to make a significant difference on this earth?

I close this three-part series with one more money-back guarantee: lock on to your CALLING, add in the practices of SABBATH and SOLITUDE, and I guarantee you that a year from now you WILL be more passionate, more energized, and more productive for the Kingdom.

Lord, thank You for telling us that we are Your masterpiece. That You have created us for good works. That we have been entrusted with a special commissioning to make a significance difference on this earth. By Your Spirit, empower us to live out Your calling on our lives!