

Seven Key Traits of Disciple-making Disciples and the Disciples They Make: Called (Pt.2)
Romans 1:7

Romans 1:7 *Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle . . .* (My translation)

Called: The powerful, intentional command of God creates what is commanded.

First, God calls us into existence.

Psalm 139:13-16 (ESV) *For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.*

Jeremiah 1:4-5 (ESV) *Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."*

Ephesians 2:10 (ESV) *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

The word of God declares without reservation that every human being conceived and brought forth on the planet in all of time in an individual creation of God, a person called into existence by the command and for the purpose of God.

Called into existence for purpose

Our very existence is the result of God's call, but why? Why does God call anyone into existence?

Romans 8:28-30 (ESV) *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

1. We know our purpose is to be conformed to Christ.
2. We know our purpose is to be united, along with all creation, to Christ.
 - a. **Ephesians 1:9-10 (ESV)** *making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.*

3. We know our purpose is to manifest the manifold wisdom of God to the rulers and authorities in heavenly places.
 - a. **Ephesians 3:9-11 (ESV) and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,**
4. We know our purpose is a holy calling
 - a. **2 Timothy 1:9 (ESV) who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,**

What is our purpose? We can say it in one sentence.

1 Peter 1:14-16 (ESV) As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

You were called into existence by our all-wise, loving God to reveal in the world the true heart, mind, will, character, and conduct of God through faith in and obedience to Jesus Christ. You do not exist to be god but that in and through you God makes Himself truly and accurately known. In and through you God accomplishes His mission to fill all creation with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord the way the water covers the sea.

“Be ye holy, for I, the LORD your God, am holy.”

Proverbs 3:5-6 (ESV) Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

All your ways: The way you

think

love

talk

decide

vote

pray

drive

respond

grieve

face challenges

relate

live when no one is looking

live when everyone is looking

live in the dark recesses of your heart where only God can see

God does not command happiness but holiness. He does not command an effect but a condition. He commands not a result but a reason. He calls us not to a public presentation but a personal principle. Be ye holy.

Second, God calls us into relationship

Romans 1:6-7 (ESV) *including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Not called to be alone, but called to belong

John 17:20-21 (ESV) *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.*

Colossians 3:3-4 (ESV) *For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV) *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

To find the great desire of our hearts in the person of Jesus Christ AND BE SATISFIED WITH HIM

1 Corinthians 1:9 (ESV) *God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Called not only to relationship with Christ through faith, but to relationship with the whole people of God

Colossians 3:15 (ESV) *And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.*

1 Peter 2:9 (ESV) *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

1 Peter 2:10 (ESV) *Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

Once you were a nobody alone in the world and separated from God, but God in love and in mercy called you to a different state and a different status. God made you His, a somebody among all the somebody’s for whom He demonstrates the depth of His love and the height of His glory in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

God's call creates that which He commands. God creates the relationship with Christ and with one another and then empowers us with the Spirit to live like Jesus in those relationships.

Third, God calls us into obedience.

Jeremiah 7:22-23 (ESV) *For in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to your fathers or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. But this command I gave them: 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.'*

Not primarily a command to religious practice as much as a call to personal holiness.

Jesus repeats this principle to His disciple-making disciples and the disciples they make:

John 14:15 (ESV) *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*

John 15:10 (ESV) *If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.*

God's call always includes a call to both faith AND obedience!
James reminds us that faith without works is dead. A living relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ always includes the privilege and requirement of faithfulness to the word of God.

We ought to expect Christ to create in us what He commands of us.

Love one another
Bear one another's burdens
Be my witnesses

No command is a burden to be borne but an opportunity to receive: grace, mercy, faith, strength, joy, hope. Even the cross, as heavy as it was, presented to Jesus a doorway to joy as the Father created in Jesus the passion for salvation to which He called His Son.

Hebrews 12:1-2 (ESV) *Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Fourth, God calls us to service.

God called Paul an apostle
God calls you a son/daughter then sets this task: Go and make disciples
God's call is God's enabling!

1 Thessalonians 5:24 (ESV) *He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.*

1 Thessalonians 5:24 (KJV) *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*

Some of you have in an inkling that God has called you to something, and you are wondering how you are going to do it. In fact, you are avoiding the attempt because you see no way you can pull it off. Listen, if God calls you, His call creates what He commands! He will do what He desires done.

Philippians 2:13 (ESV) *for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.*

God lacks no ability to accomplish anything to which He calls us.

Finally, God calls us to glory

Romans 8:29-30 (ESV) *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

Hebrews 9:15 (ESV) *Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.*

2 Peter 1:3 (ESV) *His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,*

Let us not think of God's glory as something unobtainable, a treasure hidden behind an impassable wall. It is not like standing outside a hospital birthing room, rejoicing in someone else's glory but having no glory of our own. God calls us INTO His glory, INTO His excellence, and what have we learned about God's call? God's command creates what God commands.

From beginning to end our lives are subject to the call of God, God's command creating what is commanded in us, for us, and through us.

Too long has the burden of faith and obedience weighed as a burden on the shoulders of those who cannot carry it. God's call creates what He commands. Our trust is in Him to accomplish in us and through us all that He commands of us. Our purpose is in Him. Our ability is in Him. Our opportunity is in Him. Our outcomes are in Him.

There is nothing to fear. There is nothing to fret about. What can we be afraid of? That God will fail? That God will not keep His promise? That Christ will not be enough, His life and death and

resurrection somehow insufficient for our eternal need? That life is nothing more than God holding out the proverbial carrot waiting for us to lunge forward only to betray us?

Are we afraid that God will abandon what He has purchased at such great expense? Tell me, those of you who fear and doubt, is Christ Himself not clear evidence to us of God's everlasting commitment to rescue and eternal glory with Him?

Why take the time to explain God's call?

So that you will think differently about Christ and your life in Him. God calls us with a powerful, intentional call that creates what He commands. He calls us not so much to "do" something as to "be" something: be faith-filled; be Christ-centered, be grounded in the word, be full of hope and joyful expectation, be the handiwork of God Himself as He creates in us what He commands of us.

Why take the time to explain God's call?

So that you will love differently. Love God. Love Christ. Love the Spirit. Love the word, love the church. Love salvation and joy and doctrine and peace and mission and possibility without reservation or reluctance because you know that it is God Himself who creates in you what He commands of you.

Why take the time to explain God's call?

So that you will worship differently. Is God worthy of worship? Certainly. Do you owe God worship? Of course. But if worship is something you give God only because you think you owe it to Him, then worship for you is more an act of duty than of love and wonder and you are missing out on the heart of worship. God demonstrates in Christ that He loves you, then He continually demonstrates His love for you as He creates in you what He commands of you. O worship the King, all glorious above, and gratefully sing His wonderful love!