



Sermon Discussion Guide

You are Called to Become

Live Your Calling: What on Earth Am I Here For? – Part 4

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Memory Verse: *“In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28 (NIV)*

In this series we are learning that God has 5 callings on our lives. There is an order to them; they become our life building blocks. So far we’ve looked at 1) to be loved, and 2) to belong. This week our lesson focuses on the third calling, to become like Christ. Five times Scripture compares “becoming” to running a race. There are 8 principles to draw from these references. In this discussion guide, we’ll look at just a few.

OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.

HOW DO I BECOME WHAT GOD CALLS ME TO BE?

Running Your Marathon to Maturity

“Let us strip off anything that slows us down or holds us back, and especially those sins that wrap themselves so tightly around our feet and trip us up; and let us run with patience the particular race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish.” Hebrews 12:1-2 (LB)

1. To become what God calls us to be, the first thing we need to do is simplify our lives. What is holding you back? Share with your group as a way to move forward in your race.
2. Keeping our eyes on Jesus is key to becoming like him and thereby fulfilling our purpose in life. What does Hebrews 12:1-2 say about how to de-clutter our lives and focus on Jesus?
3. Describe to the group your favorite spot where you like to meet with Jesus.

“All athletes practice strict self-control. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I am not like a boxer who misses his punches.” 1 Corinthians 9:25-26 (NLT)

4. What characteristics do athletes develop in order to win a race? Explain how they would directly apply to believers.

“I am sure that God, who began a good work within you, will continue his work until it is finished on that day when Christ Jesus comes back again.” Philippians 1:6 (NLT)

5. What great truth is revealed in Philippians 1:6? Take a moment in your group to magnify God, exalting his name for his saving grace in our lives.

Diving Deeper (optional)

“Jesus did not give up because of the cross! On the contrary, because of the joy that was waiting for him, he thought nothing of the disgrace of dying on the cross, and he is now seated at the right side of God’s throne. Think of what he went through; how he put up with so much hatred from sinners! So do not let yourselves become discouraged and give up.” Hebrews 12:2-3 (TEV)

- When it gets hard, remember the reward. From the passage above, discuss how to keep from becoming discouraged.
- What does it take to develop Christlike character?
- How can your small group help one another become all that God is calling you to be? List a few ways.

REVIEW ANY ASSIGNMENTS OR COMMITMENTS MADE DURING YOUR PREVIOUS MEETING.

Sermon Discussion Guide Leader Notes

Suggestions for This Week's Study

- When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?
- This study gives practical steppingstones on how to “become” more like Christ: Simplify my life; be patient; spend time to focus on Jesus; know when things get hard, I will receive God’s reward; gather a team to help me; know God is my cheerleader; take every step with purpose; realize what I don’t finish, God will!
- Encourage each person to have a special place to meet with Jesus daily, if they don’t already have one. What items do you need to have nearby? What can you do to help focus on a clutter-free conversation with Jesus?

Preparing to Lead Your Group

- ✓ **PRAY** for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God’s wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God’s instrument to lead the group to greater understanding and a willingness to commit to becoming more like God. Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group.
- ✓ **PLAN** where you want to take your group in the next 60-90 days. Is your group strong in some areas and weak in others? How can you challenge the members to live more balanced Christian lives? Consider God’s five purposes for the church: Fellowship, Discipleship, Ministry, Mission and Worship, and make a plan to encourage your group members to growth and commitment in their weak areas.
- ✓ **PONDER YOUR PROGRESS** after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what didn’t. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. Consider whether your plan is being effective in moving the group to greater understanding and commitment. How are you doing with leading the discussion: is it stimulating, challenging, and meaningful? Are you able to keep the group on track? Do you need to make some changes?

Using This Sermon Discussion Guide

- Talk It Over is a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. We’ve designed it so it can be completed easily within 30-45 minutes. As the discussion leader, you should preview and evaluate the questions based on the needs of your group. Decide in advance what is most important to focus on, should time not allow for the entire lesson.
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, consider using the Diving Deeper section or add additional Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- The questions relating to Bible study methods are helpful to develop Bible literacy and spiritual maturity in our lives. You can help your group be aware of their needs in these areas by using these questions as a regular part of each discussion.
- Personal applications are essential for growth and should be included in every discussion. When discussing how they will apply principles, group members may state very general goals such as “I need to spend more time in prayer.” It is important for you to help people make goals that are very specific and commit to specific plans of action by asking, for example, “How are you going to begin?” An example is to get up 25 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- Your goal as the leader is to bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their needs for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.