

God's Method of Calling a Leader

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"The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person. (1 Samuel 10:6).

God's means of calling us into his mission and purposes of life can often come because of a work-related problem. There are a number of examples of this in scripture. The calling of King Saul as king of Israel is an example of this truth.

The scene of this story is found in 1 Samuel 9 and 10. Saul is working for his dad. We cannot tell what type of business his father Kish had, but it required the use of donkeys. Donkeys represented commerce during Bible times. Donkeys transported goods and the scripture tells us that Kish was missing some of his donkeys. No doubt, his distribution system was severely affected with the loss of some of his donkeys. So, he instructed his son Saul to take a servant with him and go find them.

Divine Instruction Often Comes from the Most Unlikely Sources

Saul and the servant went to three different areas to find the missing donkeys over a three day period. They had no luck. It was getting late and Saul was concerned that his father might be worried about him. He was ready to abandon the search.

Most of us attempt to solve our problems the best we know how. In this case, it only resulted in frustration and failure. Saul's servant had heard of a prophet who had divine powers in a nearby city. "There is a man of God in the town," he suggests. "The prophet might know what direction for us to take." Saul has no other options so he takes his advice. He is willing to listen. So often, many of us are not in position to hear the answer to a problem until we have exhausted all of our options in our own strength.

On their way to the city they meet two young girls who tell them where the prophet is and when he will be in the city. God often uses situations that seem very incidental in pointing us to the way God has for us. This was the second divine intervention for Saul, although it seemed very innocent on the surface. When they go into town, they run right into the prophet Samuel.

When God is in control of getting you where He wants, you don't have to worry about whether it will happen. He is in control of the divine appointments.

A Divine Appointment on the Island of Cyprus

In March of 1998, I attended a ministry conference in Cyprus as a result of an invitation from Gunnar Olson, founder of the International Christian Chamber of Commerce. I was four years into a Joseph pit in which I had lost a significant amount of money. I did not know why I was going to Cyprus since I was still in the midst of major business and financial problems. If God had not miraculously provided the finances for me to go, I would not have attended. But, because He provided, I went.

During the conference a man came up to me and said, "God wants you to know that He had to remove your finances in order for you to receive the reward He has for you in heaven." Imagine having someone come up to you and say those words. I had never met this man. He knew nothing about me. He was from England; I was from the United States. When we concluded our visit, we prayed together.

During our prayer time, he said he saw a picture in his mind of a tree with fruit on it that was now beginning to fall. "You are the tree!" he said. It was the third time someone I did not know described the same picture to me, but each tree was in a different and progressive phase during a prayer time over that four-year period. I began to weep, as I was overwhelmed with the pinpoint precision of God's intimacy and care to let me know I was in His perfect will despite the adversities I was facing. I am sure God encouraged Joseph by giving him interpretations of dreams for those over him to show Joseph He was in the midst of his adversity.

God Often Solves Your Problem When He Has You in Position to Fulfill What He Has Called You to Do

When Saul and his servant meet the man of God they discover that the man of God already knows of their problem and why they are there. He assures them they will get the answer they want to know about their lost donkeys, but there is more they will get than what they came for. "As for the donkeys you lost three days ago, do not worry about them; they have been found. And to whom is all the desire of Israel turned, if not to you and all your father's family?" (1 Samuel 9:20). Samuel informs Saul that he is called by God to be king over Israel. Saul's response was to be expected. He thought Samuel made a mistake. Many of us would respond in the same way. After all, we are simply people seeking to solve a workplace problem. Saul does not believe he has what it takes to be a king. He was right. But God saw differently, and had different plans. "Saul answered, 'But am I not a Benjamite, from the smallest tribe of Israel, and is not my clan the least of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why do you say such a thing to me?'" (1 Samuel 9:21).

We often limit God in our response to His calling. And it takes time to embrace this new change in our life. We often exhibit a false sense of humility. *God is more interested in the heart than our skill and ability.* If He has control of our hearts, He will bear fruit from our limited skills. He desires to release His power through our lives once we become yielded. We might think that Saul's response was humility. It isn't humility; it is a false sense of humility and actually reveals arrogance and pride to say that God is unable to accomplish something through us.

Whenever God Brings Us to a New Calling, We are Not Always Eager to Embrace It.

Even after Saul was anointed by Samuel and was called to the public crowning to be king, he was having second doubts about whether this was real or not. "Then he brought forward the tribe of Benjamin, clan by clan, and Matri's clan was chosen. Finally, Saul son of Kish was chosen. But when they looked for him, he was not to be found. . So they inquired further of the LORD, "Has the man come here yet?" And the LORD said, "Yes, he has hidden himself among the baggage." (1 Samuel 10:21,22). What a humorous scene this is. Saul was hiding in the baggage.

We often have the same response, "Who am I? I am just a simple business person who is trying to make a living. There is nothing special about me. We often say things like, "I don't have the resources to accomplish this task! I am a secretary. I am in debt! I am divorced! I don't know anyone!" We all have reasons God cannot use us. There is a major crisis of belief that must be confronted.

God Must Change the Person You Were, to the Person He Wants You to Be.

Henry Blackaby, author of *Experiencing God* states, "You cannot go with God and stay where you are." Whenever God begins to move us into a different direction in life, it requires a change. Some of these changes can be scary. It requires obedience and faith. The final stage of Saul's calling required some major changes. First, he had to change his perception of who he was. "The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person. (1 Samuel 10:6). You and I must be changed into a different person. We cannot accomplish what God wants to do and remain the same person. It requires a change in perception, methodology, and even character qualities sometimes. Up to this point Saul had never prophesied, he had never led a group of people and he had never had to be accountable to a prophet and God for every action.

A New Partnership Must Be Formed

After God accomplishes his purpose in calling Saul, he solves the business problem for his father, Kish. Also, a new partnership is formed between God, Samuel the prophet, and Saul. It was never to be a ruling monarchy. God was to remain in control through his prophet. Whenever we give complete control to God, a new partnership is formed between God and us. The partnership is between God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and us.

God Always Confirms His Calling through Others

God knows we need to know this new thing is from Him, and not some weird cult. "When you leave me today, you will meet two men near Rachel's tomb, at Zelzah on the border of Benjamin. They will say to you, `The donkeys you set out to look for have been found'" (1 Samuel 10:2).

Imagine making such a life-changing decision because of one man who comes into your life. Saul had to decide if this man was from God, or just a crazy religious man.

God gave Saul greater assurance by confirming what this man was telling him. He confirmed this by restoring what was most important to him -- his donkeys. God solved the very problem Saul set out to solve. But, he not only had his problem solved, he had his life changed and a new calling.

Perhaps God has stirred up your world. Perhaps you are being forced to make some major changes in your life. These changes may be the initial beginnings of a new direction for your life - a new calling. Be aware of those who God brings into your path. Look for confirmation of your direction. Do not be afraid to make major changes. God wants to use your life in ways you may not have ever imagined. Remember, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord (Isaiah 55:8).