

The One Thing Holding You Back From Your Calling

Jesus spoke these profound words to His disciples to help them understand the benefit of His impending death. When Christ died, He was literally freed from the confinement of inhabiting a single body. Now, His Spirit is free to fill us all, giving us the ability to walk in John 14:12: “Truly, truly I say to you, he who believes in Me will do the works that I do also. And he will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.”

We like to talk about the greater works, but how can you practically do the greater works? It starts with discovering your calling. Just as God gave certain talents to those who helped build the tabernacle in the wilderness, He has also given talents to us to help build the kingdom of God here on Earth throughout our lives. Knowing what He has gifted us with and being willing to use those gifts for His kingdom should be our earnest quest.

So the big question is: How do you discover your genuine ministry?

How You Can Leave a Legacy

All of us want to feel like we are making a positive difference in the world. Not only do we want to be remembered fondly in other people’s memories, but we also want our works to somehow live on as well. When we allow ourselves to be filled with the Spirit of God and then follow what Paul said in Colossians 3:23—“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as for the Lord and not for men”—we will make a difference and leave a legacy.

The bottom line: We can sit around waiting for God to speak to us showing us His divine purpose in our lives, or we can obey

what He has already shown us to do and do it heartily. When we see a need we are capable of filling, we do it for the Lord, not for men. Indeed, this is an important key to finding out what God has gifted us to do.

Once we volunteer to do something that is needed, we will soon discover if we have been gifted for the task. Some people have been given many talents or gifts, and others only a few. The parable of the talents in Matthew 14:25-30 tells us about three men who were given talents to use for their master. The key difference between the men with 10 talents and two talents and the man with only one talent was that the men with 10 and two did something with what they had, while the man with only one sat around griping about his lack of talent.

Avoid Being a Scatter gun

Keeping ourselves tuned in to kingdom needs around us is one aspect of finding the area in which we are most gifted to minister. The second is not allowing ourselves to become over-busy. Sometimes the needs around us can be so overwhelming and the power to say no so weak within us that we soon find ourselves resembling a scatter gun. We are sending out a lot of ammunition, but it is not really hitting the bulls-eye.

Prioritizing our responses is vital to our spiritual health and vital to preventing burnout. Ask yourself these questions:

- Are you too busy to spend quality time in daily prayer and reading of the Scriptures?
- Are you so busy doing ministry that your family only gets the leftovers?
- Are you so busy that you no longer enjoy what you are doing?
- Are you failing to manage your time well for doing kingdom work?
- Have you taken on tasks you should have left for someone else?

I am one of the main recruiters of volunteers in our church, and as much as I hate hearing the word no, it is sometimes the most healthy response to a request for help.

Keep an Open Hand

When we find the area of kingdom work that really motivates and energizes us, make sure to hold it with an open hand. God often gives us a task to complete for Him that's seasonal, not lifelong. Don't misunderstand me; He will always have something for us to do, but He may need for us to switch our focus.

Our motto should be, "Whatever the Lord needs is what I will be willing to do," whether that is cleaning the church or counseling women, teaching the children or preaching from the pulpit. It is all part of the kingdom work.

I have been used in children's ministry most of my life. I've worked in large and thriving ministries, but in one church, I was called upon to launch the children's ministry. This was not unfamiliar territory for me—I had done it before—but there were no children attending at all.

Each week I would prepare as though I would have a room full of children, not knowing whether anyone would come or not. In discouragement, one day I cried out to the Lord: "God, I don't even know if this is the right thing for me to do. It is so discouraging." God's response: "Wanda, if you will be faithful in the small things, I will bless you with great things."

There are times we need to have wisdom whether it is time to push it through or let go.

Put Your Hand to the Plow

So get busy and put your hand to the plow. In everything you do, do it with all your heart as though you were doing it in direct response to a request for help from Christ Himself. You

will soon find there's something you bring to the table that no one else can do as effectively as you. You will find that area of ministry that motivates you and, most of the time, energizes you. That will be your calling.

Finally, remember these three truths as you pursue His high calling: 1) God's ministry will always push beyond our comfort zone; 2) God's ministry will not always be fun. Sometimes it is hard work, and sometimes it is discouraging; and 3) Don't look to man for your praise. Sometimes God withholds kudos to see how devoted to Him we really are.

Wanda Hackett has been leading children's ministries for over 40 years. She has written numerous children's church curricula, some of which have been translated into Croatian. She has three children—who are all in full-time ministry—and nine grandchildren. Visit her online at .