

Prayer Guidance

- Pray for those who, as of yet, are unaware of God's call.
- Pray for those who are just beginning to get a sense of God's call.
- Pray for those who are coming to understand but fear they're unqualified.
- For those who have clearly heard the call but who are still resisting. This may be due to fear or concerns about their families.
- Pray for those who need their circumstances at work to change just enough to make this possible.
- Pray for those who are tempted to dismiss their calling as a second-class lifestyle, to see it as good.
- Families must share the call. Ask God to assure the hearts of their wives as they affirm the call.
- Pray for God to give them a realistic picture of what it will be like and to show them why the sacrifices will be worth it.
- Pray for God to send those He's calling confirming voices and confirming circumstances.
- Pray for God to clarify the vision of the people He is calling to this work.

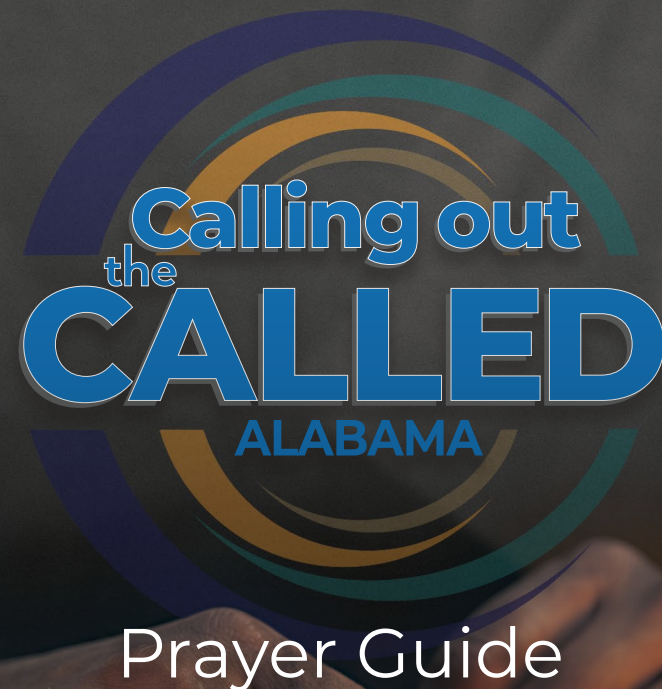
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Calling Out the Called

Calling Out the Called is a term which has been used for many years by Baptists and other believers who proclaim the Gospel. It refers to the church's work in promoting the Great Commission, in challenging believers to join the cause, and affirming the call of God upon the lives of those the Lord has chosen for this service. In turn, such people will come to understand ministry or missions to be God's will for their lives.

In a book chapter with the title, "Calling Out the Called," L. R. Scarborough writes: "There is a human side to a divine call. God calls and man calls out. It is doubted whether there is a preacher or missionary in all the world who was not influenced by some word of some wise friend or loved one at the time of his surrender to God's will."¹

A Great Commission Church calls people to Christ in its services and gives money for missions. But it is also a sending church. It deploys its members in witness and on mission trips. It celebrates when a member is called to ministry or missions. It prays for God to send out laborers from their own church family.

¹ Scarborough, L.R.; White, Thomas; Patterson, Paige (2011-06-03). *Calling Out the Called*. Seminary Hill Press. (Kindle Locations 722 - 724).

Bivocational Ministry

Bivocational refers to ministers who support their families primarily through employment outside the church. Other terms for this are covocational, dual-occupation, and not fully funded. When someone goes to plant a new church in an unreached place in this way, he is often referred to as a "tent-maker," alluding to Paul in Acts 18:3 (cp. Acts 20:34; 1 Corinthians 9:1-15).

God calls some specifically to bivocational ministry. Instead of being a second-class calling, it is a call to a great work and is a biblical evangelistic strategy. Ed Stetzer said, "If you are a bivocational pastor, you are a gift to the kingdom. That is unquestioned."²

Vocational Ministry

"Every follower of Christ is called to minister, regardless of their vocation. Some, however, are called to ministry as their vocation."³ In fact, the word *vocation* means calling. Included in the term vocational ministry are those who will become pastors and those who serve on church staff in various other ministry capacities. The call to ministry includes the call to prepare, to seek training relevant to one's specific calling. Vocational ministers are often equipped in Christian colleges, seminaries or divinity schools.

² Cited in "Is Bivocational Ministry the New Normal?" by Rudy Gray, November 2, 2016 <https://baptistcourier.com/2016/11/bivocational-ministry-new-normal/> Accessed 07/16/2024

³ Center for Vocational Ministry, www.apu.edu/vocational-ministry Accessed 08/28/2024

Missionaries

Missions is evangelism which crosses language, cultural and/or geographical boundaries. Missions deliberately engages people unlike ourselves. We adapt to them. Cross-cultural ministry requires a certain gift mix and involves a learning process. Church planters who work in certain parts of the United States fall into this category.

The Call to Ministry

When people are called to ministry, they may experience:

- ▶ Affirmation by others of their spiritual giftedness
- ▶ A more intense desire to serve
- ▶ Vision to expand their ministry
- ▶ An increased burden for a people or place

There is always a clear sense of being called to the ministry. This calling, however, usually unfolds in a process, an increasing awareness, a growing acceptance.