



WEEK ONE: CALLED FOR A PURPOSE

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By Carey Madding

We all tend to focus on the hero in a white hat or the villain with hard eyes. We want to be center-stage, part of the final showdown. But much of our lives are spent as ordinary people, not extraordinary characters. What if you and I are only meant to play "bit parts" on the stage of life? What if we are just called to be servants? God sees the heart and He alone is the Director of our lives. Our small acts of obedience, what do they matter? What about our strange gifts and talents, used in His service? In His hands, they become the stuff of legend. He guarantees that one day, we'll be in a situation that makes a huge difference in the battle for souls. Be sure that you're ready.

[Off-stage: Lonesome whistle, fading into the distance.]

Where Am I Today?

- 1) "For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers ..." Acts 13:36a (NIV 1984). In the midst of your average week, can this be said of you? In the lowest, most mundane tasks, do you sense God's presence and work in your life? Will generations to come remember you as having a Godly legacy and purpose?

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Into the Bible

- 2) This weekend, we learned that God calls everyday people to extraordinary things. **Read Esther 2:5-7 and Esther 4:6-17.** What was Esther's situation when we first read about her? What was her reaction to God's call upon her life?

- 3) God calls everyday people while they are doing everyday things. Moses was tending his father-in-law's flock (**read Exodus 3-4:17**) and Simon Peter was fishing (**read Luke 5:1-11**). In the middle of their everyday jobs, they encountered God. How did they respond?

- 4) God used Samuel to help King Saul realize his God-given purpose. And God uses His people to encourage, confirm and support each other as we each strive to serve Him. **Read Acts 9:1-20.** We typically look at the Apostle Paul's (who was first called Saul) call and conversion, but pay special attention to Ananias as you read. What did he do? What were his feelings? Have you ever been in a similar spot as either Saul or Ananias?

How Does This Apply?

- 5) **Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 and Ephesians 2:10.** Look these passages up in a modern version, like the New Living Translation, if possible. Do you believe that God has shaped you individually and specifically for His use and service? If so, do you have any idea what that service might be?

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- 6) Maybe you don't have a clue about what God's special call on your life is going to look like. Mike suggested that you "Just get busy doing something ... Serve right where you are." **Read Colossians 3:23.** How would that apply to your next steps? Pray about signing up for the next Volunteer Tour, being held at all campuses on the weekend of July 28 and 29.

Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

- 7) This week, your Digging Deeper assignment is not more study, but prayerful evaluation of your current spiritual health and your next steps. It's a checkup for your level of servanthood. If you're exercising correctly, great! Keep it up. If not, God has some action steps to get you back on track and in shape. If you're not serving, just start somewhere. Check all of the statements below that apply.
- I know my primary purpose is to bring glory to God and I try to live this out daily.
 - I know my individual calling and I am beginning to pursue it as God leads and directs.
 - I have started "moving" and serving in a direction I think God is leading, and I'm asking God to reveal more clearly His specific purpose for my life.
 - I have no idea what God has planned for me, but I want to be about the everyday service and work that I can do right now. I plan to sign up for a Volunteer Tour. (Register online at www.covechurch.org/volunteering.)
 - I know where I am interested in serving. I am committing today to contact someone about how to serve _____.
(*In Cove Kids, at the new campus, in the bookstore, to help students, etc.*)
 - I am pulling out a blank sheet of paper and signing my name.