

Finding and Following God's Plan for Your Life

Training & Equipping Season - Class 3

Qualified

Acts 6:1-7 NKJV “Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, **seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;** 4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” 5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, 6 whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. 7 **Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem,** and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”

1. Individuals were chosen to fulfill a leadership role based on their walk with the Lord and level of wisdom. These are not things they gained while being chosen but possessed already. We must live at the level you wish to attain or you will never fulfill God's ultimate work for your life.
2. Stephen became the first Martyr after preaching the Gospel boldly
3. Philip became an evangelist, seeing signs wonders, and miracles

God looks at the Heart

I Samuel 16:1, 7-13 NKJV

1. David stepped into his calling 15 years later after receiving the anointing to be Israel's king

Preparation Time is Never Wasted Time!

I Samuel 17:34-37 NKJV “But David said to Saul, “ Your servant used to keep his father' s sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, 35 I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. 36 **Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them,** seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.” 37 Moreover David said, “ **The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.**” And Saul said to David, “ Go, and the Lord be with you!”

1. The lion and the bear incidents were the training and equipping David needed to face the giant, Goliath.
2. Notice, David had confidence that stemmed from Past experience based on what he had done, and what the Lord had done through him.

For whatever God has called you to do in life, there is a training and preparation season you must first go through.

If you are not willing to go through training and preparation you will never find and fulfill God's plan for your life.

God doesn't just throw you out there to the wolves, He prepares you. God is the one who knows when you are ready. There are things about the call of God on your life, the plan He has for you, that have not been revealed to you yet, because you are not ready for it.

It's not just about knowing what you are called to do, it's also about following God's timing.

Moses is a great example of following (or not following) God's timing.

(Exodus chapters 1, 2, 3)

Acts 7:23-25 NKJV "Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand."

1. Moses thought they would all follow him and know that God was using him to deliver them from slavery. The people God sent him there to deliver rejected him because this wasn't the right time.

Acts 7:26-28 NKJV "And the next day he appeared to two of them as they were fighting, and tried to reconcile them, saying, ' Men, you are brethren; why do you wrong one another? ' But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, ' Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you want to kill me as you did the Egyptian yesterday?' "

1. Moses wasn't ready, although he tried to make something happen on his own.
2. God is the one that will let you know when it's time to step out. In the meantime, it's training and preparation time.

Romans 1:1 NKJV "Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God"

1. Notice the progression: serve, called, set apart to do the call.
2. If you don't get the training and preparation you need, you will not step into your ultimate calling. And it won't be God's fault. It's His love and mercy that will keep you from it.

God doesn't want you hurting other people or yourself by trying to do something you are not ready to do.

Training and preparation time is never wasted time!

Jesus didn't start His ministry until He was 30. Yet He was still the Son of God the whole time.

Let's look at the moment Paul and Barnabus were set apart to do the work.

Acts 13:1 NKJV "Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul."

1. Why is this significant? We see ministry gifts here! Leaders in the church. Prophets and teachers were specifically mentioned.

Acts 13:2-3 NKJV "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, " Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away."

1. It was the Holy Spirit who said it was time. Who did the Holy Spirit tell? Barnabus and Saul, AND the 5 fold ministry gifts they were connected to.

Ephesians 4:11-12 NKJV "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,"

1. You are not on your own for training and preparation. You are not on your own on this journey to find and follow God's plan for your life. Jesus has placed gifts in the body of Christ to help teach, train, and equip you to discover your call.
2. This is why it's so important to be connected to the 5 fold ministry gifts. What the 5 fold ministry gifts are called to do is to equip you to do what God has called you to do!
3. No matter what you are called to do, there will be a training and preparation season you must go through first.

I Timothy 3:8-10 NKJV "Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless."

1. We use this in our leadership training where we spend a whole night talking about this. How can you be tested if you are not doing something? The test is to see if you are ready to take the next step.