



CALLED BY GOD

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WHAT'S ONE WAY YOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED
GOD OR BEEN AWARE OF GOD'S PRESENCE THIS
WEEK?



CALLED *BY* GOD IN
MULTIPLE WAYS


“Calling” and “Vocation”

- Sometimes considered interchangeable:
“vocation” from the Latin *vocare*, “to call”

“Vocation” often associated with ordained ministry, or your job or profession

While “Calling” encompasses more: we have many callings within and beyond our daily work

We are called to follow Christ in every aspect of our lives



Calling is a central part of the Christian life, encompassing:

- *who we are called to be* – our core identity, beloved of God, made in God's image, baptized in Christ, sent forth to love and serve

- *how we are called to live* – commitments of lifestyle (simplicity/generosity) and relationships (marriage, single life, parenting)

- *what we are called to do* – the work, service and activities that fill our daily lives – paid, professional, volunteering, homemaking, raising children, caregiving



When you think of calling, remember the prepositions. We are called:

by the God who created us and loves us unconditionally

to particular kinds of work and relationships

as the people we are, with our gifts, talents and resources

in a variety of circumstances, whether joyful or difficult

from difficult situations or times of transitions

through the example, invitation or mentoring of other people

for the service of others

within the life of God – who is love

Kathleen Cahalan: *The Stories We Live: Finding God's Calling All Around Us* Eerdmans, 2017:

“We are called *by* God, who is the source of our callings. We are called *to* follow the way shown by Jesus and taken up by his disciples; this calling we share with each other. We are called *as* unique persons with a particular history and circumstance. We are called *from* the losses and grief we suffer over time, so that we can embrace life again. We are called *to* give our lives *for* others, not simply for our self-improvement or fulfillment. We are even called *in* our deepest suffering to carry out God's purposes in mysterious ways. We are called *through* the people in our lives, because calling takes root in community. And, we are called together to live *within* God's loving embrace, both now and in the life to come.”



Explore: A Calling Activity

- Calling images are spread out on the table
 - Select an image or images that reflect your experience of calling
 - Select an image that speaks to you (can't do this wrong!)

Then – small groups:

- How does this image capture your experience of calling?
- What feelings surface in you as you look at this image?
- What does this image tell you about your view of God and how God is present in your life and in your calling?

Three Images of Calling:

Calling like an acorn – God’s call is a precise plan. God has called you to a particular role, relationship, or gift. A person’s life becomes that one thing like an acorn becomes an oak tree.

Calling like a pilgrimage - God’s call is a journey. Pilgrims are called to follow a particular way and they must walk to find the way: they learn as they go, struggle under difficulty and fail along the way. Callings are a response that require that we discern the path with God’s guidance.

Calling as a surprising discovery – An “Aha!” experience. You discover an ability or develop a passion; you are awakened to a gift, you fall in love. A direction or purpose is revealed that you did not see before (though it may have been right in front of you)

The image features a white background with decorative elements. At the bottom, there are flowing, wavy lines in shades of red and yellow. A thin vertical black line is positioned to the left of the text.

KEN'S STORY

Cahalan:

- God does not create us *with* a calling (one single plan that God has made), but with the capacity for callings (that ability to engage in dialogue with God and others to create a plan for our life). Calling becomes then, a creative act, something we create with God and others, unique to each of our lives.
- Consider your callings: Are they more like the acorn, the pilgrimage, or the surprising discovery? What images of God come to mind from your callings?

