The Call: Finding and Fulfilling The Central Purpose of Your Life
By: Os Guinness

Overview by:
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Introduction

The Title: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life

• Who would not want to accomplish this!
• Stephen Covey. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.*
  - Effective individuals focus on four dimensions.
    ▪ Physical
    ▪ Mental
    ▪ Spiritual
    ▪ Social
  - Covey doesn’t tell us how to define the spiritual.
• Guinness shows us how to define our spiritual core.
Four Revelations from Reading and Rereading *The Call*

- Where was Guinness when I was starting my Christian life?
  - As a college student.
  - As a newlywed.
  - As a new parent?
  - In my career

Making major life decisions by default.

- Gratefulness for all Guinness brought to writing *The Call*.
  - Three decades devoted to thinking and refining his understanding.
  - His broad and diverse background in literature, history, philosophy.
Introduction

Four Revelations from Reading and Rereading *The Call*

• I need to teach these principles to my friends and fellow disciples of Jesus.
  - Daybreak for Men. (2009)
  - Home Fellowship.

• Every Christian *must* be given an opportunity to be exposed to these truths.
  - First course for new members in church should be Spiritual Gifts.
  - Second course for new church members should be on Calling.
Introduction

Outline
• What does it mean to be called?
• What is the purpose of being called?
• What is it like to be called?
• What are the outcomes of being called?
Calling: Definition

What does it mean to be called?

• Calling is the truth that God calls us to Himself so decisively that everything we are, everything we do, and everything we have is invested with a special devotion and dynamism lived out as a response to His summons and service. p. 4.

• The truth is not that God is finding us a place for our gifts but that God has created us and our gifts for a place of His choosing—and we will only be ourselves when we are there.” p. 47.
What does it mean to be called? (Continued)

- A life lived listening to the decisive call of God is a life lived before one audience that trumps all others—the Audience of One. p. 73.
What is the purpose of being called?

• We are not primarily called to do something or go somewhere; we are called to Someone. p. 43. Our *primary calling* as followers of Christ is by Him, to Him, and for Him.

• Our *secondary calling*, considering who God is as sovereign, is that everyone, everywhere, and in everything should think, speak, live, and act entirely for Him. p. 31.
What is the purpose of being called? (Continued)

- When Jesus calls, He calls us one by one. Comparisons are idle, speculations about others a waste of time, and envy as silly as it is evil. We are each called individually, accountable to God alone, to please Him alone, and eventually to be approved by Him alone. p. 132.
What is it like to be called?

• The notion of calling, or vocation, is vital to each of us because it touches on the modern search for a basis for individual identity and an understanding of human-ness itself. p. 20.

• God normally calls us along the line of our giftedness, but the purpose of giftedness is stewardship and service, not selfishness. p. 46.
What is it like to be called? (Continued)

• The troublesome contradiction is not between secular and religious work but between work that is inspired by gifts and calling (whether secular or religious) and work that is directed solely by career. p. 151.

• Those in modern societies who are middle class or higher can probably find such a fulfilling match between calling and work. But for many others today, and probably for most people in most societies, there is no happy match between work and calling. p. 51.
Calling: Attributes

What is it like to be called? (Continued)

• Sadly, studies show, a few people enjoy neither their work nor their personal lives; more enjoy their work but not their personal lives; only a few say they enjoy both. p. 150.

• The call of Jesus is personal but not purely individual; Jesus summons His followers not only to an individual calling but also to a corporate calling. p. 98.
What are the outcomes of being called?

• Only when we respond to Christ and follow His call do we become our real selves and come to have personalities of our own. p. 25.

• After all, to be called is to hear God whisper three things to you in a hundred intimate ways—“You are chosen, you are gifted, you are special.” p. 118.

• The imitation of Christ that is integral to following Him means that, when He calls us, He enables us to do what He calls us to do. p. 86.
Calling: Bibliography

• Guinness, Os. *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of your Life*. Nashville, TN: Word Publishing. 1998. (References are from this source)

Dr. Joseph McRae Mellichamp  
Spiritual Growth Materials

The Bible vs. Science? Or Not!  
Is the biblical description of the Creation found in Genesis 1:1-2:3 hopelessly at odds with what we know from Science about the universe and planet Earth as many people today believe? Absolutely not! Here is a clear explanation written for laymen of how scientific evidence supports the biblical Creation narrative.

The Devotional Life for Followers of Jesus  
Given the importance of the devotional life for the follower of Jesus, one would expect that most believers would be experiencing exciting times with the Lord through His word. Yet this is simply not the case. It is in the devotional life that we cultivate our relationship with Jesus. Here’s how.

The Prayer Life for Followers of Jesus  
The parallels between an audience with a head of state and an audience with the King of the universe are innumerable; we describe several. How can this way of thinking about prayer and this book help you in making your prayer life more effective? It will aid your prayer times in multiple ways.

Mere Christianity: Discussion and Study Guide  
In early 2000, *Mere Christianity* was named by *Christianity Today* as the most influential Christian book of the Twentieth Century. But many today are reluctant to attempt to read this great classic. With Dr. Mellichamp’s notes and Lewis’ book, you’ll be able to follow these concepts and answer tough questions.

The Training of the Twelve: Discussion and Study Guide  
Written in 1871 by A.B. Bruce, a Scottish minister, this magnificent classic will captivate you from the moment you begin reading it. You will marvel at Bruce’s mastery of Scripture and his insight into the ways of Jesus and the manner of the men who followed Him.

The Man in the Mirror: Discussion and Application Guide  
*The Man in the Mirror* is not a book you can simply read, lay aside, and expect to have all your problems neatly solved and put behind you. We have designed the discussion and application questions in this Guide, to enable you to systematically identify and address the challenges you face as a man seeking to follow Jesus.

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