

Discerning Your Calling In The Church

Introduction:

1. Have A Holistic Vision: “We are all called with many callings.”

Two Callings:

1. The Call to Salvation, Godliness and Discipleship—Life with God that affects all of life!

1 Cor. 1:9, God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 Thess. 2:13, 14, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth. For this purpose he called you through our proclamation of the good news, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ...

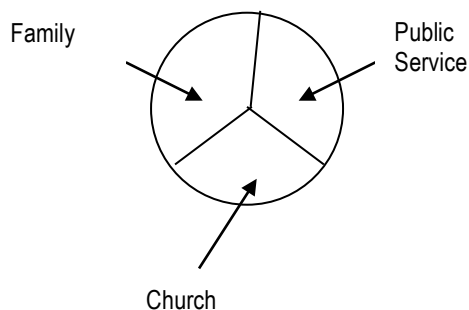
2. The Call To Vocations: (3 spheres)

...not a thing one does to live, but the thing one lives to do... it is the full expression of the worker's faculties, the thing in which he finds spiritual, mental and bodily satisfaction and the medium in which he offers himself to God....

Dorothy Sayers

Three Spheres

1 Cor. 7:17, 20, Let every one lead the life which the Lord has assigned to him, and in which God has called him... Every one should remain in the state in which he was called."



a. The Calling of Family

The great Author of our nature, who has made us sociable creatures, has instituted various societies among mankind, both civil and religious, and joined them together by the various bonds of relation. The first and radical society is that of a family, which is the nursery of the church and state. This was the society instituted in Paradise in the state of innocence, when the indulgent Creator, finding that it was not good for a man, a sociable creature, to be alone, formed a helpmeet for him and united them in the endearing bonds of the conjugal relations. From thence, the human race was propagated; and when multiplied, it was formed into civil governments and ecclesiastical assemblies... Samuel Davies

b. The Calling of Public Service for the Common Good

In all our cares, toils, annoyances, and other burdens, it will be no small alleviation to know that all these are under the superintendence of God... This too, will afford admirable consolation in following your proper calling. No work will be so mean and sordid as not to have a splendor and value in the eye of God.

John Calvin(2:35, *Institutes*)

c. The Calling of Church For the Sake of God's glorious grace revealed in Jesus Christ

- Every Member—Variety of gifts, all called to a “work of art” for the “cultic” and special grace context of God's re-creation

“...the bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.”

1 Cor. 10:16b–17

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them”
(Rom. 12:6)

- Ordination/Offices/Christian Ministry

Acts 20:28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

1 Tim. 4:14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.

2 Tim. 1:6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

2. Seek out Biblical Counsel

Prov. 12:15 The path of the fool is right (straight) in his own eyes, but the one who listens to counsel is wise.

Prov. 15:22 Without counsel, plans go awry, But in the multitude of counselors they are established.

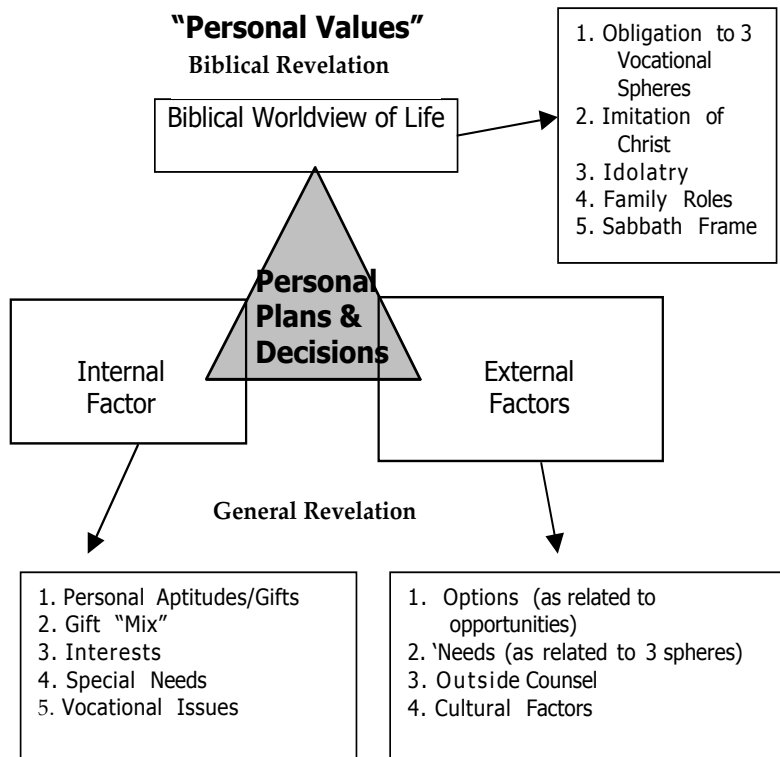
Prov. 19:20-21 Listen to counsel and receive instruction, That you may be wise in your latter days. There are many plans in a man's heart, Nevertheless the Lord's counsel—that will stand.

Prov. 21:30 There is no wisdom or understanding Or counsel against the Lord.

Prov. 15:22 Without counsel, plans go wrong, but with many advisers they succeed.

Prov. 15:32-33, Those who ignore instruction despise themselves, but those who heed admonition gain understanding. The fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom, and humility goes before honor.

3. Summary: Work the Triangle of Discernment



Applied to Church Specifically: Three Concurrent “Tests” (BCO 16.1-3) (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1)

16-1. *Ordinary vocation to office in the Church is the calling of God by the Spirit, through the inward testimony of a good conscience, manifest approbation of God’s people), and the concurring judgment of a lawful court of the Church. [outward Testimony].*

1) Of God by the Spirit: Biblical Instruction and Training Related to Duties and Callings Revealed by God in Scripture

BCO 24-1. Every church shall elect persons to the offices of ruling elder and deacon in the following manner: At such times as determined by the Session, communicant members of the congregation may submit names to the Session... who meets the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.2) S

2) Self-Examination (Inward Testimony)

Perceived Burden/Desire to serve Christ relative to a specific need

Perceived Ability: Training Is an opportunity for self-examination and preparation.

3) Congregational Affirmation: (Outward Testimony)

- **All members:**

16-2. The government of the Church is by officers gifted to represent Christ, and the right of God’s people to recognize by election to office those so gifted is inalienable. Therefore no man can be placed over a church in any office without the election, or at least the consent of that church.

- **Session:**

16-3. Upon those whom God calls to bear office in His Church He bestows suitable gifts for the discharge of their various duties. And it is indispensable that, besides possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, natural and acquired, every one admitted to an office should be sound in the faith, and his life be according to godliness. Wherefore every candidate for office is to be approved by the court by which he is to be ordained.

BCO 24-1. ...Each nominee shall then be examined in:

- a. Christian experience, especially his personal character and family management (based on the qualifications set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9),
- b. knowledge of the system of doctrine, government, discipline contained in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America (*BCO* Preface III, *The Constitution Defined*),
- c. the duties of the office to which he has been nominated, and as applicable: willingness to give assent to the questions required for ordination. (*BCO* 24-5)

Next Steps @ CPC:

1. Prayerfully Review Qualifications and Training required for interested Spiritual Leader office/position (c.f. "Leadership" module in Spiritual Leadership Seminar)

- Note: In some instances, the training pre-requisites can be fulfilled while being a xyz Leader apprentice
- Today (using cards), or preferably within a week by e-mail, notify administrator of your possible interest and in what role(s).

2. Pastoral Consultation:

Utilizing the interest cards/e-mail of expressed interest, a consultation will be scheduled as follows:

- If Interested in Session: Consultation with Sr. Pastor /Moderator of Session
- If Interested in WLB—Consultation with member of Women Leader Board and/or Sr. or Assoc. Pastor
- If Interested in SLB—Consultation with Assoc. Pastor/Moderator of SLB
- If interested in becoming a teacher, team leader, small group leader (note 4—Mercy C, Facilitator, Host, Worship C.) or other leadership role-- speak with any Key leader of ministry (e.g. SS- Heather W., pastor, elder or WLB member as deemed helpful. But your names will also be given to key-leaders of ministry upon pastoral review.

2. Nomination Process for Session and WLB

- Session (and WLB members for WLB nominations) will review and invite to apprenticeship. Candidate may complete requisite training during apprenticeship.

3. Nomination Process for SLB

- Names will be vetted by SLB and utilized to invite as team leader or team leader apprenticeship as appropriate.

4. Teacher/Small Group Leadership-

- Those interested in serving as a teacher or Sm. Group leadership role—indicate on cards or e-mail admin.