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GREEN



E X T R A C T S A N D D O C U M E N T S

CALLED TO SURRENDER

ALL CALLINGS

OVERVIEW

Surrender. Easy to say, harder to do. It's a word that makes most people feel uncomfortable. It means relinquishing control and entrusting yourself to someone else. But that is our choice, isn't it? To trust God completely with our life and our future. Our good and giving God is raising up a new generation of men and women to follow Him fully. How has God put His hand on your life "for such a time as this?"

This three-part biblical series, taken from the All Callings website, examines what it means to surrender to God and live under the Lordship of Christ. The three studies are: Called to Bear Fruit, Called to Kingdom Living, and Called to be a Vigneron.



SURRENDER.

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**CALLED TO
BEAR FRUIT**
WHAT SOIL ARE YOU?

Take a look at Matthew 13:1-23. In this passage Jesus shares a story to illustrate how the condition of our hearts can potentially lead to a life of influence, impact and purpose.

"A decision to grow always involves a choice between risk and comfort." John Ortberg

MATTHEW 13:1–23

1That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. **2**Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. **3**Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. **4**As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. **5**Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. **6**But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. **7**Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. **8**Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. **9**He who has ears, let him hear."

10The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

11He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. **12**Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. **13**This is why I speak to them in parables:

"Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. **14**In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

" 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. **15**For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.' "

16But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. **17**For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

18"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: **19**When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. **20**The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. **21**But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.

22The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. **23**But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

- Observe the four different soils. How would you describe each one?

Which soil best describes you right now and why?

- The heart described by the soil along the path is ultimately unfruitful. The good news never takes root in that heart.
- The heart described by the rocky soil is ultimately unfruitful. This heart doesn't mature, for it lacks the roots to keep it strong when stress, pressure, or burdens threaten to overwhelm. In order to avoid lingering in the rocky soil, how can you intentionally help your roots grow deep in Jesus?
- The heart described by the thorns and weeds is ultimately unfruitful. This heart struggles with two issues: the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches (Lk. 10:38-42; Heb 12:1-2) What are the inevitable thorns and weeds that could choke out your fruitfulness?

The heart described by the good soil is ultimately fruitful. This heart has a multiplied harvest, bearing fruit and bringing forth life. Good soil doesn't just happen.

How can you cultivate the good soil of your heart in order to have a fruitful life?

LEGACY

Life is meant to be lived intentionally in light of God's Kingdom. God has created each person uniquely in such a way that every individual's contribution to the Kingdom is distinct and indispensable. The Five Things is a grid that helps us get on and stay on target so that we can live on purpose maximizing our contribution. What will your Kingdom legacy be?

Kingdom Vision :: Seeing how you fit into God's big picture which then influences your decisions and choices.

Team :: A group of 2 or more people with a purpose.

Plan :: Thoughtful steps or strategy to advance God's love through purposeful actions.

Ongoing Equipping :: Outside input on a continual basis.

Coach :: Someone to walk you through the process of launching and leading a team toward that God-given vision.

CALLED TO KINGDOM LIVING

HOW WILL YOU LEAVE YOUR LEGACY?

Within the book of Hebrews is a magnificent picture of the sufficiency of the sacrifice of Jesus our Savior. Chapter 10 of Hebrews is overflowing with the gospel message. This truth requires a response from us not only on the day of our salvation but throughout our faith journey. As the author of this book tells us in the beginning of chapter 2, we must pay closer attention to the message we have heard lest we drift away from Christ and what he's called us to.

Let's take a closer look at Hebrews 10:23-25. Here you will find the prescription for what our response should be as followers of Christ.

23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful. **24** And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. **25** Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.



5 THINGS FOR KINGDOM LIVING.

KINGDOM VISION is seeing how you fit into God's big picture which then influences your decisions and choices. Our entire life is to be lived in light of how we fit into the big picture.

- How do you fit into the big picture? How might God use your unique gifts and talents to best fulfill your call to pursue "love and good deeds"?

In verse 25 we are exhorted to not give up meeting together as some often do. Here we clearly see the call to community with a purpose. No one can do it alone. We need a **TEAM**.

- Why do you think the writer of Hebrews emphasizes this?

What happens when we have community without a purpose?

The author also says to "consider" how to do these things. 'Considering' implies that we have to think about it; we have to have a **PLAN** in place to accomplish the "love and good deeds" as a team. Without a plan we are aiming at nothing, and as a result we will succeed every time at hitting it.


- Therefore, who do you need to begin the planning process with? What will be your very specific target? How will you measure success?

When choosing to live missionally, we need to constantly "encourage one another". Encouragement here captures the idea of **ONGOING EQUIPPING** and helping build one another up for the mission.

You may currently be a part of a small group Bible study or a similar community. **What does your group need to do in order to be able to fulfill God's call to mission?**

- What could you do to encourage one another to take the next step?

Something that may be subtle in this passage is that the Hebrews, to whom this letter is written, are being **COACHED** by the writer of the letter. This demonstrates to us that as we live out our calling before the Lord it is helpful to have a mentor or coach speaking into our life.

- Who will give guidance as you begin the process of applying the 5 things to your life? Who could coach your team? Why would you choose that person?
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TAKE ACTION.

In this parable we see just how much God values kingdom work and the passion He has to involve His people. We may stand around the market-square because we think we don't have 'what it takes' or sometimes we just don't know how we fit into God's plan for the vineyard. But scripture reveals that the Master is looking for people to serve right up until the end of the Day. He is constantly calling us to be a part of what He's doing. There are 5 key elements that are helpful to think through as you begin to discern how God has shaped you to best contribute to His Kingdom. We have dubbed them the 5 things: they are...

Kingdom Vision
Team
Plan
Ongoing Equipping
Coach

For more on these check out, "Called To Kingdom Living!"

CALLED TO BE A VIGNERON
VIGNERON (N.) — ONE WHO CULTIVATES A VINEYARD

God is always looking for workers to faithfully serve in His fields. **Who is going to cultivate the vineyard?** Matthew 20 illustrates this point well.

MATTHEW 20:1-7

1 "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a vineyard master who went out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. 2 After agreeing with the workers on a wage of one denarius, [the standard daily wage,] he sent them off to his vineyard. 3 Then, on going out at about nine in the morning, he saw more men standing around in the market-square doing nothing, 4 and said to them, 'You go to the vineyard too -- I'll pay you a fair wage.' So they went. 5 At noon, and again around three in the afternoon, he did the same thing. 6 About an hour before sundown, he went out, found still others standing around, and asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day, doing nothing?' 7 They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' 'You too,' he told them, 'go to the vineyard.'"

- Read over the verses again. How many times does the master go out looking for workers? What is significant about the master going out to hire workers multiple times?

Remember picking teams on the playground as a kid? Were you ever "picked last" or not picked at all? This passage has a similar feel to our 'playground' illustration. The workers hired at the beginning of the day were probably the strongest, most skilled, and equipped. The workers hired at the end of the day could have potentially been handicapped, lame, old, weak, sick, unskilled, etc. God's 'equal compensation' to all the workers displays how He values all people how He created them to contribute. And the greatest 'compensation' is really the reward of getting to work alongside the Master in His field!

How does knowing your value and getting to work alongside Jesus motivate you to take action on your kingdom building responsibilities?

We are all in search of purpose for our lives. It is so easy to believe this can be fulfilled in success or possessions, but sooner or later we realize there has to be more. This is where the Vineyard Master's invitation to serve is so powerful. There is great meaning found in doing our part to advance God's kingdom and this is not just for the pastor or the missionary or the full-time vocational Christian worker. It's for **EVERYONE!** We are all called to work in the vineyard.

- Though our assignments may be vastly different, our work in the field is uniquely significant. In what ways do we stand around the market-square and do nothing while the Master's vineyard is in need of cultivation?

In verse 12 the workers say that they "have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." This suggests the parable is set during the summer season which is a time of much growth and development in the life of a vine. Most grapes are harvested in the fall. It is interesting to note this fact to remind us that not all work in the Master's vineyard comes at the harvest. There are countless 'cultivating' jobs to be done while the grapes are yet unpicked.

As you think about how God has created you, your time and talents, **how do you see your self contributing to God's kingdom work? How do you see yourself serving in the Master's field at this season in your life and in the seasons to come?**

- What are some things that might hinder you from the specific work He has called you to? How might you move beyond those hindrances?