

Aim High!
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Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:13-14).

As long as Paul was alive, he was determined to reach forward and press toward the prize of the high calling of God: Heaven. Like Paul, we must reach forward and press toward the prize of the high calling of God. To do this, we must aim high. Will you aim high in 2020?

God's calling is high because the calling comes from Him. The writer of Hebrews emphasized the enormity of how God has called us: "*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds*" (Heb. 1:1-2).

God has called us through His Son, Jesus. Therefore, God's calling is clear and audible to everyone. Additionally, God's calling is a Heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1-2). The calling is divine and one of spiritual regeneration. Lastly, God's calling is high because of its high expectation. Jesus taught, "*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*" (Matt. 5:48).

God's kingdom is advanced in the world through Christians committed to godly living. Mediocrity is not an option. We must aspire to excellence. We must aim high.

If we do not aim high, we will not reach our goal. Marksmen must aim high when shooting a target. If they do not, gravity will pull their bullet toward the ground, causing them to miss the target. As Christians, if we do not aim high, the sin of the world will pull us down and cause us to miss Heaven. With this in mind, we must consider if we are aiming high enough to answer the high calling of God.

First of all, we must aim high in our personal lives. Aiming high for the high calling begins by obeying the Gospel. Some in Thessalonica answered the high call of the Gospel by obeying Christ. Paul wrote, "*Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (2 Thess. 2:14). Answering the high call of the Gospel enabled them to obtain the glory of Christ.

However, aiming high in our personal lives must continue after we initially answer the high calling of the Gospel. We must "*lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith*" (Heb. 12:1-2). We must tirelessly "*fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses*" (1 Tim. 6:12). These are the demands of God's high calling.

In all we do, we must try our best to reflect the goodness of Christ. Later in his epistle to the Philippians, Paul wrote, *“Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God”* (Phil. 1:27-28).

Does our new life as Christians reflect the moral and ethical conduct of our Savior? Do we engage with the world like people who are hungering and thirsting for justice (Matt. 5:6)? Or, is our conduct every bit as compromised as everyone else in the world? Perhaps today can be the start of a new beginning in our efforts to reflect Jesus by our example.

Secondly, we must aim high towards the high calling of God in our families. Family was given by God for the help of humanity. Before we learn the term *“woman”* or the name *“Eve”*, we read of God creating a *“help”* for Adam (Gen. 2:18). Husbands and wives are to help each other in life to answer the high calling of God. In so doing, God will be reflected by the family in the world.

We must not allow the lust of the world to impede our families from reaching the prize of the high calling. Our families are constantly inundated by the influence of the world. We must never compromise with the low standards of the world in our families. Instead, let us resolve to build our families on the foundation of the Lord (Psa. 127:1). Let us do as Moses instructed families of Israel:

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates” (Deut. 6:4-9).

Finally, we must aim high towards the high calling of God in our congregations. Today, the Fry road church begins a new decade! As a family of God’s people, we must help each other reach Heaven. We must help the lost reach Heaven by telling them about the high calling of God. We must work to reflect Christ to the lost (Eph. 4:11-16). The church at Ephesus worked to spread the Gospel throughout Asia (Acts 19:8-10). The church at Philippi labored to advance the Gospel (Phil. 1:3-7). We must work to do the same.

Conclusion

Are we aiming high enough? If we are going to answer the high calling of God, we must aim high. One reason we struggle personally, in our families, and in our congregations to answer the high calling, is that we do not aim high enough.

Perhaps we are like the Christians to whom James wrote. We do not have because we do not ask (Jas. 4:1-3). Our expectations are too low and or misguided. If this is true, let us refocus our aim higher. Do not accept less than your best. Do not accept less than what God has enabled you to achieve. As we begin 2020, aim high!