

Mission, Vocation, Venture

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Men / Matthew 28:18–20; Matthew 9:37–38

Notes

Some parts taken from:

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Mission, Vocation, Venture

God has made us in his image in Genesis 1:27 so if we want to know about ourselves, we should look at Him.

Attributes of God

Holy

Holman Bible Handbook *Attributes of Goodness*

Holiness. To affirm God is holy means He is both completely unique and absolutely pure. God is unique, separate from the ordinary sense of life. He is majestic in holiness. The expression of God's love is regulated by His holiness, and His holiness is related to His faithfulness and the surety of His covenants (Ps 105:42; Num 20:6–13). It is right to see God's holiness as a controlling attribute in relation to His other attributes of goodness (Isa 6:1–4; 57:15; 1 Pet 1:15–16)

1 Peter 1:15–16 **LEB**

¹⁵ but as the one who called you *is* holy, *you* yourselves be holy in all *your* conduct,

¹⁶ for it is written, "You will be holy, because I *am* holy."

Righteous

Holman Bible Handbook *Attributes of Goodness*

Righteousness. God is absolutely right beyond all comprehension in reference to His law (Ps 19:7–9), His actions (Gen 18:25), and in His relationships. God's actions

are right not just because He pronounces them right but because He acts consistently with His nature, thus His actions are objectively right.

and as his actions are consistent with his nature, so should ours be.

We should do what we say.

Psalm 19:7–9 LEB

⁷The law of Yahweh *is* perfect, reviving life. The testimony of Yahweh *is* firm, making wise *the* simple.

⁸The precepts of Yahweh *are* right, making *the* heart rejoice. The command of Yahweh *is* pure, enlightening *the* eyes.

⁹The fear of Yahweh *is* pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of Yahweh *are* true; they are righteous altogether,

Justice

Holman Bible Handbook Attributes of Goodness

Justice. The application of His righteousness and the administration of righteousness to others is God's justice. Because He is just, He must punish sin (Gen 2:17; Rom 6:23), which includes the exercise of His wrath (Rom 1:18). Apparent injustices in society will be made right by God's eschatological justice (Ps 73). But we, as God's people, are to seek justice in society (Amos 5:12–15; Jas 2:9).

Romans 6:23 LEB

²³ For the compensation due sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

which includes the exercise of His wrath

Romans 1:18 LEB

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all impiety and unrighteousness of people, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

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Psalm 73

But we, as God's people, are to seek justice in society (Amos 5:12–15; Jas 2:9).

Truth

Holman Bible Handbook *Attributes of Goodness*

Truth. God makes good His every word and promise (John 17:17–19). God can always be trusted because He conforms exactly in His being to the highest ideal of what He ought to be. This assures us that He will respond to all true worship (John 4:24).

John 17:17–19

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Faithfulness

Holman Bible Handbook *Attributes of Goodness*

Faithfulness. God's faithfulness is closely related to His consistency. His will and actions are always found true, reliable, and steadfast. He will never commit Himself to do something He is not capable of doing (Lam 3:23–24; 1 Thess 5:24).

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Lamentations 3:23–24 *LEB*

²³ *They* are new in the morning, great is your faithfulness.

²⁴ "Yahweh is my portion," says my soul, "Thus I will hope on him."

1 Thess 5:24

Love

Holman Bible Handbook *Attributes of Goodness*

Love. God's love includes fatherly benevolence (Matt 5:45), motherly care (Isa 49:14–16), and a parental discipline (Heb 12:6) because His love is a holy love. There is in God no thought of personal benefit since He seeks only the good of the ones loved (Jer 31:3; John 3:16). God's love is an initiating love (1 John 4:7–8) and does not wait for a reciprocal response to be expressed.

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Jeremiah 31:3 *LEB*

³ From afar Yahweh appeared to me, *saying*, "I have loved you *with* an everlasting

love. Therefore I have drawn you *with* loyal love.

John 3:16

God's love is an initiating love (1 John 4:7–8) and does not wait for a reciprocal response to be expressed.

Grace

Holman Bible Handbook *Attributes of Goodness*

Grace. God deals with women and men on the basis of His goodness and generosity, not on any merit in us but according to our need. God could love unselfishly and insist that His love be deserved, but His grace requires absolutely nothing. Grace is giving us what we do not deserve (Eph 1:7; 2:8; Titus 3:4–7). God is truly righteous and holy as well as truly loving and gracious.

Ephesians 2:8 *LEB*

⁸ For by grace you are saved through faith, and this *is* not from yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;

Mercy

Holman Bible Handbook *Attributes of Goodness*

Mercy. God is likewise tenderhearted and demonstrates loving compassion for His people (Exod 3:7; Ps 103:13). This includes His slowness toward anger and wrath which is His persistent love (Rom 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9). If grace is giving us what we do not deserve, God's mercy includes not giving us what we deserve.

2 Peter 3:9 *LEB*

⁹ The Lord is not delaying the promise, as some consider slowness, but is being patient toward you, *because he* does not want any to perish, but all to come to repentance.

Attributes of Men

But is there any instruction to us as men?

Yes.

God has made us in his image in Genesis 1:27 so if we should be like him.
Holy, Righteous, Just, Truthful, Faithful, Loving, Full of Grace, Merciful.

1 Corinthians 16:13 LEB

¹³ Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act courageously, be strong.

Be, Stand, Act - these are positive actions.

Paul's preliminary word (in KJV) is "Watch": that is, keep awake; be on the alert. There can be no vacation from our vocation.

"Stand fast," adds the apostle: that is, be unmoveable; let there be no deflection from your purpose or beliefs; don't waver.

Then the King James says "quit you like men", which means not cease to be like men, but conduct yourself like men; grow up and act like an adult and not like a child.

This idea is carried on in the phrase, "Be strong." And all this is to result in a manly approach, not a namby-pamby one!

1 Timothy 2:8 LEB

⁸ Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger and dispute.

Our nature is to react, to fight, but with God, we are to pray. Our hands to God and not to another.

1 Timothy 6:11-12 LEB

¹¹ But you, O man of God, flee from these *things*, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patient endurance, gentleness.

¹² Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Pursue, fight, take hold - these are energetic, they indicate strength and action

Our Mission

Make Disciples

The Bible tells us to make disciples.

Matthew 28:19 LEB

¹⁹ Therefore, go *and* make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Often we get this confused with, "Go and make workers ... browbeating them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

The Bible doesn't call us to make "workers," but "disciples."

The Purpose of Ministry

is to

Make Disciples

Men (and Women) don't enjoy being made to go on a forced march. True disciples will become workers out of the overflow of their growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

Pray for Workers

The Bible also tells us to "pray" for workers:

Matthew 9:37-38 LEB

³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest *is* plentiful, but the workers *are* few.

³⁸ Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest that he send out workers into his harvest."

"The harvest is so great, and the workers are so few," [Jesus] told his disciples. "So pray to the one in charge of the harvesting, and ask him to recruit more

workers for his harvest fields” (Matthew 9:37-38, TLB).

Too often we try to “make workers, and pray for disciples.” So we might put it this way: **God calls us to pray for workers and make disciples.**

The Ministry is Done When

We Pray for Workers

What does this look like in men?

Are you building into each other spiritually?

This comes first before assigning tasks and responsibilities.

Are you praying with and for each other?

Are you engaging in life-on-life discipleship outside of the church.

If your only interactions are over the next event, a checklist and task assignments, you’re headed towards burnout.

You may care more about their spiritual growth than they do.

Encourage men and lift them up.

Help men get connected into relationships rather than just signing up for service projects or events.

Measure the impact on your ministry not by the amount of work you get done or the number of men that show up for events. Rather, measure your impact in changed lives, new relationships, engaged fathers and committed husbands.

Our Vocation

There are differences between a job and a vocation. A job has fixed hours (though there may be opportunities for overtime); it is something that boys often enter straight from school on the recommendation of their guidance counselors. A

vocation is a calling; we undertake it because of God's inner call to us by His Holy Spirit; we do not worry about hours or rates of pay.

The Christian's true vocation is warfare, campaigning against the evils of our time, wrought by the world, the flesh, and the devil. Where wars were once fought only during certain seasons of the year, allowing the soldier to enter winter quarters until spring, the Christian's war is perpetual. As Jesus "must be about my Father's business," so the Christian must "work the works of Him that (sends) us." So we must fulfill our calling and be faithful to our vocation. A simple farmer was once asked if he could read Latin. "I don't know," he replied, "I haven't tried yet." We must be willing to try anything to win others for the Lord. Miners often say to new recruits to the coal-pits: "You've a pick in your hand and youth on your side; get working." We may not be youthful, but we have Christ on our side and we can do all things through Him.

Our Venture

A venture is an undertaking that requires courage and daring. Verse 9 describes the great daring of Paul:

1 Corinthians 16:9 LEB

⁹ for a great and effective door has opened for me, and *there are* many opponents.

he was contemplating going to one of the greatest cities of the ancient world.

The only companion he wanted was a kindred spirit, Timothy (v. 10): "he worketh the work of the Lord."

The Work We Are Called To

Believers engage in Christian service out of a variety of motives: some serve out of love for position or prominence; some out of conscience (because, perhaps, they refused to answer a missionary call when younger). The biblical reason for service is set out in

2 Timothy 4:7-8 LEB

⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have completed the race, I have kept the faith.

⁸ Finally, the crown of righteousness is reserved for me, that the Lord, the

righteous Judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have loved his appearing.

“there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.”

And it is a crown that we will immediately lay at our Savior’s feet:

- And then to take my victor’s crown,
- And at Thy feet to cast it down.

All our service is done with a single eye to His glory.

Paul has already written to these Corinthians

1 Corinthians 15:57 LEB

⁵⁷ But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

“Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory ...” (15:57).

And he has reminded them that they never venture in vain

1 Corinthians 15:58 LEB

⁵⁸ So then, my dear brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, *because you* know that your labor is not *in vain* in the Lord.

“Forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (v. 58).

So we can go on warring, constrained by the love of Christ, knowing that victory is certain. That gives us courage to venture and it confirms our vocation.