

ARE YOU QUALIFIED? 5: QUALIFIED BY GOD'S CALLING

I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of hands. (2 Timothy 1:6, NIV)

FOR SOME OF YOU, the most important question of the day may be this one: *Am I supposed to play golf?*

As much as you may love the game, a lot of things can compete for your time. Some of these are obligatory: family time, household attentions, your work (somebody's got to pay for all this fun!). Other competitors may simply be interests—would you rather see a movie today or play your old guitar? would you like to plan your summer vacation or go to lunch with friends? All these options can make a simple question like what you will do with your day a little more difficult to answer.

But now let me raise the stakes. Let's say the question is this: *Am I supposed to play golf at all?* Now we are driving at the heart of calling. It's not a matter only of what I will do with my *day*, but what I will do with my *life*. And that's not so easy to settle over a morning cup of coffee.

Calling is that dogged sense of what I must do. And for the man or woman of God there is the added recognition that it is God who has called me to this. With more honed insight, Os Guinness in his book *The Call* also avers that we have a primary calling and secondary callings. He describes the first this way:

Our primary calling as followers of Christ is by him, to him, and for him. First and foremost we are called to Someone (God), not to something (such as motherhood, politics, or teaching) or to somewhere (such as the inner city or Outer Mongolia).

Then Guinness goes on to say that our secondary callings—to “homemaking or to the practice of law or to art history,” as examples of the way God might sovereignly direct us—matter, “but only because the primary calling matters most.”

In the context of being qualified, you may fear that God will call you to something for which you have no equipping and no experience. Possibly, yes. But what better way to enter his service with humility! When we stand back and push God forward, we are recognizing and glorifying the Caller, who is the Lord. Humble service is the most important qualification we can possess, for it puts us in our place and exalts him to his, allowing us to excel in our callings.

Opening questions How do you decide whether to play golf each day?
 • Before today, what would you have listed as primary and secondary callings in your life?

READING Jeremiah 1:4-10; 2 Timothy 1:5-7; 2 Peter 1:5-11

The nature of calling (Jeremiah 1)

What directives did God give Jeremiah? What humility do you see in Jeremiah? What assurances did God supply this young man?

Empowered for the call (2 Timothy 1)

How was the church involved in Timothy's gifting? What support can your Christian brothers and sisters provide for you as you respond to God's call? What spirit is promised to us as we serve God?

Righteousness and calling (2 Peter 1)

How does righteousness connect to living out our calling before God? What quality of righteousness do you need to work on going forward from today?

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2017 Links Players International. An introductory video is available at <https://youtu.be/3l2neJcl1uo>.