

Answering the Ultimate Call

the 'calling range': salvation ~ relation ~ vocation

- God calls us to all kinds of things, but those calls don't have equal weight.
- Every other calling derives its significance from this ultimate call.

Acts 17:24-29

a very old question and a life-igniting answer

"What is the chief end of man?"

"The chief end of man is to _____ and
_____ forever."

"This was the great coming together for me – the breakthrough. What was life all about? What was it for? Why do I exist? Why am I here? To be happy? Or to glorify God? Unspoken for years, there was in me the feeling that these two were at odds... But now here was the greatest mind of early America, Jonathan Edwards, saying that God's purpose for my life was that I have a passion for God's glory and that I have a passion for my joy in that glory, and that these two are one passion. When I say this, I knew, at last ... God created me – and you – to live with a single, all-embracing, all-transforming passion – namely, a passion to glorify God by enjoying and displaying his supreme excellence in all the spheres of life." - **John Piper, *Don't Waste Your Life*, p. 31**

biblical genetics

- Learning about God's intention from our instinct to hunt for joy and

"All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end. The cause of some going to war, and of others avoiding it, is the same desire in both, attended with different views. The will never takes the least step but to this object. This is the motive of every action of every man, even of those who hang themselves." - **Blaise Pascal, *Pascal's Pensees*, 113, thought #425**

satisfaction.

the call to glorify & enjoy

glorify

- Everything exists for one ultimate reason: the glory of God.

Col 1:16-17 "For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."

Is. 43:6-7 "Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory."

"God maintains nothing with more justice than the honor of His own dignity." -
Augustine

Is 48:9-11

- We don't glorify God best by trying to give Him something, but by owning up to our need and letting Him display His infinite generosity.

enjoy

Matt. 13:44-45

"I find in the Bible a divine command to be a pleasure-seeker – that is, to forsake the two-bit, low-yield, short-term, never-satisfying, person-destroying, God-belittling pleasures of the world to sell everything "with joy" (Mt. 13:44) in order to have the kingdom of heaven and thus "enter into the joy of your master" (Mt. 25:21, 23)."
- John Piper, *Desiring God*, p. 25

▶ weighing satan's promises

crushing the scales: factoring the joys both of 'here & now' and 'bye and bye'

- When weighing God's joy vs. worldly joy, we have to make sure that all the joys that God gives are put on the scale, and not just the ones for this life (which is a vapor).

Eph 2.7 “the joy bomb taps ground zero “

- ▶ Joy unspeakable. Never-ending. Ever-heightening.

“... the implication is that our union with God, in the all-satisfying experience of his glory, can never be complete, but must be increasing with intimacy and intensity forever and ever. The perfection of heaven is not static. Nor do we see at once all there is to see – for the finite cannot take in all of the infinite. It is not our destiny to be God. Therefore, there will always be more for a finite creature to know and enjoy of God. The end of increasing pleasure in God will never come.” God is inexhaustible, infinite.... Moreover, [Edwards] says our eternal rising into more and more of God will be a ‘rising higher and higher through that infinite duration, and Not with constantly diminishing (but perhaps an increasing) velocity ... to an infinite height; though there never will be any particular time when it can be said already to have come to such a height.”
- John Piper, *A Godward Life, Book Two*, p. 163-164

idolatry: the subtle killer of calling

“The irony of our human condition is that God has put us within sight of the Himalayas of His glory in Jesus Christ, but we have chosen to pull down the shades of our chalet and show slides of Buck Hill.” - John Piper, *Desiring God*, p.107-108

- Born idol-makers and steadily working to perfect the ‘craft’.
- Unless God opens our eyes, we can’t see what is truly valuable.

the ultimate tragedy (rom 1.20-23)

- In our ignorance, we insist on the kind of joy that leaves us empty.

communion: the wine of God & the chaperone of calling

Eph 5.18-21; Jn 7.37-39

Communion – e.g., the practice of God’s presence whether in prayer, reading & meditating on Scripture, corporate/private worship, hearing the Word preached,

reading books that stir the soul to a greater affection for God or stir the mind with a deeper understanding of God.

Ps. 36.8 "They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights." (see also Ps. 16.7-11; Ps 42.1-2)

Is. 55

Ps. 63

- This Psalm has the slur of spiritual intoxication!
- As we commune with God, we will be brought into our ultimate call to glorify God and enjoy Him.
- The Holy Spirit has mission of making us into God-glorifying, grateful, satisfied, joy-intoxicated people.

"God is mightily honored when a people know that they will die of hunger and thirst unless they have God." - John Piper, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals*, p.229

How do we reach for the glass?

John 7.37-39 "Jesus said, 'If anyone thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.' Now this he said about the Spirit."

Heb 11.6 "Without faith it is impossible to please God. For he who comes to God MUST believe that He is and that He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

Commune with God by faith. Come wanting to find joy in Him ... and you will.