

Why Am I Doing What I Am Doing?

. . . make your calling and election sure. -NIV, 2 Peter 1:10

Generally speaking, it is easier to discern good from bad, ethical from unethical, biblical from unbiblical, but it gets complicated when we are to distinguish from all good, ethically right and biblically correct Christian involvements.

Personally, it has helped me to reflect once a while on the question - Why Am I Doing What I Am Doing? But I recommend that such question should be raised more often for personal introspection during our quite time. We should ask this question at the beginning of our ministry involvement. We should ask this question during the course of our ministry involvement. We should ask this question before we chose to change our ministry involvement.

Of course, such reflections are very obvious, especially when one is disillusioned, frustrated, vehemently opposed, absolutely abandoned, betrayed – all kinds of hurdles that you can imagine. I can best illustrate from my own life.

My wife and I resigned well-paid government job and joined ministry with great excitement. We lost 80% of our financial income and some comforts that any government officials enjoy, but they did not hurt us much. The enthusiasm and excitement of being fulltime in the ministry filled us with joy.

Then came the attack of the evil one. We had some black sheep in the ministry who perhaps did not get our due attention, or perhaps somehow with all good intention we might have stepped on their toes. No amount of apology reduced the offence. They were determined to hurt us and discredit our work. They opposed every move that we made. I was frustrated, disillusioned, and began questioning Why Am I Doing What I Am Doing? Was it

at all necessary to resign a good and secure job and join the fulltime ministry? Couldn't I serve God while remaining secure in government job?

Why Am I Doing What I Am Doing?

Is it because I like doing ministry more than my secular job?
Is it because I want to be fruitful and be a blessing to others?

Is it because I want to be in leadership position?

Is it because I want to be popular?

Is it because I was asked to do and I just could not say no?

Is it because no one was available?

Is it because its God's work?

Is it because it's a great place to be?

Is it because I want to love and serve God?

Is it because I think this is what God wants me to do?

They are all good reasons to be in the ministry either as part-time, or full time, or overtime. But these are not the best reason why one should involve in the ministry.

Ever since, I have been in the ministry, I have been appalled by the facts that so many people are driven by these simple good reasons and not the best reasons. And that is why, there are great number of Christian worker who resign, quit, and change ministry frequently there are great number of leaders who have thinly scattered their resources into multi-ministry beyond their ability and efficiency there are founding Dean of the Bible school who does not have time for the seminary students but for the fund raising activities and administration there are number of leaders whose involvements are an act of tokenism. I can only do this much not more. If you ask more I will resign. [Perhaps this is why they are told, "We want you to be on the Board and we only require from you just twice a year to come for the meeting. Actually, they should be told, "We want you to join the Board only if you can commit to pray for this ministry every day, that you will be willing to sacrifice all your

resources for this ministry, that you will think about this ministry while, eating, drinking, walking, bathing and sleeping. Please pray and ask God if HE wants you to be on this board.”] There are number of Christians who want their involvement to be on their terms of convenience, comfort, reward, pleasure, and benefits.

What is the best reason for our involvement in the ministry of God?

The best reason is the one and the only reason that not only sustains our involvement in the ministry but actually empowers and directs our ministry.

The best reason to involve in the ministry of God is the “Absolute Certainty of the Calling of God.” I am doing what I am doing because I am absolutely sure that this is what God has called me to do. The Bible says in 2 Peter 1:10

Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall.

But this text becomes all the more meaningful if you read in its context. Notice the verse begins with therefore and so we should look for *Wherefore* in the text. So let me read from v3. *His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;⁷ and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹ But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall.*

In other words, the purpose of God’s investment in our life is to enable us to make every effort ---- to become effective and fruitful. But before you begin making every

effort make sure your calling and election sure. Then you will direct all your resources to the right cause and the right purpose.

Let me quote two such individuals from the Bible who had absolute sense of the Calling of God in their ministry and how they stood firm in their ministry.

First persons is Amos, my favorite hero, because he was a lay person— Shepherd and a farmer but became preacher of the Word of God because God called him out.

Amos 7:12-15

Then Amaziah said to Amos, "Get out, you seer! Go back to the land of Judah. Earn your bread there and do your prophesying there.¹³ Don't prophesy anymore at Bethel, because this is the king's sanctuary and the temple of the kingdom." Amos answered Amaziah, "I was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son, but I was a shepherd, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees.¹⁵ But the LORD took me from tending the flock and said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

Notice the word BUT- contrasting conjunction (*waw disjunctive*). There are many contrasting conjunction in the Bible but this one is positive one. Now let us take the second example from the New Testament. And he is favorite hero of all Christians. He is St. Paul. Notice in his writings what he says about his sense of calling.

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| Acts 26:19 | <i>"So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.</i> |
| Romans 1:1 | <i>Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God--</i> |
| 1 Corinthians 1:1 | <i>Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes</i> |
| Galatians 1:15 | <i>But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased</i> |
| Philippians 3:14 | <i>I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.</i> |

One of the reasons why Paul could achieve so much within his brief life – was his absolute and unwavering conviction on the calling of God. He knew that God had specifically called him out to minister among the Gentiles in minor Asia. He just did not travel three times planting several Gentile Churches all over minor Asia. He just did not dream to take the gospel to beyond Rome to Spain. But he did amidst immense hardship—because God called him. He was absolutely sure of his calling.

Calling begins with intimate relationship

Yesterday I lost a bet of hundred dollar to my wife. I should not have made that bet at first place. I underestimated her ability to read my mind. These days we are talking a lot about our family and friends in India as we are planning to go home this summer. Yesterday, I asked my wife if she could guess exactly what I would be asking her mother when I meet her. There were millions of options and I was absolutely sure that she would not be able to guess. So with great confidence I told her I would give hundred dollar if she could guess correctly. And to my great surprise she told me exactly what I was thinking. I just could not believe. I asked her how did she knew it ---if I had told her earlier. Or, she heard mumbling in my dream. She replied to me---Mr. AK I have lived with you for fifteen years. I know you very well.

Calling begins with intimate relationship. A relationship that enables one to know exactly what God wants you to do. A relationship that grows into an intimate discipleship. An intimate discipleship enables one to know ones role in the mission of God crystal clear. There is no spectatorship in Christendom. There is no hierarchy in terms of priesthood. All are called to work towards the coming of God's kingdom.

But the real challenge is to discern one's calling and remain faithful to that call with absolute obedience and unwavering faith. Willing to make any sacrifice. No matter what!

If it costs one's resource—let it be. If it costs one's suffering—let it be. If its cost one's life--- let it be. It is wise to obey His call and be consumed for it because it is one's God ordained destiny.

I thank God today that God brought this wisdom to me in the second year of my ministry. And I stayed firm in my calling. The Lord blessed my ministry richly for another six years. I believe that this sense of Calling from God is the primary key to the success and effectiveness of any ministry. I believe that those of you who are involved with God's work also have similar conviction and that's why you are in it. And because of such conviction the Lord will continue to do mighty things through your ministry in the days to come.

Prayer: O Lord! Please keep me faithful to your calling