**Understanding Your Personal Calling**

Note: This process is an adaptation of a similar process created by Church Resource Ministries.

A personal calling is a person’s best understanding to date of what God has called them to be and do. It is a tool to help you live a focused life of intentional influence by providing a constant measuring stick by which you can measure your behavior and plans.

Your personal calling is comprised of your:

#1. Life Purpose – The reason you exist.

#2. Core Values – The way God has made you to live life and influence others.

#3. Vision – What God wants to accomplish through the influence of your life as you life out your purpose.

# *Question #1 – Where Am I Going?*

Before proceeding, take time to pray so that you can hear from God.

## Life Purpose…

Living a focused life with kingdom influence begins with a sure foundation. A study of key Scriptures helps reveal our reason for existence as individuals. The Biblical foundation of your life is like true north, the point of reference by which all things are measured. Life purpose:

 #1. Declares the reason you exist.

 #2. Reflects the heart of God.

 #3. Clarifies what is non-negotiable.

## Biblical Reflection

FIRST: What Scriptures has God used to give focus, purpose, and direction to your life (e.g. Matthew 22:37-40; Matthew 28:18-20; John 15:1-11; John 13:34-35; Romans 15:6-7;

2 Corinthians 4:7-11; Philippians 3:7-10; Colossians 2:6-7; 2 Peter 1:5-11)? List those verses and summarize the insights you gained from each verse.

**Verse Insights**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Verse Insights**

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

### *Reflection on Your Study*

Based on your reflection on these Scriptures, ask yourself these questions as a means to help you think through God’s purpose for your life.

#1. Why do I exist as a person?

#2. Apart from what I do, what gives my life its deepest meaning?

#3. Why did God create me?

#4. What is my response to God’s work of grace and salvation on my behalf?

In single words, or in phrases, what themes have emerged from your review of and reflections on these Scriptures?

## Writing a Life Purpose Statement

Purpose is foundational. It is primarily a “being” statement, an umbrella statement that captures the reason you exist. Here are some examples of biblical purpose statements:

*The purpose of my life is to know and experience God in ever-deepening ways and to help others do the same.*

*I exist to live in authentic intimacy with Jesus and let Him so shape my life that the people of my life will see Him at work in me.*

Reminder: A life purpose statement is not a lengthy “to do” list of Christian expectations. It should be concise, describing why a person exists based on Scripture. Try to keep it a *being* and *relational* statement.

Write the first draft of your Biblical Purpose Statement here:

***Question #2 – How Did God Make Me?***

## Values…

Values are those underlying assumptions, those core convictions that shape our actions and decisions. They are usually born out of the lessons we learn and then forged into our DNA through times of difficulty and testing.

While some have mistaken beliefs for values, actual values will always be observed in behavior.

Our core values represent our unique wiring, the unique ways God has shaped our views and approaches to life. Therefore, focused people understand how God has shaped them and intentionally live, minister, and work according to those values.

Having trouble finding your values? Ask yourself, “If I were to examine the following areas of my life, what values would I find represented by my behavior?”

 My checkbook…

 My calendar…

 My conversations…

 My contemplations…

## Reflection Questions

The reflection questions below will help you begin to surface some of your core values.

1. Some of the important lessons that God has taught me concerning my *character* are…

2. The character traits that I have learned to value the most are…

3. In your view, what are some of the ultimate values that you believe God wants all Christians to demonstrate in increasing measure?

4. What were your top six ministry values from the Ministry Match assessment?

5. Some of the important lessons God has taught me about balancing work, church and my personal life are…

6. Some of my core convictions about people and relationships are…

7. Some important lessons and insights God has taught me concerning the church, organization or ministry structures are…

8. As I look at the values listed in Appendix A, the following describe me very well:

9. If I were to describe my passion in life in one sentence, it would be…

## Writing Out Your Values

Values reflect the unique convictions and core assumptions, which shape a person’s behavior and decisions. Although you may value many things, effective servants of God learn to identify the core values that have been forged through their life experiences and lessons. Behind every value are lessons, which have so impacted our lives that they now shape our behavior and decisions.

Some of the values will relate to the way you need to live your life, others will relate to the way you approach the work of ministry.

Your task is to name each of your core values in the worksheet below. Some examples of core values include being before doing, leadership, mentoring, change, faith, family, prayer, serving others, simplicity, being real, personal development, evangelism, team, grace and mercy, suffering and humility, worship and availability. Others are listed at the end of this handout.

***My Core Values Worksheet***

Identify your six to eight **CORE VALUES** and what they mean for you. This is not to be a list of “right answers,” but the values that actually shape your behavior.

 **Value Meaning of the Value for You**

**1.**

**2.**

**3.**

**4.**

**5.**

**6.**

**7.**

**8.**

***Question #3 – What is God Calling Me to Accomplish?***

Vision is the ability to see God’s preferable future. It captures in a word picture what God wants to accomplish through the unique contribution of our lives. Vision is the heartbeat of the personal calling. God designs it. We discover it.

Vision ignites passion!

It motivates and captures us. It describes what the heart yearns to see accomplished and drives people to sacrificial living and obedience. Personal vision answers the question: If you knew that you would not fail, what would you do in your lifetime for the glory of God?

Vision is…

1. A picture – A word picture of the future from God’s perspective.

2. Motivating – Engages your passion so there is no longer any objections.

3. Not purpose restated – Purpose gives direction, vision describes the destination.

4. Dynamic – It unfolds over time as God reveals more in response to our obedience.

Many of us have pursued ambition, but called it vision. It was our own great dream for God.

Ambition leads to drivenness, restlessness and panic. In contrast, peace, power and passion are the result of discovering what God has created me to do and surrendering to it.

Discovering vision is not dreaming up your biggest dream. It is discovering what God has created and called you to do.

## Vision Examples

Below are two vision examples to help you see what a vision might look like.

Example #1

|  |
| --- |
| **SPIRITUAL VISION** |
| I see a life lived of courageous faith that is willing to go anywhere, at any time, without hesitation in order to sacrifice all things for His glory and that is drawn from a life of deep, contemplative, and continual worship and enjoyment of Jesus Christ, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit. I envision a life that understands God’s ways above man’s such that busyness does not rule my life, but His life rules my business. I anticipate a life of adventurous surrender that comes from both painful and enjoyable journeys of faith. |
| **MARITAL VISION** |
| I envision a deep understanding of God’s grace shown to us through: (a) a greater understanding of the cost and relational isolation that comes from sin in our relationship to Him and in our marriage, (b) a deeper, worshipful recognition of being loved undeservingly by Him, and (c) a firmer acceptance of His grace and its power to change our lives. I anticipate healing and joy from the immense pain of a journey that was not within God’s perfect will. I see redemption and peace as God uses the hardships to give us courage in Him for the future. I envisage God’s sovereign ministry of reconciliation lived out in His time and in a way that brings Him the most glory in the lives of my husband and me. |
| **FAMILIAL VISION** |
| I see myself further developing my relationship with and informally discipling my brother and sister. I envision a growing relationship with my parents that is more authentic and integrates our spiritual beings as a part of our familial relationship. I anticipate being a part of my sister-in-law and future brother-in-law’s lives through friendship and depth of understanding of our spiritual backgrounds. I see myself as a friend and confidant of my nephew and other future nieces and nephews in a manner that encourages them to develop a deeper understanding of Christ. |
| **PROFESSIONAL VISION** |
| I envision my life being used by God through challenging situations, requiring great hope in, trust in, and love for God. I see myself living out transformational servant leadership in order that those with whom I am in contact are growing in their courageous faith and relationship to God lived in both Spirit and Truth. I see great change in my life and those with whom I work as we dare to ask, "What could be?" in order to live holy, show love boldly, and act justly. |

Example #2

Relationship with God

*I see a deep, abiding intimacy with God, a walking with Him. I see a life of worship and prayerful dependence that is reinforced by, but not limited to my times alone with God. I see a relationship with God where I can hear His still, small voice in the midst of my busyness. I see a relationship strengthened through times of prayerful solitude. I see a commitment to God that is not put on, but flows out of a repentant and surrendered heart. I see myself living out all that God has created me to be and do.*

Relationship with My Wife

*I see an intimate, romantic relationship with Lore characterized by unconditional love. I see our relationship as a safe haven where any thoughts or feelings can be expressed. I see us helping each other grow in Christ-likeness and ministry effectiveness as we live out God’s call on our lives.*

Relationship with My Family

*I see a family of God-fearers and God-lovers. I see a family that plays and prays together. I see an adventuresome family that wants to learn and grow. I see a family that lives out the motto, “All for one, and one for all.” I see a family of humble servant leaders for Christ.*

Relationship with Others

*I see people, including myself, who need to take steps closer to God. I see myself as a courageous, loving and prayerful disciple-maker for Christ, seeing people take faith steps regularly. I see myself as a transformational servant leader who constantly builds capacity in other people, teams, organizations and myself, so that we can serve God more effectively for His glory.*

## Thinking Through Your Vision

Vision requires time for reflection and processing, as well as the faith to embrace it. Here are some steps to follow:

1. Take time to work through the starter questions below.

2. Think about past events, divine appointments and circumstances that have pointed you toward your unique contribution for God’s kingdom.

3. Journal your thoughts. Don’t try to write majestic prose. Rather, try to capture the essence of your response to this question: “What is God calling you to accomplish for His glory?” Record your thoughts in the personal vision draft box following the personal vision starter questions.

## Personal Vision Starter Questions

1. The people and circumstances that have most shaped my life and ministry are…

2. When I think about ministry in the future, the area of ministry I would love to concentrate upon is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Why?

3. The qualities of character I most admire and desire for God to shape into my life are…

Why?

4. People who know me well believe I am most used by God when I am involved in…

Why?

5. The activities of my life that contribute most to God’s kingdom are…

Why?

6. Though I may have dismissed the thought many times for various reasons, I sometimes feel I really should be doing…

Why?

7. When people talk about a passion for ministry, I often begin to think about giving my life to accomplishing…

Why?

8. What are the top five ministry gifts in my Ministry Match assessment? Are there other spiritual gifts that I believe God has given me?

9. Ask yourself: what common insights or themes surfaced in my responses to the above questions?

***Life Domains***

As you anticipate writing your vision, it is important to think about the major areas of your life. I call these life domains (notice how the authors of the two vision examples above organized their descriptions around various life domains). Make a list of 3-5 major life domains that are important to you (e.g. family, work, relationship with God, volunteer activities, friends, yourself).

Life Domains:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Personal Vision Draft***

Now, you are ready to begin writing your personal vision draft. Based upon the way God has shaped you, what do you believe He is calling you to accomplish for His glory in each of these life domains? Develop a rich, visionary description of how you would like to live out your life purpose and core values in each life domain. Each domain description should be at least three sentences. You may want to include a picture for each life domain that captures something of your vision.

Life Domain #1 - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Life Domain #2 - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Life Domain #3 - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Life Domain #4 - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Life Domain #5 - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Testing Your Vision:**

-Can you see it?

-Is it bigger than you?

-Does it engage your passion?

-Is in anchored in your past?

-Would you do it even if you did not get paid for it or had to pay for the chance to do it?

#### *Personal Calling Statement*

A statement of personal calling is a person’s best understanding to date of their unique, personal destiny under God. It is a holistic statement that integrates what a person understands God has called them to be and to do for His glory. Over time, as a person refines his/her statement of calling, it often becomes a unique document, reflecting the style, perspective and growing insight of that person.

A personal calling statement consists of Biblical purpose, core values and personal vision. Ultimately, your calling is lived out through your life, work and ministry roles.

Record your personal calling statement below by transferring your Biblical purpose, core values and personal vision from the previous pages. Feel free to edit and fine tune as you go along.

##### Personal Calling Statement

Biblical Purpose

Core Values

Personal Vision

Appendix A: Sample List of Values

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Accomplish  | Exhilaration  | Radiance  |
| Acquire  | Experiment  | Realize  |
| Adept  | Expert  | Refinement  |
| Adventure  | Explain  | Reign  |
| Alter  | Facilitate  | Relate with God  |
| Arouse  | Family  | Religious  |
| Assemble  | Foster  | Respond  |
| Assist  | Gamble  | Risk  |
| Assist  | Gloriousness  | Rule  |
| Attain  | Govern  | Score  |
| Attract  | Grace  | See  |
| Attractiveness  | Grant  | Sensations  |
| Augment  | Greatest  | Sense  |
| Be accepting  | Guide  | Sensitivity  |
| Be amused  | Have fun  |  |
| Be awake  | Holy  | Serve  |
| Be aware  | Honoring  | Set standards  |
| Be bonded  | Imagination  |  |
| Be connected  | Impact  | Show compassion  |
| Be entertained  | Improve  | Spark  |
| Be hedonistic  | In touch with  | Speculation  |
| Be integrated  | Influence  | Spirituality  |
| Be linked  | Inform  | Sports  |
| Be passionate  | Ingenuity  | Stimulate  |

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|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Be present  | Inspire  | Strengthen  |
| Be with  | Instruct  | Superiority  |
| Be your best  | Invent  | Support  |
| Beauty  | Learn  | Synthesize  |
| Bliss  | Locate  | Taste  |
| Build  | Loveliness  | Tenderness  |
| Cause  | Magnificence  | The Unknown  |
| Coach  | Mastery  | Thrill  |
| Conceive  | Minister to  | To catalyze  |
| Danger  | Model  | To contribute  |
| Dare  | Move forward  | To create  |
| Design  | Observe  | To Discover  |
| Detect  | Originality  | To experience  |
| Devoted  | Outdo  | To feel  |
| Discern  | Part of community  | To feel good  |
| Distinguish  | Perceive  | To glow  |
| Dominate field  | Perceive  | To lead  |
| Edify  | Perfect  | To nurture  |
| Educate  | Persuade  | To relate  |
| Elegance  | Plan  | To teach  |
| Emote  | Play games  | To unite  |
| Empathize  | Pleasure  | To win  |
| Encourage  | Predominate  | Touch  |
| Endeavor  | Preeminence  | Triumph  |
| Endow  | Prepare  | Turn on  |
| Energize  | Prevail  | Uncover  |
| Energy flow  | Primacy  | Unstick others  |
| Enlighten  | Prime  | Uplift  |
| Enroll  | Provide  | Venture  |
| Excellence  | Quest  | Win Over  |

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