

A person is seen from behind, standing on a white line painted on a dark asphalt road. The person is wearing a brown jacket, dark pants, and tan boots with red socks. They have a red messenger bag slung over their shoulder. The background is a misty, foggy forest with green trees. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

STEPPING INTO YOUR CALLING



CITYWIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

Follow

Fast & Pray
Observe The Sabbath
Listen To God
Learn The Bible
Offer Tithe & Time
Worship

Bless

Bless People
Listen To The Holy Spirit
Eat With People
Study Jesus' Way
Sent With Purpose

Share

Speak The Truth In Love
Have Space
Actively Listen
Reflect Grace
Encourage



We follow Jesus into the adventure of whole life and authentic community

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “CALLING”?

At Citywide we talk a lot about calling.

Most of us regularly use the word “calling” to describe what we do with a telephone and that is not a bad picture of what the bible means by the word. When you are calling a person you are intentionally reaching out and seeking to communicate with them where they are from where you are.

In the Australian bush it is common to call out using the phrase *COOEEE*. When they are calling out in the bush people are intentionally reaching out and seeking to connect invite people to come to where they are.

Both telephones and calling out in the bush are a small glimpse of what the bible means when it uses the word in verses like:

*As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the **calling** you have received.*

Ephesians 4:1 NIV

*With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his **calling**, and that by his power he may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith.*

2 Thessalonians 1:11 NIV

*Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your **calling** and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble,*

2 Peter 1:10 NIV



Calling in the bible is a picture of God reaching out and inviting us forward to where he is, which is also where life is.

At Citywide we believe that is God is calling you into relationship with him, and from that place, into the adventure of whole life.

This means that God is calling you at three levels:

1. God is calling you to be in relationship with Jesus
2. God is calling you to live like Jesus in the way he taught us all to live
3. God is calling you as an individual to live in a specific way with a specific group of people in a specific place and a particular time.



While each level of calling is important, they are not equally important.

Mostly when people are talking about calling they are talking about the third level, which is also sometimes called your “life’s purpose” or “vocation.” Interestingly the word vocation comes from the Latin word which literally means “calling”

While the third level of calling is critically important, and we all need to know that there is a purpose for our lives, it is actually the least important of the three levels and will only be healthy with the foundation of the other two.

In this booklet we will explain more about each of the three levels of calling, with a particular emphasis on the third level.

HOW DO WE AS A CHURCH SUPPORT YOU IN YOUR CALLING?

We believe it is our task to equip, encourage and support you in all three levels of God's calling on your life. This is what we believe Paul is describing as the outcome of the church's leadership working effectively in Ephesians 4.

*So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up** until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

Ephesians 4:11-13

Paul seems to believe that when the church's leadership functions are working well, they function as ligaments that help people attach to Jesus, become mature and do the work that God has assigned for them:

*Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and **held together by every supporting ligament**, grows and builds itself up in love, **as each part does its work.***

Ephesians 4:15-16

It is with these things in view we will outline in this booklet our best understanding of the ways we will seek to help you respond to the calling that God has on your life.

THE FIRST LEVEL

RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

The first level of calling is by far the most important - the call to be in relationship with Christ.

God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:9 NIV

There is nothing more important than having a personal relationship with Jesus. As he, himself says, there is no other way to find life:

I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 14:6 NIV

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.

John 10:10 NIV

As your church we want to support you in this calling to relationship with Jesus by:

- Welcoming you into times of worship that remind you that Jesus is the very centre of the entire universe and also of your life.
- Reminding you how much Jesus loves you, no matter what your past has been.
- Encourage you to regularly reflect on the parts of your life that are not surrendered to Him.
- Continually inviting and encouraging people who have not yet done so, to surrender their lives to him
- Encourage and support you to find real relationships with others who are following Jesus
- Provide encouragement and tools to help you spend time with Jesus each day in a way that works for you.

let us run with
perseverance the race
marked out for us,
fixing our eyes on
Jesus, the pioneer
and perfecter of faith.

Hebrews 12:1-2



THE SECOND LEVEL

LIVE THE JESUS WAY

The Second level of calling: is to live the way Jesus taught all of his followers to live

I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

John 13:15-17

While following Jesus is firstly about a relationship, that relationship also must become a way of life.

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

Matthew 7:24

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

James 1:22

At Citywide we try to encapsulate the core of Jesus’s way of life with the acronyms F.O.L.L.O.W., B.L.E.S.S. and S.H.A.R.E., where each letter represents a behaviour that can be lived by anyone.

Living the Jesus Way is a process

REFLECT

Look into the mirror



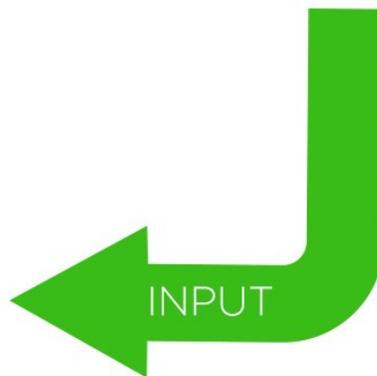
ACT

Do it



RECOGNISE

See what is healthy
or unhealthy



CHOOSE

Name the change

THE THIRD LEVEL

YOUR SPECIFIC CALL

The Third level of calling is the specific way that God is asking you as an individual to allocate your time and energy to bless the people of this city and the world.

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10 NIV

We believe that God has a specific purpose for your life that can be, but is not necessarily, reflected in your day to day decision making.

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

John 20:21

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Ephesians 4:16

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters,

Colossians 3:23

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

1 Peter 4:10

Your specific calling always come from the foundation of both your relationship with Christ and also living in the way of Jesus as reflected by the F.O.L.L.O.W., B.L.E.S.S. and S.H.A.R.E practises. If your specific calling ever loses those foundations it will quickly become an unhealthy priority that leads to an unbalanced lifestyle.

There are some other things that we believe the bible makes clear about our specific callings:

Our specific callings will not be about a role, but about a goal that reflects God's Kingdom priorities for your neighbourhood, city and world.

(Is. 56:1-2, Jer 29:7, Matt 6:33, Matt 25:35-36)

Your specific calling will come from a spirit-given dream or vision that you will probably find hard to articulate and will probably become clearer gradually as you follow

(Acts 2:16-18, Hebrews 12:1-2)

All of our specific callings are about reflecting the nature and character of God to the world, and reflecting the world back to God in prayer. This is what it means to be a “royal priesthood”.

(1 Peter 2:9)

All of our specific callings are about bringing God’s blessing to the world.

(Romans 15:29, 1 Peter 3:9, Romans 12:14).

Our specific callings will require us to die to ourselves and live in a kind of way that reflects the cross.

(Matt 10:37-39, Matthew 16:24-26, Mark 8:34-38, Luke 9:23-26, Luke 14:26-27, Luke 17:33, Luke 18:14, John 12:24-26)

In our specific callings we will be required to serve and take on roles we may not particularly enjoy.

(Matt 23:11-12, Luke 22:25-27)

You will need the fellowship, equipping encouragement and support of the church in order to step into your calling

(Eph 4:11-12, Gal 6:2, 1 These 5:14, Heb 3:13, Heb 10:24-25)

A big part of any impact you have in your specific calling will be the direct result of your relationships with your brothers and sisters in the church.

(John 13:34-35, John 17:20-23, 1 Cor 1:10)

As you live your specific calling, your life will speak loudly and provoke questions to which the only reasonable answer points to Jesus.

(Matt 5:13-16, 1 Peter 3:15-16)



DISCOVERING YOUR CALLING

Because life, and you, are constantly changing, it can be difficult to name what God is specifically calling you to in this moment.

We appreciate the work done by the *Underground Network* to identify the process of this discovery.

They put it this way:



THE OUTER TRIANGLE: The objective state of our person which shows us the more concrete indicators of our calling

Personality Inventory: Discovering the type of personality that clarifies who you are

Vocational Assessment: Discovering the role God designed you to fulfill

Opportunity Analysis: Discovering the experiences that have helped shape you

THE INNER TRIANGLE: The subjective sense of our person which serves to clarify the more abstract clues to our calling

Emotional Evaluation: Discovering the areas we are naturally drawn to

Listening Prayer: Discovering the words God is speaking to us

Counselor Input: Discovering the advice of our mentors and leaders

As a church we are committed to supporting you on the journey of discovery so that you can reach a point where you are able to tell someone what God is specifically asking of you in the places where you live, learn, work and play.

we are God's handiwork, created
in Christ Jesus to do good works,
which God prepared in advance for
us to do. Ephesians 2:8-10



STEPPING INTO YOUR CALLING

Sometimes people will discover that their calling does not require great change from what they are already doing, but simply a clearer picture of how Jesus is being in reflected in the places where they live, learn work and play.

Sometimes other people realise that they do need to make significant changes in their life priorities or start something new as they get clearer on God's specific calling.

Either way, we are committed to standing with you.

If you sense that God is asking you to continue doing what you are doing:

As you wrestle with your specific calling and don't think God is asking you to make major changes to your current priorities, we want to stand with you.

We would encourage you to see if you can come up with a simple statement that captures the Kingdom Vision that Jesus is inviting you to give your life for. There are no right and wrong ways to do this except that the vision should make sense to you and should give you some sense of the "why" behind the "how" you are spending your time. **We have people with coaching skill who can help you in this process if you would find it helpful.**

Once you can articulate your specific calling we would love to get to share that with the church family so they can be supporting you in prayer. The normal way we do this is by recording a short interview for our *Citywide Stories* segment of our Sunday Service. Your story will be an you encouragement for others.

Our Calling Incubation and Support team will be pleased to be in touch with you to explore how we can stand with you in what God has specifically called you to.

We want to encourage you to find people who are called in a similar way to you and to begin meeting as part of a Kingdom Cell. More information about Kingdom Cells are available online and from the church. If you are not sure how to do this we would love to help you get started.

If you sense that God is asking you to do something new:

For people who are wanting to make a start on something new as they step into their calling, we would encourage you to fill out the START SOMETHING worksheet which we have adapted from the Underground network.

You will find copies to this worksheet on our website and it is also available from our office. If you would like help filling it out the worksheet one of our Calling Incubation and Support team with skill in coaching would be pleased to sit down with you and dialogue it through.

Once the worksheet has been filled out we would encourage you to evaluate where things are up to, and if you are ready, to meet with the Calling Incubation and Support team to explore how we can stand with you as a church as you begin the journey.

We want to encourage you to find people who are called in a similar way to you and to begin meeting as part of a Kingdom Cell. More information about Kingdom Cells are available online and from the church. If you are not sure how to do this we would love to help you get started.

As your church we want to support you in your specific calling by:

- Creating opportunities for training and exploration of the specific calling God has for you (such as the calling Lab)
- Connecting you with our “calling support and incubation team” to help you think through the implications and best ways forward for your specific calling.
- Encouraging you to find a Kingdom Cell where you can get the kind of fellowship you will need as you step into your specific calling.
- Share with the whole church what God is calling you to and commission you for the specific way he has called you
- Cover you with prayer and be ready to respond quickly to specific prayer needs
- Connect you with people that have skills and resources you need
- Offer you use of the church’s administrative facilities and buildings to the level that is helpful and possible.
- Promote what you are doing in whatever way is helpful
- Provide coaching for you as you start and as you continue on your journey.

OUR CHURCH EXISTS FOR GOD

Everything we do comes from our love for God the Father, our obedience to Jesus, and our desire for the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

OUR CHURCH EXISTS FOR YOU

We are committed to doing whatever we can to equip, encourage and empower you to *Follow* Jesus and *Share* your life as you fulfil your God given and unique calling as a *Blessing* in our city.

OUR CHURCH EXISTS FOR HOBART

We are committed to following Jesus' leadership, and partnering with God's people in our city, in order to reach a point where every person, every street, and every sphere of society, is being influenced by people with a vision of the Kingdom of God.

As this happens Hobart will increasingly be a beacon of hope for the rest of Tasmania, Australia and for the world.

FOLLOW *Jesus*

SHARE *Life*

BLESS *Hobart*



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