

OCTOBER 10

If you're God's child, you've been called to forsake your "my life" mentality and daily live with a moment-by-moment ministry mentality.

What do you want for your life? What are you really living for? If you could have the "good life," what would it look like? If you were to say, "If only I had _____, then my life would be _____," how would you fill in the blanks? Could it be that even though you are God's child, you still think of your life as belonging to you? When you think of your life this way, then ministry is about stepping out of your life, giving God a little bit of your time, energy, and money, and then stepping back into your life. In this way of thinking, ministry is something separate from your daily life. It tends to be structured and scheduled by the leaders of your church, and you support it for a while with your own efforts. But behind this view of ministry is the thought that your life still belongs to you, and you give moments of it to the Lord for his work.

The view of ministry in the New Testament is radically different (see Eph. 4:1-16; 1 Corinthians 12; Col. 3:12-17). The New Testament is quite clear in its call to us to understand that our lives no longer belong to us. We don't own our physicality. We don't own our emotionality. We don't own our spirituality. We don't own our mentality. We don't own our psychology. We don't own our communicative abilities. We don't own our relationships. We don't own our gifts or our experiences. We don't even own our possessions in the deepest sense of what ownership means. Paul gets at this when he says at the end of a discussion of sexuality in 1 Corinthians 6, "You are not your own, for you were bought with a price" (v. 19). You begin to get close to what God has designed your life to be as one of his children when you understand that nothing that makes up you and your life belongs to you. You and all that makes up you were bought with a price, so you are owned by the One who paid that price.

But there is a second thing that the New Testament makes very clear. It is that God has called all his children not to be mere recipients of his kingdom work of grace, but to be instruments of that work as well. It is what I call the "total involvement paradigm," that is, all God's people all of the time. Every one of God's children has been given a call to ministry, and every one must think of himself that way.

Finally, the New Testament does not teach a separation between life and ministry. Every dimension of your life is a forum for ministry. Marriage is ministry. Friendship is ministry. Parenting is ministry. Being a neighbor is ministry. The workplace is a place of ministry.

You have been called to represent a glorious Savior, who has graced you with everything you need to live with a ministry mentality.

For further study and encouragement: Luke 17:7-10