

# The Call to Faith

by David Guzik

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*David Guzik's sermon emphasizes the importance of God's call to faith, highlighting its openness and the individual's responsibility to respond.*

**Duration:** 35:51

**Scripture:** Romans 10:12, Galatians 1:6, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, Revelation 22:17

**Topics:** "Faith Response", "Kingdom Discipleship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses a parable about a king who throws a wedding feast and invites many guests. However, the invited guests refuse to come, even though it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Some even mistreat and kill the king's servants. The king becomes furious and sends his armies to destroy the murderers and their city. He then invites anyone from the highways to attend the wedding feast, regardless of their background. The speaker emphasizes the importance of responding to God's call to faith and highlights that it is the foundation for discipleship, faithfulness, and fruitfulness in the Kingdom of God.

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## Transcript

Romans chapter 8 beginning at verse 28 and we know that all things work together for good to those who love God to those who are the called according to his purpose for whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren moreover whom he predestined these he also called whom he called these he also justified and whom he justified these he also glorified you know in these three verses Paul brings up the idea of calling first of all in verse 28 the idea of those who are called according to his purpose what have you thought about that are you called according to the purpose of God and then he brings up the idea in verse 30 about those that God has predestined and called and justified and glorified in each one of

these passages Paul brings up this idea of calling sort of the introductory way of speaking about this larger issue of calling I'd like to speak to you about four ideas really connected to this this understanding of calling the first is simply this when we talk about God calling it means that God has a plan and that he wants me to be a part of that plan if you would relate the idea of God's call just like a telephone call when you place a telephone call to somebody you have a plan in mind don't you know your plan may just be to chat it up with that person you may not have any high and lofty agenda but you got a plan in mind when you place a call you wouldn't pick up the receiver and punch the numbers unless you had a plan in mind

when people call you they've got a plan in mind maybe it's

to sell you something don't you hate those calls or maybe it's to inform you of something or to call something to mind but a call has behind it the idea of a plan what did you know that God has a plan you know that he wants you to be a part of that plan and when you sense a call of God on whatever level in your life that should highlight something in your mind a light bulb should turn on in your God has a plan for me that's why he's calling me the second idea that comes to us from this concept of calling is that it means that God takes the initiative by making a call in other words when God calls us he's taking the initiative it's as if the call is made and the phone is ringing and we pick it up you didn't start that call when you pick up the phone when it's ringing somebody else started

the call somebody else took the initiative God calls and we respond to his call and so we understand that about the calling of God it means that he's taking the initiative he starts the ball rolling and we respond to what he has started you know God called you before you called upon him God was looking for you before you were looking for him he found you before you found him he takes the initiative the third concept connected to this idea of calling it means that God looks at individuals when he calls another calling has in mind an individual contact now I can also show you passages scripture that have an idea of calling for a people in a broader sense a nation or ethnic group but calling is definitely also connected to individuals in the Bible it's that way when you make that telephone

call isn't it when you make a telephone call almost always you want to connect with an individual now there's exceptions to this just a few days ago the Christmas holidays of course we were calling back to my mother and father-in-law who are in Sweden and we're calling back to family and friends back there and it's one of those calls where you want to get everybody on one of the phones and so you talk and everybody gets to talk with each other and sometimes caller like that we sort of called to a group but most of time a call has in mind an individual I want to speak to an individual and God knows how to make a person-to-person call and speak to us as individuals the fourth sort of broad idea that I want to mention in terms of calling has to do with the idea of calling connected to the

fact that calling means that I'm responsible to respond to God's call you understand that don't you again let's go back to our telephone analogy if you're not too tired of it already the phone's ringing you need to pick it up don't you you can let it ring and ring and ring but the call isn't connected until you take the responsibility to pick it up now some of you have that thing caller ID and you know who's calling they say well I know who's calling I'm not going to pick up the phone there am I well sometimes people know that it's God calling and they don't want to pick it up they'll let the phone ring and ring and they'll say well he'll call again all right I don't want to hear what's on the other line when I pick that up but God's call comes to us and it means that we have a

responsibility to respond to God's call there's a partnership between the calling and the response now this morning we're going to take particular focus on the idea of the call to faith see there are many different aspects to God's call we'll talk about them in coming weeks God calls us to follow him as disciples God calls us to faithfulness in different spheres of our life God calls us to fruitfulness as workers and ministers in his kingdom but you know it all begins with the call to faith it all begins with God calling us as individuals to put our trust in him into the great work that Jesus has done to our life so with that sort of broad idea of calling open up your Bible please to Revelation chapter 22 verse 17 it's easy to find it's the last chapter in your Bible Revelation chapter 22

verse 17 and if you would sort of warm up your fingers this morning because I'm going to ask you to turn to several different passages of scripture and the first principle that I want to communicate to you this morning specifically about the call to faith is that the call to faith goes to all who will receive it that's the first principle God has a call to faith and it goes to everyone who will receive it Revelation chapter 22 verse 17 explains this for us take a look at it with me here it says and the spirit and the bride say come and let him who hears say come and let him who thirsts come please look at the last line I think it's so important and whoever desires let him take of the water of life freely this is a glorious invitation whoever desires that call goes out to everybody

everybody this morning here's that call Jesus is speaking to you and he says come whoever it's an open invitation to receive salvation in Jesus Christ you know can you imagine for a moment Jesus pushing away somebody who wanted to come to oh I want to come to Jesus but Jesus no I'm sorry you can't come I'm sorry I don't want you to come to me the door shut my hands out you cannot come we can't even think of it he will not exclude anybody who comes to him now we understand that when Jesus open such a broad invitation it also means that that invitation is an opportunity for us as well but it's a responsibility also you know if you decline an invitation you only have yourself to blame you were invited to Christmas parties weren't you and some of those invitations you accepted and maybe some

of those invitations you didn't accept you decided well I'll go to this Christmas party and I won't go to this other one you accepted or rejected based on what you wanted to do well God invites you doesn't he he says right here come you can write your name right next to that verse whoever desires let him take of the water of life freely and that's a glorious invitation because it says whoever desires if you want it it's yours if you desire it you can have it if you desire it you can come to Jesus Christ and find it and say well wait a minute but you know pastor I don't understand all those intricacies of Christian theology and doctrine you know that whole Trinity thing has me really confused I don't get it well you know it doesn't say whoever understands let him come and take of the water

of life freely does it say that well it says whoever desires it's a what you know pastor I don't think I can really repent the way that I should my heart's pretty hard I can't weep over my sins I can't make myself feel as bad about my sin as I really should well come anyway it doesn't stay in there whoever feels let him come and take of the water of life freely they say well you know I don't know if I can live the Christian way that I should I know you have to live a certain way to be a Christian I don't know if I can do that well friends it doesn't say whoever can let him come and take of the water of life freely yeah well I don't know if I'm worthy to live the Christian life does the word worthy appear in that verse whoever is worthy let him come and drink of the water of life really no

no it says whoever desires if you want it you come what a big word there it says whoever there's there's no standard given there there's nothing well you know only sinners only needy people of a certain height or a certain weight or a certain size there are little sinners big sinners dark sinners fair sinners sinners double-dipped in their sin old sinners young sinners aggravated sinners sinners who committed every crime in the catalog you might look over that Ten Commandments and you say that that was your to-do list of sin in your life and you've checked off everyone with whoever you're included whoever and it's really that simple do you desire Jesus and his salvation then you come now if you don't desire it who's to blame for you to perish you don't want it it's offered out there to

you freely you want it you come receive it if you can say now Lord I desire to be saved give me a new heart I desire to give up my sins I desire to be a Christian I desire to believe I desire to obey I don't have

the strength to do this I don't know how this can happen but Lord I want this if that's your desire then you're freely invited to come you just need to be willing there's no barrier between you and Jesus only your stubborn will isn't that a great invitation this call to faith goes out to everybody all you have to do is you have to desire it and then look verse 17 whoever desires let him take you see when you desire and when you come then you take you take something that God has to give to you I think it's amazing that all the religions of the world can be summed up into the idea

that you have to bring something to God you bring something to him bring something to the gods that's not Christianity the essence of Christianity is summed up in the idea that God invites us to take of the water of life freely you can't bring anything you need to take something that God has an open hand before you to give that's what it means to be a Christian and that call to faith goes out to everybody you see that it's open to anybody anybody who desires can come to Jesus Christ now there's another aspect another principle to this call to faith that I want to communicate to you and it's found in first Corinthians chapter one turn left in your Bible back to first Corinthians chapter one and the principle is simply this when God calls to faith the gospel makes sense when it didn't make

sense before you'll see this in first Corinthians chapter one beginning at verse 22 again first Corinthians chapter one verse 22 Paul writes there and he says for Jews request a sign and Greeks seek after wisdom but we preach Christ crucified to the Jews a stumbling block into the Greek foolishness but to those who are called both Jews and Greeks Christ the power of God in the wisdom of God you see what Paul saying here that the invitation goes out and to some people it seems like a stumbling block to other people it seems like foolishness but to those who are called that's the wisdom of God something changes in the gospel makes sense where it didn't make sense before you know this can happen in a lot of different ways maybe maybe one day your need made sense to you when before it didn't

know one day your attitude was yes Lord they need salvation I'm really glad there's churches in this world because you know I was just driving through downtown LA and did you see the homeless people there drug addicts and drunks and all Lord they need Jesus and that was your thought you're glad there's this Christian work going on in the world because there's some people out there who really need it but you didn't really see that as you one day the light went on one day your eyes were open and it made sense your need made sense when it didn't make sense before and suddenly realized I need to be saved I have a debt of sin oh sure for years and years and went around saying well nobody's perfect and excuse me that way but I realized that I have to answer before a perfect God and I need to be

saved or maybe one day it made sense the way that God provided for your need you know one day it just clicked there's Jesus on the cross and it's not just a necklace that somebody wears it's not just something they put on a wall there's Jesus on the cross and I should have been up there I should have been paying the penalty for my sin but he was an innocent man who who paid the penalty in my place all the guilt all the shame all the suffering that my sin deserved God put it on him and punished it in him I understand that now one day the light just turns on isn't it strange how person can hear the gospel time and time again and it's kind of blah blah blah until one day it turns on many of you know exactly what I'm talking about don't you one day the light flashes that's me I need that

see one day the whole picture makes sense when it didn't make sense before you say oh I need Jesus I need the salvation that he offers and that's a principle of God's calling when God calls to faith the gospel makes sense when it didn't make sense before as an aside if the gospel makes sense to you don't isn't that exciting it means that God called you that's God's calling in your life if God hasn't called you the

gospel wouldn't make sense to you and you know what if you hear this morning and the gospel honestly doesn't make sense to you I don't know I don't really need it I don't know what it's about might I say what won't you ask God to make it make sense to you don't you realize that you understand this you need to latch on to this now a third principle is also found for us in 1st

Corinthians chapter 1 this third principle is this that God's call isn't focused towards the best and the brightest of this world that starts at 1st Corinthians chapter 1 verse 25 look at it with me he says because the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men for you see your calling brethren that not many wise according to the flesh not many mighty not many noble are called but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame things which are mighty we say thank God for that because I'm one of the weak things of the world I'm one of the foolish things of the world and then that means God can choose me well I want you to notice something here it's not that the

best and the brightest are excluded you know maybe you're one of the best and brightest you're maybe you're one of those people that the rest of us just sort of envy in life and you've got it all together and you're a success in everything that you touch I want you to know God's call to salvation goes out to you too it doesn't say not any wise according to the flesh not any mighty not any noble it says many not any and so maybe you are wise maybe you are noble maybe you are mighty according to flesh well God still calls you he just doesn't call many of you but the call still goes out to you and you can still respond today you see what a comfort this is for us because it tells us that it's just for us it's for normal people it's for people like you and I remember what Jesus said he said I

haven't come to call this righteous but sinners to repentance well I can qualify for that then I want to receive that call Lord there's not a single person excluded here God issues his call to faith towards you now there's another principle that I really want to touch on that I think is very important one that we often forget about the call of God when it comes to the call to faith and that principle is found in 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2 but go ahead and turn in your Bible there 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2 beginning at verse 13 notice carefully what Paul has to say in this principle and he's getting across the principle to us that God uses the words of people to bring his call notice that the words of people not just spirits not just angels and might I say not just preachers but God

uses the words of people to bring his call 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 13 he says but we are bound to give thanks to God always for you brethren beloved by the Lord because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth you can see what you think God called you he gave you the call to salvation and you responded now look at what he says in verse 14 to which he called you by our gospel for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ that was my gospel that I preach it not that it was Paul's gospel peculiar to him and to no one else but it was the gospel that Paul brought you understand that God uses the words of people to bring his call he doesn't just issue his call in in strange or mysterious or invisible ways God

uses people people like you people like me friends if you haven't heard it already I'll tell God's calling you right now to faith I'll be the voice of that call right now and you can be the voice of that call to other people well how do you say what you just say it God gives you an open invitation to come to him whoever desires let me come and drink of the water of life freely do you want to think you can come to God you see what a glorious thing that is God uses people oftentimes waiting for God use anything but us anyone anything but God can use you to bring that call to faith let's go on to a fifth principle and and this one sort of gets us a

little bit deeper into theology when it comes to the call of God I'd like you to turn in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 22 for this fifth

principle and the fifth principle is simply this more are called than chosen to respond in other words more are called than chosen to respond the call to faith is broader than those who actually respond in other words you can be called but not chosen here Jesus says exactly this in Matthew chapter 22 beginning at verse one he says in Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said the kingdom of heaven is like a certain King who arranged a marriage for his son and sent out his servants to call those were invited to the wedding and they were not willing to come this would be absolutely astounding to the people Jesus first spoke to their jaws would drop when Jesus said you've got to be kidding because everybody knew first of all that in that day and age there was no better

party than a wedding feast that was it that was the ultimate it just did not get better you think of the ultimate party that you could have the wedding feast was it that was it it just did not get any better than that and let's face it in that day they didn't have a lot of entertainment options to choose from when you had the wedding feast man it was like I want to be there now what's more who's giving this feast a king a king is throwing a party of a lifetime and you're invited you're like sign me up I'm gonna be there there's nothing clear out my schedule it's not like well I had to wash my hair that night no you're gonna be there now Jesus says in verse three though that he sent out a servant to call those who are invited to the wedding and they weren't willing to come what are you

talking about they weren't willing to come the invitation of a lifetime and they don't want to come while he explains further verse four again he sent out other servants saying that tell those who are invited see I prepared my dinner my oxen and fatted calf were killed and all things are ready come to the wedding look at the menu there's gonna be lots of food free food and still they're not willing to come verse five they made light of it and went their ways one to his own farm another to his business and the rest seized his servants treated them spitefully and killed them this is a parable that just makes no sense why would people reject such a glorious invitation here it is it's right out for you you just come and receive come to the wedding feast so you have to do is you just come now

we don't want you know I got business to do I got places to go people to see you know I drew the analogy a little bit before how you've been invited to Christmas parties and such and you picked some and you decided others you didn't want to go to bottom line is nobody would pass up on an invitation like this a wedding feast from a king but these men for the flimsiest of reasons rejected it and not just reject they rejected it violently so look at what the man in the parable does the king verse seven but when the king heard about it he was furious and he sent out his armies destroyed those murderers and burned up their city then he said to his servants the wedding is ready but those who were invited were not worthy therefore go into the highways and as many as you find invite to the

wedding so the servants went out to the highways and gathered together all whom they found both bad and good and the wedding hall was filled with guests you can just see the king a little bit of righteous indignity goes well listen my son's not going to have a wedding with nobody there bring him in it doesn't matter and so the word goes up hey the king's throwing a wedding party do you want to go you bet I'll go and everybody comes they all want to be a part of this the hall filled with guests look there's a little twist here in verse 11 but when the king came in to see the guests he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment we say what he was in his underwear something no that's not at all in that day and age when you went to a wedding when you came into the door they gave

you a special road to wear a wedding garment the reason was simple was that at a big fancy party like that some people would have nice clothes to wear and other people would not let's remember in that day and age there were some people who just did not have a decent suit to wear and so everybody would feel on equal footing at the party there wouldn't be the haves and the have-nots when you came to the wedding party the host gave you a robe to wear and you put it on and that way everybody could feel comfortable knowing they were all dressed nicely for this came out I came in and the hostess what would you like to wear this robe and he goes forget it I'll wear my own clothes so the king when he comes and he sees this man he goes look my robes not good enough for you you want to come to my

party but you don't want to wear my robe what's wrong with you look at what he does to the man verse 13 no excuse me verse 12 so he said him friend how did you come in here without a wedding garment and he was speechless then the king said to the servants bind him hand and foot and take him away and cast him into outer darkness there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth for many are called but few are chosen you say now wait a minute here the call we saw revelation chapter 22 everybody has the call issued to him but how about being chosen and now the wheels are turning in your mind you're saying well I heard the call but but am I chosen am I chosen to receive this call there's only one way to find out receive it respond to it and then you'll know that you're chosen you don't have to

complicate this too much how do you know that you're chosen you choose him how do you know that you called when you respond to him let me say a few things about this idea about being chosen first of all being chosen should never make us proud that idea that somebody would go around thinking well you know God was looking for some of the best people around and he chose me then you don't understand God's choosing at all you know what God's choosing is about it's another way of saying that he took the initiative that he chose you before you chose him and it's a good thing that he chose first because if he waited around for us to choose him you know what it never worked no thank you God that he chose us first but you see it's just our receiving his gift but there's another aspect about this

whole idea of choosing that's very important for me to talk about some people really get caught up on the idea does God choose some people for damnation just like he chooses some to respond to his call and in their minds the human race is divided up into two categories you got those chosen for salvation and you got those chosen for damnation you know nothing to do about it you're chosen to be saved you're chosen to be damned that's all there is to it.

As a matter of fact why even preach the gospel? Because if you're chosen to be saved you're going to be saved you're chosen to be damned you're going to be damned that's it. So what is it? Does God choose some to salvation and also choose some for damnation? The answer to that scripturally is absolutely not.

Friends the Bible says nothing and knows nothing about the idea that some are chosen or predestined for hell. Now some promote the idea because they say that it's a simple logical deduction that if God chooses some for heaven then he must also choose some for hell. But the Bible doesn't say that.

We should always be careful to stick to our Bibles when it comes to such things. You speak where the Bible speaks and you're silent where the Bible is silent. And so does the Bible speak on some being chosen for salvation? Absolutely.

And so we'll speak about those being chosen. We saw that in Romans chapter 8 verse 28. Right? Those who are called according to purpose.

Those whom he predestined he called. Those he called he justified. Those he justified he glorified.

Yes we understand that perfectly. Does the Bible say in any specific way that God has chosen some for damnation? No it doesn't say that. So we speak where the Bible speaks.

We're silent where the Bible is silent. See the bottom line is simply this. You can know whether or not you're chosen.

Did you know that? You can know it. How do you know it? Well God hasn't put a yellow mark on the forehead of everybody's chosen. No God's done something else.

He works in the heart of those who are chosen to choose him. You see we respond to God's call by calling upon him. That's my next principle.

Turn to the book of Romans chapter 10 if you will. Again the next principle and it's from Romans chapter 10 verse 12 is simply this. We respond to God's call by calling upon him.

Some people get very confused about this. Well listen my head is swimming. Am I chosen or am I not chosen? And if I'm not chosen can I ever choose him? And if I'm not chosen but if I'm chosen do I have to choose him? Listen cut through all of it.

Turn to Romans chapter 10 verse 12. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. For the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon him.

For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How do you respond to God's call? You call upon him. How do you know if you're chosen then you choose him.

You say well wait a minute how can I choose him? Forget about all of that. You choose him. Remember the whosoever desires let him come and drink of the water of life freely.

That's God's invitation to you. We respond to God's call by calling upon him. You pick up the phone and you complete the call.

You want to know if he's calling you then pick up the phone. There it is right there it's ringing. What are you going to do let it ring off the hook? No you pick it up and you complete the call.

You call upon him. Which brings us to the next principle based on the same passage of scripture. Friends do you realize that God will never reject the one who responds to his call by calling upon him.

Never. Could you ever imagine that? Yes Lord I want to come to you. Yes Lord I call upon your name for salvation and God says to me well I'm sorry you're not chosen.

It can never happen. So how do I know if I'm chosen? You choose him. How do I know if I'm called? You call upon him.

You say well just don't worry about it. You just do it. Now if you say I don't want to choose him.

Well then can you fault him for not choosing you? Who are you to stand in blame of God for not choosing you if you refuse to choose him? It's very simple in the practicality of it though working out the details of it bends our mind. And friends when you get in it's well did he choose or how I choose and this that. Can't we recognize that some of these things are left with the eternal counsels of God and we just can't plumb

the depths of them.

But what the scriptures know we can say and understand. Oh that God takes the initiative and we respond to his call and you can respond to his call today. Now let me conclude with one final principle that I think is very important and one that I think is often neglected.

Turn to Galatians chapter 1 verse 6 and this final principle is simply this that we must continue in the calling to faith. Look at it here in Galatians chapter 1 verse 6. Paul says I marvel that you are turning away so soon from him who called you in the grace of Christ to a different gospel. The principle is simple.

We must continue in the calling to faith and Paul is challenging the Galatians because it looked like they weren't going to continue in it and Paul says you need to continue in this calling. Friends do you realize that when God calls you it's not like you just call and answer the call. Well fine great and then you hang up the phone and leave it alone.

He wants it to be an open line from that point on. The call is to stay open. You're to continue in that call.

God has called you. You continue in that call. You become established in it.

You persevere in it. Continue in that calling to faith. For some of you that's your great challenge.

You know maybe you didn't hang up the phone when God calls you but maybe you've set it down on the table and now you're off in the game room messing around. God says I want you to come back to that call here. The line is open.

Let's go. You need to continue in the call to faith that God has given you. Friends I'm very excited because in the coming weeks we're going to talk about the call to follow that has to do with discipleship.

We're going to talk about the call to faithfulness that has to do with following God in each individual area of our life. We're going to talk about the call to fruitfulness that has to do with your place in the kingdom of God. But we have to admit that it all begins with answering this call to faith.

You can't go any further until you've done this. You can't follow. You can't be faithful.

You can't be fruitful until first you've received you've answered this call to faith. So here's my challenge for you here this morning. Will you respond to that call.

I'll tell you how you can do that in just a moment. Friends it's very important that you respond to this because God's phone right now it's ringing for you. How will you respond.

And if you have responded how will you treat that open line from there on. Will you continue in it. I'm going to pray and then we'll talk about specifically how to respond to this in just a moment.

Let's pray. Father we thank you. You know Lord if you didn't seek us first we would have never sought you or found you for us to say we're indebted to you Lord.

It doesn't even begin to describe our gratitude towards you. And so Lord we thank you and we praise you. We honor you together this morning and we ask that you would help us to make an appropriate response to the call of God.

This call to faith in our life. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen.

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