

Group Discussion Guide: For the Week of September 8

Title: "Sacredness of the Secular - Living Out My Calling"

Before Your Small Group Meeting:

- Attend or Watch Pastor Mark Ragsdale's Message: churchatviera.com/live/

Main Theme:

Living out our calling from God in every area of life, recognizing that even our everyday work and responsibilities can be an expression of worship and service to the Lord. This guide explores how our work, our mission, and our obedience to God's commands carry eternal significance.

Setting the Context:

- Connection to the Theme of the Week: "Living Out My Calling"
 - This week's focus is on understanding and embracing the sacredness of what may seem secular—the idea that every aspect of our lives, including our work, can be an act of worship to God.
 - We'll explore what it means to live out our calling and how our labor has eternal significance in the eyes of God.

What is My Calling from God?

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:58 *"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."*

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to be "steadfast" and "immovable" in the context of your calling from God?
2. How do you currently see the work you do (whether in your job, home, or community) as "the work of the Lord"?
3. How does the promise that "your labor is not in vain" encourage you in your day-to-day responsibilities?
4. **How Can My Work Help God Bring Heaven Down to Earth?**

Scripture: Colossians 3:23 *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters."*

Discussion Questions:

1. How can your everyday work or tasks be an act of worship to God?
2. What changes in your mindset or actions might help you to view your work as serving the Lord rather than just fulfilling a duty?
3. Can you think of a recent example where you felt that your work brought a little piece of heaven to earth? Share with the group.
4. **How Well Am I Obeying the Great Commission from God?**

Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20 *"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."*

Discussion Questions:

1. In what ways are you actively participating in the Great Commission? How do you feel called to make disciples?
2. How can you integrate disciple-making into your everyday life—whether at work, home, or within your community?
3. What challenges do you face in fulfilling the Great Commission, and how can the group support you in overcoming them?

Scripture: Genesis 1:27-28 *"So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'"*

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you understand the concept of "being fruitful" and "subduing the earth" in your life today?
2. What does it look like to rule over creation responsibly and in a way that reflects God's image?
3. How can you reflect God's creative and nurturing character in your work and in how you care for the world around you?
4. **What Now?**

Scripture: Ephesians 2:8-10 *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."*

Discussion Questions:

1. What "good works" do you believe God has prepared in advance for you to do? How can you begin to walk in them more fully?
2. How does understanding that you are God's handiwork encourage you to live out your calling?
3. Reflect on a time when you felt fully alive in your work. How did that experience connect with your sense of calling?

Worship Together:

Play this song for your group: **"Build My Life" by Housefires**

- This song focuses on making Christ the foundation of our lives and seeking to live in a way that reflects His glory in everything we do.
- https://youtu.be/QZW4_8_zCBE?feature=shared

Application:

Application #1: Ask God to reveal your specific calling and strive to live it out consistently each week.

- Discuss practical steps to discover or deepen your sense of calling.

Application #2: Be fully alive in your work, recognizing that it holds eternal value.

- Share with the group how you will commit to bringing greater purpose and intentionality into your daily tasks and work.

Your Call to Action:

- Consider how you can bring the sacredness of worship into every aspect of your life, especially in what might seem secular or ordinary.
- How can you make a greater impact through your work, knowing it is ultimately for the Lord?