

Highlighting Our Heritage

Week 10: Our Origin—God’s Call and Commission

Verse: Revelation 3:8 “I have set before you an open door....”

Life Application: Identifying God’s individual call on our lives and responding in obedience to the personal task God has assigned to us

Text: Genesis 12:1-8 (Abraham); Acts 8:26-40 (Ethiopian eunuch)

Supplemental Scriptures: Joshua 1:1-9, Mark 1:16-20

Historical context: After Florence Crawford’s visit to Portland at the end of 1906, the Lord continued to bless the little group who met in the converted blacksmith shop on Second and Main. In a short time, the pastor offered to turn his church over to Florence Crawford. It would be her church—the Apostolic Faith Mission of Portland, Oregon. During a Gospel outreach trip to Minneapolis, God spoke to her, saying, “If you will go back to Portland, Oregon, and stay there, I will make that place the headquarters of the Apostolic Faith work, and I will raise up the standard of the Gospel in that city.”

God’s plan was unmistakable, and in 1908, Florence Crawford gave up her home in Los Angeles and moved to Portland.

Questions:

- How can we recognize the call of God?
- Does God call everyone? Explain your answer.
- What is the difference between the call to salvation and the call to service?
- How can we prepare ourselves to answer God’s call?
- What things might hinder us from hearing or responding to God’s call?
- What are some of the benefits of answering God’s call?
- What are some of the negative results of failing to answer?
- What are some of the reasons or excuses people give for turning away from God?
- Why doesn’t God always show us His full plan at the time of our call?
- How does the Great Commission apply to us today?

Opener: Bring an elk call, a shofar, a whistle, and a cell phone to class. Use these objects to illustrate that God’s call may come to us in different ways. He knows just how to speak to us in a manner we will understand and respond to.

Activity Ideas:

On a large sheet of poster paper, create an acrostic using the word “commission” as your starting point. Have students suggest words representing jobs we might be called to do that will fit into the acrostic. For example, the word “minister” might build off the letter M.

Give each student a length of string....maybe about 1 yard long. Ask them to use the string to outline something they could do for God. After a few minutes, go around the class and allow each student to explain what their string design represents. Use this to open a discussion about the many different calls God could potentially send our way.

Bring a toolbox to class, with a number of tools in it. Explain that these are good tools, capable of accomplishing the job they were designed to do—but someone must use them to make them effective. The worker must be willing.

Then pick up the tools one at a time. Have taped to each tool something we could do for the Lord. Examples: pray for someone in need, sing in the youth choir, invite a friend to church, speak to a visitor at church, pray for someone at the altar, etc. As each tool is examined and the message read, reinforce the thought that the worker must be willing to use each of these tools.

Take some jigsaw puzzle pieces to illustrate the point that we do not always see the whole picture. Florence Crawford did not.

Have someone from your congregation come to your class and testify about their personal call to service.