

GOD'S SPECIAL CALL

1. God's general call is to all humanity. His special call is to believers only.

- a. Every believe is “one who is called.”
 - (1) **Jud 1** 1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Messiah and brother of James, To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Messiah.
- b. The Greek term for church, ἐκκλησία, means literally “called out ones.” It derives from the Greek terms ἐκ + καλέω, “to call out”).
 - (1) **Mt 16:18** 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church (ἐκκλησία), and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
- c. As the Church, we are the “called out ones,” called out from the domain of darkness to the kingdom of Jesus.
 - (1) **Col 1:13** 13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son....
- d. There are other types of calling:
 - (1) God's general call (the six Cs). See *God's General Call*.
 - (2) Career, ministry, or vocational calling. See *Vocation*.

2. God the Father is the caller.

- a. **Ac 2:38-39** 39 For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God [specially] calls to himself.
- b. **1 Th 2:12** 12 ...We exhorted each one of you, encouraged you, and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.
- c. **1 Th 5:24** 24 He who calls you is faithful. He will surely do it.
- d. **1 Pe 1:15** 15 ...As [God] who called you is holy, you also be holy....
- e. God calls us through the gospel.
 - (1) **2 Th 2:13-14** 13 God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. 14 To this he [specially] called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Messiah.
 - (2) **Jas 1:18** 18 Of his own desire [God] brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

3. God's special call is based on:

- a. Our positive volition (humility).
 - (1) **Mt 9:13** 13 Go and learn what this means: I desire mercy, and not sacrifice. For I came not to call the righteous [the proud], but sinners [the humble].
 - (a) **Mk 2:17** 17 And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, Those who are well [the proud] have no need of a physician, but those who are sick [the humble]. I came not to call the righteous [the proud], but sinners [the humble].
 - (b) **Lk 5:32** 32 I [Jesus] have not come to call the righteous [the proud] but sinners [the humble] to a change of mind.
 - (2) **Mk 10:46-48** 46 And as [Jesus] was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me [humility]! 48 And many rebuked

him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, Son of David, have mercy on me [humility]! 49 And Jesus stopped and said, Call him. And they called the blind man, saying to him, Take heart. Get up. He is calling you [God's special call].

(3) **1 Co 1:26-28** 26 Consider your [special] calling, brothers and sisters. Not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish [the humble] in the world to shame the wise [the proud]. God chose what is weak [the humble] in the world to shame the strong [the proud]. 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not [the humble], to bring to nothing things that are [the proud].

b. God's foreknowledge.

(1) **Ro 8:28-30** 28 We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are [specially] called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined he also [specially] called....

c. God's predetermined plan.

(1) **Ro 9:22-24** 22 What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction [the proud], 23 in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy [the humble], which he has prepared beforehand [predetermination] for glory [glorification]— 24 even us whom he has [specially] called [based on humility], not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?

(2) **2 Ti 1:9** 9 [God] saved us and [specially] called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own [predetermined] purpose and grace, which he gave us in Messiah Jesus before the ages began.

d. God's election.

(1) **Ro 8:30-33** 30 And those whom [God] predetermined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

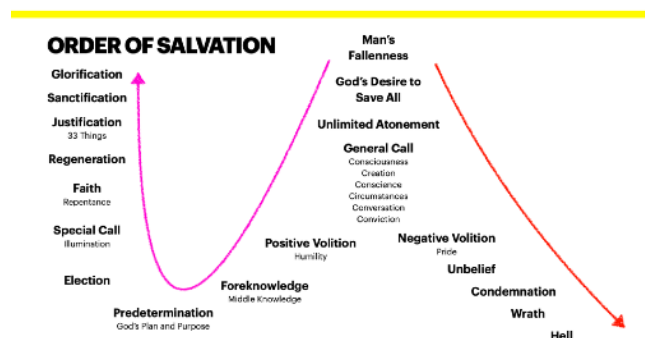
(2) **Ro 9:10-12** 10 ...Also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, 11 though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's [predetermined] purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who [specially] calls—12 she was told, The older will serve the younger.

(3) **Ro 11:28-29** 28 ...As regards [national] election, [the Jewish people] are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. 29 For the gifts and the [national] calling of God are irrevocable.

(4) **1 Co 1:26-28** 26 Consider your [special] calling, brothers and sisters. Not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose [election] what is foolish in the world to shame the wise. God chose [election] what is weak in the world to shame the

strong. 28 God chose [election] what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are.

- (5) **Ga 1:15-16** 15 But when he who had set me apart [elected me] before I [Paul] was born, and who [specially] called me by his grace, 16 was pleased to reveal his Son to me [illumination], in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles [ministry calling], I did not immediately consult with anyone.
- (6) **2 Th 2:13-14** 13 God [specially] chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. 14 To this he [specially] called you through our gospel....
- (7) **1 Pe 2:9** 9 ... You are a chosen race [election], a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who [specially] called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.
- (8) **2 Pe 1:10** 10 Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more diligent to confirm your [special] calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.
- (9) **Re 17:14** 14 [The ten kings] will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are [specially] called, chosen [elected], and faithful.



4. God's special calling is two-way, not one-way. It involves our free will response.

a. Man's calling in response to God's calling:

- (1) **Ac 2:21** 21 ... It shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.
- (2) **Ac 22:16** 16 And now why do you [Saul] wait? Rise, be baptised, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.
- (3) **Ro 10:12-14** 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. For the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. 13 For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

b. Both the calling of God and the calling of man:

- (1) **Joe 2:32** 32 And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as Yahweh has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom Yahweh calls.

(2) **1 Co 1:2 2** To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those set apart in Messiah Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Messiah, both their Lord and ours....

c. Principles.

(1) Those who respond to God's special call are "the called."

(2) God specially calls those whom he knows won't refuse it. This differs from his general call, which he knows most will refuse

5. God's special calling is absolutely necessary for one to believe in Jesus.

a. **Jn 6:44 44** No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws [specially calls] him. And [if he comes to me] I will raise him up on the last day.

b. **Jn 6:65 65** ...No one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father [through his special call].

c. See *Illumination*.

6. God individually calls every believer at a specific time and place.

a. **Jn 9:35-38 35** Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, Do you believe in the Son of Man? **36** He answered, And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him? **37** Jesus said to him, You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you. **38** He said, Lord, I believe, and he worshiped him.

b. **Jn 10:3 3** The sheep hear his voice [his special call], and he [specially] calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

c. **Ac 2:38-39 38** ...Peter said to [the Jews, as a general call], Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God [specially] calls to himself.

d. **1 Co 7:18-24 18** Was anyone at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to remove the marks of circumcision. Was anyone at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision. ...**20** Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. **21** Were you a bondservant when called? Do not be concerned about it. ...**22** Likewise he who was free when called is a bondservant of Messiah. ...**24** So, brothers and sisters, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God.

e. Ex.: my personal experience at Sai Kung Peninsula in Hong Kong.

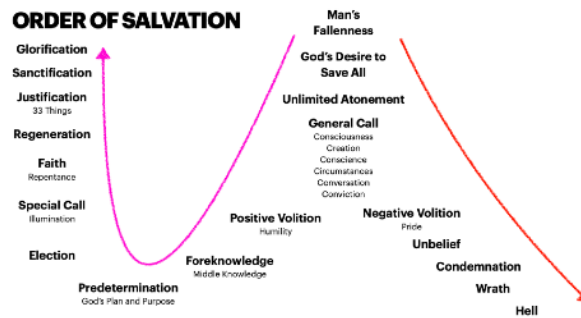
7. Special calling leads to faith, justification, sanctification, and glorification.

a. Faith.

(1) **Re 17:14 14** [The ten kings] will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are [specially] called (κλητός), chosen (ἐκλεκτός) [elected], and believing (πιστός).

b. Justification and glorification.

(1) **Ro 8:30 30** And those whom he predestined he also [specially] called, and those whom he [specially] called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.



8. Every believer is called:

- a. To belong to Jesus.
 - (1) **Ro 1:6** 6 ...Including you who are [specially] called to belong to Jesus Messiah.
- b. To be a saint with other saints.
 - (1) **Ro 1:7** 7 To all those in Rome who are loved by God and [specially] called to be saints....
 - (2) **1 Co 1:2** 2 To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those set apart in Messiah Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Messiah....
- c. Into the fellowship of Jesus.
 - (1) **1 Co 1:9** 9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Messiah our Lord.
- d. To peace.
 - (1) **1 Co 7:15** 15 But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace.
- e. In the grace of Messiah.
 - (1) **Ga 1:6** 6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Messiah and are turning to a different gospel....
- f. To freedom.
 - (1) **Ga 5:13** 13 For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.
- g. To hope.
 - (1) **Eph 1:18** 18 ...Having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints....
 - (2) **Eph 4:4** 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call....
- h. To receive an eternal inheritance.
 - (1) **Eph 1:18** 18 ...Having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints....
 - (2) **Heb 9:15** 15 ...[Jesus] is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance....
- i. To walk in a worthy manner.
 - (1) **Eph 4:1** 1 I [Paul]... , a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called....

- (2) **2 Th 1:11** 11 To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling....
- j. To the upward call of God.
 - (1) **Php 3:14** 14 I [Paul] press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Messiah Jesus.
- k. In one body.
 - (1) **Col 3:15** 15 ...To which indeed you were called in one body.
- l. To God's own kingdom and glory.
 - (1) **1 Th 2:12** 12 ...God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.
 - (2) **Heb 3:1** 1 Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession....
 - (3) **1 Pe 5:10** 10 ...After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Messiah, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.
 - (4) **2 Pe 1:3** 3 [God's] divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence....
- m. In holiness.
 - (1) **1 Th 4:7** 7 For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.
 - (2) **2 Ti 1:9** 9 [God] saved us and [specially] called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Messiah Jesus before the ages began.
 - (3) **1 Pe 1:15** 15 ...But as [God] who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct....
- n. To eternal life.
 - (1) **1 Ti 6:12** 12 Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses
- o. Out of darkness into God's marvellous light.
 - (1) **1 Pe 2:9** 9 ...That you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.
- p. To suffer for doing good.
 - (1) **1 Pe 2:20-21** 20 ...If when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. 21 For to this you have been called, because Messiah also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.
- q. To bless when we experience evil.
 - (1) **1 Pe 3:9** 9 Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.