

Now Concerning Spiritual Things
an historical account of one man's walk with God

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The Five-Fold Call of God

The title for this letter may raise a question or two in your mind. For example, did not Jesus issue a call to everyone when He said, "Whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."¹ And the answer is "Yes." A second thought might be, "Isn't the Great Commission of our Lord² His call to every believer?" The answer, of course, is "Yes." Did not Jesus likewise issue a "call" when He said, "Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest"³ and "Therefore pray the Lord of harvest to send out laborers into His harvest?"⁴ The answer to each of these questions is, "Yes." As believers, you may realize that scripture also calls us to forgive, pray, praise, fast, tithe, be merciful, etc.⁵ All of these calls in scripture are given in order for us as believers to receive blessings from God. If this is the case, then why *the five-fold call of God* instead of *ten-fold* or *fifteen-fold*, for example – and that is what this letter is all about. Come with me and let's explore the answer together.

The five-fold call of God to which I refer,

¹John 4:14.

²For the complete Great Commission record see Matthew 28: 18-20; Mark 16:14-18; Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-23; Acts 1:6-8.

³Matthew 11:28.

⁴Matthew 9:38.

⁵The most controversial items in this small "laundry list" of God's *calls* is "*fast*" and "*tithe*." The instruction of Jesus on fasting is found in Matthew 6: 16-18. Here Jesus says, "When you fast" and the assumption is that believers will fast. Moreover, Jesus clearly said that His disciples would have no need to fast while He was with them but after His departure (ascension) they would then fast. Jesus taught that unbelief may be directly related to a lack of fasting or stated positively, fasting drives out unbelief. See Matthew 17: 14-20; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43.

The curse of robbing God of tithes and offerings is clearly set forth in Malachi 3: 8, 9 and the blessing of giving God tithes and offerings is found in Malachi 3: 10-12.

not only includes all of these *calls*, but more. As one discovers *this call of God*, grows to hear its depth and the blessings therein, the purpose of his life is gradually changed from within. All telling change comes from within, for Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is within you."⁶ [Hidden in this statement is the intimate, personal relationship with Jesus as revealed by the Holy Spirit in whom He resides in His fullness.⁷] As this inward change occurs, God's desires begin to emerge in ones life. Raw ore needs refining and the process won't happen overnight. This has nothing to do with keeping a list of rules, for outward rules never changed anyone. The law of Moses is a good example, for it is written, ". . . that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, . . . for by the works of the law [keeping the rules] no flesh shall be justified."⁸

The *five-fold call* to which I refer is *simple* and *profound*, but *not easy*. These three descriptive terms may seem to conflict, but they match perfectly. God's ways and thoughts are so far beyond man's ways and thoughts that we often must experience His spiritual revelation on a particular scripture verse or subject in order to faintly grasp the comparison.⁹ When one is given spiritual revelation on a particular *word* in scripture, then the Word literally becomes *alive* and *life* to the believer, or as Jesus said, "It is the Spirit Who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words I speak to you are *spirit* and *life*."¹⁰

This is what Jesus meant when He said, "I thank you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden those things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes."¹¹ The

⁶See Luke 17:21.

⁷See John 15:26.

⁸See Galatians 2:16.

⁹See Isaiah 55:8, 9.

¹⁰John 6:63.

¹¹See Matthew 11:25; Luke 10:21.

meaning of the two Greek words translated in this scripture as *wise* and *prudent*, according to Strong's Concordance, is "one who is mentally and intellectually capable." This underscores why "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart – these, O God You will not despise"¹² and why the highest badge of honor in the kingdom may be humility.

One example of such spiritual revelation is when Jesus asked Peter, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." It was then that Jesus said to Peter, "Blessed are you Simon Bar-jonah, for flesh and blood [one who may be wise and prudent] has not revealed this to you but My Father in heaven."¹³ *The Bible is a dead letter without the Spirit* which makes the Lord an equal opportunity God. One living under a bridge in downtown Dallas and the chief executive of the most prestigious corporate entity in the city have equal access to God's throne of grace.

As I have previously written, years ago the Holy Spirit spoke to me – impressed upon my spirit the one word "fast." About the only thing I knew of the word at the time was that it described the way you drive on the Interstate. I had been called to the dinner table many times [still enjoy that!], but had never been called to fast. As a matter of fact, at the time I knew of no one who fasted, nor had I ever heard biblical teaching on the subject. Fasting was certainly not a consideration in my walk with God – never had been – and the scripture on the subject just didn't "compute" as I read and studied the Bible. Nevertheless, when God speaks, obedience is the most powerful weapon in the arsenal of the believer. Over the next ten to twelve months I tried fasts of from one to three days with no solid food – only liquids, mostly water – with no discernable results. Then it finally dawned on me, through the suggestion of a friend, to ask the Lord to instruct me on fasting since He initiated the subject. Within a few days of my request I was told to fast for a tenth of my time, the same as we give (fast from) 10 percent of our income. There are physical and spiritual benefits to fasting that I shall write about later, since that is not the purpose of this letter. I

¹²Psalm 51:17.

¹³See Matthew 16:15-17.

mention it here only as an introduction to the following words which I have shared with you previously.

I finished a twenty-four hour fast at 8:00 A.M. the morning of December 27, 1997. In prayer that morning the Lord gave me these prophetic¹⁴ words.

Stay focused during the grey days to see My light. Keep your eyes on Me. Continue to write and share with others what I have given you. Some will believe and be blessed. Do not be concerned over the others. Some will call out to Me as you have done; then I can answer their call to make their calling and election sure, as with you. My call is to all. For it to be effectual, one must hear and hunger for Me and My righteousness, then call out to Me. Then My answer *awaits* their call and Divine assurance is the result. This is how it works. *My call to all* to come unto Me. Then the hunger for Me. Then *their call unto me*. My answer was prepared with My call which is to all from the beginning. My call is to all to come unto Me for blessing, reunion and sanctification for service. *Salvation, rebirth and Spirit baptism* are three stages of growth. Salvation is the greatest blessing of *My call*. Rebirth is the greatest blessing of *My kingdom* and Spirit baptism is the greatest blessing of *ministry*. Salvation, rebirth and ministry are the three stages. As you hunger for each, My blessing *awaits*. The call of hunger never goes unnoticed. And My response is Life to the hungry. Eternal Life, blessing and abundance. Often times hardship is necessary in preparation for ministry. In your case, for example, your time in the _____ Church¹⁵ was spent in prison, imprisoned by doctrine, by

¹⁴This prophetic word was given through the gift of prophecy, one of the nine prophetic gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. The purpose of this gift, according to the apostle Paul, is for "edification, exhortation and comfort to men." (see 1 Corinthians 13:3).

¹⁵The Church referred to is a denominational Church whose doctrine is so legalistic and exclusive that those in other Churches are believed to be outside of God's salvation through Christ. Of course, there are other Churches with a similar doctrine, the largest of which is the Catholic Church.

something man does to himself through deception of the enemy which appeals to rational man through his intellect. I created no laws to get to Me. Man has done that. That is part of the deception of the times, of the enemy. He is so subtle because his appeal is universal to the world, destined to make one wise in his own sight, wise so as to appeal to his pride and vanity. This wisdom is sensuous, of the senses and intellect I have given, but used as man's master instead of his servant. The spirit must lead the soul and body, hence the Spirit must lead its creation. The creation cannot lead the Creator. That is what led to Satan's fall. Remember these words and be blessed. Amen.

What I wish to point out to you are *three parts of the five-fold call of God* contained in this prophetic "word." They are Salvation, Rebirth and Holy Spirit baptism [for ministry]. Here are a few brief words of explanation:

For some of you, *salvation* and *rebirth* appear to be synonymous, doctrinally speaking, for that's the way it may have happened to you or the way you understand the scripture. And I fully understand that. But some have come another way. One may confess Jesus as Savior and Lord with rebirth to occur at a later time. In such cases salvation precedes (is not synonymous with) rebirth. Mark supports this with these words: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved [salvation]."¹⁶ Here salvation is promised to one who "believes." Further, Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Unless one is born again he cannot *see* the kingdom of God."¹⁷ Jesus did not say, "Unless one is born again he cannot be *saved*," He said "Unless one is born again he cannot *see* the kingdom of God." I conclude, therefore, that in some cases, salvation may be distinct from rebirth. I also know of a Church in another state where the congregation was so thoroughly taught and prepared, that on occasion, salvation, rebirth and Holy Spirit baptism were all experienced simultaneously at water baptism. Try that one on for size! I am not attempting to reestablish your doctrine in this area if you are uncomfortable with

my conclusion. I only offer this explanation for your consideration. For your information, this prophetic word has also been judged by another (at my request), since "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."¹⁸

Holy Spirit baptism as the basis for "ministry" is a concept I have not previously seen in writing. In my own particular case, my understanding of God and His revealed purpose did not blossom in my life until I prayed for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This statement may also be criticized by some and I expect that. However, I am comfortable with the fact that Holy Spirit baptism is taught in the scripture. That's the way Jesus started His ministry¹⁹ and that's the way the one hundred and twenty (including the Apostles) started theirs on a crisp Sunday morning in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of our Lord.²⁰ The book of Acts records a number of similar events.

Now that we have discovered *three parts of the five-fold call of God*, let's look at the *other two*.

History records that the apostle Paul was in Corinth when he wrote a letter to the Church in Rome, Italy, in the spring of A.D. 56. These are his words from chapter twelve, verse one:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service [which is your spiritual worship in the RSV]."

Under the law of Moses, when the sacrificial animal was tied to the horns of the altar and the priest raised his knife to slay the sacrifice, the animal was helpless before him. This system of animal sacrifices prefigured Jesus when He *voluntarily* submitted Himself, once and for all, to the altar of His cross for mankind. The altar of His cross prefigures this verse of scripture for you and me. If we are to follow Him, we likewise must *voluntarily* submit [present] our bodies as a living sacrifice on the altar before Him and symbolically

¹⁶Mark 16:16.

¹⁷See John 3:3.

¹⁸See 1 Corinthians 14:32.

¹⁹See Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21, 22.

²⁰See Acta 1:4-15.

hand Him the knife as High Priest, meaning, that we must be willing to give our life for Him, if called on, even as He gave His life for us. This is the *acid test* of Christianity although I have never heard this preached in a sermon. Therefore, those of us who understand it must *live the sermon*.

Saints of God, this is what it means to follow Him. This is what it means to walk in covenant relationship with God. And this is what Jesus meant when He said, “If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me.”²¹ The cross is not the symbol of life, it is the symbol of death. There are two crosses in the Christian endeavor. We hear much of One; little of the other. Now you know one purpose of your cross.

If you think that this is an extreme idea, you are right, it is. But it is the Gospel that will set you free. This kind of commitment will bring you blessings untold. If you are only looking at your cross, you may miss the message. The message is love. Once you know Him in the fullness of His love for you, you can do no less for Him, if called on, than He has done for you. And that is why Holy Spirit baptism is so important. It is a baptism of death. *That baptism* introduced me to a personal, intimate and warm relationship with the Lord Jesus. It was then that I experienced His love for the first time! Something I had no concept of whatsoever until it *happened to me*. Holy Spirit baptism may lead you to *part four of the five-fold call of God*, covenant commitment.

And now for *part five*.

The writing of the prophet Isaiah is sometimes called the fifth Gospel because it contains so many references to the Lord Jesus. According to the historical record, Isaiah ministered for more than forty years from 740 to 697 B.C. He had an encounter with God early in his ministry that changed his life and led him to *part five*. Here is the account of his encounter.

“In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim, each one has six wings: with two he covered his

face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said, ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!’ And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. So I said: ‘Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.’ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth with it, and said: ‘Behold this has touched your lips; your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is purged.’ Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: ‘Whom shall I send. And who will go for Us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I! Send me.’”

Notice that Isaiah *saw* the Lord of hosts in all His glory. It was *then* that he realized his sin, his iniquity, his nothingness before the Lord and his need for cleansing. Afterward the seraphim touched his lips with a live coal from the altar and said, “Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged.” The Lord then presented to Isaiah His need for a servant and Isaiah’s reply was, “*Here am I! Send me.*”

Isaiah (1) *saw* the Lord of Hosts. It was then that he realized (2) that he was an undone sinner and a man of unclean lips. As a result the seraphim touched his lips with the coal of fire that (3) took his iniquity away and purged his sin. It was only then that Isaiah said (4) “*Here am I! Send me,*” in response to God’s call.

God’s will is accomplished on the earth by willing believers who answer His call (*part five*) and say, “Here am I.” This is not a boast of pride but a statement of covenant commitment, prompted by love, by one who realizes that with God, all things are possible, even using someone like you and me as a servant to accomplish His will on earth. Catching a glimpse of the Lord Jesus may lead one through Isaiah’s *four progressive steps* and prompt him to say as did the prophet, “Here am I.” This implies total trust and a realization that serving Him is the greatest honor on earth, regardless of the cost.

The five-fold call of God to each of us is: Salvation, rebirth, ministry [facilitated by Holy Spirit baptism], covenant commitment and “Here am I.”

²¹Luke 9:23.