

A Focused Life

Overview:

In his book *The Call*, Os Guinness cuts through the complexity of modern life to help readers recognize God's call on their lives. But how do we practically respond to God's call in the midst of our busy, often distracting lives? Read and discuss a short excerpt from Guinness' book and explore three ways calling brings focus to our lives.

Pre-read: "A Focused Life" (Chapter 20) from [The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life](#) by Os Guinness

Discuss:

- In this chapter, Guinness claims, "To be modern is to be addicted to choice and change." Do you agree? If so, how do you see this addiction play out in daily life?
- How have you seen the complexity and distractions of modern life lead to fragmentation, saturation, or overload in your own life?
- What are the primary factors (pressures, temptations, commitments) that distract you?

Os Guinness identifies three ways calling helps us live a more focused life:

1. Calling counters the modern idolatry of choice.

Guinness suggests that our addiction to determining our own destiny elevates our sense of autonomy and control to an almost god-like status.

- How do the following verses offer an alternative perspective? (How does knowing God has chosen you to fulfill his purposes shape the focus of your days?)

John 15:14-16 ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you."

I Cor. 6:19b-20 "You are not your own, ²⁰for you were bought with a price."

2. Calling provides the story line for our lives.

- In what areas do you currently feel the most distracted or disoriented in your life?

- How could knowing your “sense of direction and meaning [comes] solely from God’s call, not from [your] foresight, [your] wisdom, or [your] ability to read [your] circumstances” ease the overload or anxiety that comes from losing your focus?
- What “storyline” is currently playing out in your life?

3. Calling helps us to be single-minded without being fanatics.

Understanding God’s call on our lives helps us make strategic choices with our time and talents. It empowers us to say enthusiastically say yes to opportunities that align with our call and say no to distractions that might lead us off course.

“As we make our contribution along the line of our gifts and callings, and others do the same, there is both a fruitfulness and a rest in the outcome. Our gifts are used for the purpose for which they were given us. And we can rest in doing what we can without ever pretending we are more than the little people we plainly are.”

Proverbs 15:21 “Folly may amuse the empty-headed; a man of understanding makes straight for his goal.”

Proverbs 4:25 (ESV) “Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you.”

- Take a moment to consider your call. What do you need to do to ensure your “eyes look directly forward” and you “make straight” for your goal?

Wrap-up

- What’s the biggest take-away for you from this reading?
- What principles do you need to practically apply to your life this week?