

Faithfulness, not fame, measures ministry success

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DALLAS—Ministers should measure success by their degree of faithfulness to God, not worldly fame, a [Dallas Baptist University](#) dean told students at a conference devoted to helping them discern their call to ministry.

“It is not about how many Twitter followers you get,” Jay Harley said. “It is not about how many people listen to your podcast or your new worship song. It is about saying yes to God for his mission, with the great likelihood that no one may ever know your name or know the profound things that you say or the wonderful songs that you write or the great ministry that you have.”

Harley, dean of students and spiritual life at DBU, challenged students to see their unique callings as gifts from God, specifically crafted for specific individuals to accomplish specific purposes in God’s kingdom.

Discerning God’s call

About 400 students attended The Calling Conference, an event geared to help college students discern their calling to ministry and determine the next steps to take. The Baptist General Convention of Texas sponsored the conference. Ministry professionals shared knowledge and insight gained from years of ministry in churches, on college campuses and with denominational agencies.

DBU President Gary Cook told the students God uses everything in life to prepare his people for the future, even if that involves following an unexpected path. Cook did not initially plan to become a university president, he said. But looking back, he recognized everything in his

background prepared him for the challenges he faced in that role.

'Go on faith'

"You have to go on faith in calling. You never know what the Lord is doing when he starts preparing you for what's ahead," he said. "You just have to trust and know that the best place to be is within his will."

Nobody knows in advance exactly how God will use a person to accomplish the work of his kingdom, said Brent Taylor, pastor of [First Baptist Church in Carrollton](#). The one thing Christians entering ministry must know with certainty is they are responding to God's call, he emphasized.

"Don't go into ministry unless the Lord has called you," he said. "Don't go into it because you don't know what else to do. If that happens, ministry often becomes about a person's own talents, instead of the Lord's power."

—Based on reporting by Blake Killingsworth and Sally Minyard