

# Voices: Four things help us find God's call in our lives

April 11, 2023

After many years of working outside the home, I “retired.” With time to serve God more fully, I appealed to my heavenly Father and cried: “Lord, how can you use me? I don’t play the piano, and I don’t like hanging out at the gym.”

God said: “Patti, I have been preparing you all these years. I allowed you to grow up in a family that loved books. I surrounded you with books all the time. You have created your own library of prayer journals during 40-plus years. Now is the time to write a book and share with others what I have let you experience. This is your destiny.”

So, I penned my first prayer journal, and a new call in my life evolved, that of writing.

People all over the world ask the question, “Lord, how can you use me?”

Once we genuinely believe Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, we can ask God confidently what his will for our lives might be. Through our obedience in doing the small things, he will show us more ways we can serve him.

Four things help us find God's call in our lives: (1) preparation, (2) practice, (3) prayer and (4) Bible reading.

## Preparation

I wanted to prepare myself for ministry. I needed God to direct my path and

mold me to be used for his purpose. A series of books on spiritual maturity helped establish the foundation of my Christian beliefs. I also deepened my obedience to whatever God had in store.

All the while, I wondered how God could use someone like me—someone who failed my first English essay in college, was terrified of being called on in Bible study classes and was still learning sin had consequences. But God cared for me and was preparing me to be used for his glory, and I knew it.

The foundations of my faith grew through Christian books and my first two churches in the Baptist faith. God led me to University Baptist Church in Fort Worth, where I was baptized, and First Baptist Church in Houston, where my faith deepened beyond measure.

## Practice

To know where God wants to use you, experiment in different gift areas, listen to what others think you do well, take a spiritual gifts inventory survey, read books that address the topic, and pray for God to show you where you fit in the body of Christ. Then practice what you have learned.

Everyone has at least one spiritual gift. Romans 12:6-8 gives us a partial list of spiritual gifts—prophecy (explaining Scripture), service, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading and mercy. You might consider these.

I read the Bible continually during my time of discernment, wanting to know more about God and how he could use me. I began to serve in little ways, such as writing notes, putting short Bible studies together and organizing biblical materials.

Reading materials written by solid Bible-believing authors opened the door to a deeper dependence on the Holy Spirit through prayer. The Bible and these books confirmed God loved me, and in his infinite wisdom, he had a

spiritual plan for my life. God does for you, as well.

## **Prayer**

While I have read many books on prayer, it differs from carving out time daily to give praise and worship to our heavenly Father. God loves us as no one else can. He wants us to pay attention to him. Prayer gives a person time to think, meditate, confess sins and share burdens.

Sometimes we limit our call, believing only pastors and those in ministry can be used by God, but God wants everyone to seek his kingdom and to engage intimately in prayer with him.

## **Bible reading**

The primary way God speaks to us occurs by reading the Bible. Through God's word, we recognize what is right and wrong, what is honorable and what is not, and what he wants us to do or not do.

A new life of salvation, hope and trust opens for us when we continually read the word of God. God desires to show us his will and direction, and we can find that in his holy word.

## **Get ready to be used by God**

We are on a journey, and God has a purpose for us. Don't allow fear, laziness or perfectionism to stop you from seeking God's will.

While my passion for reading is what God uses to show me how he can use me, it may be different for you. God has given us all diverse backgrounds,

passions, personalities, talents and quirks. Look at your experiences, hone your skills, prepare yourself, practice ministry, pray and read God's word. Don't expect to be good at everything at once. Wait for God's timing.

When God revealed to me it was time to write a book, it occurred in my messy bedroom closet. Not only did he show me what to do, but he also confirmed it by prompting me to look at the top shelf to see my prayer journals.

That's when he said: "Now is the time to write a book and share with others what I have let you experience. This is your destiny."

What is your God-given destiny?

*Patti Greene is a graduate of Baylor University and Dallas Baptist University, a member of Second Baptist Church in Houston, and the author of seven books. The views expressed are those of the author.*