

# November 2003: When God Calls You

by Aaron Greenway

Through my life I have believed that there are those who are called and don't realize it. By the same token, being in seminary, I believe there are those going into the ministry who have no business being there. There are those who believe a lightning bolt must fall from the sky in order to be called. And there are those who see the church and its people only as a career choice, not to mention a ticket to fame, money, and power.

Being a minister of the Gospel does not mean that the person doesn't have faults, but that he has had an encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ in such a powerful way as to shake him down to the core of his being, confronting his sin, so that when God asks, "Whom shall I send?" that person will answer, "Here I am! Send me!" Notice that the call (in this case) was not, "Isaiah, go!" but the call was came out of a purified life. And without that, the calling will die.

God called me to be His child when I was 13 and to be a missionary when I was 21. Having just been in Perú, I had the opportunity to do ministry as well as be with friends that I love so much. I stayed with a middle class family. While I was there, the "Mrs." asked me, "How do you know you are called to Perú?" I told her that I don't know 100% for sure if I am called to Perú, but at the same time I have many things pointing me to Perú. I have a network of friends who are vital to my music ministry, not to mention that my music ministry is a help to them. I see the needs that are there, a need for material things, for love, and especially a need for Christ. Among the Christian

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The problem is that when we know God wants us to do something, we many times find other things to do. Jonah did this very thing. But with both prophets Isaiah and Jonah, it took a breaking, a purifying, before either one was even willing.

youth, there is a growing desire to be missionaries to the Middle East. On top of all this I feel at peace when I am there. God asked me the question He asked Isaiah almost 10 years ago. Where He is calling me may be determined by where the needs are. But unless you nurture your relationship with God and with people, the love will die. This is precisely why I went back, and will go back again, God willing.

Perhaps, you are called to be a missionary to a foreign country and you don't even know it. Perhaps, you are called to be a musician like my friend, Anita, who now works for artist Tammy Trent. Perhaps, you are called to minister to children. Perhaps, God wants you right where you are right now. The key is to be in a place where God can ask you that question. **We need Him to ask the question, "Who shall I send to the nations?" or "Who shall I send next door?"** The problem is that when we know God wants us to do something, we many times find other things to do. Jonah did this very thing. We think that if we ignore God long enough, God will give up. But with both prophets Isaiah and Jonah, it took a breaking, a purifying, before either one was even willing.

Isaiah 6:1-10 shows us that Isaiah was "a man of unclean lips." And God had to do a special work in his life before he was even ready to go where God wanted him. In the book of Jonah, we see a man who was bitter toward the Assyrians. Why should God show mercy on them? These two imperfect men were used for the glory of God. And God doesn't give up until He has shown us His glory, until we submit to Him. Reading the bestseller, *The Purpose-Driven Life* by Rick Warren, I had recently come across a quote, "Many times we are challenged to do 'great things' for God. In reality, He is pleased more when we do small things with obedience and with love." I believe that one of the small things we can do is to encounter Him. If we are faithful to obey Him in the call, no matter how significant or insignificant, we will ultimately be blessed and our lives will have greater impact. But we will never see the great things that God wants to do in our lives until we are faithful to know Him and to let Him work in our lives in the corners of our heart.

Are you called somewhere? It is easy to ignore God, so that we never feel obligated to do anything for Him. Eddie Anders, an old friend of mine, once said, "We don't like to bend the

knee, because the moment we do, we are obligated.” God has your number. The question we must ask ourselves is if we choose to go through life being satisfied to use only a portion of our spiritual potential, or if we are going to submit ourselves to carrying the cross everyday, so that God can steer us where He wants us to go.