

Another Day

Biblical reflections for busy teachers



Called to Teach?

"To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 1:7

"Our primary calling as followers of Christ is by Him, to Him, and for Him. First and foremost we are called to Someone (God), not to something (such as motherhood, politics, or teaching) or to somewhere (such as the inner city or outer Mongolia)."^{*} Thus wrote Os Guinness in his book, *The Call*. He goes on to distinguish this 'calling' from 'callings' to careers or places. The 'calling' doesn't change but 'callings' may change.

In the verse quoted above, Paul says that we are called to be saints. Saints are human beings like you and me, set apart by God, to God and for God. This is a calling to be rather than a calling to do. And it is within the context of that calling that we should set our callings to do, whether it be church pastoral ministry, overseas missionary work, teaching, nursing, accountancy, farming, engineering or mending shoes.

Among these, are there higher and lower callings? Some seem to think so, but surely the highest calling for any particular person is that to which the Lord is calling him or her. And yet, in our churches, we tend to pray for a person who teaches Sunday School rather than the one who teaches every weekday in a school.

A story is told of a cobbler who, as a recent convert to Christ and full of a desire to serve Him, came to Martin Luther and asked him what he should do, "instead of being just a cobbler". Luther asked him whether he was a good cobbler and the man acknowledged that he was said to be one of the best. Luther reportedly said, "Then be a cobbler to the Glory of God!"

We are called to be saints and, within that unchanging calling, we may be called to teach for a time and even perhaps for the whole of our lives in paid employment. If so, let's be good teachers to the glory of Him who calls us.

Lord of sea and sky, I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord, if you lead me and I will hold my pupils in my heart. Amen.

^{*}Os Guinness, *The Call*, (Nashville: Word Publications, 1998) p. 4.