

Called as Companions

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- [0 : 0 0] Called as Companions in Ministry. When I got this topic, I couldn't wait to unpack it. Because I thought as easily as it could be acknowledged, Companions in Ministry, ah, that's nice, good idea, that.
- It could just as easily be ignored. Companions in Ministry, yes. That's for someone else, not me. I'm not in the ministry. Wrong.
- Wrong. Yes, you are. If you've been saved, we are all family. And the family business is proclaiming Jesus is Lord.
- Lord of all, we are here to share that love, that good news, to everyone who needs it and everyone we meet. Well, Companions, today we've read about Paul.
- His skill, his livelihood, his intent-making. He meets Aquila and Priscilla. And as they were tent-makers too, he stays with them.
- [1 : 0 6] He works with them. They found a shared common ground. And they were united in their skills and in their interests. And through that, he used what he knew and was able to meet with the people and preach the gospel.
- And as it says, one night, the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision. Do not be afraid. Keep on speaking. Do not be silent, for I am with you.
- And we read on, he stayed. And when it was his time to leave, he left. And then when we read on, there's a line I like. It says, Paul traveled from place to place, strengthening all the disciples.
- That line I love. I'm going to say it again. Paul traveled from place to place, strengthening all the disciples. And that line I love.
- Strengthening. That's what you want, isn't it? Think of your dearest friend. Think of a companion. Someone who strengthens you, who loves you. That is what you want.
- [2 : 1 1] So today, I'm going to unpack the very title, the very theme, the very three points. So you know how long it's going to be. Called, companions, and ministry.
- Simples. Hopefully. To have your name called. To be called. Let's make a point. David, give us a wave.
- Hi, David. Can't ignore that, can you? I'm pretty loud. You okay? Good prayers earlier. Well done. When you are called, you can't ignore it.
- Unless you are my children. See, I didn't say husband, Damon, see? Think about it, though.
- At school, at work, out and about. Now, if you are called, someone calls you, it's because they want you. It's because they need you. And a call isn't a pleasant, cooey, hello.
- [3 : 1 9] Calling is strong. Calling is loud. Calling is fierce. It's to cry out. It's to shout. It's to yell. To bellow. To roar. I googled. It's to scream.
- It's to shriek. It's to summon. And you certainly can't ignore that. It sounds almost a bit serious, doesn't it? So we are called by God.

The creator of the world has called every one of us. It's pretty heavy, huh? How can we ignore that? The creator God, our saviour, wants us.

Every one of us. So who are we to put our heads in the sand and ignore that? In Jeremiah, there's an experience of being called, and I want to read it to you.

The Lord gave me this message. I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born, I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations.

[4 : 28] Oh, sovereign Lord, I said, I can't speak for you. I'm too young. The Lord replied, don't say I'm too young. For you must go wherever I send you and say whatever I tell you.

Don't be afraid of the people, for I will be with you and I will protect you, says the Lord. Well, crikey. How could he argue with that?

But I don't know about you. I can certainly relate to that. I can't speak. I'm too young. I'm too old. I'm a hundred different things.

But what does God say? Go. I will be with you. Well, okay then, we better go. We are called because he wants us.

And you and I wouldn't call for something if we didn't want it, if we didn't need it. But called to what? John 13, 34, 35. Let me give you a new command.

[5 : 32] Love one another in the same way I have loved you. This is how everyone will recognise that you are my disciples. When they see the love that you have for each other.

We are called to serve God with what we have, with who we are. So if you're a tent maker like Paul, if you're old, if you're young, if you're black, if you're white, if you're quiet or you're loud like me.

If you're happy or if you're sad, God will still use you. Isaiah 43 says, don't be afraid. I've redeemed you.

I have called you by name. You are mine. When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you. When you're in rough waters, you will not go down.

When you're between a rock and a hard place, it won't be a dead end. Because I am God, your personal God. I have paid a huge price for you because that is how much you mean to me.

[6 : 38] That is how much I love you. We are called and we are not alone. Number two.

Companions. I'd like you to take a minute. Think of someone dear to you. Think of someone precious. Think of someone who you can't wait to spend time with, to be daft with, to work with.

Have a think. People who, when you're together, you enjoy each other's company. People, friends, loved ones who support you.

Who follow you with your ideas. Ideas who trust you. And likewise, you would support them. A companion is all of those things and more.

Someone who encourages you, supports you, builds you up. Tells you when you're wrong too. In Genesis, God says, God made us for each other to be fruitful and responsible.

[7 : 44] We have each other. And like in that video earlier. And like in that video earlier. How cool is it that we are all alive on the same planet at the same time. We are born to make a difference.

But it can be easy to get overwhelmed. Feel like we can't do anything. But that is why we have each other. We have you. We have me.

Together we can do anything. What a wise little fella, huh? And he's right. By yourself you're unprotected.

With a friend you can face the worst. Can you round up a third? A three-stranded rope isn't easily broken. The Bible tells us we need each other.

There is strength in numbers and we are called to serve together. Love one another in the same way I have loved you. This is how everyone will recognize you are my disciples.

[8 : 44] When they see the love you have for each other. Number three. Ministry. Now I like this one. I think we can possibly glaze over this one the easiest.

When we read the theme companions in ministry. It's not like we are talking about the vicars and the ministers all being best friends and being each other's companions. Ministry is doing.

Ministry is being active. It's being involved. To minister is to attend to the needs of someone. To provide. To care for. So for example.

Any cog. Any job. Any person. That helps. Just say on. Just on Sunday. Anything you have done. Today. You have ministered.

Any job you have done. Out of love. You have done. Because he loved you first. You have ministered. Anything you do during the week.

[9 : 46] Any driving around for people. Any shopping for people. Any kindness. A thoughtful text. You have ministered because you have shared the love of God.

It might seem small to you. It might seem small to you. But it's not to others. Don't. I'll notice. So talking in the spiritual, what did Paul do?

He went from place to place, strengthening all the disciples. His ministry was to tell the good news of the gospel, to encourage and to build up his companions along the way.

And when we think of Jesus' ministry, we think of what he did, who he got alongside, who he encouraged. While Jesus met with his disciples, we know, believers, non-believers, the confused, the good, the bad, prostitutes, scholars, women, men, children, beggars, the wealthy, the afflicted, rulers, tax collectors, the lonely and the popular.

He encouraged all of them. So what is our ministry then? What is our calling? Firstly, you need to know Jesus as your Lord and Saviour.

[11 : 09] That's the first. And if you don't, and if you're not sure, get sure of it today. There's going to be prayer. Come and be prayed for. There are people that want to pray for you.

And if you do know Jesus as Lord, make sure the Holy Spirit is your companion. See what I did? Link that in. Welcome him in and get to know him.

Then what? Well, how about this? Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the law? Jesus replied, Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind.

This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. Love your neighbour as yourself. All the law and the prophets hang on these two commandments.

And I'm going to say it again. Love one another in the same way I have loved you. This is how everyone will recognise you are my disciples.

[12 : 21] When they see the love you have for each other. We are called to be radical. We are called to be awesome. We are called to do things for nothing in return.

So love one another. Know your companions. Support them. Encourage them. Build each other up. Follow God together.

And together you're stronger. So the good news of the gospel.