

# DEEP CALLING

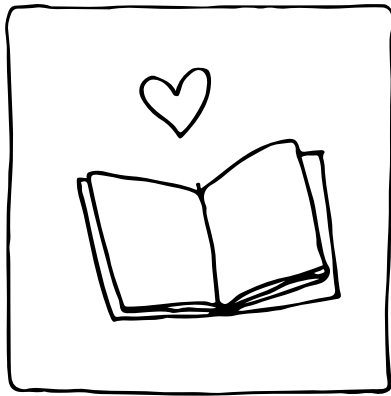
on being & growing disciples

## The Eight Calls of God

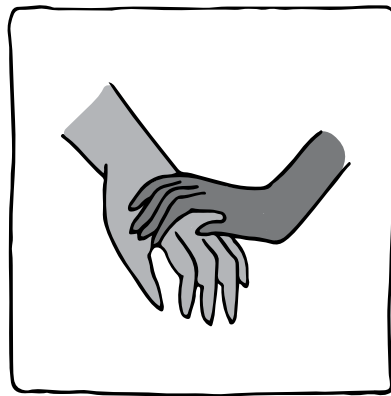
A DEVOTIONAL SERIES

Tara J. VinCross

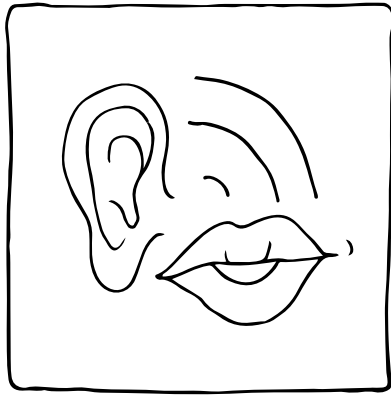




Call to Devotion



Call to Healing



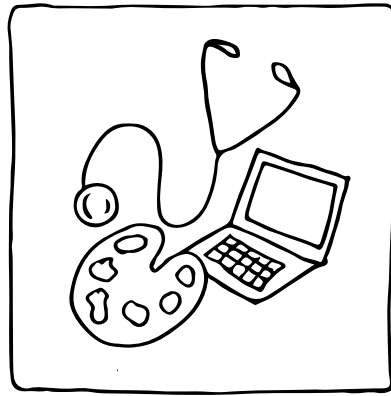
Call to Prayer



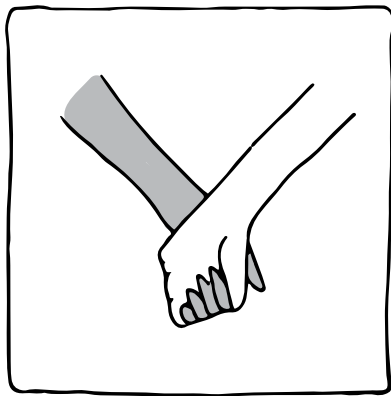
Call to Witness



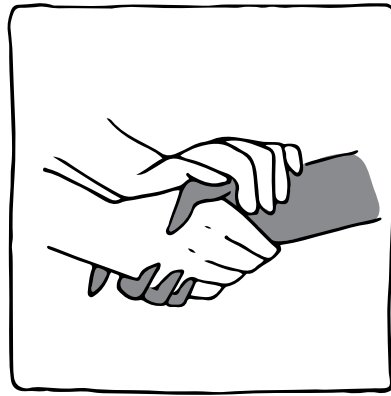
Call to Rest



Call to serve



Call to Community



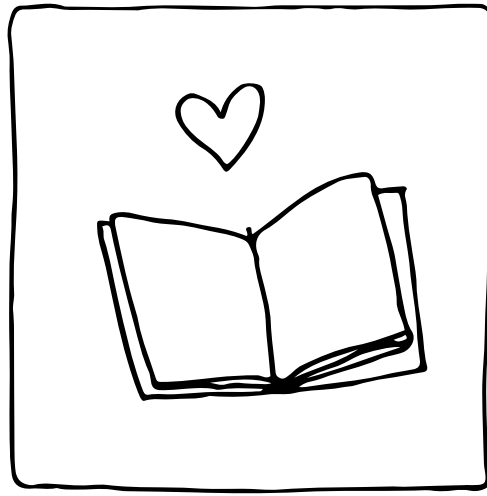
Call to Bless

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## Call to Devotion

*“In this world you will have troubles, but rejoice, I have overcome the world.”*

JOHN 16:33

### **PRAYER**

Dear God,

I turn my heart and attention to you in this moment. I do have troubles – things that perplex me and fill me with anxiety, fear, and pain. In this moment, I turn my eyes to Jesus. I turn my gaze to the One who holds me, and holds it all. I turn to you, and as I look to your Light, Love, and Goodness, I am flooded with delight, joy, and rejoicing. You are the One I seek. Truly, my God, better is one day with You than thousands elsewhere (Psalm 84:10).

I praise you, I adore you. I pour out my heart in love to you.

In the name of Jesus,

*Amen*

### **REFLECTION QUESTION**

How does this text speak into your life today? Is there a way that rejoicing and delighting in God changes how you view the troubles you are facing right now?

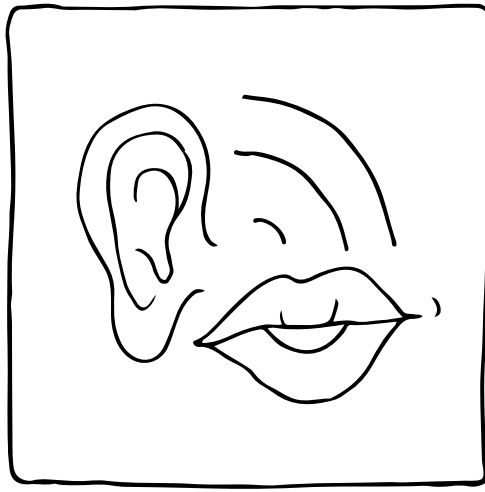
### **ACTION**

Take a few moments to delight in God today. What do you love about God?

Write down these qualities. Take a moment to draw a picture, write a poem, or sing a song in adoration to God. Perhaps you can dance in praise before God, as David did.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE**

Post your picture with #devotion #deepcalling for today and let us catch a glimpse of God’s presence in your everyday life.



## Call to Prayer

*“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.”*

MARK 1:35

### **PRAYER**

Dear God,

There's a reason Jesus got up and spent time with you under the cloak of darkness. Before the other voices began speaking into his life, before the rush of everything to do, before the expectations of others came moving towards him, he heard from you and spent time in connection and conversation with you. I need this so desperately in my life. I need to hear from you, and to know you hear me. Would you please help me to settle down and be still, to know that you are God (Psalm 46:10).

In the name of Jesus,

*Amen*

### **REFLECTION QUESTION**

Take a moment to imagine those moments that Jesus spent in prayer to God. What captures your attention in the prayer life of Jesus? What inspires you?

### **ACTION**

Our hearts need time for quiet communion with God. Get into a quiet space. Put your phone on “do not disturb.” Set a timer for 5 minutes. Open your hands in your lap, bowing your head (and your heart) in a posture of surrender. Begin opening your heart in conversation with God. Pause and listen. Wait before the Lord.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE**

Post your picture with #prayer #deepcalling for today and let us catch a glimpse of God's presence in your everyday life.



## Call to Rest

*“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.”*

EXODUS 20:8-11

## **PRAYER**

Dear God,

I affirm today that I am a human being. To be fully human means to live in a rhythm of rest and work, back to the way you designed me to live at creation. Today, I pray that you would give me freedom in the Sabbath rest. Freedom to find my value and worth in you, not in what I do. Freedom to delight. Freedom to show generosity and hospitality to “the stranger.” Freedom to receive blessing and to bless. From this place of deep rest, may I freely join the redemptive work you are doing in the world.

In the name of Jesus,

*Amen*

## **REFLECTION QUESTION**

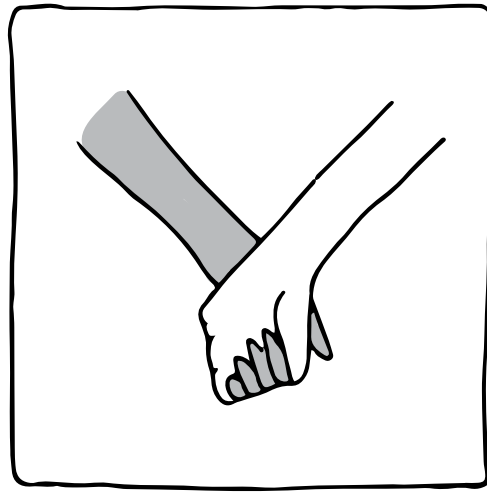
God gave this command to people who had just left slavery. They didn't know who they were because their worth was based on how many bricks they made. Work is not bad; it's what we were designed for, but it's not meant to be the source of our identity or value. Is there a way that your worth is caught up in what you produce? Is there a way God is inviting you to rest?

## **ACTION**

How are you being invited to rest in Jesus today? Mentally? Spiritually? Emotionally? Physically? Pick one act of rest and practice this today.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE**

Post your picture with #rest #deepcalling for today and let us catch a glimpse of God's presence in your everyday life.



## Call to Community

*“Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”*

ACTS 2:46-47

### **PRAYER**

Dear God,

Thank you for the community I have with other believers because of Jesus. In Acts, I see that as the church met, ate, and praised, you brought growth. There was something about this kind of authentic community that attracted not only favor, but a desire to join in. I need this community in my life. I need to remember that you do not call me to follow you alone - you've called me to follow you in community.

In the name of Jesus,

*Amen*

### **REFLECTION QUESTION**

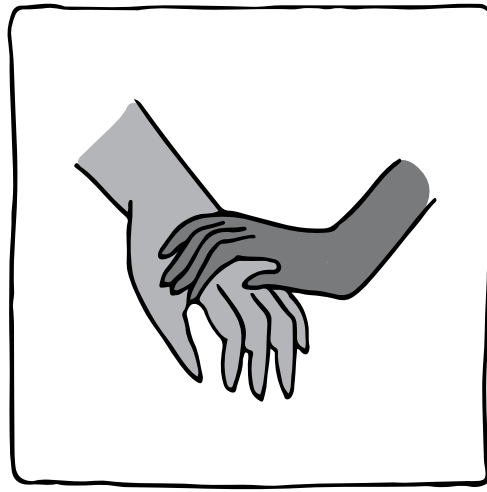
God has called us to live in dependence on God and interdependence with other believers. Is this something that comes naturally for you, or do you find it difficult? What makes it challenging for you to live in community with others?

### **ACTION**

Reach out to connect with someone in community today. Take time to listen to someone else, as well as to show up with vulnerability and honesty yourself. It does take courage - and it's worth it!

### **SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE**

Post your picture with #community #deepcalling for today and let us catch a glimpse of God's presence in your everyday life.



Call to Healing

*“By His wounds, we are healed”*

1 PETER 2:24

*“Do you want to be healed?”*

JOHN 5:6 (ESV)

## **PRAYER**

Dear God,

I want to come into the light of authenticity. I want to stand in this place that I am - the pain, the unbelief, the jealousy, the bitterness, the anger, the unwillingness to forgive - and find that you meet me here. I believe you Jesus. That if I confess my sin you are faithful and just to forgive and purify (1 John 1:9). That by your wounds, I am healed (1 Peter 2:24). Holy Spirit, I sense you asking me what Jesus asked the man at the pool so many years ago, “Do you want to be healed?” (John 5:6). Yes, God. I desire your healing and I open up my heart and mind and life to you, even now.

In the healing name of Jesus,

*Amen*

## **REFLECTION QUESTION**

God invites you to “Draw near and find help in your time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).

What area in your life do you sense brokenness and the need for the healing power of God? In your journey toward healing, how can you be more honest about what you are facing?

## **ACTION**

How can you receive God’s healing? What is one avenue of God’s grace that you can open yourself to today?

## **SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE**

Post your picture with #healing #deepcalling for today and let us catch a glimpse of God’s presence in your everyday life.



## Call to Witness

*“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”*

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18-21

### **PRAYER**

Dear God,

I belong to You. Let the reality of that belonging change me. I know that the longing of your heart is to give me vision and purpose, strength and courage to witness that you are present and active in the world. Please speak through my life. Let my story be an expression of your story, a witness to that which I have seen and heard, tasted and touched in my own experience with you.

In the name of Jesus,

*Amen*

### **REFLECTION QUESTION**

What does it look like for you to bear witness to God’s story through your story? Reflect for a moment on the small and large decisions that you can make in your own life to choose to show up in honest witness.

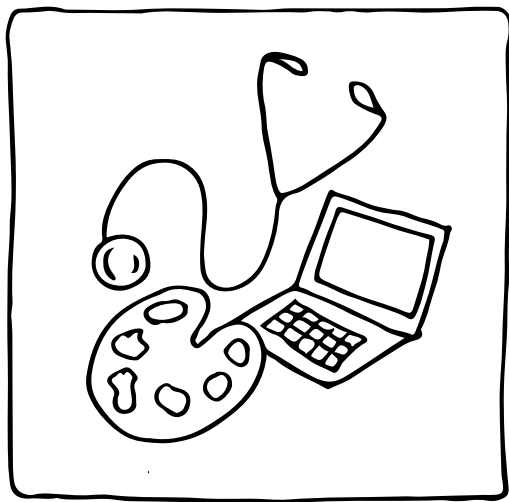
### **ACTION**

Choose one way to share your story, giving witness to the presence of God in your life. Choose one small way to do this today.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE**

Post your picture with #witness #deepcalling for today and let us catch a glimpse of God’s presence in your everyday life.





## Call to serve

*“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’”*

MATTHEW 25:34-36

## **PRAYER**

Dear God,

It is so easy to get overwhelmed by the needs around me. Homelessness, poverty, systemic injustice, food insecurity, natural disasters, mental illness, broken relationships, unemployment, and discrimination are just the “short list” of the challenges we are facing right now. It’s easy to live out the lie that the darkness is overcoming the light. I declare today, God your Kingdom is more powerful! Please help me to persist in hope, even as my heart longs for the complete renewal that will come on the day of Your return. I may not be able to feed everyone, but I can feed one. I may not be able to visit all, but I can visit this one. I may not be able to welcome in all, but this one receives my welcome. All love and hope come from you my God.

In the name of Jesus,

*Amen*

## **REFLECTION QUESTION**

Sometimes we can separate the proclamation of the gospel and the work to relieve the suffering of others. Rick Stearns calls us to “The Whole Gospel” - the good news of Jesus that brings both the proclamation of the gospel and relief for the physical suffering.

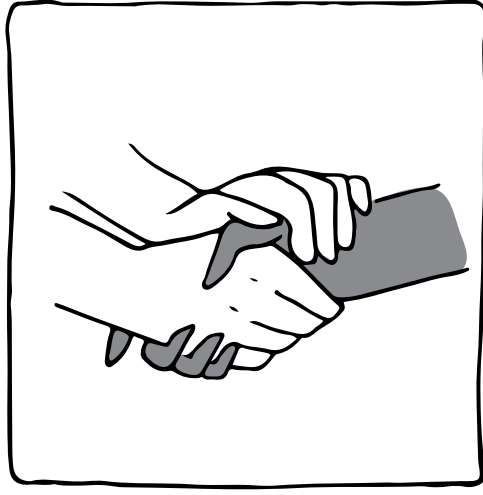
How do you understand the gospel, the good news, through the life of Jesus? What does ‘sharing the gospel’ mean in your life?

## **ACTION**

Choose one thing. What is one thing the Holy Spirit is leading you to put into practice? Is there one way you can relieve someone’s suffering today (through food, drink, welcome, clothing, hospitality, or attention)?

## **SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE**

Post your picture with #service #deepcalling for today and let us catch a glimpse of God’s presence in your everyday life.



## Call to Bless

*“I will bless you, so you can be a blessing. All the peoples of the earth will be blessed through you.”*

GENESIS 12:1-3

### **PRAYER**

Dear God,

Thank you so much for your blessing and your favor over my life. What a gift! I recognize that this blessing isn't meant to stay with me. You want this blessing to extend to everyone I come in contact with. Anchor me in hope today and allow me to be able to speak, act, and live from this place. Sometimes things feel so small and so futile, God. Please give me courage to stand in the gap between what is now and what is coming, in my own life and in the lives of others.

In the name of Jesus,

*Amen*

### **REFLECTION QUESTION**

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you reflect on the question: How does God see me? God “calls into being things that were not,” speaking of them as though they were (Romans 4:17). What do you sense that God wants to call into being in you?

### **ACTION**

To bless someone is to see them, affirm the gift they are, and speak to their potential. To let them know now what they mean to you, instead of waiting until later.

How can you share an intentional blessing with someone else today?

### **SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE**

Post your picture with #blessing #deepcalling for today and let us catch a glimpse of God's presence in your everyday life.