

# How Do You Know God's Called You?

God is calling me to \_\_\_\_\_.

Ever struggled to answer that?

During my student ministry days, I was driving across town with one of my high school students. He was a sharp young man—and still is (er, sharp, not young)—who had already sensed God's call into ministry, I don't remember where we were going or what we were discussing, but he suddenly asked me:

"How do you know you're in love?"

I was speechless for the moment. At that point, I had been married less than ten years, and I was hard pressed to articulate my love for my wife or give a set of bullet points on the signs of love. Earlier this week, I posted this question on my Facebook page: *How did you know you were truly in love?* I made two observations:



1. The only consistent answer came from several guys: "She told me I was in love." (Great. I'm surrounded by comedians.)
2. Everyone had a different marker for being in love (and some could be fodder for a Hallmark movie), and they were as varied as recipes for dressing.

Thirty years ago, I had no social media to lean on. But in my momentary cluelessness, I drew upon one fact about this young man. As a seventh grader at youth camp, he made public his decision to serve God in full-time ministry. He knew God had called him, so I said:

"How do you know God called you into the ministry? It's hard to explain to someone, isn't it? But you know. You sense it. You can't shake it. When you think of other options, you keep coming back to the call. Being in love is like that."

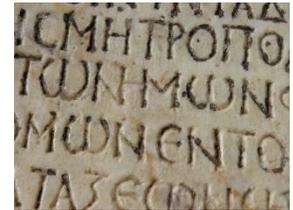
I don't know if my words helped him any, but he has been in ministry for 20+ years and he's been married for just as long.

God has a call for everyone's life, but how can we be clear on what it is? I have recently been working with

Richard Blackaby on a study that will come out next year on knowing God's will. God wants His call on your life to be clear.

- God's Word confirms His will and call for you. Or to state it negatively, God will never call you to do something that is contrary to His Word.
- God confirms His will for you through His body, the church. Other believers see your giftedness and passions and will attest to what they see God doing through you. In fact, other people can often see what God is up to in your life before you do!
- God will use circumstances to affirm and pull you toward His plan for your life.

None of this takes away from faith. You still have to trust Him in what you've read, heard, and see around you. We might think it would be nice if a finger would appear out of the sky and write on a big stone God's plan. Boy, that would be clear and obvious what God wants, right? It still takes an element of faith and trust.



Consider two people who had encounters with the angel Gabriel. Gabriel miraculously appeared to Zechariah and announced he would have a son who would be the forerunner of the Messiah. Zechariah had questions. There was an element of doubt—even with an angel right in front of Him.

A few months later, Gabriel appeared to Mary. He made an announcement to her too—a really big announcement—and while she didn't understand the ways of God is doing this, she trusted.

*"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled!" (Luke 1:38).*

God has a call for your life. Embrace it. You may not fully understand what God is up to at this point, but trust Him. You may not fully understand how God is going to do His work through you, but trust Him. Don't run from His call; embrace it.