

✧ BEGINNING OF MINISTRY SERIES ✧



PAPER 4



THE SEEDS OF *A Calling*



FROM PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION
TO SERVING OTHERS



*Looking back at how a desire to share
what God was teaching me became
the beginning of a life of serving others.*



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SERVANT OF GOD

2026

To God alone be the glory.

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The Seeds of a Calling: From Personal Transformation to Serving Others

Beginning of Ministry Series — Paper 4

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This paper is part of the **Beginning of Ministry Series**, which looks back at the author's earliest ministry work and reflects on how God used personal transformation, a growing understanding of His Word, and a desire to help others as early seeds of a developing call to serve.

Servant of God Christie

Transformed to Serve the Broken as a Servant of God

To God alone be the glory.



Introduction

When I look back at my first sermon from where I stand today, I can see that God was doing more than changing the way I thought. He was teaching me who He is, grounding my identity in Jesus Christ, teaching me to bring what I believed under the authority of His Word, and beginning a deeper work of transformation in me. Paper 3 focused on those beginnings. But something else was beginning too.

Even while I was still trying to understand what God was doing in me, I wanted what He was teaching me to help someone else. When I prepared *Changing Your Thoughts* in 2022, I did not recognize that desire as an early seed of calling. I was not thinking about developing a ministry or what serving God might eventually look like. I simply knew that Jesus was changing my life, and I wanted to share what I was learning.

Looking back four years later, I can see the significance of that desire without pretending that I understood God's plan at the time. I did not. I was still learning Scripture, still being formed, and still discovering what it meant to follow Jesus faithfully. Yet my attention was beginning to turn outward. What God was teaching me personally was becoming something I hoped might encourage and help another person.

I also understand more clearly today that serving God does not establish my identity or determine my value. I belong to Jesus Christ before I preach, teach, write, encourage, or serve. **Service flows from identity; identity does not flow from service.** **Ephesians 2:8–10** reminds me that salvation is God's gift of grace and that the good works He gives His people to do follow from what He has already done for us.

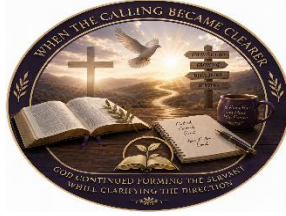
This paper looks back at those early seeds of calling. It traces the movement from personal transformation toward serving others, what God taught me about becoming His servant, the themes He was beginning to develop, and how those themes gradually became a clearer direction.

I did not know where that desire would lead.

God did.

And as the years passed, He continued forming both the servant and the calling.





What God Was Teaching Me Began to Overflow

From Personal Transformation to a Desire to Help Others

When I look back at my first sermon, one of the things I notice most clearly is that I was not talking only about myself. I was sharing what God had been teaching me, but again and again, I turned toward the people listening. I wanted them to understand that the truths I was beginning to discover in God's Word were not only for me. I hoped something God was using to change my life might also help someone else.

At the time, I did not recognize this as an early seed of calling. I would not have described it as ministry formation or said that God was beginning to develop a particular direction for my life. I simply knew that I had spent years believing painful things about myself, and Scripture was beginning to challenge those beliefs.

I was learning more about who God is, who I was because I belonged to Jesus Christ, and why God's Word had greater authority than my feelings, experiences, or the opinions of other people. As those truths began affecting me, I wanted other people to discover them too.

My understanding was still developing. As I explained in Paper 3, there are things from that first sermon that I would express differently today. I had only recently begun seriously studying Scripture, and I still had much to learn. Yet underneath those developing explanations was something genuine: if God was teaching me something that changed the way I understood Him and the way I lived, I wanted to share it.

That desire changed the way I began understanding my own story. For much of my life, painful experiences had influenced how I saw myself and how I interpreted rejection, relationships, love, value, and whether my life mattered.

As God's Word began confronting some of those beliefs, I could begin talking honestly about where I had been while also pointing toward what Jesus was doing in me.



Over time, I came to understand an important distinction: **my story is not the message. Jesus is.** My testimony can describe what I have experienced and what God has taught me through those experiences, but the purpose is not to make me the center. It should point beyond me toward the faithfulness of God.

“Come and listen, all you who fear God, and I will tell you what he did for me.”

Psalm 66:16

I did not understand that as clearly in 2022 as I do today. My first sermon naturally contained a great deal of my personal story because I was speaking about changes I believed God was making in my life. But even then, I wanted the people listening to see more than what had happened to me. I wanted them to consider what God might do in their own lives.

The same thing was beginning to happen with Scripture. When I first began seriously studying God's Word, I was primarily searching for answers for myself.

- I wanted to know God. I wanted to understand Jesus more deeply.
- I wanted to know what Scripture said about who I was and how I should live.
- I needed God's truth personally before I could faithfully share it with anyone else.

But what I was receiving began to overflow.

“Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.” Colossians 3:16

The more I learned about God, the more I wanted other people to know Him. The more Scripture challenged what I had believed, the more I wanted others to examine what they believed in light of God's Word.

The more I began understanding my identity because I belonged to Christ, the more I wanted other believers to understand who they were in Him. Something God was teaching me personally was becoming something I wanted to share.

As the years passed, however, God also taught me that sharing what I had learned carried responsibility. My personal experiences could never become the authority behind what I taught.

My experiences tell what happened to me; God's Word tells us what is true.



My story may illustrate God's faithfulness, but Scripture must establish biblical truth.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16–17

This is one area where I can see significant growth between 2022 and 2026. When I prepared my first sermon, I used Scripture, but I also relied heavily upon Christian books and teachers who had influenced me. At that point, I did not yet have the biblical and theological foundation to carefully evaluate everything I was hearing. Through continued study, God taught me to return again and again to His Word and to take seriously the responsibility of making sure that what I communicate as biblical truth actually comes from Scripture.

I also began learning that helping someone means more than giving an encouraging message. Encouragement matters, but God's Word does more than make us feel better. **Scripture comforts and strengthens us, but it also teaches, corrects, confronts, and calls us to obedience. Faithfully serving another person means pointing them toward what is true, even when truth does more than provide immediate comfort.**

Most importantly, I began understanding that anything I shared needed to point toward Jesus Christ.

"He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less." John 3:30

If I tell someone what I have experienced but never point them toward Jesus, I have only told them about me. If I speak about changing thoughts without grounding that change in God's Word, I have missed the foundation. If I encourage someone to see themselves differently without helping them understand that biblical identity begins with belonging to Christ, I have left out what matters most.

- **Jesus is the One who saves.**
- **He is the One who gives new life.**
- **He is the One in whom believers receive their identity.**
- **He is the One we are called to follow.**

Whatever God allows me to share with another person must ultimately direct attention toward Him.



Looking back, I can now see the progression that I could not see clearly in 2022. God's Word was changing what I believed. What I believed was beginning to change how I lived. As God worked in me, I wanted to tell someone else what I was learning. And as that desire grew, I began learning that testimony must point beyond me, Scripture must remain the authority, and encouragement must ultimately lead people toward Christ.

“You see, we don’t go around preaching about ourselves. We preach that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we ourselves are your servants for Jesus’ sake.” 2 Corinthians 4:5

I did not leave the church after preaching my first sermon with a ministry plan or a clear understanding of my calling. The beginning was much simpler. Jesus was changing me. I was excited about what I was learning, and I hoped what God was teaching me might help someone else.

I did not yet understand where that desire would lead.

But what God was doing in me was beginning to turn my attention toward how He might work through me.

That was one of the earliest seeds of the calling.



Learning What It Means to Be God’s Servant

From Wanting to Help to Learning Surrender and Faithfulness

As my desire to help others grew, God also began deepening my understanding of what it meant to serve Him. In the beginning, helping someone seemed simple. If God had taught me something that helped me, I wanted to share it. If someone was hurting, I wanted to encourage them. Those desires were sincere, but I eventually learned that Christian service requires more than wanting to be helpful.

Jesus is the pattern.

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Mark 10:45



Throughout the Gospels, Jesus demonstrated a kind of service that was not centered on recognition, status, or personal accomplishment. He showed compassion, taught truth, noticed people others overlooked, served His disciples, and ultimately gave His life for sinners. His example challenged me to examine what I meant when I called myself a servant of God.

Serving Christ could not primarily be about what I wanted to accomplish or whether other people noticed what I did. It had to begin with surrender.

“My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20

If my life belongs to Christ, then what He has entrusted to me belongs to Him as well. My gifts, education, experiences, testimony, and what I have learned can all be placed into His hands and used however He chooses. That does not mean every difficult experience happened so that I could someday use it in ministry.

It means I can surrender every part of my life to God and trust Him with what He chooses to do with it.

I also began understanding that calling is not first about finding a title, developing a ministry, or determining how many people I can reach. Before any particular ministry assignment comes the call Jesus gives every disciple:

Follow Me.

“Then he said to the crowd, ‘If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me.’ Luke 9:23

I cannot faithfully serve Jesus while neglecting to follow Jesus. Whatever He allows me to do for someone else must remain an overflow of my relationship with Him.

This is where another truth became increasingly important to me: **service flows from identity; identity does not flow from service.** I belong to Jesus Christ before I teach, write, encourage, speak, or serve. Ministry cannot establish my worth, and another person's response cannot determine whether my life has value.

“God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” Ephesians 2:8–10



God's grace comes first. Service follows.

That truth also began changing the way I thought about results. I can share Scripture, encourage someone, pray, teach, or walk alongside another believer, but I cannot transform another person's heart. I cannot produce spiritual growth.

"I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollo watered it, but it was God who made it grow. It's not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow." 1 Corinthians 3:6-7

God gives the growth.

Understanding that has helped me see both the privilege and the limits of being a servant. If God uses something I do to help another person, the glory belongs to Him. If I do not immediately see a response, I do not have to assume my obedience was meaningless. My responsibility is to remain faithful to what God gives me to do and leave the results in His hands.

Looking back at 2022, I did not understand all of this. I did not know exactly where God was leading me. What I had was a growing willingness to say, **"God, if what You are teaching me can help someone else, use it."**

"Then I heard the Lord asking, 'Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?' I said, 'Here I am. Send me.'" Isaiah 6:8

I now understand that availability mattered more than having every detail figured out. God did not have to show me the entire path before I could take the next faithful step. I could follow Him with what I understood while remaining willing for Him to teach, correct, and redirect me.

And He is still doing that.

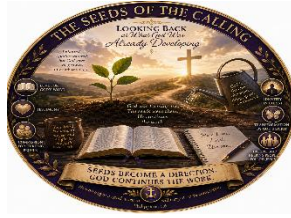
Servanthood is not something I have completed. God continues forming the servant while the servant is serving. **The goal is not simply to accomplish more for Him, but to become increasingly like Jesus while faithfully participating in whatever He gives me to do.**

I was not being called to become important in someone else's life.

I was learning to become available to Christ so that I could faithfully serve the people He placed before me.

As that understanding grew, the early seeds of calling became easier to recognize.





The Seeds of the Calling

Looking Back at What God Was Already Developing

When I look back at my first sermon today, I can recognize things I could not clearly identify in 2022. I did not have a developed ministry plan or understand what God might eventually call me to do. **I was still learning Scripture, still being formed, and still trying to understand the changes taking place in my own life.** Yet several themes were already present that God would continue developing.

I think of them as seeds. A seed contains a beginning, but it does not reveal everything that will eventually grow from it. I do not want to look backward and claim that I understood my calling before I actually did. I can simply recognize what was beginning and how God continued developing it.

One of the clearest seeds was a growing love for God's Word.

When I preached my first sermon, I had only recently begun seriously studying Scripture for myself. I was excited about what I was learning and wanted others to know what God had said. As the years passed, that excitement developed into a deeper commitment to study Scripture carefully and communicate it faithfully.

"Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15

Another seed was testimony. My first sermon was deeply personal because I was describing what I believed God had been doing in my life. I spoke about painful beliefs I had carried and how Scripture was beginning to challenge them. Over time, I learned that my testimony could be useful, but it could never become the center of the message. My story should point beyond me toward the faithfulness of God and ultimately toward Jesus Christ.

"You see, we don't go around preaching about ourselves. We preach that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we ourselves are your servants for Jesus' sake." 2 Corinthians 4:5



God was also developing compassion for people who were hurting. My own experiences made me especially aware of people struggling with rejection, identity, discouragement, and emotional pain. Those experiences do not make me an expert on someone else's suffering, nor do they mean that what helped me will affect another person in exactly the same way. They can, however, teach me to listen more carefully, pray, show compassion, and share biblical truth without pretending that I can do what only God can do.

"All praise to God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us." 2 Corinthians 1:3–4

Another seed was identity in Christ. In my first sermon, I was trying to understand myself differently because of what Scripture said. Over time, I began seeing that other believers can also allow rejection, shame, failure, comparison, circumstances, or other people's opinions to influence how they see themselves.

My understanding of identity also became more biblically grounded. Identity in Christ is not simply replacing negative thoughts with positive thoughts about ourselves. It begins with Jesus Christ—who He is, what He has accomplished, and what it means to belong to Him.

"Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory." Colossians 3:1–4

The seed of transformation continued developing as well. In 2022, I often understood transformation primarily through changing negative thoughts. I eventually learned that God's transforming work is much greater. He works throughout the whole person—our thoughts, desires, attitudes, priorities, relationships, character, and obedience.

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect." Romans 12:2

The goal is not merely to feel better about ourselves. God is forming His people increasingly into the likeness of Jesus Christ.



“For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.” Romans 8:29

Finally, these themes began coming together in discipleship. I had started with a desire to share something that helped me. As my understanding grew, I realized that serving another believer involves more than giving information or encouragement. Jesus calls His people to make disciples.

“Jesus came and told his disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” Matthew 28:18–20

A disciple learns to follow Jesus, grow in relationship with Him, obey His teaching, and increasingly live according to His ways. That realization helped bring the other seeds together.

God's Word provided the truth.

My testimony could point toward His faithfulness. Compassion affected how I approached people who were hurting. Identity in Christ helped establish who believers are because they belong to Jesus. Spiritual formation helped me understand God's continuing work of transformation. Discipleship focused those truths toward helping people follow Christ.

What had appeared to be separate interests gradually began forming a recognizable direction.

I still did not know exactly what God would ask me to do or what ministry would eventually look like. But looking back, I can see that the seeds were there.

- The love for God's Word remained.
- The concern for hurting people remained.
- The importance of identity in Christ grew stronger.
- My understanding of transformation became deeper.
- The desire to help others follow Jesus became clearer.

“I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. It's not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow.” 1 Corinthians 3:6–7



I did not create those seeds, nor could I make them grow. God used His Word, other people, study, experiences, correction, and opportunities to continue forming me.

The seeds were not evidence of what I had accomplished.

They were evidence that God was still at work.

And gradually, those seeds began pointing toward a clearer calling.



When the Calling Became Clearer

God Continued Forming the Servant While Clarifying the Direction

The seeds were present before I understood where they were leading. I wanted to know God, understand His Word, encourage people who were hurting, and share what He was teaching me. But recognizing those desires did not mean I immediately understood my calling. **Clarity came gradually as God continued forming me.**

One of the ways He clarified that direction was through continued study and theological education. When I preached my first sermon, I did not have the theological language I have today. I knew God was changing me, but I did not yet understand how the gospel, identity in Christ, spiritual formation, discipleship, community, suffering, service, and mission fit together.

As I studied, I began receiving language for things I had experienced but could not previously explain. I came to understand spiritual formation more deeply as God's continuing work of forming believers into the likeness of Jesus Christ. **I also saw more clearly the importance of Scripture, the Holy Spirit, prayer, obedience, Christian community, and service within that process.**

"So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image." 2 Corinthians 3:18



Education did not create the calling. It helped clarify what God was already developing.

It also corrected me. I discovered ideas I had accepted too quickly, Scriptures I needed to understand more carefully, and assumptions that needed to be examined. Learning more did not simply prepare me to teach others. It continually reminded me how much I still needed God to teach me.

My understanding of calling changed too. Earlier, I often thought about calling primarily in terms of **what God wanted me to do**. Over time, I began understanding that calling starts somewhere deeper.

Before I am called to a particular ministry assignment, I am called to belong to Christ and follow Him faithfully. (Ephesians 4:1)

Ministry roles and opportunities can change, but my first responsibility remains following Jesus. That realization removed some of the pressure to identify one perfect ministry position or understand my entire future. I could recognize a direction while still holding my plans with open hands.

Clarity did not mean completion.

God was still forming me, and He still is. I needed to remain teachable, continue studying His Word, pray, obey, and allow Him to correct or redirect me. I could not see everything I can see now in 2022, and what I understand today does not mean I have finished growing.

“And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.” Philippians 1:6

My understanding of discipleship also became clearer. I began by asking, **“What can I share that might help someone?”** Eventually, the question became deeper:

“How can what I share help someone follow Jesus?”

That difference matters. Information can be received without changing how someone lives. Biblical discipleship points people toward Jesus and encourages them to respond to God's truth through faith, obedience, dependence upon Him, and continued growth.

I also realized that I cannot help others follow Jesus while neglecting to follow Him myself.



"Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:4-5

The person serving is still a person being formed. God does not finish forming the servant before allowing the servant to serve. He continues teaching, correcting, humbling, and developing us along the way.

When I look back at the woman who preached her first sermon in 2022, I do not see someone who had her calling figured out.

I see someone who was beginning to say yes.

- Yes to God's Word.
- Yes to learning.
- Yes to sharing what He was teaching me.
- Yes to serving.

And yes to allowing God to determine where those steps would eventually lead.

The seeds were becoming a direction.

The next step would be learning how to walk in it.

Closing Reflection

I Wanted Somebody Else to Know Him Too

When I began looking back at my first sermon for this series, I expected to notice how much my understanding had changed. I knew I would see places where my theology was still developing and truths that four additional years of walking with God and studying His Word had deepened.

What I did not expect to notice as clearly was something much simpler.

Even while I was still trying to understand what God was doing in me, I wanted somebody else to know what I was learning about Him.

That desire is what this paper has been about.



The seeds of calling did not begin with a ministry name, position, degree, website, or carefully developed plan. They began while I was still being formed. I was learning who God is, discovering His Word for myself, beginning to understand who I was because I belonged to Jesus Christ, and learning what it meant to follow Him.

Somewhere in that process, my attention began turning toward others.

I wanted people who were hurting to know there is hope in Jesus. I wanted those struggling with their identity to discover what God's Word says. I wanted believers to know that God continues His transforming work in His children.

Most of all, I wanted somebody else to know Jesus.

Looking back, I can see that God continued developing that desire while He continued forming me. What began as a desire to share something I had learned gradually became connected with God's Word, testimony, compassion, identity in Christ, spiritual formation, discipleship, and service.

But through everything God taught me, one truth became increasingly important:

My story is not the center. Jesus is.

My testimony should point toward Him. My teaching should point toward Him. Anything I say about identity must begin with Him. Anything I teach about transformation should lead toward becoming more like Him. Anything I understand about discipleship should help people follow Him.

I do not want people to finish reading my story primarily thinking about what I survived, studied, created, or accomplished.

I want them to see the faithfulness of God.

I also understand that I cannot produce the results of ministry. I can share, teach, encourage, pray, plant, and water, but God gives the growth. **(1 Corinthians 3:6–7)**

That truth keeps the glory where it belongs. If God uses something I do to help someone, the credit belongs to Him. If I cannot see what He is doing, I can still remain faithful. My responsibility is to follow Christ and faithfully steward what He places before me. The results belong to God.

When I preached *Changing Your Thoughts* in September 2022, I did not know where any of this would lead.

I simply knew that God had begun changing me, and I wanted to tell somebody else.



The seed was small.

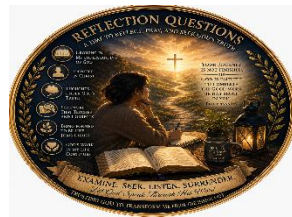
The calling was not yet clear.

But God was already at work.

I did not know everything that was ahead.

I only knew that God had brought me this far, and my responsibility was to continue following Him.

To God alone be the glory.



Personal Reflection

Recognizing the Seeds God May Be Growing

As you have read about the early seeds of calling in my life, take some time to prayerfully consider your own journey with God. Your story will not look like mine, and it does not need to. God works in His people in different circumstances and gives different opportunities to serve. These questions are not meant to help you find a ministry title or compare your calling with someone else's. They are an opportunity to consider what God has been teaching you, how He has been forming you, and how what He is doing in your life may overflow into serving others.

1. What has God been teaching you that is changing your own walk with Him?

Think about the truths God has used to deepen your understanding of Him, correct something you believed, strengthen your faith, or change the way you follow Jesus. Before God uses us to serve others, He is continually at work forming us.

Scriptures to Consider: Romans 12:2; Philippians 1:6

What God May Be Asking You to Consider:

Am I allowing what God teaches me through His Word to change the way I think and live, or am I only gaining more information about Him?

2. How might what God has taught you be used to encourage or serve someone else?

God's work in your life is personal, but it does not always end with you. Consider whether there are truths He has taught you, experiences through which He has strengthened you, or ways He has shown His faithfulness that could encourage another person. Your story does not become the authority — God's Word remains the authority — but your testimony can point someone toward Him.

Scriptures to Consider: 2 Corinthians 1:3–4; 1 Peter 4:10–11

What God May Be Asking You to Consider:

Is there something God has entrusted to me that I have been keeping only for myself when He may be inviting me to use it to serve someone else?

3. Am I willing to serve God even when no one notices or responds?

Serving Christ is not about proving your value, receiving recognition, or becoming important to someone else. Your identity is already secure in Christ. Faithful service means being willing to obey God whether the assignment is visible or hidden and whether you immediately see the results or not.

Scriptures to Consider: Mark 10:45; Colossians 3:23–24

What God May Be Asking You to Consider:

Would I still be willing to do what God asks of me if no one thanked me, recognized me, or told me that what I did made a difference?

4. What seeds might God already be developing in your life?

Look for patterns rather than trying to determine your entire future. What biblical truths continually capture your attention? What needs in other people consistently stir compassion within you? What gifts, experiences, opportunities, or areas of spiritual growth might God be developing? A seed does not reveal everything that will eventually grow from it, and you do not have to understand the entire plan before recognizing that God may already be at work.

Scriptures to Consider: Ephesians 2:10; 1 Corinthians 3:6–7

What God May Be Asking You to Consider:

What has God repeatedly placed before me, and am I willing to prayerfully pay attention without trying to control what it must eventually become?

5. Am I willing to follow Jesus before I know where He is leading me?

Calling does not begin with having every detail figured out. It begins with following Jesus. You may not know what God will ask you to do years from now, but you can faithfully respond to what He has placed before you today. The question is not whether

you can see the entire path. The question is whether you are willing to trust the One leading you.

Scriptures to Consider: [Luke 9:23](#); [Isaiah 6:8](#)

What God May Be Asking You to Consider:

What is the next faithful step God may be asking me to take, and am I willing to obey Him even if I cannot yet see where that step will lead?

As you finish these questions, do not feel pressured to identify a calling, ministry, position, or plan. Instead, ask God to help you recognize what **He** is doing. He is the One who forms His people, gives gifts, opens opportunities, and produces spiritual growth.

The seeds in your life may look different from the seeds in mine. What matters is not that our stories look the same, but that each of us remains available to Jesus Christ and faithful with whatever He places before us.



A Prayer for You

Father,

I pray for the person reading these words. You know their story completely. You know what You have been teaching them, where they are growing, where they are struggling, and the things You may already be developing in their life that they cannot yet see. Help them understand that they do not have to know the entire path before they can faithfully follow You. Teach them to recognize Your work without comparing their journey with someone else's. If You have placed gifts, compassion, experiences, or opportunities before them, give them wisdom to surrender those things to You and use them in whatever way brings You glory.

Remind them that their value does not come from what they accomplish, how many people they help, or whether anyone recognizes what they do. If they belong to Jesus Christ, their identity is found in Him. Let their service flow from knowing You and loving You rather than from a need to prove themselves.

Give them a servant's heart. Teach them to love people with compassion, remain faithful to Your Word, and point others toward Jesus rather than themselves. When they cannot see the results of their obedience, help them trust You with what only You can do.

And if You are asking them to take a step of faith, give them courage to say yes. May they remain available, teachable, humble, and willing to follow wherever You lead.

In Jesus' name, **amen.**

A Prayer of Thanks to God

Father,

Thank You for allowing me to look backward and recognize what I could not see while I was living through it. Thank You for every truth You taught me, every correction I needed, every person You used, and every step through which You continued forming me.

Thank You that the calling was never something I had to create for myself. You were already at work before I understood what You were doing. What began as a desire to know You became a desire for someone else to know You too. Thank You for taking those small beginnings and continuing to shape them according to Your purposes.

Keep reminding me that anything You allow me to do belongs to You. My story belongs to You. My education belongs to You. My writing, teaching, testimony, gifts, and opportunities belong to You. I do not want any of them to become more important than the One they are meant to serve.

Thank You most of all for Jesus. Without Him, there is no message for me to share, no identity for me to find, no transformation I can produce, and no ministry worth building. Keep Him at the center of everything I do.

Continue forming me while I serve. Correct me when I am wrong. Humble me when pride tries to enter. Teach me to depend upon Your Spirit rather than myself. Help me remain faithful whether anyone notices or not and never allow me to take credit for growth that only You can give.

Whatever You choose to do with the seeds You planted, the calling You clarified, or the life You have given me, may it point people toward Jesus Christ.

To You alone belongs the glory.

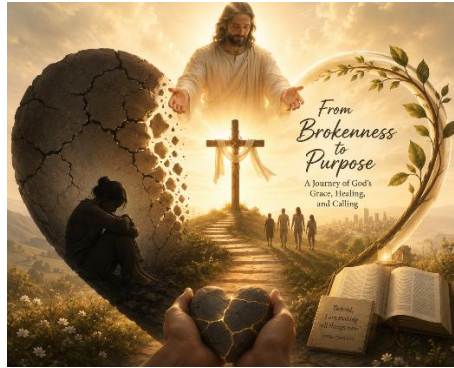
In Jesus' name, **amen.**



Prayerfully prepared by
Christie Johnson

Christie Johnson
Servant of God

"Pointing people to the hope, healing, and transformation found in Jesus Christ."



Continue the Journey

Philippians 1:6

The seeds were present before I understood what they would become. What began as a desire to know God, share what He was teaching me, and help someone else gradually became a clearer call to serve.

But recognizing a calling was only the beginning.

In **Paper 5 — *When the Calling Became a Ministry: Learning to Walk in What God Was Calling Me to Do***, I continue the story by looking at what happened when those early seeds began moving beyond desire and into action. I will reflect on the steps God led me to take, the ways He continued preparing and forming me, and how my growing understanding of ministry began taking a more recognizable shape.

I still did not know everything that was ahead. I simply continued taking the next step God placed before me.

The seed had been planted.

The calling was becoming clearer.

Now I had to learn what it meant to walk in it.

The journey continues in Paper 5.

To God alone be the glory.

