

Opportunity or Order?

When a person is enlisted in the military they learn to take orders – no questions asked. In the workplace directives are also given by supervisors. The employee is expected to comply with what they are told to do.

It is entirely different with our faith. God doesn't order us to comply with his commands or volunteer to serve. It is our choice whether or not we follow and serve Him.

So, which of the three is the strongest commitment? In the military the response is an enthusiastic "Yes, Sir," but if not said loudly enough the enlisted man has to say it again. The response has to be bold and decisive, even if not the person's choice. The employee also is expected to acknowledge the assignment to be sure he or she understands. But, with God, it is entirely up to us whether or not we accept God's invitation. It is a matter of choice.



So, how does God ask? One of the more familiar Bible verses is from Isaiah 6:8, which reads: *Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"* In the scripture passage Isaiah heard God saying, "Whom shall I send." God didn't direct that request to anyone in particular but to people in general. A call from God is not for a select few, but for everyone. In reality, only some people will step forward and accept God's calling. But, those who do are showing the strongest commitment of all: free will is a decision made by the person from the heart. They know in their heart it is the right thing to do, and not just what they are told to do. And, they unquestionably trust, respect and worship their leader – God.

A critical part of answering the call is proximity. Isaiah was in the presence of God when he heard God asking for those willing to serve. Are you in the presence of God enough to hear when He calls you?

God provides us with many opportunities to serve. He doesn't single out anyone and say to them: "You, go." There is no forcing or pleading. Instead, God places opportunities in our path and equips us with the skills to accomplish the task. The Holy Spirit instills in our heart the will and receptivity to serve. Our spiritual attitude determines if we hear the call. It is up to us whether or not we accept that opportunity.



We accept the call because we are close enough to God to know what He wants us to do and are receptive to serving Him. "Here am I. Send me!"

Scripture: *Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me (John 12:26).*

Question: Are you in the presence of God enough to hear His call? Are you willing to accept God's call to serve?

Prayer: Dear Lord. We pray that we will seek to be in your presence so that we will understand what you want us to do and then answer your call. Amen.