4. Calling

Learning Objectives

- To understand that the Great Commandment is the Calling of every Christian.
- To understand that the Great Commission is also the Calling of every Christian.
- To help participants identify their areas of influence.

Welcome [5 mins]

Welcome the group to this session, recap the last session and review how the challenge went.
The challenge was to look for an opportunity where you can give up something or take up something.

🏸 **Bonus Game:**
Select a game that will best suit your group and setting. Consider games this week that fit with the theme of instructions and telling someone what to do.

> ***Pray for the session***

Introduction [10 mins]

Icebreaker: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up and why?

Have you ever asked yourself: “why am I here?” At some point in life, we all wonder about the meaning of life, our purpose, or our calling. In this session, we’re going to explore what “calling” means, and how we can find our purpose in life.

📌 **Activity:**

[Source items beforehand – bring in a couple of different tools. E.g. Power tools, DIY tools, craft tools. The more unusual, the better.]

Ask the group if they know what the tools are used for.

Imagine you had never seen *one of these tools* before but you discovered it hidden away in your loft or garage. **How would you try and find out what it was meant for?**

You might look at the shape, or how it moves. You could try searching for an instruction manual. You could try to Google it. But the best way to find out what something is for is to ask the person who designed it. In the same way, if we want to find out what we were made for, then the best place to go is to our creator – God.

Our culture tells us that we can discover our own meaning within ourselves, and yet at the same time, people are more confused about who they are and what they are here for than ever. God was kind enough not to leave us guessing but to give us some clear signposts by writing them down in the Bible, our instruction manual... of sorts.

There were a couple of times in Jesus' life where he summarized what we are here for. One of them is called the **Great Commandment** and the other **Great Commission.** As we'll see, they link together amazingly well.

Bible Focus [25 mins]

🕹️ **Bonus: – Memory Game [10 Mins]**

Play your favourite group memory game. Think about how many of those things in the game you could remember.

📽️ **VIDEO - Bible Project video "The law" 0:00 – 0:50**

There are 613 laws/commands given to Israel in the first 5 books of the Bible. Imagine trying to remember all of those! On top of that, some of the religious leaders in Jesus' day created extra laws to stop people from coming close to breaking the commandments – it was impossible to follow!

At one point, a religious teacher came up to Jesus and asked a very important question.

📖 **Read Matthew 22:36-40**

"Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which 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 all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Encourage everyone to leave their Bibles open at this passage.

Jesus said all 613 laws can be summed up in just *two*, thank goodness!

What were they?

Make sure to draw out that they were to Love God and love our neighbour.

Share with the group what you love doing the most.

In pairs, share what you love doing the most.

Ask a couple of people to feedback

Now share with the person next to you what food you love the most.

Ask for some feedback

"Love" is a funny word in the English language. We can *love* chocolate, and we can *love* our families, we *love* a tv show, and we can *love our* husband or wife. The word "love" doesn't always mean the same thing. So, when Jesus says we have to "Love" God, we have to work out what that means.

> Imagine that your best friend moved to Australia and you hadn't seen them for a whole year. As a surprise, they managed to travel back to the UK for just one day. It doesn't matter what plans you had for that day; you would cancel them to see your friend. OR if you like football – imagine your Dad rang you and said a work colleague had tickets to the Champions League final, and your team is playing, and he's asking if you want to go? It doesn't matter what you had planned for that day, you would cancel!

We can often work out how much we ***love*** something by what we're willing to give up for it.

For example, the Bible says in;

📖 1 John 3:16
"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters."

Jesus showed us how much he loved us by even giving up his life.

Going back to the Matthew 22 passage, Jesus said that the purpose of our lives is to love God.

What three things does Jesus say we have to love God with?

Get feedback

Jesus said our purpose was to love God with our HEART, MIND and SOUL. To the Jews of that day, those three words represented the complete and total being of who we are and what we do as humans.

How much of our heart, mind and soul do we need to love God with? Some of them? Most of them? = ALL of them!

SO really simply. Our purpose. My purpose. Your purpose in life - the reason why we were made, our ultimate and first calling in life is-to KNOW & LOVE GOD with ALL that we are and have.

📌 **Bonus [7 Mins]**

Read John 15:4-5
"Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Jesus said staying connected to Him was the key to living a life that bears fruit.

So, how do we do that?
Refer back to the "Discipleship" session.

How do you think we can grow in our love for God?
How can we know God better?

Jesus said that Loving God was linked to the second command he mentioned, which is to "Love others as yourself." The more we encounter the God who died for the world, the more we will be motivated to GO and love others in the world ourselves.

The Great Commission:

> Think about what it's like getting ready for school/college in your house on a really busy morning. When you've got something especially important that you need to remember that day your parents are likely to remind you as one of the last things they say. For example, just before you leave, they might say "make sure you deliver that letter", or, "remember I will be collecting you for the dentist'".
> The last thing we tell someone is often the most important thing we want them to remember.
> E.g. How often do we say "I love you" to our families before going on a journey?

After Jesus rose again and was about to return to heaven, he shared some final things with his disciples. We can assume those last few things he said were also important.

📖 **Read**

Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Acts 1:8
"*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

Amongst Jesus' final words is a command to ***go*** and make disciples and be a witness to who Jesus was and what he said: "to the ends of the earth". This does include other cultures and countries but also your town, your school, your clubs and your family.

This is what Christians call "THE GREAT COMMISSION".

How do we do this?...

One of the main ways we can do this is by sharing the gospel and our story with others as we talked about in the "Gospel" and "Sharing our faith" session. However, it's not just when we are sharing our faith with someone directly that we are obeying the Great Commission. We can use all areas of our lives to build God's Kingdom. That includes everything from our jobs, our family and our hobbies.

📽️ Video **- Fruitfulness on the frontline (LICC)**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SyMMfyy3FDE

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God calls all of us to reach out to others, to speak about Jesus, and to follow how God is calling us. He gives us all individual callings, which enable us to play our part. Everyone's role will look different, we're not all called to the same thing. You have unique opportunities, personality and giftings. You are uniquely placed to reach the people you are surrounded by.

It's not just about volunteering at Church on a Sunday, it's about praying for those people who have nothing, it's about giving up your pocket money to buy a homeless person lunch, it's about telling your friends at school that Jesus loves them when they don't think anybody else does.

📽️ **Bonus Video [3 Mins]**

Watch this video together.

Idris Elba + Purdey's Presents: Thrive On - What do you want to be when you grow up?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJ4slo3UZfw

Testimony: [5 mins]

Have one of the leaders share what walking in their calling looks like for them. Encourage them to focus on how their unique gifts and opportunities contribute to what they do.

Application: [15 mins]

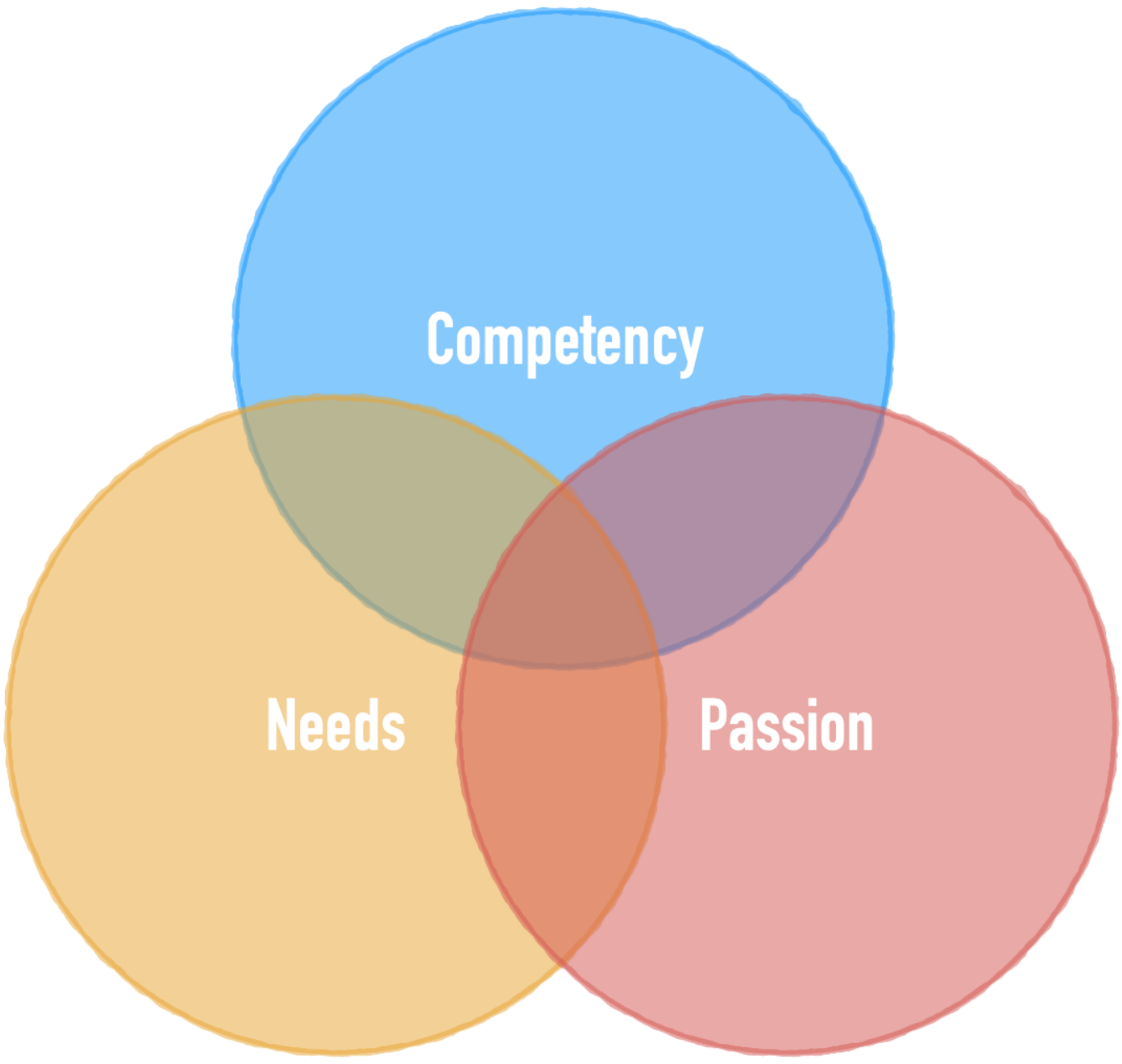
When we're young, we often have a dream, something we want to be when we're older. But as we go through life those dreams can fall away. It's easy to stop imagining what life could be like, as we go along with "normal" and get caught up in the busyness of life.

God gives each of us dreams and passions, and he wants to use those unique gifts that he's given us to further his Kingdom. Today, we want to spend some time asking God about how we can use our gifts and passions to serve him.

Remind everyone that we don't expect you to have a 10-year plan of your life sorted today: we want you to start the process of asking God the areas he wants to use you.

Activity: Competency - Needs - Passions

Use PPT slide or draw the three circles diagram on a whiteboard or flipchart paper.



Explain that one of the ways we can do this is to think about these three areas:

Competency

- Activities that you are good at doing. This doesn't mean you have to be perfect at this activity, but you may have a natural talent for it.
- Things you know how to do, but others struggle with.
- Things that you have learnt to do.

Needs

- People around you who are worse off than you.
- Parts of culture that don't align with God's ways.
- Parts of the world that are struggling.

Passion

- Activities that you love doing/being part of.
- Stuff that stirs you and you want to challenge in society.
- Desires that you find hard to express.

Activities that relate to all three areas are often the place where you will have the greatest influence. It's also where you are likely to be able to keep serving long term.

Print out and hand out "Competency - Needs – Passions" sheets and give young people time to fill them in. See Appendix.

***Feedback -** Encourage people to feedback about what they've written. Specifically, focus on where those three areas crossover and how that links to the idea of Calling. Affirm those ideas that correctly connect those three areas and the idea of Calling. If they've misunderstood what we mean by Calling you can gently clarify what it could mean for them.*

Conclusion & Challenge [2 mins]

When we ask the question "What am I here for?" or "What is my calling?", as a Christian we can boil it down to living out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. Each of us can live that out in a unique way that matches our unique gifts, passions and the needs around us. But remember, even our best actions don't mean anything unless we are following the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

Challenge:

Your challenge before the next session is to think and pray about an idea or project you could do this year that would contribute towards the Great Commission and relates to each of the three circles on your sheets.

Share some examples to inspire and spark their creativity.

> ***Pray to end the session***