

# Marks of Authentic “Call”

## **It Feels Like Good News!**

Life-giving, energizing, and satisfying. It genuinely excites us. Not coming from a place of “should,” “ought,” or “must.” We *want* to do it. A sense of joy feels dominant and abiding.

## **A Sense of Mystery**

Curiosity and awe are present. There is a sense of serendipity coming from “beyond” ourselves. The Spirit of God *within* feels connected to the Spirit of God in the extended world.

## **It Feels “Right”**

There is a sense of authenticity in pursuing it, and a feeling of being “made for this.” There is no need to “fake it.” You can pursue it while still being “true” to yourself.

## **Feels Too Big**

Initial feelings of inadequacy and perhaps even resistance: “Who am *I* to do this?” It is not an ego trip, but something that requires your *surrender* to God’s will in order to find the courage to do it.

## **Persistence Despite Fears**

We are never completely sure that we’ve got it right, and we are acutely aware of the possibility of failure. Nevertheless, we cannot seem to stop ourselves from moving in this direction.

## **Won’t Go Away**

It keeps coming up, even when we try to move in a different direction. It tugs at us inwardly, and external events seem to conspire in ways that keep putting it in front of us.

## **Clarity of Purpose**

Our sense of purpose and our understanding of what is needed feels holistic, nuanced, and clear. We see the next steps we need to take, even if we don’t know where they might lead us.

## **Open-Ended & Dynamic**

Develops, adapts, expands, and deepens over time. It is fluid; new circumstances and contexts present new layers of understanding. May lead us to places we could never have expected.

## **Produces Growth**

Enhances our inner being. We are stretched. Through the work, we become more whole. We are healed, even as we are healers. In this sense, “call is salvation” (O’Comer, *Cry Pain Cry Hope*).

## **Costly**

Requires us to become mature and take responsibility. We develop boundaries around the expectations of others, and learn to say “no” to the things that pull us away from our call.

## **Countercultural**

May not seem “rational” or “successful” according to our families or conventional wisdom. As an expression of God’s values, it puts us in conflict with the social, political, and religious status quo.