

## The Unrepentant God

August 22, 2016

In the last week, I attended a writer's conference in Portland, Oregon. It was my first writer's conference and I was inundated with lots of information and lots of ideas. I am only now beginning to process the materials and ideas presented in the week.

But there was one thought, one idea that settled in my mind about mid-way through the conference – that there is a purpose and a design to the work that God has for me. A passage of scripture came to my mind on Wednesday and I have not been able to shake it since. The passage is a verse from Romans.

Romans 11:29 says, ***“For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.”*** (ESV) While the passage was written in the context of discussing the role of Israel in the divine plan, I have understood this passage to refer to the calling to ministry that God expresses in the lives of those he calls to serve.

When I was 14, I experienced a call of God to the ministry – and at the time I understood it as a call to the pulpit, to preach. I have always believed that God's call was definite, certain and without recension. God has never withdrawn his calling and his gifting of me. God is unrepentant toward those he calls to serve.

When I left the pastoral ministry in the fall of 2014, without a pulpit to preach and a congregation to pastor, I started to feel that I had turned my back on my calling, that I was no longer a minister serving in the kingdom of God. I was plagued with some self-doubt and concern that perhaps I had made a mistake.

I left the pastoral ministry seeking opportunity to teach and to write. I thought that was “less than” the call to preach. This past week I was reminded that I am still called to minister within the kingdom of God. The focus of my ministry has changed but my calling to honor God with my service and my life has not.

My ministry now is comprised of nurturing, teaching and imparting grace to theological students who are training to enter the professional ministry. My ministry is inclusive of sharing my thoughts about life, God and spirituality through my blog and through my writing. My ministry is to express in writing thoughts that will shape and touch people's lives with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I thought at one point in the last several years that God was done with me and that my calling “expired”. However, I was reminded last week that God is unrepentant – he does not change his mind on his calling and his gifting of his servants.

I am so glad that God's gifts and his calling is without repentance. I am called of God to impart grace – in the first part of my life in the pastoral ministry and now in this phase of my life, to impart grace through my thoughts, my writing and my teaching.

Join me in praying that I will always value the calling of God in my life...and that you will discover and live out your calling as well!