



## The One True Destination Trap

Excerpted from [A Leader's Life Purpose Handbook](#) by Tony Stoltzfus

In [The MapQuest Paradigm](#) article from back in June we talked about how clients can get stuck thinking that there is only one right route to their calling—that one wrong turn dooms me to missing it. A similar trap coaches must be aware of is when clients unconsciously believe that

there is one right calling *destination* as well as one right road to get to it. There is only one place I must get to that will suffice, one perfect role to fill, or one particular task to **complete to fulfill my life call. It's pretty obvious** how that kind of thinking gets people tied up in knots. I've worked with several individuals who felt God had shown them the one right person they were called to marry—and then that person went off and hitched up with someone else! What do you do with that?

So what should we expect calling to look like? Is there just one certain role in a particular town with a certain organization doing exactly the right thing that represents your call? In short, no. Calling is not primarily a *destination*—it is an *incarnation*. The call is to embody something of Christ. The task is the channel. While there is a life task that best channels your call, it can come in many different flavors.

But this flexibility in the destination goes even further. At any moment, God takes whatever you are and whatever you have chosen to that point and works with you to **make the most of it. If you choose course 'A', he will take whatever that makes of your life, roll it into your call and work to help you maximize it. If you choose the opposite thing, he will take what that makes you and partner with you to make the most of it.** *Calling is not a static, predetermined destination, but a dynamic, adaptive journey.* God actively recalibrates our calling after each choice, to take into account what he has to work with. We actually partner with God in our life purpose, and our choices shape the plan and the destination—and yet all was foreknown by a God who stands outside of time and sees all days as one.

From a human perspective, God continuously adapts our call to our choices. From a divine one, he foresees every choice and his plan accounts for it. The mystery of

receiving a call from a God who is outside of time is complicated.<sup>1</sup> However, the practical application is simple: we do the best we can to follow the best we know of our call, assured that God is working with us to make things turn out according to his desires. Nothing we do wrong or that's done wrong to us can thwart that.

Abraham's life is a good example of this principle of God dynamically recalibrating your calling based on your choices. When God called Abraham to "go to the land that I will show you," the promise was to "this land." After Abraham separated from Lot, and chose to hold his inheritance lightly instead of trying to make it happen, God appeared to him again, and told him that all the land in sight to the north, south east and west would be his. Then, after Abraham rescued Lot from the warring kings and refused to take the spoils of Sodom (another good choice), God appeared to him again and promised him the land "from the River of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates"—and then named nine additional tribes that his descendants would dispossess.

See the pattern here? As Abraham obeys and grows in character, the revelation and scope of his call grow with it. God adjusts Abraham's call on the fly based on his

### Coaching Calling Failure

Here are some coaching questions (or personal reflection questions for use as an action step) for the client who feels s/he has failed or been unfaithful to a call:

- *"If God redeemed your call like he redeemed your life, what would that mean?"*
- *"God doesn't wipe away all the consequences of our failures. Let's say you have to deal with some lasting fallout from this. How might God weave that suffering into your call?"*
- *"What life message might come from this failure that would embody Christ to the world?"*
- *"If you started fresh now, and didn't worry about what was behind but focused on what lies ahead, what could you accomplish with your life?"*

<sup>1</sup> I'm using the idea of human and divine perspectives here to keep us from getting hung up on free will versus pre-destination. God dwells outside of the river time, in the timeless; so from his perspective, every moment happens in front of the same spot on the riverbank. We flow by in time, but he stands still and sees all. For the great I AM, there is no past or future—everything is now. But from a human perspective, each moment is new and unforeseen. We make choices about the direction our lives will flow, and our future is the product of those choices. That's how free will and predestination coexist without conflict—it's a matter of your frame of reference.

choices (again, keeping in mind that we are describing this from a human perspective). Obedience expands your destiny.

*This article is an excerpt from the life purpose coaching manual, [Leader's Life Purpose Handbook](#) by Tony Stoltzfus*

