

BIBLICAL AND CANONICAL GROUNDS FOR ASSUMING THE FULFILMENT OF MAN IN THE ECCLESIAL MINISTRY

Abstract

This text explores the path towards human fulfilment in ecclesial ministry. It sees man's call to growth as a path to realizing one's God-given potential. Although sin obscures this call, God gently guides man toward renewal, culminating in Christ's restorative work. Seeking the kingdom re-orientates one's priorities toward eternity and aligns personal gifts with God's will. The Church nurtures these gifts, making each believer a vital, responsible member of Christ's Body. Through partaking of grace, one becomes a witness to the world. However, authentic Christian living requires continual purification. The calling to priesthood represents the pinnacle of service through total dedication. Chosen for their maturity and theological grounding, priests devote themselves completely to equipping believers for ministry. Necessary qualities include blamelessness, prudence, and virtuous living. Pastoral ministry starts from an inner call later confirmed by the Church. One who feels drawn to service and theological study discovers through this process a crystallization of vocation, assuming responsibility for living out God's gifts.



Keywords

fulfilment, vocation, Ministry, Church, Priesthood

Introduction

Human, created in the image and likeness of the Creator, received from God the command to grow (Gn 1:28) (Rose 2001, 102), which is, in fact, a call to fulfilment. Unfortunately, by obeying his instincts rather than the Word of God, he became an accomplice to degradation, as a result of breaking of bond of trust in which he has been placed.

God could not leave humanity unfulfilled and therefore He announced the way by which it would be restored to its former glory (Gn 3:14), but without setting a time limit, valuing man's free participation in his own renewal. Beyond temporal constraints, the Heavenly Father has embarked a journey together with man, over the course of decades of discreet pedagogy, through a work of love, patience, perseverance, forbearance, and in some cases also of firmness.

In the fullness of time, when a young woman was able to overcome her understanding and say, "Let it be to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38), the Path of Renewal was opened to her (St. Athanasius the Great 1987, 100).

From this readiness to accept the call, untainted by human resistance, God has begun the work of restoration of man and the whole creation, as the Good Friday Troparion tells us (*Mineiul pe Martie* 2001, 187). The attitude of the Virgin Mary was cherished and honoured by the Saviour, showing that all humanity was included in this participation in the economy of salvation (Evdokimov 2004, 180). When the woman in the crowd said "Blessed is the womb that bore you and blessed are the breasts that you sucked!" (Lk 11:27), the Saviour showed that all who listen to the word of the Lord and fulfil it share the same blessing (Lk 11:28).

By listening to and following the path opened by the Word of God, man comes to live the fulfilment of the potential placed in him.

Each one of us should be concerned with how we can reach fulfilment and understand how we can be workers towards fulfilling what God has placed in us as potential.

The human journey towards the valorisation of inclinations and the discernment of vocation and calling

From a very young age, human beings are confronted with an avalanche of inclinations and urges. Some are God's gifts placed within the human being (Larchet 2001), others are instinctual developments, and many are influences of the environment. It is very difficult for a man to distinguish between these and, unfortunately, if he is not given genuine criteria for discernment early on, years of his life can be wasted in useless or even destructive wanderings, which can lead to waste, discouragement and despair.

By listening the voice of conscience and the will of God in the concern not to thwart the grace by which Christ is co-worker in our perfection (2Cor 6:1), man comes to distinguish between the different callings and to advance towards fulfilment, to come

to the assumption of the call of callings, the choice of life, which can also be called vocation.

This work of progress towards fulfilment is actually a service, a participation in the fulfilment in us of what God has placed as potential. Each person can also participate in the fulfilment of those around them, through support anchored in values and virtues.

The servant does what the master asks. His participation is one of willingness and of obedience. For this reason, when a man enters into the logic of service, he must be aware that he is abandoning his own will and falling into the will of the one in whose name he is striving (Tseleghedis 2015, 44). In this process it is not a matter of abolishing one's own will, but of a participation, through availability and faith, in a work that is above man.

Christ The Savior framed his ministry in this paradigm. He shows before us the perfect model of obedience (cf. Jn 5:30) and the symphony between the mind of the Almighty and the work of man.

Man, being aware of the potential for the fulfilment of his life through the Father's Fatherly work, needs not obsessively desire to acquire certain achievements which he considers important. He must seek a fulfilment in which his inner life meets God's will, and from this sincere association all else will flow, overcoming the problems he faces in life (St. John Chrysostom 2007), separating himself from the worldly, as St Paul tells us: "I exhort you therefore, brethren, for the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, as your spiritual worship, and that you not be conformed to this age, but be changed by the renewing of your mind, that you may know what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect".

Seeking peace and peace of mind as the Psalmist urges us (Ps 33:13), we will find ourselves on the authentic path of life. This point is also emphasized by the Holy Gospel when it speaks of the advice given by the Saviour to those who care for the things of the world (Mt 6:25-34). The answer is also a clarifying word on how we should relate to different callings, quests, needs and expectations. Even if, at first reading, this pericope would give the impression that man does not have to worry about food, clothing and other necessities of life we are shown that the only truly essential concern is the search for the Kingdom (St. Theofilact of Bulgaria 2007, 202). Everything else, which God knows is necessary, is added because of the orientation towards the eternal. Interestingly, Christ only asks us to seek the Kingdom, he does not ask us to find it.

From this state of seeking the high will come the giving of the temporal things necessary for daily life.

If we have a search that is based on stable foundations, in the coherence of the Christian conscience, the Lord comes to meet us, bringing us the fruits of the Kingdom.

We can thus understand that man advances towards fulfilment when he lives in peace and tranquillity, a sign of communion with God's grace (St. Basil the Great 1986, 257), in all that he does, through which he advances towards salvation and the knowledge of the truth (1Tim 2:4).

The knowledge of truth is not only about the external world but also about man himself. Coming to know our potential is part of our vocation, an important step in understanding how we are to relate to the choices we make in life so that we synchronize them with God's life-giving work.

To encourage us on this journey, St. Peter the Damascus says: "According to knowledge, it is man's choice, and this is the beginning of salvation. It consists in man's forsaking his wills and thoughts and fulfilling the wills and thoughts of God. And if he can do these things, there shall not be found in the whole creation a thing or occupation or place that can prevent him from becoming as God from the beginning has wished him to be, according to His image and likeness, and by his endeavour God through grace, fearless, just, good, and wise, whether in riches, or poverty, or virginity, or in marriage, whether in government and liberty, or in subjection and bondage, and simply speaking, in every time, place, and thing" (St. Peter of Damascus 1976, 30-1).

The spiritual search for gifts during life

In human relationships, when we make ourselves available, we ask how we could be of help. We should do the same in our relationship with God. When a man seeks fulfilment, it is natural to ask what his life is for. How can he make his life a fulfilment of what God blesses?

The difference between God's response and man's response is that Heavenly Father sees in us the potential for fulfilment in all its complexity, whereas man has only certain immediate expectations.

So, we need to understand that God's answer to our search is not a human one. He enhances in us the gifts we have so that the service we propose is also our fulfilment. Rather than responding to us articulately through a particular path that he suddenly opens, he waits to see how we have the capacity to work with the gifts placed in us. He

blesses our openness to different ministries, one at a time, that prepare us for fulfilment in ministry, tailored to each person.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul testifies that God gives man grace according to the gift (Eph 4:7). In the Epistle to the Corinthians, the same Apostle exhorts us to covet the best gifts (1 Cor 12:31). By putting these verses together, we can see the way by which man can distinguish between the gifts that are set before him: We each have the freedom to desire, to covet the gifts that are pleasing to our heart. At the same time, we should understand that only gifts that are from God receive grace and bear genuine fruit.

It is appropriate for a man to have the initiative and the zeal to carry out projects that seem good to him and according to his heart. To the extent that they are a gift from God, they will receive grace and will come to fruition. If they are not fulfilled, they will fade away, but desired with a clear conscience, they can be turned into a life experience, which orients man on a path from which other genuinely fulfilling opportunities can open towards a vocation which initially might even be unimagined.

Many inclinations, aptitudes, passions or preoccupations come to be seen as stages of life, apparently without much consistency, but which influence the human journey. As long as they are received honestly and with spiritual balance, even if they will not all accompany him in the long term on the road to fulfilment, they will participate in completing the beauty of the picture of life. All that is needed is that on this journey, the inward movements are not contrary to the conscience, values and principles that man receives through the grace of birth from Water and Spirit.

The Church, the communal reality in which man is fulfilled

The Church, the communion of those who assume Christ in their lives, the icon of the Kingdom (Bobrinskoy 2003, 80) is shared with us, through the mysterious work of grace, as the framework in which we participate in the Trinitarian life (Şelaru 2014, 13) advancing towards a co-working with God. In this dynamic all believers are involved, each one with the task of making the divine image fruitful in him, progressing and achieving a life of communion (Şelaru 2014, 301) in which each one assumes service and accepts to be served.

When the Church welcomes a new member into its bosom, from the very first prayers offered for the one “called to holy enlightenment”, the request for an active involvement in the life of the Church is obvious, the priest asking God that he become

a worthy soldier, a devoted servant of Christ (Aghiasmatar 2016, 20-1). The prayers that precede immersion ask God that the man will be able to make the Gifts of the Holy Spirit work in him, “and increasing the deposit of grace, to take the reward of the high calling and to be counted among the first-born enrolled in heaven” (Aghiasmatar 2016, 42).

Each person has the potential to be a living member (Aghiasmatar 2016, 30), with an effective role in the life of the Church. In the prayer that the priest makes at the haircut during the Baptism Service, the similarity of this gesture to the investiture that the prophet Samuel performs in the name of God for David (Afanasiev 2008, 64) is explicitly stated. Thus, we can understand that by working with grace in the settlement to which God calls us, we each have the potential to become an apostle, increasing the deposit of grace (Bulgakov 1952, 156), and making every life in Christ an apostleship.

Together working with God is confirmed and strengthened by co-working the Grace that establishes and perfects man in the attitude he has assumed. At the same time, we must understand that for Grace to be at work it must meet the will of man committed to the path of the Kingdom.

Nowadays it is more important than ever that every Christian assumes responsible participation in the life and ministry of the Church. Each of us must understand our role as a living member of the Body of Christ in a world where people act as if God does not exist (Ciubotea 2009, 217). The revelation of the likeness of God through conscious and committed participation in the life of the Church makes the Church itself to be perceived by society as a dynamic, peace-making and fruitful factor through the facts that prove Christ active in the world.

Every layman, sealed with the seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit, is a bearer in the world of the Spirit's fruits, which are as St. Paul shows us in his Epistle to the Galatians: “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, purity” (Gal 5:22-23). Such attitudes cannot be restrained by anyone or anything, “against such things these there is no law” (Gal 5:23). They are means at the disposal of every Christian by which the world can be transfigured.

Every believer who participates in the life of the Church becomes a sharer in grace and is chosen to carry this ministry into the environment where he or she spends most of his or her time, in his or her personal surroundings and at work.

Those who participate in the sacramental life and share in the holy works are people of the Kingdom and, as the Saviour shows us in the parable about the Kingdom of God, are that dough mixed with three measures of flour to leaven all things (Lk 13:21).

The Church must assume the role of the yeast that leavens the dough (Mt 13:33). Like the flour, each person receives the leaven of the kingdom, to be integrated into the dough which is in turn leaven for all humanity.

Believers who participate in the life of the Church acquire a vitality that is transmitted beyond the testimony of the community. For this to bear fruit, there must be a constant concern for the purification of attitudes, so that witness may be edifying and holy.

St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans, 11, confirms this understanding (“If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches.” – Rom 11:16) and warns us about the danger of pride that taints the leaven. “Your boasting is not good. Don’t you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch - as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.” (1 Cor 5:6-7).

Thus, the mission of the Church depends on the purity and authenticity of each Christian’s testimony.

In this ministry, we must be concerned about making the Savior Christ the worker, extinguishing any claim of merit on our part that might lead to damaging seediness.

If a person is ready to respond to God’s call, he can become a bearer of Christ to the extent that he abandons himself, takes up his cross and follows the one who called him (Mk 8:34).

Christ, respecting freedom, invites us to participate in his work to the extent that we deny ourselves and follow Him. The assumption of the call is very important because it is only through the good use of freedom that the commitment is fully at work. If there were any compulsion, man’s participation would not be full, it would be corrupted in its content.

Ecclesiastes tells us, “Before men are life and death, and whichever they choose will be given to them” (Eccl 15:17). In the book of Deuteronomy God says through Moses, “See, I have set before you today life and death, good and evil. For I command

you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws so that you may live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are about to take possession.” (Dt 30:15-16). In keeping with this understanding of human freedom, St. Paul speaks to us about how we must make our choices in order to remain in the Lord's work.

“So then, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election certain, for by doing this you will never fail.” (2 Pt 1:10).

We are thus invited to lay a serious foundation for our choices, aware that by assuming what God puts in our hearts we cannot fail. For this reason, it is important to let God renew in our innermost being the Righteous Spirit, who has been placed in the human heart since the building. This spirit of discernment makes desire naturally meet what God addresses to us as a call.

The first consequence of assuming the call with a pure heart and in complete freedom is the renunciation of all that clouds those within us.

Each person's self is besieged by a multitude of states, habits, weaknesses, and conditionings, inherited or acquired from the lives far from Christ, to which those before us and the environment in which we live have made us partakers. Through the investigation of conscience and the continuous renewal of our lives, we can come to this self-denial and say with St. Paul: “I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live in faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal 2:20).

Once this state of cleansing from all that is selfish is reached, man can look within his heart and discern the deep calls that are addressed to him. There man meets his own cross, which he must bear following Christ on the path of apostleship.

Often the word “cross” and the expression “bearing the cross” are used in a sense that emphasizes primarily the sufferings and difficulties of life. Indeed, man is called to take up the cross, to crucify his own will, out of love for the world and the fulfilment of God's commandments. At the same time, we can ask ourselves how this understanding can be reconciled with the rosary that we take part in every Sunday on All Saints' Day, when we adore the Resurrection, confessing that “through the Cross, joy has come to all the world” (*Catavasier* 2000, 50)?

Can the call to carry our cross and thus follow Christ not also be understood as a call addressed to every Christian to participate responsibly in the salvation of the

world by cultivating the gifts that God has placed in him and by responding by making these gifts fruitful?

Since each person is God's gift to the world, for the world to be renewed, each person must take honest and responsible responsibility for his life, understanding his purpose, cultivating it and bearing fruit every day (Lk 9:23). Every day of our lives is thus a participation in the work of salvation.

We cannot be true Christians if we do not take this attitude. Whoever does not try to understand his mission, to cultivate it honestly and to make it work, does not honour the name of Christian and, unfortunately, makes Christ a disgrace. For this reason, we can say that the man who does not cultivate the gifts with which God has endowed him to do the work of Christ is not worthy of the name of Christian: "He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me" (Mt 10:38).

Once we have discerned the call and the gifts within us, we will be able to help those around us also to discern the call and to put the gifts to work towards fulfilment.

The calling of the priesthood, the highest stage of human fulfilment in ministry

Priesthood was assumed by the Church through an extension and rediscovery of the meaning of the Law. The Old Testament priest was the one whose mission was to offer sacrifices for the people.

In the New Testament, priesthood is no longer understood in the same sense. In Christ, each one brings the sacrifice of his own life and integrates the whole of humanity into it. Christ is the one who sacrifices and who sacrifices Himself through each person who receives Him. But He has chosen persons to make explicit this work of continuous sacrifice until the end of time. From among the people, the Church chooses the most courageous, with the power of testimony, for a ministry of forerunners on the path of service.

Clerical ministry is a ministry of service, primarily to integrate into the ministry of the Church those who are available for service at whatever level. To be able to carry out this ministry, the clergy must assume a state of sacrifice, offering and dedication. Priests chosen and ordained by the Church for a distinct ministry are, as St. Paul says in his Epistle to the Ephesians 4:12-13, "to the perfecting of the saints, to the work of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith

and in the knowledge of the Son of God attaining to the state of perfect man, to the measure of the fullness of the age of Christ”.

Pastoral ministry is materialized based on an interior call, crowned by the choice for ministry that the Church makes through ordination. It is very natural and blessed for a man, as St. Paul tells us, to covet the gift of the priesthood, and to desire it with all his heart. If this desire seals a gift from God, the Lord will give grace commensurate with the gift. All that is needed in this process is that the strengthening of the readiness to serve be done with all the heart, not in the form that one can imagine but in the way that God considers that man can fulfil his mission.

He who feels the inner call to study theology and follows this urge advances towards understanding how the various ministries are carried out in the Church. The theological knowledge and the pastoral formation he follows should open him to understanding the complexity and beauty of Church life and the complexity of ministry. During this formation, the call is put to the test and the vocation to service is crystallized as the culmination of a life lived responsibly.

Priestly ministry is prepared for those lay people who have an honest life, a good name, a thorough theological training and have come to the responsible assumption of fulfilment either in family life or in the monastic path.

At the time of ordination, the future priest makes a solemn confession before the Church: bishop, clergy and people confessing that he fulfils the conditions that St. Paul sets forth in the Epistle to Timothy, chapter 3 stating that he is “blameless, a husband of one wife, watchful (*νηφάλιον* – prudent, moderate in desires – Bailly), wise, decent, hospitable to strangers, apt to teach others; not given to wine, not fond of beating (non-aggressive), not greedy of ill-gotten gain, but gentle, peaceable, not fond of money, keeping his household well” (1 Tim 3:2-5).

St. John Chrysostom, in his 10th homily to the First Epistle to Timothy, explains these requirements. Regarding the irreproachable life that a candidate for the priesthood must have he says: “Using the word *blameless* he (Paul) understands all virtues. So that he who is conscious of committing sins is wrong if he desires the episcopate (pastoral ministry), from which he has excluded himself by his deeds; he is to be guided, not to guide others. He who leads must be brighter than a flame and have a spotless life, for all eyes are on him and his life” (St. John Chrysostom 2009, 40).

A tarnished reputation carries with it the risk of bringing reproach upon the Church and therefore such a person should not be called to the priesthood. Saint

John Chrysostom goes so far as to consider that even unproven accusations that cause confusion among the people should be considered when choosing a cleric. He asks rhetorically and he answers: “What if a man is pursued by mischief, and certain circumstances draw him into slander? It may happen to be so, but that person must not be elevated in dignity (priesthood, our note) because there is danger of disturbance” (St. John Chrysostom 2009, 42). The pastor must live a blameless life even in the eyes of those outside the Church, so that “outsiders”, although they slander him for the faith, may value him for his way of life (St. John Chrysostom 2009, 41).

Canonical tradition has assumed and deepened this understanding by requiring that ministers be chosen from among those who live blamelessly, have a good reputation, and have not defiled their lives with fornication or other dishonest acts. The Church has been and is concerned that the reputation of the whole family of clerics should not be tarnished and that their way of life should uphold the Church’s ordinances. For this reason, so that their lives should not encourage second marriages or concubinage, 18 Apostolic Canon prohibits the calling to the ministry of a person married to a widow, and still more of one married to a woman of bad reputation.

From the earliest days of the Church, the faithful were called to service in several stages, through which their vocation was strengthened and matured. The first obligatory stage was to understand the faith. Since in the early centuries, many people were baptised as adults, the Church tried to prevent the desire to become a Christian from being affected by the desire to become a clergyman or a minister in some ecclesiastical rank. For this reason, those who had not participated in the lengthy catechetical formation preceding Baptism and the newly baptised were not called to ministry.

In addition to understanding the faith through knowledge of the Scriptures and the writings of the Holy Fathers, those preparing for the priesthood need to strengthen their spiritual formation in a framework of spiritual witness. He who is thinking of dedicating his life to this mission must be concerned about receiving testimonies from those already living in the ministry. At the same time, understanding how experienced priests carry out their mission is not meant to offer ready-made solutions, but to make us understand how God worked through them and how they knew how to entrust themselves to God’s work.

The mission of shepherding is a ministry of human nature placed at God’s disposal so that His work may continue in the world until the end of time. The priest does not do his work but leads the faithful to God’s work and helps them to undertake

it. He is called to give his own life to lead the spiritual flock to the perfect nourishment of God's work.

Rev. Dumitru Stăniloae points out that the person who assumes the priesthood must give himself to Christ, as Christ gave Himself to the Father. He shows that the priesthood in Christ receives meaning through this internalization of sacrifice: "from the power and according to the likeness of the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ, presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to the Lord, and as our spiritual service", like the body of Christ (Rom 12:1). This is our priesthood and sacrifice in the power and likeness of the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ. It is not the world that man has to offer to God first as a sacrifice, as a priest, but himself. It is in this sense that Saint Peter links the "royal priesthood" of those who believe in Christ with their duty to proclaim in their being "the virtues of Him who called them out of darkness into His enlightened light" and "to abstain from the lust of the flesh, which is against the soul" (1Pt 2:9-11). Only by becoming holy sacrifices do we also enter the Father, that is, into communion with Him. But only in Christ can we enter this communion with the Father. This shows the extension of Christ's holy sacrifice in us, to make us also, not without our cooperation, holy sacrifices and, since Christ as a sacrifice is also priest, priests in close union with him" (Stăniloae 1997, 70).

Christ identifies Himself with those chosen for His manifestation in them, saying: "He who listens to you listens to Me, and he who disobeys you disobeys Me" (Lk 10:16) "and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mt 28:20). Thus, by integrating man into priestly ministry, the human person is assumed as a means of sharing in the ministry of Christ.

Speaking of the sacramental priesthood, Father Stăniloae points out that the Church and salvation in Christ depend on it because it is through those who have been called to the priesthood that the faithful receive the Mysteries of the Kingdom. It is through those chosen into the priesthood that Christ Himself is the worker. The work of those sent by Him is the work of Christ, the teaching of those is also the teaching of Christ. For this reason, the priest has no reason to take pride in the fulfilment of his mission because "priests are ministers of Christ's saving ministry. They give of themselves nothing but service" (Stăniloae 1997, 101).

Through the call of the sacramental priesthood, man receives the grace that makes him an icon of the sacraments of God. The pastor integrates the service of the community into his ministry. If every Christian is a member in part of the

ecclesial body whose head is Christ, we can say without hesitation that every believer is integrated into the priestly ministry. Through priests and their followers, the Kingdom of God is mingled with the world, so that all mankind may receive the leaven of reunion with God (Mt 13:33). It is also important to understand that the priesthood is a sacrifice to those around us.

The priest is a support for the community he leads. Through the servant, man must feel encouraged and supported to understand the sacramental ministry of the Church, through which the Kingdom becomes accessible to us here and now. All that is understood, however, awaits to be translated into life, and therefore the pastor is also a support to help the believer to be a witness of the faith through the works of life so that the Lord may be glorified through their ministry (cf. Mt 5:16). Priests need to be able to make the faithful understand the importance of their participation in the whole priestly ministry that Christ is fulfilling in the world. This mission can only be undertaken successfully if the shepherd carries it out wholeheartedly, aware of the greatness of the mission but also the richness of God's love poured out through him into the world. Father Stăniloae draws attention to this by saying that "if priests do not serve wholeheartedly, they not only fail to carry out the saving work of Christ as they should but to a great extent they hinder its fulfilment" (Stăniloae 1997, 102).

Conclusion

Human fulfilment lies in realizing one's potential according to God's purposes. This requires seeking first God's kingdom rather than worldly ambition. As we align our gifts with eternity, we discover our unique vocation. The Church plays an indispensable role in nurturing gifts and empowering believers to witness through imparting grace. Thus, the Body of Christ equips people for service. However, authenticity demands continual self-examination and purification.

Pastoral ministry represents the epitome of service because priests fully devote themselves to preparing others for ministry. Initial inner calls find eventual concrete actualization through theological education and the Church's confirmation. Embracing the call to ministry means completely relinquishing a self-directed life to live out God's will. This path of self-denial leads to the cross of responsibility yet also joyful purpose as our potential harmonizes with holy designs.

Since every believer receives God's commission to serve in some capacity, we each must seek personal fulfilment in Christ by cultivating our gifts to build up

others. Our vocation awaits discovery through the process of placing ourselves at the disposal of divine intentions. In summary, human fulfilment coincides with responding wholeheartedly to God's call, thereby aligning our lives with eternal Kingdom priorities and allowing our gifts to shine in humble service within Christ's Body.

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