

Something to Pray About

September 2014 – Cindy Sears

Then Moses said to the people of Israel, “See, **the LORD has called by name** Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.”
—Exodus 35:30 ESV

Names, Names, Names

In the Read Thru the Bible plan I am in, I was directed to read in 1 Chronicles in the Old Testament. Practically, the first 12 chapters of this book are nothing but lists of names—from Adam to Abraham to a list of the warriors of David, the King of Israel. Names, names, and more names! Why all these lists of names of individuals and families and their duties and feats of heroism in the Bible? Generations of people and their service to the temple and to the nation of Israel are listed. Why are all these names listed in the Bible—God’s holy Word? What is the significance of this aspect of the History of Israel and of God’s people? There are even lists of individuals by families and by occupation.

Our God cares for us as individuals within families that are working in the world. He calls us by name. He knew us before we were conceived in the womb. He calls us—summons us to faith and to obedience and to service in all aspects of life—relationships, work, and worship. Our God is a god of people. Our God cares for each one of us. He numbers all the hairs of our heads. He collects our tears in a bottle and promises to one day wipe them all away. Our God inspires people to do great and mighty things as individuals and in groups. Our God uses us—weak, fearful, vacillating, doubting—people to transform the world and restrain the evil in it. I know of no other religion that has such an abundance of individually named people in its sacred writings.

So, why all these names, all these lists, of people and families, jobs and contributions to God’s work on earth? Because we count to God—I count; you count. We are so important to God, you and I, that He sent His only Son, Jesus, to die for each and every one of us! How amazing is that? Does any other religion, does any other god, does any other philosophy, does any other governor, and does any other master, care so much for each and every person who has been born or ever lived on this earth?

¹³ **For You formed my inward parts;**

You covered me in my mother’s womb.

¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made;

Marvelous are Your works,

And *that* my soul knows very well.

¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You,

When I was made in secret,

And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

¹⁶ Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.

And in Your book they all were written,

The days fashioned for me,

When *as yet there were* none of them.

--Psalm 139:13-16 NKJV

⁶“Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. ⁷**But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.** Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. --Luke 12:6-7 NKJV

⁸You Yourself have recorded my wanderings.

Put my tears in Your bottle.

Are they not in Your records?

⁹Then my enemies will retreat on the day when I call.

This I know: God is for me. --Psalm 56:8-9 HCSB

⁸The Sovereign Lord will destroy death forever! **He will wipe away the tears from everyone's eyes** and take away the disgrace his people have suffered throughout the world. The Lord himself has spoken.

--Isaiah 25:8 GNT

¹⁶**God loved the people of this world so much** that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die.

--John 3:16 CEV

2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. **He calls his own sheep by name** and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. —John 10:2-4 NRSV

As you see in the quote from Exodus next to the title of this article, God calls us by name for specific service. (Bezalel used his artistic skills to help design and decorate the Tabernacle of God.) Everyone that God calls into His kingdom through the power of forgiveness in Jesus Christ is also called into service in that Kingdom here. Jesus died to save each one of us; we serve in joyful obedience. We are all in full-time ministry for God—not just pastors and missionaries. “Serve the Lord with gladness...enter his courts with praise” (See Psalm 100).

Have you found your place of service in this church? Have you heard God’s call at your place of work? Do you use your skills and talents for God’s glory and to further His kingdom’s work? He calls you by your name. Are you listening? Will your name be written down in the history of faith, in God’s history of the kingdom’s work on earth?

Suggested reading: *The Call; Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life* by Os Guinness. This is an excellent examination of what it means to be called by God into salvation and into His service.

