



# SHARING SCRIPTURE

## Discover • Jesus • Together

### God's Call

**For use:** Oct. 13 - 19

**Texts:** Ezra 7:10; Nehemiah 1:1-11; Daniel 8; 9:24-27; Romans 8:28, 29; 9; Exodus 3, 4

Amanda took a call that would sink most people. She didn't know that she would be thrown in over her head the first day on the job. In fact, the Seattle dispatcher was actually completing a final test when she took the domestic violence call that led police on a wild goose chase through several cities. But last Thursday she was ready and had one of the greatest qualities needed for this position—a calm demeanor.

KOMO news reports, “Stetz said she was drawn to being a dispatcher through an eagerness to help people and figured her calm demeanor and the fact that she’s a mother was a good fit for the position. ‘I feel like it’s served me well so far,’ she said. ‘In the moment, you just focus on what you’re doing and you don’t even realize how much of it is muscle memory, and it just came kind of naturally.’ Indeed. She passed her test with flying colors and even got a visit from a Bellevue police chief to say thanks.” [1]

Amanda, a NORCOM dispatcher, explains that it all began with an “open line phone call with a verbal disturbance heard.” She explains, “Nobody was talking into the phone, so we sent a couple units on it to check it out... and just kind of took off from there.” Fortunately, the police thwarted a carjacking when the driver tried to jump out of his car and take over another vehicle. Thanks to Amanda, there were no serious injuries during the entire ordeal.

This week’s Sabbath school lesson reminds us that God is calling all Christians to help people with their unique gifts. Sometimes we respond like Ezra and Nehemiah—we’re thrown into the fray, ready and willing to serve. But sometimes we’re like Jonah or Moses and we want to run or make excuses.

But while God calls all people to service, we shouldn’t sit around and wait for a phone call from heaven. Just as Amanda pursued training to become a dispatcher, we learn that “Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel” (Ezra 7:10). It wasn’t just Ezra’s natural abilities or God-given talents that came into play ... he leaned into the task with all his heart.

When Amanda took the crisis call, and the woman who was in danger couldn’t even take time to talk into the phone, Amanda pursued the situation and potentially saved a life. Let’s not twiddle away our time wondering how to serve. Let’s press forward, like Ezra,

and combine God's call with a heart to reach out to hurting people all around us.

~Curtis Rittenour

[1] <https://komonews.com/news/local/911-operator-who-took-chaotic-call-from-bellevue-attack-victim-was-first-day-on-job>

## For Reflection

**Connecting:** Have you ever had to step into a crisis situation unexpectedly? What happened? Did you feel up to the task?

**Sharing:** "Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel" (Ezra 7:10). What keeps most people in the church from responding to God's call?

1. They simply don't feel qualified to serve in the church.
2. A lot of members think it's "the pastor's job" to do a lot of the work in the church.
3. Many have not had an opportunity to explore their spiritual gifts.
4. The biggest problem is that people need to first fall in love with Jesus and *want* to serve Christ.
5. Church leaders could do a better job letting go and seeking to involve more members.
6. Other:

**Applying:** Go around the circle in your class and take turns letting the class affirm the different gifts they see in each person.

**Valuing:** Have you prepared your heart to serve the Lord like Ezra did? Pray with one other person that God will help you this week to lean into helping those around you, even when you may not feel fully prepared.

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Three decades ago, we created this resource for small groups and Sabbath school classes, and it continues to bless so many people worldwide. Thank you for your continued interest in these biblical themes and what they mean to your life and those people with whom you share it.

Paul Richardson  
Executive Director

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