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ON THE AIR



## Obeying Christ's Call

How Your Authenticity Can Open Doors



More than anything, obeying Christ's call requires that we just show up.

—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Authenticity is the gentle art of embracing your true self as God created you.

Being real means to be sincere, open-hearted, and transparent in a culture that often pressures us to conform or hide behind masks. Chuck and I have found that cultivating authenticity is crucial for personal growth and fulfillment. In a world that presents us with so many challenges, pursuing authenticity takes on special significance.

The key lies in being who you are according to how Christ designed you to be. Embrace your individuality and allow your actions and choices to resonate with His truth. Pray that the Lord will give you courage to resist societal pressures to conform; after all, authenticity thrives in the audacity to honor convictions and resist the allure of wide acceptance through compromise.

Being sincere opens the door for others to truly understand and cherish the radiant person Christ made you to be. It also allows you to accept differences and limitations in yourself and others, and by doing this, you become more open and relatable in your communication and interaction with people.

Every time you stand by your convictions, it strengthens your resolve to resist the temptation to compromise your principles and increases opportunities to inspire and uplift those fortunate enough to cross your path.

*Charissa Swindoll Gaither*  
Charissa Swindoll Gaither



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# Growing and Learning in Pursuit of Jesus' Great Commission



collapsed. His marriage had ended in a divorce. His children were adrift. The student body was at an all-time low. Soon, it seemed, the college would be closing its doors.

I got off the plane and there he sat off in the distance on a bench—head down, alone, deflated.

We made eye contact. No smile. No handshake. I grabbed his shoulders, stood him up, embraced him, and then pushed him back and asked, “Now, how are you?”

With tears hanging on his eyelids, he quietly replied, “I’m growing and I’m learning . . . but I’m not fantastic.”

Growing and learning. That’s what life is about.

Life is rarely as fantastic as this new president first portrayed. Life is ordinary.

I like how one Quaker mother put it, “God moves among the casseroles.” Isn’t that fitting? Life is about growing and learning as you deal with children and needs and lunches and carpooling and business challenges and disappointment and failure and struggles and dogs you can’t train and people you can’t stand even though you’re supposed to love them. One of my daughters with busy children once said to me, “Dad, now I know why some animals eat their young,” and I responded, “Be grateful you’re alive, sweetheart.”

In a recent letter, I discussed how Jesus’ non-sensational appearance to Cleopas and his friend, who were traveling to Emmaus on the first Easter Sunday, depicts how Jesus often works in our lives. Quietly and slowly, but perfectly and deeply. The resurrected Lord simply walked along with them, talked with them, and later ate with them. They learned. They grew.

Jesus doesn’t usually do the dramatic and spectacular in our lives hour by hour.

Be careful of those who frequently emphasize the super-sensational. Growing and learning is often imperceptible. Hyped-up language and flowery

by Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Many years ago, I was invited to travel across the country to speak at a small Bible college. Moral failures from the prior president had caused the school to flounder, and the successor, a younger man with little training, was given the heavy mantle of leadership to keep the school on target and alive. Being good friends with some of the school’s board members, I wanted to help however I could, so I went.

The new president waited to greet me as I walked off the plane.

“How are you today . . .” Before I could finish my sentence, he shook my hand from the wrist and exclaimed, “FANTASTIC!”

“Well, that’s great,” I said, “How’s the sch . . .”

“OUTSTANDING! Just outstanding!”

*Nothing’s this good*, I thought, and he went on with story after story.

I returned the year after, and he put on the same act.

“Everything’s FANTASTIC!”

From my first visit to the second, the student body dwindled. Then I went back for the third time. Between my second and third visits, the president’s life had

depictions of the Christian life can make you feel inferior if your life is not FANTASTIC. Furthermore, it makes you feel you must “arrive” before you can really obey Christ in pursuit of His Great Commission. Nonsense!

Just weeks after Jesus’ stroll toward Emmaus, He appeared on a mountain before His followers and issued His universal directive:

*Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

(Matthew 28:18–20)

Jesus didn’t limit His Great Commission to a certain class of spectacular Christians who had “arrived.” His command and promise are for all Christians who are maturing and walking in pursuit of His calling. Here’s what I mean.

First, Jesus spoke with ordinary people who knew Him personally. They weren’t selected because they were the best and brightest. They didn’t receive magic wands or halos or uniforms. They were ordinary folk, like you and me, whose main requirement was just showing up.

More than anything, obeying Christ’s call requires that we just show up.

Second, Jesus presented a simple and clear game plan. It’s uncomplicated: make disciples. We tell others about Jesus and help them obey Jesus. There is no trade secret or insider knowledge or coded language. We invite others to grow and to learn in Christ as we’re growing and learning in Him.

Third, Jesus was intense about the mission but relaxed about the method. There’s a place for everybody. You don’t have to be dripping with charisma or eloquent or charming or super-intelligent or stunning or wealthy or well-connected or beautiful. Christ will harness your personality, talents, gifts, and circumstances to further His mission with the method just right for you.

Growing and learning. ***That’s what following Christ is all about!***

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