

A Call to Ministry

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

Discussing a potential call to vocational ministry with your teens is about helping them explore and discern God's plan for their lives. It's important to guide them in understanding that a call to ministry is a serious commitment but also a fulfilling way to serve God and others. Encourage them to pray for guidance, seek counsel from trusted leaders, and reflect on their passions and spiritual gifts. Remind them that discerning a call to ministry is a journey that involves both heart and mind, and it's okay if they don't have all the answers right away.

➤ conversation starter

Why do you feel like God might be calling you to serve in vocational ministry? What thoughts or feelings do you have about this?

What aspects of ministry are you drawn to? Are there particular areas of service or types of ministry that resonate with you?

➤ navigating the conversation:

- **Encourage Prayer and Reflection:** Suggest that they spend time in prayer, asking God for guidance and clarity about their calling.
- **Explore Their Gifts and Passions:** Discuss what spiritual gifts and natural talents they possess that might be suited for ministry. Encouragement to serve in various capacities can help them discover where they feel most called.
- **Seek Wisdom from Others:** Advise them to talk with pastors, youth leaders, and other spiritual mentors who can offer insight and advice.
- **Discuss the Nature of Ministry:** Talk about the joys and challenges of vocational ministry. It's important they understand both the rewards and sacrifices involved.
- **Look for Opportunities to Serve:** Encourage them to get involved in different ministry activities to gain experience and better understand where they might be called to serve.
- **Stress the Importance of Education:** Discuss the role of formal theological education in preparing for ministry and the various paths that can be taken.
- **Be Patient:** Emphasize that discerning a call to ministry often takes time and might evolve as they grow in their faith and understanding.
- **Support Their Journey:** Assure them of your support and love, regardless of their path. Their exploration of a call to ministry is a significant part of their spiritual journey.
- **Address Doubts and Fears:** It's normal to have doubts or fears about such a significant decision. Encourage open discussion about any concerns they may have.
- **Encourage Patience with God's Timing:** Remind them that God's timing might differ from ours. Encourage patience and trust in God's plan for their lives, whether the call to ministry becomes clear now or later in life.

