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### Gardner-Webb Professor Joe Collins Authors Book on Understanding God's Calling

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# Gardner-Webb Professor Joe Collins Authors Book on Understanding God's Calling

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Office of University Communications

July 16, 2013

## *“What Does God Want Me To Do” Designed to Help Laypeople and Clergy Alike*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – A newly published book by Gardner-Webb University Associate Professor of Religious Studies Dr. Joe Collins is based on 20 years of research and experience with the church. The purpose of “What Does God Want Me To Do” is to help individuals understand and respond to God’s calling, while helping them grasp the idea that being called is not a one-time event but rather an ongoing spiritual phenomenon.

“What is my calling?’ is a question Christians and non-Christians alike ask themselves,” said Collins. “It can be confusing. While God sometimes speaks directly to people, often times he does not. The speech might have more to do with feelings and interests or things we see happening around us and I think through the Holy Spirit we can come to some kind of conclusion.”

“What Does God Want Me to Do” shares six aspects about calling that Collins discovered during his doctoral research. Those aspects include God speaking, what God is doing in the world, God speaking through someone else, and coming to a greater self-knowledge. Through his research, Collins discovered that most individuals come to their initial sense of calling through different combinations of two or three of these aspects.

“One of the examples I give when it comes to self-knowledge is gifts, talents, and desires. This is when you look at your own abilities and how God gifted you. Those kind of things give us some direction of what God wants us to do,” said Collins.

Collins has been with GWU the past eight years, has served in the local church, and is an award-winning dulcimer player. He also is a dulcimer craftsman, as well as a songwriter and vocalist. He received bachelor and master degrees in English from East Carolina University (Greenville, N.C.), a Master of Divinity in Religious Education at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (Wake Forest, N.C.), and a Doctor of Adult Education from N.C. State University (Raleigh, N.C.).

“The book attempts to provide a model that is large enough that anybody can use it no matter how they are natured spiritually and at the same time comprehensive enough to where it has meaning,” Collins added.

The book is for sale online at <http://bookstore.crossbooks.com> and will be available soon through the GWU Campus Shop. Collins can be reached directly at [jcollins@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:jcollins@gardner-webb.edu).

*Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University offers a comprehensive academic experience within a Christian environment.*