Christian Ministry and Training

# The Call to Ministry

**Extracted from "Church Life Principles"**

*By David Cartledge*

*Distributed by*

christianministry.com.au

These Subject Notes are distributed by:
Christian Ministry and Training

www.christianministry.com.au

Christian Ministry and Training is a Division of
Universal Education and Training Ltd
Australia ABN 75 090 720 086

Copyright for these notes rests with Marie Cartledge

Subject Notes by David Cartledge include:

- Old Testament Survey
- New Testament Survey
- Principles of Interpretation
- Faith Principles
- Leadership and Ministry
- Ministry Gifts
- Principles of Preaching
- Angels and Demons
- Study of Christ
- The Call to Ministry (Extracted from “Church Life Principles”)
- The Feasts of Israel
- The Person & Work of the Holy Spirit
- The Nature of Man
- Song of Solomon
- Study of Salvation
- Tabernacle Truths
- The Theology of God

# About the Author

**David Cartledge** gave his life to the Lord at the age of 15 and sensed a clear call to ministry just three years later. At 19, he enrolled in an Australian Bible College, where he studied for three years and prepared for a life of service to God. Shortly after graduating, he married Marie, who stood faithfully by his side throughout his life, often sharing in the ministry work.

David began his ministry as an assistant pastor in Hobart, Tasmania, serving there for two years. He and Marie then planted a church in Devonport, a small town in northern Tasmania, where they ministered for the next four years. After that, they relocated to Lithgow, a country town in New South Wales, where David pastored a local church.

In 1970, at the age of 30, David was called to Townsville in Queensland to pastor a growing congregation. Over the next 18 years, the church experienced remarkable growth during the charismatic renewal. Meetings often continued late into the night, marked by powerful encounters with God and miraculous healings. As the church expanded, David led the congregation to purchase 92 acres of land on the outskirts of Townsville to establish a Bible college and a Christian school—both firsts within his church denomination in Australia. His vision for equipping leaders and raising up the next generation of believers took shape through these initiatives, which became an integral part of the church's mission.

At 37, David was appointed to the Australian National Executive of his denomination, a leadership position he held for 26 years. One of his greatest contributions during this time was his focus on church planting. Through a strategic, faith-filled, and systematic approach, David helped establish many churches across Queensland and, eventually, nationwide.

In 1988, at the age of 48, David and Marie left the thriving Townsville church—which had grown from a few dozen to over 1,000 people—and moved to the Gold Coast to start a new church with a small group of locals. For someone who had already overcome immense challenges and seen great growth, starting over could have been daunting. But because God had clearly spoken to him, David stepped out in obedience. Before long, he had established a new church on a main road near Surfers Paradise, which also began to grow rapidly.

At 53, David was invited to become President of the national Bible College just outside Sydney. He accepted and remained in this role for nine years. During this time, he implemented many improvements, including relocating the college from Katoomba in the Blue Mountains to Chester Hill, a more central location in Sydney. This move was made possible through the miraculous acquisition of a large, former Australian Defence Services property, which became the college's new campus.

At the age of 62 David began travelling the world, inspiring churches to move into the prophetic and apostolic realm and went to be with the Lord a few years later in 2005. He had given his all and he left a legacy of a life of devotion and service to God. His wife Marie continues to serve the Lord and is a wonderful example of a mother and Grandmother for the family she and David raised together as they served in ministry.

"*Our movement has been deeply impacted by David Cartledge. He is truly one of our greats. What David believed in, he believed in 100 per cent. Whatever he did, he did 100 per cent. He spoke fervently about faith, and lived so fervent by faith*." Brian Houston, Hillsong, Australia

# Contents

**Part 1** ..... **1**
Function is more important than definition ..... 1
Recognition of your gift and calling will release a new level of ministry ..... 1
The call is indicated by its sphere of interest ..... 1
The ability to dream and accomplish the dream indicates the level of ministry ..... 2
Establish the absolute and life changing nature of the call ..... 2
Every Minister should have a burning bush experience ..... 2
Stay small ..... 3
The Cry of a Man of God ..... 3
**Part 2** ..... **5**
The Incarnation repeated ..... 5
Authenticity ..... 5
Ministering out of relationship with God ..... 5
Ministering out of experience ..... 5
The man becomes the message ..... 6
The test of truth ..... 6
God's enabling in the gift ..... 6
Our gift is at God's initiative ..... 7
The danger of assuming another ministry's role ..... 7
The Bible pattern is plurality of ministries ..... 7
The bondage of imitation ..... 8
The release of self-acceptance ..... 8
Developing the gift ..... 8
**Part 3** ..... **9**
Understanding the nature of the gift ..... 9
The possibility of self-deception ..... 10
Operating out of deception and demonic influences ..... 10
Humanistic Motivation ..... 10
Presuming on God ..... 10
Things which are presumptions on our ministry ..... 11
**Part 4** ..... **12**
Lessons from the Old Testament Priesthood ..... 12
Twelve disqualifations to ministry ..... 12
**Part 5** ..... **17**
The need to evaluate the goals of your Ministry ..... 17

Dealing with your shaping influences ..... 17
Coming to terms with groups ..... 17
Three things necessary for ministry to affect the community ..... 18
Put your roots down ..... 18
The minister's responsibility for his personal and ministerial growth never ceases ..... 19
The ministry is calling with the greatest pressure known to man ..... 19
New or young ministers need to be in situations where they can grow with their Church or calling ..... 19
Paul's instructions to Timothy ..... 20

# Part 1

There is a need to satisfy ourselves absolutely regarding our calling in God to the ministry. **Hebrews 5:4** declares that this calling is at God's initiative only. **Matthew 9:37-39**. There are false shepherds and there are those who are hirelings and not true shepherds - **John 10:12-13**. In examining ourselves, there are a number of factors to use as a measuring standard.

## Function is more important than definition

Some men will not operate unless they are given recognition, a title, or prominence. They want to start at the top. The true man of God will be prepared to operate in obscurity if need be and will do menial tasks without feeling that they are below his dignity. Instead of waiting for someone to create an opportunity for him he will get out and get it going by himself. He will be prepared to be the servant of all - **Matthew 20:27-28**. He will minister to his leader - **2 Kings 3:11**.

When people learn to function in their ministry, God will arrange for it to be recognised or given definition.

## Recognition of your gift and calling will release a new level of ministry

While it is not necessary to have recognition by others initially, it is important to accept and recognise the call of God personally. Many a person has struggled with mediocrity, trying to conform to what others consider a normal level of ministry while a drive has been in them for greater things. The recognition of one's calling will allow the development of the full potential of that gift. This amounts to an expression of faith in the anointing God has given you for the task He has called you to.

## The call is indicated by its sphere of interest

Many people have difficulty knowing what they are called to be because there has been no direct revelation of which ministry gift they have received. Jesus said that the tree is known by its fruit - **Matthew 7:20**. A Pastor will not be capable of an apostolic function; a teacher will not operate as an evangelist; the evangelist will have a unique capacity to reach souls, but may have little insight into the revelations of God for the Church as the prophet has it.

While the function of a particular calling will manifest itself in an almost natural way, there is a need to recognise it and develop it or wait upon it - **Romans 12:7**, to completely fulfil it. **Colossians 4:17**. Sometimes the full understanding of our specific calling will come to us gradually. Not all have a call parallel to Paul's where he was given clear direction from the beginning that he was to go to the Gentiles as a chosen vessel. However, even with Paul there was apparently a gradual unfolding of the extent of his calling. He knew he was called to preach and the recognition of his apostolic function came later - **I Timothy 2:7 and 2 Timothy 1:11**

.

## The ability to dream and accomplish the dream indicates the level of ministry

Joseph is a classic example of this point. Many are visionaries who never produce what they talk of. However Joseph was able to bring his dreams to fruition. His practical balance enabled him also to take the dream of Pharoah and prepare Egypt for the years of famine, thus creating the circumstances in which his own dream of his brethren bowing before him was fulfilled. Jesus said that He had chosen his disciples and ordained them that they should go and bring forth fruit and that it should remain. **John 15:16**. Jesus also said that the Father was glorified in us bringing forth "much" fruit. **John 15:8**.

**Psalm 126:6** declares the certainty of fruit being produced if seed is sown. It is important to evaluate if we are theoreticians or practitioners of the gospel. Some can theorise, but cannot produce. The calling of God is its own enabling and if a man or woman is genuinely called, there is an innate ability to produce fruit in the specific sphere they are called to.

## Establish the absolute and life changing nature of the call

Jeremiah said that he could not escape his call. He tried to turn away from it, but God's word in his heart was like a fire in his bones - **Jeremiah 20:7-10**.
In each biblical situation the call to the ministry was life-changing. Those called could not settle in any other sphere of activity.

After Elijah had laid his mantle on Elisha, the plow was burnt and the oxen slain. There was no going back.

Jesus' disciples - "we have left all and followed thee" - **Matthew 19:27**.

Moses - the burning bush became an irrevocable turning point in his life. It motivated him to face his greatest fears - Egypt, and to endure Israel's weaknesses and grumblings for 40 years.

Jonah - on the receiving end of God's determination to fulfill his purpose in his life.

There are many situations to be faced in a life of ministry in which only the absolute assurance of a specific call will enable you to endure the test.

Some have suppressed their call and tried to find satisfaction in business or leisure. Jesus said we might hide our light under a bushel (business or commerce) or under a bed (our own leisure, too lazy to accomplish the call of God in our lives.) - **Matthew 5:15-16**.

## Every Minister should have a burning bush experience

Not all those called would have a call as dramatic as Moses' but all must have an absolute and specific direction from God that the ministry is his life's work. If he is not sure of that, he should not enter into the ministry as he will be operating as either a hireling or a professional instead of a God ordained and chosen vessel

## Stay small

The anointing of God is a rising tide in our lives. The experience and release of faith accomplished over years of ministry can and does expand the minister's life and opportunities. It is absolutely important to keep humble. **Matthew 5:6** says "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven". A clearer translation is, "Blessed are those who rate themselves insignificant for of them is the rule of the heavenlies".
Saul lost his kingdom because he started small but got too big in his own eyes. **1 Samuel 15:17**.

Written in the margin of his mother's Bible opened to **2 Chronicles 7:14**, which President Ronald Reagan used at his Inauguration were these words, "You can get too big for God to use you, but never too small!"

## The Cry of a Man of God

A.W. Tozer was ordained to the ministry in 1922. This is what he said to his Lord on the day of his ordination. After the elders and ministers had prayed and laid their hands on him, he withdrew to meet his Saviour in the secret place and in the silence, farther in than his well-meaning brethren could take him.

*O Lord, I have heard thy voice and was afraid. Thou hast called me to an awesome task in a grave and perilous hour. Thou art about to shake all nations and the earth and also heaven, that the things that cannot be shaken may remain.*

*O Lord, our Lord, thou hast stooped to honour me by calling me to be thy servant. No man taketh this honour upon himself save he that is called of God as was Aaron. Thou hast ordained me thy messenger to them that are stubborn of heart and hard of hearing. They have rejected thee, the Master, and it is not to be expected that they will receive me, the servant.*

*My God, I shall not waste time deploring my weakness or my unfittedness for the work. The responsibility is not mine, but shine. Thou hast said, "I knew thee—I ordained thee—I sanctified thee," and thou hast also said, "Thou shalt go to all to whom I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." Who am I to argue with thee or to call into question thy sovereign choice? The decision is not mine, but shine. So be it, Lord. Thy will, not mine, be done.*

*Well do I know, thou God of the prophets and the apostles, that as long as I honour thee thou wilt honour me. Help me therefore to take this solemn vow to honour thee in all my future life and labours, whether by gain or by loss, by life or by death, and then to keep that vow unbroken while I live.*

*It is time, O God, for thee to work, for the enemy has entered into thy pastures and the sheep are torn and scattered. And false shepherds abound who deny the danger and laugh at the perils which surround thy flock. The sheep are deceived by these hirelings and follow them with touching loyalty while the wolf closes in to kill and destroy.*

*I beseech thee, give me sharp eyes to detect the presence of the enemy; give me understanding to distinguish the false friend from the true. Give me vision to see and courage faithfully to report what I see. Make my voice so like shine own that even the sick sheep will recognise it and follow thee.*

*Lord Jesus, I come to thee for spiritual preparation. Lay thy hand upon me. Anoint me with the oil of the New Testament prophet. Forbid that I should become a religious scribe and thus lose my prophetic calling. Save me from the curse that lies dark across the face of the modern clergy, the curse of compromise, of imitation, of professionalism.*

*Save me from the error of judging a church by its size,, its popularity or the amount of its yearly offerings. Help me to remember that I am a prophet -not a promoter, not a religious manager, but a prophet. Let me never become a slave to crowds . Heal my soul of carnal ambitions and deliver me from the itch for publicity.*

*Save me from bondage to things. Let me not waste my days puttering around the house. Lay thy terror upon me, O God, and drive me to the place of prayer where I may wrestle with principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world. Deliver me from overeating and late sleeping. Teach me self-discipline that I may be a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

*I accept hard work and small rewards in this life. I ask for no easy place. I shall try to be blind to the little ways that could make my life easier. If others seek the smoother path, I shall try to take the hard way without judging them too harshly. I shall expect opposition and try to take it quietly when it comes.*

*If, as sometimes it falleth out to thy servants, I should have grateful gifts pressed upon me by thy kindly people, stand by me then and save me from the blight that often follows. Teach me to use whatever I receive in such manner that it will not injure my soul nor diminish my spiritual power.*

*And if in thy permissive providence honour should come to me from thy church, let me not forget in that hour that I am unworthy of the least of thy mercies, and that if men knew me as intimately as I know myself they would withhold their honours or bestow them upon others more worthy to receive them.*

*And now, O Lord of heaven and earth, I consecrate my remaining days to thee; let them be many or few, as thou wilt. Let me stand before the great or minster to the poor and lowly; that choice is not mine, and I would not influence it if I could.*

*I am thy servant to do thy will. That will is sweeter to me than position or riches or fame, and I choose it above all things on earth or in heaven.*

*Though I am chosen of thee and honoured by a high and holy calling, let me never forget that I am but a man of dust and ashes, a man with all the natural faults and passions that plague the race of men. I pray thee, therefore, my Lord and Redeemer, save me from myself and from all the injuries I may do myself while trying to be a blessing to others.*

*Fill me with thy power by the Holy Spirit, and I will go in thy strength and tell of thy righteousness, even shine only. I will spread abroad the message of redeeming love while my normal powers endure.*

*Then, dear Lord, when I am old and weary and too tired to go on, have a place ready for me above, and make me to be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting. Amen. - Challenge*

# Part 2

## The Incarnation repeated

While it is true that all believers have Christ in their lives, there is a special sense in which the Minister is so totally identified with the Word of God which he preaches that Jesus Christ is revealed in him afresh. He becomes a manifestation of Jesus. His life, more than his words, show the very nature of God and without this he is merely a hireling.

Paul declared two powerful facts regarding himself as a minister:

**A.** It pleased God to "reveal His Son in me that I might preach" - **Galatians 1:15-16**. This shows that the ministry is not a man motivated activity but one that is totally dependent on God. We are not preaching for God or about God, but our lives must reveal God. The Word must become alive in us.

**B.** **1 Corinthians 4:16** - "Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ". The life and ministry of Jesus was so active in Paul that he could say "to follow me is the same as following Jesus."

## Authenticity

Without Christ revealed in the minister and the Divine Word made flesh again we are not able to be true or authentic. The Word of God is not merely doctrine or detail and cannot be taught as a theory or imparted as a philosophy. It must be experienced. One of the major reasons for the Baptism with the Holy Spirit is to impart life to the Word in us. It is possible for it to become a ministration of death if imparted without the Spirit. **2 Corinthians 3:6**.

## Ministering out of relationship with God

Moses said to God, "If your presence doesn't go with me, I do not want to go" (**Exodus 33**).

The Old Testament priest had first to minister to the Lord in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle before he went out to minister to the people. When he did the fragrance of the Incense of worship saturated his clothes and the people knew he had been with God.

The Minister belongs to God. He does not belong to the people. He must not be manipulated by the ideas or pressure of the congregation, but in all things must maintain his relationship with the Lord. This will develop a greater revelation of Christ in his ministry. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. **Matthew 12:34**. The aspects of prayer, intercession, worship, praise, waiting on God and absorbing the Word are not options. Without this developed relationship the Minister is running without a message.

## Ministering out of experience

There is a sense in which the Minister must share out of his experience and especially his personal relationship with God. However, it can be counterproductive for him to be

influenced by the things which happen to him and become reactionary. On the other hand, his ministry can only be effective and non-theoretical when he himself experiences the things he preaches. It is pointless, and in fact damaging if he preaches faith and never lives by faith himself.

## The man becomes the message

Since the ministry is more the revelation of Christ in us - the Word made flesh, our lives are more important than the facts we attempt to teach. Character is far more important than charisma. For this reason the Minister must continually deal with himself so that there is a clear channel for the revelation of Christ in him. Consequently neither the man nor the message is made overnight. Biblical examples abound of men who were developed in obscurity for their life's call and only when the man had become the message did he fulfill his ministry, e.g. Joseph, David, Elisha, Paul, etc.

## The test of truth

When God develops a truth in our lives to make it part of us and not a theory we've learned mentally, He will invariable test us on that truth. **Psalm 105: 19** says " that until Joseph's time came the word of the Lord tried him". The revelation he had received in his dreams as a boy tested him in every way to make him capable of fulfilling it.

Every new step we make will be brought into a state of tension to establish whether we will express it actually and be authentic or simply subscribe to it theoretically. As with Israel in the wilderness between Egypt and the Promised Land, there is most often a time of testing between the declaration of truth and its culmination.

## God's enabling in the gift

There are at least 12 endowments of God to man for the purpose of ministry, either to the Body of Christ, or within it. Five of these are the Ascension Gift Ministries of Apostle, Prophet, Pastor, Evangelist & Teacher (**Eph. 4:11**). Seven are the Motivational Gifts of Insight, Serving, Teaching, Exhorting, Contributing, Facilitating and Mercy (**Rom. 12:6-8**). There are probably other gifts as well.

In most cases the Ascension Gift Ministries would also possess a dominant Motivational Gift. However, all those not called to one of the five special ministries have a Motivational Gift which orients them toward their designated function in the Body of Christ and also enables them to carry it out.

## Our gift is at God's initiative

We do not choose our gift. It is imparted at the sovereign discretion of the Lord. We cannot change it. Our only response can be to either accept it or reject it. A teacher does not choose to become an Apostle, nor a prophet an evangelist. Note **John 15:16**, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you." **Isaiah 45:9**, "Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, 'what makest thou?'. Woe to him that striveth with his Maker". **Matthew 6:27**, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature". Just as God has made some short and some tall, so He has made some Pastors and some Evangelists. Some are called to the Ministry, and others are given Motivational Gifts.

## The danger of assuming another ministry's role

**A** It was over this precise thing that Saul forfeited his Kingdom. **1 Sam. 13:8-14**. Saul offered the sacrifice which was Samuel's responsibility. It was an act of DISOBEDIENCE". He transgressed his own call to be King, not priest.

**B** Uzziah lost his Kingship and authority over the same issue - **2 Chron. 26:3-21**. He attempted to offer incense in the place of Azariah the priest. He was smitten with leprosy and was separated from his people till the day he died.

**C** Leprosy is flesh trouble. It is the main cause of a person attempting to fill another man's role. It is a manifestation of pride and an excess of self-confidence in one's importance, indispensability and ability.

**D** An example of a ministry doing a job not given to it was William Branham. As a miracle worker, his gift was without question, but when he attempted to become a teacher, he led countless thousands into grievous error.

## The Bible pattern is plurality of ministries

Jesus sent his disciples out to minister two by two (**Luke 10:1, Mark 6:7**). When the ministries were sent out from Antioch it was in multiples, i.e. Paul and Barnabas (**Acts 13:2-3**). The Apostles sent Judas and Silas who were prophets out together (**Acts 15:27-33**). Paul and Silas went out together (**Acts 15:40**), and Barnabas and Mark travelled in ministry (**Acts 15:39**).

When the Samaritan revival broke out (**Acts 8**), the apostles sent Peter and John to assist Philip. By this means Jesus, the Head of the Church, has arranged for there to be balance and full expression of the ministry in this plurality. As we have previously noted, the ideal local Church situation is where all five Ascension Gift Ministries are resident. What is lacking in one ministry is supplied by another. Ministries are not to be competitive, but complementary.

## The bondage of imitation

Most successful ministries will have their disciples. They will also generally have their imitators. There is a difference between a disciple and an imitation. The first seeks to learn, and receive an impartation from the ministry he is attached to. The imitation merely picks up a technique or an idea without learning the heart beat of the ministry in question.

We are all called to be unique and individual and express our particular ministry out of our own personal deposit of God.

The ministry demands authenticity. If we are merely copies and have not received a ministry from the Lord Himself, then our work will be valueless. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and only that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit (**John 3:6**). The main problem with copying others is that you are prevented from developing a ministry that is unique to you and which may be more creative and effective in time than the ministry you are tempted to copy.

## The release of self-acceptance

It is necessary to have a good self-image to have an effective ministry. Without this you will constantly consider your gift inferior to others and will not have a true acceptance of it. It is absolutely essential to express faith in your gift and the basic way to do this is to totally accept your calling in life and pour your whole heart into it. This applies to any function the minister may be involved in at present. He should accept that as though it will be a life vocation. If he does not, he will always be looking for “greener pastures” and will not do his best where he is. Robert Schuller says that “a minister should never accept a pastorate unless he is prepared to spend the rest of his life there”. If he doesn’t have this motivation, it may be because he has never fully accepted his gift from God and does not have faith in its power and scope.

## Developing the gift

No Ministry Gift, however powerful, is ever imparted fully formed. It is given in potential, but must be developed to its full strength with the passage of time and experience. Maturity in the Minister will mean a greater release of the Gift**. Romans 12:7** says that whatever gift we have received must be “waited upon”. In other words, that Gift must get stronger and achieve more or the Minister himself is not growing. Note **2 Peter 3:18**.

Like every other spiritual facility imparted to us by God (faith, love, etc.) any gift we receive, whether ministry, motivational or spiritual, should get stronger with use.

There is a price for God’s power in our lives, whether that is expressed in preaching, teaching, or miracles, and the man or woman of God must learn to wait on God in prayer, in fasting, and in the Word to see his gift fully developed.

# Part 3

The early Church started by believing the truth but in some cases transitioned into believing something else. They were led astray by people with ideas that seemed good but which were not from God. Hence Paul wrote this warning to the Colossian Christians:

**Col. 2:8**

*"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ."* (NIV)

In writing to the Galatian Christians Paul asked:

**Gal 3:1-4**

*"1 You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified.*

*2 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard?*

*3 Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?*

*4 Have you experienced so much in vain—if it really was in vain?"* (NIV)

The Galatian Christians, were subject to the influence of ministers and were trapped into abandoning their faith for a salvation based on human merit and religious observances.

It is possible for gifted people to be called into a positions of ministry but to fail to achieve the will and purposes of God for their lives. Perhaps those early Colossian and Galatian Christians were being influenced by people who started out in the right direction but then went astray taking others with them in the process.

## Understanding the nature of the gift

The Bible declares that the Gifts and callings of God are without repentance (**Rom. 11:29**). Once given and received that Gift becomes more than a blessing. It becomes a solemn responsibility - a driving force that cannot be rejected. Jeremiah found this to be so. **Jer. 20:9**. God does not take the gift back again. If we do not measure up to it, the gift itself will make us the most miserable of men because we are not fulfilling the drive for spiritual life it is intended for, and because our inadequate consecration to God does not allow for a full development of that Gift's potential. Others may accept mediocrity, but we will always know ourselves, and that we were capable of much more in God. That call of God will be a blessing or curse, dependent on what we do with it.

## The possibility of self-deception

**James 1:21-25** declares that if we do not fulfil God's demands on us and hear them only, we are prone to self-deception. From this point on, all we do ostensibly for God is based on a wrong foundation. There are ministries in the world now whose lives are in complete contradiction with the revealed Word of God. Deliberate and unadjusted abrogation of Divine principle means that the ministry of that person is flowing out of a distorted channel and cannot produce life. We bring forth after our own kind.

## Operating out of deception and demonic influences

The end result of deception is that instead of the genuinely imparted gift being motivated by the Holy Spirit, another force is flowing in that Gift. This will take one of two forms, but the end result will be that the people ministered to are taken out of the way.

Deliberate disobedience will produce a progressive level of deception until a situation of complete bondage is achieved in those who follow that ministry. Examples abound of this demonic perversion of God-given ministries. Saul, King of Israel is one such example. He was called of God and anointed, yet through his disobedience to the Word of God, he harboured an evil spirit and attempted to commit murder, fought against the new anointing (David), indulged in occult practice and died a suicide's death.

Jim Jones (in the Guyana massacre) is an example of someone who twisted Bible concepts to bring deception and ultimately death . You can easily find information on the internet about his relatively recent historical tragedy involving this demonically inspired leader convincing hundreds of people to take their own lives.

## Humanistic Motivation

It is possible for the God-given ministry to abandon the anointing of the Holy Spirit and employ humanistic ideals or psychological techniques to achieve seeming results. Gimmicks and falsity in ministry will produce the same in the people.

The Song of Solomon shows us that when we operate as the horse in Pharoah's chariots we are advancing Satan's cause and not God's. God's work done by any other method but God's ways will not glorify God or be owned by God.

One of the key demands on the minister is to seek:

**God's ways:**
Exodus 33:13

**God's wisdom:**
Proverbs 4:7, James 1:5

## Presuming on God

In Leviticus 10:1-3 we read of what happened in the story of Nadab and Abihu "presuming" on God, thinking that because they were called of God, He would accept anything they

chose to do. Modern day ministers are in a precarious place when they have the same idea in their mind.

Samson is the classic case in the scriptures of a man who presumed on his calling and gift. He played fast and loose with his anointing until the day came when he went too far and the Spirit of the Lord departed from him. **Judges 16:20**. He was so desensitized to God that he wasn't aware of his loss of anointing. He was in total deception. His deliberate disobedience to the Word of God when he insisted on marrying a Philistine instead of an Israelite blinded him to his progressively deteriorating condition. The gift remained with him all his life, and even though a wasted ministry, that motivation still drove him.

## *Things which are presumptions on our ministry*

Disobedience to God's Word

Disobedience to God's revealed will for us and our ministry

Attempting to take another's ministry - thus expressing pride in our self importance and indispensability

Uncleanness. They that bear the vessels of the Lord must be clean - **Isaiah 52:11**.

Refusal to accept discipline - **Hebrews 12:8**

An unprepared heart - no waiting on God in prayer and His words

Laziness - hiding the light under the bed - **Matthew 5:15**

Divergence from our calling - i.e. involvement in distracting things, business, etc., will choke the Word and make it unfruitful - **Luke 8:14**

Touching the gold

Touching the glory

Disobedience to God's revealed will for us and our ministry

Attempting to take another's ministry - thus expressing pride in our self importance and indispensability

It is possible to "travel in your gift" and to produce seeming results, but the long term effect will be deception and destruction of the lives you minister to.

# Part 4

## Lessons from the Old Testament Priesthood

There are numerous things which will weaken the expression of ministry. We must at all costs avoid presuming that the Gift we have received from God is all we will ever need. It is a delicate faculty and may be impaired by sin, strife or sloth among other things.

We are a Kingdom of Priests unto God (**1 Peter 2:5**) and those with a Ministry Gift have a greater degree of responsibility as a priest. Jesus said that our righteousness must exceed that of the scribe and Pharisees. **Matthew 5:20**. On this basis it is clear that the standard required for New Testaments priests must be higher than for Old Testament priests.

The pattern of priorities in ministry is established by the procedure of the Old Testament priests. They ministered first to the Lord, then to the House of God (fellow priests), then to the world (congregation).

## Twelve disqualifations to ministry

**Leviticus 21:16-24** establishes twelve disqualifications for Old Testament priests. Each of these characteristics has a spiritual significance which applies to all New Testament priests in general and to the Ascension Gift Ministries in particular. Any blemish whatsoever eliminated him from effective ministry.

### 1. Blindness

This refers to a minister who has no VISION. He cannot see afar off. **2 Peter 1:9**. The blind minister lives for today only. He is constantly reacting to or being manipulated by situations instead of being in control. He has lost his way and is groping in the dark for direction. **Proverbs 29:18** declares “where there is no progressive vision, the people run amuck”. Vision is the prime criteria for an effective and God-blessed ministry. It is understanding God’s ways. **Exodus 33:13**.

The classic Bible case of this blemish is Eli (**1 Samuel 3:1-2**). He was physically blind, but also spiritually dull. He misinterpreted Hannah’s -intercession, his own sons ran amuck, was by-passed by God for the child Samuel, and presided over Israel’s Ichabod period - “the glory is departed”.

### 2. Lameness

**a)** This blemish prevents the minister from making progress. He can’t walk in the purposes of God. Victory over the land of Canaan was promised to Joshua only as the sole of his feet stood upon each place (**Joshua 1:3**). The Word urges to “go on to perfection” (**Heb. 6:1**); to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (**Phil. 3:14**).

The lame minister is not moving on. He has parked when he is comfortable. He makes no progress in his own spiritual life and cannot lead his church to he effective or grow.

**b)** This can also refer to the minister being unbalanced. His lameness will cause him to put all his weight on one leg instead of it being evenly distributed. The end result of an unbalanced ministry is to go round in circles

### 3. Flat Nose

This is not a deformity and has nothing to do with the shape of the nose. It means that he has no olfactory sense. He can't smell. The minister with this blemish has no sense of perception, and as a result he is prone to DECEPTION. He cannot smell the difference between what is wholesome and what is corrupt. He will not be able to determine what is acceptable to God (**Phil. 4:18**), nor will he be aware of uncleanness in the Church. **1 Corinthians 5:2**. The Corinthian Church had no perception of the falseness that was among them.

### 4. Anything superfluous

The priest with this problem may have had six toes or fingers, or some other congenital deformity. It refers to an excess of flesh. Any minister that lives out of fleshly motivations is headed for trouble in his ministry. An uncrucified life will demand satisfaction for itself and disqualify from ministry.

a) Isaac was beguiled into depriving Esau of his rightful blessing by his flesh trouble. His passionate love of venison (flesh) was his undoing. **Genesis 27**. (He was also blind.)

b) Uzziah attempted to take another man's ministry and the hidden flesh trouble (pride) manifested in the form of leprosy. **2 Chronicles 26:14-21**.

c) Samson forfeited his ministry and call to be the deliverer of God's people by:

   I. Being the friend of the world - the enemies of God's people. **James 4:4**.

   II. He squandered his anointing and God-given gifts through sexual immorality - the mostdamaging of all sins of the flesh. The minister who does not keep himself sexually pure in his relationships with the people destroys his credibility with the people and generally will never rise to the full expression of his potential again.

d) Esau sold his birthright for one morsel of meat (flesh) and could not regain that blessing again though he sought it carefully with tears. **Heb. 12:16**.

e) Paul said that he beat his body (flesh) and subdued it lest when he preach to others he might be a castaway. **1 Corinthians 9:27**.

## 5. Broken feet

This man is unable to take a stand. He is afflicted with the dread disease of compromise. He is blown about by every wind of doctrine. **Ephesians 4:14**. He is influenced by people's attitudes and expectations and does not stand for God and truth.

The Bible says that God will make our feet like hind's feet. **2 Samuel 22:34**. In other words we are enabled to stand safely in the most precarious places in our ministry without falling. We must be surefooted.

The word declares that we must have the devil under our feet We have to stand in the evil day and having done all to stand. **Eph 6:12-18**, **Rom. 16:20**. This is not possible with broken feet.

Some can't stand the pressure of life. The cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches (**Mark 4:19**) are too much for the broken-footed minister.

Indecisiveness or Division will destroy our ability to take a stand - **Matthew 12:25**. Note also **1Cor. 16:13, Gal. 5:1, Phil. 1:27, 4:1, 1 Thess. 3:8, 2 Thess. 2:15**.

Our standing must be rooted in total dependency on God and not in self-confidence. **1 Cor. 10:12**.

## 6. Broken Hands

This is the problem of the priest who is unable to get a grip on things. He is afflicted with NEGLECT. The Bible declares that we must "hold fast the things we have learned" - **Titus 1:9, Heb. 2:**1.

We must also hold fast sound words (**2 Timothy 1:13**), our confidence and rejoicing (**Heb. 3:6**), the confession of our faith (**Heb. 10:23**), that which is proved and good (**1 Thess. 5:21**) and that which we already have (**Rev. 3:11**) And neglect not the Gift of God in us (**1 Timothy 4:14**).

He also lets opportunity slip through his fingers. He cannot capitalise on God's blessings to him and is always waiting for someone to do it for him, or for a miracle to descend from heaven with no involvement by himself.

## 7. Crookbacked

The priest with this blemish was either weak in his back, or had a hump back. In either case he could not carry a load. The New Testament Priest is not only required to bear his own burden, but to bear those of others as well (**Gal. 6:2 & 5, Romans 15:1**).

In addition to this, the true ministry is required to take up the cross daily- **Matthew 16:24**, and **Luke 14:27**.

He will be able to bear temptation -**1 Cor. 10:13**. e.g. Joseph

He can also bear persecution - **Gal. 6:17, 2 Cor. 11:24-28**

One of the common problems of today in ministry is men who cannot cope with life. The man of God had dealt with all areas of weakness and is not emotionally, psychologically, temperamentally or spiritually unable to cope with the challenges of the work of God. He has disciplined himself to develop strength in all these areas. Jesus said "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The minister who is having trouble with his back should cast all his cares on Jesus. **1 Peter 5:7**.

**Ps. 55:22** says "cast your burden on the Lord and He shall sustain thee". The marginal reference for "burden" is "gift". If the gift we have received of the Lord or our calling becomes onerous, draw only on his strength and you will find His burden is light.

## 8. Dwarf

This priest is underdeveloped or immature. He hasn't grown up or his development has been stunted by some interference with the growth process. To be effective in ministry we must be constantly growing in the Lord. **2 Peter 3:18**. We must also not stop growing until we reach full stature- **Eph. 4:13**.

Paul said he couldn't write to the Corinthians as mature people, but as to babies -**1 Cor. 3:1-3**. Their immaturity was caused by carnality.

Paul also says that when he became a man, he put away childish things, **1 Cor. 13:11**, and likens understanding to maturity. **1 Cor. 14:20**. The deficiency of wisdom, knowledge and understanding will stunt the growth of the priest of God. Seek wisdom. It is the principle thing. **Prov. 4:7**.

Immaturity is overcome by giving out to others what we have been taught. In other words it is the discipling process. We cannot be effectively discipled without discipling someone else. **Heb. 5:12-13**.

Full maturity also means that the minister, by reason of use (or experience) is able to discern what is good and evil. **Heb. 5:14**.

## 9. Blemish in the eye

This man is colour blind. He is confused. He finds it difficult to get guidance because all things look the same to him. He may be in this condition because he needs to remove a beam from his eye (**Matt. 7:1-5**). His problem of confusion, i.e. not seeing clearly (.**v 5**) is probably related to hypocrisy - a double standard

## 10. Scurvy

This condition is caused by a deficiency of diet - actually a lack of ascorbic acid (vitamin C). It is common among those who get no fresh food. This minister lives on a diet of cut and dried spiritual food. His diet is preserved stuff from a previous generation. He has no fresh revelation. He does not comprehend "present truth" - **2 Pet. 1:12**. Like the Laodiceans, he feels he has "arrived". There is nothing more to be gained from God. **Rev. 3:17**.

### 11. Scabbed

This minister is one who has been hurt and is imperfectly healed. He still has a sensitive spot. He can be immobilised by having it hurt again. He is constantly needing to protect himself and cannot be open with people or take any risks lest his sore spot be touched. This will most often be in the emotional area. He needs to lay hold of the ministry of Jesus who "came to heal the broken hearted" - those bruised through the calamities of life. **Luke 4:18**.

### 12. Broken stones

The priest who is sterile and cannot reproduce himself is disqualified from ministry. This work of God is not to be led by professional theorists, but by those who can practice what they preach and impart it to others also. **Matt. 23:2-3, 2 Timothy 2:2**. The minister must be challenging and inspiring. His life must be an example for others to follow. He must cause an impact on the life of those that hear him.

This priest who was disqualified to minister for God could receive, but he could not give out. **Lev. 21:22-23**.

Unlike the Old Testament priest who was unable to change his condition, the New Testament priest can find a solution to his disqualification. He can be healed or restored. However, he must make restoration the top priority of his if he expects to be effective for God.

# Part 5

## The need to evaluate the goals of your Ministry

It is possible to fall into a pattern of ministry that is unproductive because its objectives are unclear. The goal has never been clearly focused on. The Minister may have a subconscious desire to gain the approval of his “Shaping Influences” and may not have any clear objective to “impress” his community with the gospel.

It is imperative that every minister should establish who he intends to minister to and that must involve the presently unsaved. Without this objective he will be forever pushed and pulled by past or present shaping influences.

## Dealing with your shaping influences

We are most often the product of our “past” environment. Many Ministers find themselves subconsciously seeking the approval of their parents or former pastor or denomination.

To be completely successful the Minister must break this pressure from the past to conform to a previous age. He must be open to new ideas and adaptable to the current move of God. It is too possible to try to impress people through our past environment. Moses fell into this trap when he was moved with Israel’s plight as servants in Egypt. Operating by an environmental motivation, he slew the Egyptian taskmaster to impress the Israelites. Instead of achieving this, the Egyptian shaping influence on his life produced the opposite effect. God took 40 years in the desert of Midian to get Egypt out of Moses.

While the influences from our past may be good and lay solid foundations in our lives every person must develop his own personal expression of ministry.

## Coming to terms with groups

While our shaping influences tend to be in our past, you may be confronted with pressure from individuals or groups who want to mould your ministry to their ideal. This is a “present” problem.

Peter was subject to this kind of pressure and didn’t know who he was trying to impress - **Gal. 2:12**. As a result of present pressures he ended up offending everyone and was guilty of partiality.

The Lord said to Joshua when he was appointed to lead Israel - “Be strong and very courageous” (**Jos. 1:6-9**). Without being offensive or belligerent, the leader in Ministry must be prepared to stand up for his convictions, otherwise every pressure group will succeed in bending him to their desires and nothing worthwhile will be achieved. Jeremiah was told by the Lord “not to be afraid of the faces of the people”.

Another area of pressure is comparison. Many a Minister has settled far below his potential God because he adopted the “norm” as his highest level of achievement. **2 Cor. 10:12**.

Make up your mind where you want to go in God, and go there in spite of your pressure groups.

Throughout your Ministry there will need to be periods of re-assessment and adjustment. We are all affected by the “gravity pull” of the people and situations we are involved with. They may pull us slightly off course, and if this is not corrected, the end result will be to miss our goal by miles.

Anything which is unfruitful or inconvenient to the achieving of your goal to impress your community for the Lord should be immediately and irrevocably discarded. Past methods or concepts which will not be effective for God today should be laid aside regardless how influential or successful the person who used them was in his own day.

## *Three things necessary for ministry to affect the community*

| | |
|---|---|
| Viability | Your Ministry must work. It must produce results and bring forth fruit in the long term. **John 15:16**. Without an effective result all you have is a theory. Your community will not be attracted by ideals but by proof. |
| Relevancy | Your Ministry must be directed to the needs of our times. Each community must be addressed in a relevant way. It is possible to be so side-tracked or irrelevant in the style of your ministry that your message is completely ignored. |
| Authenticity | Your Ministry must be real. There are too many insincere, unscrupulous confidence tricksters masquerading as Ministers of the Gospel. The man of God must have a conscience void of offence toward God and man (**Acts 24:16**). There is no substitute for reality and the man of God must live what he preaches or his insincerity will become obvious to all. |

## *Put your roots down*

One of the main keys to Church ministry is continuity. Pastors who put their roots down and make their chosen community home for the rest of their life if need be, will have a better opportunity to impress their community than those who treat their stay there as temporary.

## *The minister's responsibility for his personal and ministerial growth never ceases*

Late in his life and Ministry while a prisoner in Roman awaiting execution Paul wrote, "I don't count myself to have attained yet but I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus". **Philippians 3:12-14**.

## *The ministry is calling with the greatest pressure known to man*

Many Ministers have been unable to handle the strain and have either left the Ministry or their health has suffered due to the weight of:

- Standing between God and the people - **Ex. 4:16, 7:1 & 1 Pet. 4:11**
- Having to produce results - **John 15:14, Acts 2:22, & Matt. 12:38**
- Limitations on Privacy.
- Time and urgent demands
- Finance for Church and home

## *New or young ministers need to be in situations where they can grow with their Church or calling*

David was anointed to be King, but for an extensive period served as a servant in the court of Saul where he gained experience in statecraft and rulership. He was being groomed for the throne by God.

Experience can't be bought or imparted. It must be gained by training.

**1 Timothy 3:6** and **5:22** make it clear that a novice must not be exalted to leadership or he will fall into pride and condemnation of the devil.

There is much advantage in a Minister serving some time in an Assistant's role or as a Ministry Team member. This is not an emphatic rule but if possible it should be sought.

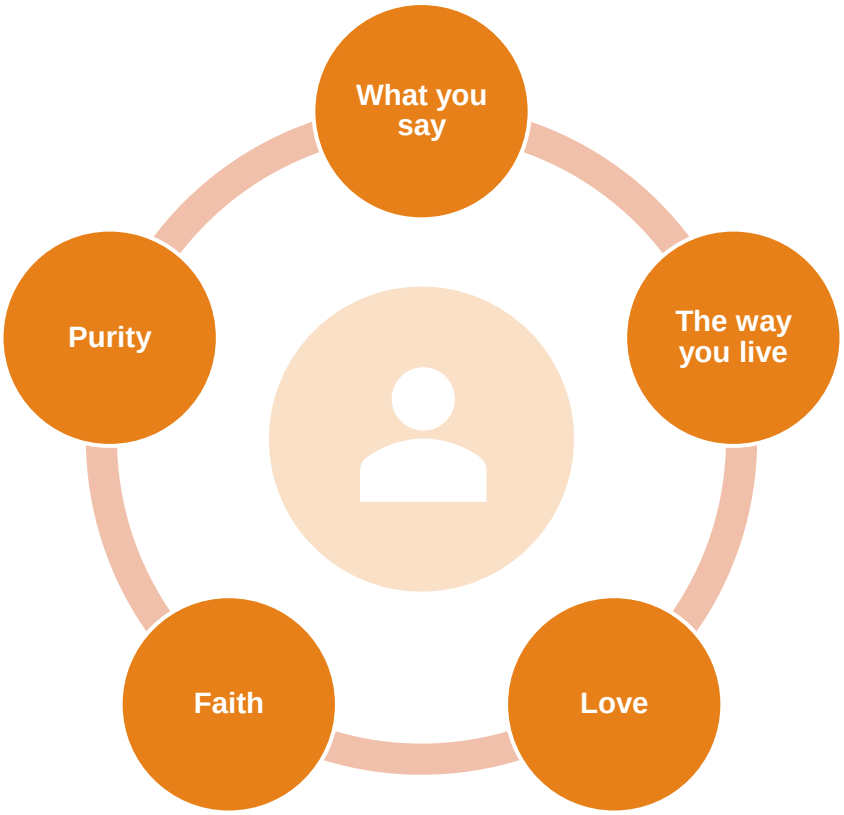
Paul, the mighty apostle began his actual ministry as an assistant to Barnabas in Antioch and this was after a number of years of getting his foundations in order. **Acts 11:25-26**

# Paul's instructions to Timothy

Timothy had been under Paul's teaching and oversight and had travelled with Paul for a considerable period. He had gained experience and had then been installed as the Pastor of the Church at Ephesus (**1 Tim. 1:3**). The two epistles to Timothy are Paul's counsel to him on how to handle this enormous responsibility. Some say that the Church there grew to 70,000 strong. Timothy was given to crying, nervousness and stomach pains. (**2 Timothy 1:4, 7 and 1 Timothy 5:23**).

Paul counselled Timothy in numerous practical areas and every new Minister should give himself to diligent study of these two epistles and also Titus in preparation for his growth into his calling.

The following are some of the points brought to Timothy's attention:

1. Don't be gullible -**1 Timothy 1:4**
2. Develop a strong prayer ministry -**1 Timothy 2:1-8**
3. Uphold good standards of behaviour -**1 Timothy 3**
4. Beware of deception -**1 Timothy 4:1-7**
5. Take care to teach and observe proper interpersonal relationships - **1 Timothy 5:1 to 6:2**
6. Avoid being side-tracked or snared by foolish or things irrelevant to your ministry -**1 Timothy 6:3-14**
7. Stir up the gift imparted to you - **2 Timothy 1:6-7** and **1 Timothy 4:14**
8. Deal with fear and develop a positive faith filled life - **2 Tim. 1:7**
9. Take heed to the prophetic word concerning you - **2 Timothy 1:18**
10. Study to show yourself approved and able to rightly divide the Word of Truth - **2 Timothy 2:15** and **2 Timothy 3:14-17**
11. Be consistent - 2 **Timothy 4:2** .

Be an example of the believers in every area - **1 Timothy 4:12:**