

CHURCH OF GOD

STUDY GUIDE FOR MINISTERIAL LICENSURE



EXHORTER

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REFERENCES USED IN THIS BOOK

The **capital letter S** followed by an Arabic numeral (**S20** or **S46**, for example) identifies all major headings (Sections) in the Church of God Book of Discipline, Church Order, and Governance.

Under major headings identified by an S number:

Roman numerals identify subheadings. **Capital letters** identify divisions under subheadings. **Arabic numerals** identify paragraphs or numbered sections within a division.

Capital letter A as in (58th A., 1980,) means 58th General Assembly, 1980.

DF as in (DF 4) means Declaration of Faith, Article 4.

CT as in (CT 6) means Church Teaching, Number 6.

Bk.M. means *Book of Minutes* (1906-1917)

LAMA as in (LAMA) means *Like a Mighty Army, A History of the Church of God, Definitive Edition* (1996)—the Church of God history by Dr. Charles W. Conn.

In the references, **a year listed in brackets**, such as [1994], indicates some action taken by the International Executive Council or the International Executive Committee.

In the references, **numbers in parentheses**, such as (14) or (8), means Item 14 or Item 8.

Words in brackets [] indicate an editorial correction or explanation.

State Overseer as used herein may refer to the overseer of a state, states, or part of a state in the U.S.A., or to the overseer of a designated country, region or territory. Terms used may be *state overseer*, *state/territorial overseer*, or *state/regional overseer*.

The terms *Biblical* and *Scriptural*, as used in this book, mean, based on or consistent with the teachings of the 66 books of the Protestant Bible, Old and New Testaments.

STUDY GUIDE FOR MINISTERIAL LICENSURE

EXHORTER

GENERAL INFORMATION

All Christians are called to ministry in the community of faith and in the world. Within the ranks of Christians who share in ministry, there are individuals who are called of God and set apart by the church for the specialized ministry of Word and sacrament. The preaching and teaching of the Word of God are primary functions of ministers. The credentialing process grants to ministers the ecclesiastical authorization required by the church to engage in ministry, to administer sacraments, to exercise pastoral oversight, and to equip the laity for ministry.

Individuals should enter the ministry with a profound sense of a divine call. Evidence of such a call on a person's life will be recognizable by the church. The Scriptures demand very high standards of one who professes a call to the ministry. The effectiveness of the Church of God depends largely upon the spiritual qualification, the character, and the manner of life of its ministers.

By virtue of the fact that you have come to this point in your progress toward ministry—having been recommended by your pastor, approved by your district overseer and administrative bishop, and set forth by your local church in a conference—the denomination now accepts your application and assumes its God-ordained responsibility to prepare and guide you toward more productive fulfillment of your call.

This is your first step in terms of ministerial rank in the Church of God. It is an important moment, not to be taken lightly, for in many ways, it will establish the tone and tenor of your lifetime ministry.

RANK OF EXHORTER

Exhorter is the first rank in the ministry of the Church of God. The time served under this designation of ministry is one of supervised ministry experience, accountability, and further training. This period is combined with the Ministerial Internship Program in which the exhorter serves under the supervision of a local pastor. The experience in the Ministerial Internship Program and experiences in other ministerial activities establish a record of achievement and progress. This record is used by the district overseer and administrative bishop as a basis for recommending advancement in rank.

Whenever deemed qualified by the administrative bishop, an exhorter may apply for advancement to the rank of ordained minister. However, the exhorter cannot be advanced until the

minister has completed the Ministerial Internship Program (MIP) or its equivalent. (Individuals who are presently serving as a pastor, evangelist, or associate pastor with at least one year of experience may qualify to participate in MIP on the equivalency level.) Details about MIP are available from the state office.

QUALIFICATIONS OF EXHORTERS

1. The church recognizes the exhorter as a regular rank of the ministry. It is, however, the primary rank, and all applicants for the ministry must serve as exhorter before being promoted in rank, except ordained ministers coming from other reputable organizations.
2. Must have the baptism in the Holy Ghost (DF 8, 9).
3. The candidate for exhorter must be actively engaged in the ministry either in evangelistic or pastoral work before being recommended for licensing.
4. Must be thoroughly acquainted with the Teachings and Doctrines of the Church of God as set forth by the International General Assembly.
5. Must successfully pass the examination given by a duly constituted board of examiners.

RIGHTS AND AUTHORITIES

The exhorter shall have full right and authority to . . .

1. Preach and defend the gospel of Jesus Christ.
2. Serve as evangelist.
3. Serve as pastor of a church.
4. In cases of emergency, the exhorter may be authorized by the state overseer to baptize converts and receive believers into fellowship of church membership (47th A., 1958, pp. 28, 29).
5. When an exhorter is serving as pastor, and where state laws recognize the credential of an exhorter as those of a duly authorized minister of the gospel, the exhorter may solemnize the rites of matrimony (54th A., 1972, p. 46).
6. Exhorters who are serving as helpers and assistants may receive tithes when available (21st A., 1926, p. 32).
7. The exhorter must be active in the ministry, and shall be required to pay tithes [into the local church where his or her membership is located] and to make monthly reports to the state overseer and to the secretary general. The exhorter may be promoted to the rank of ordained minister when deemed qualified by the state overseer and others concerned (42nd A., 1948, p. 27).

The purpose in this study guide and the subsequent examination is to aid the applicant in effective ministerial activity. The study guide is divided into three major parts—Bible, Church of God History and Polity, and Declaration of Faith and Practical Commitments.

RANK OF MINISTER OF MUSIC AND/OR MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

These two ministries are recognized through licensure and may be granted to either men or women. In addition to the regular examination for exhorter minister, applicants for these areas will be required to pass a written examination in the area of specialization.

Basic qualifications are the same as those for exhorter level. However, it is necessary for ministers in these areas of specialization to have the appropriate training (formal education or its equivalent) required to function in the area of ministry designated.

Qualifications of Ministers of Music and/or Ministers of Christian Education

1. Must have the baptism in the Holy Ghost (DF 8, 9).
2. Must be thoroughly acquainted with the Teachings and Doctrines of the Church of God as set forth by the International General Assembly.
3. Must possess the necessary training, either formal or an adequate substitute thereof, to enable him [or her] to serve the church effectively in either of these highly specialized areas of the ministry.
4. Must successfully pass the examination given by a duly constituted board of examiners.

Rights and Authorities

The minister of music and/or minister of Christian education shall have full right and authority to . . .

1. Serve as music director, Christian education director, teacher, or assistant pastor of local churches.
2. Publish, defend, and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. The minister of music and/or minister of Christian education shall not be eligible for ordination as long as he [or she] remains solely in the field of music or Christian education.
4. In the event the minister of Christian education or minister of music enters into a pulpit ministry, we recommend that he/she be given credit for his/her period of licensure [as minister of Christian education or minister of music] and that this period serve in lieu of the exhorter's licensure (50th A., 1964, p. 55).

In addition to the regular examination for exhorter minister, applicants for these areas will be required to pass a written examination in the chosen specialization.

Procedure for a Minister of Music and/or of Christian Education to Move Toward Ordination

1. The applicant must meet all the required qualifications for the rank of ordained minister and then ordained bishop.
2. The minister of music and/or minister of Christian education is not eligible for ordination as long as the person remains solely in the field of music or Christian Education.
3. In order to move toward ordination, the minister of music and/or minister of Christian education must declare a pulpit ministry in addition to the area of specialty.
4. The period of licensure as a minister of music and/or Christian education serves in lieu of the exhorter's licensure.
5. Ministers of music and/or ministers of Christian education who wish to make application for ordained minister rank must complete the Ministerial Internship Program or its equivalency prior to their application for ordained minister being approved.

STEPS IN TAKING THE EXAM

1. The administrative bishop will schedule the examination, providing date, time, directions, and instruction for the written and oral examinations. If applicants do not wish to or cannot be ready or available for that date, it is the responsibility of the applicants to request that the administrative bishop permit them to take the exam at a later date.
2. After the ministerial applicant completes the written examination, the examination is scored according to an official answer key. **In order to be approved, the applicant must have an average of 70 percent on all parts of the examination and have no score lower than 60 percent on any section.**
3. Following successful completion of the written examination, the applicant will appear for oral examination before an Examining Board appointed by the administrative bishop.
4. The Examining Board (consisting of at least three ordained bishops) will conduct an oral examination dealing with questions of ministry, knowledge of the way of salvation, ministerial calling, personal relationships in ministry, direction in ministry, theology of ministry, and personal goals in ministry.
5. The board will give its recommendation for approval or disapproval to the administrative bishop.
6. If the administrative bishop concurs with the recommendation for approval, he will forward all papers to the general overseer (presiding bishop).

CONDUCT OF THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION

The **written examination** will be administered according to the following procedures:

1. The written examination will be issued to the individual applicant from the office of the administrative bishop.
2. The written examination will be given on a date set and at a place appointed by the administrative bishop in each state, on either an individual or group basis.
3. The examination will be issued, monitored, and collected by a responsible person appointed by the administrative bishop.
4. The examination will have three sections: Bible, Church of God History and Polity, and Declaration of Faith and Practical Commitments. The written examination will be taken in a single sitting.
5. When the applicant has completed the written examination, the applicant will return the exam to the person in charge.

The scoring of the written examination will be done by the administrative bishop or someone appointed by him.

1. The examination will be graded according to an official answer key. Examination questions will be drawn from a master set of questions and these will be changed periodically in order to safeguard the integrity of the program.
2. The scores achieved on the written examination will determine whether the applicant will be permitted to appear before an examining board for an oral examination and final evaluation. If the applicant scores below 60 percent on any of the three sections of the examination, that section in the examination must be repeated before going before the examining board. An average of 70 percent on the total examination is required for an applicant to be permitted to go before the board for the oral examination.

CONDUCT OF THE ORAL EXAMINATION

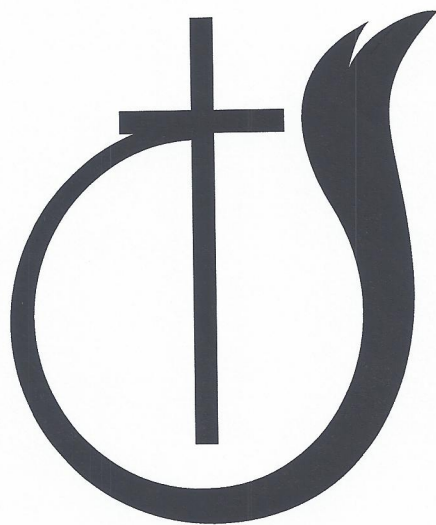
The **oral examination** will be conducted according to the following procedures:

1. The examining board will consist of at least three (3) ordained bishops appointed by the administrative bishop.
2. This board may examine the applicant in any area of ministry and ministerial preparation appropriate to the rank of ministry for which he is applying. The examining board should have the scores from the written examinations in order to be aware of the applicant's particular strengths and weaknesses.

IMPORTANT

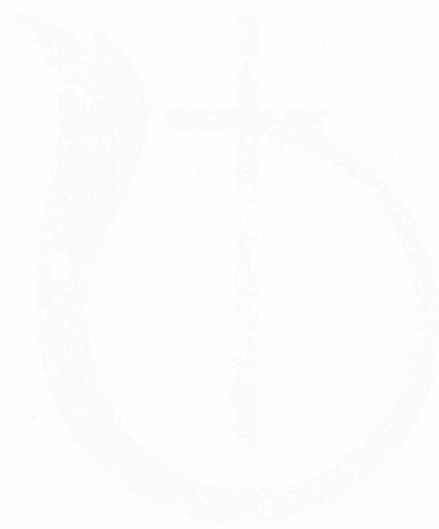
The written exam will be comprised of selected questions from each part of the study guide. This is inclusive of Part I—Bible; Part II—Church of God History and Polity; Part III—Declaration of Faith and Practical Commitments.

PART ONE
BIBLE



EXHORTER

BACK ONE
BIBLE



EXHORTER

THE MINISTER: "WHO AM I?"¹

I. THE MINISTER IS . . .

One of the most important questions believers can ask themselves is, Who am I? The answer to that question gives identity. The way individuals see themselves is the way others see them and the way they come across in the ministerial role. The answer also determines the level of effectiveness and efficiency.

Believers are created in the image of God—each a personality with a behavioral approach to life, called to the ministry as a disciple, a shepherd/leader, and an agent of spiritual change.

A. CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.

The first answer to the question, Who am I? is, "Believers are created in the image of God." They have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Their lives are in harmony with the Lord. They are redeemed, cleansed, and empowered through the work of the Holy Spirit. Thus, they are equipped to live for God and to serve Him.

Not only are they believers, but believers created in the image of God. The Scripture supports this premise.

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (Genesis 1:27).

What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made [man] a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:4-6).

I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14a).

Three levels of creation will be considered: physical, emotional and spiritual.

Physical. Human beings are the height of God's creation. As the crowning glory of all God's creative work, He has formed people in a marvelous way. They are indeed made in His image physically.

Emotional. God has given individuals the capacity to experience the same emotions He feels. The Scripture speaks of God's love for humankind and His joy when a sinner repents. The apostle Paul's attitude toward the Philippians demonstrates an individual's ability to exhibit the same emotions. He

¹All scripture references in "The Minister: 'Who Am I?'" are taken from the *New King James Version* (NKJV) of the Bible, unless otherwise noted.

wrote: "Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved" (Philippians 4:1). The reader can hear God's heart beating through Paul. Individuals do indeed have feelings: feelings of love and appreciation. They are able to reflect and analyze what they are doing, and that separates them from the animal kingdom. Their emotional makeup has a great deal to do with the kind of people they are.

Spiritual. Individuals also bear God's image spiritually. As believers, they are called to be servants, and in this they follow in the footsteps of the Master, Jesus Christ. What a marvelous experience. God says to believers today what He said to the Romans: "You also are the called of Jesus Christ . . . beloved of God, called to be saints" (Romans 1:6, 7). This calling brings them into a different dimension of life. They are made to sit with Him in heavenly places, as Paul told the Ephesians.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace (Ephesians 1:3-7).

In addition to all of this, the apostle says that God has given "the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of [Christ], the eyes of [man's] understanding being enlightened" (Ephesians 1:17, 18).

The apostle Peter further comments on the unique position believers have as partakers of the divine nature.

His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (2 Peter 1:3, 4).

Interaction occurs between the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of individuals. The way these facets of the self interact determines the kind of persons they are and the type of ministers they become. Discipleship starts when and how individuals view themselves and their image. If they are not happy with their physical life, emotional life, or spiritual life, it will soon be evident. People who know them well will soon detect how they feel. When the physical, emotional, and spiritual phases of life harmonize, it becomes evident that the believers are created in the image of God.

B. CREATED WITH A UNIQUE PERSONALITY.

Believers have individual personalities. They hear talk about changes in lifestyles. For believers, these changes come at conversion. Paul wrote: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). After conversion, believers begin to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That means, in part, that personality changes as one becomes more like Jesus. Believers become different individuals than they were. In fact, they should always be developing, growing more mature, and becoming more Christlike.

Personality is determined by what is in control of one's life. One has an entirely different response to life, depending on whether the physical (flesh), the soul or the spirit is in charge. Paul wrote: "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6). When the flesh is in control, the result is the manifestation of all kinds of carnality. The list of fleshly activity is a long one. Paul wrote:

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21).

Since believers have been redeemed, their objective should be to have their spirits in control of their lives. When one's spirit is in harmony with the Holy Spirit, it produces the fruit of the Spirit in one's daily walk. Paul describes this fruit: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22, 23).

Believers' personalities are a combination of the influences of the body, soul, and spirit. When they understand this, they begin to realize that there is nobody else just like they are. Believers do not have to be like anybody else. Instead, they need to develop and maximize their uniqueness. They may learn from other people or even model others, but they must always maintain their uniqueness.

There are characteristics about believers that are unique. They act out what is going on inside them. They act and behave in ways that are the result of all the influences that bear upon them. These influences come together to form the personality.

C. CREATED WITH A BEHAVIORAL APPROACH TO LIFE.

All behavior is experience-oriented. It is based on the experiences people have. All believers have rich experiences in the Lord available to them. These include the following:

1. They can know what it means to be justified. Paul wrote: "Having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him" (Romans 5:9).
2. They can be sanctified. The writer of Hebrews declared: "Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate" (13:12).
3. They can know what it is to be redeemed. Peter said: "Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things . . . but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18, 19).

4. They can know what it means to really be reconciled. Paul wrote: "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been made near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13).
5. They can know what it means to have peace. Paul observed: "For it pleased the Father . . . by [Christ] to reconcile all things to Himself . . . having made peace through the blood of His cross" (Colossians 1:19, 20).

A behavioral approach to life calls for certain adjustments on the part of individuals because they are need-motivated and experience-oriented. Above all, they are to be Christlike in style.

Christlike behavior is the will of God. Paul could not have been clearer about this than when he was writing to the Colossians.

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may have a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light (Colossians 1:9-12).

No other question is more often asked by believers than how they may know the will of God for their lives. For many people, this is a real problem as they wonder about the will of God. What they forget is that God's will is the same for every believer. His will is clearly enunciated in this passage from Colossians. And what this passage says to every minister is that being a minister is not the most important thing in life. The most important thing is to walk worthy of the Lord, to please Him, to bear fruit in every good work, to grow in the knowledge of God, to be strengthened with power, and to joyfully give praise to the Father. Those who live in this manner will become Christlike in style.

So, who is a believer? A believer is a person: (1) who is created in the image of God, (2) who has a unique personality, and (3) who has a behavioral approach to life.

D. CALLED TO THE MINISTRY

Believers who are called into ministry are involved because they have been given a divine mandate. They do not view their work as a vocation, a career, or a profession. They move under divine direction so that they answer not only to men but also to God. What is behind this calling? What does it mean to be called of God?

1. As a Disciple

- a. *A disciple possesses a genuine concern for the lost.* A sense of urgency about lost humanity seems to evade the modern church. Too many ministers seem to have lost their concern for fallen mankind. They no longer get upset when people are not saved in their church services.

What the people are going to remember about the sermons they hear is the urgency ministers bring to them and the conviction with which they speak. They may not remember what the ministers said, but the people will remember how they said it.

Both the psalmist and the apostle Paul gave us examples of what it means to possess a concern for the lost.

Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him (Psalm 126:5, 6).

I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh (Romans 9:1-3).

- b. *A disciple searches the Scripture to be an effective witness.* The apostle Paul commended the Bereans for being “more fair-minded” than the Thessalonians. They received Paul’s preaching with great eagerness, then they “searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11).

Paul also encouraged Timothy to present himself to God as “a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). A knowledge of the Scripture is essential to effective witnessing. This is true whether the witness is from the pulpit or in one-on-one contact with the lost. Personal evangelism can be a frightening experience. But when believers are fortified by the Word and enabled of the Spirit, they can be effective.

- c. *A disciple recognizes human need as a field of evangelism.* Jesus saw the need in the life of the Samaritan woman at the well as an opportunity for evangelism (John 4:7). Philip saw the lack of understanding on the part of the Ethiopian eunuch as a chance to share the gospel (Acts 8:30). Paul viewed the misguided perceptions about God among the Athenians as an opportunity to witness concerning the true God (Acts 17:23).

Every need believers encounter is a time for evangelism. Everything they do contributes in some way to evangelism. If people are cleaning the church, there is a sense in which they are in evangelism. If they are answering the phone, they are doing evangelistic work. Any call may represent a need for which Jesus Christ has an answer. Human need is a field of evangelism.

- d. *A disciple is led by the Holy Spirit.* Paul wrote to the Romans: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. . . . The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Romans 8:14, 16). This leading of the Spirit sustains believers in the good times and in the bad times. It also gives them vision for service.
- e. *A disciple trusts God’s Word as a source of power.* Peter said that “the word of God . . . lives and abides forever” (1 Peter 1:23). To what extent do Christians believe the Bible?

How many churches are set up biblically? How many people function in a biblical framework? How many act out the Bible in their everyday lives?

The Bible is under fire from many quarters today. Its validity, authenticity, reliability and inspiration are being called into question. But if believers really knew the Word and tasted its power, they would have a different attitude.

- *The Bible is inspired.* Paul told Timothy that “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16).
- *The Bible penetrates the heart.* The writer of Hebrews affirmed this. He wrote: “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).
- *The Bible endures forever.* This is what Jesus had in mind when He said that “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away” (Matthew 24:35).

Too many ministers are so busy that they have very little time to explore the Scriptures for their own personal nourishment. But it is essential that they read and study the Bible on a personal level. It must be more than just a place to find a text to preach next Sunday. It needs to be a place to find enrichment and power with God.

- f. *A disciple avoids foolish controversy by exalting Christ.* Paul told Timothy: “Avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife” (2 Timothy 2:23). A good rule of thumb for any pastor is to try to never discipline or deal with controversy on Sundays. The Lord’s Day is an opportunity to feed the sheep, not shear them. Handle controversial matters on Wednesday evening or other teaching times.

Develop a spiritual motive for witnessing and for ministry. A minister’s motive for ministry must be spiritual and not carnal or fleshly. A minister should echo the cry of the apostle Paul: “That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (Philippians 3:10). In his ministry, Christ must become for him “wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption” (1 Corinthians 1:30). That is the basis for a spiritual ministry.

2. As a Shepherd/Leader

The scriptures list several characteristics that describe a shepherd/leader.

- a. *A shepherd/leader is a concerned caretaker.* Jesus gives a picture of a concerned caretaker in the form of a shepherd who has 100 sheep. He leaves the 99 sheep who have not strayed from the fold and goes out in search of the one lost sheep. He rejoices greatly when he finds and rescues that lost sheep. (See Matthew 18:12, 13.)

- b. *A shepherd/leader is an experienced modeler.* Ministers make Christ the model for their ministries. They are enabled to do this through their experience of redemption in Christ. Paul wrote: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- c. *A shepherd/leader is a productive provider.* Peter said that through His divine power, God "has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue" (2 Peter 1:3; see also vv. 4-11). Everything a minister needs to be a productive provider he has in Jesus Christ.
- d. *A shepherd/leader is a mature mentor.* A new convert is put at great risk when placed in a leadership role. The individual's immaturity in Christ may cause the person to stumble. Paul admonished that a bishop should not be "a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil" (1 Timothy 3:6).
- e. *A shepherd/leader is a disciplined director.* Among the qualifications Paul listed for a bishop are the following: he "must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach" (1 Timothy 3:2). A lack of personal discipline in this area can be disastrous.
- f. *A shepherd/leader is an exemplary administrator.* How ministers conduct their personal and family life has a bearing on their ministerial functions. Paul admonished: "If a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?" (1 Timothy 3:5).
- g. *A shepherd/leader is consistently stable in faith, love, and endurance.* Paul urged Titus to "exhort the young men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you" (Titus 2:6-8).
- h. *A shepherd/leader is divinely called.* The writer of Hebrews identifies those to whom he is writing as "partakers of the heavenly calling" and encourages them to fix their attention on Jesus Christ, "the Apostle and High Priest of our confession" (Hebrews 3:1).

What does it mean to be called? Paul offers several observations.

- *A called person functions compellingly out of necessity.* This thought comes from Paul's own words: "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9:16). If a person can do anything else but preach, he should do it.
- *A called person functions willingly in the light of a sacred responsibility.* This is what brings joy to the ministry. Above any hassle or problems of personal tension with some of the people is the fulfillment of a devotion to the sacred call God has placed upon one's life. Such willing service has its rewards.

- *A called person functions sacrificially with total dedication (martyrdom if necessary).* This is what Paul had in mind when he wrote: “But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24).

3. As an Agent of Spiritual Change

The early Christians devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. The result of this unity of spirit was that God performed wonders and signs in their midst. People shared their possessions. Souls were being saved daily and added to the church. Through this unity and fellowship, believers reached a place where God could work through them. (See Acts 2:40-47.) They became agents of spiritual change. Believers today need to follow their examples. How can they do that? By living out certain biblical principles.

- Believers need to be “kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love” (Romans 12:10a).
- Believers need to honor others above themselves: “in honor giving preference to one another” (Romans 12:10b).
- Believers should accept each person as important. Paul wrote: “Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another” (Romans 12:15, 16a).
- Believers are called to serve in love. Paul admonished the Galatians: “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13).
- Believers need to carry one another’s burdens. Paul declared: “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).
- Believers should accept other believers for who they are because that is what Christ has done for all who have come to Him. Paul wrote: “Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God” (Romans 15:7).
- Believers should exhibit a spirit of forgiveness. Paul admonished believers to bear “with one another, and [forgive] one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do” (Colossians 3:13).
- Believers should be encouragers. Paul saw this virtue in the Thessalonians and commended them: “Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing” (1 Thessalonians 5:11).
- Believers should show hospitality openly and willingly. Consider the words of Peter: “Be hospitable to one another without grumbling” (1 Peter 4:9).

THE MINISTER: “WHAT IS A MINISTER’S ROLE?”¹

I. AS A MINISTER IN LEADERSHIP, IT IS NECESSARY TO . . .

A. DEVELOP SPIRITUAL RESPONSE PATTERNS

There is a constant state of spiritual conflict—a spiritual warfare waged for control of the mind. This struggle is what Paul addressed when writing to the Romans, “to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace” (Romans 8:6). He advised the Colossians:

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience in which you also once walked when you lived in them” (Colossians 3:1-7).

As believers in the role of leadership, it is important to develop spiritual response patterns. Everyone—Christian and non-Christian—respond to everything that happens either in fear or hope. From the Christian perspective, however, the word faith is more appropriate. Christians respond to everything that happens either in fear or in faith.

Individuals can know they are out of kilter when they respond with anxiety for little or no reason. For example, some pastors are prone to respond in anxiety and fear to a telephone call even though they do not know who is calling, particularly if there are problems going on in their churches. How can they adjust this response process?

They have to develop spiritual response patterns. The biggest enemy ministers and church leaders have is anxiety—a kind of blind sense of apprehension. It is a low-grade fear that is kept on the back burner all the time that gnaws and wears away at them.

The interesting thing is that the problem does not cause the pain; the circumstances do not cause the anxiety. So what is the causal factor? The individual’s perception of the problem causes the pain. The way one thinks about the circumstances causes the anxiety.

Individuals cannot always do something about the problem or change the circumstances, but they can do something about the way they think—the way they perceive the situation. That is the message Paul sent to the Philippians.

¹All scripture references in “The Minister: ‘What Is a Minister’s Role?’” are taken from the *New King James Version (NKJV)* of the Bible, unless otherwise noted.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you (Philippians 4:6-9).

The writer of Hebrews identifies five things that are important in making faith work.

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls (Hebrews 12:1-3).

1. *The first thing ministers can do to make faith work is to draw from history.* They can draw from the experiences of that “great . . . cloud of witnesses” (v. 1). If God did it once, He will do it again. If God saw them through before, He will see them through again. If God opened up the Red Sea for them ten years ago, He will do it again.
2. *The second thing ministers can do is travel light.* They can “lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares” (v. 1). He needs to keep his mind clear.
3. *Third, ministers can choose their life plan.* (v. 1). They can “run with endurance the race that is set before them” (v. 1). It is important for them to know what their life plan is. It will keep them from becoming concerned about being someplace else or doing something else.
4. *Ministers must focus their faith on the Founder.* They can look “unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith” (v. 2). Jesus must become the head of the church. The church does not belong to the pastor, the members, or the denomination; it is God’s church, and Christ is the head.
5. *Ministers must rest their case.* They should “not become weary and discouraged in their soul” (v. 3). Considering Jesus who “endured such hostility from sinners” and endured the cross, ministers can rest their case and follow Him so that they will not lose heart nor grow weary. That is the way ministers can make their faith work for them, and these are the issues that help them to think like they ought to think.

B. MAKE ADJUSTMENTS THROUGH A SPIRITUAL MIND-SET

For ministers to come to the internalization of this spiritual mind-set, they must understand the contrast between the spiritual mind and the sinful mind.

1. The Sinful Mind

Consider first the sinful mind. What is God trying to keep people from becoming? What is Satan trying to do to them?

- a. *The sinful mind is reprobate* (Romans 1:28). Something happens in the mind that brings people down to a level of depravity, prompting them to do the things of the flesh. Paul wrote: "Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21). A reprobate mind-set prompts people to do those things. The sin happens in their minds before it ever happens in their bodies. That is why the mind is so important.
- b. *The sinful mind—a carnal mind—is hostile to God*. Paul said, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be" (Romans 8:7).
- c. *The sinful mind is futile in its thinking*. The apostle wrote: "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind" (Ephesians 4:17). That is one of the biggest things ministers deal with every day in their congregations. People are thinking like Gentiles and trying to live like Christians. There's a discrepancy—a conflict—in their mentality. The minister's job is to help them resolve that conflict.
- d. *The sinful mind is puffed up*. Paul admonished, "Let no one defraud you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind" (Colossians 2:18).
- e. *The sinful mind is corrupt or defiled*. Consider these words to Titus: "To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled" (Titus 1:15).

Satan wants to get believers into this sinful mind-set so they will forget the privileges they have in Christ. They should remember these words and follow this advice: "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:1-3). In short, the sinful mind-set is intended by Satan to keep people dead spiritually.

2. The Spiritual Mind

The spiritual mind makes believers alive in Christ and dead to the flesh. What are the components of a spiritual mind-set?

- a. *The spiritual mind is transformed.* Paul admonished: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:2).
- b. *The spiritual mind is renewed, that is, made new.* The Ephesians were admonished: “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (Ephesians 4:22-24, *NIV*).
- c. *The spiritual mind is Christlike.* Paul addressed this subject to two different congregations. “For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace” (Romans 8:6). “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5).
- d. *The spiritual mind is positive in thought.* Paul offered the Philippians a model mind-set. “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you” (Philippians 4:8, 9).

II. AS A SHEPHERD/LEADER, I . . .

A. APPROPRIATE A BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK

Acting as a shepherd/leader begins with appropriating a Biblical framework. In Ephesians 6:10-20, the apostle Paul gives such a framework out of which one can operate.

1. *Have a sense of purpose.* Paul wrote: “Be strong in the Lord” (v. 10). Leaders have to make changes. The definition of growth is “change.” And to make changes, one has to be strong in the Lord. The Lord can empower one to change—to grow.
2. *Have a workable plan.* The Apostle added: “Take up the whole armor of God” (v. 13). Then he tells what that whole armor is. It includes the girdle of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, and sword of the Spirit.
3. *Have a commitment to prayer.* Paul wrote: “[Pray] . . . in the Spirit” (v. 18). A praying minister is a growing minister. Prayer and growth go together and prayer is so very, very important. One of the things that will help sustain a church, in the most difficult times, is intercessory prayer groups. Ministers need intercessors who pray for them daily. That is such a tremendous support. God’s messengers need those who are committed to prayer—prayer in the Spirit.

4. *Have the consistency of participation.* Paul said, “I am an ambassador [for Christ]” (v. 20). That means every minister should have a philosophy of ministry. Paul’s philosophy was to be an ambassador for Christ, and thereby to bring others to the Lord.

In developing its mission, a church may develop a statement by using the following acronym (taken from the Mount Paran Church of God in Atlanta, Georgia):

C *Celebration*—the exaltation of Christ through worship (Philippians 2:8-11)

O *Outreach*—the proclamation of hope (Matthew 28:19, 20)

N *Nurture*—the development of disciples (Ephesians 4:11-13)

C *Care*—the healing of the hurting (Galatians 6:1, 2)

E *Encouragement*—a reassurance from stressful times (Matthew 25:34-36)

R *Responsibility*—the accountability of resources (1 Chronicles 29:11, 12)

N *New life in Christ*—living the Spirit-filled life (2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1)

B. ASSUME A STANCE OF LEADERSHIP

After appropriating a Biblical framework, the minister must take a stance of leadership. That stance must be scriptural:

- The apostle Peter advises: “Shepherd the flock of God which is among you . . . being examples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:2, 3).
- The apostle Paul admonishes ministers to lead “with diligence” (Romans 12:8).
- Paul says that God appoints leaders—“apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers”—and equips them with gifts of the Spirit (see Ephesians 4:11).

C. ACTIVATE FELLOWSHIP

Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works” (Matthew 16:24-27).

1. *Jesus enlisted others.* He said, “Come after Me.” Membership procedures are important. People should want to join the church. Why would they want to join the church? What

does the church have to offer that will enlist people to come and be a part of its location, to be a part of its outreach and its ministry?

2. *Jesus motivated people.* He said, “Deny yourself, take up your cross, make a commitment” (v. 24). In today’s world that commitment has to be more convenient than ever before. But commitment is important here. Deny yourself; be motivated.
3. *Jesus educated people.* “Follow Me; take up your cross.” He educated people to come.
4. *Jesus called for dedication.* “Whoever loses his life for My sake will find it” (v. 25).

D. ACCENT MINISTRY PRIORITIES

1. *Structure to reach unbelievers and seekers.* Does anyone want to know how to make the church grow? Fill the pews with sinners. Then, let the Holy Spirit do the work.
2. *Facilitate personal growth.* A caring church wants people to come as they are. It does not tell them to check their sins at the door or to meet any certain criteria. Instead, it says, Come; from the highways and hedges, come; let him who is thirsty, come (see Luke 14:23; John 7:37). Once they find Jesus Christ, then the church needs to nurture them. Afterwards is the time to involve them.
3. *Build on the centrality of worship.* Worshiping Christ is the centrality of all that the church is. It rises or falls on the quality, the impact, the influence and the outcome of the worship service.
4. *Help people through therapeutic preaching.* People should leave different than they came. People are looking for something to grasp. They are looking to receive something to make it through the next week.
5. *Develop a staff attitude of humility and servanthood.* Ministers need to be servant/leaders.

E. ASPIRE TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

Preaching exists for one reason—to influence people. The gospel should be presented in such a way as to influence individuals to move from a lower plane to a higher plane. This happens through the inspiration and anointing of the Holy Spirit. The ultimate results of the proclamation will show the changes that have occurred.

What is the process for proclamation? Here are seven steps for building a therapeutic sermon.

1. Decide on the subject.
2. Develop the biblical basis. Get the subject, then go look for a text.

3. Delineate the application points. Develop the outline—the points that need to be driven home. For instance, a sermon based on Acts 5:42—“Daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ”—would have the following points:
 - There is a time element in the word “daily.”
 - There is the temple element—“in the temple, and in every house.”
 - There is a telling element—they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.”
 - There is a timeless element—“Jesus . . . the Christ.” The pastor should find these points and delineate the point that he thinks would come out of this Biblical basis.
4. Define the exegetical meanings. Find the exegesis of the passage. There are all kinds of materials available to help determine what the passage is saying in the context in which it was written.
5. Determine the appropriate illustrations.
6. Detail the outline. Write it out in longhand.
7. Deliver it from the heart. Preachers should memorize the scriptures, absorb them in their hearts, then take the message to the pulpit. Do whatever needs to be done on Saturday night to make the message burn. If it does not burn in the ministers, it is not going to burn in anybody else. They should not preach the message until they feel it in their heart and spirit.

What are the objectives of proclamation?

Six objectives are given in 2 Timothy 1:8–2:7:

- (1) evangelism (1:8);
- (2) ethics (1:9);
- (3) doctrine (1:9-11);
- (4) inspiration (1:12);
- (5) nurture (1:13, 14); and
- (6) development (2:1-7).

There are seven guideline questions pastors should ask about their congregations:

1. What ranges of Christian experience seem unknown to the congregation? The Holy Spirit? Spiritual gifts? Identity in Christ? Christian commitment?
2. To what Christian principles do they appear blind? Morality? Relationships? Ethics? In today's world that is a very important question. There are people in the congregation

who have seared their consciences. They are fooling themselves about their faith, and they will go to hell unless the Word of God grips their hearts.

3. What spiritual needs seem unmet? One great spiritual need is practicing the presence of God—to know how to walk in His presence and to live in His presence.
4. What areas of personal and social life do not meet Christ's kingdom? What parts of their lives are they hiding?
5. What is lacking in the church's effect on the community? What about its witness? What about its representation? What about its involvement? The next great move of the Holy Spirit is going to be through lay people. It does not seem that it can happen any other way.
6. What aspects of the gospel have most immediate appeal to the sinners present? Love? Reasons for living? Relationships? Climate? What aspects of the gospel need to touch them the most?
7. What problems of adjustment and daily coping seem most prevalent? Faith? Hope? Love?

THE MINISTER: “HOW DO I PLAN THE WORSHIP SERVICE?”¹

A.W. Tozer referred to worship as the missing jewel of the modern church. The word *worship* in both the Hebrew and Greek primarily means “to bow down,” signifying the bowing of the will to God, the submission to God, and the adoration of God. The most important event in the life of the church each week is the Sunday celebration of worship. The most important thing the minister does is to prepare the worship service in such a way that he truly leads the people into an experience of the presence of God.

The early church model of worship was based on the synagogue style which developed during the silent-year period and was predominant during the ministry of Jesus. As the people would come together in their local towns and communities, the worship on the Sabbath was focused on the synagogue. In fact, the worship itself was composed of several primary components.

1. There was praise to God. The worshipers would sing psalms and hymns.
2. Then the priest and the rabbi would share with the people the meaning of the Word.
3. The worshipers fellowshiped and encouraged one another.

Immediately following Pentecost, the early church was born. The Book of Acts describes something of that early worship model: “They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers” (2:42). This verse embodies some of the basic components of that early worship experience of the New Testament church. Sunday became the focal point of the worship of the early church because it is the day of the resurrection of Jesus. This point is very important for ministers to emphasize every Sunday when people come together to worship. Sunday is the first day of the week, and it sets the tone and the attitude for the remainder of the week.

Worship has at its heart the celebration of the risen Christ. The Sunday experience of worship can be viewed as the hub of the wheel of ministry. Looking at ministry as a wheel, there obviously is the hub of the wheel and then the spokes which move outward—Bible studies, prayer groups, outreach, small group fellowships, and world missions. Of course, the more churches grow the more spokes they add to the wheel. But the hub of the wheel is worship. The Sunday experience, when the majority of the people come together, is the time that ministers make the greatest impact on their congregations. Out of this worship experience, all other areas of ministry flow and develop.

When churches are small, ministers can get preoccupied with how many people are present. However, they should not focus on the quantity of people, rather on the quality of the worship service. It is very important that ministers and leadership prepare themselves spiritually to make Sunday the greatest experience for the people as they come together to celebrate the risen Christ. The minister must devote

¹All scripture references in “The Minister: ‘How Do I Plan a Worship Service?’” are taken from the *New King James Version (NKJV)* of the Bible, unless otherwise noted.

himself to making sure everything that happens in the worship service happens in a standard of excellence. The Bible says, "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

I. PURPOSE OF WORSHIP

Understanding the purpose of worship dictates how the worship service itself is structured. There are three primary reasons believers come together in a corporate setting to worship.

A. Exalt God.

Exaltation means that the music, drama, preaching, prayers and all facets of the service focus on the glory, magnitude, greatness, and holiness of God. Oftentimes ministers make the mistake of tailoring the service to the needs of people. If this happens, then more emphasis is placed on the human situation than on the greatness of God. But, the first reason people come together to worship is to take their minds off themselves and their dilemmas, crises, situations, or struggles, and to focus their faith and spiritual eyes on the greatness of God. A good example of exaltation is found in Psalm 100.

The more believers exalt God, the more it puts their present struggles or issues into proper perspective. Therefore, the service should always focus on the exaltation of God and the person of Jesus Christ. He is the reason for coming together.

B. Edify Believers.

The word *edify* simply means "to make strong, fortify, strengthen, or build up." Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14 that everything should be done for the strengthening or the edification of the church. That is the reason believers come together to worship, fellowship, share their lives with each other, hear the Word of God, and apply it to their lives in order to be strong. The objective of ministry is to move people from conversion to spiritual growth and discipleship. It is not enough just to bring people to Christ, because when they are first converted, they are spiritual infants. Infants must then develop into a life of growth and development. Therefore, the worship service itself is structured in such a way to mature the people of God and to help them grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. Evangelize the Lost.

There are still numbers of people who are unconverted and who will attend worship services. In fact, every Sunday in most churches there are people who have never come to a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently, when the worship service is designed, the minister needs to keep these people in mind. In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul makes this case when he talks about the gifts of the Holy Spirit, in particular, tongues and prophecy. He talks about the unbeliever in the midst of the corporate public worship of the church. As pastors are leading the people in worship and seeking to build up the body of Christ, they have the understanding that there are people present who do not know Christ. His goal is to reach them for the Lord Jesus

Christ. This is why believers come together to worship: they come to exalt God and glorify Him, to build up the church, but also to be sensitive to the needs of those who do not know the Lord.

II. STRUCTURING THE WORSHIP SERVICE

There is no right or wrong way to structure the worship service, although there are certain elements of worship which are universal. For example, a service should include prayer, singing, reading, and teaching the Word of God, and ministering to one another. But the structure or the order is different from church to church. It is very important to understand that fact. The style could range from a traditional type of service to a very contemporary style of worship that would utilize arts, modern music, and so forth. This is an illustration of the difference between the wine and the wineskin in the parable Jesus gave in Mark 2:22. The wineskin is the structure or the form, but the wine is the essence of ministry. The wine is the worship, singing, prayer, and the ministry of the Word. The wineskin is the method, and it is left up to the ministers to decide how it will be done as the Holy Spirit leads them.

Accordingly, there are diversities of ministries and ways that congregations worship today, and one is not better than the other. One is not more effective than the other. One is not right and the other wrong. Therefore, ministers need to know their congregations, their needs, the settings in which God has placed them, and tailor the style of worship to be in harmony with the people to whom they are ministering.

Indeed, the ministers' number one priority as spiritual leaders is to lead their people in worship. Nevertheless, they are responsible for more than just delivering the sermon. They are the ones, as priests before God, who are responsible for the design and layout of the whole order of service. Even though there are many people who get involved and help in music, drama, and so forth, ministers themselves are the chief architects of the flow of the worship, and ultimately they are the ones who preside over the worship service. It is important then that ministers once again realize that the most important thing they do every week is to prepare to lead their people in the worship of God.

A. PREPARATION FOR THE WORSHIP SERVICE

What should go into the worship service? Again, the way these components are incorporated is relative to one's own situation, but there are some very important components that should not be left out.

1. *Time.* The minister should give a great deal of time to planning the Sunday worship service. Time is the number one commodity, not money. Time is far more valuable. People feel pushed. They feel pressured. They live under a constant series of demands. Consequently, when people go to church and experience the worship service, they need to encounter God in worship.
2. *Thought, prayer, design.* The service ought to be thought through, prayed through, and designed for the glory of God. It should not include any downtime or contain anything

that does not bring glory to God. It should edify the church, or bring people to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Structuring and planning the service gives a sense of direction, aim, and focus for the worship service itself.

B. CHIEF COMPONENTS OF THE WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

1. *Musical prelude.* The service should begin with a music prelude—it may be organ music, band music or whatever style—which should set an atmosphere of worship in the church as the worshipers are entering the sanctuary.
2. *Call to worship.* The prelude is followed by a call to worship. This too is normally a musical selection. However, it should not be a song that would be considered a personal testimony. As wonderful as personal testimonies are, like “Amazing Grace” or “Blessed Assurance,” they still focus on the worshiper himself. But the call to worship is a different kind of song, a different style of music, and a different lyrical content. It is a song that focuses the minds of the worshipers away from themselves and onto the greatness and glory of God and of Jesus Christ. It is also an invitation to worship. This song can be a celebration song; it can be an upbeat type of song, calling people to glorify God, to worship God, and to praise Him with joy and celebration.
3. *Scripture reading.* The third component of the worship service is the reading of the Word. The Bible says in 1 Timothy 4:13 that there should be public reading of Scripture. This is especially useful for times in the year like the Advent season, Palm Sunday, the Easter celebration and, of course, it is appropriate every Sunday. The more the worship service is filled with the reading and preaching of the Scripture, the more the people will receive ministry. One of the greatest weaknesses of the modern church is the absence of the reading and the ministering of the Scripture. The more content there is of the Word of God in the hearing of the people, the stronger their faith will be. Paul said, “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). The Scripture reading could include the pastor reading the Word in the hearing of the people, a responsive reading, or a reading in unison of one of the great psalms.
4. *Congregational praise.* The congregational praise is very important because the worship service should not be a spectator sport. The people should not simply sit in the pews and look up to the platform, watching the minister, the choir, or the soloist. They should participate themselves. Congregational singing is very important, and normally will move from a celebrative nature to a more worshipful type of music. The great commandment in Deuteronomy 6:4, 5 says, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.” Congregational singing, worship and the reading of the Word is designed to help believers live out that commandment.
5. *Pastoral prayer.* Here is where the minister comes before the Lord on behalf of the people. Some congregations practice concert prayer, and it is certainly in order to do so. But the pastoral prayer is different. As a spiritual leader and a priest, the minister leads the people to the throne of God. There are several different styles of pastoral prayers.

- *First, the minister may lead the congregation in a prayer of thanksgiving.* This helps the congregation to focus on giving God thanksgiving and praise for all that He has done. The minister may encourage the people to express their own thanksgiving to God, maybe with the lifting up of hands and speaking praise to the Lord—thanksgiving first and foremost for who God is and then for what God has done. The content of the prayer has much to do with how the people themselves think about God.
 - *The second kind of prayer the minister can offer for the people is a prayer of intercession.* *Intercession* means “to stand in the stead of another, to represent the cause and case of another.” It is very much like the role of an attorney who represents a client in a court of law. The intercessor is the one who is coming before God on behalf of others. Intercession may focus on a variety of needs; for example, a crisis in the nation or a special missions emphasis.
 - *The third kind of prayer that the minister can pray, and should pray quite often in a service, is a prayer for the personal needs of the congregation.* The minister himself is one who feels the burdens of the people. It is a wonderful expression of ministry and love when the minister brings the congregation before the Lord and prays for them out of a heart of love. The people have a sense that the minister loves them and cares about them and is aware of their struggles.
 - *The fourth kind of prayer is to simply lead the congregation in the Lord’s Prayer.* Jesus gave that prayer to use in personal times of prayer. Not only can people pray it, but there are times when they can sing it. It is a very powerful experience to hear a congregation singing together the Lord’s Prayer. The beauty of this magnificent prayer is that it covers every aspect of human need.
 - *And finally, Scriptural prayers can be offered.* The Bible is filled with many prayers that the minister can memorize and pray over the congregation. Some examples are found in Colossians 1:9-14, Ephesians 1:15-23 and 3:14-21. The greatest and most powerful prayers the minister will ever pray for the people are those given in the Word of God.
6. *Greeting.* After the pastoral prayer, an opportunity for people to greet one another should be given. The minister should encourage the congregation to introduce themselves to those around them. It is very important when people come together in the Lord’s house that their paths cross, their lives intersect, and they make new friendships. Perhaps they will invite each other out to lunch and build relationships. The more they build relationships, the more commitment they are going to have to that local body of believers.
7. *Offering.* After people have greeted one another, it is time for the worship experience of giving. What should go into the receiving of the offering to truly make it an expression of worship to God? While preparing to receive the offering, first-time visitors can be welcomed and invited to fill out a guest card. (Some congregations will have a reception for first-time visitors as soon as the service is over. It is a wonderful opportunity to tell them that they are appreciated.)

As the ushers come to wait upon the congregation, the pastor can take 30 seconds to a minute to briefly talk about the offering. The offering is worship to God. The offering is neither an opportunity to give a financial report to the congregation nor is it an opportunity to berate people. It is certainly not an opportunity for the minister to induce fear or guilt about giving. Using fear and guilt to motivate people is very unproductive. It happens, unfortunately, in the church world, but it does not yield any lasting results. Believers should give out of their own willingness to give. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 9:7: "God loves a cheerful giver." "Cheerful giving" is the essence of an offering. It is an expression of joy, blessing, and worship. It is a wonderful opportunity for the pastor within just a few seconds to "pour in" the Word of God. He might wish to quote Leviticus 27:30, Proverbs 3:9, 10, or Malachi 3:10.

There is joy in the fact that believers can take something temporary like money and give it into the work of the Lord and produce an eternal reward. People are helped in counseling and ministry. The poor are fed, and people are won to Christ by supporting missionaries around the world. When people see the connection between money and the impact of the gospel that lasts for eternity, that is what creates the sense of joy. Every time believers give, they become evangelists. They are carrying the gospel to somebody somewhere.

The minister then prays a brief prayer over the offering in such a way that the congregation understands they are presenting their gifts before the Lord as expressions of themselves. It is a wonderful opportunity for the minister to pray that God will bless and prosper the people.

The offertory could be a special choir song or an instrumental selection which gives praise and glory to God. This is not a time for someone to talk about the songs they are going to sing. That kind of downtime is a distraction. People are beginning to give of their resources. And as they give, it needs to be in an atmosphere of worship. Therefore, as soon as the minister says, "Amen" to his prayer, the music should begin. Furthermore, the offertory has a second goal—that of preparing the hearts of the people for the main event of the Sunday celebration.

8. *The ministry of the Word of God.* Ministering of the Word is the centerpiece of the worship service in the church. The minister needs to minister in such a way that the congregation receives a spiritual return on the investment of their time. People want to hear from God. They want to encounter God. And that is why they come to church.

There are three goals of preaching. The word *preaching* simply means "to tell, to announce the good news." The minister is not commissioned by God to give bad news; he is commissioned by God to give good news to the people. The Bible says of the apostles that they devoted themselves to the ministering of the Word and to prayer (see Acts 6:4). To make an impact today, ministers need to maintain a high commitment level to the ministry of the Word of God. Some churches have learned to use drama, which catches the attention of the people, as a supplement to the Word. They will take the theme of the sermon and put it into a drama which the minister's sermon will then follow in the same train of thought. It is a wonderful vehicle of communication. The three goals of preaching are . . .

- a. *Inspire.* The minister is trying to inspire the people to holy living, to commitment to Christ, and to build up their faith.
- b. *Instruct.* Pastoral preaching has a high teaching element to it which builds up believers and matures them in the faith.
- c. *Invite.* Unbelievers are usually present; therefore, the worship service should focus on them. The invitation to accept Christ is a missing element in many churches. The Bible says in Revelation 22:17, "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.'" Thus, the sermon should inspire, instruct, and provide an opportunity to accept Christ.

There are three simple guidelines that ministers need to follow if their preaching is going to make an impact on people:

- a. Center the sermon on the person of Jesus Christ. Speak often of Him—His glory, His divinity, His nature, His work, His ministry.
 - b. Preaching needs to be biblically based.
 - c. Make it personally relevant.
9. *The altar service.* The invitation is the climax of the service; it is also the goal and the purpose. Altar calls come in a variety of shapes, forms, and fashions. So, the first question that should be asked is, "What kind of altar call should be given?" The kind of altar call that is given has a great deal to do with the goal of the sermon. So in the very beginning of planning a sermon, the minister should complete this statement: "I want people to _____." Is the goal of the sermon to get people to live for the Lord? To be encouraged? To be able to handle their adversity? To have joy? To receive healing from illnesses, diseases, and problems? It is very important that the goal of the sermon is clear for the ministers, or else at the end of the service, they will be confused. They will not really be sure where they are going with the service. The altar call should always include some element of invitation to accept Christ.

Where should the altar call take place? The altar call could happen by inviting people to the actual altar at the front of the church. It could also happen in the pews. Pentecost happened when people were sitting in the Upper Room. People could stand for special prayer. The altar call could happen in a variety of places.

How should the altar call be conducted? Following the direction and leadership of the Holy Spirit is crucial during the entire worship experience, but especially during the altar service. There are different kinds of altar calls for different kinds of worship services. One should not be hesitant to use a variety. The people could be called forward, pray in their pews, or turn in groups of two or three and join hands and pray for each other. So, diversity is important and should be orchestrated by the needs of the congregation, the style of service, and by the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Follow-up is another important facet of the altar service. A very simple way to accomplish this is to have a small card in the pews where people can write their name, address, and decision made for Christ. The ministerial team can follow up by a personal call, a written letter, or an information packet sent to the new converts on how to grow in the Christian walk. They should always be invited back to a new believers' class. The follow-up of people who accept Christ in the worship service is a very important component to leading people in worship and bringing them to know Jesus Christ.

10. *Benediction*. The word *benediction* means "a word of blessing." Here is where the pastor pronounces the blessing of God on the people. There are blessings in the Old Testament. Numbers 6:24-26 is the blessing of the priest. The people of God stand before the Lord and the pastor blesses them and he says: "Now may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. And the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you his peace both now and forever. Amen." There is also the great benediction in 2 Corinthians 13:14 that can be used. "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." At this point, the minister dismisses the congregation.
11. *Postlude*. There should be some kind of postlude—music playing as people are leaving and fellowshiping.

The most important event in the life of the church every week is the coming together on the Lord's Day to worship the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the minister should plan the worship service for the glory of God and the benefit of the congregation.

THE MINISTER: “HOW DO I ADMINISTER THE ORDINANCES?”¹

Nothing so centralizes Jesus and the worship service as do the sacraments of the church. When believers celebrate Holy Communion, baptism, and footwashing, they are proclaiming all that Jesus Christ has done for them. When Communion is celebrated, it declares Christ died for the sinner. When baptism is celebrated, it announces Christ lives in the believer. When footwashing is celebrated, it describes Christ's service to the body of believers.

Why are these expressions of worship called sacraments? It is a very beautiful word which comes from the Latin word *sacramentum*. There are two important meanings concerning this word that shed some light on the sacraments of Holy Communion and baptism. The first is the fact that the word *sacramentum* implies a mystery. Indeed, there is something of a shroud of mystery about these sacraments. Partaking of the bread and drinking of the cup is more than a symbol or emblem; it is a spiritual reality taking place. It is communion with Jesus Christ himself—an experience of the very grace of God in the believer's heart. Communion is more than just going through some religious ritual; it is a mystery—Christ dwelling in the believer and the believer dwelling in Christ. Water baptism is the same way. It does not save the sinner, but it is closely connected with faith, repentance, and confession of faith. The presence of God and the grace of God are both ministered to the believer's heart in the sacrament of baptism.

Another interesting fact about the word *sacramentum* is that it refers to the ancient soldier's oath of loyalty. When the soldiers in the Roman army would pledge themselves to be faithful to the cause of Rome, they would take a *sacramentum*. When believers celebrate Holy Communion, they are celebrating the grace of God. Furthermore, they are also declaring that Jesus Christ is Lord, and if Christ is Lord, then they are loyal to Him, subject to Him, and obedient to Him. When believers enter into baptism and go into the water, they are making a confession of faith that Jesus is not only their Savior, but also Lord of their lives. Furthermore, they are pledging themselves to be loyal to Christ. Thus, the sacrament is a spiritual mystery element, and it is also the Christian's oath of loyalty, confessing again that Jesus is Lord.

COMMUNION

I. NAMES FOR COMMUNION

- A. *Communion is called the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:20).* The Lord's Supper also reflects back to the time of the Passover, because the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 5:7, “Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.” This helps believers to focus on what Christ did to save them from their sins.

¹All scripture references in “The Minister: ‘How Do I Administer the Ordinances?’” are taken from the *New King James Version (NKJV)* of the Bible, unless otherwise noted.

- B. *Communion is called the breaking of bread.* The New Testament says: “They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). This refers to the worship focused on the celebration of Holy Communion. It is the breaking of bread because it is a time of fellowship with Christ, and a time of fellowship together. The early church celebrated Communion with what they called the love feast, or the agape festival. It was also a time of sharing a meal together. And they often connected the Lord’s Supper with this actual meal.
- C. *Communion is called Holy Communion.* The term *communion* means “a fellowship or a participation with Christ” (see 1 Corinthians 10:16). It is a time of intimacy with the Lord himself.
- D. In the Greek language, *Communion is called the Eucharist*, which in the English translation is rendered “thanksgiving,” or as Paul says, “the cup of blessing” (1 Corinthians 10:16). The smaller word *charis*, which is found in the middle of the word Eucharist, is the Greek word for grace. The derivative of that, the word *chara*, means joy. Therefore, this word is very important in the New Testament. The Eucharist should be celebrated in an atmosphere that is positive and uplifting. It is a time of giving thanks and praise to God for His gift of the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. CELEBRATING COMMUNION

Three main reasons stand out for celebrating regularly the Lord’s Supper in the life of the church.

- A. *First, the Lord’s Supper focuses the believer’s faith on the person of Jesus Christ.* The partaking of the bread and the drinking of the cup reflect back to Calvary where Christ was “wounded for our transgressions . . . [and] bruised for our iniquities” (Isaiah 53:5). The church must always keep its faith focused on Calvary where John 3:16 was acted out: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” And there’s nothing that does that any clearer than the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the cup, proclaiming the Lord’s death.
- B. *The second reason that the church celebrates the Lord’s Supper is to foster fellowship among the people of God.* Communion is about relationship with the Lord and about relationship with each other. That is why confessing of sins is necessary. There should not be resentment, bitterness, church schisms, and so forth going on. Communion is a way that brings believers back to the place of unity in the Spirit. When ministers administer the Communion, it is very important for them to emphasize that the church should be in fellowship with God and with one another. Christ said in the Gospel of Matthew, “If you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar. . . . First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (5:23, 24). When the church celebrates Communion, it does so as a body of believers. Christians do not need any baggage in their relationships, so they should openly confess before God and ask Him to cleanse their hearts. Then when they take Communion, it builds a greater sense of fellowship together.
- C. *The third reason that the church celebrates Communion is to receive forgiveness and to focus on the forgiveness of God.* Communion fosters a sense of forgiveness. It is wonderful because it is a reminder that there is nothing that God has not already forgiven through Christ. That is the

purpose of the Eucharist. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:19: "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them." Consequently, as believers are receiving and focusing on forgiveness, it softens their hearts to be forgiving toward others, which is one of the most important principles of living the Christian life. The Lord's Prayer says, "Father . . . forgive us our [sins] as we forgive [those who have sinned against us]" (Matthew 6:12). Nothing poisons the church more quickly than unforgiveness, bitterness, resentment, hurt feelings, and all the emotional baggage that goes with that. Hebrews 12:15 says, "Looking diligently lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled." When the minister administers the Lord's Supper in a way that is beneficial to the believers, it will focus their faith on Jesus; it will create a deeper closeness in fellowship; and it will facilitate the forgiveness process where the believers are receiving forgiveness and giving forgiveness to others.

III. THEOLOGICAL QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUPPER

There are several important theological questions which people ask concerning the Communion.

- A. "In what sense is Christ present in the *Communion*?" Christ is present in the Eucharist spiritually, but not physically. The last time that Jesus ate the Passover meal with His disciples, He took a piece of bread—He didn't take a piece of His body—and He said, "This is My body" (Luke 22:19). That is a mystical statement, because it was not His fleshly body. There is no reason to assume that the Eucharist today is His actual physical body. He didn't say that the bread symbolizes Me; He didn't say the bread represents My body; He said the bread is My body and that is why it is called a sacrament. It is more than a symbol, more than a ritual, it is participating spiritually with the living presence of Christ.
- B. "In what manner is the *Communion a means of grace*?" Christ established this meal as an expression of the grace of God, but it is only when mankind puts his faith in Jesus that grace becomes part of his life. A person can partake of the sacrament and not experience grace. The sacrament is a means or expression of grace, but it is not grace. It is only when the individual partakes of the Eucharist by faith in Jesus himself that grace really becomes a reality in his heart. The Bible says in Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace you have been saved through faith." So, it is not in partaking of the sacrament that grace is administered to the believers' hearts, it is only when they partake of the sacrament by personal faith in Jesus Christ that they experience the grace of God as reality.
- C. "Who may participate in the *Communion*?" The Communion is a sacrament of the church and for the church; therefore, it is a sacrament that is available only for believers. Many churches practice what is called open Communion. This simply means that as long as the recipients are confessing Christians, they are welcome to share at the Lord's Table. They do not have to be in a particular denomination, but they do have to be confessing Christians. The sacrament then is a means of grace, of the church and for the church, and those who come to the Lord's Table should be those who have faith in Jesus Christ.

IV. ADMINISTERING HOLY COMMUNION

The minister needs to administer Communion in such a way that it is beneficial for the lives of the people of God.

- A. The first step in administering this sacrament is to explain the meaning of the sacrament to the congregation. They need to understand the importance of this sacrament and what all of it means—the bread and wine, the process, and the receiving of Christ by faith.
- B. Second, ministers need to prepare the congregations to receive the Eucharist. Before the people ever partake of the elements, preparation needs to be made. Believers need to pray a prayer of confession. Paul is clear in 1 Corinthians 11 that the cup of the Lord should not be drunk in an unworthy manner. Participants should come to the Lord's Table with hearts of humility, confessing their sins openly before God. If there is something being held against someone—hurt feelings, bitterness, resentment, unforgiveness—bring that before the Lord in prayer, confessing it and forgiving the person. Prayers of thanksgiving should be offered for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of Jesus Christ, because this is the Eucharist.
- C. The elements now are distributed to the people.
 1. The bread is distributed first and then the cup of wine as Christ did. When the people have the elements, the minister should lift up the bread and either read or quote the words of Jesus: "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19). The minister then proclaims to the congregation, "Let us partake of the bread or the body of Christ together."
 2. The cup of wine then would be lifted up by the minister to the congregation. They, in turn, would lift up their cups of wine, and the minister would quote or read the words of Jesus from Matthew 26: "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (v. 28). The minister then says, "Let us drink the cup together."
 3. Afterwards, the minister should pray for the needs of the people, because they are receiving Jesus Christ and all His power by faith. The Bible says that after they had the first Communion, they sang a hymn and went up to the Mount of Olives (Matthew 26:30). Therefore, it is very appropriate to sing a hymn of thanksgiving and praise to God for His amazing grace.

WATER BAPTISM

The sacrament of Christian baptism is an identification with Christ—His death, His burial, His resurrection. In the New Testament, baptism is associated with repentance. Peter said, "Repent, and . . . be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). It is also associated with union and oneness with Christ (see Romans 6:1-10). Baptism is further associated with discipleship. Christ said in Matthew 28:19 to "Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Finally, baptism is closely connected with forgiveness of sins. Peter preached in Acts 2:38 to "Repent and . . . be baptized," then forgiveness of sins would result.

This statement is not meant to say that baptism is repentance or union with Christ or discipleship and forgiveness. Baptism does not save; only faith in Christ does. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8, 9). When people accept Christ by faith, baptism becomes an expression of repentance, forgiveness, oneness in Christ, and discipleship.

I. HISTORY OF BAPTISM

Looking at the history of baptism, one can trace it along three lines.

- A. First of all, baptism in ancient times signified an identification with some person or some group. There are various forms of baptism that have existed in different cultures in ancient times.
- B. Second, in the Jewish culture, history reveals that for centuries they practiced baptism and still practice it as a rite of passage when a Gentile converts to Judaism. It is a purification rite, symbolizing the washing away of the old life of pagan thinking and now embracing Jehovah as the one true God. The one Jew who brought baptism to the forefront is John the Baptist. He was a prophet, no doubt, but he was also a Levitical priest, which is an important point to understand. John the Baptist went out into the Judean wilderness south of Jerusalem and began to preach repentance and baptism. What was extraordinary about John the Baptist was that he invited Jews to be baptized which was unheard of in Judaism. When Jewish males are born, they undergo the rite of circumcision. They are born into the covenant of Judaism, because they are sons and daughters of Abraham. If a Gentile wanted to convert to Judaism, the person did so by the rite of baptism. For John the Baptist to tell his own people they needed to repent and to be baptized was in effect telling them that just because they were born into Judaism did not make them right with God. The early church fathers said what John did was, in effect, excommunicate the entire nation. He was calling them to have a heart examination and to love the Lord their God and to obey Him with all of their hearts. Therefore, it is understandable why John the Baptist was so controversial. This same lesson is vital for believers today. It does not matter what family context one is born into; it does not matter what religious background one has; knowing God is a matter of the heart.
- C. Third, Christian baptism was born out of that background and was a continuation and expansion of John's message. It is associated with faith and repentance of sins, and it is also a sacrament that demonstrates putting one's faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. The process of baptism is demonstrated by confession of faith and identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In Romans 6:1-14, Paul deals with the theology of baptism: dying with Christ and being raised to walk in newness of life. The old self has been crucified with Christ and sin no longer dominates. Believers have been raised to new life, and now live by the power of the risen Christ within them.

II. THE MODE OF BAPTISM PRACTICED BY THE CHURCH OF GOD IS IMMERSION.

- A. Baptism by immersion was the common practice of the Jews and of John the Baptist. The word baptized or *baptizo* in the Greek means “to dip or to immerse or to submerge.” On the other hand, some churches practice sprinkling. The rite of sprinkling children in baptism comes out of the Old Testament process of the priest sprinkling the altar with the blood. However, immersion is going into the water to show the connection with Christ’s going into the grave. When the believer comes out of the water, it is showing the connection with Christ’s coming out of the grave. Therefore, it is identification with what He did at Calvary. The old life of sin has died; the believer is now a brand new person.
- B. Infant baptism is not practiced by the Church of God, because baptism in the New Testament follows conversion. Baptism follows the ministry of the Word and the faith of the person who believes the gospel. Therefore, it is when one believes on Christ and is saved that the individual takes the next step and makes a public confession of that conversion by baptism. Baptizing small children is a decision that parents need to make personally with their children. Children should not be coerced into baptism. When children have made a personal commitment of their lives to Christ and the parents are certain their child understands, it is then the child can be taught about baptism. Baptism can be administered to young boys and girls when they have made a personal confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. FORMULA FOR BAPTISM

The baptism formula—“In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”—is found in Matthew 28:19. In the baptism of Jesus, there was the descending of the Holy Spirit upon Him to anoint Him for His life’s ministry and the voice of the Father from Heaven. Baptism is identification with Jesus Christ as Lord by which the believer portrays Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection.

IV. ADMINISTERING THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Baptisms should be performed by a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They should take place in the public worship service, because they are an expression of public confession of faith. When ministers administer the sacrament of baptism, they go into the baptismal pool of the church, or if it is an outdoor setting, into a lake or river. The candidate then walks into the water and stands before the minister. The minister asks the person, “Do you publicly confess Jesus Christ as Lord?” And the person will say, “Yes, I do.” Or the minister could have the individual repeat after him and say: “I publicly confess Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior.” Either way the person is making a public confession of faith (see Romans 10:9). Immersion can be done in one of two ways. The pastor can lean the person back into the water and say: “I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” Then bring the person up. Or the person can kneel straight down, and the pastor can put his hand on the head of the person as he/she goes into the water, and then the individual will rise straight up. In fact, the ancient rite of baptism was more of that posture. But either way the person has been immersed in the water. This wonderful experience becomes a living memory in the life of every confessing believer.

Footwashing

I. THE HISTORY OF FOOTWASHING

The washing of feet was an ancient custom of hospitality. When people would visit in a home, they were given a basin of water in which to wash their feet, because most people could not afford a servant to wash the feet of all the guests. As people traveled in the ancient world, obviously their feet were dusty from their travels. Consequently, a basin of water would be provided, and the visitor would wash his own feet. This was the common practice in every home. Examples of this ancient custom can be found in the Old Testament in Genesis 18:4 when angels came to Abraham, in Genesis 19:2 when angels came to Lot, and also in Genesis 24:32 and 43:24. Also, household servants could wash the feet of people. When Abigail was appeasing David's anger, she made the statement that she would wash the feet of his servants, which was a way of expressing her love and her servanthood (1 Samuel 25:41).

The New Testament relates a very beautiful moment in Jesus' life when He was at the home of the Pharisee named Simon. He was reclined at the table for dinner, and the Bible says a sinful woman came in. Apparently, she had a bad reputation. She stood behind Jesus and began to weep because of her love for Him. As her tears fell upon His feet, she dried them with her hair. She was actually washing Jesus' feet with her own tears. Of course, Simon and the others objected that Jesus would even allow a woman to touch Him or get that near to Him. Jesus then said to Simon that no one bothered to wash His feet for Him when He came into his house. But this woman, because she loved Him and needed forgiveness, had performed this act of service (Luke 7:36-50). Another example of footwashing occurred in the home of Lazarus. His sister Mary washed the feet of Jesus with anointing oil, and Jesus said that she had done it for His burial (John 12:1-8).

The most important event in the early church concerning footwashing, however, happened the night of the Passover when Jesus broke the bread, gave the cup, and instituted what is called the Lord's Supper. It was during that Passover meal that a dispute broke out among the disciples as to who was the greatest. Having overheard that dispute, Jesus said that whoever wanted to be the greatest must be the least of all (see Luke 22:24-27). John 13:1-17 says that it was at this point Jesus got up from the table and wrapped a towel around His waist. He brought out a basin of water and washed the feet of His disciples. He did that to model for them what it means to be a leader in the kingdom of God. It does not mean to be a big shot; it does not mean to lord authority over others; it does not mean to intimidate others; it does not mean to vie for power. Jesus said, "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14).

II. ADMINISTERING THE SACRAMENT OF FOOTWASHING

The sinful woman washed the feet of Jesus to show that she loved Him. Jesus washed the feet of His disciples to show that He was the servant of all. How then should believers today practice footwashing? John 13 could be read aloud, and then believers can pair off, the men with the men and the women with the women. They can then take turns washing each other's feet with the basin of water and drying the feet with a towel. Believers could also pray for each other. The reenactment of the footwashing service is one way to give thanks for the fact that Christ came as the servant of all and to show joy in serving one another. Footwashing is also very beneficial in leadership groups, elderships, and in a pastoral staff.

Thus, these sacraments are vital to believers' worship. The Lord's Supper focuses on the Crucifixion: Christ died for the sinner. Baptism celebrates the fact that Christ came forth triumphant on the third day: The believer has risen with Christ and proclaims Him Lord of all. Footwashing is a reminder that Christ is King of all and came to serve: It is the Christian's joy to serve Him and to serve one another.

THE MINISTER: “HOW DO I CONDUCT FAMILY MINISTRY?”

DEDICATION OF CHILDREN

I. BIBLICAL BASIS FOR DEDICATING CHILDREN

From a Biblical standpoint, the practice of dedicating children comes from two primary experiences. One is found in the Old Testament, and the other is found in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, Samuel, who became a priest and prophet of God and the last judge of Israel before the time of the kings, was a miracle boy. Elkanah, his father, and Hannah, his mother, were unable to have children. Hannah prayed regularly at the Temple, petitioning God for a son. God heard her cry, and Samuel was born. The name Samuel means “heard of God,” because he was an answer to prayer. Elkanah and Hannah brought Samuel to the temple of God and to the priest Eli, presenting him before the Lord and dedicating him (see 1 Samuel 1:27, 28). Hannah said, “As long as he lives he shall be lent to the Lord” (v. 28). There, under the care of Eli, Samuel grew up and became a priest of God, fulfilling God’s call on his life. In this story, the concept of dedicating children to the Lord is beautifully depicted.

The second experience is found in the New Testament—the experience of Jesus himself. Jesus, as all Jewish males, was circumcised on the eighth day. It was on that day that He was given His name—Jesus. After the time of purification, which was 40 days for the mother after giving birth to the child, Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the Temple to present him to the Lord. They also offered a sacrifice of praise to the Lord (see Luke 2:21-24).

The firstborn of all men and animals were to be dedicated to the Lord according to Exodus 13:12, 13. The Levites themselves actually served in the place of all firstborn males in Israel. Therefore, the whole tribe of Levi was dedicated to the Lord as the firstborn of all Israel. So, Jesus himself as a young child was taken to the Temple, and there Joseph and Mary presented him to the Lord.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF INFANT DEDICATION

There are four important components of the actual baby dedication.

- A. *The first is praise.* Dedicating children to God is an act of praise and thanksgiving. Psalm 127:3 declares, “Children are a heritage from the Lord.” The very act of dedicating children is an expression of praise and thanks to God for the gift of children.

¹All scripture references in “The Minister: ‘How Do I Conduct Family Ministry?’” are taken from the *New King James Version (NKJV)* of the Bible, unless otherwise noted.

- B. *The second is pledge.* When parents present a child in dedication to the Lord, they are pledging themselves to be faithful to raise that child in the “[nurture] and the admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). When a couple presents their child at the altar, they are also presenting themselves, as well as making a pledge in good faith. They are dedicating themselves to raise their children in the ways of the Lord.
- C. *The third component is the promise.* It is a time to claim the promise of God. The Scripture says in Proverbs 22:6: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” The best way to start training up a child is at the very beginning in the act of dedication. And God says that the child will not depart from what he has been taught. They may stray; they may test it, as all children do, but what is put in their hearts, God promises will remain. It is a time to claim the promises of Acts 16:31: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” It is a time to claim the salvation of the child for the glory of God.
- D. *The final component is a time of prayer.* It is a time that the child is presented to God in praise and thanksgiving. The minister prays for the blessing of God on the life of the child, for the will of God to be fulfilled, and for salvation to come into the life of the child. This is the significance of dedicating children to the Lord.

III. IMPLEMENTING THE DEDICATION SERVICE

A designated time needs to be announced in the church so people know that this is a time they can dedicate their children to the Lord. Some churches have infant dedications once a month, others have special times when the families desire dedication. The minister, or church office, should get the parents’ names, the grandparents’ names, the full name of the child, and every name of every person in the family who is going to be there. Making preparation in advance is very important.

- A. *The actual worship service.* First, the minister explains to the family and the congregation the meaning of infant dedication. It takes only a few minutes to talk about the experiences of Samuel and Jesus, to talk about the fact that this is a time of praise to God, a time for the parents to pledge themselves, and a time to proclaim the promise of God. It is also important to express that infant dedication is not infant baptism; it is not conversion, but believing God for the salvation of the child.
- B. *Second, the minister then will stand with the family.* The minister will either hold the baby, which can be risky because they can do all kinds of things, or let one of the parents hold the child and the minister lay hands upon the child. There needs to be the physical contact of either holding the child and placing a hand on the head of the child or laying hands on the child as the parents hold it. Even as Jesus took children into His arms, the Bible says, and blessed them, so the minister stands with the family, and lays hands upon the child.

C. *Third, the minister prays the prayer of dedication.* That prayer should include these elements:

- Giving God thanksgiving and praise and celebrating the joy of the couple at the birth of their child.
- Praying in faith for the salvation of the child.
- Praying that God's will and purpose will be fulfilled in the life of the child.
- Praying for God's blessing, His safety, His protection, health and happiness in the life of the child.
- A pronouncement to this effect: "Now for the glory of God and the building up of the kingdom of Christ, we dedicate this child (name the child) in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

The end of the prayer is an actual declaration for the glory of God and the building up of the kingdom of Christ.

Follow-up is very important. This should be a special time in the life of the couple, the family, and the child. Present an infant dedication certificate that is signed by the minister, giving the date of the dedication, and so forth. It is also beneficial to provide the child with a Bible. Some churches provide the child with a blue Bible or New Testament for the little boys and a pink one for the little girls. When the child grows up, he has a record and a memento representing this significant time in his life.

THE WEDDING SERVICE

The wedding service is one of the greatest days in a person's life. It is a ceremony where individuals have made a vow to God to give themselves to each other and become one flesh for the glory of God.

I. PREMARITAL COUNSELING

Premarital counseling is very important. There is a great deal of material available, including video materials published by Christian organizations. Before a couple gets married in the church, the pastor can invite them to come to a six-week class. They can watch the videos and participate in the personality and compatibility tests. It helps them prepare for the critical elements of married life and to know that they are in the will of God. It also helps them to have a sense of an awareness of some important issues that begin in the early months of marriage.

If a pastor is going to marry a couple, the pastor also needs to personally meet with them. This gives the pastor an opportunity to get to know the couple and to find out some things about their lives. The pastor talks to them about important issues and answers any questions about marriage, or their relationship. The pastor should also go over the order of service and work with them in developing their personal wedding service.

II. THE PASTOR'S ATTIRE

The pastor needs to wear either a dark suit or a ministerial robe because that kind of attire best fits in with any kind of attire or color scheme that the wedding party would select. The pastor needs to dress properly, and in such a way that one does not stand out or draw attention. It is helpful to ask the couple which they prefer—a dark suit or the ministerial robe.

III. THE ORDER OF SERVICE

The service begins with the processional where everyone in the wedding party moves into their places. This is followed by the opening remarks. The pastor addresses both the couple and the congregation and explains the meaning of marriage as a covenant relationship before God.

The pastor then leads the couple in the exchanging of vows as they share their love together. The vows will be followed by the ring ceremony that the couple shares and repeats together. A word of advice here: Only a few words at a time should be given to the couple because they are usually quite nervous.

After the exchange of rings, comes the celebration of Communion. This portion of the service is optional. Not everyone celebrates Communion, but if it is administered, normally the couple will kneel at a kneeling bench. The pastor talks about the significance of Communion—what they are doing is confessing Jesus as Lord of their hearts, and from this point on, Lord of their home. The Communion also demonstrates the essence of marital love. It is again a Communion of forgiveness, grace, and unity just as Jesus loves the church unconditionally. The same is true with loving each other in marriage unconditionally. It is the couple's ability to forgive each other that will enable them to pass through all the difficulties that they might experience. They share Communion as the pastor gives the bread and recites or quotes the words of Jesus: "This is the body of Christ broken for you." They then partake of the cup. Afterwards, the pastor invites the congregation to join in as a prayer of blessing is offered for the couple that God will seal their vows by the power of the Holy Spirit. The pastor can also pray for God to "open . . . the windows of heaven and pour out [upon them a] blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10).

Communion is usually followed by the lighting of the unity candle. As the unity candle is lit, there is normally a musical selection. Then the pastor explains: "The lighting of the unity candle is to signify that God is joining you to become one flesh and that is the significance of the unity candle." The unity candle is optional. Not all couples use it, but many do.

Following the unity candle is the pronouncement. The pastor brings the couple back and pronounces them husband and wife in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. "What God has joined together, let not man separate" (Matthew 19:6). Then the pastor says to the groom, "You may now kiss the bride."

Then it is time to pronounce the blessing of the Lord. The pastor might use the priestly blessing of Numbers 6: "[May] the Lord bless you and keep you; [may] the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; [may] the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you

peace [both now and forever]." Amen (vv. 24-26). Or, the pastor may choose to use the benediction of 2 Corinthians 13:14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all." After pronouncing the blessing of the Lord upon the couple, the pastor then invites them to turn to the congregation and says: "It is my joyful privilege to present to you today Mr. and Mrs. _____." By doing so, a formal presentation of the couple is made. The recessional begins as the couple goes out.

THE MINISTER: “HOW DO I BRING COMFORT?”¹

PASTORAL VISITATION

It is important to understand why pastoral visitation is important. In days past, visitation consisted of the minister's going from door to door calling upon the members. But it is a different world today and a much different time, especially when it comes to the urban setting and city living and lifestyle. How do ministers visit their people today, and how do they maintain contact with their people?

I. THEOLOGY OF PASTORAL VISITATION

The pastor's role is that of a shepherd. In fact, that is what the word pastor means. As ministers shepherd their people, they provide them with nurture and care. In doing so, they are fulfilling their calling and gifting as pastors. There are many other offices and lay ministries in the church that help fulfill the pastoral call of nurture and healing. In the opening verses of Ezekiel 34, God talks through Ezekiel to the priests and the ministers of the day, telling them that they had neglected the care, nurture, and personal touch of the flock. Something of the heart of God is revealed as He displays His love. Therefore, ministers should understand that to be true pastors they must somehow embrace others with such a deep love and compassion that they get a sense of how much God loves them. Perhaps the clearest definition of a pastor and the best ministry description any pastor could have is found in the Shepherd Psalm—Psalm 23.

When ministers fulfill the role of shepherds, they bring nurture, comfort, and guidance into people's lives. They prepare the people spiritually to face enemies that threaten to destroy their lives, their businesses, or their families. Finally, pastors even help them walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Pastoral visitation is visiting the sick, helping people through bereavement, conducting the funeral service, and being Christ's agent of healing by shepherding people with that gentle touch of the Good Shepherd himself.

II. CONDUCTING THE PASTORAL VISIT

What is a pastoral visit, and how is it conducted? There are three primary ways that visitation occurs.

- A. *The first kind of visit is hospital visitation.* It is when people are sick and wounded that they definitely need a minister's presence and touch. When ministers visit someone in a hospital, the visit should be brief, positive, and uplifting.

¹All scripture references in “The Minister: ‘How Do I Bring Comfort?’” are taken from the *New King James Version (NKJV)* of the Bible, unless otherwise noted.

- B. *The second way that the minister fulfills the pastoral visitation is through pastoral counseling.* People believe that counseling will happen in a spiritual context, and they find a great deal of security in receiving counseling at the church through ministers of the gospel.
- C. *The third way that fulfills pastoral ministry is pastoral contact.* W. Phillip Keller, in his books on sheep and shepherds, talks about the fact that the shepherd will frequently touch his sheep. It is very important for pastors and ministers to realize that they need to touch their people by maintaining contact with them—embracing, shaking hands, calling on the phone, writing letters.

THE FUNERAL SERVICE

The role of the minister includes leading people through the “valley of the shadow of death,” grief counseling, and the funeral service. The next section will discuss how to structure the funeral service, how to prepare the family for the funeral service, and how to conduct the funeral service in a way that glorifies God and comforts the family.

I. PASTORAL CONTACT

A great deal of pastoral ministry will take place before the minister actually gets to the funeral service. As soon as the minister is notified that someone has passed away, the minister needs to go to the family. While the minister is with the family, there are two goals of intervention. The first goal is to comfort the family.

It is not the time to answer every theological question, but to focus on the faithfulness of God and the grace of God that will carry them through these difficult times. It is the time to pray with the family and for the family. It is a time to share a Scripture. At this point, the minister comes into the world of hurt and deepest pain; the minister becomes an agent of healing power and grace of God.

The second goal of meeting with the family is to help them prepare for the funeral. Many people, because of their grief, are not sure what to do. Sometimes people are not prepared at all for the loss of a loved one, and they have not made preparations for the actual funeral service; furthermore, they do not know what to do at all. The minister then needs to walk them through the process of what will need to happen in the preparation of their loved one, not only at the funeral home, but also with the funeral service itself. This is the place when the minister can begin to talk about the funeral service. And then from this point over the next couple of days, as the minister visits them and calls them, this is where the minister will get information for the eulogy that will be used and shared about the person. The minister should ask the family what types of things they would like to have shared; what songs they would like to have sung. Therefore, it may take a period of a couple of days before the actual funeral service for the family to think these things through and talk together as members of the family. What is more important at the funeral service is providing what the family wants and desires.

II. ORDER OF SERVICE FOR A FUNERAL

Here is a suggested order of service for the funeral of a Christian in celebration of eternal life even in the face of tragedy and loss. The family will naturally tailor the funeral service to their own desires.

- A. *The service begins with preservice music.* As people gather in the sanctuary, there is soft organ or piano music playing that creates an atmosphere of worship and praise even in the face of death.
- B. *Next comes the reading of the Word.* Most services have Scripture reading and the invocation. This is not the place for personal remarks; it is not the place for extemporaneous preaching. Sometimes it is good to have a passage from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Psalm 23 is appropriate, as well as many passages in the New Testament like John 14 where Christ says, "In My Father's house are many mansions" (v. 2) or 1 Corinthians 15:51 where Paul talks about the hope Christians have in the resurrection of Christ. The Scripture needs to be read or quoted without comment; the minister should pray the invocation to invoke the blessings of God upon the service and to pray that God will use the service to bring glory to Himself and to minister to His people.
- C. *The reading of the Word and invocation can then be followed by music.* Again, this can be a soloist, perhaps a choir selection or even congregational singing. Next is the eulogy which is the time to share personal remarks. It is wonderful when family members or friends can come and share personal reflections on their loved one who has passed away. This is one of the highlights of the funeral service when a person receives words of praise and commendation because of the life that he lived for the glory of God.
- D. *After the eulogy comes the ministry of the Word—the sermon itself.* It is a very important part of the service and a very sensitive area. There are some important aspects that should be noted by ministers of the gospel when it comes to preaching the funeral service. The sermon obviously should be brief. But the sermon has certain goals here that are important.
 1. *The first goal of the sermon is to exalt Jesus as the risen Lord.* The hope for eternal life is based on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and that fact is the essence of the believer's confession of faith and the heart of the preaching of the church. It is the fact that Jesus has been raised from the dead that guarantees eternal life. Jesus said in John 14:19, "Because I live, you will live also." The sermon needs to focus heavily on the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 2. *The second goal of the sermon is to comfort the family.* Ministers need to be careful that they do not make remarks that would be offensive to the family or that might not strengthen and encourage them. The purpose of the sermon is to provide comfort, grace, and strength to the family to help them get through this time by building their faith.

3. *The third goal of the sermon should clarify the means of eternal life.* While the service itself is not an evangelistic revival service, it is perhaps the minister's best opportunity to present clearly the claims of Jesus Christ. It is quite in order, as the minister talks about the fact that Jesus has risen and the hope that is in Him, to say that the only way one can have that hope is through faith and grace in the Lord Jesus Christ. The good news of the gospel declares: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). The funeral service brings people to think about their own finiteness. In fact, they are brought face to face with the greater issues of life, death, and eternity. Therefore, the funeral service is a wonderful time for the minister to preach, to exalt Jesus, to comfort the family, and to declare that there is a way that man can receive eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.
- E. *After the sermon, the minister will pray for the family and friends.* The minister will bring them before God and pray that God will comfort them and strengthen them and do what only God can do—give hope in the midst of death, grief, and loss. The minister may then want to move from the pastoral prayer into a congregational prayer.
- F. *Finally, comes the benediction—the word of blessing.* Again the minister may wish to use the Aaronic priestly blessing of Numbers 6 or one of the blessings of the New Testament like 2 Corinthians 13:14. But whichever the pastor chooses, he is pronouncing the blessing of God upon the people. Then, of course, there is the recessional as everyone goes to the burial site.

III. INTERMENT

- A. The interment is a sacred moment. It is an act of dedicating the burial place to the Lord as a place of memory. It becomes a place for the family and friends to come and reflect upon their joyful memories, and it also becomes a site that signifies hope in the resurrection of the dead.
- B. This service is a very important part of the experience of working through grief. It is a very emotional time for the family; in fact, it is perhaps even more emotional than the actual funeral service, because this service is going to conclude with the actual burial of the loved one. That in itself has a sense of closure and finality.
- C. How then is this brief service at the gravesite conducted? There are five components of this service.
 1. *First, a musical selection would be appropriate.* After the family has gathered and everyone is in place, a soloist could sing a selection like "Amazing Grace."
 2. *The second component would be the reading of the Word.* Again, the Scripture is full of passages that help to bring the awareness of hope and the assurance of eternal life. The following selection is a wonderful example:

I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more

death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away (Revelation 21:1-5).

3. *Next comes a prayer of committal.* This prayer commits the body of the loved one to the ground, dedicating this site as a place of memory, of hope, and of faith in the Resurrection.
4. *This prayer can be followed by a congregational prayer or song.* The Lord's Prayer is an excellent selection if it has not already been used in the funeral service. Or the congregation could sing a chorus of "Because He Lives" or the last verse of "Amazing Grace." Doing so enables everyone to release the grief and the pain they have and to boldly confess their faith.
5. *Finally, the minister will then personally greet each member of the family who is still seated and will pronounce the blessing of God on each one.* The minister should let them know that they are loved and being prayed for, and that the pastoral staff will make themselves available for them.

THE MINISTER: “HOW DO I SERVE AS AN ADMINISTRATOR?”¹

Administration, which is one of the most important aspects of ministry, comes with the role of being a minister of a church. By the very nature of the calling, the minister is responsible for administering both the philosophy of ministry and the plan of ministry for the church. Philosophy is the explanation of the beliefs and actions of the church, while the plan of ministry has to do with the implementation of the vision or philosophy of ministry. Therefore, administration deals with the philosophy, or what is often called vision, and it deals with the plan or the actual strategy of the program of ministry of the church.

The word *administration* actually means “to organize, to plot, to guide, and to direct.” Therefore, ministers are administrators who organize, plot, guide, and direct the affairs of the church. The word administration was originally used in ancient Greek to refer to the helmsmen of a ship who was able to guide the ship through treacherous waters to safe port. In actuality, this is what the minister does—guides and directs the church as it moves into the future.

VISION: “The Ministry Imperative”

I. OVERVIEW

An overview of vision consists of an objective, a purpose, and benefits. The objective for vision is to give the church direction. The purpose of vision is to provide the church a clearly defined ministry focus and a means by which to measure its ministry effectiveness. And, there are several benefits of vision:

- It keeps the ministry focus sharp.
- It prevents the church from going on ministry tangents.
- It creates excitement within the people and leads them to a common goal.
- It enables the church to celebrate ministry success and make ministry improvements by providing a measurable means for consistent and constructive ministry evaluation.

II. SOURCE OF VISION

Administration begins with the philosophy of ministry or what is called a vision. Proverbs 29:18 says, “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (KJV). Ministers are visionaries, which mean

¹All scripture references in “The Minister: ‘How Do I Serve as an Administrator?’” are taken from the *New King James Version (NKJV)* of the Bible, unless otherwise noted.

they see where the church needs to be going and they make certain steps to help the church get to where they see it is heading. Without a vision, without a philosophy of ministry, without an understanding of the programs and activities, the church drifts along without any overall sense of direction. For ministers to administrate the church, they have to give the church a vision, and the vision needs to be articulated. This is what is called a vision statement.

Where does vision come from? Every vision is going to be a little different. No two visions will be alike, but there is a revelation source. It comes from God. And how does God get the vision to individuals? For some people, it comes through the Bible. They read a verse of Scripture, and they get a feeling of direction. For some people, it comes through prayer—God impresses them. For some people it comes through the church—the leadership says, “You’re the person to do this job.” Sometimes it comes through circumstances which mandate that a person does certain things. The minister may respond to the occurrences and then find the direction. Sometimes it comes from trusted friends and people who care. Sometimes it comes from intuition deep down inside.

As a minister, it is very important to help the leaders and congregation develop a vision statement by answering the following questions:

1. What do you visualize?
2. What is your vision for your church?
3. What kind of ministry do you see yourself developing?
4. What has God called you to do in your city and your community?

III. MANIFESTATION OF VISION

How is the vision manifested? One way is through ministry philosophy and another is in church identity. All ministers have a philosophy of ministry even though some think they do not. Their philosophy of ministry is that they do not have one. However, the way in which ministers operate is their philosophy of ministry.

Through the years, a church develops an identity. No two churches are alike. Denominations, networks, associations, and fellowships often try to make every church the same, but God never made any two identical snowflakes. Every church has its own identity.

Ministry practices must have a driving force—the vision, because without the vision the people will perish. In some smaller churches, the pastor and his family have to do everything.

The point here is that regardless of the size of the church, whether it is 5,000 or 10,000 or 50 or 150, a church needs direction. It needs a defined vision.

Many pastors have a difficult time writing down their statements or their visions for their churches. It comes from struggle, it comes from grappling with God and seeing where the church is. It takes a process of time. The point is that it is not something one can just jot down. It is something that comes about over time, prayer, struggle, reading, meditation, and discussion.

Thus, it is very important to understand that in these practices of ministry one starts out with vision. This vision comes through a revelation source. One lives out that vision in the ministry philosophy and church identity. It is developed as one plans ahead. Vision will then lead into organization. But vision is most important, for without a vision, the people perish.

IV. DEFINITION OF VISION

- A. Looking at vision from a Scriptural overview, one can gain insight from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Old Testament, Proverbs 29:18 says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (KJV). And then in the New Testament, Paul says, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19). In Acts 9, the account is given of how Paul experienced a light from heaven on the road to Damascus, and then in verses 15 and following, God told him, as he went to the street called Straight and was receiving ministry, that he was to be a chosen instrument. He was to carry Christ to the Gentile world, and he would endure suffering. In other words, Paul was a man of vision.

Two Greek words used in the New Testament that define, in an exegetical sense, the meaning of vision are *horama* and *optasia*. The first word *horama* means "that which is seen; an appearance." It also means "in a manner in which one conceives or perceives of coming consequences and the way in which one looks at those." The second word is *optasia* which means "coming into view" and "an internal image of possibility." The Greek says that "it is that which is seen; an unfolding future possibility." That is where vision has to start from the Scriptural understanding—an unfolding future possibility.

- B. The following is a workable operational definition of vision: "It is an internalized projected thrust for ministry action." Internalized means it is something that has happened to the leaders, which they feel like God is saying to them." It is projected because it is in the future. It is a goal which the leaders are seeking to attain. It is a horizon that the leaders are seeking to reach. It is a mountain that they are seeking to climb. It is a valley that they are seeking to go through. So, it is an internalized projected vision, but it has thrust. It has action. It has energy. It has power. Leaders must get people to help them to achieve this vision. It has a thrust, and as one plunges forward then it brings about ministry action.

V. IMPLEMENTATION OF VISION

- A. *Administration begins with a vision.* When a vision is developed, it is followed by a mission statement.
- B. *Developing a mission statement.* Every ministry needs guiding principles in writing a mission statement. Without these guiding principles, ministry will be without focus and clarity. The following five principles shape everything the minister does.
1. *Evangelism.* Evangelism is giving the world hope in Christ, by reaching people who do not know the Lord. This is caring about the lost.

2. *Edification.* To edify means “to make strong, to build up, to fortify.” It means to take new converts and help them strengthen and develop their faith, so that they become strong, dedicated disciples. The Bible says “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving” (Colossians 2:6, 7).
3. *Equipping.* The person who comes to know the Lord needs to grow in his personal walk and be equipped. He needs to be taught how to use his gifts, talents and abilities to serve in the church and to serve the world, thus becoming equipped for ministry.
4. *Encouraging.* Encouraging means “healing and nurturing.” People are hurting because of stress and difficulties. The church should not have a negative or legalistic atmosphere; rather, it should be an atmosphere where people are encouraged to reach their highest potential in the Lord.
5. *Excellence.* Whatever is done, whatever program is launched in the church, or outside the church—music ministry, youth ministry, it does not matter what kind of ministry—this question should be asked: “Is this a ministry of excellence?” The church should not want status quo or a halfway job; it should think through the program and launch it for the glory of God. To maintain a ministry of excellence, ask the following questions about the programs of the church and everything that is done in ministry. Is it . . .
 - Helping to reach people?
 - Building stronger disciples?
 - Equipping people for ministry and getting them involved in active service?
 - Encouraging and building people up to recognize their potential in Christ?
 - Doing everything it can in a spirit of excellence as unto the Lord?

C. *Applying the vision.* Making the vision a reality requires three basic administrative functions.

1. The first thing the pastor must do is to select personnel. These are the people who are going to make the vision become a reality.
2. The second is the ministry plan or the programs of the church. Which programs will be launched? Which programs will be kept? Which ministries will be developed?
3. The third area the pastor must deal with is the budget of the church, because all of this takes money. Ecclesiastes 10:19 says, “Money answers every thing.” In the church world, leaders understand this. Resources have to be provided to make these ministry plans become a reality.

D. *Operating implications.* How is this information translated into the everyday workings of the practices of ministry? A pastor must start seeing beyond the people who are being led. Leaders have to go forward and use as examples some of the biblical models. For instance, Moses saw further than anybody else because he was led by God to bring the people out of Egypt. Joshua had a vision, and he was the one who took the people into the Promised Land. Joshua settled the

Promised Land because he could see further; he saw more than the other people saw. And Christ revealed in Luke 4:18 that He was "anointed . . . to preach the gospel to the poor. . . . preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, [and] to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Christ brought a vision into the world.

ORGANIZATION "Building the Body"

I. OVERVIEW

The greatest organization in the world, without a doubt, is the church. Christ said He was going to build a church and the "gates of Hell [would] not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18, KJV). Perhaps the question that needs to be addressed is, "What is the church?" When one looks in the Bible, it gives quite an overview of the meaning of the church, because it is all about the church. In the Old Testament, Israel was a shadow or a prefigure of what God was going to do through Christ in the church. In essence, national Israel of the Old Testament became spiritual Israel or the church of the New Testament. The Bible uses certain Greek words when it has reference to the church:

- *Ekklesia*—"Those who are called out of the world into fellowship with Christ."
- *Laos*—"People of God."
- *Leitourgia*—"The work of the people of God."
- *Koinonia*—"The fellowship of the Holy Spirit."
- *Kerusso*—"Those who go back into the world and proclaim or preach repentance."

Therefore, when the church is discussed, one is talking about those believers who have been called out of the world, and into the fellowship of Christ to become the people of God, who do the work of the people of God, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, who go back into the world to proclaim "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

The Book of Ephesians perhaps gives the greatest overview of the church of any of the New Testament epistles. For instance, the church is . . .

- The body of Christ—Ephesians 1
- The temple of Christ—Ephesians 2
- The revelation of Christ—Ephesians 3
- The new humanity of Christ—Ephesians 4
- The bride of Christ—Ephesians 5
- The army of Christ—Ephesians 6

Now considering this overview of the church, one has to understand that it really is an organization—an organization which builds the Body. The church, then, can be looked at as a body and talked about as an organization. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul gives this beautiful description of the church as a body of many parts:

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But eagerly desire the greater gifts (vv. 12-31, *NIV*).

The challenge of the church is to take as many members as possible and bring them into one body where there is no schism and no division.

Perhaps when one looks at church history, the combining of people into a body has been one of the biggest difficulties the church has faced. How does the church balance spirit, form, and people? Some churches can get overbalanced if there is nothing but spirit, others when there is nothing but form. Organization then is coming to a balance of spirit and form. In many ways, a church has to come to a place where there is some sense of relevant facilitative organization.

The objective behind organization is that it gives the church structure for the vision to be carried out. The purpose of organization is to provide the church an operational framework that clearly defines the ministry policies, procedures, roles, and functions needed to carry out its ministry vision. There must be a structure by which that vision can be carried out or be carried out upon. The benefits of organization are . . .

- To establish lines of responsibility, accountability, communication, and support to the church laity and staff.
- To provide a clear understanding as to what is expected of each lay person and staff person.
- To reflect a staff work ethic of excellence, integrity, and genuine concern, which builds a sense of security and care into the laity.
- To make the ministry vision possible—it gives the vision a body by which to be carried out.

In Ephesians 4:11, Paul says some are given to be “apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors, and teachers.” This is also found in 1 Corinthians 12:28. What was Paul saying in both of those sessions? He was talking about the structure of the church. And what was the purpose of that? Looking at Ephesians 4, he is obviously talking about the idea of building up the church and equipping the saints so the church could mature in Christ who is the head of the church, thereby edifying one another—which is the purpose and the vision of the church.

Organization is an important factor in developing a church. Needs assessments and job descriptions are two success determinants. Needs assessments are necessary for churches to know what needs are present and whether or not these needs are being met. Job descriptions are also necessary for people to know what their roles are, what their responsibilities are, and to whom they are accountable. When these two determinates are in place, the people can release their gifts into doing all of those things that make up the body of Jesus Christ. However, four other determinates will be considered in order to successfully build the body of Christ; namely, distinctive in style, community in outreach, flexible in method, and communicative in function.

II. DISTINCTIVE IN STYLE

It is important for each church to know its own distinctive style. In fact, this style is custom designed by the people, the location, the pastor, and other factors. One Old Testament example of style was David's experience with Saul's armor. David could not wear Saul's huge armor; he had his own style which was very successful for him.

A church's identity can be derived from the needs of the people in the community around the church.

In order to successfully build the body of Christ, the church must be need-oriented, job-described, and distinctive in style. In addition to these determinants, the next one is very closely related—community in outreach.

III. COMMUNITY IN OUTREACH

Churches located in or near a community need to be aware of the needs of the people who live in the surrounding community. In other words, the church needs to be involved in community outreach.

Relationships are not just for members and those in this particular building. Members have many different relationships to which they are connected, and the church needs to recognize what they are and try to structure its organization in such a way that they make connections in all of these different places as best they can.

- The first obvious relationship is with God.
- The second relationship a church has is with the organization called a denomination.

- The third relationship a church has is with its congregation.
- The fourth relationship is called the nuclear community. The church is in a relationship with God, the denomination, the congregation, and the nuclear community which is the areas or the residences surrounding the church. That is an important group to be in relationship with.
- The fifth relationship is the extended city. A church is also part of a city.
- A sixth and final relationship is obviously a world vision. A church should be involved in world missions, which causes it to be global in thinking. It changes people, and that is what changes a church. It will change the hearts of people which, in turn, changes the whole dynamic of the church. When relationships are discussed, one must remember the following:
 1. Organization provides a body for the ministry vision. The vision cannot live without a body.
 2. Organization provides a structure for ministry development. All of the parts of the body are not going to develop unless there is some kind of an organizational emphasis.
 3. The organization provides a balance between spirit and form. It keeps the church from becoming too formal or too emotional. A balance needs to be maintained.
 4. Organizational efficiency depends on these success determinants: need-oriented, job-described, distinctive in style, community in outreach, flexible in method, and communicative in function.

Organization then is the building of the body, and building the body includes involvement—the people factor.

IV. THE DISCIPLINE OF GIVING

One of the greatest disciplines in the Christian life is that of giving. It is as vital to the Christian walk as the disciplines of prayer and studying the Word of God. Ministers often neglect the instruction of their congregations concerning this discipline. Yet, Jesus Christ himself had more to say in the New Testament about giving and the right use of possessions than almost any other subject. Giving was first and foremost in the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ. With that in mind, there must be an effort to foster an understanding of the discipline of giving, and the ability to train people in that area.

Some of the basic teachings of the faith concerning tithes and offerings are found in Malachi 3:7-10.

“Yet from the days of your fathers you have gone away from My ordinances and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord of hosts. “But you said, ‘In what way shall we return?’ ‘Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In

what way have we robbed You?" In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and prove Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it."

A. TITHES AND OFFERINGS ARE NOT THE SAME

When calling Israel to judgment, God said they were "cursed with a curse," not because of some great sin of immorality, but because they had withheld their tithes and offerings. They had not understood their covenant with God, and that the paying of tithes and the giving of offerings was (and is) the surest sign of worship and devotion to Him.

From the very beginning, God's desire has been to bless man. In Genesis 1:28, God began to pronounce blessings upon mankind, and it has never been His intention to change those blessings to a curse. His blessings, however, have always been contingent upon an individual's worship and obedience. There are people who appear as if they are cursed—they have great debt or financial problems that are bringing pressure to their marriages and homes. It is a societal fact that money, or the lack of it, is a major cause of divorce. Often, such situations can be traced to a failure in obedience to the discipline of giving.

God never intended for His people to be in need of anything. In the creation, God created in abundance. Everything that He created was abundant and created to give. The grass, trees and shrubs give off oxygen. The stars, sun, and moon give off light. The sun gives off heat. There is nothing in God's creation that does not give. God also made human beings to give, and until they understand and practice the discipline of giving, they will never be able to operate in the abundance that God intended.

Note the question that God asked in Malachi: "Will a man rob God?" More simply stated, "Will you rob Me?" He followed that question with a command: "Return to Me and I will return to you." By this He was saying that if an individual comes back to God with his tithes and offerings, He will return to that person what is lacking. The prosperity, health, healing, and protection from enemies that God promised will be returned when people discipline themselves to give.

Two things should be noted here: First of all, it is God's tithe, and secondly, it is an individual's offering. The tithe—the tenth—belongs to the Lord. Both the Hebrew and Greek words translated tithe mean "the tenth" or "the tenth part." Leviticus 27:30 says the tithe "is the Lord's. It is holy to the Lord." In tithing, the individual is giving something to God that belongs to Him. The tithe has been determined by God to be 10 percent. If a person makes \$1 million, the tithe is \$100,000. If a person makes \$1,000, it is \$100. If the individual makes \$100, it is \$10. The tithe is equal for everyone—10 percent—no matter what the increase is.

Offerings, however, originate as a gift to God. The apostle Paul wrote: "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). People must give as they determine with willing and cheerful hearts. The

Bible also indicates in 2 Corinthians 8:1-6, that offerings are to be given sacrificially when the giver is in need. The Macedonians were somewhat poverty stricken, yet they were called upon to give—and they gave willingly. This indicates that individuals can give above their ability, meaning they are planting seed for harvest. The tithe can never be the seed. Only the offering can be a seed that is planted in the Kingdom. People give beyond their ability because there is a need in their lives and they want to make a sacrifice—plant a seed.

B. TITHING IS PROOF OF LOVE AND DEVOTION TO GOD

Tithing is proof of one's love and devotion to God. It was the first outward form of worship described in the Bible. In Genesis 14, the Bible just simply says that Abraham paid tithe to Melchizadek. There are those who want to connect the tithe with the law and deny its New Testament application. Tithing, however, was practiced before the Law was given. When Jesus fulfilled the Law in areas that were not to be continued, tithing was not included in that fulfillment, and so it continued on in the New Testament and beyond.

Tithing establishes a covenant of trust between individuals and God, and brings the abundance of heaven's resources into one's life. What needs to be comprehended in tithing and giving is simply that if a person tithes and gives, he will be blessed, and if he does not, he will be cursed. As God's stewards, believers have no choice but to serve God according to His Word and His will.

INVOLVEMENT: "Commitment to Service"

I. OVERVIEW

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges of the church is involving people in ministry. Ministers can have the vision. They can set the organization, but unless they have the people involved in ministry, the organization and the vision are not going anywhere. It is a tremendous challenge for churches, because people are stressed. They are busy. People are pulled here and there with all the many things they have going on, and it is something the church has to work at diligently to keep people involved.

This section on involvement will address how to keep people, recruit people, and keep people motivated and involved in the ministry of the church. A simple definition of *involvement* is "getting people to become partners in ministry." To expand on that definition, one would need to include such items as objective, purpose, and benefits of involvement.

1. The objective of involvement is to give the church life—to recruit people who bring life into the church. It is not systems, programs, or plans, but involvement is about people.
2. The purpose of involvement is to provide clearly defined ways the church laity and staff can be motivated, recruited, placed, and equipped for ministry in order to participate in the ministry vision.

3. There are certain benefits of involvement.
 - a. When people become involved in ministry, they are motivated to take ownership of the vision.
 - b. It empowers or gives an opportunity to use their gifts and their talents.
 - c. Then, involvement provides the people a sense of productivity.
 - d. Finally, involvement breathes life into otherwise dead programs and plans.

II. PARTICIPATION

The key for motivating people to be involved in ministry is providing them the sense of Kingdom purpose and productivity. People who know they are making a contribution to the kingdom of God and to the vision of the church, will do anything. This is a prime motivating factor for keeping people involved.

Regardless of the size of the church, people have to be involved—that is what gives the ministry life. There are biblical examples of that. Moses, for example, had a vision to get the people out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. But as he was doing so, he would sit all day long and listen to his people's troubles and problems. However, Jethro, his father-in-law, helped him to realize that he needed to involve others to help him. Jethro advised Moses to select capable people to help him hear cases, and then he could hear the really tough cases. By involving others, he was able to be more organized and get other people involved.

Jesus Christ did the same thing. He had a vision to preach the gospel of the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, but He called the 12 disciples to help Him. He also had the 72 and then the 120 from the Upper Room experience. Again, the bottom line is people involvement. No matter the size of the church, people have to be motivated and recruited into the ministry vision.

III. ESTABLISHING THE GAME PLAN

Establishing a game plan involves an annual planning session and setting the yearly budget. Once these are accomplished then they must be implemented. Furthermore, one must keep in mind that this game plan is established from the standpoint of getting people involved in ministry.

IV. CALLING THE TEAM

In sports analogy, a game plan needs a team to carry it out. Several things need to be considered: (1) determining the ministry positions, (2) expanding the roster, (3) reaching the stands, and (4) getting on board. So what does that mean in everyday language? Basically, calling the team means determining the ministry positions. Churches must have core ministry positions. In other words, positions are needed to carry out the ministry.

A. ELDERSHIP

Elders are in the core ministry position. A minister needs leaders who are going to help bear the burden of the ministry. The eldership should be composed of individuals who are gifted in administration and in different types of ministry.

Every minister needs to be accountable to someone. In a more centralized organization, ministers are accountable to an administrative bishop. The pastoral staff could be accountable to a board of administrative elders. They could meet with them on a monthly basis. Every month the minister could give them a financial report and keep them up-to-date. These leaders will become involved in the ministry and a bond will be formed between them and the pastoral staff.

The elders also are involved in hospital visitation and altar work. Some elders can even do lay counseling. When a church has a strong board of elders, then the minister has to become a manager of people. Managing people is the minister's duty for a growing, developing church. A church will only grow to a certain point with solo leadership. Many churches stalemate at a 100 or 200. In order to grow further, they have to develop and expand their core. There is no magic number. A minister has to base that on what the needs are, the size of the congregation, and so forth. A minister does not need to hire staff until it is absolutely necessary.

B. TEACHERS AND WORKERS

Teachers and workers are other key ministry positions necessary in a church. It is vitally important to have capable, competent teachers and workers in the Sunday school and Wednesday night classes with children and youth.

C. MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

Music is the universal language; it speaks to the heart, and it says much about the worship service. Perhaps this is the area where a church needs to pour its money. Some churches contract people to play the piano, to lead worship, or wherever they are most needed.

It is vitally important to develop talent given by God. A church should not pay people to perform. The key is to hire developers. Often churches hire performers who cannot develop, but they perform well. Actually what a church needs is someone who can perform and develop.

D. AUXILIARY WORKERS

A final worker needed in the team and core positions is the auxiliary worker. For example, most churches need ushers, greeters, a welcoming committee, and even traffic control people. These positions are critical. People will stay with a church more by how they are treated by these ushers and greeters than by the sermons the minister preaches. In fact, church starts when the people drive into the church parking lot. Whatever happens after they get onto the property is what is important.

CARE: "The People Factor"

I. CHRIST'S ATTITUDE

The New Testament gives examples of Christ's teachings and examples of a role model and how to be a people person. In Israel, the old Jericho Road is the setting for the parable of the Good Samaritan. Everybody went by the wounded man: the priest, the Levite. But the Good Samaritan, even though he was an outcast to the Israelites, went over to where he was and helped him. Christ said that is the way to take care of people. In Luke 19:10, Christ said, "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Christ recognized people at their point of need. He was always involved in the people factor—He was a people person. He ate with publicans and sinners (Matthew 9); He gave attention to the needs of the Syrophenician woman whom the Jews had nothing to do with (Mark 7); He willingly talked to the sinful Samaritan woman (John 4). In every case, Jesus recognized people at their point of need—it has to start here.

Christ also related to people in spite of tradition. He was willing to break the traditions if necessary for the people's sake. In John 8, He treated adultery with understanding and forgiveness: "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first" (v. 7). In Mark, Chapters 1 and 5, Jesus touched people who were diseased and dead. In Mark 2, He ignored such customs as the prescribed hand washings and the fastings. That was what the Pharisees did trying to gain points. However, it does not work that way. In Mark 2:27, Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." He related to people in spite of tradition.

Furthermore, as a people person, Christ responded to people in a therapeutic context. In fact, in Luke 6:1-35, Christ emphasized the theme of loving one's enemies. Jesus was certainly the ultimate role model for this theme. He was also characterized by concern. For example, in Matthew 17 and in Mark 9, Jesus showed concern for the demoniac boy and delivered him. He also demonstrated tenderness toward the blind man by spitting on the ground, making a little mud cake and putting it on his eyes. After washing his eyes, he could see. Jesus always had optimism. In fact, in the Book of Mark, Jesus said, "Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them" (11:24). Therefore, if a church is Christlike, it will recognize people at their point of need, relate to people in spite of their traditions, and respond to people in a therapeutic context. The point is, when leadership comes to that kind of an understanding, then they will have a dynamic church dedicated to the people factor.

The purpose of care is to provide the church practical ways by which people can build relationships, be cared for, and care for the needs of others in order to feel part of the ministry vision. Feeling a part of the ministry is very critical. But in order to feel a part, individuals must not only be able to have relationships where they are being cared for, but also they should have the opportunity to care for others. This is true because people have a God-given need to love and be loved. God made mankind that way.

The benefits of caring are . . .

1. Caring provides people a sense of belonging to something significant and purposeful.
2. Caring makes the ministry vision relevant to the everyday needs of people.
3. Caring keeps people as the priority of ministry.

It is easy for leaders to get so involved in organization that they lose sight of the people. The organization becomes more important than the people. So, caring keeps people the priority.

II. CONGREGATIONAL ATTITUDE

Every congregation has some kind of an attitude. An attitude is the translation of an inward mind-set into outward behavior. People behave out of their attitudes, and there are certain factors which go into a caring church attitude.

A. PARAMETERS

A caring church will demonstrate five parameters:

1. First, the congregational attitude that is most represented by caring churches is an openness to all people. If a church is open to all people, then it will welcome anyone regardless of ethnic background, creed, or nationality.
2. Second, a caring church will show an attitude that each person is important. No "big I's and little you's." Every person is important whether a millionaire or on welfare or whatever economic status.
3. Third, a caring church knows that human behavior can be changed. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new." If leaders do not believe that behavior can be changed, then they need to go out of business. After all, that is what the church is all about. People should experience a behavior change, not just a feeling change. Much of what happens in the altars today is cathartic. They experience a release; they feel better; but they are not making any changes. Catharsis is a starting point, but discipleship means developing a kind of behavior that conforms more and more to the image of Jesus Christ.
4. Fourth, a caring church acknowledges that the Holy Spirit is the change agent. He is the One who changes lives and who imparts spiritual truth. The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ, endues people with the power, fills them with all the fullness of God, pours out God's love into their hearts, enables them to live holy lives, strengthens them, and makes intercession with groans that words cannot express. Paul says in Ephesians that "[God] is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" (3:20). That power is the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works in believers and that must be part of the congregational attitude of a caring church.

5. Fifth, a caring church means that every member is a disciple/witness. Every person can be a witness in some way. On a continuum from 1 to 10, some people struggle to witness at 1, and others can be found at various points on the continuum. The goal is to bring them along as near to 10 as possible. The Bible talks about disciples walking . . .

- “in newness of life” (Romans 6:4)
- “by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7)
- “in the Spirit . . . [not in] the flesh” (Galatians 5:16)
- “worthy of the calling with which [they] were called” (Ephesians 4:1)
- “in love, as Christ also has loved us” (Ephesians 5:2)
- “circumspectly, not as fools but as wise” (Ephesians 5:15).

Thus, it is a believer’s walk in Christ that grows a disciple/witness. As a result, a church full of effective witnesses will be exhibiting an important characteristic of a caring church.

EVANGELISM: “Beyond the Walls”

I. EVANGELISM: CENTRAL THRUST OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

The objective of evangelism is to give the church mission. The purpose of evangelism is to equip the church with a clearly defined strategy and plan for fulfilling the mission of reaching lost people with the gospel. It is a clearly defined strategy and plan, not just something loosely thrown together. It is something that the church looks to as its mission. Then, there are four benefits of evangelism.

1. Evangelism trains believers to confidently and effectively share their faith. If the church keeps a focus on evangelism, keeps it in the forefront, then it can begin to train the people.
2. Evangelism empowers the church with continuous spiritual excitement and vitality. When people accept Christ, the church is invigorated and comes to life.
3. Evangelism keeps the church looking for the soon return of Jesus Christ. Evangelism generates the ongoing urgency to make known the message of Christ’s soon return, because believers do not want anyone left behind.
4. Evangelism contributes to the global commission to preach the gospel to our nation prior to Christ’s return. And the church has been commissioned by Christ to do that.

Evangelism and mission come about through the power of the message. The word *kerygma* means “the preached message” like Peter preached on Pentecost. It is the dynamic that brings about the power. If the church loses the simplicity and the centrality of that message, then they have lost the thrust of evangelism. The message in Acts 2:16-18 is the Holy Spirit: a fulfillment of prophecy. What God is doing now through the Holy Spirit since the Day of Pentecost is indeed a fulfillment of prophecy. The second part of that message was found in . .

- Acts 2:21—a universal opportunity for salvation.
- Luke 17:21—the Kingdom is in believers.
- Romans 14:17—the Kingdom is not eating and drinking, but it is “righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”
- Luke 22:29—Christ said He was conferring on believers a Kingdom just like the Father had conferred on Him.

It is the universal opportunity for salvation. The key to all that is in Acts 2:22-36 where the scriptures show Christ as Lord. Verse 22 says that He is divine; verse 23 says He is crucified; verse 24 says He is resurrected; verses 32, 33 say that He is exalted; and Acts 1:9-11 say He is returning. That's the heart of the message.

The church ought to be preaching the Resurrection every Sunday, not just at Easter. In other words, to have an evangelistic church, ministers have to get back to the *kerygma*, the essential message of the church. Sometimes, ministers get so deep, they become extremely shallow, because they do not have the depth of the gospel. Acts 2:38 teaches that repentance is necessary for remission of sins. That message is still necessary. And finally, this evangelistic message should be at the core of the mission. It is a universal opportunity to receive the Holy Spirit as stated in Acts 2:38, 39. Now when Peter got up and preached on the Day of Pentecost, this was the power of the evangelistic message that brought people together. But once the people have heard, then they must respond to that message. The goal of evangelism is seeing people come to the place where they become followers of Christ, and in one sense of the word, if they are filled with the Holy Spirit, they become evangelists. That is the whole point.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF A SENDING CHURCH

The sending church will exhibit five important characteristics.

- A. *The sending church is centered in Christ.* He is the head of the church—“on this rock I will build My church” (Matthew 16:18).
- B. *A sending church is characterized by discipleship in outreach.* Disciples make disciples; they reproduce. For instance, the story is told about a Christian couple who were involved in group meetings. They were very concerned about the salvation of three couples in their neighborhood. So, they started inviting them to the group meetings. After an entire year of working with these couples, they all accepted Christ and started attending church. This is discipleship in action—disciples bringing in disciples.
- C. *The sending church is lay-empowered.* It empowers its lay people to do the work of the ministry, so it is not contained just to the professional clergy. God never intended that. Christ never intended that. However, people who are called to special functions and callings of the ministry obviously need to be paid. But the point is, they are responsible for getting other people involved in the reproduction.

- D. *The sending church is spiritual in climate, because whatever it does socially, whatever it does in all of these other ways, it still should have a spiritual connotation.* The church is trying to help people get better prepared to win other people to Christ.
- E. *The sending church is worship-anointed.* The worship service itself must be one of the key factors in the evangelistic thrust.

Ultimately, it comes down to whether a church is a satisfied church or a sending church, and it seems most churches vacillate back and forth. When a church reaches a plateau, it is because it is satisfied. When the church is sending, it is because it is moving forward. If a church gets into a satisfied position, then it may need to call a prayer meeting and/or a time of fasting. One minister said, "You have to stay in a positive tension." When Christians no longer feel the burden or feel the tension, then they are losing their edge. When a church loses its positive tension, does not feel the burden or the weight, then it loses its edge and becomes satisfied.

The biggest problem a minister has is learning to live with that tension in a way that it can be meaningful rather than debilitating. For many, it drives them out of the ministry because they cannot handle that tension. Christ, however, always had that tension when He was on earth. Paul and Peter and all the great people through the Bible have had that tension.

III. ENLARGING THE CIRCLE

- A. One should look at evangelism outreach services as a way of enlarging that circle. Some examples are Easter, Christmas, and Fourth of July. Many times nonchurchgoers will become churchgoers as a result of attending a special event. These events should not be seen as something to do again at Easter or Christmas because of tradition. They have to be viewed as opportunities to present the gospel to those who are not normally going to be in the church service.
- B. Children's programs are also vital to the church's outreach. They are some of the most marvelous ways of presenting the gospel, because little kids are going to have their parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles attend. They are even going to have their teachers that are not saved coming to this particular service. All of the adults will be endeared to the kids, but in the meantime, the message is coming across to them. At the end, the invitation is given. It does not have to be heavy-handed; it can be very simple. Oftentimes, people accept Christ at the end of a presentation of this nature. Therefore, these special presentations should always be structured so people can bring their unsaved friends and know that it is going to be a service that will be nonthreatening, but the gospel message will be heard.
- C. Another way to enlarge the circle is through witnessing programs—training people to share their faith. It is important to have some kind of training method by which to help people know how to share the gospel. The message is the same, but the delivery system is what needs to be appropriate. There was a time when churches could witness in the malls and other public places, but now that is hard to do. Public places will rarely give permission for witnessing. Other methods have to be utilized.

- D. One of the most effective means of evangelism is relational. There is a particular kind called prayer/care/share method. The way it works is a believer targets an unsaved friend and begins praying for the individual. The believer develops ways of caring for this person—doing things for specific needs that the person might have. Then as the relationship moves along, find an opportunity to share a testimony of what Jesus has done. Before sharing this testimony, the believer has demonstrated the gospel; thus, the name: prayer/care/share method.

IV. THE WORSHIP SERVICE

The worship service is really the heart of evangelism. Worship is thanksgiving—one's glad response to God's revelation in Christ. When people come together in the worship service, it is a time of offering a presentation of ourselves to God. How people come into worship has a lot to do with the giving of one's time, talent, and treasure. Worship is edification; it is the celebration and praise to God for His bountiful gifts in music and praise. Worship is calling. One could say it is fitting into the call and taking part in that call that involves worship. Worship is also ministry—it is preparation to live out Christ in the world. If people view worship as only celebration, feeling good, singing loud and lively (even though that is part of it), then they have missed the whole meaning of worship. Worship should begin with the benediction. We have come to get prepared to go outside of the walls. That is why people come together on the first day of the week—to celebrate the resurrection of Christ and to disciple others.

What about the worship service itself? If the climate of the worship service is not appropriate, then evangelism is not going to result. In the parable of the sower, Christ talks about how important it is to understand that this seed has to be on good ground. When He talks about the parable of the sower, some of it fell on stony ground, some of it fell on thorny ground, some of it fell on the path and could not grow, but some fell on good ground. The soil must be prepared.

V. EVANGELISTIC EVENT

What goes into a worship service that makes it an evangelistic event? When talking about an evangelistic event, one must remove the notion that this is some big revival crusade. Big revival crusades do happen, and revival is happening on a large scale in many areas. But that is not going to happen to most of the people, so one must look at it from the broad perspective of what needs to go into a worship service.

- A. *There has to be a priest.* Who is the priest? That is the minister, and the minister has to have a sense of direction. What does the minister want to happen in this worship service? Where is the service going? And from that priestly role, the minister must function as an intercessor for the people to bring them to God and bring God to them.
- B. *There has to be preparation.* There needs to be preplanning with the worship teams. The minister and the worship leader should be on the same wavelength, so the worship leader is not going south and the minister is going north and the two never shall meet. That is the point that is so important.

- C. *There must be planning.* What is the format of this service? One way to start is with a hymn, and then build until the pastoral prayer. That is the most wonderful time of the service when the minister leads the people to the Lord in prayer. There are several kinds of prayers: minister-led prayer, concert prayer, all types of prayer. The one goal of the priestly prayer is where conviction takes place and where the Holy Spirit works. The offering can be taken at a high point in worship or saved until the end. Every minister should have a plan of where the service is going.
- D. *There must be participation.* If the people are not participating, then the minister has missed the goal. If the people are just watching, then they are spectators. Their worship has become a spectator sport. There has to be people involvement. Ministers should want the worship service to be well planned, the singers to sing their best, and the arrangements to be in order, but not draw attention away from God. He should get all the attention.
- E. *There should be power.* Power is not just speed and noise; power is conviction. It is the Holy Spirit moving in the hearts and lives of the people.
- F. *There must be preaching.* The preaching of the Word is the most important thing that happens in a worship service. The minister should have enough time to bring the *kerygma* into being. Many Christians are weak because they do not know the Word. They have not been taught. They have not had the preaching that they need to know the Word. After the Word then the altar service. This is the point of enjoying worship. There is a climate of evangelism taking place.

VI. RELATIONSHIP TO THE EVANGELIST

Most churches have evangelists who come in. What exactly is expected of him? Here are some expectations:

- Preach the Word
- Touch the hearts of the people
- Participate in the vision for the local church, not their own agenda
- Promote the people—give them something that they can take with them
- Be a praying man or woman

The evangelist should not expect to enjoy everything, but should focus on what God is doing in the local church so the evangelist and the minister can work together as a team. When the evangelist leaves, the goal should be to leave something that will help the church move on its way. Then, the evangelist needs to be paid and paid well. Thus, evangelism is the central thrust of the local church.

The character of the local church is derived from its evangelistic message. It comes in the *kerygma*. The Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of prophecy; the universal opportunity of salvation. Christ is Lord. Repentance is necessary for the remission of sins. Also, the universal opportunity to receive the Holy Spirit is there. But the relevance of the local church is achieved in the evangelistic context of a sending church, centered in Christ, discipleship in outreach, laity in power, spiritual in climate, and worship-oriented. And the power of the local church is manifested in the anointed worship experience. It enlarges the circle. It produces disciples. It prepares the people for Kingdom living.

Infrastructure gives a framework on which to build the church. Jesus Christ says it best: "I'm giving you a commission, and I want you to initiate a church as a living bodily organism unto My Spirit. 'And on this rock [your confession of faith] I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven'" (Matthew 16:18, 19). And this embodies the practices of ministry—learning to use the keys to the Kingdom.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

THE MINISTER: "WHO AM I?"

1. The answer to the question, "Who Am I?" gives a person's _____. *identity*
2. Believers are _____ in the _____. *created; image of God*
3. _____ is a scripture that supports belief that believers are created in the image of God. *Genesis 1:27*
4. An individual is created as physical, _____, and _____. *emotional; spiritual*
5. God has given individuals the capacity to express the same _____ He feels. *emotions*
6. The interaction of the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of individuals determine the kind of _____ they become. *ministers*
7. _____ is a scripture that indicates to the believer the experience of justification. *Romans 5:9*
8. _____ is a Scripture that identifies the expression of redemption to the believer. *1 Peter 1:18, 19*
9. _____ behavior is the will of God. *Christlike*
10. A disciple possesses a genuine concern for the _____. *lost*
11. A disciple searches the _____ to be an effective witness. *Scripture*
12. A shepherd/leader is stable in _____. *faith; love; and endurance*
13. A called person functions compellingly out of _____. *necessity*
14. A called person functions _____ in light of a sacred responsibility. *willingly*
15. A minister is an agent of _____. *spiritual change*

THE MINISTER: "WHAT IS A MINISTER'S ROLE?"

1. Ministers must develop _____. *spiritual response patterns*
2. Ministers need to recognize that there is a constant state of spiritual conflict for control of the _____. *mind*
3. Ministers must focus their faith on _____. *Christ*
4. In order to be spiritual, a minister must understand the contrast between the _____ mind and the _____ mind. *spiritual; sinful*
5. The sinful mind is _____ to God (Romans 8:7). *hostile*
6. The spiritual mind is _____ (Romans 12:2). *transformed*
7. As a shepherd/leader, a minister must have a _____ _____. *workable plan*
8. As a shepherd/leader, a minister has a sense of _____ (Ephesians 6:10). *purpose*
9. As a shepherd/leader, a minister must have a commitment to _____. *prayer*
10. As a shepherd/leader, a minister must assume a stance of _____. *leadership*
11. Jesus _____ people. *educated*
12. As a shepherd/leader, a minister accents ministry _____. *priorities*
13. A ministry priority should build on the centrality of _____. *worship*
14. Preaching exists to _____ people. *influence*
15. A sermon must be felt in the _____ of the minister *heart and spirit*

THE MINISTER: "HOW DO I PLAN THE WORSHIP SERVICE?"

1. _____ is the most important event in the life of the church each week. *Celebration of worship*
2. The early church model of worship was based on the _____ style. *Synagogue*
3. Worship can be viewed as the _____ of the wheel of ministry. *hub*
4. Three purposes of worship are _____. *exalt God; edify believers; evangelize the lost*
5. A worship service should _____ believers. *mature*
6. A structure of a worship service may be _____ from church to church. *different*
7. A worship service should be _____ through, _____ through, and _____ for the glory of God. *thought; prayed; designed*
8. A call to worship should _____ the worshiper onto the greatness of God. *focus*
9. The Bible says in _____ that there should be public reading of Scripture. *1 Timothy 4:13*
10. The _____ praise is important because the worship service should not be a spectator event. *congregational*
11. Using fear and guilt when receiving an offering is _____. *unproductive*
12. The _____ is the centerpiece of the worship service in a church. *ministry of the Word of God*
13. Pastoral preaching has a high _____ element in the content. *teaching*
14. A sermon should _____ on the person of Jesus Christ. *center*
15. Preaching needs to be _____ based. *biblically*

THE MINISTER: "HOW DO I ADMINISTER THE SACRAMENTS?"

1. The most centralizing aspects of the worship service are the _____ of the church. *sacraments*
2. The sacraments of the church are _____. *Communion; baptism; footwashing*
3. Sacrament implies _____. *mystery and celebration*
4. _____ represents Christ dwelling in the believer and the believer dwelling in Christ. *Communion*
5. _____ is connected with faith, repentance, and confession of faith. *Baptism*
6. The Lord's Supper is another name for _____. *Communion*
7. Communion focuses the believer on the _____ of Christ. *person*
8. The Lord's Supper _____ among the people of God. *fosters fellowship*
9. Communion recognizes that an individual is _____. *forgiven*
10. Christ is present in Communion _____. *spiritually*
11. Communion is an _____ of grace, but is not grace. *expression*
12. Communion is available for only _____. *believers*
13. Baptism is an _____ with Christ. *identification*
14. Baptism does not _____ a person. *save*
15. _____ is the mode of baptism. *Immersion*
16. Baptism follows _____. *conversion*
17. The formula for baptism is focused in Matthew _____. *28:19*
18. The washing of feet was an ancient custom of _____. *hospitality*
19. _____ is a biblical passage about footwashing. *John 13:1-17*
20. The Lord's Supper focuses on the _____ of Christ. *crucifixion*

THE MINISTER: "HOW DO I CONDUCT FAMILY MINISTRY?"

1. The practice of dedicating children comes from the dedication of _____. *Samuel and Jesus*
2. Dedicating children to God is an act of _____. *praise and thanksgiving*
3. When parents dedicate a child to God, they _____ themselves to rear the child before God. *pledge*
4. Dedicating a child is a time to claim the _____ of God. *promise*
5. In a child dedication service, the minister explains the _____ of infant dedication. *purpose*
6. In premarital counseling, the pastor talks to a couple about their _____. *relationship*
7. In premarital counseling, the pastor goes over the order of _____ with the couple. *service*
8. In a marriage service, the pastor should explain the meaning of marriage as a _____ before God. *covenant relationship*

THE MINISTER: "HOW DO I BRING COMFORT?"

1. The pastor's role is that of a _____. *shepherd*
2. As ministers shepherd their congregation, they provide them with _____. *nurture and care*
3. The best minister description of a pastor might be found in _____. *Psalm 23*
4. As a shepherd, a minister provides _____ for the congregation. *guidance*
5. Ministers prepare the congregation _____ to face challenges. *spiritually*
6. Ministry includes _____ contact. *pastoral*
7. When a minister meets a family after a loved one passes away, the minister provides _____ for the funeral service. *comfort and preparation*
8. In ministering to a grieving family, a minister should focus on the _____ of God. *faithfulness and grace*
9. Providing what the family _____ and _____ at a funeral service is important. *wants and desires*
10. Three goals of a sermon at a funeral are to _____ Jesus, _____ the family, and _____ the means of eternal life. *exalt; comfort; clarify*

THE MINISTER: "HOW DO I SERVE AS AN ADMINISTRATOR?"

1. _____ is part of the ministry of the church. *Administration*
2. By the nature of the calling, the minister is responsible for administering both the _____ and _____ of ministry. *philosophy; plan*
3. The plan of ministry deals with the _____ of ministry. *strategy*
4. _____ means "to organize, to plot, to guide and to direct." *Administration*
5. The minister _____ the church as it moves into the future. *guides and directs*
6. A vision for ministry creates an _____, a _____, and _____ for ministry. *objective; purpose; benefits*
7. The purpose of vision is to provide a church with a ministry _____ and a means to measure ministry _____. *focus; effectiveness*
8. The Old Testament passage, _____, explains the necessity of a vision for a church. *Proverbs 29:18*
9. Ministers are _____, which means they see where the church needs to be going and they outline steps to help the church reach the destination. *visionaries*
10. A vision for ministry starts from the scriptural understanding—an unfolding _____. *future possibility*
11. Give five principles that should be used in writing a mission statement for ministry: _____. *evangelism; edification; equipping; encouraging; and excellence*
12. Making a ministry vision a reality includes three administrative functions: (1) _____, (2) _____, (3) _____. *selecting personnel; identifying ministry plans; establishing a budget for the ministry plan*
13. The church is an _____ that builds the body of Christ. *organization*
14. Paul gives an illustrative description of the church as a body of many parts in _____. *1 Corinthians 12:12-31*
15. Organization is coming to a balance of _____. *spirit and form*

16. The objective behind organization is that it gives the church _____ for the vision to be carried out. *structure*
17. It is important for a church to know its own _____ style. *distinctive*
18. In order to successfully build the body of Christ, the church must be _____. *need-oriented, job-described; and distinctive in style.*
19. Churches need to be aware of the _____ of the people who live in its surrounding community. *needs*
20. _____ is a spiritual discipline. *Giving*
21. Basic teachings concerning tithes and offerings are found in _____. *Malachi 3:7-10*
22. Helping people see the Kingdom _____ are key factors for motivating people to involve themselves in ministry. *purpose and benefits*
23. Four core ministry positions in a church are _____. *eldership; teachers; musicians; and auxiliary workers*
24. The _____ should be composed of individuals who are gifts in administration and in different types of ministry. *eldership*
25. Christ's teachings or actions illustrate how a minister can be a _____. *people person*
26. Christ recognized people at their point of _____. *need*
27. Christ related to people in spite of _____. *tradition*
28. Caring provides people a sense of belonging to something _____. *significant and purposeful*
29. Caring keeps people as the _____ of ministry. *priority*
30. Caring churches are _____ to all people. *open*
31. _____ should be the central thrust of the local church. *Evangelism*
32. The sending church is _____. *lay-empowered*
33. A _____ church does not become a _____ church. *sending; satisfied*

34. Special services, like _____, should be evangelistic services. *Easter and Christmas*
35. _____ to share their faith emphasizes evangelism. *Training people*
36. One of the most effective means of evangelism is _____. *relational*
37. _____ is expected of an evangelist. *Preaching the Word*
38. An evangelist should _____ on what God is doing in the local church. *focus*
39. An evangelist should help the church _____. *move forward*
40. The character of a church is derived from its _____. *evangelistic message*

