

OBTAINING YOUR OWN MINISTRY

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Unless you have decided that giving up all or a part of your future, in service to God, will result in a good life and a better eternity, none of what follows will make sense. But for those who have so chosen, the following ideas may bring some clarity on a clear route to service.

1. When preparing for a specific ministry in the future, you should do what you can, where you can, to help around the church and help others in your congregation. If you see a need, fill that need. Almost any ministry leader who might have an influence on your future, will have very little use for a prima donna that is too good to get their hands dirty. Ministry begins with the heart of a servant.

Until you settle on your own ministry, give part of yourself away by becoming part of the ministries of others, in which you can be of assistance.

There may be times when you have failed God and feel unworthy to even be in His presence, much less claim to be working for Him. Understand that restoration is one decision of repentance away, followed by your worship and praise, to which He will come. We do not worship God because we are worthy, but because He is worthy.

Service in any aspect has always been more a matter of willingness than of excellence. Yet you sometimes hesitate to give of yourself in any degree because you either feel unworthy to serve with your meager talents, you are waiting to be asked, or worse, you are waiting for an assignment you feel lives up to your self image. Or, you are waiting to feel holy enough, or sanctified enough. Until your body is dead, you won't get there.

If God can use a donkey to convey His message, He can most likely use you to help in His work.

Encourage others who also wish to serve the church body or are already doing so in some capacity. If you can help them further their work, do so. Be their helping hands when you can.

2. If your brother or sister is struggling to continue living for God, encourage them as well. That is a ministry. It is not looking down on someone to be concerned for them. It does help your approach to doing so, to consider that you need not feel superior to one whom you encourage. We are all really just beggars, trying to show other beggars, where we found food. God will ultimately be the source of their help and their strength. Any part you play in encouragement or even restoration is really a very small part of that miracle. You have no cause for taking pride in being a small part of God's work.

If your brother or sister is in pain, they may not want or welcome help. They may even be hurtful. You can only then offer them the same grace that you would your natural siblings, and pray for them from afar. There will be times when nothing can be done

except for that, until God changes their heart. That will be frustrating, but in some cases, God alone will be able to do the work. It becomes your job to supply the faith.

A word of caution. In our over-sexualized world, taking too much interest in someone of the opposite sex, even if it is only because they seem to be hurting, can become misconstrued. Time should not be spent with them alone. And simply praying for them doesn't complicate or compromise anything.

If attraction does exist, especially avoid time alone with them, till motives become clear and platonic companionship is once again possible.

3. It may well be, that you will give and give of yourself to others, without ever receiving any help from them in the future, or reward, or even gratitude. All of which would likely negate God blessing you in return, since you would already have received your reward.

It is better to consider that what you do for others, to be what you are actually doing it in service to God. If you donate money to someone who lets their needs be known, and they blow that money on their pleasure, what is that to you? You donated it to God, which leaves them to explain to God, how they squandered His providence.

4. You might often struggle with the idea of finding your calling, before you become involved in the work of the church. Since callings come from God is in His timing, you are not likely to "find" one, so much as to acknowledge a burden God has already placed upon your heart. Such assignments from God are often accompanied by grief. The best we can hope for is to identify our calling, before it finds us.
5. If there is a ministry that resonates with you, with which you desire to become involved, discuss that first with your pastor, to verify that you have their approval to become involved. If they are not your shepherd, don't bother calling them your pastor.
6. If your pastor approves, approach the head of that ministry to get permission for involvement. Learn from them the steps you will need to take to join their team. Note that if you are not already ministering in that capacity to some degree somewhere, you are most likely not called by God to do that. Singers sing. Writers write. Ministers minister. Officially becoming part of a team just opens a wider door.
7. Take the steps you have been told by the leader of the ministry. Without submission to authority, God has little use for your talents or availability.
8. Begin developing skills that may be valuable in that ministry. For example, if that ministry of interest involves public speaking and you are shy, find opportunities to speak in public. Sounds awful, doesn't it. This is a hint. It is easier to speak to strangers, once you become sure that what you have to say, will be of benefit to them.

9. Accept opportunities to practice your ministry, when opportunities arise. These may come to light when networking or associating with your peer groups. Your pastor may know of other churches who might welcome your help.

Should those opportunities come to light, don't accept them unless you first obtain the permission of your pastor and your ministry leader. There are many smaller churches who need and would welcome your help, especially if they hold service at a different time than your own church.