



School Of Ministry

Lesson 38

ENSURING CONTINUITY FOR THE FUTURE OF MINISTRY (2)

(1) Ministry Standards.....

If the following ministry standards are observed, continuity and the future of the ministry are enhanced. However, these standards should not only be observed and carried out only in ministry but also in everyday life regardless of what we do. Not only will our lifestyle be pleasing to God, but we will experience success in every area of life as well.

- (I) Demand **EXCELLENCE** of yourself and others around you that God calls to serve with you. “Good enough” is never good enough. Don’t have a “that’s-good-enough mentality” about your ministry. Consistently challenge yourself first, and those around you to get better. Don’t make or accept excuses for failure. Keep moving forward, keep advancing, and keep excelling. Represent Jesus first class: Make rules for yourself, and draw boundaries for yourself that you refuse to cross.
- (II) The Ministry must always maintain a high standard of **ETHICS** and **INTEGRITY** (I Thes 2:1-3). Be completely absorbed in God’s will; be full of integrity, and do your best to live above criticism.
- (III) When your **METHODS** are misunderstood and your **MOTIVES** misinterpreted, you must persevere. Have single-mindedness toward God and sincerity toward people. Jesus is the only “preacher/Minister” who has ever lived without sin, and yet He was misunderstood. We are imperfect so should count on being criticized and misunderstood. Don’t defend yourself; don’t get distracted; don’t use God’s platform of leadership to defend yourself or attack others. Let God work things out.

In addition to the above pay attention to the following: **(IV)** Never doubt God's call on your life regardless of your experiences; keep it ever alive in your thinking; **(V)** The success and future of your ministry is not dependent upon your ability but upon God's ability in you; **(VI)** Never take advantage of people. Don't get involved in "religious politics" or push yourself. If you continually seek God, He will promote you and establish your ministry; **(VII)** Overcoming opposition in your ministry only comes by being single-minded. The things you compromise to get you will eventually lose; **(VIII)** Be engulfed in the truth that God cannot fail and He won't fail you; and finally **(IX)** In every way you can, whether in implementing God's vision, operating finances, organizing your work, appointing people and delegating tasks etc, **PATTERN YOUR LIFE AND MINISTRY AFTER JESUS**. We are literally an extension of His ministry.

(2) Business of Ministry / Organizational Structure / Administration....Isaiah 9:6; Luke 17:20, 21, Luke 2:49; Acts 6:3; Acts 1:15-26; Rom 12:11; I Thes 4:11; Matt 25:14-30; I Tim 4:8; Matt 19:26-30; Mk 10:28-31

God is a specialist in organization. Everything about His creation was organized from the beginning. He believes in structure, planning, goal setting, administration and business. Jesus while here on earth, expressed in His teachings that ministry is "the Father's business" and portrayed God as being "Profit-oriented". Unfortunately, one of the reasons why most ministries ordained of God fail is due to their 'un-business-like' approach to the ministry. Many ministers and the world at large relate with the Kingdom of God as a "Sunday morning" affair when sermons are preached, songs sung, offerings collected, "churchy" people play their stereotypical roles, go home and then return the following Sunday to repeat the same cycle etc. However, Jesus had a different approach. ***He portrayed the kingdom of God as a government and a business*** that operated always with the goal of pleasing the Father and producing increase. ***If we must succeed and have continuity in the ministry, we must have the same business-like approach that Jesus had.*** Ministry has legal aspects to it: There are compliance issues that must be addressed for the ministry to be legally authentic and profitable. Ministry involves making investments that lead to profit, and although much of the profit of ministry is spiritual and eternal, there is a whole lot that must affect our present life (**I Tim 4:8**).

No one in their right minds (regardless of how much they love the Lord) will commit to serving God in the ministry partly or fully if all it promises is a life of struggles, uncertainties, or poverty. Jesus showed clearly that going into the ministry is not the same thing as taking a "vow of poverty". He demonstrated (**Matt 19:26-30**) that ***if we make substantial investments in the ministry over time, we can expect to be rewarded on earth and eternally.*** Business-minded people in the world run their enterprises by investing all of their faculties in order to be profitable. And even though many of them end up without any noticeable increase, God guarantees that He will bless and reward our investments of gifts, talents, resources etc that are made in the kingdom of God (Isa 45:19; **Isaiah 48: 16-18**; James 5:1-4; **I Cor 9:4-14**). It is however, being properly organized, developing the right kind of structure that can enhance productivity, and administering our ministry using the wisdom of God in such a way as to provoke profit and increase, that enable us to enjoy increase, continuity, and long-lasting success in the kingdom of God.

The strength of any ministry is largely dependent on the efficiency of its organizational structure. ***It takes more than the Anointing to succeed in the ministry***, and no ministry succeeds without good administration (Prov 24:3). ***Administration is the integration of goals and objectives into functional and profitable units***. There must be clearly set goals and objectives. To enhance this, we must identify our God-given medium of operation (e.g. a local church) needed for maximum accomplishment. Then this medium must be creatively broken down into functional units with their own objectives. Each unit should be staffed and directed by volunteers and workers with the appropriate gift-mixes that the departments require to function maximally. Finally, a good structure should be developed to facilitate the operations, communications, and smooth flow of the units. ***Leadership is not getting things done by yourself, but the ability to get others to do the assigned job with good results***. Appropriate staffing, adequate provision of needed resources, and clearly spelt out functions and expected results etc are all requirements of a good organizational structure and administration.

(3) Reproducing the Minister and Ministry...2 Tim 2:1-7; Gen 1:11-28; I Chr 20:4-8; Gen 22:16-18; Exo 3:14, 15

The Law of Reproduction simply states that in nature, and among men, everything that is living reproduces after its own kind. Trees reproduce trees, flowers reproduce flowers, animals reproduce animals, human beings reproduce human beings, and ministers reproduce other ministers. God's way of reproducing Himself in us is through His Word (John 10:34-36; Psalms 82:1-6), and Jesus when He was leaving the earth, having reproduced Himself in His disciples, breathed upon them and commissioned them to carry on with His mandate (John 20:21-23; Matthew 28:16-20). In the same way, Apostle Paul instructed Timothy, one of his foremost protégés, to keep the cycle going by imparting to others what he had imparted to him. You and I had the privilege of the gospel being preached to us because of this cycle of reproduction. The late Archbishop Benson Idahosa was quoted many times as saying ***"Success without Successors is Stupidity"***! It is God's will to help us live beyond our generation (Psalms 112). It is our assignment, not just to serve God in the ministry and succeed at it, ***but to minister in such a way that our legacy is continued even after we are gone from the earth***. Thus it is important to be actively involved in identifying our "Timothys" and reproducing in them what we have received of the Lord (I Tim 4:8-16). On-going mentoring of ourselves, our children, the younger generation and other believers and ministers is mandatory if we must achieve long-lasting success in the ministry. We must take heed to ourselves and to our ministries because somehow or the other, whatever we are will be reproduced in others after us.