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The Call to Ministry

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Introduction

God knows everything. There isn't anything that God does not know. God knows eternity from the beginning to the end. God is the beginning of everything. Genesis 1:1 says, **"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"** (NKJV).

John 1:1-3 says,

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

The above verses are talking about Jesus, who was the Son of God from the beginning. Jesus said in Revelation 1:8, **"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."**

God knows everyone whoever existed in all of creation. God is always now. Therefore, God also has foreknowledge of what is going to happen in the future. God knows the complete past, and God knows the complete future to the end of eternity.

God knows every detail about everyone's life. In Matthew 10:30 Jesus said, **"the very hairs of your head are all numbered."** In Jeremiah 1:5, the LORD God said to Jeremiah, **"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."** Every person born into this world was formed in their mother's womb by God.

God knows everything and everyone ever born into this world. That means God knows you also. He knew you before you were formed in your mother's womb.

Now the Question is, do you know God? If you say you do, how well do you know Him?

The Importance of the Call

Why is it important to understand “The Call to Ministry?” There are a number of reasons why it should be important for everyone to understand the call.

(1). According to the New Testament, everyone who is born again is called to a ministry of some sort. Called to a ministry, means “called to serve.” There are a few verses in the New Testament that make it important for us to understand the call, and also, what ministry we are called to as an individual in the family of God. One verse of importance to the Call is in Matthew 7:21, where Jesus said, **“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”**

The will of God the Father for each individual is that they fulfill the call of God on their lives. Therefore, the call of God is the will of God for each individual. If we don’t know what our call is, how can we be sure we are doing the will of God the Father?

(2). According to the parable of the tares of the field in Matthew, Chapter Thirteen (Matt. 13:24-30, 37-34), the tares are those who Satan puts in the churches. These that Satan puts in the churches will in the end be taken out and **“And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth”** (Matt. 13:42).

This would not be a good position to be in after spending all our lifetime doing what we thought we should be doing, and then finding out too late, that it wasn’t God, but the devil that was putting us into the ministry that we were doing.

(3). According to the New Testament, we are not to do the work of the ministry by our own ability. We are to be led by the Holy Spirit in everything we do. That which is done of our own ability is called “works of the flesh.” That which is done by God working in us and through us is called “walking after the Spirit.” These two are contrary to each other.

Galatians 5:16,17 says,

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Therefore, not knowing the call of God on our lives could easily get us over into walking after the flesh rather than walking after the Spirit. According to Romans 8:1, if we walk after the flesh we bring condemnation upon ourselves. Whereas, God’s plan for every born again Christian is that they walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh (Rom. 8:1-8).

For those who need help in determining the Call of God on their lives, they can go to www.handsforjesus.org or www.handsforjesus.cc on the Internet, and download as many free books as they wish. In many of these books there is information to help them know how God works in the lives of His Children and to do the will of God for their life.

If they still need help, they can write to Hands For Jesus, Inc., at the address on the first page of this book. State their concerns, and we will do our best to reply with an answer. The purpose for Hands For Jesus, Inc. is to help others to know, and do the will of God in their lives. We are here to serve others. We are not respecters of persons. No one is unimportant to God or to us here at Hands For Jesus, Inc.

God Calls People

There are certain people God called to establish His will here on earth. Just to name a few, God called Adam, Abraham, and Jesus to establish His will here on earth.

There are certain people whom God calls specifically into certain types of ministry work. These people are called by God and placed into the call by God. Just to mention a few of these, God called Moses, Aaron, and the Old Testament prophets. God called John the Baptist, the twelve Apostles, and Paul who at that time was Saul of Tarsus.

Every one of these mentioned above were called by God. Man cannot call himself to any of these positions. Speaking of the position Jesus now has as High Priest, Hebrews 5:4 says, **“And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.”**

Therefore, as we view the history of God’s callings we see that it was God’s idea, God did it, and not man. The first example is that of Adam. When the LORD God created man in the beginning, He created them male and female (Gen. 1:26-28). Yet there was one individual that God created, who was only male, and that was the man named Adam. Out of all the people on this earth, God chose Adam as the first man in His creation. Adam was the beginning of the whole human race here on earth. Even Eve came out of Adam. Adam was first, then Eve.

Did Adam have a choice before God created man? We do not know, there is no indication that God gave Adam a choice before the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7). There is no indication that anyone had a choice before they were born into this world as to who their parents would be, and into what country or nation they would be born. It all indicates that God made that decision concerning each individual before they were conceived into their mother’s womb.

When Cain was born of Adam and Eve, Eve said, **“I have gotten a man from the LORD”** (Gen. 4:1). Eve knew it was the LORD that caused the birth of Cain. Even though Adam was the father of Cain, it was the LORD that determined when Cain would be born.

The LORD spoke to Jeremiah, saying, **“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations”** (Jer. 1:5). This tells us two things about Jeremiah and all mankind. The LORD God formed Jeremiah in his mother’s womb. It also tells us that the LORD God called Jeremiah into the ministry of a prophet to the nations. It wasn’t Jeremiah’s idea to be born as a child of Israel, rather than as an Egyptian or of another nation. We could say, it was all God’s idea who Jeremiah’s mother would be and what Jeremiah would do in his lifetime here on earth. Jeremiah was called by the LORD God to be a prophet even before he was conceived in his mother’s womb.

God has foreknowledge of all things. God knows what people are going to do before they do it (Gen. 25:23). God knows everyone before they are born into this world. This is God’s creation, not man’s and not the devil’s.

God has a plan and a purpose for everyone who was ever born into this world. Man can try to do things that God had not planned for him, but he cannot change the original call upon his life. Men can fail to fulfill the call of God on their lives, but they cannot remove the call. Romans 11:29 says, **“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”** God is not going to change His mind on the gifts and callings. But, man can prevent that calling from accomplishing all that God planned for the person who has been called.

One example is King Saul. God chose and called Saul to be the first king over the tribes of

Israel (1 Sam. 9:1-10:1). Saul disobeyed the LORD and because of his disobedience, the LORD chose David to replace Saul (1 Sam. 15:1-23). The calling on King Saul's life was there, as long as King Saul lived, but Saul did not fulfill that call according to the original purpose for that call.

Therefore, there are callings upon individuals lives, and that calling remains, whether the person fulfills that call or not. The fulfilling of the call is dependant upon the response of the individual person to the call. God does not force anyone to fulfill the call upon their lives. It's up to each individual to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit to fulfill the call that God placed upon their lives. Therefore, God calls, but man must respond.

It is always God that does the calling. Man cannot call himself to any position without God first calling him. Those who try to call themselves to a position are doing so by a work of Satan in their minds. Satan is the one who tries to get people to enter into positions that God did not call them to (Matt. 13:38,39). Therefore, it is important that we understand the call of God on a persons life and how it works for the good of all mankind.

Let's take Abraham for an example. It was God that called Abraham when he was still in Ur of the Chaldees (Acts 7:2-3, Gen. 12:1). Abraham responded to the call, and when he arrived where the LORD wanted him, the LORD spoke to him again and informed him of another part of his calling. The LORD then said to Abraham **"Unto thy seed will I give this land"** (Gen. 12:7). Each time Abraham responded to what the LORD asked him to do, the LORD then informed him of more of his calling. By Abraham's response to the call of God, he became known as the Father of God's chosen people. A covenant was made with Abraham concerning all those who would choose to follow God's plan for their lives. Abraham became the father of the nation of Israel. He also became the father of all who live by faith.

Abraham obeyed the call of God and God established His plan here on earth through a covenant He made with Abraham and his seed after him.

What will be the future of those who came after us? What will happen to those who are our children by natural birth? It has a lot to do with what we do about the call of God on our lives as individuals. Our response to God's call will determine what will happen to those after us.

Called by God

When we talk about being called by God to a ministry, we are talking about those who God called “to serve others.” The word “ministry” means, “to serve others, or be a servant to others.” A ministry is not a high position. It is a position whereby a person becomes a servant to others. If anyone thinks they have been called to a ministry, they should understand, if they are called they must become a servant to those whom they are to minister to. In other words, in the ministry work, others do not serve you, you serve them.

It is God that does the calling. We do not call ourselves to any position in this world, or in the body of Christ. God even put Pharaoh over Egypt at the time of Moses, when Moses led the Children of Israel out of Egypt. God worked out all the details, that this Pharaoh (not the Pharaoh that was over Egypt when Joseph was alive), would be over Egypt when Moses and Aaron went to bring the Children of Israel out of captivity.

Speaking of the call of God to a work of the ministry, we must understand, it is God who calls. It is God who equips. It is God who sends. It is God who supplies. All man is, is a vessel for God to use to accomplish His will here on earth.

God does not force anyone to do His will. God does not force anyone to fulfill the call of God on their lives. God cannot fulfill the call on a person’s life without the cooperation of the person. If the person refuses to cooperate with God, God can do no more for that person concerning the call of God on their life.

Let’s take one example from Luke, Chapter One. God had already chosen Mary to become the mother of Jesus. But God could not force Mary to be the mother of Jesus. Mary had to be willing to cooperate with God to become the mother of Jesus.

God sent the angel Gabriel to Mary to inform her of God’s plan for her to become the mother of Jesus. Before the angel came to Mary, there was no indication that Mary knew anything about the plan of God for her life. It was God’s choice, and God’s timing, and until that time it seems Mary knew nothing concerning her becoming the mother of Jesus.

When the angel spoke to Mary, she was faced with a decision, would she respond to the call, or would she refuse? Mary had to make a quick decision, she didn’t have a week or month to think about it. The angel needed a response that day.

When Mary questioned the situation, concerning the circumstance (that she was a virgin), the angel explained to Mary how this would happen. The Angel said, **“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”** (Luke 1:35). This was the answer Mary needed “how was she to become pregnant?” Then the angel explained something very important to Mary, **“For with God nothing shall be impossible”** (Luke 1:37). There had to be an agreement between Mary and God. God could not, and would not, force Mary to become the mother of Jesus. Mary had to agree to permit God to do His will in her life. God could not do His will without Mary, and Mary could not become the mother of Jesus without the help of the Holy Spirit. It took Mary’s willingness and the power of the Holy Spirit to bring Jesus into this world, born of a virgin.

This is the way all ministry work is to be done. Man cannot do the work of the ministry without the help of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will not force anyone to do the will of God.

There must be cooperation between man and God for anyone to do the work of the ministry.

There is first the call. God first called Abraham. Following Abraham's response, God then could continue the call on Abraham's life. If Abraham would not have left Ur of the Chaldees, the call of God on Abraham's life would not have been completed. If Mary would not have said to the angel **"Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word"** (Luke 1:38), the LORD could not have used Mary to complete His will here on earth. Man must respond to the call (usually without knowing all the details).

How much time is involved between the first indication that God is calling and the time a person knows what that call is? That depends entirely upon God, and His plan. God only reveals things when He so desires, not according to our will or desires. No one knows how long it was between the time the LORD first spoke to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees and the time Abraham arrived where the LORD wanted him in the land of Canaan. It could have been many years.

The call of God on Abraham's life is a good example of what happens in a persons life from the time God starts working with them and the time their call is completed. Let us look at what we know about Abraham and God's call upon his life and see how these things came about?

We do know that in Acts 7:2,3 it tells us,

The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

Evidently, Abraham must have said something to his father Terah. For in Genesis 11:31 it says, **"And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there."**

Abraham remained in Haran until his father died. This could have been quite some time for it tells us in Genesis 12:5 **"And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came."**

We see that Abraham and Lot gathered **"their substance...and the souls that they had gotten in Haran."** It takes time to accumulate substance and people, who became servants to Lot and Abraham while in Haran.

After Abraham's father died, it said in Genesis 12:4, **"So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran."** Genesis 12:6 tells us, **"And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land."** When Abraham arrived at the place, where the LORD wanted him, the LORD began to reveal why He called Abraham already while he was in Ur of the Chaldees.

This is very important for Christians to understand. We must obey the LORD to continue receiving information concerning **"The Call to Ministry."** Nothing of importance happened in Abraham's life until he left his father's house (separated himself from those who could keep him from obeying the LORD). Had Abraham never left Ur of the Chaldees or Haran, the call of God on his life may never have become what it is today.

God does not force anyone to do anything. It is all up to the individual to respond to the call

of God on their lives. Each time Abraham responded to the instructions of the LORD, he was given a little more information as to what God's plan was for him.

In Genesis 12:7 it tells us, **“And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land...”** This could be the second or third time the LORD appeared to Abraham (first in Ur, now after leaving his father's house). This seems to be the first time the LORD promised Abraham's seed a possession of land.

After Lot and Abraham parted, Genesis 13:14-17 says,

And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

This is the first time the LORD spoke about the nation of Israel becoming as **“the dust of the earth.”** The LORD was making two covenants with Abraham, one with Israel and one with Christ (one called the Old Covenant and one called the New Covenant).

Then years later in a vision, Abraham asked who his heir would be, being Abraham had no children, **“the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir”** (Gen. 15:4). This is the first time Abraham knew his heir would be his own child, not his servant. Then Genesis 15:5 says, **“And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.”** Here the LORD is speaking of the New Covenant. Abraham's seed according to the stars of heaven pertains to those who are “in Christ.” In Genesis 15:13-21 the LORD went back to speaking of the covenant with the children of Israel (the Old Covenant).

Years later, Abraham still did not have a child. (Abraham was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born. That was eleven years after Abraham left his father's house in Haran and came into the land of promise).

Genesis, Chapter Sixteen, reveals how that Satan, working through the minds of people, tries to get people to do the will of God without waiting on the LORD. Sarah came up with the idea of Abraham having a child with Hagar.

When Abraham was ninety-nine years old (twenty-four years after leaving his father's house), the LORD first revealed to Abraham His plan, so that Abraham could understand the importance of his calling. O' how important it is to wait upon the LORD and don't let Satan try to get a person to do the will of God themselves, without the leading of the Holy Spirit.

In Genesis, Chapter Seventeen, **“the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect...And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly”** (Gen. 17:1,2). O' how important it is to understand that, even though God is working in a persons life for years, they must wait upon the LORD, before they go out to do the will of God. Notice, the LORD required one thing of Abraham, before He would make a covenant with Abraham. That was, **“walk before me, and be thou**

perfect...” This is a requirement that will establish a person in the ministry the LORD called them to.

Notice also, the LORD did not say, “I have made a covenant,” but rather He said **“And I will make my covenant between me and thee...”** **“I will,”** is future tense, not past tense. Although, the LORD knew the end from the beginning (that is, the LORD knew Abraham would obey Him), Abraham did not know the total requirements for the covenant the LORD was about to make with him and his seed after him.

When a person is called to the ministry, the LORD usually does not give them any more information than what they need at the time. We must learn to follow the LORD day by day, not knowing all the details of the future. Jesus said in Matthew 6:34, **“Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”** To Thomas, Jesus said, **“because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed”** (John 20:29). Therefore, those who obey the LORD without seeing will be blessed, for **“the just shall live by faith”** (Heb. 10:38).

In Genesis, Chapter Seventeen, the LORD first revealed to Abraham that Sarah would have a child. In Genesis 17:15,16, it says,

And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.

Twenty four years after leaving his father’s house, Abraham was first informed that Sarah would be the mother of Isaac, **“the child of promise, not of works.”** Then in Genesis, Chapter Eighteen, the LORD appeared to Abraham and told him “when” Sarah would have a child, who was Isaac, “the child by promise.” The LORD said to Abraham, **“I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son”** (Gen. 18:10).

When Ishmael was about fifteen years old, Abraham obeyed the LORD and sent Hagar and Ishmael away (Gen. 18:11-15). It was important that Abraham obey the LORD, even when it involved sending away his son after the flesh (Ishmael).

Many years went by when God tested Abraham’s faith, and told him to take Isaac and sacrifice him on mount Moriah. This Abraham did, and was faithful, not knowing the future, but trusting in the LORD and the promise which he had been given. Hebrew 11:17-19 tells us.

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Genesis 22:15-18 tells us,

And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

This was the final testing of Abraham to fulfill the call of God on his life. It is so important that we learn to obey the LORD even when it does not conform to our understanding. Proverbs 3:5 says, **“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.”** God is not telling us to do things foolishly, for God will give us peace in our spirit before we do anything. God is a God of love and peace, and will not force anyone to do anything. What Abraham did, he did not do it foolishly, for Hebrews 11:8-10 tells us,

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

For those called into the ministry, it is very important that we do not get our eyes and attention on this world, or the things of this world. In 1 John 2:15-17 it tells us,

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Abraham is called the father of God’s chosen people, “because he obeyed the LORD.”

It’s important to obey the LORD, and not seek the world or the things of this world. Abraham’s attention was not on the world or the things of the world. Abraham was looking toward heaven, where all those who obey the LORD will spend eternity.

The Call

Many people who are called to the ministry have had an experience with the LORD early in their childhood, or years before they knew they were called to the ministry. Some can even trace the call to before they were born, their mother or someone close to them had an experience with the LORD and it was revealed that God was going to use that child for His glory. Samuel's mother dedicated him to the LORD even before she became pregnant (1 Sam. 1:11). Moses's mother knew there was a call of God upon Moses when he was born (Ex. 2:2).

In my own life, at the age of sixteen, I had a desire in my heart to study the Bible, to find the answers I needed, that if I died that I would be sure I went to heaven. In my later teens and early twenties I experienced the hand of God on my life many times. I knew it was God, but did not understand why God was delivering me from danger and death over and over again.

In the early 1960's I had a dream whereby my father, who had passed away appeared to me and advised me of things that were happening that I had ignored, and told me what to do. I did as I was told in the dream and everything worked out for my good. The plan of the enemy failed, (Satan could no longer use what he had planned against me). I knew that dream came as a result of God working in my life, but I didn't know why God was protecting me.

Many times I knew it was God protecting me and keeping me from danger, but I did not know why. In 1966, I saw the hand of God working on my behalf when I had a daughter born with holes in all four sections of her heart. She lived just over six months. All through her lifetime, I saw evidence of God being in control of what happened. I always knew it was God, but did not understand why God was working on my behalf.

The first indication of God calling me to the ministry was when I was born again at the age of forty-five. I had been a church member since I was sixteen. I did a lot of church work from the time I was twenty on. I was on church boards in a number of churches, taught Sunday school in one of the churches. I believe God was preparing me for the future work already at that time, even though the church system I belonged to did not understand the new birth or the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

When I was born again on a Thursday night in June of 1979, my whole life changed. I could no longer think of owning property, retiring at the age of fifty-five, also, many years of fear left me that night. There was such a change in my life, and my thinking, I could not understand what happened?

The following Sunday, after Church and eating a noon meal I sat on my living room davenport, and suddenly, I found myself in the sky, standing on a large white fluffy cloud. I was shown my personal wealth and accomplishments, and the attempts of others trying to gain personal gain and reputation. During that time, I saw a bright light shining down from heaven and a voice spoke to me, saying, "*all of this will pass away, the only thing that will matter is your relationship to Me.*" I knew that was the voice of the LORD, but I did not see Him or anyone else at that time.

This experience took at least fifteen minutes. During that time my youngest son came into the house and tried to talk to me, asking for the keys to my vehicle to get my tools to fix his bicycle. When I did not respond to him, he then took the keys out from my pocket and went and opened my vehicle. Then he returned and tried to awake me again, to tell me he had gotten the tools from my vehicle, but he could not get any response from me. He put the keys in my pocket and went out to work on his bicycle.

After I was back in my body, I saw my two boys working on their bicycles and I asked them, “how did you get the tools out of my vehicle?” Then they told me what happened, and how my youngest son asked for the keys but could not get any response from me when he first came, and again when he brought the keys back.

This could have been the beginning of revealing to me the call to the ministry in my life. That year, 1979, was the beginning of many works of God in my life. I got to know the LORD from the Scriptures in a way I never knew Him before. The LORD started healing my body without me even saying anything. I would notice things in my body that had given me problems were no longer there. One was, I had hemorrhoids for years with much bleeding. They disappeared without me knowing just when, but within that year I know they were gone and have never returned.

Within months from the day I was born again I had a desire for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. At first, I didn't know anyone in Milwaukee that could help me receive the Baptism. I keep praying and looking for someone who could help me. (The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is necessary for the ministry. No one should enter the ministry work without the Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4,5,8)). The desire for the Baptism was a work of the Holy Spirit in my life.

On May 7, 1981 I received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. The LORD used a sister in the LORD from the state of Louisiana to minister the Baptism to me. The LORD gave her a word of knowledge concerning my life, my present situation, and how I would receive through her obedience that day. This information she received from the LORD about 1:30pm, and about 4:30pm I received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. She knew that I would receive that day, but waited for me to come and receive. The next day I met with her and her husband and wanted to tell her why I wanted the baptism in the Holy Spirit and what was happening in my life. She said to me, no, let me tell you why and what was happening in your life. She told me what I wanted to tell her all about my situation and things that came against me. She received her information from the LORD, mine came by my own personal experiences.

Following the Baptism in the Holy Spirit I began to receive words of knowledge and words of wisdom from the Holy Spirit. At times I spoke prophetically, yet not understanding prophetic speaking. In July of 1981 I spoke prophetically of entering into the ministry. The words came out of my mouth without me knowing what I was saying until I heard myself say them. That was the first positive indication that I was called to the ministry. Following that time, the LORD started to use me in praying for others and they received healing as I prayed for them.

The first week of January 1982, I made application to attend Bible School, and the first week of February I receive notice of acceptance into that Bible School.

In the mean time, on January 23, 1982 I had a desire to attend a meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where someone from out of state was holding meetings. I had no idea that anything was about to happen to me that day. Only one other person, who was with me at the time, knew I was at that meeting until I was called out. During the meeting the minister in charge pointed directly to me and spoke the following:

My Brother here in the dark suit, right there, Hallelujah! Lift up you hands and Praise Him. The LORD is healing you today, the power of the LORD is going all through you. I see the fire of God burning all through your chest, it's going all through you, Hallelujah! All the way down through your stomach, the LORD is healing you completely, Praise the LORD! And the LORD is going to enrich and

strengthen your mind to understand His Word, Hallelujah! Hallelujah! The LORD is saying, Merle, receive the anointing in a new way, even this day, Hallelujah! Go ahead and praise God, Hallelujah!

Before I attended that meeting, I had problems eating. I could only eat a small amount of food at one time. It was as if I had a peptic ulcer at the entrance to my stomach. I had difficulty swallowing food. Usually could only get small amounts of food down, therefore, I could not eat a full meal at any time. The same day, following that meeting, I ate a full meal with no problems whatsoever. I knew the LORD healed me of that condition that day.

There are times when there is a word of knowledge or prophecy from the LORD, that confirmation will come shortly following. To me, this was confirmation of what was spoken that it was of the LORD.

Following receiving the confirmation of acceptance to Bible School, I was concerned about two things: (1). I had a large payment to make within a few weeks and did not have anywhere near the money I needed. (2). What should I do about the Television business I was in at the time? Should I sell it, and how would I sell it if I did?

In February of 1982 a woman in the ministry came to me to borrow a video tape from me. While she was there, she turned and spoke to me, *“Merle, don’t worry about the money, you will have the money on time. Don’t worry about selling the business. The LORD already has a buyer for the business. The business will be sold and you will be in Oklahoma in September in time to start Bible School.”*

Just to say a little about selling the business, the LORD worked out a very unusual deal in the selling of the business. The Realtor I hired to sell the business made a deal whereby he sold the business to his own son, who knew nothing about repairing Television sets. His son learned a lot “supernaturally,” with no schooling or training. His son and his wife also, became born again Christians because of the witness they saw in me. I did not pray for them. I did not lead them to the LORD. They saw the LORD working in my life and wanted that same LORD Jesus in their lives.

That Spring, others spoke words over me, of which I do not have any tape recordings of. A third one, which also was not taped spoke some of the following words.

Brother Merle, the ministry work the LORD is calling you to is not what you think. It is not like anything you know about. When it happens, you will know it is the LORD. You will know what it is, there will be no question.

That was given to me on a Friday evening. The following Sunday night, about 1:00 A.M., I awoke with a great desire to write. It seemed I continued to write and write with no desire to stop. Within a month or so I had written my first book, “THE LORD SAID, TELL THEM I LOVE THEM.”

Before I left for Bible School that year I had 15,000 of these books printed. I paid for them, and gave them away free. One church used nearly 3,000 of them. Since 1982 I have written well over 75 books. And have an enormous amount of information in my computer, ready to be used when the right time comes.

The anointing to write books comes upon me very often. When it comes upon me, I write, and then I study what was written, and check it with the Written Word. I look for others also to read what I have written and tell me if there is anything they question about what is written.

June 20, 1982, I had been having meetings with a small group of Christians. During those meetings we heard about an Evangelist who was holding meetings in Cincinnati Ohio. We saw him

on Television and wanted to go see him in person. To the best of my knowledge at that time, I was going to see what God was doing in this person's ministry. I had no idea of what was about to happen to me while at that meeting.

Three others besides myself and my two sons wanted to go to Cincinnati Ohio to attend one of his meetings. We went there for a Saturday Evening meeting, and then stayed over for Sunday morning meeting. We never signed our names or told anyone that we were there. We were seated in the center of the auditorium, at least forty feet from the Evangelist. During the middle to the Sunday morning service the Evangelist looked directly at me, and pointing to me, He said,

There is someone right in here, your, you have a ministry. You're involved in a business, of some type around a lot of electronics and tubes. But you have a ministry also, and you have been praying for God to open the doors for your ministry part of your life. I want to say Merle, is there anybody right in here named Merle? (I stood up, and He said), *Brother Merle, I want you to walk up here. God is going to let you start your ministry by laying hands upon this man. Somebody say Amen!* (He asked), *Brother Merle, have I ever talked to you before?* (I answered, No). (He asked), *Do you work around a lot of electronics and tubes and wires and so forth?* (I answered, Yes, I've been in the TV business for 12 years). (He said), *In the television business?* (He asked) *Is this your first time here?* (I answered. Yes it is). Then he said, *And Brother Merle, God says as long as you live, you are going to speak the Word's of spirit and life. Your ministry is just starting. The word of wisdom, gift of knowledge, discerning of spirits.*

As I was walking back to my seat, about half way back, we heard the audible voice of the LORD say, *"and out of your hands shall flow the power of healing as you lay them upon the sick."* This voice I heard with my ears, and it was also heard by all five people who were with me at that time (they were at least twenty feet from me at the time). We all knew it was the audible voice of the LORD. Yet, it was not on the cassette tape that was recording the Evangelist at the time.

Already at this time I would like to remind those reading this or hearing it from others, if you are called to the ministry, God will confirm that calling with many invaluable proofs, with signs and words of wisdom, words of knowledge, even prophecies. By the time you start doing the work God has called you to, there will be no doubt that you have a true calling from God to the ministry. Do not be in a hurry to go out and minister, God is not in a hurry. God has all the time in eternity to bring to pass that which He starts. If God called you, God will lead and guide you by His Spirit working in you. Philippians 1:6 says, **"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."** Philippians 2:13 says, **"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."**

There is an anointing for the work of the ministry that God calls you to. You must wait until you have the anointing before you move out into the work the LORD has called you to. Do not try to do the work of a ministry without the anointing from the Holy Spirit. God does not want you doing the work of the ministry by your own ability. God will give you His ability to do the work He has called you to do.

Satan will always try to hinder you from doing the work of the ministry. In 2 Corinthians 12:7 the apostle Paul wrote, **"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me,**

lest I should be exalted above measure.” In 1 Thessalonians 2:18 Paul wrote, **“Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.”** Therefore, think it not strange if Satan tries to hinder you in the call of God upon your life.

In 1982 and 1983, I was at Bible School, and at the same time I was writing on Born Again and Salvation, showing the difference between these two. I was also writing on the Two Adams, Adam and Jesus, the difference between these two. I would write while under the anointing, but then when I was not under the anointing, I had problems.

I knew what I was writing did not agree with some of the larger ministries’ teachings. I kept praying, *“LORD, take this ministry away from me and give it to someone else. It’s more than I can handle. Let someone else do this work.”* While I was trying to get the LORD take away the ministry that He called me to, one Sunday the Pastor of the church I attended (who was used greatly by the LORD in the word of wisdom, word of knowledge, discerning of spirit, healing and miracles) said, *“anyone who needs prayer, come up front.”* I didn’t think I needed prayer, but from my spirit I knew I should go up also. As I stood in line, the Pastor came to me with his assistant Pastor following him. He looked at me and said to his assistant Pastor, *“you have a word for Merle, don’t you?”* He went to the next person in line and the assistant Pastor said to me *“Merle, the LORD said write it.”*

Later that week I wasn’t sure that assistant Pastor knew what I was writing so I went over to his house to talk with him. When I explained what I was writing, he said to me, *“what you are writing is right, what they are teaching is error, the LORD wants you to continue to write what He gives you.”* This Pastor and I have been friends after that for many years.

During those years many things happened, too numerous to mention. I would receive words of knowledge concerning others. Others would receive words of knowledge, and prophesy for me.

In 1991, I was at a meeting where the Evangelist came and laid his hand upon my shoulder and said,

“the LORD said, the books you are writing will go all over the world, and will still be working for the LORD after you have gone....”

There was more to this, but it is not necessary at this time. At the time this was spoken to me about the books going all over the world, I had no idea that Hands For Jesus, Inc. would be using the Internet to make books available FREE all over the world by downloading from the Web sites. At that time I was sending out books on my own, and also some of my books were being sent over seas by another Christian organization.

On February 9, 1993, I was at meeting where the person ministering came to me, laid his hand on my shoulder and spoke these words,

“From the temptations and the lusts of this world, O they walk after My Spirit, they walk after Me. For I’ve revealed things by My Spirit from My Word says the Spirit, that have caused you to live godly and overcome temptation; that will establish you on the Rock of My Word. So listen diligently to those things, don’t let them slip, the things that you have heard. For time of adversity of problems are at hand and only those that I equip in those days will be able to stand. So minister in My presence when things are well with thee, in the day of tribulation, I, your LORD God, will strengthen you and see you through.”

This was truly a word from the LORD. It was needed at that time, for Satan had been using people against me and what I was doing.

During the years from 1990 through about 1997 many times in one church that I ministered there was a woman by the name of Lois, (who is now gone to be with Jesus). She would see lights around me and behind me. Sometimes only two, other times as many as five. She called them angels.

From 1998 to 2000, as I ministered in another church, there was a man attending who saw angels by me when I ministered. He said he could see the complete angel all the way down to the feet. Sometimes there were two or three angels standing by me.

We know that those who are called of God to minister have angels (ministering spirits (Heb. 1:14)) with them. These angels have many purposes and they are visible to some at times.

In August, 2004, two angels appeared to me in my living room. They were dressed in United States Army uniforms. They had no identification on them. I thought they were real people.

I was asleep in my living room at the time. One of them awoke me by taking hold of my bare foot. I jumped as I was awakened. I stared at them from head to foot. I checked every detail I could, trying to figure out who they were and how they got into my house? After a few minutes of me looking at them and them looking straight at me, they disappeared.

In my spirit I knew they were angels sent to protect me. They did not say anything to me and I did not say anything to them. They were just reminding me, they are to guard and protect me.

When you have a call of God on you for a ministry, the LORD will confirm your calling with many signs and proof of your calling. The anointing will be upon you when you minister. At other times, you may not experience any anointing upon you.

When the anointing is upon you, it is for the purpose of helping others. It is not there for you, but for to help others. The anointing is to minister to others. The LORD will minister to you personally when you are alone, in your time of prayer, and study.

Never consider the anointing to be yours personally. It is not yours, it belongs to the LORD and is controlled by the Holy Spirit. It comes and goes as the Holy Spirit wills. You cannot make it come, but you can prevent it from coming by disobedience to the LORD or by grieving the Holy Spirit. The anointing belongs to God and the Holy Spirit controls it.

You will recognize the anointing by the way the anointing works. You know it is not you, you know it is the Holy Spirit. You know you do not have the ability of yourself to minister the way ministry work is done when you are under the anointing.

When the anointing for a ministry is not upon you, you are no different from any other Christian. You are just as subject to deception as any other Christian. Satan will attack you, just like he does others. You are not special in the eyes of God. You are just another member of the LORD's body here on earth.

The way you live your life is totally up to you. You decide what you do, and how you do it. You are not protected against sin. You must do your part the same as any other members of the body of Christ, to resist sin and all the works of the devil. You must **“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you”** (James 4:7). God will not do it for you. This is your responsibility.

God is not a respecter of persons. The call of God on your life does not make you special in anyway. No matter how great the anointing, you are no different in the eyes of the LORD than a person who was just born again into the body of Christ yesterday. A new babe in Christ is just as important to God as you are. God will not do any favors for you, just because you are called and anointed for a ministry.

The Anointing

The true anointing is always from God, “the Holy Spirit.” The true anointing always has a peace and joy about it. When it comes, you know it is not you, personally. You know there is a difference between what you can do and what comes from God.

The anointing flows without effort and many times without ever getting tired, it flows peacefully and is a joy. When under the anointing you can speak or minister for hours and never get tired. Time seems to never end, you just keep going and going and still feel refreshed. Things go smoothly, and you sometimes feel that you do not need to put any effort in what you are doing at all. Many times, two hours is like fifteen minutes.

There are anointings for almost everything God has us do. That includes ushering in church, greeting others as they come in, as well as even cleaning the carpets or scrubbing floors. When the anointing is there, it is a joy and you never get tired.

Mainly we think of the call of God for the five-fold ministries of Apostle, Prophet, Teacher, Evangelist, and Pastor. But there are also two other anointings for ministries that are just as important, which is “Praise and Worship Leaders” and “Intercessors.” The same thing applies to these anointings, those with anointing never seem to get tired, they can continue for hours, as though they had only gone for fifteen minutes.

Each of these anointings are different from the others. For the Apostle, the anointing is strongest in the area of authority. As an example, Peter was an apostle in Acts 5:1-10. By the anointing, Peter spoke, and judgement came upon Ananias and Sapphira, and they fell over dead. The apostle Paul was an apostle and in Acts 13:9-11, Paul, speaking by the anointing caused blindness to come upon Elymas the sorcerer.

For the Prophet, the anointing is the strongest to prophesy. They speak the “foreknowledge of God” concerning things to come. Many times they speak to Kings and rulers of nations as well as to Christians.

For the Teacher, the anointing is strongest in teaching from “the written Word of God,” not worldly situation or past worldly happenings. Not from news paper articles or magazine articles. A Teacher sticks very closely to the Written Word.

For the Evangelist, the anointing is strongest in winning the lost and bringing back those who have gone astray. They operate very strongly in faith, miracles, healing, and casting out demons with great signs and wonders. Philip the Evangelist walked in this anointing in Acts, Chapter Eight.

For the Pastor, the greatest anointing is in ministering to the people. They have the greatest “compassion” for those who are sick in their bodies or minds. They have a great compassion for those who go astray, or are led astray. They have the anointing of a good shepherd.

All of these can operate in any of the anointings at times, but you can know them by the greatest anointing on their lives.

Likewise, the greatest anointing on praise and worship leaders is the ability to lead praise and worship without getting tired. Many of these write or author new songs of praise and worship. They will sing from the Scriptures and sing psalms.

The greatest anointing on an intercessor is praying in the Spirit for hours and hours without getting tired. Four to eight hours of praying is not uncommon when under the anointing. Many times they will travail in the spirit until they have a release, even if it takes hours.

With everyone who is called, there will be an anointing. It is not the will of God that any called person operates by their own ability. God always gives them the ability to perform the work to which they are called.

The Counterfeit

In every one of the callings to ministry, there are those who did not come into that position through the Door of the sheepfold. In Revelation 2:2, Jesus said to the Church at Ephesus, **“I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.”** Back in the Old Testament times, there were always more false prophets than there were true prophets (1 Kings 18:22, 19:10).

Jesus said in John 10:7, **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.”** In John 10:1 Jesus said, **“He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.”**

When a Christian enters into the ministry through the Door, they also receive the anointing to do the work they have been called to do. There are many Christians today, calling themselves “Pastors.” Many of these do not have the anointing necessary to be a Pastor. They took the title of Pastor, but have not received the anointing from the LORD to be a Pastor.

This is a very sad situation indeed, for those who belong to their churches do not get the proper teaching on how to receive healing. Therefore, when they get sick, their Pastor sometimes tells them to go and see a doctor. The Bible does not teach that.

The Bible teaches that a Pastor is to take them to the LORD according to the Word of God written in our New Testament (Covenant) and get them healed. This is the duty of a Pastor.

I have seen Pastors who go and visit people in their homes and in hospitals, thinking they are obeying James 1:27, which says, **“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”** When they visit those who are sick, instead of praying according the Word of God for their healing, they try to comfort them in their pain and suffering. They become like “Job’s comforters,” not helping those who need healing at all. But instead, they are helping Satan destroy their bodies with sickness and disease. When the person dies, they say they were doing their duty, by preparing them to meet the LORD in heaven when they get there. Satan sure has their minds blinded to the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Remember, part of Job’s problem was his three friends, which some call “Job’s comforters.” Had Job listened to Elihu, the young prophet sent by the LORD, his situation could have been turned around much earlier in his struggle with the boils that Satan smote him with. When Christians are sick, “they don’t need those Pastors” that don’t know how to take a persons sickness and diseases to the LORD and get them healed.

Look at what it says about Elihu, in Job 32:2, **“Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God.”** This is many times the reason why Christians who are sick and need healing don’t get healed. They don’t need someone to comfort them in their sickness. They need someone to lead them in repentance from their sin of self-justification. Once they have repented of their self-righteousness and self-justification, it is easy to get them healed.

I have been at funeral services of Pastors, where they had many other Pastors praying for them and visiting them all the time while they were sick, in their homes and in the hospital. These pastors were not helping the sick, they were only helping the devil destroy them and take the sick

persons life.

Satan has the power of death, not Jesus. Jesus has the power of life, not the power of death. We believe that Jesus will receive those who are His when they die. But, the LORD's way of receiving someone when they leave this earth is that they just simply "give up the ghost, and go to be with Jesus." Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jesus all "gave up the ghost," when they died. Satan did not take their lives from them. Christians do not need to be sick to die. Death by sickness or disease is a work of the devil.

O' how important it is to understand our covenant, and the way the LORD works, that we do not help the devil do his destroying among Christians. We don't need Pastors who are "Job's comforters." We need Pastors who have the anointing that is necessary to do the work of a Pastor.

If you are a member of a church where the Pastor does not have the anointing to get people healed when they are sick, you need to do a lot of praying to the LORD. Pray for the Pastor, that he receives the anointing. But, also, if your prayers are not bringing an anointing upon your Pastor, it would be wise to ask the LORD to lead you to a Church where the Pastor does have the anointing to heal the sick. There is no need for you to "be nice," so to speak to a Pastor who is not anointed for the position of a Pastor. Just pray for the LORD to show you another Church where there is an anointed Pastor.

Never leave a church or Pastor with bitterness in your heart. Forgive him, pray for him, but don't stay with him and lose the benefits of healing for your body when you are sick. Always keep yourself from unforgiveness. Unforgiveness could prevent you from receiving healing (Matt. 6:15).

Don't Be Deceived

Satan will do everything he can to stop you from fulfilling the Call of God on your life. If he can't stop you in one way, he will try to lead you into another direction. Look at Balaam for an example. In Numbers 22:38, **“Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.”** This is the true ministry of a prophet. “Only the words the LORD puts in their mouth will they speak.” Satan cannot stop a prophet that maintains this attitude toward the ministry of a prophet.

So what did Satan do to stop Balaam? Peter said, Balaam **“loved the wages of unrighteousness”** (2 Peter 2:15). Jesus said, **“Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication”** (Rev. 2:14). Balaam, because of what he did, was also slain with the sword (Num. 31:8).

Many Spirit filled Christians have been deceived by the devil in many ways. We must know what God has called us to do, and then be doing what God called us to do.

Stay with your calling and do not try to operate in another calling unless the LORD anoints you for that calling. The LORD has changed the callings of some after they have been faithful in their first calling. It must be the LORD changing the calling, not the person. It must be God's will, not the will of the individual.

If you need help in identifying the call of God on your life, you can write to Hands For Jesus, Inc., at the address on the first page of this book. We will do our best to help you know the call of God on your life. Also, there are many free books on our Web sites, at www.handsforjesus.org and www.handsforjesus.cc that can be very helpful to you.

Remember what Paul wrote to Timothy, **“... watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry”** (2 Tim. 4:5).