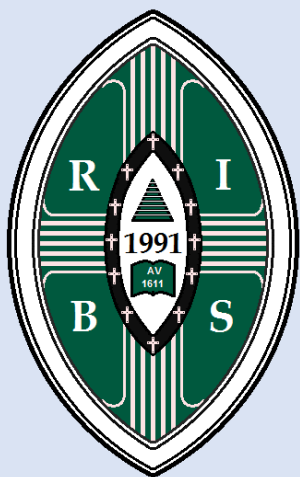


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**PREPARATION AND
APPLICATION FOR SERVICE**

Prepared by

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This Syllabus is Approved for
Baptist International School of the Scriptures

N. S. Desent, Ph.D., Th.D., D.D.

CLASS 211 PREPARATION AND APPLICATION FOR SERVICE
AND TERM EVALUATION FOR CERTIFICATION

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AND TERM EVALUATION FOR CERTIFICATION**

A Syllabus Approved for Baptist International School of the Scriptures – 1 Credit.

N. Sebastian Desent, Ph.D., Th.D., D.D.; Pastor, Historic Baptist Church

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Genesis 1

22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Genesis 8

17 Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

Genesis 9

1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

Genesis 16

10 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

Genesis 17

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

Genesis 22

17 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;

Genesis 26

4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

24 And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

Genesis 28

3 And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

Genesis 35

11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;

Genesis 47

27 And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly.

Exodus 1

7 And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.

Exodus 32

13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.

Leviticus 26

9 For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you.

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Introduction

God's passionate plea for his children in the Old Testament was shown in Deuteronomy 5:29:

O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

God's love and care for us as his children is most graciously shown at the crucifixion when he died for us in order that we might live. God commended his love toward us, in that, "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

God uses men with the right heart to serve him. This right heart is manifested in a fear of the Lord, shown by the man's obedience to God's commandments.

A man who has the right heart and works will be used of Jesus Christ. The Lord is not impressed with a man's abilities or his stuff. God rather looks on the inside.

Jeremiah 9:23, 24 says:

23 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

24 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Baptist International School of the Scriptures recognizes and values the integrity of the student. Classes are either passed or not – there are no grades; but a man is not full prepared simply because he passes his classes or does the work assigned. A man must also be a man of integrity and faithfulness.

This class may at first appear to be a little confusing. However, this is one of the most applicable classes in respect to the individual student or minister. It is a blessed class in that it requires personal time between the student and the teacher, with the intent that they discuss the student's personal development as a minister of Jesus Christ. If a student is involved in self-directed study, the student or minister should seek out someone trustworthy who can help and be honest with the student. It is best to have a trustworthy brother to help. Proverbs 27:6 – Faithful are the wounds of a friend....

Self-evaluation can be done, but it is better executed with someone close to supply their thoughts. We tend to be blind to some personal things.

Proverbs 18:17: *"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him."*

Proverbs 21:2: *"Every way of man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts."*

No one should be wounded in this class. The class is used to help a student self-evaluate by discussions. Speaking the truth in love is necessary. A man needs to know and accept his limitations, know where he needs to grow, and be able to give and accept correction in love.

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We are all learning and maturing. Accountability is a helpful thing in personal development, and a man should desire it.

The class is intended for both types of students:

1. The student who has God's calling realized and is fulfilling that calling – being in actual service unto the Lord. This man is a student because he wants to “sharpen his iron” and be more effective for the Lord. This man has his *Ministry Major* materialized.
2. The student who knows generally that God has called him and is preparing for the ministry. He is waiting for God to place him where he is supposed to serve. He is awaiting confirmation of his *Ministry Major* or seeking to define it.

In this class we will discuss where a student is, what his calling is, how to have his calling realized (if waiting), and what is lacking, if anything.

It is a sad disservice to a student for anyone to assume what God wants him to do – or worse, take the place of God and impose upon him some ministry – without really taking the time to discuss, analyze, and prove the man's calling. We who are mature in the faith need to help direct, but always according to the will of God.

Submitting to Pastoral Authority – Hebrews 13:7, 17

A pastor has liberty to assign a man to certain areas of service. However, we take for granted the pastor knows his people and has sought and proved God's will. In Titus 1:5 Paul left Titus in Crete and gave him a big work to accomplish. I can only believe Paul knew Titus well, and knew his calling and the will of God, and that he sought God in his assigning of Titus to Crete.

We are all (or should be) under church authority, and with such, be willing to serve as the church and its leadership directs. This class can also be used as an opportunity for the pastor to assign responsibilities to his students.

A submissive heart to the Lord and to the pastor are indispensable if a man is going to serve God. God does not use rebellious or self-willed men.

God Directs Faithful Men who are Doing

Whenever you examine a man who is serving God – whether in scripture or not – you will see that God uses men who are busy and doing things. There is an old saying, “If you want something done, give it to man who is busy.” Slothful men, procrastinators, men searching for glory, and lukewarm men are generally content doing just what they are doing – little or nothing. A diligent man, a busy man – a man with energy, focus, and purpose – is a rare find and one that God uses. We may not approve of the persecution that Saul initiated as he made havoc of the church (Acts 8:3); but we can all agree he was zealous, tireless, and focused.

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After conversion, but before being called as an apostle, Saul worked with Barnabas to deliver relief (Acts 11:28-30). Acts 13:1-3, shows Saul was a prophet or a teacher, and he and Barnabas were separated unto the missionary work. No one can deny the diligent service of the apostle Paul. He was a man who finished his course (2 Timothy 4:7).

Paul wrote that a steward must be faithful:

1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

So then, God uses men who are moving. My pastor said, "God can't steer a parked car." Men who are candidates for the ministry show a pattern of good works already started. They are faithful and diligent in service to God. Their testimony is such that brethren know they have a desire to serve God.

These men are not slothful in business. They are not busybodies. They are not self-willed. They show forth a discipline and humility for the Lord. God directs men who are *doing*.

Brother Fraser said, "Don't tell me what you are going to do, tell me what you are doing."

Edification, not Destruction

Although we do not know all things, we should do our best in judging rightly. Using Paul's example, we are to edify and not destroy (2 Corinthians 10:8; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Romans 15:2). We want to leave our students encouraged to continue serving.

We are here to edify our brethren. Whether in preaching, fellowship, speech, or actions; we put others first. The mature man will understand the need and benefits of edification and will use this opportunity to edify his students.

Read Romans 14:19; 15:2; 1 Corinthians 14:12, 26; 2 Corinthians 10:8; 12:19; 13:10; 1 Timothy 1:4.

Ephesians 4:12 makes the job of a preacher clear: perfecting the saints, the work of the ministry, and edifying the body of Christ. That is what Jesus called us to do.

Judge Righteous Judgment

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We are not judges: we do not condemn. But, we are fruit inspectors (Matthew 7). We are not Lords (1 Peter 5), but we are to prove all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21). We judge righteous judgment (John 7:24), not according to appearance, but according to the word of the Lord, first taking the beam out of our own eye before taking the mote out of our brother's eye (Matthew 7:1-5).

Remembering what Jesus said, "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." We want to make sure we operate in love considering our own selves and treat others as we want to be treated.

This class is an opportunity to take inventory of one's self. In all, following the Lord's commandment to judge righteous judgment (John 7:24)

The Need for Humility

Sincere humility is a required attribute in the work of the Lord. God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble (James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5). God hates a proud look (Proverbs 6). Leviathan is king over all the children of pride (Job 31:43).

Is the student sincerely humble and respectful and submissive to his pastor and church?

Condescending to Men of Low Estate (Romans 12:16)

The word *condescend* is used only once. It is an interesting word because it assumes that the person is of a high estate, but he lowers himself to a low estate. Jesus was condescending when he walked among men. God is higher than we are, and Psalm 8:4 asks the right question of God: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

Philippians 2:3-11 is noteworthy to explain condescension:

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The man of God must continually bring himself low and esteem others better than himself. The natural state of one's own opinion is high – but be not high-minded (Romans 12:16; 11:20; 1 Timothy 6:17; 2

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Timothy 3:4). We must *condescend* to men of low estate – a willful humbling and a purposed consideration of others as being better than we.

Be Not High Minded

Romans 12:16: Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

Again, used only once in the King James Bible, *condescend* means to purposely lower oneself to another's level. It means to stoop in order to be equal. To waive any superiority of rank or position to perform humble tasks. To give up any special rights.

The word uses *con-* (together) with *descendere* (lower, climb down).

Allow me to repeat the work of Jesus as shown in Philippians 2:3-11:

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.
4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.
5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:
6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:
7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:
8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:
10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;
11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

God's men, God's servants, need to purpose in themselves to not be high-minded, but to serve in love (Galatians 5:13).

Interestingly, the New Testament talks of the mind of man in both good ways and bad ways:

- Stedfastly minded (Ruth 1:18)
- Chafed in their minds ((2 Samuel 17:8)
- Right mind (Mark 5:15)
- Doubtful mind (Luke 12:29)
- Evil affected minds (Acts 14:2)
- Reprobate mind (Romans 1:28)
- Otherwise minded (Galatians 5:10; Philippians 3:15)
- Spiritually minded (Romans 8:6)
- Carnally minded (Romans 8:6, 7)
- Sober minded (Titus 2:6)
- Double minded (James 1:8; 4:8)

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- Same mind (Romans 12:16; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Philippians 4:2)
- Ready mind (Acts 17:11; 2 Corinthians 8:19; 1 Peter 5:2)
- Willing mind (1 Chronicles 28:9; 2 Corinthians 8:12)
- Blinded minds (2 Corinthians 3:14; 4:4)
- One mind (Romans 15:6; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Philippians 1:27; 2:2; 1 Peter 3:8, Revelation 17:13)
- Pure mind (2 Peter 3:1)
- Corrupt minds (2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 6:5; 2 Timothy 3:8)
- Sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7)
- Shaken in mind (2 Thessalonians 2:2)
- Humbleness of mind (Acts 20:19; Colossians 3:12)
- Fleshly mind (Colossians 2:18)
- Fervent mind (2 Corinthians 7:7)

A man's ability to control his mind is a wonderful advantage. Preachers need to control their mind and willingly condescend to men of low estate. They should realize they are nothing and no better than anyone else, except for the Lord's work in their lives.

The Ultimate Goal

The best thing a teacher can impart to a student is the desire and ability for the student to *follow the Holy Ghost in Liberty*. This first starts as being obedience to what the Spirit wrote (New Testament), then moving on to personal direction through prayer and interaction.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:16) and holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (1 Peter 1). Obedience first to the basic and obvious leading of the Spirit as *what is written* comes first before a man can expect to move on to higher things.

If a man is not faithful in least, he will not be faithful in much. If he is faithful in least (written New Testament commandments), he will be faithful in much.

If a man lacks the pattern of following the Holy Ghost according to what the Holy ghost puts in writing, how can he be trusted to know if he is truly following the leading of the Holy Ghost in liberty?

The Spirit and word agree because they have the same Author. A man will *know* what is the leading of the Spirit because it aligns with what he *knows* is written.

The Progression of the Doctrine of Christ in a Minister's Life

When we receive Christ as Savior, we are all just babes on our way to perfection and maturity. This progression is directed by God and he takes care of each of his children. Each of us grows differently, but we all must grow. We go through maturity stages – babes, young men, old men (elders, fathers). Read 1 John 2:12-14

12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.
13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

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14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

This path to perfection, this road to maturity, this course of high calling comes primarily through knowledge and obedience of God's word – specifically the commandments of Jesus Christ. This is the Doctrine of Christ. It starts with having eyes to see and ears to hear, and a heart to understand. Through obedience and diligence, we learn and obey (live). Eventually we love the doctrine of Christ so much we desire to labour in the Master's field.

God then sets the man as an ensample (or pattern) for others to follow (1 Corinthians 11:1). Since life is short, we want to give diligence to make our calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10). We become a leader and a teacher until the Lord takes us home.

The following list shows the stages:

- Look
- Listen
- Learn
- Live
- Love
- Labour
- Lead
- Leave

These milestones have been used throughout the *Baptist International* curricula to show the progression of a man in the ministry. He first looks and listens to see and hear the good counsel of God. He realizes the truth of God and dedicates his life to learn the things of God. He is not force-fed, but he desires the sincere milk of the word that he may grow thereby.

The change into a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17) becomes obvious. Old things are passed away and all things become new. He now shows his doctrine by what he lives. This is not head knowledge, but heart knowledge. His testimony is right, his priorities are right, his desires are right.

For some, this life comes quickly. For others, it takes a lifetime to realize the benefits of obedience.

After faithful living according to what the man learned, God continues to impart understanding. This understanding is based on obedience and consideration of the commandments of Christ (Psalm 111:10; 2 Timothy 2:7). Then, at some point the man learns to love all the commandments from our Lord Jesus Christ. His obedience is not simply because he honors and fears God, but because he loves Jesus Christ and his doctrine; and he wants to dedicate his life to the Lord's work (John 14:15; 21:17). He will be obedient and teach others because he operates in love – love for God, and love for man. This is the great epiphany.

At this point the man desires to labour for the Lord – even full time if God allows. He awaits God's calling, and it will likely come. The man has been faithful to God, and God is always faithful. A man cannot fully labour for the Lord if it is not done in love.

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Sometimes it takes years. Sometimes it takes decades. But in all labour there is profit (Proverbs 14:23). Sometimes, the visible fruit does not appear even in our lifetime. However, the labour for Jesus Christ will bear fruit. I am not speaking of the personal fruit for the Lord the man should already have (fruit of the Spirit and souls – Galatians 5, John 4); but the fruit I speak of are the souls he will lead in making disciples.

This man has proved he is a pattern of good works, an ensample to follow, and one who follows Christ faithfully. He can say as Paul did, “Be ye followers of me, even as I am also of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1; 4:16).

This is the time this man needs to prepare his replacements, for none of us has tomorrow promised (James 4:15; 1 Corinthians 4:19). He has work to do before he can leave this earth. He needs to be able to say as did our brother Paul, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith;” (2 Timothy 4:7).

We should at this point think of our brethren the apostles. Most were martyred for their faith and love for Jesus Christ. We should try to understand their love, their motivation, their faithfulness. They were simple men, but the greatest in God’s kingdom.

Church Authority

It should be already understood that nothing in the Lord’s work is done without church authority. God is not looking for “Lone Rangers” and “wandering stars.” He required the church in Antioch to separate Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:1-3); and he requires it today. He requires his preachers *to be sent* (Romans 10:15).

John the Baptist and Jesus Christ were sent by God (John 1:6; 3:17); but we are neither. Jesus’ apostles and the deacons, and the other apostles (Paul, Matthias, Barnabas, etc.); were all sent under church authority.

Jesus is the head of the church (Ephesians 5:23). He uses the authority and testimony of his church when doing his work on earth.

As will be mentioned again, Jesus’ ministers are sent by a church, work through a church, do the work of the ministry in a church, and edify the church through the gifts God gives them. Without a church they have no authority to go, no place to work, no ministry, and no objective.

Ministry Requirements

When a man says he is called by God in respect to some ministry, I find there are five necessary elements (requirements) he should have in order to match the New Testament criteria.

- Desire (1 Timothy 3:1)
- Calling of God (Acts 13:1-3)
- Gift of God manifested (1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6)
- Church Authorization (Acts 13:1-3; Romans 10:15; 2 Timothy 1:6) – ordination and testimony
- Scriptural Qualifications met

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When a man attempts to fulfill the work of the Lord and is lacking a scriptural requirement, he is operating in a non-scriptural manner. His likelihood of success is limited. He should first strive lawfully before he strives at all (2 Timothy 2:5).

Below I develop these thoughts further.

The Desire

For example, a man's desire for the office of a bishop – or any other ministry – can be strong or weak depending on his environment, faith, and other happenstances. He may have had great zeal and desire at one point in his life, but then something happens and then he goes through a season of discouragement and feels unworthy. This is not uncommon.

But there is always that deep-rooted desire to do, to go, to represent the Saviour; regardless of the cost. This desire is not taught or bought, but it can be sought. Jeremiah 20:9 speaks of the prophet having God's word in his heart as a burning fire shut up in his bones, and he could not stay from speaking the things of the Lord. But even Jeremiah, from being mocked, thought not to speak the word of the Lord (vs. 7, 8)

One of our duties as pastors is to speak to men to edification, exhortation, and comfort (1 Corinthians 14:3; Romans 15:2) – not for destruction (2 Corinthians 10:8; 13:10). Sometimes we need to help a man “rekindle” that desire should it wane.

God desires his servants to do the work willingly and rewards them accordingly (1 Corinthians 9:17; 1 Peter 5:2). Just as God loves a cheerful giver, he loves a cheerful servant who gives his labour to the work of the Master. His motivation is love (2 Corinthians 5:14). God does not want “Jonah's” who “grudgingly” (2 Corinthians 9:7) must be forced to do the work.

1 Peter 5 speaks of taking the oversight “willingly.” This is so necessary. Paul said if he did the work “willingly,” then he had a reward (1 Corinthians 9:17). But if not, a dispensation of the gospel was still committed unto him.

God would rather we serve willingly, but in those few times when we do not feel so willing, we need to understand the commitment we have to God – regardless of what we feel.

The Calling

The calling of God is manifested to the individual and discerned by the church leadership. Both of these works are accomplished through the Holy Ghost's leadership (Read Acts 13:1-3). Barnabas and Saul are said to be “sent forth by the Holy Ghost” (verse 4). The Holy Ghost not only called the two men but manifested their calling to the church of Antioch.

The calling of God is only as I can describe from personal experience. We are not as the apostles who heard the Lord's voice, saying, “follow me.” I would say the calling of God is a consistent affirmation in the Spirit that God want a man to surrender to a particular work. When he reads his Bible, hears preaching, does his daily responsibilities, there is an underlying uneasiness that he knows God wants him to do something. It is likely something he knows or is resisting. The surrender to a call I believe should be made public (in a church service) after first discussing the subject with the pastor.

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Now, the calling may come early in a man's life, in which case the man has to prepare. For example, I was called to the pastorate as a single man, but I understood I would have to find a godly wife in order to meet one of the qualifications of a bishop.

The same can be said of Jeremiah (1:5), ordained to be a prophet before he came forth out of the womb. He still had to grow and prepare. We can say the same of John the Baptist and our Saviour Jesus Christ – they were called to do a work but had to prepare for the Lord's right time. Moses understood God would use him to deliver Israel from bondage (Acts 7:25), but it took 40 years as shepherd before the time was right. One can say the same of the apostles. They were called as novices (one might say) but after learning from the Master Jesus Christ they developed into the greatest servants the world has had the blessing of knowing.

Many young men surrender to the call but then must work toward the qualifications God has set.

In some cases, the man is fully prepared and busy doing the Lord's work. As in the case of Paul, he was sent by the church in Acts 13 shortly after God instructed them to separate Barnabas and Saul. Some men are already in some sort of service in the church when God calls them, and they can immediately step fulfill their calling.

The Gifts

There are many gifts that God gives. The ones shown in the New Testament are listed in a few places (Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12) and are discussed later. I personally believe other gifts – not shown in the Bible – are also of God. Talents related to music, organization, art, creativity, workmanship, children, etc.; I admit are given by God and should be used to glorify God.

For the scope of this paper, we are concerned with only the gifts recorded in the Bible.

The Gifts and calling of God are without Repentance (Romans 11:29)

God sees all things – past, present and future. He knows when and how we will fail. He knows what sins we will commit. When he saves us, he saves us with full knowledge of our whole future. This is one reason why salvation is guaranteed once given by God. There is nothing we can do to undo God's gift.

Just as we cannot lose the gift of salvation once given (it is the gift of God – Ephesians 2:1-10), we cannot lose the other gifts from God. Now, we can refuse to use them, hide them, deny them – but there will be a reckoning when the judgment comes.

In the context of Romans 11, Paul is speaking of Israel. Verse 28 says they are enemies, but as a nation, all Israel will be saved (v. 26)

You also notice the gifts and calling of God are joined.

Now, this is a sensitive issue and needs further explanation.

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Matthew 25:13-30 – The parable of the talents. The slothful servant was allowed to hide his talent until the judgment. At that it was taken away and given to the diligent servant.

Luke 19:12-27 has similar instruction. The slothful servant did not lose his pound until the Lord returned.

Gifts are given by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4; Hebrews 2:4) and called spiritual gifts (v. 1). Paul exhorts the Corinthians to “covet earnestly the best gifts,” which means to me they can be sought after, desired (1 Corinthians 14:1), and given. These gifts are not only determined by God, but also by the individual. A man may at times have to “stir up” the gift of God (2 Timothy 1:6), but he does not lose it.

Ephesians 4:8 Jesus gave gifts unto men. These gifts are shown as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Today, we have the latter three – evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Men should be able to know their gifts in this respect. A pastor, though, does the work of an evangelist (2 Timothy 2:4) and is supposed to be apt to teach (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:24).

These gifts are to be used for the edifying of the church (1 Corinthians 14:12) – not for boasting or self-gratification.

So, men have gifts, and men *are* gifts. We do say there are no longer apostles or prophets today. These were given and spoke with divine authority without the need for scripture. After the New Testament was completed, we do not have the need for apostles and prophets. We believe the New Testament contains the *complete* revelation of God to his children. A man, today, should preach and teach the New Testament. Any different revelation is rejected. If any revelation aligns with the New Testament, it is unnecessary.

Today we have evangelists, pastors, and teachers. A preacher should have a calling aligned with one of these.

Ephesians 4:12 gives us the purpose of these three ministries:

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

As you can see, the work involves the church (saints, ministry, and body of Christ). Not only are these men church authorized, but their work is primarily found in the church.

[Editor’s Note: A man who says he needs no church to fulfill his calling is lacking on two points – he has no sending authority and he has no area of service; for both are the church. He has no purpose either, for the work is to edify the church.]

We see in respect to an evangelist, that Philip was called that (Acts 21:8). He was ordained a deacon in Acts 6, but he was also called and sent as an evangelist. We understand the word *evangelist* is rooted in the word *evangelizo* – to proclaim the good news or glad tidings – the gospel. He is a gospel preacher.

The pastor is a shepherd of a flock. He takes the oversight. He is sometimes referred to as the bishop – overseer of a church. His qualifications are described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. He is associated with another office in the church, that of the Deacon. The apostles were considered bishops (Acts 1:20). Jesus is considered the Bishop (1 Peter 2:25)

Hindering or Jeopardizing the Calling and the Use of Gifts

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In the section before this one, we mentioned five requirements for the ministry. Two are God-given – the calling and the gifts. Three are man controlled – the desire, the qualifications, and church authorization.

Although the first two are certain once obtained, a man can hinder the other three – desire, church authorization, and qualifications.

God is a God of Second Chances

We have heard preaching on the subject and have read of the many cases of Adam, Cain, Moses, Samson, David, Elijah, Jonah, Peter, John Mark, and many others to whom God used after they failed. Our God is merciful and graceful. He knows all our faults and failures even before we commit them, and he still purposes to love us and use us. Failure does not necessarily make a man unusable. Sometimes the failure makes him a lot wiser and humble. Any such issues that are concerning should be discussed with the pastor or teacher.

Proverbs 24:16: For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

This is not to say failing is acceptable or without consequence. Hebrews 12:5-12 speaks of God's chastening. Although grievous, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness. Galatians 6:7-10 shows us that sowing to the flesh reaps corruption. This corruption is not to be desired. The grief and corruption of sin is never worth the pleasures of sin.

Church Authorization

A man ignorant of the need for church membership or authorization may go out and use his gifts and calling under his own wisdom and leadership, but note that since these are primarily given to edify the church (Ephesians 4:11-14; 1 Corinthians 14:12), he is missing the main use of his gifts and calling. He has them. He uses them; but he does not use them as intended by God, and there tends to be a waste. He will have to give an account one day, but I do not say he loses them.

The best use of gifts, of course, is to use them as God intended, where he intends them to be used, following God's leadership through the church and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is the head of the church. When a church authorizes a sent man, it is as Jesus sending that man. The multiplicity of testimony – each church member with the Holy Ghost – is a powerful sending body. Jesus said where two or three are gathered he is in the midst (Matthew 18). The judgment of the church is honored by Jesus Christ. Whatsoever is loosed is loosed, whatsoever is bound is bound (Matthew 16:19; 18:18)

Jesus works through his church as the executive of his will (Acts 13:1-3). The church trains a man, sends a man, and the man's ministry is in the church in respect to the perfecting the saints, the work of the ministry, and the edifying of the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12). Furthermore, whatever gifts he has are to edify the church (1 Corinthians 14:4, 5, 12, 26; Ephesians 4:11, 12).

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A man by his poor behavior may lose his church membership or authorization. He may still be an accomplished vessel of the gift, but he is put on a shelf – made a castaway (1 Corinthians 9:27). His first responsibility is to be restored into fellowship. Sin hinders the *use* of gifts, but one does not *lose* his gifts because of sin. He may lose the opportunity to exercise his gifts for a time – even a long time – but God is the Expert on repairing broken lives and reconciling sinners.

The process of restoration is different depending on the individual and the issue at hand. My thoughts are these: if a man has supplied a good testimony and has a pattern of good works showing he has properly repented and overcome the sin, that church should judge to restore that man into fellowship. Depending on how a position of trust was violated, the church must decide whether reinstatement of an office is warranted. The office and the membership are two different things. Reinstatement of membership for a while may be needed until the time he is restored to an office, if at all. Please keep in mind every church is independent and autonomous, and they judge for themselves what they see as right.

Meeting the Qualifications

Bishops and Deacons

In respect to this subject, the only *personal qualifications* for using your gifts and callings is when they are related to the bishoprick or deaconship. In 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, these qualifications are listed. These qualifications are either met or they are not. Furthermore, it is the church that determines whether these qualifications are met on an individual basis. If someone disagrees, let him still respect the authority of the church.

I will say there are “*general qualifications*” for all members. Some are listed in the church covenant, the church constitution or its by-laws. Some are expected for members in leadership roles. The New Testament also gives many commandments that God’s children are expected to follow, whether or not they are in leadership. After that, there are some *requirements* (we should say) that are related to the use of gifts.

For example, 1 Corinthians 14 showed the proper use of tongues in the church. Romans 12:8 says he that giveth should do it with simplicity. He that ruleth should do it with diligence. He that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. These, I say, are *general requirements* for the use of gifts. If a man has the gift, he should know how to rightly use that gift.

But in respect to the *ordained offices* of bishop and deacons (see Acts 6:3-6; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:6-9), the qualifications are clear and many. These are listed later.

Evangelists

I would first impose upon the evangelist the qualifications of a deacon. Looking at Philip, he was first ordained a deacon (Acts 6) before he was called an evangelist (Acts 21:8). This shows me he was ordained as a deacon, but there is no record of his being ordained a second time. I assume his deacon ordination was sufficient for the work of an evangelist. Paul telling the Bishop Timothy to do the work of an evangelist (2 Timothy 2:4), shows me his bishop ordination (1 Timothy 6:22) was sufficient for the work of an evangelist. Paul’s revelation in Ephesians 4:12 says the evangelist is for “the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” Other than these passages we do not have a lot of

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revelation on the subject of the evangelist. Combining the three passages I conclude a deacon's or bishop's qualifications are sufficient, and his work is summarized in Ephesians.

I personally teach an evangelist should be church approved and ordained similarly to that of a deacon or bishop.

Missionaries

Today we also have our faithful, beloved, *Missionaries*. These, I think, follow the pattern of the Apostle Paul, going to places where Christ has not been preached, winning souls and organizing churches.

The missionary work is probably the greatest work a man can do for Jesus Christ. The favor and support of the churches should be toward these men.

A Missionary's qualifications *per se* are not recorded in the New Testament – for the word *Missionary* is not found. But we understand that the Missionary is indeed a Bishop. A *sent-man* as was Titus (Titus 3:16; 1:5), to a place needing churches and ordained elders (more bishops).

The Missionary, being a bishop, we conclude his qualifications are the same as a bishop.

However, I should like to add to this “office” the blessings of the multiplicity of churches. A *pastor* of a church operates under the authority of his own church and has the approval of those in his church. He needs no other church or has no other church in most cases. A missionary, on the other hand, although a pastor of his mission-church, also has a sending church. In many instances he also has the support of other churches. What a tremendous blessing and powerful authority this is.

Think of this: his mission-church, however many, are, through the power of the Holy Ghost, recognizing his gifts and calling, and authorizing his local work. They are praying, giving, serving, and supporting the mission-church. Next, the missionary's sending church has those members, through the power of the Holy Ghost, recognizing his gifts and calling, and authorizing his work. They, too, are praying, giving, and supporting the man and his work. After this, if the missionary has a few other supporting churches, each one of those churches give independent testimony – through the power of the Holy Ghost – to the gifts, calling and authority of his work. These, too, are praying giving, and supporting that man and the mission-church.

All in all, that missionary has many times the multiplicity of testimony. Besides his sending church's authority; he also has many other churches who voted and independently validated his work. He can have many more times the number of saints praying and giving to his work that he realizes.

Some exceptions: Since the word *Missionary* is widely used and subject to many definitions depending whom you ask, you will find unmarried men and women missionaries serving in various places. The unmarried women should be working in a church, supporting the pastor. A single man may have ministry in evangelism or teaching. For the scope of this class, we will assume missionaries to be married men, fulfilling the qualifications of a bishop.

The Work

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In addition to the man meeting the general and personal qualifications, the area of service should be proved by the scriptures to be a qualified area of service. Sometimes a church will authorize non-scriptural *ministries* and authorize men to lead these “ministries.” Some ministries may be non-scriptural and not be bad. Churches have liberty to oversee works – nursery schools, day care, music ministries, orphanages, rescue missions, hospitals, etc. – that are considered good, but not found in the New Testament. And, each church can judge for herself what ministries she engages in. However, for the subject of this class, we are only concerned with those ministries supported by the New Testament.

We will not discuss traveling church music groups, homeless shelters, orphanages, ministries to addicts, bingo parlors, rummage sales, beauty contests, etc. Whom a church authorizes to lead other type ministries is their concern. We are concerned with the works shown in the New Testament.

The work a church authorizes from a New Testament point of view can be divided into groups as follows:

- The man's ministry
- The man's area of ministry
- The object of the ministry

The man's ministry – Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, and Deacons – can be thought of as inter-church work. The man fulfills his work inside and for a church; with some outreach. The four types listed above are scriptural ministries and the new testament shows how they are fulfilled.

The area of ministry – to every creature, all nations, Jerusalem to the uttermost, unto the end of the world – is self-explanatory. Everywhere there are people is an area of ministry. A missionary or pastor may work a particular area for some time, and then move to another. This work is scriptural from a point of view that there are people there. Some exceptions are obvious – a man wants to go where there are no people (i.e., he wants to be a hermit) or an uninhabited area (Antarctica, some islands). I doubt many churches would entertain such folly.

The object of the ministry will be harder to judge. We know all things done by the church should have the redemption and the godly edification of man as its purpose. We see in the New Testament men teaching, preaching, giving, and serving. A work connected with one of these is scriptural. Let a church pray and seek God's guidance for every work it supports.

Exceptions: There may be some exceptions one has to be aware of. For example, if a man's area of ministry is overly redundant. Paul strived to preach the gospel not where Christ was named. He did not want to build on another man's foundation (Romans 15:20). I expect this exception will be rare. There is always a need and the fields are white unto harvest. In some rare cases a church may decide sending a man elsewhere.

Another exception would be if God directs otherwise. Paul intended to go into Asia but was forbidden by the Holy Ghost (Acts 16:6-10). The Spirit would not suffer them to go, and instead supplied a vision to show him to go to Macedonia.

The Man Needs to be Clear on Where he is and Where he Needs to Be

It is more important what a man *is* and what he *does*, rather than what he *knows*. He must *be* what he is supposed to be, then *do* what he is supposed to do; then he can teach. He needs to be a good tree. He needs to bear good fruit. He needs to be a pattern for Reproduction.

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A man should not think of himself more highly than he ought to think (Romans 12:3). He should think soberly.

The Need for Vision

All leaders need to have the three viewpoints as illustrated in John 4 with Jesus, or Hebrews 12:1-3, or the great commission (Matthew 28:16-20). These three visions are:

- A High View
- A Long View
- A World View

The **high view** is to set one's affections on things above (Colossians 3). As Jesus said, "my meat is to do the will of him that sent me." We run *looking unto Jesus*. We understand all power comes from Jesus Christ, and his will and his commandments are top priority in the preacher's life. Jesus' will is followed, not mine. He is the one we serve.

The **long view** is to do all thinking of the end result – the judgment seat of Christ and what we leave here on earth for others to assume the responsibility of. Jesus said also, he was to *finish the work* his Father gave him to do. Paul said he finished his course (2 Timothy 4). Jesus, in Hebrews 12, is said to have endured the cross *for the joy that was set before him*.

Also, the setting up of things for the next generation. David prepared all for Solomon to build the temple. Moses could only go so far, and it was upon Joshua to take the Israelites into the promised land. Jesus paid it all, but now it was upon the apostles to go into all the world and preach that gospel.

We must realize that in our short life we have to train men and prepare them to go farther than we were able. We need a sense of urgency and allow them liberty to serve. *Our limitations are not their limitation*.

The **world view** is as Jesus said, lifting up our eyes and seeing the fields are white unto harvest. Our responsibility for world evangelism goes far beyond our church walls. We are witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and unto the uttermost.

The Glory of Young Men is their Strength (Proverbs 20:29)

Young men have youth, strength, energy, and flexibility. All these things should be used in the Lord's work. Young men have overcome the wicked one (1 John 2:13, 14). Young men are beautiful and (or should be) full of life and joy and purpose.

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7:

- 1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;
- 2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

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3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low;

5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Churches should put their young men (and women) to the work. Young men make great song leaders, musicians, preachers, teachers, workers, etc. Young women make great singers, teachers, nursery workers, helpers, etc.

We should always make room for young men and women to work in the ministry. They may not be perfect, but they need opportunities with grace to learn to be perfect. Delegation of this sort is wonderful in the eyes of the Lord (1 Timothy 4:12; 1 Samuel 2:18, 26)

The Beauty of Old Men is their Grey Head (proverbs 20:29)

Older men have experience, wisdom, and good counsel. Together with young men the work of the Lord becomes a synergetic work, each helping each other, and both accomplishing more for the work of the Lord.

Old men should not be discouraging or limiting in their words towards young men. They should encourage and listen to ideas.

As Eleanor Roosevelt said: "Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people."

Our older brethren tend to be more serious, focused, and patient. These are all good attributes for the Lord's work.

We are Instructed to Prove Many Things

1 Thessalonians 5:21: Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

All preachers have a certain amount of truth they accept as true. Most of these truths are indeed true. However, there are also many things that have not been proved by the preacher in his personal study and meditation. Many things he accepts without rightly dividing the word of truth. These are things he hears in messages, learned in school, heard from other preachers – things that sound reasonable, but are not actually true.

Men in the ministry of teaching others need to be able to study every detail of what they proclaim as true. We should not accept something as true just because some famous preacher said it was so. I have personally

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found many things I have heard needed to be adjusted slightly in order to be true. Let God be true, but every man a liar (Romans 3:4).

For example, if we are saved, we will not spend eternity in heaven once we die. Actually, a believer is present with the Lord when he dies (2 Corinthians 5:8). If he is caught up (Bible does not use *rapture*), he is with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:17). He then rules with Christ for a thousand years on earth (Revelation 20:5, 6). After that, there is a new Jerusalem wherein he dwells, that comes down from the new heaven onto a new earth (Revelation 21:1, 2).

Another example is, if one is lost, he does not spend eternity in hell. We know hell delivers up its contents at the white throne (Revelation 20:13). From there, they are cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14, 15).

One may say these are small distinctions. The lesson is to study for yourself a subject before you assume it is true. We should not be parrots just repeating what we hear without proving all things.

We Must Prove our Own Work

We prove our work in many ways. Here are some points:

- We make sure the work is aligned with the New Testament – the written word
- We have the Holy Spirit confirmation
- We fast and Pray to seek God' confirmation. This is the individual and those in the church.
- We see the church's testimony and approval
- We check our *desires* to make sure they are true before God
- We see that objectives are met that are aligned with the work – Provision of God
- We seek for God to open and close doors, such as Paul's Macedonian call where the Spirit prevented one way and gave vision to the other way.
- Although we should not need visible results for confirmation, we should seek God in confirming.

Faithful in Least, Faithful in Much

In Luke 16:10-12 the Saviour gave a parable of the unjust steward. Concluding the lesson, he said these words:

10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

As a minister of the Lord, a man must be faithful (see 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2): 1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

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The pattern the Lord gives to follow is that a man must first be faithful in that which is least: prayer, bible reading, soul-winning, tithing, church attendance, services in the church, etc. As the Lord sees a man's faithfulness, his responsibilities increase. One can say even the Lord followed this pattern during his earthly ministry.

A man who wants to short-cut to a place of leadership and authority will make a poor leader. Furthermore, that position will most likely be man-imposed, not God-given.

Another benefit of this pattern of the Lord is that we should strive to do those things that are least. When given the choice, do that which is least, for then there are promises that will follow – especially in glory when our life on earth ends. There will be so many people in heaven with much, simply because they were faithful with the least here on earth.

See also Luke 19:17. Here we see the regards for being faithful in least is authority over cities when we return with the Lord during the millennial reign of Christ.

Going the Second Mile

In the Lord's sermon on the mount in Matthew 5 we read:

- 38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:
39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.
40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.
41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.
42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.
43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.
44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;
45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.
46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?
47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?
48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Here, the Lord teaches us to do more than what is expected. When it comes to evil, we do not recompense evil for evil. We allow disrespect, evil, and when people take advantage. We are to reward evil with good, and heap coals of fire on the heads of those who hate us. We bless those that curse, we pray for them that use us.

Although contrary to the flesh, we do these things because they are instructed of the Lord. We do them for the Lord, following his example.

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The minister of Jesus Christ should exemplify this attitude of not recompensing evil for evil, but rather blessing.

Being a Servant

Good Servants make Good Masters.

We are all servants and we should be faithful to serve Jesus Christ, and one another in love (Galatians 5:13). It is through being a servant, going the second mile, that we see the Lord work in our lives and his miracles (see John 2:9). Good servants learn to be as their master (Luke 6:40). They should obey in singleness of heart (Colossians 3:22). They should be obey regardless of the character of the master (Titus 2:9; 1 Peter 2:18).

Good Submission needed for Good Rulership

Just as in the military, politics, business, and associations; the man who is submissive, obedient, and a team player gets promoted the fastest. People trust and admire servants who are faithful and wise, and put them in authority (Matthew 24:45; Luke 12:42). The same goes for the Lord's work.

Be Under Authority to have Authority

In Luke 7 we find this instance with Jesus and the centurion's servant:

- 1 Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.
- 2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.
- 3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.
- 4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:
- 5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.
- 6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:
- 7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.
- 8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.
- 9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.
- 10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

The centurion here understood authority. He knew to have authority, one had to be under authority. He could only say go, come, and do because he was given that authority.

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Jesus marveled at him because of his faith. Jesus' authority comes from the Father – "all power is given unto me" (Matthew 28:18). And then he says, "go ye, therefore...."

We, as ministers of Jesus Christ are authorized by the church, Jesus' authoritative body. We do not have authority in ourselves. The Bible does not give authority, it is our authority. We submit to it. It is the church that teaches, baptizes, and sends. Understand the difference. The Bible shows where this authority comes from God – Jesus – church – preachers (see John 1:1; Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 10; Acts 13:1-3).

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Checklists and Discussions with Student

In the following lessons the teacher and student will find check boxes. These should be used to indicate where the student is, and what areas may need improvement. The teacher can either check areas that need improvement, or check areas that he believes the students fulfills.

Either way, the topics should be subject to conversations so both parties are comfortable. Keep in mind we are not judging perfection, but a faithfulness or pattern

Lesson 1: The Will of God

Romans 12:1-3 – God’s Will

- 1 Present body a living sacrifice []
- 2 Holy []
- 3 Acceptable unto God []

These three above are one’s *“reasonable service.”*

- 4 Be not conformed to this world []
- 5 Be transformed []
- 6 Having a renewed mind []

This is how you *“prove”* God’s will

- 7 **Good Will of God** (Written in the New Testament) []

Includes your reasonable service. Doing all that is commanded. Being faithful in the least. Being obedient to the commandments of Jesus Christ

- 8 **Acceptable Will of God** []

Going the second mile, doing more than what is required. This is having a servant’s heart and willing to do whatever, whenever, for God. This willingness is in all things and will open doors of service. Although not an execution of your calling, this is doing as the Spirit leads and as God opens door. This is a proving time to see one’s faithfulness in least and much.

- 9 **Perfect Will of God** []

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This is your “proved calling.” God’s call is clear to you and the Church. This is your area of service until God moves you.

We can assign these proofs to certain stages:

- Look []
- Listen []
- Learn []
- Live – The GOOD WILL OF GOD []
- Love []
- Labour – The ACCEPTABLE WILL OF GOD []
- Lead – The PERFECT WILL OF GOD []
- Leave []

[Editor’s Note: We say Romans 12:1-3 can be understood two ways: that God’s will is always good, acceptable, and perfect; and that as we progress in service, we find the good, the acceptable, then the perfect will of God.]

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Lesson 2: Some Necessary Elements for the Ministry

Desire for the ministry (1 Timothy 3:1)	[]
Calling of God discussed (Acts 13:1-3)	[]
Gifts of God manifested to the church (1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6)	[]
Faithfulness in the least things (Luke 16:10)	[]
Prayer	[]
Bible reading	[]
Tithes and offerings	[]
Church attendance	[]
Witnessing and Soul-winning	[]
Does the man possess humility?	[]
Does he submit to pastoral authority?	[]
Is he currently active in the Lord's work?	[]

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Lesson 3: Focus

Focused Life – seek ye first kingdom of God and his righteousness (Matthew 6:33)	[]
The Steps of a Good Man are Ordered by the Lord (Psalm 37:23)	[]
Striving for the Mastery Requires Temperance (1 Corinthians 9:25)	[]
Understands Many things are lawful but not all are expedient (1 Corinthians 10:23)	[]
Strive Lawfully (2 Timothy 2:5)	[]
Self-Disciplined (Proverbs 16:32; 1 Corinthians 9:27)	[]
With the Spirit – walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:16)	[]
Good Profession (1 Timothy 6:12)	[]
Patient – the Race is Paced – Not Spurts or Wasted Energy (Hebrews 12:1)	[]
Not given the spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7)	[]
Not ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, but a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God (2 Timothy 1:8)	[]
Holds fast the form of sound words, in faith and love (2 Timothy 1:13)	[]
Continues in the things he has learned (2 Timothy 3:14)	[]
Preaches the word in season out of season (2 Timothy 4:2)	[]
Speaks, exhorts, and rebukes with authority of God’s word (Titus 2:15)	[]

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Lesson 4: Need for Holiness

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Let not iniquity reign over me Psalm 119:133 | [] |
| Deny lusts (Titus 2:12) | [] |
| Sin not have dominion (Romans 6:14) | [] |
| Victory over the world | [] |
| Give no occasion to the flesh (Galatians 5:13) | [] |
| Flee youthful lusts (2 Timothy 2:22) | [] |
| Provide things honest in the sight of all men (Romans 12:17) | [] |
| Abstain from all appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22) | [] |

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Lesson 5: Ministry Requirements – Gifts of God Manifested

There are necessary gifts for the minister. He should have a few of the gifts below. Discuss with the student the gifts the teacher sees and what other gifts the student may have or need.

Salvation (Ephesians 2:8-10) []

The gifts of God as shown in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12

Romans 12:6 – Gifts according to the grace of God:

Check all that apply:

- A. Prophecy (v. 6) – Preaching []
- B. Ministry (v. 7) – Serving []
- C. Teaching (v. 7) []
- D. Exhortation (v. 8) []
- E. Giving with Simplicity (v. 8) []
- F. Ruling with Diligence (v. 8) []
- G. Showing mercy with cheerfulness (v. 8) []

1 Corinthians 12:1 – Spiritual Gifts

Check all that apply:

- H. Word of wisdom (v. 8) []
- I. Word of knowledge (v. 8) []
- J. Faith (v. 9) []
- K. * Healing (v. 9) – helping others heal through love and faith []
- L. * Miracles (v. 10) – Accomplishing great tasks for the Lord []
- M. Prophecy (v. 10) – edification, exhortation, comfort (13:1; 14:1-3, 39) []
- N. Discernment of spirits (v. 10) []
- O. * Tongues (v. 10) – learning of languages []

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P. * Interpretation of tongues (v. 10) – translation []

* First Corinthians was written from Philippi (16:25). This is a book written early in the New Testament and the gifts of tongues and healing were given as signs for Jews (1:22; 14:22) and given to apostles mainly. We believe after the New Testament was completed these signs ceased (13:12). See also Exodus 7:3-9; Acts 8:13; 3:12, Mark 16:17, 18).

Other

Q. Charity (13:1-13; 14:1) []

R. Stir up the gift of God (2 Timothy 1:6) – Does the man do it? []

S. Does the man exemplify his gift to profit the church? (Romans 12) []

Romans 12:9-21 – Other Things

Check all that apply:

T. Love without dissimulation (v. 9) – not selective in whom he loves []

U. Abhor evil, cleave to good (v. 9) []

V. Kindly affection one to another in brotherly love (v.9) []

W. In honour preferring one another (v. 9) []

X. Not slothful in business (v. 11) []

Y. Fervent in spirit (v. 11) []

Z. Serving the Lord (v. 11) []

AA. Rejoicing in Hope (v. 12) []

BB. Patient in Tribulation (v. 12) []

CC. Continues instant in prayer (v. 12) []

DD. Distributes to necessity of the saints (v. 13) []

EE. Given to hospitality (v. 13) []

FF. Bless persecutors (v. 14) []

GG. Compassion – rejoicing and weeping (v. 15) []

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HH.	Unity	
II.	Condescension – humility (v. 16)	[]
JJ.	Not revengeful (v. 17)	[]
KK.	Honest (v. 17)	[]
LL.	Lives peaceably (v. 18)	[]
MM.	Overcomes evil with good (v.21)	[]

2 Timothy 2:1-26 – Other Things

Check all that apply:

NN.	Strong in the Grace of Jesus Christ (v. 1)	[]
OO.	Commits same teaching to faithful men (v. 2)	[]
PP.	Endures harness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (V. 3)	[]
QQ.	Not entangled with life’s affairs (v. 4)	[]
RR.	Strives lawfully (v. 5)	[]
SS.	Labours and is a first-partaker of the fruits (v. 6)	[]
TT.	Charges not to strive about words to no profit (v. 14, 23)	[]
UU.	Studies to shew himself approved unto God (v. 15)	[]
VV.	Shuns profane and vain babblings (v. 16)	[]
WW.	Purged from iniquity (v. 19-22)	[]
XX.	Flees youthful lusts, but follows rightly (v. 22)	[]
YY.	Is gentle to all men, apt to teach, and patient (v. 24)	[]
ZZ.	Instructs in meekness (v. 25)	[]

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Lesson 5: Church Authorization

(Acts 13:1-3; Romans 10:15; 2 Timothy 1:6) – Ordination and Testimony

Credible Testimony	[]
Scriptural Baptism	[]
License to Preach	[]
Authority to Baptize	[]
Ordination	[]
<i>Experienced in the following works:</i>	
Gospel preaching	[]
Bible Teaching	[]
Bible Study and Writing Outlines	[]
Baptizing	[]
Church Organization	[]
Weddings	[]
Funerals	[]
Dedications	[]
Mission Work	[]

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Lesson 6: Ministry Requirements – Qualifications Met

General Requirements for Leaders (elders)

- A. Not a Novice (1 Timothy 3:6) []
- B. Good Doctrine (1 Timothy 4:6) []
- C. Faithful in the Least (Luke 16:10) []
- D. Do Work of an Evangelist (2 Timothy 4:5) []
- E. Pattern of Good Works (Titus 2:7) []
- F. Not a Lord over God's Heritage (1 Peter 5:3) []
- G. Ensample to the Flock (1 Peter 5:3) []
- H. Feed the Flock of God (1 Peter 5:2) []

Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23):

- A. Love []
- B. Joy []
- C. Peace []
- D. Longsuffering []
- E. Gentleness []
- F. Goodness []
- G. Faith []
- H. Meekness []
- I. Temperance []

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Lesson 7: Ministry Major – Commandments First, then Placement.

We are to do the work of the Lord as he has commanded in written form (New Testament) before we can expect the Lord to place us in the ministry. If a man is not faithful in the least, he won't be faithful in much.

We can divide the areas of ministry in two divisions: In the church and out of the church:

Interchurch Service

Separated Service

Under each of these there are basically three areas:

Interchurch Service

Separated Service

Leadership

Leadership

Teaching

Teaching

Support

Support

If a student is unsure what his ministry major is to be, he should do the following:

- A. Continue in obedience and faithfulness to the Lord's commandments []
- B. Be consistent in prayer, Bible reading, and church attendance []
- C. Go the second mile in service []
- D. Identify one of the six areas above as a direction (it can always change). []
- E. Continue with the S.O.S. program. []

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Lesson 8: Office of a Bishop

(1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5; Ephesians 4:11; etc.)

We Baptists understand a bishop is an overseer (Greek: *episcopos*). Today we usually refer to these men as pastors. Paul shows us in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 what are the qualifications of a bishop.

- 1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.
- 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;
- 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;
- 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;
- 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)
- 6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.
- 7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

A man that is qualified for the office a bishop will meet these qualifications. *Check all that apply:*

Desires the office of a bishop

Sees it as a good work []

Blameless (a good testimony in all areas, no pattern of sin) []

The husband of one wife []

Vigilant []

Sober []

Of good behavior []

Given to hospitality []

Apt to teach []

Not given to wine []

No striker []

Not greedy of filthy lucre []

Patient []

Not a brawler []

Not covetous []

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- Rule well own house []
- Children in subjection []
- Not a novice []
- Good report of those without []

Paul added in Titus 1:5-9:

5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Check all that apply:

- Not selfwilled []
- Not soon angry []
- A lover of hospitality []
- A lover of good men []
- Just []
- Holy []
- Temperate []
- Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught []
- Able by sound doctrine to exhort and convince gainsayers []

Paul also write in Ephesians 4:

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

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12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Check all that apply:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|
| Perfects the saints | [] |
| Performs the work of the ministry | [] |
| Edifies the body of Christ (the church) | [] |
| Not tossed to and fro | [] |
| Speaks the truth in love | [] |

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Lesson 9: Avoiding Hypocrisy
(Matthew 23)

Jesus condemned the pharisees as hypocrites and pronounced woes upon them in Matthew 23. This is an opportunity for the student to identify and reject any hypocritical works. The student should not be guilty of any of the following things.

- A. Say and do not (v. 3) []
- B. Bind heavy burdens on followers, and not help (v. 4) []
- C. Works are to be seen of men (v.5) []
- D. Fancy religious clothes and accessories (v. 5) []
- E. Love places of prominence (uppermost rooms and chief seats) (v. 6) []
- F. Love greetings – called Rabbi (master) (v. 7) []
- G. Hinder salvation of others (v. 13) []
- H. Devour widow's houses (v. 14) []
- I. Make long prayers for pretense (v. 14) []
- J. Compass sea and land to make proselyte (v. 15) []
- K. Swear by temple or gold (v. 16) []
- L. Pay tithe but omit judgment, mercy, and faith (v. 23) []
- M. Strain gnats but swallow camels (v. 24) []
- N. Outside looks clean, but inside is excess (v. 25) []
- O. Whited sepulchers with dead man's bones (v. 27) []
- P. Build tombs and sepulchers (v. 29) []

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Lesson 10: Having a Vision

A vision, scripturally speaking, is a message from God. In 1 Samuel 3:1, 15; the Bible says “there was no open vision.” This is a sad state when God does not communicate with his people. It also says, “the word of the LORD was precious in those days.” We rely on God’s word first. Then we learn his visions align with what his word says.

The prophets received visions (1 Samuel 3:15; 2 Samuel 7:17; 2 Chronicles 26:5; 32:32; Isaiah 1:1; Obadiah 1:1; Nahum 1:1; Habakkuk 2:2).

Proverbs 29:18 is well-known verse: “Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”

People need a vision from God. People need the word of God. People need for God to speak to them and lead them through his word and his man (the preacher).

We understand, then, for the man of God to lead rightly; that man must be, first, well-acquainted with the word of God; and, second, be led of the Holy Spirit.

We should never be men who speak our own ideas and not the word of God:

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD.

Jeremiah 23:16

In the New Testament, the men of God had visions – see Acts 9:10, 12; 10:3; 16:9; 2 Corinthians 12:1). However, in this age we have the completed word of God. We do not require visions for infallible truth – for we have that with the New Testament. What we do need, are men with a vision of what God wants to do in their lives and the lives of the people they lead.

A man needs vision – a purpose to do a work for the Lord somewhere, somehow, by faith. Starting a church starts with a vision. Building a work starts with a vision. Having a mission’s conference, revival, tent meeting, etc.; all require a vision first.

Men of God will have many visions as to what God leads them to do. With this vision there should be faith, zeal, urgency (with patience), and it should be God-honoring. The vision should be easily communicated to followers so they are onboard and can give what is needed. Without knowing the need, people do not usually give.

The teacher should at this time discuss what the visions the student has for his work in the ministry.

Describe in a few words what vision the student has for his ministry:

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Lesson 11: Optional Subjects and Special Circumstances

At this point the teacher may have some things that have not been covered in this class. He should use this time to discuss any things not discussed previously that he deems important.

If there are special circumstances that may hinder a preacher from full service, or physical handicaps, or other limitations; it is good to discuss these with the student.

Below are spaces for any other things the teacher deems appropriate.

_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]
_____	[]

Teacher's comments in respect to the student:
