

MINEOLA BIBLE INSTITUTE AND SEMINARY

Keys to Effective Ministry

Radical, Biblical, Apostolic, Christianity



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Introduction

We demand excellence of God! Have you ever thought about that?

- We won't allow him one little mistake!
- We won't allow him one little lie!
- We won't allow him one little failure!

Since we expect excellence from God, we should be ready, willing, and dedicated to demanding the highest form of excellence, both from ourselves and the ministry He has entrusted to us.

Matthew 5: 48 tells us to *Be perfect as our father in heaven is perfect.*

Ephesians 4:1 instructs as well that we are to--walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we were called.

This applies to whatever field of ministry we find ourselves in. It applies both to the lay person, as well as, the fivefold vocational ministry equally.

Excellence of ministry - I want that to soak in.

You must become willing to demand excellence of the ministries you are involved in.

We also want to demand excellence from those that labor with us.

The Apostle Paul took the training of his disciples very seriously because he realized that they were handling the mightiest power in the universe.

The Gospel is not only the power by which people are saved from hell, it is more broadly, God's unlimited power to save, heal, and deliver!

Paul told Timothy in I Tim. 1:11, that this Glorious Gospel had been “committed to his trust.”

As ministers of the Gospel you are entrusted with God’s awesome power and might.

You are, therefore faced with two responsibilities:

1) to develop and maintain a ministry of excellence and

2) to deal with satan directly.

By virtue of our role as Apostolics, we have been positioned and categorized, particularly as far as Satan is concerned, as some of the most dangerous and often hated human beings on the planet!

We pose a serious threat to satan and his people.

Our second responsibility then, is to deal with him effectively.

Without a firm decision to succeed, with God’s help, we cannot hope to maintain the measure of maturity and perfection that our ministries must command.

Not only Born Again and full of the Spirit but knowing how to use the Sword of the Lord and the power of Almighty God to change lives forever.

This requires **boldness** on our part.

We represent God’s divine power and authority in this world, the adversary must reckon with us.

Romans 1:16 -for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that BELIEVETH; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Now it's real easy to read right past this verse and miss what the spirit is really saying:

Salvation is the great, inclusive word of the gospel, gathering into itself all of the redemptive acts and processes:

- Forgiveness,
- Justification,
- Sanctification,
- Grace,
- Redemption,
- Propitiation,
- Imputation
- Sanctification, and
- Glorification.

The Hebrew and Greek words for salvation imply:

- deliverance,
- safety,
- preservation,
- healing and
- soundness.

The gospel is not only the power by which we are saved from hell, it is more specifically: God's unlimited ability to save heal and deliver in all realms.

The gospel is the power of God manifested.

If you think about that for a while, you begin to understand the need for a ministry of excellence.

A ministry of excellence:

- Is built on faith - it absolutely will not tolerate unbelief in itself.

- It will not tolerate taking the easy way out.
- It does not rely on gimmicks and carnal methods.

- It will pay any price to get the job done the right way - God's way - based on the Word.

- It will proudly uphold God's name and will represent Jesus Christ to the world.

- It will accurately handle the Word of God and again.

- It does not plan for failure

This is not easy to do because as representatives of God, you're going to have to do twice as much as everybody else.

We have to live exemplary lives by a higher standard -- the world expects it -- God expects it!

We have been entrusted with a grave responsibility.

Can I just admit to you, I have not always appreciated or lived up to that responsibility and I've had to repent.

We all have our heroes of the faith we wish we could emulate.

But, let me ask you a question: Do we really?! Do we really want that kind of ministry?
Are we willing to pay the price to get it?

Let me give a Personal example:

In High School I was in ROTC, and competed as a marksman, gaining Distinguished Expert status.

It was quite common for me to have fellow competitors say to me, “Man, I wish I could shoot like that!”

I’d always thank them, politely.

What I really wanted to say was, “**No you don’t!**”

“If you did, you’d be up at 5:00 AM to be early enough to school to shoot 100 rounds every morning in order to perfect your technique and you’d stay after school every day to practice again.”

The same can be said for golf, tennis, football, or any other sport.

You excel at what you’re committed to.

Can you say along with me, “I can stand to increase my commitment to effectiveness in ministry?”

Success in ministry, as you know, doesn’t come because of personality or great speaking ability.

It comes as a result of what you have dedicated yourself to.

What do you long to do with this gospel?

Not just your good ideas, but what are your dreams!?

What will we actually commit to and what will we lay our lives down for?

As ministers of the gospel we have been entrusted not only with the truth; we have been equipped with the Lord's strength and might.

Remember, satan is limited, you are not!

Your victory is assured, because:

Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.

and we can say with the Apostle Paul,

“Thanks be to God who always causes us to triumph through the Lord Jesus Christ.”

It is this ministry of excellence we will be talking about in this book!

Key One -- Dedication: A Decision, Not a Feeling

The first key to effective ministry is **dedication**.

True dedication is a **choice** - it is a decision of quality.

A **quality decision** is a decision for which there is **no turning back**.

True dedication makes a decision based on one's commitment to God, rather than on feelings or emotions.

It is a decision, that with God's help, you will never violate:

- Men will not be able to change you,
- Matters of life and death will not be able to change you,

and

- Feelings will have no bearing on this commitment.

True commitment is like losing the engine in a single-engine airplane - you are committed to land!

Feelings of fear, doubt or inadequacy are of absolutely no consequence - you **will** land that plane.

When you accepted the call to ministry, you faced this kind of a commitment.

How you handle it now could determine whether you succeed or fail or even whether you live or die.

For those of you who consider yourselves lay people or perhaps are newer to the ministry:

Take the time to get before God, and dig into the word. Stay there and rest in the Lord, until the Holy Ghost and the Word of God transform your level of commitment.

Without this firm, quality decision, Satan will take advantage of every opportunity to make your life and ministry a failure.

But remember:

God is at work in us both to will and to do for his good pleasure. Philippians 2:13

He is faithful. He will create in you the power and desire to make that uncompromising decision.

When you finally make a full, no quit, no turning back, forever commitment or renew that commitment to God - fulfilling and continuing your calling will be the most exciting thing you have ever done!

Don't be intimidated by the commitment - God has provided the power, furnished the weapons and equipped you with everything you need.

It's the same as when you experience the New Birth.

Once you made a quality decision to obey the Gospel, God met you there and he did the rest.

His power, His Spirit, and His words performed their functions and you were Born Again.

A decision was all it took. Your part is to determine in your heart to obey your calling and God will do his part.

What about finding your place in ministry?

Each and every believer is anointed and endued with the power to fulfill a specific function in the body of Christ.

By the Spirit of God, every individual is able to perform their calling with mastery and excellence.

The Bible says in Romans 11:29 that the gifts in the callings of God are without repentance.

Whether you are called to the five-fold ministry or to the all-important Ministry of the Saints - the Lord will not revoke your assignment.

What is the ministry of the saints? Notice, it's not, "ministry to the saints."

1 Corinthians 16:15--I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)

Every saint has a ministry calling!

He ordained you from the foundation of the world!

Consider **2 Timothy 2:20**:

We're going to knock a tradition right in the head.

“But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of the earth, and some to honor, and some to dishonor.”

Most times, people will stop reading right there and say, “Well brother you know...”

Right there, you know a tradition is coming at you.

“Well brother, yes! But you know, we can't all be vessels of gold. Some of us are meant to be earthen vessels.”

We have a word for that in Texas.

Hogwash!

Satan will always attempt to twist the scriptures to keep believers bowed down with false humility, trying to live for God based on their feelings and their performance.

Look at verse 21:

“If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.”

It is important to God, that we become vessels of honor - yielded to his word and dedicated to doing his will in the Earth.

Here is the important point:

Whether you become a gold vessel or a mud pot is not the Master's decision - it's yours!

A decision for total dedication includes a determination to please God and a commitment to the truth.

The decision to please the Father must include the decision to **live in victory**.

God gets no enjoyment from our defeat.

He was grieved with the children of Israel because they were overcome in the wilderness.

The victory that overcomes the world - is our faith (1 John 5:4).

Put on the armor of God and fight the good fight of faith.

What is a good fight? A good fight is the fight you win!

Take control of your life and resist the devil, by standing firm on the Word of God and controlling your feelings and emotions.

To control your feelings, you must control your tongue!

James 3:2 says that the person who can control his words can gain mastery over his whole body.

So, step one is **Dedication** - make a quality decision and commitment to the word and the things of God.

Become dedicated:

- **Decide to please the father**
- **Decide to walk in victory**
- **Decide to live the life of love**
- **Decide to live by faith**

Make the quality, no turning back decision, that if your faith won't get it, then you won't have it - because you are determined to please God by living by faith.

Never go back on your faith!

Key Two -- Singleness of Purpose

When we read the gospels, we find that Jesus was moved with compassion. **God's Word and Will** dictated everything He did.

He was dedicated - He was committed to it.

He had one thing in mind: fulfilling the Word of God.

Our Singleness of Purpose is to meet the needs of the people.

By doing God's will, putting his word first place in our lives and making it the final authority in everything we do, we can be confident that God will work through us to meet the needs of the people.

It is essential however, that we remain single minded.

James 1:5-8 King James Version (KJV)

⁵ If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

⁶ But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

⁷ For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

⁸ A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

Let's read it in the Amplified Version:

James 1:5-8 Amplified Bible, Classic Edition (AMPC)

⁵ *If any of you is deficient in wisdom, let him ask of [\[a\]](#)the giving God [Who gives] to everyone liberally and ungrudgingly, without reproaching or faultfinding, and it will be given him.*

⁶ *Only it must be in faith that he asks with no wavering (no hesitating, no doubting). For the one who wavers (hesitates, doubts) is like the billowing surge out at sea that is blown hither and thither and tossed by the wind.*

⁷ *For truly, let not such a person imagine that he will receive anything [he asks for] from the Lord,*

⁸ *[For being as he is] a man of two minds (hesitating, dubious, irresolute), [he is] unstable and unreliable and uncertain about everything [he thinks, feels, decides].*

The double-minded man is one who hesitates!

Why?

He is not made a firm decision about what he's going to do. He is irresolute or indecisive.

He has not resolved to handle things- once and for all - without changing his mind.

A double-minded man has not really made a decision at all. He is "unstable in all his ways" and goes back and forth from one viewpoint to another.

What happens when you hesitate?

Your adversary takes the initiative and you find yourself on the defensive with Satan ahead of you, beating you at every turn.

If you're not single-minded about your mission and purpose, you will not have any definite direction. You will always be wondering what you're supposed to do.

Do you know what a double-minded man really is?

A double-minded man is one who tries to live by faith and protect his fear at the same time

He talks both ways:

His faith proclaims, "I believe God is going to heal me - someday."

His faith whispers, "I wouldn't want to say I was well, just yet."

Inconsistency is hazardous.

Luke Eight records a significant event in the life of the disciples that illustrates the dangers of instability and hesitancy:

Luke 8:22-25 King James Version (KJV)

²² Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

²³ But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.

²⁴ And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

²⁵ And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

Jesus was quite clear about his intention when they first entered the ship: ***“let us go over unto the other side..”*** (verse 22).

There was enough power in those words to get the disciples all the way across the way, yet they became afraid and ran to Jesus.

This is a perfect illustration of double-mindedness:

-They were speaking fear in the presence of faith personify.

-They were consumed by the problem when they already possessed the solution.

“We perish”, didn’t sound unstable to them - it sounded realistic - but to Jesus, it was a direct contradiction to what he had plainly stated.

When Jesus said to them, *“let us go over to the other side.”* He knew, beyond a shadow of doubt, that’s where they were going.

The disciples **should** have known it as well!

If they were not capable of exercising such faith, Jesus would not have had the right to rebuke them after He had calmed the storm.

A single-minded man makes quality decisions and settles them forever.

If we’re going to put the Lord, his work and Word first place in our lives, there will be times when we will have to bypass what we see in order to meet the people’s needs.

Don’t hesitate! Do whatever it takes!

Remember, your goal is to meet the needs of the people

Minister to everyone you meet, everywhere you go!

Even if you are not in a preaching ministry, make it your goal to have a Biblical solution for every problem you encounter.

Be willing to walk away from **anything** in order to get God's word to those who desperately need it.

God's Word is all you need - - it will sustain you in every way.

If there ever a choice between the Word and anything else - -**Choose the Bible way!**

Stay single-minded and meet the needs of the people.

Key Three -- Follow the Leadership of the Holy Ghost

1 John 2:27

27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

In order to remain single-minded on the things of God, the third key to effective ministry is to rely on the leadership of the Spirit of God and **not** on our own understanding.

The Holy Ghost has been given to us as a **teacher** and a **guide** who leads us in accordance with God's will

By Him, we have the mind of Christ and can handle every situation with the wisdom of God.

We are admonished to, ***“trust in the Lord with all our hearts”*** and warned to ***“lean not on our own understanding.”*** In all our ways to acknowledge him and it is he who will make clear the way before us.”

When ministering, never trust the path your mind wants to take.

Don't depend upon your natural understanding.

Learn to follow the leadership of the Spirit within you.

That's his reason for dwelling within you.

If we're going to minister effectively to people's needs, we will have to be led of the spirit because, more often than not, we will find ourselves in situations that only access to the wisdom of God can handle.

During times such as these, our decision to meet the needs of the people must rise to the surface.

Jesus said that the Holy Ghost would lead us into all truth and assured us that His sheep would know his voice.

We can't wait until we arrive in the situation to go and seek the wisdom of God. **We have to be prepared beforehand.**

Once there, we don't have time to "pray through". We have to be prayed up, open and sensitive to the things of the spirit in order to effectively deal with these situations.

We can forget about being led by the Holy Ghost if we spend the majority of our time attending to personal affairs, playing golf with the mayor, making business appointments, coaching Little League and watching television.

It's not that any of those things are wrong, in and of themselves. It's a question of where your priorities lie.

Acts 20:24 King James Version (KJV)

24But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

We must spend our time in prayer and in the word beforehand - otherwise, we will simply not be spiritually prepared to meet the needs of the people and overcome the obstacles that Satan will surely place in our lives

Key Four -- Strip away all Else

Just before his crucifixion, Jesus prayed a special prayer for his disciples.

John 17:17-18 King James Version (KJV)

¹⁷Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

¹⁸As thou hast sent me into the world, even so, have I also sent them into the world.

As we all know, to sanctify means to “**separate**” or “**set apart.**”

We are separated from sin and set apart unto righteousness so, to have an effective ministry - Key Four helps us to remember that we must strip away everything in the world from our lives until there is nothing left but the Word and things of God.

Sin

One of the first and most important things that must be rooted out is sin and **sin consciousness!**

The sin part is, I think, fairly obvious.

But what do I mean by “sin-consciousness”?

How many times have you heard, or ever said, like me: *“I’m just an old sinner, saved by grace”?*

The Bible truth - which is often hard for us to understand and accept is that we **were** sinners; but **now**, we **have been** saved by grace.

Since the time of our new birth, we've been made the righteousness of God in Christ!

2 Corinthians 5:21 King James Version (KJV)

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Consider:

1 Corinthians 1:30 King James Version (KJV)

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

What am I trying to say? Or, more importantly - not say?

Do we still sin? Of course we do!

But when we sin, we then go on to access and appropriate our right standing with God by confessing our sin and receiving forgiveness.

He is faithful and just to forgive and cleanse us.

For our part, we must begin to **emphasize** our right standing with God.

When we help people get born again, we need to teach them “**who they are in Christ,**” and what a glorious inheritance they have, not, “over yonder” but **right now**, because of what he has done for us.

Second - we must strip away negative confessions.

Don't confess that you are sick, sinful, needy, weak and fearful.

Find out what God has to say about you in His Word and begin to confess those things instead.

Say to yourself:

- I'm the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.
- By his stripes, I am healed
- The joy of the Lord is my strength.
- The Lord meets all my needs according to his riches in Glory by Christ Jesus.

Begin to confess what the Word says you are.

The Lord is plain - He says what He means and means what He says.

His word is truth!

We must learn to control our speech.

Matthew 12:34-37 King James Version (KJV)

³⁴O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

³⁵A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

³⁶But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

³⁷For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

For example:

We take for granted, common expressions in clichés.

- **I was scared to death, or**
- **That tickled me to death or**
- **I'm just dying to see that!**

We must rid ourselves of this kind of thinking!

Do it out of respect for Jesus!

Do it out of respect for the word!

Let's begin to express ourselves, based on the truth of that word!

Besides, expressions like this are simply untrue.

You weren't scared to death; you weren't tickled to death. You were never even close to death.

But we pick up these expressions and they become such a habit that we're not aware of what we are **really** saying.

When we have grown to the point in our spiritual lives where we have confidence in the integrity of our own words; we won't have any difficulty believing the **absolute truth** of God's word.

We must get rid of our "**idle words.**"

As ministers of the Gospel; whether it's pulpit ministry or the ministry of the saints, we set the example.

We must make absolutely sure that what we say is accurate, true, and honest.

Thirdly, get rid of spiritual junk food!

Romans 12:2 King James Version (KJV)

²And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Put the Word of God first in your life and let it strip away all the other things.

That's not to say we can't relax and have personal and family time. But, none of these principles will work while we sit and watch TV day and night.

There are habits we must break sometimes!

By putting God first -- we are establishing priorities.

Ever get bored? I know I do!

Boredom indicates that our Word level is low.

It has been put into second place to some natural, physical thing.

These are not necessarily sins per se - most are simply time wasters.

A steady diet of newspapers and social media, (Facebook, Twitter etc.), is harmful to our spiritual well-being, just as junk food is to our physical health.

We simply cannot feed on carnal distractions and be effective ministers of Jesus Christ.

The media generally dwells on the negative side of life - wars, inflation, accidents, death, conflicts.

The Bible says in Matthew 13:22, that the cares and worries of the world will choke the word.

We must not allow the worldly media and circumstances around us to determine what we believe. We must instead, put our trust in God alone and what His Word says.

Everything in moderation! That's the key!

Nothing wrong with reading the newspaper.

But for some, reading their Bible the way they read the newspaper, would make all the difference in the world.

Finally, lay aside the cares of the world!

Philippians 4:6-7 reminds us to, "*be careful for nothing*", but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known unto God. And when we do that, it assures us that: the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard or keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Let's say we have a problem or face a crisis.

By focusing on the situation - we begin to act out of fear and even panic, rather than by faith and the promise of God.

Some say, *"Well brother, we're only human!"*

That's simply no longer true!

We are sons and daughters of the Most High God.

By allowing ourselves to be consumed by the problem; doubt, fear, and confusion can take over.

If we do that, we simply close the door to what God wants to give.

We must let the Word of God separate us from the cares of the world.

For example: for pressing needs, find the scriptures that promise that the Lord will meet our needs.

Matthew 6:33 King James Version (KJV)

³³But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 7:7 King James Version (KJV)

⁷Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

Philippians 4:19 King James Version (KJV)

¹⁹ But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

So, number four in the Keys to Effective Ministry is to Strip away all but the Word!

The Holy Ghost will always lead us in accordance with the Word, so our victory is assured.

Key Five--Look to the Word Day and Night

Proverbs 4:20-21 King James Version (KJV)

²⁰ My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

²¹ Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.

Joshua 1:8 King James Version (KJV)

⁸ This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

When the going gets tough, the pressure builds, and it seems like everyone in the world and all hell together are arrayed against you, God demands that you walk by the Word and **nothing else**.

The Psalmist said:

Psalm 119:97 King James Version (KJV)

⁹⁷ O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

Closely related to step four,

Key Five to Effective Ministry is to look to the Word day and night.

Looking to the Word will produce several effects on your life and ministry you simply cannot get any other way.

Proverbs 4:5-9 King James Version (KJV)

⁵Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

⁶Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

⁷Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

⁸Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

⁹She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

The ornament referred to here, is being **clothed with the favor of God**.

It is the result of **seeking God's wisdom by exalting his Word**, which in turn brings divine favor.

The wisdom of God places a Crown of Glory (God's grace or favor) upon your head.

This grace, or favor of God, is available to every person on earth, without exception. Remember, *"God is no respecter of persons."*

However, there are conditions.

Favor cannot be earned. It is the gift of God you do not merit it; you receive it.

Although it is for all, God's grace is not automatic. It must be appropriated by the believer through faith.

We already know that “faith comes by hearing and hearing, by the word of God.”

The basis for receiving God’s favor is through faith.

Therefore, you receive God’s favor through the Word.

The Word promotes.

If we will refrain from self-promotion and refuse to exalt ourselves, but, instead lift up the word of God - then He will promote us and bring us to a place of honor.

Peter tells us in **1 Peter 5:6-7 King James Version (KJV)**

⁶Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

⁷Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

We humble ourselves by:

- Placing ourselves in God’s hands
- Casting all our cares upon him
- Holding our tongues
- Refusing to pull strings or vying for power

Look, you might get what you desire!

But if you wrangle it on your own, then you will have to maintain it on your own without any help from the Spirit of God.

If he didn’t place you in a position, he’s not obligated to sustain you there.

You will be responsible for your own failures.

Why all this time in the Word?

Think about what I asked earlier:

How effective do we want to be?

A music major in college practices hours every day. Olympic skaters spend 6 to 8 hours daily in training routines.

We as ministers, ought to discipline ourselves in the Word constantly - especially in our beginning years.

We must permeate our minds with the Word and solid Bible-based sermons.

We must do whatever it takes to become **totally saturated** with the Word.

Many of you have done that for years. The rest of us will benefit from your example.

A side benefit of looking to the Word :

Looking to the Word, helps control your flesh.

Psalm 119:11 King James Version (KJV)

11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

•

Hebrews 5:12-14 King James Version (KJV)

12For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

People have the mistaken idea that as Christians, we have to fight against carnality until Jesus comes to free the body of Christ.

This is not true!

Sound strange? Listen:

We simply have to learn to consistently walk in the spirit.

We must walk in the spirit in order not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

Galatians 5:16King James Version (KJV)

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

The body has no nature of its own. It will do whatever it is told.

Many people have said, "When you're born again. The nature of God is in your spirit, but the adamic nature is in your body."

Hey folks! That is simply not a true statement!

In the first place, sin was never Adam's nature. Adam's original nature was perfection - he had the nature of God!

After the fall, satan's nature took root in him and caused the problems.

Adam invited that nature through his high treason.

But it wasn't in his body. It was in his spirit. His body was trained to follow his spirit.

Now, lest you think I'm somehow talking about "sinless perfection." Let's be clear. I am not! **But we can sin less.**

Our bodies will do whatever they are trained to do.

If our reborn human spirit dominates our flesh, more of our actions will be Godly ones.

Did you ever notice that we can sin without even thinking about it?

Most people sin without even trying - it just comes "naturally"!

How then can we ever hope to overcome this situation?

The answer is found in Romans 12:1-2:

Present your body as a sacrificial offering to God.

Reprogram yourself to **automatically act on the word in obedient faith.**

In sports, it is called "muscle memory."

You repeat an action so often, that it becomes unconscious.

By continuing to put the Word of God into your mind, spirit, and body, you will eventually come to a place where the Word controls all three.

When that happens, the spirit becomes the dominant force in your life and everything else will conform to it.

We will have become separated from the world and we will have become Word controlled.

Key Six -- Commit Yourself to Prayer and Fasting

The sixth of our steps to excellence in ministry is to commit ourselves to a lifestyle of prayer and fasting.

Prayer

Prayer is the foundation for success in every Christian endeavor.

Jesus is our example.

Have you noticed how often the Bible mentions that he withdrew to a lonely and solitary place to pray?

In fact, if you study it out you'll see that Jesus moved from one place of prayer to the next and in between, the Power flowed!

Mark 1:35 King James Version (KJV)

³⁵And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

Luke 6:12 King James Version (KJV)

¹²And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

These are just two of the many instances recorded in the gospels.

Jesus was in continual communication with God through prayer.

He spent hours every day separated from the people, fellowshiping with His Heavenly Father.

If he had the need for preparation through prayer, how much more should we?

In fact, such foundation and preparation is the only thing that will keep us together when we're faced with the situations that require a great deal of faith.

Even the apostles recognized this need!

They chose deacons to assist them in their duties, saying:

Acts 6:2-4 King James Version (KJV)

²Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

³Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

⁴But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

If we have taken the time to saturate our minds and hearts with the word of God - to the extent that we're single-minded on that word, our thinking will no longer be influenced by doubt, fear, and unbelief.

We will stop wailing and begging God for power to do the job.

We'll experience the truth of 1John 2:27; Which promises the anointing that abides or remains in us.

1 John 2:27 King James Version (KJV)

27But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

All we have to do is open our mouth and of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

The word will be what is in your heart in abundance and that is what will come out.

Prayer and study are the keys.

The anointing is there - we **have**, past tense, **received it**.

But it is accessed and released by prayer.

Our ministry will be severely limited if we're not prepared to base it on fellowship with God.

It is in our prayer time; more specifically, time spent praying in the spirit --that we will find out what God would have us say in the moment and how to conduct ourselves.

Nothing can be substituted for prayer.

Fasting

Now, a few words on a very popular subject - fasting!

We won't get into the nuts and bolts and specifics on how to fast - that's a book all by itself.

Contrary to popular belief, fasting was not given to us as a spiritual discipline that helps us convince God to do something he doesn't want to do or influence Him to act on our behalf.

Abstaining from food does not impress God!

The purpose of fasting is to shut off the influence of the flesh in order to become even more in tune with the spirit.

It brings areas to the surface that need correction so you can deal with them in light of the word.

It will keep us keen to the voice of God for guidance-- both for our own lives and the lives of others for whom we are interceding.

We must be very careful not to fast in order to receive visions or apparitions from the Lord. Why?

Because Satan would love to step in and manifest himself as an "angel of light" in order to deceive you!

Make a quality decision not to **seek** dreams and visions.

If the Lord sees fit to bring them that's great!

But we have to determine to base our faith on and receive our revelation from the Word of God alone!

Why?

Because, anything we receive, aside from the Word of God will not produce faith.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

Fasting helps us receive from God but it does not push God to action.

Faith is all it takes to move God to exercise of power for you.

The problem is not God's unwillingness to help us or his inability to intervene on behalf.

The problem is the believer's spiritual density!

It's our inability to understand and receive what Christ has already provided to Calvary.

Fasting is simply a tool that puts us in a position to be more spiritually sensitive and "tuned in" to God, so we can better receive from him.

Let's talk about the rewards of fasting:

Matthew 6:17-18 King James Version (KJV)

17But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

18That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

The reward of fasting is whatever motivated you to fast in the first place.

Whatever it is, establish it by faith and **declare** it before you even start to fast.

Expect to receive it!

God will see in secret and reward you openly.

Perhaps you're fasting for no other reason than to fellowship with God.

That is a sound reason and you will receive your reward of divine fellowship.

You may be fasting to better understand something from the Word of God that you know he has been trying to reveal to you, but you haven't been able to grasp it, yet.

That understanding can be the reward you seek during your fast.

Perhaps you have been praying for an unsaved family member. Your fast can be undertaken as a time a special intercession.

Declare the purpose of the fast and that will be the reward.

Key Seven--Formula for Success

These seven Keys for Effective Ministry, I believe, will be a major blessing to you as you minister the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I have personally proven their value and validity in my own life.

I would like to close by giving you a **Three Step Formula for Success** in applying these principles to your life and ministry.

I learned this several years ago from a great man of God and it's proven valuable many times over.

If you'll apply these truths seriously, you'll have success in every area of your life and ministry. Nothing can hold it back from you.

Every Christian endeavor, no matter what it is, will succeed when it is backed by this kind of prayer and dedication because God Himself is behind it.

One-- Find the will of God in your situation by prayer and meditation in the Word.

God's word is his will.

Consult with other men and women of God as needed to clarify your thoughts.

Whatever may be involved, find God's plan.

Two--Once you have determined what the will of God is, **confer no more with flesh and blood!**

Don't seek any more advice.

Don't hesitate!

Just look to the word and stand firm on it.

Three -Get the job done and all costs!

If God has called you to do it, then with God you can do it!

You're capable of doing anything the Word says you can do.

Put God's Word first place in your life and let **it** be the final authority.

All of Heaven's resources - the Almighty God in Christ, Jesus of Nazareth and all the Host of Heaven - will ensure that you succeed.