

Finding The "Right" Ministry

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Wouldn't it be great if God just "paved the way" for you to find a "perfect" church, where your gifts and abilities could flourish without any "weird" experiences? That sounds nice, but it isn't how God works! He loves conflict. He loves to set up situations that make us "squirm" a bit. He loves this because He loves you! As a loving Father, He knows that you don't learn as much from successes, as you do from "weird" experiences.



You may wonder, "How do I find the right place to minister?" This is a complex question. The "bottom line" is that God will lead you to where He wants you to be, but there is a "human" side to this quest. God wants you to seek Him (Jer. 29:13), to follow Him (Deut. 28:1-6), and to acknowledge Him (Prov. 3:5-7). He may give you a series of "signs" that clearly indicate where He wants you to go, but He may not. He may set up situations for you to interpret. Here are some clear facts and principles to consider:

- **God is not blind** - God knows what He's doing with you! He gave you the gifts that you have (creative, problem-solving, process-building passion!). He is **Omniscient** (all-knowing), **Omnipresent** (not restricted by space or time), **Omnipotent** (all-powerful)!
- **God never forgets or regrets** - He never has His "head" in his hands, saying, "Oh no, now what am I going to do?" He has permitted you to experience your life and ministry experiences for a reason! (Rom. 8:28)
- **God treasures endurance, the ability to overcome, and long-suffering** - Read Romans 5:3, 4; Hebrews 10:36; James 1: 2, 3; Rev. 2; Galatians 5:22. He is doing something in you! Don't loose heart or be discouraged!
- **Be faithful** – There isn't a verse in the Bible that implies that we should "bounce around" in ministry looking for the "perfect place." Instead, He tells us to be faithful, and to be willing to serve Him no matter what! 2Chronicles 16:9 tells you that He is searching for people "whose hearts are totally His"! He clearly identifies "being faithful" as important in 1Cor. 4:1-6. Jesus tells a parable about faithfulness in Mt. 25:14-30. So, be faithful in using your gift and do well with what is placed in front of you! Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart! (Psalm 37:4).
- **Be open** - Your life is complicated. How do you discern God's leading or "voice" in your life? He speaks to all of us differently. Does He "speak" to you, or lead you by giving you "bad" experiences? Does He "speak" to you, or lead you by giving you peace? Does He "speak" to you, or lead you by sending people alongside you to counsel you? (Prov. 15:22) He encourages us to "acknowledge Him" in all our ways, and He will "direct your path." (Prov. 3: 5-7) So, be open to what He's doing. Don't stop looking, asking, or knocking on the doors of the Church!
- **Rest for a while** - It is okay to "take a Sabbath rest" from ministry if you feel you need to. Restoring from a "weird" experience is something that Elijah did. In 1Kings 19, you can read the story of Elijah needing some rest. God let him rest and cared for his needs. BUT, after God felt he had rested enough, He told Elijah to "Get up" and return to the work that God called Him to do. Do you know for sure that God has called you to lead a children's ministry (CM)? If the answer to that question is "Yes," then resting is okay for a short time, but you must get back to it soon. If the answer to the question is "I'm not sure," then you need to seek God about the calling on your life. If you aren't sure what it is, rest long enough to get clarity from God, and then go back to it!



- **Focus your time** - God will show you whether or not you are supposed to be in full-time or part-time ministry. If you know your calling, you have to seek His wisdom about taking on a full-time ministry job. What are your other priorities? Do your other priorities let you give full-time attention to ministry? Be careful! Ask Him to clarify what He wants you to learn from your previous ministry experiences. Did you go into them "too willing"? Did they take advantage of that? Did you go into them unclear of your own boundaries? If you feel He wants you to direct a CM, then ask Him to lead you to a church that is looking for that. It is dangerous to serve at a church who only wants to pay "part-time," but expects full-time work! Be very clear in your prayers and in your interviews! View the online ministry job boards and look for churches who are ready to commit to a full-time CM Director! Wait on the Lord until you have a peace about the next position you take.
- **Know for what you're looking** - Ask God to clearly identify what church qualities you want. Do you want a large church, small church, mega church? Do you want a church that is very "traditional," or a church that is more progressive and "trendy"? Do you want a church that is supportive of women in ministry leadership? Do you want a church that is ready to invest time and money into the CM? Make a list of the qualities you want, pray about them, and wait for them!



Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Don't lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your path straight.

Proverbs 3:5