

We are living in a time where one of the most important things the Body of Christ is seeking is balance. This book is a must read for every pastor who desires for his church to properly grow in the perfection of God. It is also a must read for every child of God searching to discover their place within the church, while at the same time coming to an understanding of how to flow with their pastor and the vision that God has mandated him. The biblical examples that are taught and brought to life in this book will refresh and enlighten you on how you can achieve God's best for your life. Rev. Buddy Bell is truly a pastor's friend and gifted in bringing balance to the Body of Christ. I highly recommend every pastor and church staff members read *Ministry of Helps, Volume 2* if they desire to see their church develop and grow in fulfilling its vision.

*Danny Sims
Senior Pastor
New Life Christian Fellowship
Jackson, Mississippi*

When Buddy Bell says he is a "pastor's friend," he really is. When we first had Buddy minister in our church, we more than doubled our volunteer work staff. He helps people understand that their call to the helps ministry in the local church is vital and fulfilling. It blesses a pastor's heart to see people doing life together, and everyone serving with joy in this community called the local church. I believe this book is Buddy's best yet. His passion is clear through each story and each chapter for every believer not to tolerate church, but to really enjoy it and be a vital part of what God is doing today.

*Pastor Robert Barriger
Camino De Vida
Lima, Peru
www.lifemissions.com*

The Ministry of Helps is the most overlooked, under-rated ministry in the church. Every year thousands of pastors leave the ministry. Most pastors quit because they are over worked and burned out. With a healthy “Ministry of Helps” at their disposal, this number would be considerably lower. Buddy Bell shares proven biblical principles that will help equip the local church to fulfill its God-given mandate while enjoying the experience. This book is a must read for leaders and lay people alike.

*Dr. Jim Willoughby
Senior Pastor
Echos of Faith World Outreach Ministries
Ontario, CA*

Rev. Buddy Bell is a trail-blazing pioneer in the ministry of helps. He is a man who has brought great encouragement and purpose to the lives of multitudes of believers called to serve in this often unrecognized, but vitally important, ministry. He is truly a “pastor’s friend” who understands the importance of “every joint supplies.” This book is full of insights on the importance of the ministry of helps in the local church. It showcases biblical examples of those who served as “ministers of help,” and is a delightful read marked with Rev. Bell’s trademark humor.

Our church is indebted to him for laying the foundation of helps in the early years. Imagine a whole army of helpers and servers in a local church that is stirred, challenged, and anointed. A church like that would glorify our Lord Jesus and shake the very foundations of hell!

*Joseph Prince
Senior Pastor
New Creation Church
Singapore*

You hold in your hands the road map to an exciting future!

Buddy Bell is a travel agent who has helped to send tens of thousands of people on a journey to a place far beyond the mundane. He will lead the way past the boundaries of just going through the motions. Pack your bags and get ready for the adventure of a lifetime.

Countless churches have been transformed into launching pads for significant life-changing ministry through the leadership of Buddy Bell. On these pages you will begin to understand that YOU are a major key for your church to experience the greater things God wants to do.

Thank the Lord for pastors and church leaders, but the transformation begins when every child of God begins to discover their place of service and ministry.

I am thrilled that you are taking this step and moving beyond the past. Your journey begins TODAY! Read each word prayerfully and embrace the dream that God places in your heart!

B. G. Nevitt

Senior Pastor

Decatur, Illinois

www.gtChurch.com

Buddy should have been a boxer because he knows how to knock some sense into the Body of Christ when it comes to the Ministry of Helps. His first book was mandatory reading when I started the ministry, and this book is definitely going to be another best seller. I'm so glad to have Buddy and Kathy as our close friends as we partner in teaching the Body of Christ. Get ready for the best 1, 2, combination that will change your ministry.

Pastor Orlando Barela

Household of Faith Family Church

Orange, California

“Every member a minister and every minister ministering” is the oft repeated mantra of churches today! This sounds great, but pastors everywhere still beg for volunteers while their church members either sit on the sidelines or attempt to become something, or someone, they’re not! How can we conquer the confusion?

Buddy Bell has used his practical, down to earth, and often humorous approach in thousands of churches to bridge the gap between “member” and “minister ministering.” Buddy simply, biblically, and powerfully explains and encourages church members in the true “ministry of helps.” This latest edition of Buddy’s teaching, *The Ministry of Helps, Volume 2*, will prompt believers to launch exciting but authentic ministries within their local church. Get ready, pastor! This book will position you for ministry multiplication, growth, and advancement!

*Pastor David Brown
Victory Church
Amarillo, TX*

My greatest challenge as a pastor is motivating people in the church to help with the many behind-the-scenes tasks. In reading Rev. Bell’s new book, *The Ministry of Helps, Volume 2*, I found the answer. It is the most practical and inspiring book on the subject I have read, and I will be using it in our new member’s class for years to come.

*Mike Buie
Cathedral of Praise
Sand Springs, Oklahoma*

Buddy and Kathy Bell have been a tremendous blessing to Omega Church for many years. *The Ministry of Helps, Volume 2* is an even greater blessing. Just when we think that Buddy has done his best, he causes us to believe even more that the ministry of helps is the greatest ministry of all.

*Pastors Ronnie and Zona Allen
Senior Pastors
Omega Church
San Antonio, TX*

Ministry of Helps, Vol. 2

*Equipping Believers to
Change Their World*

by

Dr. Buddy Bell



Harrison House
Tulsa, Oklahoma

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Dedication

My wife, Kathy, has served in the local church for many years and has never complained. I traveled a lot when our girls were growing up, and Kathy would shuttle the girls to school and to extracurricular activities, sometimes averaging 300-400 miles a day. She served in the nursery and ministry offices, and was a homemaker, mom, and great wife. But what amazed me the most was how she put together a women's conference for Marilyn Hickey Ministries, with over 6,000 women in attendance, and how she took on the task of feeding 100 youth workers. She would prepare small meals at home and take them to the church to feed the volunteers. They had two services so Kathy and her helpers would clean up after the first group, have fresh food for the second

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group, and provide food and drinks for the youth pastor and his staff. She always went the extra mile in serving others.

Even today, Kathy serves in our local church when we are home. She also oversees our ministry offices, runs her own business, and still makes time to love on our five beautiful grandchildren. I asked her one day why she does what she does. She said that it was just her heart to serve others. Kathy believes in the supernatural and that God can use anyone. What a woman of God! I know that God is very pleased with her.

God bless the people around the world, like Kathy, who have a heart to serve others—you are beyond the beauty of a rose.

Foreword

When Dr. Buddy Bell asked me to write the foreword for his new book, *Ministry of Helps, Vol. 2: Equipping Believers To Change Their World*, I was delighted to do so for a number of reasons. First, I have Dr. Buddy Bell to thank for the impartation that was made into my ministry at a time when we desperately needed it. My ministry was on the verge of growing and moving into a new church, and the anointing on his life in the Ministry of Helps has blessed my church tremendously.

A second reason I am honored to write a foreword for this book is because of the profound impact his previous work had on my life. In his book *The Ministry of Helps*, he helped me see the need for a spirit of excellence in my ministry. Although I read the book and taught it to my

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congregation, it was not until the anointed Dr. Bell walked into my church and opened his mouth did I know the profound effect he would have on my ministry. He blessed my life and blessed the lives of my church members. We experienced a transformation that has forever changed our way of thinking about every ministry in the church. No longer will nursery workers be just babysitters or diaper changers. From now on they are God's instruments of love, because each time they touch a child they nurture God's little lambs. Everyone in the Ministry of Helps has an anointing that only comes from God. Dr. Buddy Bell has opened my eyes and given me a whole new perspective on what it means to serve in ministry.

A third reason that I am honored to write this foreword is because in this book Dr. Bell clearly defines what it is to run a church God's way. He gives biblical instruction with a unique twist that only a man with his insight could expound on. I will never look at Jesus feeding the multitude in the same light after reading his account of this great

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event and the profound way he expresses it for the undergirding of pastors.

When you finish reading this book you will know that there is a way to run a church that benefits every individual. It takes everyone in a church to make the church work, and Dr. Buddy Bell brings it all together so clearly. With his insight he takes you from where you are now in your church to where God wants you to be. If you are a pastor that wants to see growth in your congregation, this is the book for you. If you want to experience what being a pastor with effective sheep is truly about, this book will open you up to experience God in the Ministry of Helps.

After you have read *Ministry of Helps, Vol. 2: Equipping Believers To Change Their World*, it will greatly impact your life. I am confident that you will be as blessed as I have been by the ministry of Dr. Buddy Bell.

Dr. Jonathon Carter
Siloam Church International
College Park, GA

Introduction

Every Christian wants to serve God. Many of us have just never been taught what to do, and we've never seen that *everything* we do for His kingdom is important. Some are new Christians who were not raised in churches and don't know anything about a church. All these believers know is that they come to church, they get blessed hearing somebody preach a good message, and they go home thinking, *Is that all there is to it?* They want more, but they don't know what "more" is.

That was my church experience for years until I realized I didn't want to just *go* to church. I wanted to *be* in church—which meant being *involved* in church. Eventually I found that serving in the church is a ministry, and it's in the Bible.

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I've been traveling for over twenty-five years now and have been in almost 2,500 churches, teaching on the ministry of helps. It always amazes me how many people in the Body of Christ still have not heard of the ministry of helps or have seen it in the Bible. Yet it has been there, right under our noses the whole time.

Several years ago I wrote a book to provide insight into the ministry of helps. Since then, so many people have expressed a desire to learn more about this important ministry, and I felt God wanted me to do a continuation of that teaching in a second book.

In these pages we're going to be looking at people who serve in their local church. If you're not serving in some way, I believe this book will help you by stirring the gifts that God has placed in you. My prayer is that it will motivate, assist, encourage, and enlighten you so that you can find your place in the Body of Christ.

You are valuable and important to your church. God brought you there for a reason, a purpose.

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With that in mind, I am going to show you in the Word of God that pastors don't make or break a church—*the members* make it or break it.

This teaching will accomplish four things:

You will understand why your pastor insists that you get involved in some area of ministry in the church.

You will develop a better attitude in serving.

If you are a pastor, you will understand why you are not wrong in wanting to delegate.

You will gain a better biblical understanding of the structure of the local church. Many believers don't really understand what the pastor's responsibility is and what their responsibility is. I think this point is probably the most important of the four.

You may already be serving in your church. If so, I'll be sharing some things with you that you already live. You're going to find out that what you do is of God, that it is in the Bible, and that it is a supernatural ministry.

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Jesus often told stories (parables) to make His points, and I'll be doing the same—telling true stories and answering questions I'm often asked, such as, “Is the ministry of helps really in the Bible? How do we lift up Jesus? Did God have me in mind when He designed the ministry of helps? What makes first-time church visitors want to come back?” You're going to see the Gospels in a whole different light and notice some things you probably never noticed before.

Helps: A Little Word With a Big Purpose

In the early 1980s, when I first started traveling and teaching on the ministry of helps, there were many times when I would go to my Bible with fear and trembling. I would open up to 1 Corinthians 12:28, which talks about the ministry gifts. The reason I say this is because the Bible says that we're not supposed to be moved by people's faces (Jer. 1:8), but you ought to see some of the faces I have to look at when I'm teaching this message! Some people look at me like, “Where are you coming up with this? You're making this up, aren't you?”

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Quite often I go back to 1 Corinthians 12:28 just hoping and praying that the little word *helps* is still there. God's Word never changes, *helps* is still there, and I've written this book to let you know why that is so important.

I'm not satisfied with your just showing up at church. I want you to get up out of your pew and get involved in the vision that God has placed upon your pastor's heart. In helping to fulfill your pastor's vision, you'll be able to go on and do all that God wants you to do and be all that He wants you to be—a believer who's equipped to change your world.

There is a big difference between calling church workers volunteers and calling them what the Bible says they are: ministers of helps. The mindsets of volunteers are completely different from the mindsets of ministers, so their actions are different. Let me explain what I mean by this.

Volunteers:

Consider themselves just helpers.

Help when it is convenient.

Are hesitant to make decisions.

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Do not see themselves as essential parts of the church or ministry.

Fail to see the true reward in serving.

Helps ministers:

Realize their area of service is a ministry.

Know they are a vital part of the church and ministry.

Know they have been empowered to minister within the guidelines set forth by the leadership of the church.

Understand that their service is building up eternal rewards.

I think you can see the difference between recruiting volunteers and commissioning ministers of helps. When pastors commission ministers of helps, they are not only doing the work of the ministry the Bible way; but they are also releasing the gifts and ministries of the members of their churches. Then, when a member of a congregation is commissioned into a ministry of helps, they understand that their contribution is vital to the health and success of their church. What a difference that makes!

PART 1

Running
the Church
God's Way

CHAPTER 1

Divine Design

I was raised on a farm in Illinois, and one of the highlights of my life before I turned sixteen and got my driver's license was going to my grandfather's farm and driving the tractors, the combine, and other vehicles he owned. That was really something to me. My biggest thrill was driving his truck because it had four on the floor, and I loved to shift those gears and pump that clutch!

I couldn't go to the farm any time I wanted to and take the truck out for a drive. I could only drive the truck when my grandfather was using it out in the field. One day I was at school, and I knew my grandfather had the truck out that day. So I decided

that after school I'd go over to his farm and drive it. I'd get to shift those gears and pump that clutch. Oh, how I wanted to drive that truck! That's all I thought about while I was in class, and I learned absolutely nothing that day at school!

Finally, the last bell rang. I bolted out the door and got on the school bus. The ride home took about an hour, so I sat up close to the front and watched the bus driver shift those gears and pump that clutch. I knew that in about an hour I'd be doing the same thing!

At long last I got home, got off the school bus, and hopped on my bicycle. My grandfather's farm was about a mile and a half away, and while I was riding my bicycle over there, all I could think about was driving that truck and how I was going to shift those gears and pump that clutch.

When I reached my grandfather's farm, I went directly into the barn, but my heart sank when I saw the truck. It was sitting by the tool shop with its hood up, and I thought, *Something's wrong*. I walked into the shop and Grandpa was there. He

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had the carburetor out of the truck, and it was all torn apart on the workbench.

I looked at him and said, “Grandpa, what are you doing?”

He said, “Well, Buddy, the truck wasn’t running too good so I stopped, took the carburetor off, and took it apart to clean it. I’m going to put it back together here in just a little bit, and we’ll get it going again.”

“Hurry up, Grandpa!” I said. I’d been waiting all day to drive that truck.

Grandpa cleaned the different parts of the carburetor, and then he began to put it back together. I noticed that he was taking more time with the smaller parts than he was with the bigger parts. On many of the little parts, he would go over to the shelf, get a book, and read about them for a few minutes before he would work on them.

That was just too much for me to bear. I soon blurted out, “Grandpa! Don’t mess with the little

parts. Just put the big parts together. I want to drive the truck right now.”

“Oh no, Buddy,” he said. “We’ve got to have all the parts to this carburetor, big and small, and we’ve got to have them all adjusted properly, or this truck won’t run right. It’ll run, but we won’t get the full potential, the full power out of this engine.”

“I don’t care about all that,” I said. “Just put the thing together, Grandpa, and let me drive. That’s all I want to do right now.”

He stood there for a moment with a thoughtful look on his face. Then he said, “Buddy, I want to prove something to you. You think some of these little parts are not that important, so I’m going to put the carburetor together and leave out some of them. I’m going to prove to you how important they really are.”

My grandfather proceeded to put the smaller parts on the workbench. He then put the big parts of the carburetor together and put it back in the truck. Then he got in and fired it up. The engine took off for a few seconds, but then it flooded out.

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Grandpa turned to me and said, “Now, Buddy, the reason this is happening is because you think that these so-called little parts are not that important, so I’ve left them out. But that’s why the truck is not running properly. I’ll prove it to you again.” He fired up the engine a second time and it initially took off, but in a moment it flooded out again.

This story is a clear-cut illustration of the way many modern churches are run. So often the church members expect more out of their pastors than just preaching. In small churches, they often expect them to do everything. The pastors jump in to their work, and at first they’re fired up and everything seems to be running smoothly. But after a while, they burn out because they can’t do everything themselves. They let some things slide for a while, and then they jump back in, all fired up to do everything. But before long, things fizzle out again because they need help.

Why does this happen in so many churches? I believe it’s because those churches develop the attitude that all they need is just the big parts. They don’t need the so-called little parts. They don’t need

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to get into the manual to learn about every member, every part, and how to finely tune and adjust them so that the church can get the full potential and the full power out of the Body of Christ.

When my grandfather put the carburetor together with every part and fired up the engine again, he got the full potential and the full power out of it; and the truck ran perfectly. Can you see from this story how much the church needs every believer working and functioning properly in the Body of Christ? Otherwise, the Body just won't run right. The church will run, but we'll only be running on half the power. We won't get the full potential out of the church if we don't have all the special members working and functioning properly *together*.

Divine Set-up

You may not realize it, but if you are a born-again believer, you are not just a member in the Body of Christ; you are a special member. It's in the Bible.

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Now ye are the body of Christ, and members
in *particular*.

1 Corinthians 12:27

Every believer is a “ye,” but the Bible calls you a “particular member.” When I read the word *particular*, I immediately think of the word *special*. You can even find that definition in some dictionaries.

Often I’ll mention that in my meetings, and most people will say amen and nod their heads in agreement. But I always have a few who will tell me later, “I don’t consider myself to be special. I’m at church every time the doors open, I believe I’m 100 percent behind the pastor, and I’ll do just about anything that needs to be done in the church. But I don’t know if I’d say I’m special.” If you can relate to that, relax. You don’t have to say that you’re special. The Bible has already said it for you.

I want you to see what else the Bible says about this. What we’re about to read is what God expects to be in the carburetor—I mean, in the church.

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God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that, miracles, then gifts of healings, *helps*, governments, diversities of tongues.

1 Corinthians 12:28

This is what God wants in the church. You would be amazed at how many times I've been asked if the ministry of helps is in the Bible, but there it is.

People are wide-eyed when they start to study this verse. They love to read about having apostles, prophets, teachers, working of miracles, gifts of healings—the ministry gifts that sound exciting—in the church. But these same people blink right over *helps*. They think, *What's that doing in the midst of all those exciting things for God?*

The truth is that God set the ministry of helps in the church. No man made it up. No committee put it together. It says right there in 1 Corinthians 12:28 that the same God who created the heavens and the earth set the ministry of helps in the church.

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Over twenty-five years ago I discovered the ministry of helps. I saw that it is a supernatural ministry that is just as valid and just as anointed as the offices of a preacher or a prophet. The reason is that our God is not a respecter of people. (Acts 10:34.) In other words, He does not value some of us above others.

We have what I call “specialties” for God. These are particular callings or giftings that each individual believer can give Him to use to fulfill His purpose: the salvation of the world. (John 3:16.) Wherever we fit in the Body, we are of equal value in God’s eyes.

What has happened to the church? Why do we respect some in the Body of Christ and regard them as higher than we do others? Doesn’t the Bible say that we are all in this thing together?

Please understand my heart. I’m not saying this to take anything away from prophets or apostles or any of the other ministry gifts. I thank God for all of them. I just believe that we should be what God wants each of us to be because the church needs

every member. We need all the parts of the Body working together.

How effective can the church be if we are all doing our part? When the disciples got their ministry of helps together, Acts 6:7-8 says, “The Word of God increased...the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly,” and “great wonders and miracles” were done “among the people.” Sounds like they began to change their world! That is how effective we can be if all members of the Body—big and small—will understand their importance and do their part with passion and excellence.

Excited To Serve

To be in the ministry of helps is to be “usefully employed in various ways as aids in promoting the temporal or spiritual welfare of the church.”¹ Noah Webster defines the word *helps* as “To aid; to assist; to bring a supply.” He says that it is, “strength or means furnished towards promoting...

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deliverance from difficulty or distress” and compares it to being “a servant.”²

You may remember from my first book on the ministry of helps this next definition by the well-known biblical scholar W.E. Vine, but it bears repeating. He defines *helps* as, “One of the ministrations in the local church, by way of rendering assistance, perhaps especially of help ministered to the weak and needy.”³ Are you beginning to get the picture?

Let me put it this way. If you’ve ever been prompted in your heart to render assistance or to give help to the weak and the needy, to help someone in difficulty or distress, *ye* were being prompted by the Holy Spirit to operate in this supernatural ministry of helps.

I’m sure you know people who have been sitting in church for years crying out to God, “Oh God, I want to do something for You.” At some point the Holy Ghost has probably spoken in their hearts, “We need some ushers in the church,” “We need somebody to come to the church and take

some food and clothing over to a needy family,” or, “Some nursery workers are needed in the church.” Not realizing and understanding that ushering, working in the nursery, and other areas of helps are supernatural ministries of God, they ignore His promptings because they want a pulpit ministry or something else that seems more “glorious.” And so they continue to cry out, “Oh God! I want to do something for You!”

A famous excuse that seems to be running rampant through the church is a word that just seems to rise up automatically; and once it leaves people’s lips, they think they’re free from serving. After these Christians have been asked to serve in some capacity in the church, they immediately come back with, “I just don’t *feel led* to do that.”

When I hear that excuse, I sometimes tell the person, “Let me lead you. The Bible says, ‘Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might’” (Eccl. 9:10 NIV). This is such a concern of mine that for many years I’ve been carrying something in my pocket to respond to that answer. Whenever I run across a Christian who has never

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felt led to serve in the church, I pull a lead bullet out of my pocket, place it in their hand, and tell them to squeeze it. When they do I say, “Now you’ve felt ‘lead.’”

Let me give you what I consider to be the most outstanding definition for the ministry of helps, written by someone who “felt led” in that area. It’s by a man named Godbey, who was a Pentecostal Holiness preacher in the 1800s. Rev. Godbey not only wrote a powerful commentary on the New Testament, but he defined the ministry of helps with excitement and enthusiasm.

I thanked God that I found someone who was excited about those who render assistance and give help to the weak and the needy. This man was passionate about every part of the Body of Christ, but look at his definition of the helps ministry.

Oh! The infinite value of the humble gospel helpers. Thousands of people who have no gifts as leaders are number one helpers. How grand revival work moves along when red-hot platoons of fire-baptized helpers crowd around God’s heroic leaders of the embattled hosts.⁴

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What a definition for a dirty diaper changer, for an offering bucket passer—for those who serve in any form of ministry in the church!

If you get more excited about apostles and prophets than you do about nursery workers, ushers, or greeters, you may be turning into a respector in the Body of Christ, and that's not going to get the job done. Remember, we're in this together. We need all the parts *working together*.

In my travels all of these years I've been amazed to see how some Christians treat other believers in the Body of Christ. I'm sure this doesn't go on in your church, but I've seen it in so many other churches—people looking down on those who work in the nursery, clean the church, visit nursing homes, drive the church van, or serve as ushers and greeters.

These giving people often hear statements like, “That's nice what you do; maybe one of these days God will really use you.” Or, “I'm glad God spoke to you about working in the nursery and not me. I mean, you've really got to be anointed to go work back there.”

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Then we have words to describe people in church who are faithful, committed, loyal, and trustworthy. That's not what we call those who are in the ministry of helps. We use other adjectives like weird, strange, and different. Or we tell them, "God broke the mold when He made you," and we laugh. Let me tell you something. Those words cut, and they cut deep.

Hosea 4:6 makes a simple statement but yet such a powerful truth regarding these ignorant statements: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

Watch Your Words

Over the years my wife, Kathy, and I have met hundreds of wonderful Christians who love Jesus with all their hearts, yet they have been destroyed because of a lack of knowledge concerning the ministry of helps. Many times it wasn't their own lack of knowledge that destroyed them, but it was the lack of knowledge of others around them, who didn't understand that their words could create or destroy.

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Death and life are in the power of the tongue.

Proverbs 18:21

Some of the most destroying words are spoken after church services—down the halls, in front of children’s rooms and nurseries—in hundreds of churches throughout this country. “Boy, you missed it! We had a tremendous service. How long is God going to have you back here?” Then we wonder why the pastor has such a hard time getting people to serve outside of the sanctuary. One reason is that people who serve there are constantly being told that they missed God.

How can you miss God when you’re serving Him? I think the only way you can miss God is when you’re sitting around, doing nothing. We have no shortage of those people in our churches!

In my case, for five and a half years I searched, trying to find my place in the Body of Christ. I would come to church and think, *There’s got to be more than driving to a building, sitting in a room, listening to stories about God, and going home. There’s got to be more.*

DIVINE DESIGN

I'll be honest with you. I thought, *If this is it, forget it!* Eventually I ran off to a Bible school, trying to be the man of the hour, the man of faith and power in the pulpit. It didn't take long before I found out that that wasn't it for me.

Then my wife and I got involved in a church where the pastor believed in raising up an army, not just an audience. I didn't realize it at the time, but it's easier to raise up an audience than it is an army. All the pastor has to do is tickle them behind the ear, where it feels good, with a nice sermon. But when you raise up an army, the toes are going to hurt because they're marching for the Lord and they're being stepped on a lot.

After a couple of months in that church, I said, "Kathy, there really *is* more to church than just driving to a building, sitting in a room, listening to stories about God, and going home." Funny thing was, every time we turned around we were called weird, strange, or different.

People would point at us, laugh out loud, and say, "God broke the mold when He made you two,"

just because Kathy and I were at the church every time the doors opened. We served in the nursery together. We would come on Saturday nights and clean the church to get it ready for Sunday mornings. And we didn't say we had to pray about it whenever we were asked to do something. Those words have never come out of our mouths. Whenever we've been asked to serve God, we say yes.

I believe that when your pastor asks you to do something in the church and you tell him that you have to pray about it, you're actually telling him that you hear from God, but he doesn't. Now either your pastor hears from God or he doesn't hear from God. If you don't think he hears from God, you need to go find one who does and attend his church.

Sometimes I'd go home from church at night and actually cry because of the things people called me. My pastor would tell me that it's just how some Christians react to someone who serves in church because they don't understand why we do the work that we do. That made sense, but it didn't make me feel better.

DIVINE DESIGN

I'll never forget the Sunday morning that I sat in church, and my pastor at that time opened up to 1 Corinthians 12:28 and began to read it out loud. When he got to that little word *helps*, he stopped. For a few minutes he talked about the ministry of helps. He did not preach or teach a message on the ministry of helps as I'm doing in this book, but he *expounded* on the ministry of helps. I had never heard it or seen it in the Bible before, and I'll never forget that moment.

I sat there with tears in my eyes, and I thought, *I'm not weird. I'm not strange. I'm not different. Most of all, God didn't break the mold when He made me. The mold is still in the Bible.*

Finally, after searching for five and a half years—confused, frustrated, and many times very angry toward God—I found out there was nothing wrong with me when I got excited during the offering because I was one of the ushers who got to hand out the envelopes and pass the bucket, because I wanted to come in on Saturday nights and clean the church and get it ready for everybody else on Sunday mornings, or because I wanted to go back

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into the nursery with my wife and serve so another family could hear the Word of God in the sanctuary.

I found out that morning that I had a ministry, and that it was called the ministry of helps. That's why every time I read the definition by Rev. Godbey, it just goes off on the inside of me like fireworks. It's me, and it's many other believers in the church today. It may even be you!

Do you understand now why God led you to read this book? I believe that this message is for you to help you find your place in the church (Eph. 2:10 NIV), or to remind you why you do what you do if you've already found your place.

God created His plan for the church in advance—and your part in it. As you read on, you're going to see some familiar believers who made it possible for one Man to fulfill His goal and change the world through His ministry because they found their place in the Body of Christ.

PART 2

Being About
Our Father's
Business

CHAPTER 2

Jesus and the Ministry of Helps, Part 1

It's amazing how many people actually think that Jesus did everything Himself. I know many church people think that way because in my travels I see firsthand how congregations expect their pastors to do it all.

They can't help that kind of thinking. They've been taught what I call "incomplete pictures" out of the Bible, showing that Jesus did everything Himself. But that is not a fact. Even Jesus had the ministry of helps. In these next two chapters, we're going to see how valuable the ministry of helps was to Jesus and why it is still needed today.

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I shared a story in my first book on the ministry of helps about a pastor I met in a restaurant who knew nothing about the helps ministry. When I tried to explain it to him, he got a fearful look in his eyes and told me that if I taught that in his church, he would lose his paycheck. Pastors need to pastor in faith if they're going to be effective, but too often they pastor in fear. Their messages are motivated by fear, and their congregations have put that fear upon them. What's sad is that in many cases we've used the Word of God to do it.

And he gave some, apostles; some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 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.

Ephesians 4:11,12

Some believers read those verses and think they are referring only to pastors; so they stop reading at “for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the

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body of Christ.” In their minds, this passage gives three things pastors are supposed to be doing:

1. the perfecting of the saints;
2. the work of the ministry;
3. the edifying of the body of Christ.

Actually, verse 12 states three purposes for the five ministry gifts that are mentioned in verse 11. Yet so often these verses are brought up to pastors before they are hired. The scenario often goes something like this.

The hiring committee, made up of the elders and the deacon board, usually has a meeting with the prospective pastor. During the meeting they say, “Pastor, we want to get a few things straight before you take over the church here, and we would like to use the Bible to show you what we expect out of you, and what God expects out of you.”

Then they proceed to read Ephesians 4:11-12 and say, “We see in this passage that God has given you to us. Do you understand that? Good. Now, let’s see what you’re supposed to be doing as our pastor.

“First of all, verse 12 says that you are here for the perfecting of the saints. In other words, we expect you to get up on the platform on Sunday mornings and evenings, on Wednesday nights, and whenever else we tell you to, and minister the Word of God. Do you understand that?” Good. Let’s go to number two.

“The second point is that you are here for the work of the ministry. That means doing church-related work in addition to preaching the Word on Sundays and Wednesdays. Our last pastor seemed to have a problem in that area, but we know you won’t have that problem, will you?”

When the prospective pastor nods, they continue, “The Bible clearly states here that if you’ll do these two things, the Body of Christ will be edified. In other words, we will be happy.”

Pastors have told me that this is exactly what happened to them. Anyone who subjects a pastor to that kind of hiring process is putting fear upon them. That pastor knows one thing for sure—they had better do the work of the ministry or they may

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lose their position. Looking at those verses in that way makes the ministry of the pastor an overly burdensome calling.

How sad that some pastors are put under that kind of fear and pressure, especially with the Word of God. One of the reasons a pastor is hired initially is because they are an anointed, powerful preacher. That's what the people like about them. But when they are expected to take care of all the work of the ministry, that means they will have to stop reading the Word and spending time in prayer (which is how they got the preaching anointing in the first place). Inevitably, they will lose the power and anointing to preach effectively.

So the pastor is caught in a vicious cycle of trying to do all the work of the ministry and preaching in all the services and meetings. If that continues, eventually they will start to slack up doing the work of the ministry so they can spend time again in the Word and prayer and get back the anointing to preach. Within a few months, the people will come to them and say, "Pastor, you seem to be falling behind on the work of the

ministry. Is there a problem?” and the pastor can’t win for losing.

Can you see why so many wonderful, powerful men and women of God have thrown in the towel? They feel pulled in so many directions that they finally say, “Forget it. Maybe I’m not called to be a pastor. I can’t get it together. I get ahead over here and I get behind over there. I try to catch up over there and I get behind over here,” and they quit.

Let me help you to understand exactly what the Word of God is saying in Ephesians 4.

Lifting Up Jesus

We just saw in verse 11 that, “He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers.” Do you know why God gave us pastors? It’s not to boss them around or to keep them poor in order to see if living a life of faith really works. That is actually how some Christians interpret this passage. Of course, neither of those is true.

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The answer can be found in verse 12. Let's read it from *The Amplified Bible*: "His [God's] intention was the perfecting and the full equipping of the saints (His consecrated people), [that they should do] the work of ministering toward building up Christ's body (the church)."

Why are we, the saints of God, being perfected and equipped by our pastors (who God has set in the church) to do the work of the ministry? "For the edifying of the body of Christ" (KJV). That word *edify* means to build up or to promote "another's growth in Christian wisdom...happiness, holiness."¹

Promoting others begins by first lifting up Jesus. In John 12:32, Jesus told us, "If I be lifted up...*I will draw all men unto me.*" *Lifted up* means "to exalt, to raise to dignity, honor."² How are we lifting up Jesus in church? Some church members think that it's by having the pastor do more work around the church—painting Sunday school rooms or mowing the grass. But I truly believe the answer has been here all the time.

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The ministry gifts cannot lift up Jesus all by themselves. Pastors cannot do it all alone. The church staff cannot do it by themselves. They need the members to do the work of the ministry, which is what they are equipping us to do!

If we will allow the ministry gifts to do their part—to perfect and to equip us with the Word—then we can begin to do our part (the work of the ministry). That will free up the pastor to accomplish their part, and others will be drawn to Christ.

You might say, “That’s just you. You’re hung up on this work thing. You think and breathe and live the ministry of helps. You just work in church all the time.” The truth is, Jesus functioned this way.

The Great Shepherd

In His ministry Jesus was our example of the ministry gifts in Ephesians 4. Do you know which one He was noted for, the one that stood out from the others? Some people say teacher. Others say prophet. But Jesus was not known as the great

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apostle or the great prophet or the great teacher or the great evangelist, even though He was all of those. He was known as the Great Shepherd.

The word *shepherd* is often used symbolically in the Bible to refer to pastor. Unfortunately, the ministry gift of pastor is thought of by some as the low gift on the totem pole. We talk about apostles, and we have that far off look in our eyes. We talk about prophets and evangelists, and we get a look of excitement on our faces. We talk about teachers and we have that studious look. Why is it that when we talk about pastors, we have the “they’re a dime a dozen” look? Nothing could be further from the truth!

Pastors are an essential part of the five-fold ministry, and Jesus was the prime example. On His way to the cross, He preached and taught and loved the people. He had compassion on them and healed them. Yet He didn’t function without the ministry of helps. The disciples helped Jesus fulfill His purpose and vision on earth.

Most pastors have a vision, a purpose, and goals, and Jesus was no different. When I've posed the question in churches, "What was Jesus' goal on earth?", I've heard a variety of answers.

- He was to fulfill the Father's will.
- He was to reveal God to us.
- He was to serve us.
- He was to redeem us to the Father.

How do we know He did all that? His goal was to get to the cross. If He didn't make it to the cross, none of the rest would have happened. That was His purpose here on earth and, thank God, He made it to the cross. But do you know how He made it?

Many people don't realize that certain things had to be completed in an allotted time and biblical prophecies had to be fulfilled before God would allow Jesus to be nailed to the cross. We're going to delve into some of these conditions now because they illustrate God's biblical structure for the church.

One Bible passage gives the account of something significant that happened on the way to the

cross—the feeding of the multitude. I’m sure that the way you’ve heard this story taught was that Jesus fed the multitude and all He had were five loaves of bread and two fishes. The way the picture has been painted to us is that Jesus did it all.

Five thousand men plus women and children were waiting to be fed, and Jesus took the five loaves and two fishes, looked up to heaven and blessed them, broke the fish and the loaves, and fed over five thousand people. But this account is not completely true. Jesus didn’t do it all by Himself. He had the ministry of helps around Him. I’m going to complete the picture of what happened that day. Keep in mind Ephesians 4:11-13 as we take a closer look at this story.

“You Feed Them”

After Jesus received the news of John the Baptist’s beheading, He left by boat to be alone. But a multitude of people heard of His departure and followed Him on land. When He went ashore and saw the great amount of people waiting for

Him, He had compassion on them and held a healing service. As evening approached, it was obvious that the people would need to eat soon.

The twelve disciples came to Jesus and said, “This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals [food]” (Matt. 14:15).

The twelve had this great idea about how the people should get food to eat, and they told Jesus what He ought to do. But Jesus answered the twelve, “They need not depart. Give ye them to eat.” (Matt. 14:16.) In other words, “You feed them.” Was Jesus being irresponsible? No, He knew that we have to be moving forward in service, doing our part, to be overtaken with blessings!

How did the disciples respond? The twelve said to the One (Jesus), “We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.” (Matt. 14:17.)

Have you ever heard that type of statement made in your church? “Pastor, you want to build

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what kind of addition to this building? Have you looked into our checking account lately?”

What did the One say to the twelve? “All right, men. I’ll tell you what. I’ll go and feed the first two thousand people just to show you that this is really going to work. Just hang in there with Me, and I’ll even feed twenty-five hundred people to prove to you that it works.”

Of course, Jesus didn’t say or do that, but how often is that version played out in modern-day churches? The deacons stand back and say, “Okay, Pastor. We’ve told you what to do and you won’t follow our advice. So we all agree that you should do it, and maybe we’ll jump in and help out. We’ll see if it works first.” So a pastor ends up doing most or all of the work, which prevents them from being able to focus on what God called them to do, and the multitude never gets fed.

In this biblical account, Jesus didn’t handle things all by Himself. He told the disciples to sit the multitude down near Him in groups of a

hundred and groups of fifty. (Mark 6:39,40.) This struck me as a very interesting move on Jesus' part.

Once while teaching this message in a church I said, "If I were to ask you to sit these people down in groups of tens or twenties, how would you do it?" One person responded, "Count them off one at a time." That was a good answer because after you've done that, you would be able to tell me exactly how many people were sitting down; there would be no guessing about it.

When I read this for the first time, I thought, *Jesus, that's not too smart. The disciples already know that all they have are five loaves and two fishes to feed this multitude. If You have them seat all those people in groups of a hundred and groups of fifty, they're going to know exactly how many people are out there, and they're going to get upset at the large number that need to be fed. You would be better off keeping them guessing as to the actual amount.*

But that would not be perfecting the saints, would it? Remember, our pastors are here to perfect us, just as Jesus was perfecting the disciples.

Keeping Right Attitudes

After the thousands of people had been seated on the grass, Matthew 14:19 says that Jesus “took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed, and broke, *and gave the loaves to His disciples*, and the disciples to the multitude.”

Who passed out the food? It’s clear from this verse that Jesus didn’t. The disciples passed out the food. The Bible goes on to say that the people “did all eat, and were filled: and they,” or the disciples, “took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.”

Let’s back up for a moment. We saw that the disciples told Jesus what to do and He said, “No, this is what you’re going to do.” Now remember that according to Ephesians 4:11-12, the ministry gifts are here to perfect and equip the saints so the saints can do the work of the ministry. When those two things are being done properly, the Body of Christ will be edified. Can you see it unfolding in this story? Jesus is perfecting the saints—in this case, the disciples.

I also want you to notice that Jesus is not doing much running around. He is saying to the disciples, “*You go get the food and bring it to Me. You pass it out.*” Then the disciples did as Jesus said and brought the food to Him. What did He do? He took the food, looked up to heaven, blessed it, broke it, and handed it back to the same men who had told Him what to do—the ones who knew exactly how many people were sitting out on that hillside. I believe that at that moment there was an opportunity for some unsaintly attitudes to surface!

Imagine the disciples standing there, looking at the five loaves and two fishes of bread, knowing how many people were out there waiting to be fed. They stare at Jesus, they glance at the food, then they look at the multitude. I believe at this point some interesting thoughts are going through their heads. *Maybe we ought to eat first. These people just show up every now and then. We’re with the Lord all the time. If anybody ought to go through the line first, it ought to be the staff.*

Isn’t that what often happens in churches? The staff goes through the line first, and they take the

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best of everything. Then, when the multitude comes in behind them, the multitude often doesn't get enough to eat.

How long would it take to pass out food to approximately 15,000 people? Could the disciples do it in five minutes? Ten minutes? Half an hour? An hour? It probably took several hours to pass out that food—and that was several hours to develop a bad attitude.

I can just imagine the disciples passing out bread and fish, thinking, *We told Jesus what to do. Why didn't He listen? What if we run out of food? So far, every time we reach in the basket, there's something in it. But we're probably going to run out soon. We should've eaten before we started passing out the food. Look how many people we've got left to feed! At this rate, there isn't going to be anything left for us to eat.*

Surely some of the disciples had those kinds of thoughts. After all, they were facing a big problem and they were human just like you and me. But notice that they didn't say anything. Those

thoughts were coming at them, but they threw them back down every time.

You're going to have problems too. That's just a fact of life. God's going to be there with you because He never leaves you or forsakes you (Heb. 13:5), but you decide what you're going to do with your problems. Negative thoughts will pop up in your mind during troubling times, but what you do with those thoughts determines the outcome.

The apostle Paul tells us that we're supposed to cast down all evil imaginations. (2 Cor. 10:5.) If we cast them down and refuse to dwell on them, then we won't speak them. It's when we start speaking them out loud that they grab hold of us and become a part of us. Then we've really got a problem! That's why the disciples didn't talk. They just passed out the food.

Picture the scene for a moment. The disciples begin walking toward the front of the crowd when they finish handing out the food, and Jesus is standing by twelve baskets with a smile on His face.

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At this point the disciples have another opportunity for a bad attitude. Jesus tells them to gather up the remaining fragments of leftovers and put them in those twelve baskets, so they're beginning to wonder, *Now He wants us to pick up all the food that's left over? When are we going to eat?*

Have you ever wondered why there were twelve baskets left that day? Why weren't there sixteen? Why weren't there twenty-one or eight or two? Why twelve? I'm convinced the reason is that there were twelve disciples and each basket was for each disciple.

At the end of a miracle you may forget that you had a part in that miraculous event, or you may think that God didn't really notice that you had a part in it. But God knows right where you are and exactly what you're doing at all times, and He's got many blessings waiting for you—especially when you keep a right attitude. All you need to do is get ready for heaven to open up and pour you out your basketful!

Get Involved

Imagine that you are one of the disciples that day. Let's say that you've been passing out food for several hours and every time you've reached into the basket, you've pulled out some bread and fish. Now you've come to number 15,000. Maybe this last person is your spouse. You reach into your basket and pull out a fish and a loaf of bread—number 15,000.

How would that have affected you? How would you have reacted? What would you have felt on the inside? I know it would have greatly encouraged my faith in God because when I get involved, I don't think about myself anymore; I only think about God and how wonderful He is!

Here's another scenario to consider. Suppose you were there that day, but you were just standing off to the side, observing Jesus watch your pastor give out the food. Your pastor has been passing out food all day and finally comes to number 15,000. This time they motion to you to reach into the basket and pull out bread and fish. You do it and

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hand it to number 15,000. What would that have done to you? It wouldn't be the same as watching your pastor do it, would it?

Yes, the pastor could do everything, and the church staff could do everything; but when *you* are involved, when *you* reach into that basket and pull out the fish and the bread and hand it to number 15,000, it does more to you than if you just stand back and watch the pastor and the staff do it all.

How important is it to get involved in church and be a part of reaching the multitude? It may make you feel good to sit back and watch people getting saved and lives changed, but if you're involved in the church and you have a part in changing those lives, it does something more to you—it changes your life as well.

Do you see Ephesians 4:11-12 in this story? Are you noticing how much work of the ministry Jesus is doing? He is doing His part.

He spoke it.

He delegated it.

He blessed it.

What did the disciples do? At first, they thought they knew best and told the Great Shepherd how they thought it should be done. But they ended up doing it His way.

They got the food.

They seated the people, which probably took at least an hour.

They passed out the food, which probably took several hours.

They picked up the fragments that remained, and that probably took several more hours.

The point is, when the disciples did their part, Jesus was able to do His part. A miracle took place, and the disciples received a great blessing.

Sometimes churches look at how many members they have and compare that number to the overall population of their city. Say a church has about fifteen hundred people. The leaders look at their city of two million plus people and think, *We're such a small church. How could we ever*

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reach the multitudes? But it's simple. When believers are willing to do the work of the ministry and allow pastors to do their part, there's no telling what can happen—even feeding a multitude with only five loaves and two fishes.

CHAPTER 3

Jesus and the Ministry of Helps, Part 2

Let's look at something else that happened to Jesus on the way to the cross.

And when he [Jesus] was entered into a ship,
His disciples followed him, And behold, there
arose a great tempest of the sea, insomuch that the
ship was covered with the waves: but he [Jesus]
was asleep. And his disciples came to him and
awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And
he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of
little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds
and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the

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men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!

Matthew 8:23-27

It is obvious here that Jesus is a leader, but I can remember having a different impression of Him when I was little. I would be watching television and flipping through the stations, and every now and then I would come across a movie that was about Jesus and the disciples. Or I would be reading books and seeing pictures of Jesus and the disciples, and I had this image of Jesus as being tall and pale with long hair. I pictured the disciples as a tight knit group of guys who followed about ten or twelve feet behind Him.

Back then I imagined Jesus in Matthew 8 came up to the dock, stepped into the boat, and the disciples were right behind Him. He told them, “All right, guys. Come on. We’re going to go across the lake to the other side. I have some work to do over there, and you can ride along and watch. Get in. Watch your step. Let’s try to even out the seating

here—half of you on this side, the other half on that side.

“It’s a beautiful day to be out on the sea. Are we ready? Okay now, *I’m going to row the boat*,” and Jesus grabbed the oars and started rowing. Soon He said, “What did you say? The wind’s picking up? There’s a storm brewing? Just hang on. I’ll row faster.”

So many pastors relate to my childhood version of this story, particularly when storms come up in their church and they hear, “This is your boat. Let’s see you get it to the other side.” But that isn’t what we read in the Bible. What really happened that day?

Jesus stepped into the boat all right, but He didn’t sit down and grab the oars. He went to the rear (Mark 4:38), made a bed, and laid down to rest because He knew He was going to have to minister when He got to the other side.

I believe some negative thoughts went through a few of the disciples’ heads when He did this. I can just see them looking at one another, thinking,

What's He doing? I mean, these oars will fit His hands just like they fit ours. It's His idea to go across the lake anyway.

That would have been no different than hearing someone in your church say, “Does anybody know the pastor’s whereabouts? It’s his idea to come down here and do all this work and paint all these rooms. He’s probably home taking a nap, listening to a Buddy Bell message.”

But notice the Bible doesn’t mention that the disciples said anything about Jesus. They may have had a few bad thoughts, but they didn’t speak them out. Instead, *they* grabbed those oars and started rowing the boat.

Soon the wind came up, the storm began to rage, and the disciples began to fear. So they went to the stern of the ship and woke up a Man who was getting His rest. They woke up a rested Man, and that rested Man came up on deck, pointed His finger at the storm, rebuked it—and the storm ceased.

When we go to sleep at night, we go to sleep to get some rest. Maybe we have to go to work the

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next day, we have a special meeting to attend where we will be ministering, or we have something else on our list of things to do that requires us to be totally rested. Jesus knew He had to minister when He got to the other side of the lake. So He went to the back of the boat and got some rest.

The point is that the disciples woke up a rested Man; and that rested Man was able to come up to the bow, speak three words to the storm and turbulent waves, and put an end to a bad situation.

You may not be aware of what pastors who have to “row the boat” themselves go through. Without a competent ministry of helps working with them, they become overworked and less effective. They never get enough rest to make up for all the work they are doing. Let’s take a moment to see what could easily be a typical week for this kind of pastor.

Who’s Rowing the Boat in Most Churches Today?

Monday morning, the phone rings. It’s Sister Jones wanting to know, “Pastor Joe, were you

preaching at me Sunday morning? It seems as though every time you made a point, you were looking right at me.” Now Pastor Joe’s already got a long list of things to do, but he takes the time to explain that he wasn’t preaching just to her.

As soon as he hangs up the phone, it rings again. This time it’s Brother Jenkins, who has the same question. So he has to go through the whole explanation again. Now he’s really behind schedule, and he has to run across town to a discount store to get toilet paper and light bulbs for the church. He tries to make up for the lost time on the phone, but he isn’t able to do it. As a result, on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings he’s up early, but he’s behind schedule and still has a long “To Do” list.

He’s got to pick up some supplies, get the mail from the post office box, visit Brother Smith in the hospital, and mow the lawn (or shovel the snow). He runs here; he runs there. He takes care of this; he takes care of that. And somehow he has to prepare and preach a message at the Wednesday night church service.

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Saturday morning, he wakes up and prays that no one will call him that day. Then he will have time to study for the Sunday message. Suddenly the phone rings. He answers and it's Brother Thompson, who proceeds to tell him that he's at the church. Pastor Joe says, "What are you doing down there? Oh, you're having a meeting? You're going to paint the Sunday school rooms? Yes, I've got paint brushes and a ladder. You want me to come down there? But today is Saturday, and I've got to get something together to preach tomorrow. What? Okay, I'll get it out of a book."

Pastor Joe hangs up the phone, goes down to a meeting he didn't call, and he starts painting the Sunday school rooms. When evening comes everybody leaves because tomorrow's Sunday, and they go to church in the morning. But Pastor Joe stays to complete the paint job and clean up. He doesn't get home until late that night.

When he finally comes home, Pastor Joe's wife is still up. She's kept his dinner warm. He walks in very hungry because he hasn't had a decent meal all week. He's extremely tired because he's been

running around too much every day. Before he sits down to eat, he looks over at the couch and realizes how worn out he is from all that he's been doing. Does he eat or does he rest? He walks over, drops on the couch, and immediately falls into a deep sleep.

Pastor Joe is awakened abruptly when the phone rings. Another church member is calling, this time with a question about the book of Revelation. He stays up late that night discussing everything this church member has concerns about. When he finally hangs up the phone, it's early Sunday morning, so he doesn't go to sleep. He takes a shower and gets dressed because he's got to get down to the church early. Why? He has the only key to the building, and some of the church members don't like sitting in their cars waiting for the church to open.

Soon it's time for the service to start. Pastor Joe comes up to the platform (the boat deck). He's tired and worn out and hasn't been in the Word all week. He steps behind the podium, looks out across the congregation (the sea). He sees the wind blowing

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and the storm raging (all the strife and jealousy and other problems of the people) sitting in the seats.

What does Pastor Joe do? He hasn't had time to be in the Word or to be in prayer. He hasn't had time to get any rest. So he looks at the storm and the wind and thinks, *Oh my God. What am I going to do? God, forgive me. I know I should've been in the Word. I know I should've been in prayer. But I had to go do this and take care of that. They wanted me to do all those things. God, forgive me.*

Pastor Joe doesn't know that the Bible speaks of a different way of doing things. The pastors God envisions have the ministry of helps rowing the boat across the sea for them. They don't have to go running everywhere during the week or take care of everything themselves or come in to meetings they don't know anything about. They have help.

They don't have to paint all the buildings and add on a third story with their own hands. The ministry of helps is doing these things. They don't have to come in early on Sundays and Wednesdays and clean up the nursery and the church. The

ministry of helps is taking care of it—rowing the boat across the sea—and *they've* got their own keys to the building.

When these pastors come to church on Sundays and Wednesdays, they can't wait until it's time for the service so they can get up to the podium and preach. They have been in the Word. They have been in prayer. They have had a good night's sleep and are rested. They are thinking, *Hurry up with those announcements. Release me and let me get to preaching!*

When they are introduced, they leap up behind the podiums (on deck). They look out across their congregations (the sea) and see the wind blowing and the storm raging (all the strife and jealousy and problems). But they plant their feet upon the solid rock of Jesus Christ, point their fingers at the enemy, and rebuke the wind and the storm with the Word of God. Then the peace that passes all understanding (Phil. 4:7) permeates their churches because they have had time to be in the Word and in prayer during the week. They have had time to rest and sleep as well.

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Can you see why the ministry of helps is so important? Did you see how much ministry work Jesus did? In this case it was necessary for Him to take a nap while the disciples rowed the boat across the sea. Here's another time when Jesus did His part, the disciples did their part, and a miracle happened as a result. When they got to the other side, Jesus delivered two demon-possessed people and they were set free. (Matt. 8:28-33). Some church folk can't even "row" the Gospel across the road to their neighbors to set them free!

More miracles took place while Jesus was on His way to the cross because the Great Shepherd and His helps team were cooperating with each other. Imagine what could happen if the modern church operated that way.

Leading the Donkey

Years ago, I was an usher in the church I was attending, and we who were in the ministry of helps decided to do something special for our pastor. On Sunday mornings, we would drive him

to church. Unfortunately, there were some people who had a problem with that. They thought that he had asked us to do it. But it was strictly voluntary. We wanted to do it for him. Let me tell you why.

There is something that can easily happen to anyone when driving to church on Sunday mornings. When we leave the house, many times we're praising the Lord. But by the time we get to church, we aren't praising the Lord anymore. We are mad at the devil! Maybe someone cuts us off on the road or takes the parking spot we were headed for in the church parking lot. We cry out, "You're not going to believe what this woman did to me at the corner!" Or "Wait till you hear what happened to me in the parking lot!"

The Bible says that the devil comes to steal, to kill, and to destroy, and that we're not to give place to him. (John 10:10 and Eph. 4:27.) So, we decided that we were not going to give the devil any opportunity to steal the message in our pastor's heart by getting his mind on something else. James 1:8 says that a double-minded person is unstable in all his ways. We wanted the best out of our pastor. We

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wanted him to be perfectly in tune with the Holy Spirit when he ministered to us on Sundays.

We told our pastor, “You sit in the back seat and read your Bible and pray. We’ll take care of the devil, and we’ll get you to church on time. You just stay hooked up to heaven and on what God has in your heart because we want 110 percent from you on Sunday mornings.

Some people had a problem with that, but there’s actually Scripture on it. There’s a story in the Bible that says Jesus didn’t drive His donkey in to Jerusalem. The disciples led His donkey in.

And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples.

Matthew 21:1

I don’t know if you have been noticing this, but Jesus is really big into delegating.

Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring

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them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you,
ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and
straightway he will send them.

Matthew 21:2,3

The two disciples didn't stand there and say,
"Jesus, why don't You go get Your own donkey?
You go over there and say, 'The Lord has need of
them.'" No. They had the right attitude. Perhaps
they knew that this was more than just the Pastor
being bossy.

All this was done, that it might be fulfilled
which was spoken by the prophet.

Matthew 21:4

Now wait a minute. You mean this wasn't
Jesus' idea to do this? No, this wasn't Jesus' idea.
He was fulfilling Bible prophecy. (Zech. 9:9.) He
was doing the will of God. Some people think that
pastors sit in their offices all day just thinking up
things for people to do. "Is that all they do, just
come up with these ideas? When do we get a
break?" But pastors are continuously seeking the
will of God for their church. Their primary concern

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is that their people be happy and successful in the perfect will of the Lord.

Pastors stand on the platform on Sunday mornings and tell their congregations what they need to say and do when they get in certain situations. They assure them from God's Word that He will deliver them. But some people have a bad attitude about it and say to themselves, *They think I'm going to do what they say, but they don't work where I work. They don't live where I live.* Thank God the two disciples didn't get into that kind of thinking when their Pastor gave them direction.

The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats.

Matthew 21:6,7 NASB

I want to point out something else that I believe is going to help you. I don't know if you noticed this, but the two disciples brought Jesus a brand-new donkey, one that had never been ridden. They didn't get Him an old, worn out, beat-up-looking

donkey. What am I saying? It's okay for pastors to drive a nice car.

Donkeys were the mode of travel in that day just as cars are for us today. Why do we expect our pastors to drive around in an old, beat-up car that has bald tires and smells horrible? Let me tell you, a new donkey smells differently than a used donkey, and a new car smells differently than a used one. But some people have a problem when a pastor gets a new car.

What did Jesus do when they brought to Him the donkey that no one had ridden before? He got on the donkey, but He didn't drive the donkey into town. The disciples led the donkey into town, helping Jesus to fulfill His calling and to make it to the cross.

Come to Their Need

We can also see the part that Jesus' ministry of helps played in the story of the blind man who sat alongside the road. This is how it is usually taught.

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One day blind Bartimaeus heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, and as Jesus was walking down the street, he cried out, “Thou son of David, have mercy on me” (Mark 10:48). When Jesus heard his cry, He stopped in His tracks, walked over to Bartimaeus, laid His hands on him, and healed his eyes.

Of course, that’s not exactly how it happened, but it’s the incomplete picture that some preachers paint for people. What’s been left out here is often not taught or emphasized when this story is told. I believe that it’s another example of the most important key to the modern church functioning God’s way.

When Jesus walked along the road, Bartimaeus heard that He was coming and shouted, “Thou son of David, have mercy on me!” Jesus heard his cry and stopped in His tracks. But here’s the difference, and it’s the key to the way the local church ought to function. Jesus said, “Bring him to Me,” and the disciples, who were standing off to the side, came to the blind man’s need.

Surely the disciples had some thoughts about this procedure and could have developed a bad attitude by speaking them out. When Jesus gave that command, they could have said to Him, “Why can’t You walk over there? The man is blind and he’s calling for You, Pastor. You should go visit him.”

Or they could have told the blind man what many in churches today believe: “I don’t know why He has to have a prayer line at the end of every service. I’d like to get out of here early, but that won’t happen. Just stand there, Bartimaeus. He’ll be over here in a moment.” Then we wonder why miracles happen in so few of our churches!

The disciples didn’t talk that way to Jesus, and they didn’t say those words to Bartimaeus. They said, “Be of good comfort, rise; he [Jesus] calleth thee” (v. 49). I believe that they knew before Bartimaeus got what he needed that he was going to get it.

They spoke positive, encouraging words to someone in need, words that meant, “You’ve got

questions, and you're going to get an answer. You've got a need, and it's going to be met."

Then they brought him to Jesus, who said to Bartimaeus, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole," and immediately that blind man received his sight.

How many times have people come to their pastor and said, "Pastor, I have a relative (a friend, or a neighbor) who really needs Jesus, and if you would just stop by and visit with them or have coffee with them sometime, I know they would come to church. They really should be here because they are greatly troubled, and I know that God will meet their needs if you would just go by their house."

The problem is that this is request number 440 that the pastor has received that week. If they handle all of them, they won't have time to study the Word and do their part as the pastor. What am I saying? Be like the disciples—*you* go visit your friends and relatives. Have coffee with them, tell

them they need God and that they need to be in church—and then *you* bring them to church.

You tell them that you know where the answers are to their questions and that you'll come by on Sunday morning and pick them up and take them to church with you. You'll simply be telling them what the disciples told Bartimaeus, "Be of good cheer. The Master calls for you."

That may be why people don't get saved or healed in your church. Are you doing your part? If you want to see people get saved, there have to be unsaved people in your neighborhood, your family, or your place of work. How are they going to get there? You bring them to church. If you want to see sick people get healed, and there are probably some sick people in your church, you should go get them and bring them to church.

If you do your part and bring them to church, then the pastor can do his part; and your friends or loved ones may even end up walking down the aisle in response to the altar call. If they need to receive Jesus, they'll receive Jesus. If they need a

miracle, they'll receive their miracle—all because you obeyed God's call to the ministry of helps.

Be in Your Own Story

Do you remember Jesus' statement, "If I be lifted up, I'll draw all men unto Me"? Jesus eventually made it to the cross. But He only had a certain amount of time to get there, and He could have been late and missed it.

If Jesus had sailed in the boat by Himself, if He had passed out all the food by Himself, if He had gone to get the donkey and ride it in to Jerusalem by Himself, He would not have made it to the cross on time. I believe the reason He fulfilled His goal was because the disciples didn't develop a bad attitude, even though they had many opportunities, and they did their part. Because they operated faithfully in the ministry of helps, Jesus made it to Calvary on time.

When the Roman soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross, that cross was lying on the ground. After

they nailed His hands and feet to it, they picked it up, and they dropped it into a hole, fulfilling His spoken words and Bible prophecy that when He was lifted up, He would draw all men to Him.

Jesus finished what was in His heart to do on the way to the cross because of the ministry of helps. He taught the disciples and us how to serve. Then, in dying on the cross, He became known as a servant to all. (Mark 10:33.) He is our role model, and as we serve Him by serving others, we lift Him up and people will come to Him to be saved.

Every pastor should be known as a servant to all and be able to fulfill everything that God has placed upon his heart, *and so should we*. If you are not serving in your church let this book challenge you to find your place, get involved, and do all that God wants you to do. Instead of just reading these stories, be in your own stories with God and be part of lifting up Jesus to people in your world.

CHAPTER 4

God Uses Both Stars and Candles

While writing this book, I came across another definition of the ministry of helps in the *Broadman Bible Commentary* that is going to be the focus of this chapter. It describes the plan God has for His church and starts off by saying, “There is no hierarchy in the gifts of God. The ministry of the Church does not rest on status, but on service.”¹

Status does not impress God. Status does not move God. The only thing that impresses and moves our God is service. So many believers think that you must have status before God will really use you and do something for you. But this quote

goes on to say, “No gift that serves others is little,” and it ends with a statement that is what I’m going to be focusing on: “God uses both the *stars* and the *candles* to light His world.”²

The term *stars* refers to those in the forefront of ministry—men and women who are called of God to be preachers and teachers of the Word, prophets, Christian artists, worship leaders, and the like. We know all the stars in the Bible—people like Noah, Moses, Esther, and Paul—but many *candles* are found in Scripture too. Jesus’ own disciples are an example of candles called to help a Star fulfill His vision and accomplish His goals.

Those stars and candles in the Bible are people who were human just like you and I. They didn’t come from another planet, and you’re going to meet two of those candles in a moment. Maybe you haven’t been called to be a star in God’s kingdom, but every believer can be a candle.

It is a scientific fact that the intensity of light is measured by candles (technically known as foot-candles).³ When something provides illumination,

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the light that is measured must come from a light source. Jesus is our spiritual light Source when we become born again. He told us that He is the light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5), and the apostle Paul said that we are to be reflections of His light.

Show yourselves to be blameless and guiltless, innocent and uncontaminated, children of God without blemish (faultless, unrebukable) in the midst of a crooked and wicked generation [spiritually perverted and perverse], among whom you are seen as bright lights (stars or beacons [candles, author's paraphrase] shining out clearly) in the [dark] world.

Philippians 2:15,16 AMP

Jesus also told us in Matthew 5:14-16 that because we are in Him, we are the light of the world. He said that we are to let our light shine and not hide it. It just so happens that in God's overall plan, some of us are stars and some are candles, but it's the same light of His Son Jesus shining through us to disperse the darkness holding our world in its death grip.

We all know that candles can shine at any time—day or night—even during storms, which is when you bring the candles out. In a storm, you may not be able to see the stars, but candles will still shine brightly. Let's see how this relates to us spiritually.

Imagine that you are in a spiritual storm, surrounded with darkness. Suddenly there's a knock at your door. You go to the door and find out it's a candle. This person says to you, "I heard you were in a storm. I just want to bring some light into your life."

A little time goes by and there's another knock at your door. You open the door and it's another candle. This person tells you the same thing, "Heard you were in a storm and wanted to bring some light and some warmth into your life."

More time goes by and the phone rings. You answer it and on the other end is a candle who tells you, "Heard you were in a storm and wanted to bring some light and some warmth into your life." The next thing you know, you're surrounded by candles. You're surrounded by light, you're

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surrounded by Jesus, and suddenly you realize the storm has departed.

Are candles starting to sound pretty important?

Every four days I'm on an airplane going somewhere in the world, and I fly quite often at night. When the pilot turns on the lights on both wings of the airplane, hundreds of thousands of "candles" are being lit. The reason is so that the pilot can land the plane in the dark. Pilots need "candles" to penetrate that darkness and see the runway in order to land the plane safely.

Think how much darkness you could penetrate with ten thousand candles lit on your left and ten thousand candles lit on your right. You could "land" the Gospel anywhere in the world. All it takes is candle power.

God Remembers What We Do To Help Others

Now I'm going to introduce you to the candle I mentioned earlier. One of the first things I plan to

do when I get to heaven is to go to this person, sit him down, and ask him what his name is because not only has he helped me so much over the years through his faithfulness and his commitment, but I can relate to him as a nameless person.

Many times in the past my name was not said when I was introduced in church. For instance, the pastor would tell someone, “There’s our head usher,” or “There’s one of our nursery workers,” without mentioning my name. He probably didn’t realize he was doing that, but sometimes it bothered me because it implied that I was not that important.

Later, when I’d go into churches to minister, pastors would talk to me the same way about their bus captain, their outreach director, or other ministry of helps workers. Occasionally I’d ask the pastor what their names were out of respect for those people and because I’d think of the nameless candle I had discovered in the Bible.

This man appears in the book of 1 Samuel. Israel had just defeated the Philistines, but they had regrouped and had come back.

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And the Philistines gathered together to fight with Israel, 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude. And they came up and pitched in Michmash eastward from Bethaven. And when the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.

1 Samuel 13:5

Do you ever feel like you're surrounded? Do you ever feel like there are more of our enemy than there are of us? Try to visualize this scene and how the Israelites must have felt. The Philistines had surrounded Israel with thirty thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen, and so many infantry that to count them would be like trying to count sand on the seashore. When the Israelites saw this, they panicked, ran away, and tried to hide in caves, in rocks, and in thickets. They even hid in a pit.

Have you ever been in a pit? Doing something foolish can get you into a pit, and Israel did a foolish thing. They needed tools of war, but the

Philistines had made sure that not one blacksmith could be found in all of Israel. (v. 19.) It is possible that in previous wars the Philistines took away all of Israel's smiths and didn't allow any iron tools to be forged by the Philistine smiths except for farming.⁴ *Israel didn't try to secretly make their own weapons*, and now there were only two swords left in the land—Saul had one and his son, Jonathan, had the other.

I'm sure you've heard of Saul and Jonathan in the Bible. They are both stars. But I want to introduce you to a candle who served one of these stars faithfully. Have you ever heard of the armorbearer for Jonathan? You may feel that he can't be that important because his name isn't mentioned in the Scriptures. But God doesn't forget what we do to help others; and as we're about to see, an armorbearer was a man of resource and courage who protected his fighting companion during battles.⁵ He just might have known that God uses both stars and candles to light His world.

Committed To Win

Jonathan said to the young man that bear his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised.

1 Samuel 14:6

Jonathan had just come up with the big idea of taking his armorbearer and one sword and going to spy out the enemy camp—an enemy who was armed with swords, spears, and bows and arrows. So he said to the young man who bore his armor, “Come on. Let’s go.”

What would be going through your head at that moment if you were Jonathan’s armorbearer, especially when Jonathan went on to say, “It may be that the Lord will work for us”? Nothing like starting off with a little doubt! That young man was probably thinking, *I’ll just smile and maybe he’ll forget about it.* But then Jonathan got back into faith, saying, “There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.”

Some believers might have said to Jonathan, “This is your big idea. You’ve got the only sword. Why don’t you go on up and check it out. If everything works out okay, I’ll catch up later.”

How many times have pastors heard this kind of statement from church members? “You want to buy what kind of a building?” or “You want to go where and do what? Well, if and when you accomplish that, then I’ll start helping in this church.” When God speaks to a Jonathan and says, “Listen, there’s a battle,” sometimes that’s when their armorbearers bail out.

Jonathan’s armorbearer didn’t bail out, did he? Look at what he says, “Do all that is in thine heart: Turn thee; behold, I’m with thee according to thy heart” (v. 7). What a statement of commitment. Yet, some people struggle with that statement. They think that the armorbearer was brainwashed or that he was going by blind faith.

What if we change the word *heart* to *vision*? Isn’t that where the vision is, in the heart? What if the armorbearer had said, “Do all that is in thine

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vision...I'm with thee according to thy *vision*”? How important is it to have a godly vision for our lives? Proverbs 29:18 says that without a vision, we perish.

Several Bible translations of that verse refer to *vision* as revelation of God (AMP), seeing what God is doing (MESSAGE), and divine guidance (NLT). Now can you understand why the armorbearer had no problem following a man of vision?

Let me ask you another question. Who was the armorbearer making this commitment to? This is where a lot of people make their mistake. They think that his commitment was to Jonathan, but he was not making his commitment to a man. He was making his commitment to God.

Sometimes people make a commitment to a person, and when the person stumbles and falls, they stumble and fall too. Then they wonder why. The armorbearer made his commitment to God, who never falls or fails. He recognized that the vision in Jonathan's heart came from God, and because God put it there, they could not lose!

Stand Your Ground

It may have appeared that Jonathan and his armorbearer were going to get themselves killed. After all, they were outnumbered, there were only two of them, and they only had one sword. But this was a God-inspired plan, and Jonathan told his courageous companion how they were going to carry it out.

“Behold, we will pass over unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them. If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come unto you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them. But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the Lord hath delivered them into our hand: and this shall be a sign unto us.”

1 Samuel 14:8-10

Jonathan was saying, “Come on, I know where there’s a battle. This is what we’ve got to do to get there and win.” Did Jonathan’s armorbearer say, I’ve got to pray about this first,” or did he immediately follow Jonathan?

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“Both of them discovered [showed] themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines.”

1 Samuel 14:11

This is where some armorbearers fall away. When the pastor tells them his vision for the church, they don’t get behind him. A typical reaction could be, “Maybe we’re jumping the gun here a little bit. After all, he is young, and this is his first pastorate. Maybe we need to get together more to pray before we follow him into this battle.”

If that describes you, before you join hands with your fellow armorbearers for prayer, have someone read Hebrews 6:10 out loud. Then remind yourselves that God uses both the stars and the candles to light His world. Also, be aware that the enemy has evil schemes up his sleeve to make you fail and retreat.

Notice that the Philistine enemy brought up Israel’s past failures, saying, “Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves” (v. 11). Have you ever been reminded of your past when you were out doing something

for God? That's a tactic of the enemy to stop you from finishing what God's called you to do. It didn't stop Jonathan, and it doesn't have to stop you.

And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armourbearer, and said, Come up to us and we will shew you a thing.

1 Samuel 14:12

Jonathan wasn't fazed by their remarks. He said to his armorbearer, "Come up after me: for the Lord hath delivered them [into our hands and] into the hands of Israel." The armorbearer didn't have a sword in his hand, but he was still with Jonathan.

And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet *and his armourbearer after him.*

1 Samuel 14:13

Here's another point where Jonathan's armorbearer could have bailed out and run away. But I believe at that moment he reminded himself of his pledge to Jonathan at the bottom of the hill, "Do all that is within thine heart. *And behold I'm with thee according to thy heart.*" We know he kept his word

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because the Bible says that he climbed up on his hands and feet after Jonathan. In other words, when Jonathan stood up, he stood up. When Jonathan moved forward, he moved forward.

I've had many wonderful armorbearers over the years, but a few of them didn't tow the mark. When there was a battle to be won and I would tackle a project, instead of pitching in and helping me, they would say, "You ought to be happy I just show up." Or they'd stand there and watch without lifting a hand; and when it was over, I'd tell myself, "You did that perfectly." Most people would rather just sit there and watch. If you know someone like that, I encourage you to give them a copy of this book.

Pick Up the Sword

I don't know about you, but I don't want to be behind a Jonathan who goes into a battle just singing "Onward, Christian soldiers, marching onto war"⁶ and walking backwards! I want to follow a Jonathan who knows how to go into a battle and how to use a sword.

When Jonathan's loyal armorbearer followed him into battle, "they [the Philistines] fell before Jonathan; *and his armourbearer slew after him*. And that first slaughter, which Jonathan *and his armourbearer* made, was about twenty men" (vv. 13,14).

Now that is a puzzling passage. Initially the armorbearer didn't have a sword. Jonathan had the sword. So how did the armorbearer fight "after him"? Perhaps he stood there and cried, "Fall!" Or maybe he encouraged Jonathan, saying, "They don't like us. They laughed at us. You've got the sword of the Lord; make them fall before you. There's a soldier, right there, Jonathan. Here's another soldier, over here. Go get them, Jonathan!" But I'm sure that's not what happened.

This armorbearer was right behind Jonathan, and I believe that he stumbled upon a dead soldier who had a sword. He wasn't using it anymore, so the armorbearer picked it up, and now there were two swords in the battle. But there would not have been two swords in the battle if the armorbearer had said, "This is your project, Jonathan. You've

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got the only sword. Why don't you go on and check it out. If everything works out okay, then I'll catch up later."

Many people feel that their pastor is the only one who really knows how to use the sword. Of course, I'm not talking about a real sword. One way the Bible uses the term *sword* is to symbolize the Word of God. (Eph. 6:7; Heb. 4:12.) We use the sword of the Word in spiritual battles to defeat the devil by speaking it out loud when we pray for ourselves and others. Another way we use the sword is by tackling a project—just showing up, pitching in, and helping the pastor.

If the armorbearers would just show up for the battle, if they would just try to defeat the first obstacle the enemy puts in their way, they would realize that it works, and they would pick up their swords every time. Then there would be at least two swords in the battle. Imagine what the church could accomplish then!

Look what happened when Jonathan and his armorbearer went into battle together. God used a

star and a candle, and they were dropping the Philistines left and right.

And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armourbearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow. And there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling.

1 Samuel 14:14,15

That word *slaughter* tells me that Jonathan didn't come into the enemy camp and politely ask if anyone wanted to swordfight. He came in swinging his sword so forcefully that it caused "a very great trembling" on the earth.

Perhaps it was inconceivable to the Philistines that only two Hebrew men would attack them, so they were terrified at the thought that there must be a larger force of Israelites just over the rocky slope. The sudden shock of the attack, aided by an earthquake, caused the Philistines to tremble with panic and become so confused that they began "swinging

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their [own] swords wildly, killing each other” (v. 20 MESSAGE).

The whole mission was begun and carried out by the faith of a star and a candle, but it was born of God who gave them the victory when they worked together to accomplish His will. That’s what it is going to take to spread the light of Jesus and penetrate the darkness in the world. It is going to take the stars and the candles *working together*.

God Also Uses Women

In Acts 9:36-43, the Bible tells us about the life and ministry of a woman named Tabitha, who is also called Dorcas. I’ll never forget the first time I read this passage about her. I had a poor image of women because of how I was raised on the farm and how I had been taught. All I saw women do in our family was cook, sew, clean house, and have babies. And the teacher of the first Bible study I attended was a man who said that the Bible says women are to be quiet in church. They are never to stand before a group of people and teach the Word

of God. He wasn't married, and I think he had a problem with women in ministry.

I'll never forget the first class I had when I got to Bible school because it was on women in the Bible. The teacher said that God uses women in ministry. I thought, *Man, we just got them under control, and now you say God wants to use them!* Obviously, I was a little confused at that time.

When I read about Dorcas in the book of Acts, I wondered why the Bible was talking about her. She didn't do anything that great, like preaching or healing the sick. She just did "good works and almsdeeds." To me, that sounded just like the women where I grew up. It certainly didn't sound like she was a minister. Then she got sick and died. Other believers washed her and prepared her for burial, and she went to heaven (Buddy Bell translation), but it seems God wasn't done with her. Her friends went to get Peter.

Dorcas's friends showed Peter the coats and garments she had made. At that point I'm thinking, *Did she do that much to justify Peter coming to*

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her? But God uses both the stars and the candles to light His world. It says Peter told everyone to leave, and he kneeled down and prayed. What did Peter pray? Some say he prayed a great prayer of faith. Some say he asked God to heal her. But I believe his prayer might have sounded a little like Hebrews 6:10.

“God, You are not an unrighteous God. You will not forget our work and labor of love. And Tabitha has put forth a lot of work and labor of love. Hear, oh God.” Then he turned to the body and said, “Tabitha, arise.” She opened her eyes, took Peter’s hand, and he presented her to the friends who loved her so much.

The Bible goes on to say that many believed in the Lord that day because a candle was raised from the dead—a female candle. This was the first time I saw that God does use both the stars and the candles—and both men and women—to light His world! It was reading this story of Dorcas that caused my entire view of women and ministry to begin to change.

As I continued to study women in the Bible, I found other examples where they served in the ministry of helps, such as the woman who washed Jesus' feet in Luke 7:37-50. The religious people criticized Jesus for allowing her to touch Him because she was a sinner. But Jesus saw her heart, that she loved Him and worshipped Him. He forgave her and corrected the religious people by telling them, "Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." Jesus used this woman in the ministry of helps to illustrate love and forgiveness.

Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, also anointed Jesus. This is a very interesting passage of Scripture because it also shows the corruption that was already working in Judas's heart.

Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spike-nard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

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Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

John 12:3-8

The contrast between Judas and Mary really hit me. Judas was a thief who didn't care about the people; and the Bible says in 1 John 4:20 that if you don't love your brother, then you don't love God. He was one of Jesus' disciples, a man who was a leader in Jesus' ministry. Yet Mary, a woman, loved Jesus, loved the people, and was the only one who understood He was soon going to die. So she was anointing Him for death. In other words, a woman who operated in the ministry of helps loved Him and served Him better than a man who was on His leadership team.

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I also noticed that Judas criticized Mary for anointing Jesus with very expensive oil. In the ministry of helps, we worship and serve Jesus by serving His Body of believers, and sometimes we are criticized because we do so much for them or spend so much time and money on “little things.” An example I have already mentioned is picking up our pastor and driving him to church and back so that he can stay focused on the message God has given him.

Don’t misunderstand me. I’m not saying a pastor should live in a mansion and drive a Mercedes when his entire congregation can barely keep food on the table and clothes on their backs. But we should honor the men and women of God who serve us as we would honor Jesus Himself. I think women understand this better than men do because they are naturally more submissive and are taught from an early age to serve others. They also are more emotional, which is not always a bad thing! They can “get a clue” to what’s really going on when men are scratching their heads trying to figure out what’s happening in a certain situation.

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Women are also extremely courageous in the way they love. If you've ever seen a wife "stand by her man" or a mother protect her child from someone or something that is trying to hurt them, you know what I mean! The women loved Jesus so much that they stayed at the cross when all the men but John ran away in fear of their own lives. (Matt. 27:55-56; John 19:25-27.) And the Bible says that they ministered to Jesus. They even prepared His body for burial, which is another great example of women in the ministry of helps. (Luke 23:55,56.)

After Jesus was resurrected and the church was born at Pentecost, women continued to play a big role in ministry. We've already seen how important Dorcas was in Acts, chapter 9. In Acts 18:1-3, Priscilla worked in the ministry with her husband, Aquila, and the apostle Paul. Paul mentions her in both his letter to the Romans and his first letter to the Corinthians. In Acts 18:24-26, with her husband, Priscilla taught Apollos "the more excellent way." So we see that women in the New Testament not only teach, but they teach men!

Then I read about the four daughters of Philip the Evangelist in Acts 21:8-9. All of them prophesied in the church! Many believers and leaders in the Body of Christ today believe that the Bible says that women should be silent in church, but I believe that this comes from wrong teaching of a few verses of Scripture taken out of context. There are many great books on this subject that you can read to study this out for yourself, such as *The Woman Question*, by Kenneth Hagin, Sr. But what really changed my mind about this was when the Holy Spirit opened my eyes to see all the women in the New Testament who ministered in various gifts and callings, especially in the ministry of helps. Women can be stars as well as candles.

From the time we were married, my wife has always been my partner in ministry. She has gifts and insight and abilities that I don't have, so we complement each other. She is as valuable and powerful a minister as any man I know. So not only did God show me in His Word that women were ministers, but He showed me through my wife. There is no doubt in my mind and heart that God

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uses women as well as men in the ministry, and women are especially great in the ministry of helps because they have such love and understanding for other people's needs.

Who Is Important?

There is one last thing I want you to think about. There were no stars raised from the dead in the Bible. I often tell zealous Christians wanting to be stars that if they happen to die before their time, they probably won't be back! On the other hand, if they are a candle and something happens to them, there's a good chance they will be raised from the dead like Dorcas was.

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 12:18 that God puts the members of the body of Christ where He wants them and uses them as He sees fit. It also says in verses 21-25 that every member is equally important, that we should honor and love every member the same, whether they are an apostle or a greeter at the door.

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We must always remember that both the apostle and the greeter are anointed by God to lead people to Jesus, heal the sick, cast out demons, feed the poor, and clothe the naked. God picks the stars and the candles to light His world, and when our churches come into agreement with Him, they can accomplish so much more.

PART 3

Winning
First-Time
Visitors

CHAPTER 5

“They’d Have To Pay Me To Go in There!”

What would cause a first-time visitor to want to come back to your church? Experts say that a family will determine in the first six minutes after driving on to your church property if they will return or not. As I pondered that one time, I thought about the story of the Queen of Sheba and her first visit to King Solomon’s palace. I ended up drawing some spiritual parallels. What you’re about to see in these next three chapters may surprise you because one of the first things that profoundly impressed her was the ministry of helps.

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The Queen of Sheba was a monarch from a distant land, who made a great journey to see for herself if all that she had heard about the legendary Hebrew ruler was true.

When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not.

2 Chronicles 9:1,2

Can you tell that this woman was rich? She carried her jewels and precious stones on camels. Most women would love to have just one camel loaded down with jewels and precious stones. A little later on you'll see why this is significant.

And when the queen of Sheba had seen....

2 Chronicles 9:3

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I want to focus on the word *seen* or *sight* in this verse. I realize that believers are not supposed to be *moved* by what we see, or by what we hear, smell, taste, or feel. But if we’re not supposed to use our senses, why did God give them to us? He equipped us with natural senses because we live in the natural world. However, we are not to allow ourselves to be controlled by them.

Consider this scenario. If my nose (sense of smell) isn’t working when I pick up a glass of sour milk, and my tongue (sense of taste) isn’t working if I drink some of that sour milk, my stomach will work. I’ll soon feel the effects of drinking the sour milk, but it won’t be a pleasant experience. And I won’t want more of it!

In the same way, first-time church visitors are moved by their senses, beginning with what they see (sense of sight). I’ve driven by some churches, and just by seeing them from the outside I’ve thought, *They’d have to pay me to go in there—and many have*. The ministry of helps has the responsibility to keep that from being the first impression of their church.

Wisdom Can Be Seen

When the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built....

2 Chronicles 9:3

God made Solomon's wisdom so great that his reputation echoed throughout the known world, even into the palaces of kings and queens. The Queen of Sheba had heard of the wisdom of Solomon and had gone to great trouble and expense to see it for herself—and she wasn't disappointed. It was the first thing she noticed.

Wisdom can be seen in the way things function, the way things are handled, the way things are managed and taken care of. Solomon's wisdom was seen throughout the house he had built, which was the second thing the Queen of Sheba noticed. Churches are often referred to as the house of God, and their appearance should reflect that because visitors see the church's exterior before they ever see the interior. This is one time when the outward appearance is very important.

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In this passage, I thought it was interesting that a woman would notice a building, but they do notice buildings. They notice the décor of buildings on the outside and on the inside—and it affects them in a different way than it affects men. Women like certain color schemes. They like to see plants and flowers and church banners. Generally, men don’t notice exterior or interior decorations. Most men are not affected by their surroundings. Just give them a block of cement to stand on and they’ll preach. Give them a chair to sit on and they’ll listen to the Word.

Recently, I was with a pastor friend of mine who has a fairly large church in Chicago, Illinois, and he said something about this that really made sense. “Would you agree that there are more women than there are men in the majority of the congregations you have ministered to?” I agreed with him.

Then he said, “Think about the church buildings you’ve preached in. Wouldn’t you agree that the majority of those church buildings—on the

outside as well as on the inside—have a very cold look and feel to them?” Again, I had to agree.

My pastor friend continued, “If you’re not relaxed, if you’re not comfortable and at ease, if you don’t have peace in church, the odds are that you’re not going to bring someone else into that same atmosphere.” That is so true.

Churches need to put some life on the outside of their buildings. Plant some flowers and other greenery, and have a well-kept lawn. Then, when people drive by they will think, *If there’s life on the outside, there might be life on the inside.*

When we sold our home, our realtor said to put any extra money we had on the outside of the house. If people drove by and didn’t like the outside, the odds were that they wouldn’t pick up the phone to find out what was on the inside. I know that sounds extreme, but the next time you go to church, take a close look at the churches you pass by on the way to yours. The church that receives the care and attention to detail is the one people will decide to visit.

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Got Life?

Have you noticed over the years how gas stations have evolved? They’ve gone through an extreme makeover—from the plain, drab look of having just two pumps sticking out of the ground and no inviting décor to a spruced-up front area with plants and shrubs and great lighting. That way, even if you drive in there late at night, it looks like daytime.

I was told by some gas station owners that oil companies have actually done expensive studies to find out how to attract women as customers because so many women today are driving vehicles and pumping their own gas. They found that if they planted a few flowers out front, the odds are that women will pull into their gas station instead of the one across the street that’s only got two pumps sticking out of the ground, car parts laying around everywhere, and a gas station attendant dressed in coveralls, who is chewing and spitting tobacco. Their study showed that women will even pay two to three cents more a gallon to go to a landscaped gas station.

The point is, when visitors drive onto the church property, the first few minutes will determine whether or not they will return to that church. Landscaping plays a big role in their decision. What do visitors see when they first arrive at your church?

One time I went to speak at a church that was way out in the country. The pastor was very excited because they had just built a new building. But what really excited him was the fact that they had a paved parking lot. That was really something for a church in “the back forty.”

The pastor wanted me to see that paved parking lot more than he wanted me to see his building. We drove out there, and as we came around the last curve, I was stunned. He had a concrete parking lot all right—it was concrete right up to the four walls of that church. Not one blade of grass, one flower, one tree, or one shrub was on that whole property! It looked like a funeral home.

My first thought was that he didn’t have any women on his building committee. When I mentioned that to him, he looked at me in astonishment and

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said, “How did you know?” I said, “There’s no grass or flowers or trees or shrubs anywhere in sight!”

“I know,” he said. “We did that on purpose. We’re tired of cutting the grass around here. We’re tired of planting flowers and trimming the shrubs.” He had left out what adds life on the outside of a church and makes people want to knock down the doors to get in.

Put Your Best Foot Forward

Here’s something I hear quite often in my travels to different churches: “Why don’t more intelligent people come to our church?” I’m not sure how they define “intelligent people,” but one reason more people in general don’t come could be that what they see first on the outside is what they believe they will continue to see if they go inside.

Something that can really make a bad first impression is the sign out in front of a church. I’ve preached in some churches that have a sign out front that words can be put on, but letters are

missing because there aren't enough to finish spelling a word. In some cases, the words aren't even abbreviated the right way. I've actually had well-intentioned leaders tell me they are believing God that everyone who passes by will know what they mean.

Don't put anything up on a church sign if you run out of letters! And be sure the words are spelled correctly. When people drive by and see a sign with misspelled words on it, they think there aren't any intelligent people on the inside, and they'll make a mental note to stay away.

Something else to be careful of are church flagpoles. An empty flagpole gives the message that there must not be anybody around. A flag should be flying from that flagpole, and it should not be a flag that is faded, ripped, or torn. If yours is, get a new one. When people see the same old faded, ripped, torn flag every time they drive by, it gives them the feeling that nobody cares in that church.

It's human nature to judge the interior by the exterior, whether it's people or buildings or some

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other entity. Boosting church growth may begin as simply as taking a closer look at the outside of your church.

Cleanliness Is Part of Godliness

Once visitors enter the church building, often the first place they go is to your bathroom. I know some women who will only buy gas from gas stations that have the cleanest and nicest bathrooms. People tend to have a similar philosophy for churches. The bathroom will determine if they’re going to come back or not, so it had better be clean.

I’ll never forget the time I was invited to preach in a church, and someone from the church came to my hotel to pick me up. I had to use the restroom, but they had already arrived to get me; so I thought I’d wait until I got to the church. This church was only a couple of years old, but when I walked in there, I couldn’t believe what I saw. It was one of the filthiest churches I’ve ever been in. The bathroom was so dirty that when I went inside, I did not use it. I turned around and walked back out.

When it was time for me to preach, I preached a short, twenty-minute message, said “Amen,” and left, not because I was mad but because *I had to use the bathroom!* I had to go someplace else to find one that was clean. Surely first-time visitors to a church in that condition will feel the same way.

Servings of Meat

Another thing the Queen of Sheba noticed was the meat on Solomon’s table.

And the meat of his table....

2 Chronicles 9:4

The word *meat* is referring to food that nourishes the physical body. Solomon obviously served the choicest meat—perhaps prime rib, filet mignon, or tenderloin. But in the Bible, *meat* can also refer to spiritual food that “sustains and nourishes spiritual life or holiness.”¹

Have you ever had anybody ask you what your pastor preaches on Sunday morning? People who

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ask that kind of question are usually looking for a pastor who preaches a message with some spiritual meat to it. Possibly the church they’ve been attending is just feeding them the milk of the Word. After a while, as we begin to grow in the Lord, milk just doesn’t satisfy anymore. (Heb. 5:12-14.) We need to be fed the meat of the Word because that’s what makes us become mature sons and daughters of God.

Telling people about the “steak” that your pastor serves on Sundays and Wednesdays won’t scare them away. If you just tell people a little milk dish portion of a powerful sermon your pastor preached one time, it is no wonder they don’t come to your church.

I believe there was more on Solomon’s table than just pieces of meat, but the meat is what grabbed the Queen’s attention. If someone you know is looking for a church that feeds them the meat of the Word, tell them what’s being served at your church. “If you want steak, you need to come on Sunday morning—we have steak on Sunday

mornings and Sunday nights, and prime rib on Wednesday nights!”

“Bring Out the Faith Chairs”

It’s a biblical fact that first-time visitors notice how many people come to church.

“When the Queen of Sheba had seen...the sitting of his servants.”

2 Chronicles 9:4

Remember, the Queen of Sheba was a first-time visitor to Israel. How do visitors know the number of people who don’t come to a church if this is their first visit? Every chair in the auditorium—empty or filled—represents a person.

You might disagree with me on this, but I think it’s pretty safe to say that the main reason that 99.9 percent of visitors visit a church is out of curiosity. By telling people great things about your church, you can peak their interest.

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Some Christians say that it’s hard to get people to come to their church. When I hear people say that, it tells me they don’t talk about their church outside of the four walls of that church. All you have to do is talk about your church. You don’t have to preach to people, just tell them what goes on there. Tell them how your pastor is a wild, powerful, anointed preacher. Tell them about your tremendous children’s ministry. Tell them about your fantastic youth ministry that is reaching so many young people for Christ.

Everybody has a different curiosity level, and when theirs gets to a certain point—maybe the 110th time you ask them to come—they’ll say, “You know what? I want to come. I want to go down there and see that for myself.”

Maybe you’ve told them that Jesus lives in your church, that God lives there, that the Holy Ghost lives there, that the pastor walks on water and his wife’s an angel—she’s got wings! But if, when they walk into the church, they see half of the chairs empty, their first thought is probably

going to be, *If this church is so wonderful, where is everybody?*

You may tell them, “Oh, we’re all here,” but they’ll say, “No, you’re not. Where’s all *those* people?” as they point to the empty seats in the auditorium. Empty chairs do not impress people.

I often call pastors of churches where I’m going to preach to find out a little bit about their church beforehand. Many of them will tell me the number of people they have, saying something like, “We run about 300, but we can seat 750 people in our church.” They’re trying to impress me with the larger number, but they’re actually saying that they can’t get over 300 people to come to their church. *Empty chairs are not impressive.*

I’ve gone to churches that have a hundred people in attendance on Sunday morning, but their auditorium will hold 500 chairs. So, in faith they go out and buy 400 extra chairs and put them out in the auditorium. *I* understand what they’re doing, and *they* understand what they’re doing, but new people don’t see anything but a lot of empty

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chairs. Again, they may have been told many wonderful things about the church, but if they walk in and see that 400 people didn’t show up, they’re going to doubt what they’ve heard. What those pastors need to do is put those 400 faith chairs in a faith room. Then when more people show up, go to that faith room and bring out some faith chairs for them to sit on.

Do you want to create some excitement in your church? Bring in chairs. It’s a better report to be able to say, “This morning, we had to bring in 20 extra chairs in our church. I’m telling you, God is moving,” even though you had room for a 150 chairs. You just didn’t put them out until you needed them. That will create excitement. What am I saying? Go ahead and buy extra chairs; just don’t put them out until they’re needed.

One time I came back from a meeting and my wife, Kathy, asked me how it went. I said, “The place was packed out. It was full!”

She said, “Didn’t only 25 people show up?”

I said, “No, there were 26.” That may not sound like much, but that place had 26 chairs and 26 people attended, so the place was full. It was packed out.

While speaking to a group of pastors after a conference, I commended them that in every service all the seats were filled—500, to be exact. They agreed most wholeheartedly. Then I told them that the auditorium would hold 1000 chairs. I asked them if the meetings would have been as exciting in a half-empty auditorium. They saw the wisdom in setting up only the number of chairs for the number of people attending.

Wouldn’t you like to have a first-time visitor leave your church after the service and say, “I went to that church, and I had to wait until they got me a chair. That auditorium was full!” instead of saying, “I went to that church and there were so few people there that I could pick any chair I wanted.”

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What Makes or Breaks a Church?

Empty chairs often reflect a lack of church growth. Pastors typically get the blame when churches aren’t growing or people don’t come back, but they are not usually the reason. It’s a proven fact that the first person you meet in a new location is going to be what influences you the most on whether or not you return.

Who do church visitors see first, the pastor or those in the ministry of helps? It’s sad, but in some churches it’s old Brother Fred, who is telling them where to park their car. He used to usher in the main auditorium, but he was a little rough with people, so they moved him to the parking lot team. Now the first thing a visitor hears is, “Make sure you park between the lines, and don’t ask me any questions about where something is at in the church.” Sad, but true!

Who do your people meet first?

Remember, the pastor does not make or break a church; we, together, make or break the church.

CHAPTER 6

It's a Package Deal: Leadership and Being a Godly Example

The “president” of the last “club” we’re all going to try to join makes a special announcement before we can enter in. Some church members think it goes something like this: “Well done! Thy one who was thinking about getting involved with the church, but couldn’t quite come up with any extra time to do it.” No, that’s not it. A few of them think it’s, “Well done! Thy one who would have become involved in church but didn’t quite go along with everything the pastor preached and taught from the pulpit.” That’s not it either.

Then there's those who think it's, "Well done! Thy one who served in the church but didn't feel it was necessary to serve with faithfulness and integrity." But they won't be getting in either.

The truth is, in that day, when the Lord returns, He is going to announce to those who are serving faithfully, "Well done, thou *good and faithful* servant...enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. 25:21). The last club we will all want to get into is the Faithfulness Club. I don't know about you, but I want to be serving faithfully when Jesus comes back. (v. 31.) So in this chapter we're going to see what it takes to be a faithful servant.

When we are serving faithfully, it shows. The Queen of Sheba not only noticed the sitting of Solomon's servants, she noticed "the attendance of his ministers" (2 Chron. 9:4). I'm going to make two statements about that verse.

First, *people never go beyond their leadership*. However the leadership is in the church, that's the way the people will be. I'm not just talking about pastors and their spouses. I'm talking about elders,

deacons, and anyone else in a leadership position. If they're not faithful, committed, and excited about the pastor's vision for the church, I can guarantee you that the people who are under them won't be either.

Second, if anyone should be in the church services and the meetings, the leaders in the church should be there. Only two excuses are acceptable for leaders to miss a service or meeting.

The leader has a job in addition to serving the church.

They died.

The first excuse is understandable if that person has a family to support, and the second excuse is self-explanatory! Other than these reasons, leaders need to show the congregation that they are solidly behind their pastor. It's not hard to figure out why only half of the church is behind the pastor when only half of the church leaders are behind the pastor.

When I first got into the ministry and started traveling, I was told that 85 percent of most church problems come out of leadership. I didn't believe it then, but now I know it's true! Over the years I have sat and talked with hundreds of pastors about the problems in their churches. During our conversations they almost always mentioned some of their leaders' names—Deacon So-and-So, Elder So-and-So, Associate Pastor So-and-So, Choir Director So-and-So, Bus Captain So-and-So. Many of them then asked me, “Can you be too tough on your leaders?”

Do you know what I told them? “You can never be too tough on your leaders.” Pastors need to be tougher on their leaders than they are on themselves because those leaders are with the sheep more than they are. God refers to believers as sheep many times in His Word. (John 10:15; 21:17, among others.) When you become a leader in your church, you automatically become an example to the sheep. It's a package deal. You can't separate the two, even though some try.

A number of people want to be a leader, but some don't want to be a godly example. For instance, when a certain guest preacher or prophet speaks at their church, these leaders want their front row seat *and* they want an extra seat so they can bring a friend. But when was the last time those leaders sat on the front row and brought a friend to church to hear their pastor?

Personally, I don't think a leader should sit beyond the second row in the church. One of the things I've learned about leading over the years is that when you lead, that means you're out in front. So how can you lead people when you sit behind them?

I've been taught there's a reason for everything, so a few years ago I began asking pastors about certain people I saw sitting in the back of the church while I was preaching. I noticed that they were not real interested in my message. In most cases I was told that the person sitting in the back was a leader in the church.

I figured they had to have a reason other than that they were designated to sit there. Most likely these leaders weren't sitting that far away from the pastor at first. Then I would meet with these pastors and they would tell me they were having problems with the same leader who was sitting in the back. I believe the reason these leaders sit in the back is because they don't want the people to see that they don't get along with the pastor anymore.

Maybe the leaders disagree over some kind of change the pastor made. Perhaps they think the pastor should have waited at least three months before announcing it to the congregation. So they move to the back of the church to sit far away from the pastor because they're upset.

Here's one solution I suggest to pastors: pick a row in the sanctuary, and if the leaders ever sit somewhere beyond that row, have a meeting with them to discuss the situation because they're sending the pastor a message by their actions and creating a negative atmosphere in the services. There has to be reason they are putting distance between you and them.

Be Faithful, Committed, and Excited

In many churches, when people first become born again, they're on fire for the Lord and eager to do almost anything the pastor asks of them. But as time goes on, it seems harder and harder to get some of them to serve God.

Let me give you an illustration. A person who has recently become born again comes to church and hears the pastor teach on faithfulness. This new Christian is all fired up about the message and thinks, *I want to be faithful. The pastor said that Proverbs 28:20 tells us the faithful shall abound with blessings. I sure want to abound with blessings. And I want to be more faithful than I am right now.* But this new Christian keeps running into some church leaders who don't want to be any more faithful than they are right now.

The next Sunday this new Christian comes to church and hears the pastor preach on being committed. Again this person is excited about the message, thinking, *I want to be committed to the Lord. I want to be sold out much more than I am*

right now. But this person keeps running into those same leaders who don't want to be any more committed than they are now.

Then in the Wednesday evening service, the new Christian hears the pastor teach that we need to get excited about Jesus and reaching the world for Him, and this person thinks, *I want to be excited about that. I want to be more excited than I am right now!* But this new believer keeps running into the church leaders who don't want to be any more excited than they are right now.

Eventually, the new believer will think, *Forget it. Maybe there is something wrong with me for getting so excited about church and the pastor's messages. Maybe God dropped me on my head when I got saved. But I'd sure like to be a leader. Leaders get to do awesome things in the church like staying after the services, fellowshiping with the speakers, and going places with the pastor. In order to be a leader, maybe I just need to do what the leaders do in this church—so I'll just sit in the back of the auditorium and do nothing.*

This is the truth. For people in the church to grow in faithfulness and become more committed and more excited, the leaders have to become more faithful, more committed, and more excited than they are right now. As long as the leaders are moving forward, the people will move forward. As long as the leaders grow, the people will grow. But when leaders stop, the people stop.

When we hear our pastors put a demand upon the leaders in the church—perhaps expecting them to listen to a certain CD, read a particular book, attend a leadership meeting, or do any other church-related task the pastor asks them to do—we need to rejoice. Those demands will help them to grow and to move forward—and when they do, we will too.

God Loves a Cheerful “Picker Upper”

I’ve often had pastors ask me, “Is it too much to expect church leaders to be tithers in the church?” I have a great answer for that question: “Do you want your members to be tithers? If your leaders

are not tithers, I can guarantee you this—your church won’t be tithers because people never go beyond their leadership.”

If pastors find the offerings are down, they need to watch their ushers. Second Chronicles 9:4 says that the Queen of Sheba saw “his [Solomon’s] ascent by which he went up into the house of the LORD.” In other words, she saw his body language in church. It’s a known fact that 85 percent of communication is done through the body. Next Sunday, check out the kind of body expression your church leaders are displaying and you’ll see this is true.

When the pastor stands on the platform and says, “It’s offering time,” how do ushers respond? As they come down the aisle do people think, *I don’t want to put anything in the bucket. They look like they’re at a funeral. They’re probably going to take the offering out back and bury it somewhere!* If God loves a cheerful giver—and He does (2 Cor. 9:7)—then God loves a cheerful “picker upper”!

While we're on the subject, why do some pastors have to train their ushers in every service? These pastors have to tell their ushers, sometimes two or three times, that it's offering time. They have to tell them to pass out the offering envelopes, to pass the buckets, and that if someone's hand is raised, it means the person wants an offering envelope—and most of these ushers have been taking offerings for months, maybe even years.

I believe the reason this happens is that these ushers are not givers themselves. Show me a tithing usher who believes that when you give it'll be given back to you good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over (Luke 6:38), and I'll show you an usher who doesn't need to be told by the pastor in every service what to do when it's time to take the offering.

I don't know about you, but if I'm going to pay my tithes in church, I want the person who's going to pick it up to be a tither too. In fact, if the usher walks up to you first with the offering bucket and that bucket is empty, don't drop in your offering. Instead, hand that empty bucket right back because

there should already be an offering envelope in there—the usher's.

Serve With Style

The people who served in Solomon's house had a distinctive, impressive style. Does your ministry of helps impress visitors or drive them away?

Apparel

The Queen of Sheba was so impressed with the servants' apparel that the Bible says she noticed what they were wearing—twice.

“When the queen of Sheba had seen...the attendance of his ministers, *and their apparel...* his cupbearers also, *and their apparel....*”

2 Chronicles 9:4

The *Message Bible* says that the ministers were “sharply dressed.” Does that phrase come to mind when you see your church leaders? How about the way you dress if you are in church leadership? Even the cupbearers (the ones who put the water on

the platform) were dressed sharply because the queen also noticed what they were wearing.

At this point you may be thinking, *Maybe somebody needs to tell her that God doesn't look at the outward appearance; He looks at the inward appearance.* (1 Sam. 16:7.) That may be true in most cases, but not for people in church leadership.

When you know you're coming into the house of God to serve in the house of God, what is your attitude when you go to your clothes closet on a Sunday morning? Do you throw open the door, pick out any old wrinkled, mismatched, or casual-looking outfit, and think, *Oh well, at least it's clean.* That is a *careless* attitude. I'm sure you are glad that God doesn't have a careless attitude with you!

Surely you have something better in your clothes closet than just what's clean. I'm not saying we have to wear \$500 suits or \$700 dresses. Your best and my best might not be the same. Your best and my best might not cost the same amount of money. Maybe my clothes aren't made out of the fancy material your clothes are made out of.

Wearing your best might be as simple as ironing your clothes. Some leaders would be amazed at what an iron could do to their shirts or blouses! I just think we ought to give God our best.

Since the Queen of Sheba brought up their apparel twice, I could mention something else here about dress. I've been to some churches where the leaders looked sloppy and I thought, *They must have hired these leaders because they sure don't dress like the pastor and his wife.* If you're not sure how to dress to serve in church, follow the example of your pastor.

And a good point to remember is that dressing in the same style will bring out the theme of unity. When a visitor or congregation member sees that the pastor and the leadership are all dressed in the same excellent way, they will think, *This church really has their act together and is going places for God.*

Worship Team and Musicians

These are the people who are responsible for leading us into the presence of God and are using

music to prepare our hearts to receive the pastor's message. Yet I've been in some churches where I've seen them stand up on the platform for a half an hour or more, singing and playing songs about Jesus and about how wonderful God is, and they can't even smile.

I travel to speak in other churches all the time, and I admit that on several occasions I've felt like walking up to the musicians or the worship team when the service was over and asking, "Who are you mad at? What are you so upset about?"

Worship team members and musicians need to look as though they want to be up on the platform. Some of the excuses I've heard when I teach on this are, "You wouldn't believe what I'm going through," or "The reason I don't smile while I'm playing is because I'm concentrating on playing the music." Maybe they just need to practice more or spend time in prayer as a group before the services begin. But it is important that they show on the outside the joy of worshipping God on the inside. Otherwise, they won't inspire the congregation to worship God.

Worship team members should understand putting on a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness (Isa. 61:3) more than anyone else. Whether they have practiced enough or not, whether they have had a bad week or not, they need to put their whole heart and soul into praising God. The people will never go where they don't lead them.

Youth Pastors

You may be surprised to hear this, but our youth want good leaders too. I have a friend who's in ministry, and he called me to relate this story just after the church he attended had hired a new youth leader. One day, after his children had gone to the youth ministry meetings for a while, they came to my friend and said, "Dad, would you say something to our new youth leader?"

My friend said, "Why?"

"He cusses around us all the time," they replied. "He says the reason he does it is that he thinks it's cool. But Dad, it's not cool to us. Some of the kids have a reason if they cuss—they don't know any

better. But he doesn't have a reason for doing it. He's supposed to show us the right way to live."

Have you ever been to a church where you can't tell the youth pastor from the youth? I have—many times. I'm not talking about when the youth-related activities and outreaches call for casual dress. I'm talking about those who always dress like teenagers. They also talk like them and walk like them. Then we wonder why our youth don't grow up.

I hear this from some youth pastors all the time, "I'm just trying to get down to their level."

I tell them, "Well, you made it! The problem is, they don't have anybody to take them from that level to the next because you're trying to act like one of them."

Many youth pastors are doing a fantastic job in leading young people to grow emotionally and spiritually. But I believe that some youth pastors don't want to grow up. They don't want to have to take on responsibility as adults, and they've found a place where they can continue being a child.

Youth pastors should only get down on the kids' level when they are communicating the truth of God's Word. They need to say it in a way that their kids can understand it. At the same time, they need to challenge them to grow up and be godly adults—and they need to be an example of a godly adult for them at all times. They can be “cool” and still be on fire for God!

This is not meant to be a condemning message, but I want to reveal areas in the church that might need improvement so you can change them. We're not going to win the world by offering them the same things they already have. We're going to win them by showing them there's something better.

CHAPTER 7

Stepping Into Another World

Did you ever hear anybody say, “Well, I’m just going to have to see it to believe it”? That kind of logic led the Queen of Sheba on her long journey to Solomon’s palace. After just one visit, she knew the truth and told Solomon, “It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom” (2 Chron. 9:5). Sounds like someone talked to her, doesn’t it? What she heard had drawn her to the house of God. Then what she saw when she got there changed her life.

Howbeit I believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the

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one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not
told me: for thou exceedest the fame that I heard.

2 Chronicles 9:5

There was something else that affected the
queen just as much or *more* than what she had been
seeing. Look what she said in the next verse.

Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy
servants, which stand continually before thee, that
hear thy wisdom.

2 Chronicles 9:7

Everywhere she went everybody was happy!
The spirit of the place affected her. She couldn't get
over their attitude. That said volumes about
Solomon's leadership style and the conditions of
the nation. The same holds true in our modern
churches. A pastor can preach one of the most
anointed messages he's ever preached, but it's the
attitude of the ministry of helps that makes or
breaks a church more so than the pastor.

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“God’s in This Place!”

Let’s look at a church that knows all about the ministry of helps. The people who serve in that kind of church know that wherever they are, Jesus is there with them.

The greeters stand at the door with smiles on their faces, and the love of God is radiating from them to everyone they meet. A new family walks in and the greeters shake their hands. They hug them. They answer all their questions and tell them where everything is located in the church. The family is touched, and as they walk away they say, “Wow, God’s at the door.”

That family walks on down the hall to the nursery. The nursery worker comes out with a big smile on her face and she finds out they’re new. “We just want to welcome you today to our church,” she says. “Let me tell you some things about our nursery that you might not know.

“This is not a babysitting service back here, but it’s a ministry. What I mean is that we’re going to be ministering the love of Jesus to your baby, as

our pastor is going to be ministering the love of Jesus to you. We've got some information written up about our nursery that we'd like for you to read, so you can see that we are well qualified to take care of your little one. We want you to have the peace of God because we believe that God brought you here, and we want to make sure you hear everything that God has to say to you today through our pastor."

As those parents walk away from the nursery, they're saying, "Wow, God's in the nursery!"

Now they come on down the hall to the children's church. The children's worker comes out with a smile on his face and finds out they're new. He says to them, "We just want to welcome you today to our church. Let me tell you some things about our children's ministry you might not know.

"We do more than just teach the children how many animals went into the ark," he says. "We also teach them the Word of God, as our pastor is going to teach you the Word of God today, and you're going to leave here a family full of the Word of

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God.” The parents walk away going, “Wow, God’s in children’s church.”

Finally, they walk into the sanctuary, and they see smiling ushers who are like the disciples who said to blind Bartimaeus, “Be of good cheer. The Master calls of thee.” They find this family a good seat up front and say to them, “You’re new here and we want you to get up front so you can see and hear everything God has for you, because that’s why God brought you to our church today. Our pastor’s been in the Word and in prayer, and we’re looking forward to another great ‘meal’ from him this Sunday morning.”

The ushers walk away and these parents go, “Wow, God’s in the ushers.” Then the worship leader comes out. This person has already been with the sound person and had a sound check. The mic has already been turned up, so all the worship leader does is grab that mic and take off singing.

This husband and wife are sitting there in wonder, and the wife begins to shake and the husband begins to shake, and they both look at

each other and say, “What do you think is going to happen when the preacher comes out?” They’ve been so affected by the ministry of helps team that the pastor could pull out old Sermon Number Eight that doesn’t have an ounce of anointing on it and that family would still keep coming back to that church!

Do you see it clearer now? *We’re in this together.*

Why All the Fuss and Bother?

At this point you may be saying, “I’ve been sitting here reading this book for a while now, and all I’ve heard is that we ought to dress right, act right, smell right, and look right. But why are we doing all of this? Are we just putting on a big show?” I’m glad you asked.

One phrase stood out to me when I read about the Queen of Sheba in 2 Chronicles 9, verse 4: “There was no more spirit in her.” Now, that doesn’t mean she died. The *New American Standard Bible* version says, “She was breathless.”

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When she saw all the wonders of Solomon and his palace—the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the meat on his table, the sitting of his servants, the attendance of his ministers and their apparel, the cupbearers and their apparel, and the way he carried himself up into the house of the Lord—she was so astonished by it that it took her breath away. I wouldn't be surprised if she had the thought, *It's like stepping into another world.*

I've talked to countless people who have made that same positive comment to me about a certain church they visited. Isn't that what so many in the world out there are looking for—another world, one that is better?

You and I know there is a better world; it's called the kingdom of God. Why don't we, the church, show it to others? I know we could never fully show heaven to someone, but I personally believe that God gives every church one piece of the pie, and all we have to do is serve up *our* piece. If we can get the world to take a bite of the piece of our pie, they'll say, "You know, I want the whole pie."

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God has given every believer the job of reconciling their world to Christ. (2 Cor. 5:18-20 NIV.) It's up to us to compel people to come to church (Luke 14:23)—and make sure that when they get there, they find out that there is a God and that His way of living is better. That's the message I've tried to share in this book. I think this next verse sums it up and captures the real purpose of the ministry of helps.

[The Queen of Sheba said,] Blessed be the
LORD thy God.

2 Chronicles 9:8

Do you realize what this verse is saying? The Queen of Sheba got saved! I know nobody got born again in the Old Testament, because Jesus hadn't yet come to earth, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again to sit at the right hand of God in heaven. But it's the type and shadow of what was to come in the New Testament; and those who believed were counted as saved, just like Abraham. (Rom. 4:3.) This first-time visitor only went to one "church," and she said, "There *is* a God."

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I don't think an unsaved person should have to go to a church four or five times to realize that there is a God. They should realize it in their *first* visit. That's what church is all about. We're here to lift up Jesus and change our world by letting them know there is a better way to live—and it's in Him.

Look at what the Queen of Sheba realized from her visit with Solomon.

God...delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, to be king for the LORD thy God: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.

2 Chronicles 9:8

What a statement from a first-time visitor! “There is a God. You're a man of God. This is a house of God. God's hand is upon you.” But that wasn't all. After the altar call came the offering. This woman expressed the depth of her appreciation and admiration through her generous giving.

And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices great abundance, and

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precious stones: neither was there any such spice
as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon.

2 Chronicles 9:9

She pulled out her checkbook that morning,
wrote a check for the equivalent of 130 million
dollars, and dropped it in the bucket when it went by!

There's no telling how many Queens of Sheba
have been to your church, people who could write
just one check and pay for everything without even
blinking an eye. Let me put it this way. If your
church's buildings and land aren't paid for yet, I
can tell you how to get them paid for. According to
this Scripture, let the first-time visitors pay for it!

This happened to a pastor I know who had a
large church in Texas. He was preaching one
Sunday morning, and he gave an altar call to lay
hands on people who were sick and pray for their
healing. One of the people who came up for prayer
was a visitor from California. When he came up to
the altar, some of the leaders prayed for him
without knowing that he was a visitor or where he
was from. About six weeks later, the pastor

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received a call from this man. First, he told the pastor how blessed he had been at the church, and how wonderful it was. Then he asked, “Pastor, is there anything you need in the church?”

It just so happened that the church was in a building program, so the pastor reluctantly said to this man who’d only been in the church once, “We do have a building program going on right now, and if you want to give a little to that, we would really appreciate it.”

The man said yes, and in the mail about a week later the pastor received a check for \$250,000 from him! But it didn’t stop there. By the end of the year, the man had given almost one million dollars to that church—and he’d only stepped in the building one time!

Money is not the only point here. In fact, forget the money. Let’s talk about people. The Queen of Sheba not only gave millions of dollars to Solomon, but some say that she was actually the one responsible for bringing the teachings of God to her country.

What am I saying? You don't know who's going to walk into your church service, and the impact that you make upon them may well determine the impact that they make upon other cities, other nations—and upon their world. The impact that you make upon them may just give them the boldness to go home and walk across the street and share Jesus with their neighbor.

I talked to a missionary couple one time who told me that it was in just *one* church service that God filled their hearts with love for the country they now serve. They said there would be times when they would be lying in a hut in that country, thinking, *I'm going to give up. I'm going to quit. This is just too difficult.* But then they would think about that *one* church service when God called them to the mission field, and they would say, “No, we won't quit. God, You're real! You're everlasting because Your love was everywhere in that church.”

Conclusion: The Rewards of Helping

Around 1985 Kathy and I went to Singapore to minister in a small church of 150 people, which was pastored by a young, single Singaporean. While we were there I told him that if he ever came to the Tulsa area in the U.S. and needed a place to stay, he could stay with us. A few months went by and he called to see if he could stay with us during a campmeeting in our city. Because I'm a man of my word I said, "Sure."

We met him at the airport and put him in one of our daughters' bedrooms. Although he wasn't too keen on Barbie and Ken, we had a wonderful time of fellowship and getting to know each other. On Sunday morning he came with me to open the church and get things ready for the services.

During the week we took him to different ministries and churches in the area. Many of them blessed him with materials to take back to his church. We even took him to our friend's ranch, where he rode a horse for the first time in his life. He was quite a cowboy for the day.

In 2005 this same pastor flew me to Singapore (in business class) and put me in the Singapore Ritz Carlton Hotel. Before I even preached, he gave our ministry an outstanding offering. By this time his church had about 13,000 members and was one of the greatest ministry of helps churches I had known. On Wednesday night we had a ministry of helps meeting. There were over 2000 in attendance and 800 were ushers! This great church even served a meal to their workers that evening.

Between two of the four Sunday morning services, the pastor looked at me and smiled. Then he said, "You never know who you will help. We are looking forward to our return trip in 2006!"

A Lesson From the Ritz

During my stay at the Ritz Carlton Hotel I wanted to see with my own eyes why it is considered one of the best hotels in the world. I would spend one to two hours a day sitting in the lobby watching how they treated their customers. The first thing that impressed me was that after arriving at 5 a.m., I was addressed by my name by at least five different employees. When I went to eat I asked for a certain table, and the next day I was asked if I wanted that same table.

I learned later that each guest's preferences and needs are recorded in a database. At the main door there are several employees—excuse me, ladies and gentlemen—waiting to assist customers when they enter the hotel. I was blessed to meet the manager of the ladies and gentlemen of the hotel. He told me that the reason they don't have signs in the hotel is because they take customers to where they want to go in the hotel, answering all their questions.

They wanted to give each customer a personal touch. I got to meet many of the ladies and

gentlemen and asked them how they liked working for the Ritz Carlton Hotel. Not one of them had anything negative to say. They all had hearts to serve and received joy from it. I was also showed a small card that had their creed on it. I thought how interesting it would be if this was practiced in the local church, so I wrote a Ministry of Helps Creed for churches.

Ministry of Helps Creed

1. (Name of Church) is a place where the genuine care and comfort of our members and guests is our highest mission. We pledge to provide the finest personal service and facilities so that the people will fully enjoy the presence of the Lord and the teaching of His Word, that they may be in a position to receive everything they need from Him.
2. The members of (Name of Church) who are God's Ministry of Helps are vital to our service to God's children and those who come to our church to be saved. By applying the

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principles of trust, honesty, respect, integrity, and commitment, we nurture and maximize their gifts and callings to the benefit of each individual and the entire body.

3. (Name of Church) provides a ministry environment where diversity is valued, spiritual life in Jesus Christ is strengthened, individual callings are identified and fulfilled, and all the glory and honor goes to God.
4. A minister of helps will warmly greet each member and visitor, using their name when possible. If they cannot answer their questions or meet their needs, they will direct them to the person or persons who can. When people exit our church, ministers of helps will warmly say good-bye, using their names if possible. Every person is treated with the utmost care and respect.
5. Every minister of helps will be trained by an experienced minister of helps. Leaders in the Ministry of Helps will always be open to the suggestions of others. If a minister of helps

discovers an area that needs improvement or has a problem, they should report it to the appropriate leader. An attitude of humility and teamwork is essential to all ministers of helps.

6. Every minister of helps is an ambassador of (Name of Church) to their world outside of the church, just as they are an ambassador for Christ in the world. Helps ministers are to be as loyal to the church and their leadership in the church as they are to the Lord Jesus Christ.
7. Ministers of helps pay particular attention to appearance in all things: dress, manner, and communication. They conform their dress and grooming to that of their leadership, which portrays unity. Their manners always consider the feelings and needs of others before themselves. And their communication is always polite, positive, and warm.
8. All ministers of helps must know and adhere to the safety standards of (Name of Church). This not only means creating and maintaining a safe environment for all members and visitors of the

CONCLUSION: THE REWARDS OF HELPING

church, but also knowing all fire, security, and emergency procedures. They must know what to do in any problem situation.

9. Each minister of helps must take pride in (Name of Church) by conserving energy, properly maintaining all facilities, and generally protecting the property and environment.
10. Every minister of helps must understand their vital importance as a member of (Name of Church) and as a member of the universal Body of Christ. Without them, Jesus cannot move through His Body effectively, bring in His harvest of souls, and establish His kingdom in the earth.

In my travels to over 2500 churches I've noticed the ones with the biggest hearts to serve others were doing the most in the kingdom of God. Hebrews 13:2 says that we could be entertaining angels without knowing it when we serve people. Serving others is what Jesus did while He was here on earth, and He did it without expecting anything in return. We must have that same attitude in serving. Then we

will see even greater success than the Ritz Carlton because we are doing all things for the Lord.

A Final Word

How do we get God to move through us as believers to impact others in a powerful, life-changing way? It's really very simple, and it's the very heart of this message.

Be what God wants you to be. If God has asked you to be in the ministry of helps—if He's asked you to be a nursery worker or an usher or a musician or the church cleaner or the church van driver or serve in some other area—be the best you can be!

And then be happy in doing it. Take joy in fulfilling God's will for your life because He takes joy in watching you fulfill His will.

Do these things and God will take care of the rest—the salvation of souls, the deliverance of those in bondage, the healing of bodies, the miracles, signs, and wonders, and everything else that displays His kingdom of love to a lost and dying world.

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Be what God wants you to be. Do all that God wants you to do. Then nobody will be mad but the devil!

I can't think of a better way to end this book than to repeat this wonderful quote from Godbey:

Oh! The infinite value of the humble gospel helpers. Thousands of people who have no gifts as leaders are number one helpers. How grand revival work moves along when red-hot platoons of fire-baptized helpers crowd around God's heroic leaders of the embattled hosts.

Study Guide

Introduction

1. Before you read this book, had you ever heard of the ministry of helps?
2. If you were raised in church, what was your understanding of the ministry of helps?

Helps: A Little Word With a Big Purpose

3. Read 1 Corinthians 12. Write down the important points the apostle Paul gives regarding the church.
4. Explain the attitude difference between being a “volunteer” and a “minister.”

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PART 1

Running the Church God's Way

Chapter 1

Divine Design

1. What did the author learn about the body of Christ when his grandfather was fixing the carburetor on his truck?
2. The story of the carburetor is an illustration of what?

Divine Set-up

3. Read 1 Corinthians 12:27. How do you personally relate to the statement that you are a member “in particular” in the body of Christ?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 12:28. What does this say about the ministry of helps?
5. What does 1 Corinthians 12:27-28 say about God's attitude toward the body of Christ?
6. What can happen when every member of the body does his or her part?

STUDY GUIDE

Excited To Serve

7. In your own words, define the ministry of helps.
8. Has the Holy Spirit ever prompted you to operate in the ministry of helps? How did you respond? Did you feel “led”?
9. Why do you think Reverend Godbey was so excited about the ministry of helps?
10. What has been your attitude toward nursery workers, ushers, and other helps ministers in the past? What is your attitude now?

Watch Your Words

11. When are some of the most destroying words spoken?
12. What is the only way you can miss God?
13. What is the difference between an audience and an army?

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PART 2

Being About Our Father's Business

Chapter 2

Jesus and the Ministry of Helps, Part 1

1. Read Ephesians 4:11-12. When believers misunderstand these verses, what are the three things they believe their pastor is to accomplish in their church? Explain each task in detail.
2. What is the reason pastors are usually hired? Why do most pastors quit the ministry?

Lifting Up Jesus

3. What does Ephesians 4:11-12 really require of pastors? Of congregation members?
4. What are believers doing when they lift up Jesus? What does “edify” mean to you in everyday, practical terms?

The Great Shepherd

5. As the Great Shepherd or Pastor, did Jesus do everything Himself?

STUDY GUIDE

6. What was His primary goal and purpose during His lifetime on earth?

“You Feed Them”

7. Read Matthew 14:14-21 and Mark 6:34-44. Who actually fed the five thousand and their families?
8. What was the first practical thing Jesus asked the disciples to do before distributing the food? Why do you think Jesus asked the disciples to do this?

Keeping Right Attitudes

9. Explain how Ephesians 4:11-12 unfolded by the account of feeding the multitude with the loaves and fishes.
10. At what points in the account were the disciples tempted to have bad attitudes? Can you relate to them in these situations?
11. How do you avoid having a wrong attitude? Name examples in your own life where having the wrong attitude hindered God’s blessing or

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keeping a right attitude brought God's blessings into your life.

Get Involved

12. What happens to your thinking when you get involved in the ministry of helps? How does getting involved affect your life?
13. From the account of the loaves and fishes, how important is it to follow the specific instructions of your leaders in the church?

Chapter 3

Jesus and the Ministry of Helps, Part 2

1. Read Matthew 8:23-27. What was Jesus doing while the disciples rowed the boat across the sea?
2. Did Jesus need to rest in order to be effective in the work of the ministry? Do pastors need adequate rest in order to be effective in the work of the ministry?

STUDY GUIDE

Who's Rowing the Boat in Most Churches Today?

3. Who is rowing the boat in most churches today?
Who is rowing the boat in your church?
4. What is God's biblical picture of how a pastor operates in the ministry?
5. What happened as a result of Jesus getting enough rest and the disciples doing their part in the ministry of helps? What happens when pastors function the way God wants them to function?

Leading the Donkey

6. Did Jesus do a lot of delegating? Give three examples that we have seen so far.
7. Why did Jesus tell His disciples to go get the donkey? Why does your pastor tell you to do certain things?
8. What would have happened if the disciples had not obeyed Jesus' instructions?

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Come to Their Need

9. Read Mark 10:46-52. What did the disciples say and do to come to the blind man's need?
10. When the ministry of helps cooperates with leaders in the church, what does Jesus do?
11. What can you do to help unbelievers you know come to Jesus?

Be in Your Own Story

12. What was one of the main reasons Jesus made it to the cross on time?
13. How will your pastor be able to fulfill his vision and destiny?

Chapter 4

God Uses Both Stars and Candles

1. "The ministry of the Church does not rest on _____ but on _____." What does not impress God? What does impress God? Do you need to change your mind about what impresses you?

STUDY GUIDE

2. Read Philippians 2:15-16 and Matthew 5:14-16. Only some believers are called to be stars, but all of us are called to be candles. How can you let your light shine in your world?
3. Where do we find light in a storm? How does a pilot land a plane when it is dark outside?

God Remembers What We Do To Help Others

4. Who are often the “nameless” believers in the church?
5. What is an armorbearer?

Committed To Win

6. When do armorbearers usually bail out?
7. Read Proverbs 29:18. What must a leader have in order for believers, and especially armorbearers, to follow and be committed?
8. Who are armorbearers and believers committed to? In other words, whose vision do they follow?

Stand Your Ground

9. Again, when do armorbearers usually fall away? What does the enemy do to try to get us to fall away?
10. What weapons did Jonathan's armorbearer have when he followed Jonathan into battle?
11. What did Jonathan's armorbearer do when Jonathan began to climb up on his hands and knees?

Pick Up the Sword

12. How did Jonathan's armorbearer fight "after him"?
13. What is our "sword"? Who is qualified to use the sword? In what ways do we use the sword?
14. Read 1 Samuel 14:14-16. What happens when both stars and candles work together?

God Also Uses Women

15. Read Acts 9:36-43. What did Tabitha do that caused the other believers to love her so much and the apostle Peter to raise her from the dead?

STUDY GUIDE

16. Read Luke 7:37-50. What truth was illustrated when this woman washed Jesus' feet?
17. Read John 12:3-8 and 19:25-27. How were women instrumental in Jesus accomplishing His purpose?
18. Discuss how the emotions of women can enhance their ability to minister and worship.
19. Name three women in the New Testament who ministered either as stars or candles and tell what each did to further the Gospel.

Who Is Important?

20. How many stars were raised from the dead in the Bible (not counting Jesus)?
21. Read 1 Corinthians 12:18, 21-25. What is every believer anointed to do, regardless of status or position?
22. Who is most important in the body of Christ, and who is not that important?

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Part 3

Winning First-Time Visitors

Chapter 5

“They’d Have To Pay Me To Go in There!”

1. When do first-time visitors usually determine whether or not they will return to a church?
2. Why did God give you your five senses? Give an example of how you are to use them.

Wisdom Can Be Seen

3. How is wisdom seen?
4. Why is the outward appearance of a church important?

Got Life?

5. Explain why gas companies changed the outward appearance of their gas stations.
6. What does landscaping do for a church?

STUDY GUIDE

Put Your Best Foot Forward

7. Explain why a church's sign can either drive a prospective visitor away or make them want to come inside. What can it say to people passing by?
8. If your church has a flagpole, what are some things you should remember? What can this say to people passing by?

Cleanliness Is Part of Godliness

9. How important is the condition of the bathrooms in your church?

Servings of Meat

10. What is "spiritual meat"?
11. Why do believers need spiritual meat?

"Bring Out the Faith Chairs"

12. What does a chair in your church represent?
13. What is the best way to get someone to come to your church (other than just asking them)?

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14. How do you talk about your church to the people in your life? Do you talk about your church at all?
15. What impression do a lot of empty chairs make? What happens when you don't have enough chairs and have to bring out more?
16. What can happen when you tell someone how great your church is, they finally come to visit, and there are a lot of empty chairs?

What Makes or Breaks a Church?

17. Who is the person who most often influences whether or not a visitor will return to a church?
18. Who do visitors to your church encounter first?

Chapter 6

It's a Package Deal:

Leadership and Being a Godly Example

1. What is the "last club" we are all going to want to get into? How do you get into it?

STUDY GUIDE

2. If the leaders of a church are not faithful, will the rest of the congregation be faithful?
3. What are the only two acceptable excuses for a leader missing a service or meeting?
4. Where do most church problems come from?
5. Where should leaders sit and why?

Be Faithful, Committed, and Excited

6. Explain the process through which a new Christian can be influenced to either grow or backslide by the leaders in the church.
7. How important is it for the pastor to continually challenge the leaders of the church?

God Loves a Cheerful “Picker Upper”

8. What percentage of communication is body language?
9. How should users react outwardly when they take the offering?

10. Why is it important for ushers to understand giving?

Serve With Style

Apparel

11. What does the way you dress say to visitors and other members of the church? Whose example should you follow?

12. What outward appearance can tell visitors and members of the church that your church has its act together?

Worship Team and Musicians

13. How does the outward appearance of the praise and worship team and musicians affect a congregation?

Youth Pastors

14. What can it mean when you cannot tell the youth pastor from the youth?

STUDY GUIDE

15. When is it appropriate for a youth pastor to come down to a kid's level and when is it inappropriate?

Chapter 7

Stepping Into Another World

1. What was perhaps the most important thing that the Queen of Sheba saw when she visited Israel?

“God’s in This Place!”

2. What does every minister of helps know?
3. How does God show His presence through every minister of helps?

Why All the Fuss and Bother?

4. Read 2 Chronicles 9:4. What happened to the Queen of Sheba as she experienced Solomon's court?
5. What is the main thing most visitors and unbelievers are looking for in a church?

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6. Read 2 Chronicles 9:8. What was the first thing the Queen of Sheba did after she had seen Solomon's realm?
7. What is the purpose of putting our best foot forward outwardly as a church?
8. How did the Queen of Sheba show her appreciation for all that Solomon had shown her? How does this affect your thinking about the ministry of helps?
9. What did the Queen of Sheba take back to her country?

Conclusion

The Rewards of Helping

1. Give an example from your life (or someone else's life) where you (they) helped or ministered to someone in need, and your (their) efforts brought great reward.

A Lesson From the Ritz

2. What is the first thing that impressed the author when he stayed at the Ritz Carlton Hotel?

STUDY GUIDE

3. Name several other things that impressed him.
4. What does the Ritz Carlton Hotel call their employees?
5. Would you like to stay at the Ritz Carlton Hotel? Why?

A Final Word

6. What two things can every believer do to impact others in a powerful, life-changing way?

Endnotes

Chapter 1

- ¹ Albert Barnes, D.D., *Barnes' Notes*, Electronic Database (copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft), "1 Corinthians 12:28."
- ² American Dictionary of the English Language, 10th Ed. (San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1998). Fascimile of Noah Webster's 1828 edition, permission to reprint by G.&C. Merriam Company, copyright 1967 & 1995 (Renewal) by Rosalie J. Slater, s.v. "HELPS."
- ³ W.E. Vine, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Old Tappan: Flemming H. Revell Company, 1981), Volume 2, p. 213.
- ⁴ Rev. W.B. Godbey, *Godbey's Commentary* (Cincinnati: Revivalist Press. Copyright © 1986 by M. W. Knapp).

Chapter 2

- ¹ Thayer and Smith, *The KJV New Testament Greek Lexicon*, "Greek Lexicon entry for Oikodome," s.v. "edifying," Ephesians 4:12, available from <<http://www.biblestudytools.net/Lexicons/Greek/grk.cgi?number=3619&version=kjv>>.
- ² Ibid., "Greek Lexicon entry for Hupsoo," s.v. "lifted up," John 12:32, available from <<http://www.bible>

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Chapter 4

¹ Clifton J. Allen, *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1973).

² Ibid.

³ Based on informations from *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th Ed., (Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003), s.v. "foot-candle."

⁴ *Adam Clarke's Commentary*, Electronic Database (copyright © 1996 by Biblesoft). All rights reserved. "1 Samuel 13:19."

⁵ *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Original James Orr 1915 Edition, Electronic Database (copyright © 1995-1996 by Biblesoft). All rights reserved. s.v. "Armor-Bearer."

⁶ "Onward, Christian Soldier," words by Sabine Baring-Gould, music by Arthur S. Sullivan.

Chapter 5

¹ Noah Webster, s.v. "MEAT."

Prayer of Salvation

God loves you—no matter who you are, no matter what your past. God loves you so much that He gave His one and only begotten Son for you. The Bible tells us that “...whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16 NIV). Jesus laid down His life and rose again so that we could spend eternity with Him in heaven and experience His absolute best on earth. If you would like to receive Jesus into your life, say the following prayer out loud and mean it from your heart.

Heavenly Father, I come to You admitting that I am a sinner. Right now, I choose to turn away from sin, and I ask You to cleanse me of all unrighteousness. I believe that Your Son, Jesus, died on the cross to take away my sins. I also believe that He rose again from the dead so that I might be forgiven of my sins and made righteous through faith in Him. I call upon the name of Jesus Christ to be the Savior and Lord of my life. Jesus, I choose to follow You and ask that You fill me with the power of the Holy Spirit. I declare that right now I am a child of God. I am free from sin and full of the righteousness of God. I am saved in Jesus' name. Amen.

If you prayed this prayer to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior for the first time, please contact us on the Web at **www.harrisonhouse.com** to receive a free book.

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About the Author

Dr. Buddy Bell, president and founder of the Ministry of Helps International, Inc., in Tulsa, Oklahoma, originally began serving in the ministry of helps in his local church over 25 years ago by doing with excellence all his hand could find to do.

Sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, Dr. Bell began developing highly effective methods of ushering, conspicuous only in their reflection of God's character and love. Ushers following his example or trained by him functioned supernaturally. As they maintained the order necessary to allow the power of the Holy Spirit to flow forth to minister, they spread God's love. People's needs were met not only in the services, but elsewhere in the church building, even in the parking lot. Consequently, churches began requesting Dr. Bell's usher and general ministry of helps training.

To meet the need, Dr. Bell began holding workshops, speaking at conferences, serving as a consultant to churches, filming videos, and writing manuals and books. His training, coupled with his hilarious presentation, has been in great demand for many years. He has now traveled to more than 2,500 churches, teaching and helping church staffs and congregations awake to the power and plan of the Holy Spirit for accomplishing the work of the ministry through every believer.

In authoring the *Ministry of Helps Handbook, Volume 1* and *Volume 2*, Dr. Bell has revealed how to be totally effective serving in the ministry of helps. He has

also produced “The Complete Local Church Usher Training System,” “Development of Local Church Leadership Notebook,” and 20 DVD’s utilized by more than 15,000 churches worldwide. Several teachings of Dr. Buddy Bell can be found in over 50 different languages in the International School of Ministry—www.isom.org.

Dr. Bell’s humor, zeal, and anointing from God to present ministry of helps training motivates people in a most delightful manner to find their place and fulfill their ministry in the local church.

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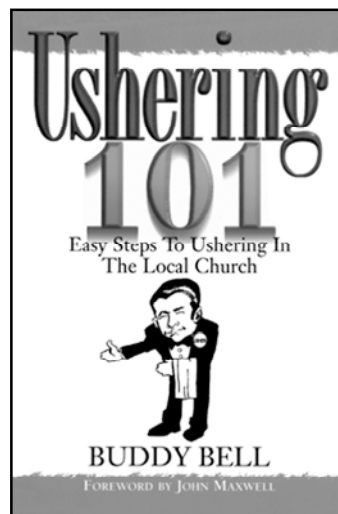
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