

7 Charismatic Characters Who Shouldn't Be on Your Ministry Team

When the Holy Spirit comes in His fullness, people receive miraculous anointing, remarkable boldness, overflowing joy and irresistible enthusiasm. Yet because we are all bent toward sin and selfishness, many people who experience the Holy Spirit's raw power sometimes also act weird. Their flesh gets in the way, and they misuse the gifts of the Spirit.

I've seen this happen oftentimes during prayer ministry times at a church altar. Because of poor training and a lack of mature leadership, things can get wacky when people come to the front of the auditorium for ministry. If this flakiness isn't immediately corrected, visitors will stop coming and your church will get a bad reputation.

Here are seven people you should never allow to be in a ministry position in your church:

1. Bulldozer Bertha. If this woman decides to pray for you at the altar, put one foot in front of the other, hold onto a chair and brace yourself. She intends to push you to the floor, one way or another. She's been told over and over that it is rude—not to mention dangerous—to push people during prayer. But she claims “the Spirit” turns her into a samurai warrior when the anointing comes on her. Steer clear. Bulldozer Bertha is an accident waiting to happen.

2. Shonda Wanda. I appreciate the gift of speaking in tongues, and there is a time and place for this gift in a church meeting. But it is not appropriate for a person to scream in tongues while they are ministering to someone at the altar. Shonda Wanda is notorious for offending visitors by pummeling them with noisy glossolalia. She should be reminded that

seekers who come for prayer should be treated with sensitivity and respect—and that tongues is best reserved for private prayer times (see 1 Corinthians 14:18-19).

3. Lascivious Larry. It is totally acceptable for people on a prayer team to lay hands on those who are seeking healing or comfort. But in this age of sexual perversion, some people are looking for a cheap thrill, even in church. Prayer ministers should be carefully trained on what kind of touch is appropriate during ministry times. We must have a zero tolerance policy for those who grope in the name of Jesus.

4. Freak-Out Frances. It's a fact: Some people just act plain weird when they feel the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Some shake, others vibrate, others shriek or make birthing noises. I don't believe we should allow prayer ministers to carry on like this at the altar. The people who are entrusted with the job of praying for others should minister with gentleness and self-control. You will scare and confuse people if you are flailing your arms, jerking your torso or acting as if you have a nervous tic while you pray for them. This kind of immature behavior squelches the Holy Spirit.

5. Shrill Bill. The gift of prophecy can be a wonderful blessing—or it can be a total turn-off when the person prophesying is out of order. Nothing kills a church service like a prophet who sounds like he is channeling a banshee. Those who desire to minister in the gift of prophecy should learn to speak in a normal tone of voice—and they should convey love and grace even when they are passionate. Don't allow angry or bitter prophets to ruin church for everyone else.

6. Slick Rick. I believe it is scriptural to anoint people with oil when praying for healing (see James 5:14). But “anoint” does not mean dousing a person with two quarts of scented olive oil. I've seen some prayer ministers get so carried away with the oil that the poor people they were

praying for left the church slimier than a pasta salad. A dab of anointing oil is enough!

7. Groovy Greta. God has gifted certain people with grace in the arts—whether it is singing, songwriting, music or dance. But not all artistic expression belongs in church, and not everyone who thinks they are gifted should be given a platform. We’ve all been in situations where someone performed an awkward “praise dance” that should have been screened before it ended up on the church’s live webcast. Don’t allow the holy worship of God to be tainted by people who are selfishly seeking attention.

I believe we charismatics are entering a new season in which God is raising the bar and calling us to a higher level of maturity. We must put away “childish things” (see 1 Cor. 13:11) and embrace not only the Holy Spirit’s gifts but His fruit as well. Let’s reject the flaky, the goofy and the weird and choose an authentic spirituality that honors God and respects the people we are called to reach for Christ.

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