

If God Is Calling You, Here's Where to Start

We must always remember that the gifts God has given you were given for His glory. So, if the Lord is calling you as a leader, here are some things you should do to prepare:

1. Serve a seasoned and respected voice that carries the same call you do. We need new leaders that start their journey by serving a mentor and that mentor's anointing, long before going into public ministry. Seasoning and accountability come to those who are patient to allow God to move on their behalf. It is dangerous to bypass the process the Lord has planned for those representing Him beyond the walls of one congregation. Pushing doors open damages the body of Christ.

Find someone in the Spirit you desire to be like and serve them. This will help you see more than just the spotlight side of ministry. It's the principle of honor. Before Elisha could ever receive the double portion from Elijah, he had to go through a process called service.

"But Jehoshaphat said, 'Is there a prophet of the Lord here, through whom we may inquire of the Lord?' Then one of the king of Israel's servants answered, 'Elisha the son of Shaphat, who poured water on the hands of Elijah, is here'" (2 Kin. 3:11).

Imagine—the only credential given to Elisha was that he washed the hands of Elijah. As the old saying goes, "If a person is too good to serve others, he is not fit to lead others."

2. Let other seasoned leaders confirm your call. A few years ago, well-respected friends told me to consider running for mayor. It didn't sound like a bad idea and I am still not opposed to it in my future, should it be God's will. However, when I prayed about it, I could not get a clear answer from the Lord. So I called upon my mentors and spiritual fathers. I

received the same answer from all of them. "This is not the season for you to run for office." Their answer gave me peace.

Good ideas are not necessarily God ideas. Good ideas can bring worldly success but have the potential to keep you from God's intended plan. I do not want to chase illegitimate dreams that were never God's plan.

3. Pray, pray, pray. Kyle Searcy, a respected leader in the body of Christ, posted a note on his Instagram that said, "My secret is simple; I pray." I loved seeing a great giant in the faith post that foundational truth. Many people give credit for success to their education or great contacts. However, those who know their position in ministry understand it has been given by God and their burning relationship with Him. They find fuel for success by living in the wilderness of prayer. Build a solid prayer life that is sustained by a radical love for Jesus.

I am confident God will raise your gift to the level He desires it to be. After all, the gift was given for His glory.

Chris Mathis is the lead pastor of the Summit Church in Crestview, Florida, and oversees several churches, ministries and networks. He is the author of the book *Thy Kingdom Come*, as well as many other teaching manuscripts that train and equip leaders around the globe. He has also served on the leadership team of the New Breed Revivalist Network.