

Why Do You Want to Go Into the Ministry?

Time. Where does it go?

It seems at the beginning of any ordinary week, that “time” is my beneficent friend ... but by Thursday afternoon ... that discouraging archenemy known as “time” is breathing down my overworked and underpaid back.

The challenge of time is especially difficult for women who are in ministry. Often, in addition to the call and pressing demands of the ministry, women have meals to prepare, clothes to launder, homes to clean, kids to chauffeur and groceries to buy. And, when a woman in ministry endeavors to fit other necessary and healthy activities into her already over-packed life such as exercise, Bible study and a primary commitment to marriage, time becomes even more precious and less available.

As I look back at nearly four decades as a woman in ministry, I can assure you that there are few greater challenges to serving the American church and the Western Body of Christ than the challenge of time.

I have learned the wisdom in saying a gentle and humble “no” rather than an enthusiastic and overcommitted “yes.”

I have learned that it truly does make a difference in pausing to pray about an offered ministry commitment rather than jumping in before consulting the Lord. (After all ... He is the one Who created time! He has a vested interest in your personal calendar!)

I have learned that just because there is a need to be met does not mean that I am the one who was been called to meet it.

There are times when ministry will indeed require dying to self, laying down personal plans and even the readjustment of a family's schedule when there is a vital and genuine need. However, once that need has been carefully and kindly met, it is needful and wise to place one's focus firmly on the family who should never feel second-place to ministry obligations. I have always believed that my marriage and my family are my first and most important ministry commitment.

I have learned to ask myself these six probing questions before I commit to an additional ministry opportunity:

1. God, would You give me a Bible verse about this particular decision?
2. What does my husband think about this ministry opportunity?
3. Will this decision, in the long run, help our family lead a more meaningful life?
4. Does this opportunity simply feed my ego or does it meet a genuine need in the Body of Christ?
5. Does this opportunity fit my personal calling and mission?
6. Is there some other calendar commitment that I can and should let go of in order to accept this new responsibility?

Remember that each day is a gift from God and that He has a divine and remarkable plan for every day of your life. Also, remind yourself often that the words "stress" and "ministry" should never become conjoined in the life of a believer. If the ministry role that you are committed to is causing more stress than it is joy, it is time for you to step back and re-evaluate your commitments.

"Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow; you are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that" (Jam. 4:14 & 15).

Carol McLeod is an author and popular speaker at women's conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor. Carol has written five books, "No More Ordinary", "Holy Estrogen!", "The Rooms of a Woman's Heart" and "Defiant Joy!" Her most recent book, "Refined: Finding Joy in the Midst of the Fire", will be released on August 1, 2015. Her teaching DVD, "The Rooms of a Woman's Heart", won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award, for excellence in religious programming. [Click here for more information about her ministry.](#)