



Ramah's Voice

a ministry of Ramah International, Inc.

Godly Ministry Management

By Sydna A. Massé

Ministry occurs at all levels of our life. Sometimes it's organized and structured like running a pregnancy care center or post-abortion ministry and other times it's just smiling and being kind to the person standing behind you in the check out line. In this article, excerpted for our booklet, *Soaring to New Heights: Understanding God's Call to New Ministry Endeavors*, we offer key principles to keep in mind while working in any area of God's ministry calling.

A Firm Foundation

Paul talks about the foundation for ministry in I Corinthians 3:10-15 (NIV): *"By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames."*

God is our firm foundation and He has provided us with credibility and experience starting with the day we were conceived. Part of that experience involves developing the expertise to know how to build a house and when to call upon other craftsmen to help – including the best known carpenter of all time! There are times when we pick up the project and find the foundation complete but there are no walls in place. Perhaps you are on the third level finishing off the "attic" of the house and fine-tuning the rest of the structure.

The one thing you must understand is the principle that Paul outlined in the passage above – the work will

be revealed with fire to test the quality of each person's work. In an upcoming issue of Ramah's Voice, I will speak more to the principles of "fire walking" or dealing with spiritual warfare. For now understand that your shelter will be rocked from time to time to keep you focused on the strong foundation — God!

God is The Provider

Sometimes it's embarrassing to ask people to donate to our ministry. For some reason we feel like we are begging for our own salaries! How much easier it is to work where someone else gives you a paycheck. The problem with that is that you learn to be grateful to the employer and not to the Lord for your provision. In full-time ministry God is your employer. He wants to use you to bless other people by allowing them to support His work through you. There is nothing more precious than a "widow's mite" offering that is given out of love. Clearly our main task is to be accountable financially to our donors and to the Lord.

God has every donor picked out in advance and will bring them forward in His time. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills and truly understands just where your checking account stands today. While each gift is important, prayer is the most vital gift we receive in this work. Walking in faith through the low financial times help us to shed excess weight and become leaner. This keeps us closer to the Lord. Be open to His leading when requesting funds. Don't come across as desperate or angry with donors or be jealous because other ministries have more funding. Trust the Lord to meet the needs of your ministry each and every time. When He does, joyously report to donors the fresh crop of fruit that's resulted from their "sowing" into your work.

The Old Prophets

Before I resigned at Focus, our pastor preached a sermon on the "Old Prophet" from I Kings 13:11-32. This is the story about a new prophet from Judah that the Lord was using mightily. When an old prophet heard about this new guy, he wanted to meet him and

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saddled up his donkey to look for him. The new guy was under orders from God not to eat bread or drink water in that area or return by the way he came. The old prophet **lied**. He said that an angel came to him and said that he was to bring the young man back for dinner. The young prophet trusted and went with the old minister. It cost him his life to listen to a man and not to the strict instructions of God.

I wonder if the old prophet was jealous because he may have lost his gift of ministry? Maybe he just wanted to encourage him. Could he have thought some of the young prophet's anointing could rub off on him? We'll never know. The purpose of this story is to remind us to trust God and obey Him explicitly. I'm sure if the young man had taken a few hours to pray about this, he would have heard from God that the old prophet was lying.

Be sure to take everything to God in prayer. Understand that even good folks can be used by the evil one to make you stumble and fall away from God. Some advisers could have heard from God about your ministry and make convincing points to help you see things their way. Keep in mind that they could be dead wrong. God is the only one who can help you differentiate between the two. There is no rush – wait upon the Lord for additional confirmation and direction.

Fresh Fruit & Wolves

The Bible is clear in Matthew 7: 15-19 (NIV) that we must be on guard for deceivers and they will be easily recognizable by the fruit of their efforts: *“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.”*

When I'm writing update letters I'm delighted to look back and list out the fruit of the Lord's work through us. While there are good and bad times, we have tangible, documented proof that lives are being touched by God's grace through our efforts. If you ever feel like giving up sit down first and write out a list of God's fruits through you. This principle also helps you evaluate individuals and ministries related to your work. Look for a godly grove. Be very wary if you see someone attempting to take over another's fruit. Unless they produce their own Godly crop, they could be wolves!

God rarely cuts down healthy trees that bear fruit. He may graft in a new type of branch with different fruit from time to time. Maybe He will give you a good pruning that can be painful and leave you feeling alone and bald. If your vines are a bit withered, He can give you a long watering as well that can leave you feeling drenched. God knows your needs and wants to help you grow and stretch to new heights where you can feel the “Son” shine better. Be sure to praise Him in every situation – good or bad.

Perfection Belongs to God

This work has nothing to do with you but everything to do with the Holy Spirit working through you. You cannot be “qualified” for ministry but you can be trained and equipped. God established this ministry as your future role before you were born. He will touch your mouth with His words and go before you to reach the individuals He has ordained to hear His message through you. That could be one person or millions. Numbers don't count in God's plan because the one life that He touches through you could in turn reach another that reaches another that reaches a final person who will reach millions. The domino effect of our efforts will never be realized until we reach heaven. Otherwise our spirit could be tempted by pride. It's a wonderful thing not to feel the pressure of having to be a “perfect” ministry leader. Perfection is impossible for humans but you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you (Philippians 4:13). You will make mistakes because you are human. When this happens, repent and ask for forgiveness from God and those who may have been affected. God will even use those mistakes to help His ministry succeed through you.

We can be confident in the Holy Spirit as relayed in II Corinthians 3:4-6 NIV: *“Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant.”*

Posing on a Pedestal

An eventual aspect of every successful ministry is the introduction of pride and pedestal living. People like to be associated with success so you could find new friends coming from all areas. Find good role models who consistently display a “servant’s heart” versus a “proudful spirit.”

Most ministry leaders struggle with living in the spotlight. Pregnancy care center folks can be viewed as “heroes” and adored/respected easily whether or not they desire that status. Others will hate us for a variety of reasons. It’s such a world of extremes. Heroes come in all shapes and sizes with different levels of fortitude. Lately several PAS individuals who read my book have given me this title. It is in these critical times when we must be sure to acknowledge that the real hero lives inside of us – Jesus Christ!

Always welcome humility and be happy to fellowship with strangers. The result will be the greatest blessing as Jesus outlined in Matthew 11:29 (NIV): *“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

Knowing When to Quit

Many people come and go from pro-life work and their time will always have an affect on their futures. I’ve seen many who **should** have left but didn’t because they were addicted to being used by God! These well-meaning people turn their backs on their families to concentrate on reaching strangers instead. I Timothy 3:1-7 (NIV) outlines the attributes of ministry – including how they relate to their children:

“If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap.”

Keep in mind you are replaceable. God can pull us out at any time and use someone else. There are seasons of service that are based on many variables. When the Lord released me from the Focus ministry, I was afraid of the next step. Looking back I am blessed to know that He was the one responsible for pushing me out of that lovely nest. Had I not been obedient, someone else may have enjoyed the blessings of this ministry and I would have been stuck, once again, in the belly of a whale.

Whether the calling to a new ministry, to remain in your current work or to go back home to your family, every minute of our life can involve ministry. Just because you don’t head a program at a church or non-profit ministry doesn’t mean God won’t continue to use you! Be open to every opportunity to show His love through your heart.

God’s Tapestry

It’s comforting to know that before we were born, God had our futures mapped out. As outlined in the Jeremiah 1:5 verse above, Psalms 139:15-16 (NIV) relays a similar message:

“My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.”

In heaven God could see our lives as part of this huge incredible tapestry that is all woven together. Our human eyes can hardly glimpse a thread of God’s view that encompasses our lives throughout generations. It is the messy backside of the picture, with its intermittent and jumbled threads, that appears most often to us. We can hardly make sense of it. We concentrate on our pain and failure and can’t see how the Lord could take the horribleness of our sins and turn it together for His good. Yet God never wastes our pain. He knew all of our days – the good and bad – before we were born. He will make good use of every experience in your life in the work He’s planned for your future.



This article contains a portion of the booklet, “Soaring to New Heights,” For more information on this booklet, and the 13 other booklets written by Sydna Masse, visit our website at: www.ramahinternational.org or call 1-866-807-2624.

You'll Never Walk (Or Stumble) Alone

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
(Philippians 4:13)



Watching people is a favorite pastime of mine during my frequent air travels. The other day I saw a small child being pulled along by his father who was trying to make a flight. This boy was uncooperative and at one point stumbled and began to cry. His dad stopped, kindly picked him up and carried him the rest of the way.

Ever feel like that boy? You want to stop and check out the excitement but feel God pulling you along too quickly. Our lack of concentration means that we sometimes stumble and fall – some label these feelings as burnout, stress or backsliding. This can lead to basic errors that can cause other consequences. The tumble should make us turn to God and feel His comforting arms carrying us.

During one of my recent stumbles a friend prayed with me and asked God to reveal which one of my desires had to be released. Once I released this desire to Him, I felt the relief of His peace and knew that I could handle my numerous tasks because *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"* (Philippians 4:13).

God knows our stress threshold and can bring us to a burnout point to get our attention focused back on Him. It's important to apologize when you have messed up and to forgive yourself for making a mistake. Next time you feel this way request prayer from a godly friend. Take a break and allow Him to pick you up and carry you to the next gate.

Sydna A. Massé

Ramah's Resource Corner:

Sydna Massé has written an evangelical post-abortion tract published by the American Tract Society. It's called "Steps to Healing: Finding Peace After Abortion." This four-color piece has only 1,300 words. It contains the topics 'How do you know you need healing?', "You are not alone!", "Joy comes in the mourning", and "The hope of healing." The basic salvation message is presented as well as a blank space on the back to add your ministry information. This is a great tool to hand out at fairs, conventions, church services, promotional mailings, or anywhere the post-abortive can be found. One woman said she found the tract in the bathroom stall at her church! Available from Ramah International at a suggested donation of \$3.00 for a package of 25 tracts.

From the Word of God:

"Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also,"
– Jesus.

Luke 12:32-34 (NKJV)

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