

Ministering Principles

How the Spirit Can (and Will) Help You Minister

The priesthood assignment to minister, given to both men and women, includes the right to receive revelation.

The call to minister and serve and even love as the Savior did can sometimes seem challenging—especially when it involves reaching out to those we may not know very well. With a million ways to minister, we wonder how we can know the best ways to reach out to those we've been assigned.

We don't have to wonder long because our sincere efforts can be guided by the Holy Ghost.

“Your sacred ministering assignment gives you the divine right to inspiration,” said Sister Bonnie H. Cordon, Young Women General President. “You can seek that inspiration with confidence.”¹

When we seek to serve as the Savior did, we can be guided by the same Spirit that guided Him. This is especially true when serving in assignments, such as ministering, made under the authority of the bishop's priesthood keys. Here are six suggestions for ministering with the Spirit.

How Can I Have the Spirit When Ministering?

1

Ask for Guidance. Heavenly Father wants us to communicate with Him through prayer. Prayer not only allows us to draw closer to Him, but it also secures “blessings that God is already willing to grant but that are made conditional on our asking for them.”² “As we pray and seek to understand their hearts,” said Sister Cordon, “I testify that Heavenly Father will direct us and His Spirit will go with us.”³



2

Don't Wait for a Prompting. Be proactive. Be “anxiously engaged” (Doctrine and Covenants 58:27), and you’ll find that your efforts can be guided and magnified. “Going forward with our service and work is an important way to qualify for revelation,” said President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency. “In my study of the scriptures I have noted that most revelation to the children of God comes when they are on the move, not when they are sitting back in their habitations waiting for the Lord to tell them the first step to take.”⁴



INVITATION TO ACT

As you go about your daily ministering, prayerfully seek and respond to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Remember that Heavenly Father will bless you and those you minister to as you do!

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES

Send us your experiences as you have ministered to others or have been ministered to. Go to liahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org and click “Submit an Article or Feedback.”

How do I Recognize Promptings to Minister?

3

Take Mormon's Advice. We don't need to hang around fretting over whether a thought was a prompting or not. Not when we have Mormon's easy key to knowing: If you have a thought that prompts you to do good and to believe or to help others believe in Christ, you can know it is of God (see Moroni 7:16).



4

Don't Worry about It. "Just jump into the pool and swim," said Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Head toward those in need. Don't be immobilized wondering whether you should do the backstroke or the dog paddle. If we follow the basic principles that have been taught, stay aligned with priesthood keys, and seek the Holy Spirit to guide us, we cannot fail."⁵



THE SAVIOR'S EXAMPLE

The Savior was prepared for His ministry. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost," and then Christ "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38). He was "full of the Holy Ghost" and was often "led by the Spirit" (Luke 4:1). Christ surely went about doing good before being anointed with the Holy Ghost, but receiving the Holy Ghost and having that right to inspiration was an important part of His ministry—just as it's an important part of ours.

What's the Best Way to Follow a Prompting?

5

Immediately. Sister Susan Bednar (wife of Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles) is a great example of following promptings. After praying “for the spiritual eyes to see those who have a need,” she looks around the congregation and will often “feel a spiritual nudge to visit with or make a phone call to a particular person,” shared Elder Bednar. “And when Sister Bednar receives such an impression, she promptly responds and obeys. It often is the case that as soon as the ‘amen’ is spoken in the benediction, she will talk with a teenager or hug a sister or, upon returning home, immediately pick up the phone and make a call.”⁶

6

Courageously. Fear of rejection and feelings of shyness, inadequacy, or being an inconvenience can hinder us from following a prompting to minister. “In various times and ways, we all feel inadequate, uncertain, perhaps unworthy,” said Elder Gerrit W. Gong of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “Yet in our faithful efforts to love God and to minister to our neighbor, we may feel God’s love and needed inspiration for their and our lives in new and holier ways.”⁷

One brother shared how he was hesitant to reach out to the husband of a woman who had attempted suicide. But he finally asked the husband to lunch. “When I said, ‘Your wife attempted suicide. That must be overwhelming for you. Do you want to talk about it?’ he openly wept,” he shared. “We had a tender and intimate conversation and developed a remarkable closeness and trust within minutes.”⁸ ■

NOTES

1. Bonnie H. Cordon, “Becoming a Shepherd,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 76.
2. Bible Dictionary, “Prayer.”
3. Bonnie H. Cordon, “Becoming a Shepherd,” 76.
4. Dallin H. Oaks, “In His Own Time, in His Own Way,” *Ensign*, Aug. 2013, 22; *Liahona*, Aug. 2013, 24.
5. Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Ministry of Reconciliation,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 77.
6. David A. Bednar, “Quick to Observe,” *Ensign*, Dec. 2006, 33; *Liahona*, Dec. 2006, 17.
7. Gerrit W. Gong, “Our Campfire of Faith,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 42.
8. See Bonnie H. Cordon, “Becoming a Shepherd,” 76.



DISCOVER MORE

The prophet teaches how to receive personal revelation: see “Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives,” by President Russell M. Nelson (*Ensign or Liahona*, May 2018).