

FULFILLING MY MINISTRY

~ KNOW WHAT IT TAKES ~



FULFILLING MY MINISTRY

~ **KNOW WHAT IT TAKES** ~
USE ALL THAT GOD HAS GIVEN TO YOU

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1. Introduction

- Today we are continuing from where we left off the last time I preached. We were looking at the topic of ‘Fulfilling my ministry’
- Last time our main focus was on developing an understanding as to what it really means
- We said the following about ministry and fulfillment:
- An assignment from God
- A service to God and man
- It’s an opportunity and mandate to partner with God
- It’s also an opportunity to make a significant and lasting difference – a contribution to the God’s redemptive agenda – which is the mission of God

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1. Introduction

- It can be life-long / for a life time, or in particular times and seasons
- The transformation of lives, people, places and situations, allied to an inner witness from God, are the best indicators of fulfilment in time; with ultimate judgment in the hands of God in eternity
- Demands focus, dedication, discipline, etc. for its fulfillment
- It begins with a surrender to God at the foot of the cross

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1. Introduction

- Today our topic is, 'Fulfilling my ministry – know what it takes'
- We are asking ourselves:
- What are the keys to fulfilling my ministry?
- What are the demands?
- What are the disciplines?
- What does God require of me?

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2. Bible passage & text

- **Texts:**

Then David said to his son Solomon, “Be strong and courageous, and act; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you nor forsake you until all the work for the service of the house of the Lord is finished. (1 Chronicles 28:20)

So Solomon built the house and finished it. (1 Kings 6:14)

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2. Bible passage & text

- **Texts:**

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:12-14)

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2. Bible passage & text

- **Texts:**

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2)

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3.1 Submit, surrender, serve

- One of the key conclusions that we came to the last time as to what it means to fulfill ministry and what it would take is that the starting point is the surrender to Jesus as your Saviour and Lord
- You do so by acknowledging that you are sinner, confessing your sins and asking that God the Father will forgive because of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus
- You transfer your faith from yourself and everything else to what Jesus has done
- When you do that you become born again. That means you receive eternal life and are made part of God's family (John 3:16; 1:12)

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3.1 *Submit, surrender, serve*

- If you have not done so, or went away from God, you can do so now by praying a simple prayer
- However, that initial act of surrender is only the beginning of a daily process of continuous submission. That is the basis from which you serve
- So, if you want to fulfill your ministry, daily surrender to Jesus

- **Examples:**

- Jesus

And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." (Matthew 26:39)

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3.1 *Submit, surrender, serve*

- Jesus calls us to do the same
Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. (Mark 8:34-35)
- Ministry is the assignment that God has so graciously given to us, as part of His redemptive agenda. It follows therefore that we have to take orders, directives from Him. That demands ***submission, surrender and service***

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3.2 Know the power of God (the anointing)

- Anyone who is going to successfully complete a task must have the necessary tools or resources to do so
- God gave Bezalel and Oholiab the supernatural ability to do what they had to do. In the same way He gave Jeremiah the ability to prophesy
- This pattern is repeated throughout history
- Before He went up to heaven Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit (John 21:20; Acts 1:8)
- In Acts 2, the Spirit came upon the Church in power. He gave them supernatural ability to fulfill mission, perform miracles, signs and wonders

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3.2 Know the power of God (the anointing)

- That same Spirit is available to us. It is He who empowers to do the works of God
- Scripture says that we have the anointing, and that is true. However, we must seek, in the place of prayer, praise and worship to receive fresh anointing for each

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3.3 Know the presence of God

- One of the constant refrains that we read in both the Old and the New Testament is, ‘for God was with him’
- We read it about Abraham (Genesis 21:22; 26:28;), Joseph (Genesis 39:2-3, 23), David (1 Samuel 18:12,14), Samuel (1 Samuel 3: 19); Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:7)
- Finally, we read the same of Jesus (Acts 10:38)
- We see it in the life of Daniel and the three Hebrew men
- One thing is clear: the presence of God makes the difference

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3.3 *Know the presence of God*

- What is it about the presence of God?
- Answer: It grants favour, access, and ultimately success in ministry
- Not only is it about God graciously being with us, it is also about us humbly drawing close to God. Two conditions – clean hands and a pure heart; holiness and purity (Psalm 15; 24)
- All the people mentioned were successful because they were obedient to God's use of them. Because of that God was with them

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3.4 Prayer

- Ministry without prayer is powerless
- Prayer is a must for anyone who wishes to be effective in ministry
- That's because ministry is an act of spiritual warfare
- Ministry is partnering with God to accomplish His redemptive plan for mankind. The devil will not stand idle to see you succeed. You will certainly be an object of demonic attack. So we must pray
- We must pray for protection, direction and power

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3.4 Prayer

- We must pray because Jesus prayed. The effectiveness of His earthly ministry was built on a solid foundation of His relationship with His Father in prayer
- We see Jesus' prayer life in the following:
- Jesus prayed early in the morning as well as all night
- He prayed both before and after the great events of his life
- He prayed 'when life was unusually busy'
- During his inauguration into ministry (Luke 3:21)
- Before He made an important decision (Luke 6:12-13)
- When God's sovereign plan is about to be revealed (John 17:1)

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3.4 Prayer

- Jesus prayed...
- When others are listening (Matthew 6:5)
- During His greatest need (Matthew 26:36-44; Hebrews 5:7)
- Knowing his life was about to end He turned to prayer
- His last moments of freedom were spent in prayer, alone with the Father
- In total submission to the Father (Matthew 26:39)
- Repeatedly (Matthew 26:44; Luke 18:1)
- One thing is clear – prayer was the key to Jesus fulfilling His ministry
- If Jesus prayed and succeeded, we must do the same

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3.5 Identify the needs around you

- Your ministry should always be focused on meeting needs in line with the redemptive plan of God
- Nehemiah's leadership gift was used to meet a need - that of rebuilding the broken walls of Jerusalem
- David saw the need in the battlefield – the need to remove the reproach brought upon God's name and Israel as a result of the insults of Goliath (1 Samuel 17)
- Jesus saw thousands of hungry and tired people that needing to be fed

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3.5 Identify the needs around you

- The greatest need of mankind is for a Saviour. Our primary ministry is the salvation of souls. We have been mandated to go into all the world and preach the gospel to all nations (Matthew 28:18-20)
- But how do you identify a need?
- The answer is as follows:
 1. Vision / revelation (God shows you)
 2. Information (Nehemiah; Peter)
 3. Observation (Jesus feeding the five thousand; Peter and John in Acts 3)
 4. Association (being with people)

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3.6 Use what you have – deploy your gifts

- This is about using the tools, resources and gifts that God has given to you
- Paul exhorted Timothy, *‘Therefore I remind you to stir up (fan into flame) the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.’ (2 Timothy 1:6)*
- The bible says, *‘A man’s gift makes room for him, And brings him before great men.’ (Proverbs 18:16)*
- One of the greatest gifts that God has given to us is people. David had his mighty men; Moses had Joshua; Elijah had Elisha; Paul had Timothy, and the list goes on

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3.6 Use what you have – deploy your gifts

- The gift of people given by God to you is to fulfill ministry
- One of the things that is very clear in terms of God's dealing with man is that it is the deployment of your gift that will bring transformation
- **Examples:**
- David (1 Samuel 16:18-19)
- Peter & John (Acts 3:1-10)
- Paul (Acts 19; 27-28)
- Jesus (Acts 10:38)
- To fulfill ministry: use what you have; that which God has given to you

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3.6 Use what you have – deploy your gifts

- It is also important to know the nature or type of gifts that you have and how to flow or function in them
- For the time being know that there three ways in which gifts may be categorised:
- Gifts of the Father (Romans 12:6-8)
- Gifts of the Son (Ephesians 4:11)
- Gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8-10)

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3.6 Use what you have – deploy your gifts

- You also need to know how the gift in you is stirred, activated and deployed in your life
- A case point is the prophet Elisha who, when called upon to minister, said said:
Now bring me someone who can play the harp.” While the harp was being played, the power of the LORD came upon Elisha, (2 Kings 3:15)
- He understood in that moment how the gift, grace or anointing upon his life is stirred, activated and manifested – music from a harpist

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3.7 Understand the power of engagement

- Ministry does not take place in a vacuum or laboratory; nor predominantly or exclusively inside a Church building
- A cursory glance at the bible shows that ministry is predominantly in the marketplace or where people are
- That means we have to connect with our world, as follows:
 1. Incarnation (word became flesh)
 2. Identification (be with) – not separation
 3. Transformation (which is the result of the first two)
- Fulfilling my ministry means being where people are – work, rest and play; at the factory, office, leisure and travel spaces of life

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3.8 Maintain fitness for purpose

- This is about maintaining your health:
 1. Physically – walks, jogging, gym, gardening, cycling
 2. Emotionally
 3. Psychologically
 4. Socially – positive and godly relationships / friendships
 5. Intellectually – reading, study, mental exercises
 6. Spiritually – worship, praise, reading God’s word, meditation, prayer; general spiritual disciplines, in order to grow
- These require more detailed consideration. But just as Samuel and Jesus grew, we must do the same; to stay sharp and fit for purpose (1 Samuel 2:26; Luke 2:40)

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3.9 Watch out for moments, times and seasons

- Just as life is not a straight line, challenges come along the way as we seek to fulfill ministry. That's when we go through moments, times and seasons in our development
- That's because any of the following could be happening to you:
 1. Personal dissatisfaction / unease with progress or just before a new phase
 2. Preparation for a new season
 3. Spiritual (or emotional and psychological) growth spurts
 4. Character formation

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3.9 Watch out for moments, times and seasons

5. Distraction

- What do you do?
- First, pause, be still, be quiet in your Spirit, watch and listen to hear what God is saying
- Pray, pray, pray
- Speak to a mature, trusted believer
- Hear what God is saying, and obey

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3.10 Focus each day on finishing well and strong

- Form the texts that we read at the beginning:
- King David said to his son Solomon:
Then David said to his son Solomon, “Be strong and courageous, and act; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you nor forsake you until all the work for the service of the house of the Lord is finished. (1 Chronicles 28:20)
- My prayer, as you seek to fulfil your ministry is that you will know strength and courage; that God will be with you. You will not fail
- As Solomon completed the temple, you shall complete your assignment under God in Jesus’ name

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3.10 Focus each day on finishing well and strong

- Speaking of his personal journey, Apostle Paul wrote:
Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:12-14)
- My prayer is that you will not look back, dwell on the past, be a prisoner of history or you will not lose focus. On the contrary, you will press toward the goal and the prize. You will finish well and finish strong

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3.10 Focus each day on finishing well and strong

- Our last text says:
Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-3)
- As you serve God in ministry, may you lay aside every weight, every sin, every hindrance, so that you will run to the very end. Your eyes will never stray from Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your faith. Like Jesus, you too will finish well and finish strong

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11. Summary, conclusion and application

- God has given us everything that we need in order to fulfil our mandate. All that He requires of us is to avail ourselves of all the resources that He has made available to us:
 1. Submit, surrender, serve – every day
 2. Seek and avail yourself of the power of God (anointing) / the power of the Holy Spirit
 3. Seek His presence, ask for God's presence
 4. Pray, pray, pray – don't stop praying

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11. Summary, conclusion and application

5. Identify the needs around you
6. Use what you have – deploy your gifts
7. Understand the power of engagement – in the marketplace, through incarnation and identification, to bring transformation
8. Maintain fitness for purpose holistically
9. Watch out for and understand the moments, times and seasons that you are in
- As we do these things, I know that the God who has called you will enable you to fulfil your ministry; finishing well and finishing strong