

LEADERS CALLED BY GOD

Volume 1

Section A



General Conference
Ministerial Association

*“Listen to me, you islands;
hear this, you distant
nations: Before I was born
the Lord called me; from my
mother’s womb he has
spoken my name.”*

Isaiah 49:1



I- Is a personal calling



In His infinite mercy, God uses men and women in order to place them before the greatest work ever entrusted to a mortal: The salvation of souls! God does this in spite of our weaknesses and failures, but does so because He is willing to transform us and turn us into leaders after His own heart. He never calls anyone so that they fail; He calls us to enable us and for us to succeed in the task He sets before us.



Elders in the church are men and women called by God to fulfill a divine purpose, to wit:

- Prepare the church for the second coming of Jesus.
- Work with the church to accomplish its mission upon the earth.



II- Characteristics of the calling



1- It is a calling made by God and not by men

The church elders must be sure that:

- It was God who called them and not men. It is true that the church appointed them; but it was God who inspired and moved the church to do such. That is why the apostle Paul, when speaking about his calling, said:



- *“Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—”*

Galatians 1:1

- Paul also reminds us: *“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope...”*

1 Timothy 1:1



2- Is a personal calling

- No one else could accomplish for the elders the work God has appointed for them to do.
- *“When God calls a man to do a certain work in His cause, He does not also lay upon him burdens that other men can and should bear. These may be essential, but according to His own wisdom God apportions to every man his work.”*

6T 245



3- It is a calling with a purpose

- Upon calling, God has a higher purpose for the elders because He wants to engage them in caring for what God loves the most upon the earth: **His church**. Therefore, God wants them to fulfill a mission, just as it is well stated in *1 Peter 2:9*:

“...that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”



4- It is a calling by His grace and not by our merits

- Elders have no personal merits to be the object of a calling by God; only that God has been gracious to them and by God's grace the Lord deemed it well to use them in His service. Paul expressed his gratitude to God's calling in this manner:



“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service... The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly...”

1 Timothy 1:12, 14

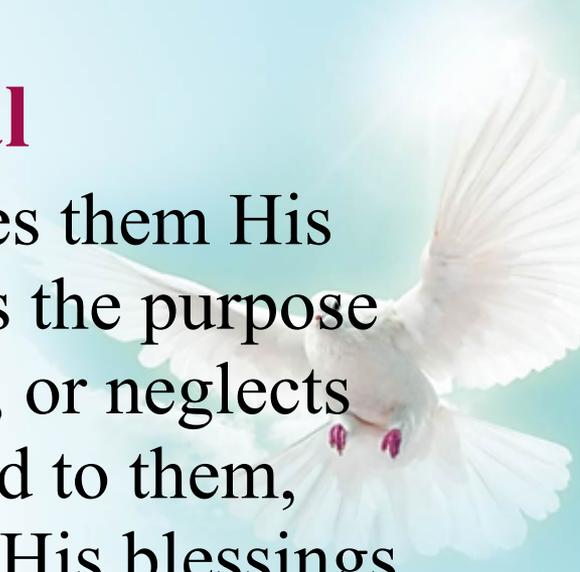


5- The calling is conditional

- God calls the elders and promises them His presence; but if any elder diverts the purpose for which they have been called, or neglects to carry out the mission entrusted to them, God could withdraw from them His blessings and consider them a neglectful steward. Such is expressed in the Holy Scriptures:

“He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.”

John 15:2



Points to ponder

- Elders are not **superior** to the other members of the church.
- Neither are they **better** or superior to the other leaders on whom the church depends.
- It does not mean that they are more **gifted** than others.



- Neither does it indicate that they are **intellectually** superior or better equipped for problem-solving.
- It is simply that by God's **grace** the Lord chose them and His Holy Spirit will qualify them to carry out such a delicate, but noteworthy mission.
- The mission is to be accomplished in **humility**, tactfully and giving the **glory** to God who is the only one who deserves it.



**III- The Bible reminds
us that it is God who
calls us**



*“...God, who set me
apart from my mother’s
womb and called me by
his grace...”*

Galatians 1:15



“As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”

Ephesians 4:1-3



“With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith.”

2 Thessalonians 1:11



“He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time...”

2 Timothy 1:9



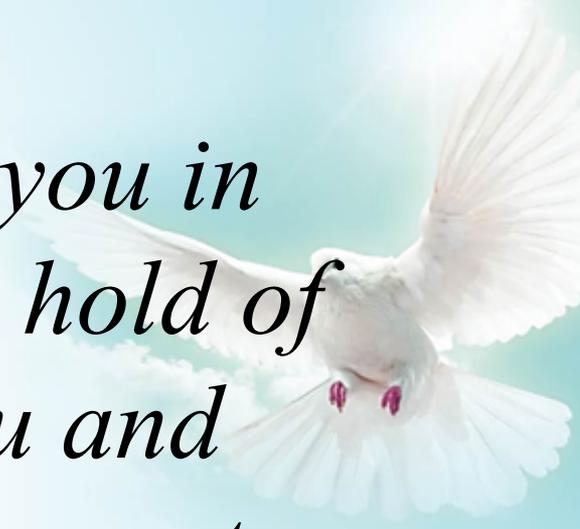
“I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, ‘You are my servant’; I have chosen you and have not rejected you.”

Isaiah 41:9



“I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles...”

Isaiah 42:6



**IV- Elders must be
aware that...**



- It was God who **called** them by means of the church.
- It is an honor to be called by God for such an eminent **mission**.
- Such honor entails a great **responsibility**.
- The calling is by grace and not for being **superior** to other leaders or members of the church.



- An elder is first and foremost **accountable** to God.
- If God called him, God will **qualify** him in proportion to his submissiveness.
- If his service is mediocre, it is God whom he is **dishonoring.**



- God calls, but He can also reject an elder if he does not fulfill God's **expectations**.
- To God, the church is “the apple of His eye.” Therefore, it is to be cared for with respect, dedication and **responsibility**.
- The call of God abides in humility, reverence and responsibility. It does **not** abide in **self-importance and self-sufficiency**.



V- Inspired counsel



“God calls a man to do a certain work; and when he has carried it as far as he is qualified to take it, the Lord brings in others, to carry it still farther.”

DA 182



“Men whom God will connect with His work are not limp and fiberless, without muscle or moral force of character. It is only by continued and persevering labor that men can be disciplined to bear a part in the work of God.”

3T 496



**Recapitulating
what we studied**



1- Two purposes for the calling:

- Prepare the church for heaven.
- Qualify the church so that it fulfills its mission.



2- Characteristics of the calling:

- It is from God.
- It is personal.
- It is for a purpose.
- It is made by grace.
- It is conditional.



3- Cite two texts about the calling

- Galatians 1:15
- Isaiah 41:9



4- An elder must be aware that: (List four facts)

- It is God who calls them.
- God called them by grace.
- If God called them, God will qualify them.
- They are accountable to God.

