

Seven Conditions

by F.B. Meyer

To be effective in ministry, one must be Holy Ghost filled, emptied, a man of prayer, willing to give up prejudice, Spirit-guided, humble, and seeking the glory of Christ.

Scripture: Matthew 5:16, John 3:30, Acts 2:4, Acts 4:31, Acts 10:9, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Philippians 2:3-4, Colossians 3:23-24, 1 Peter 5:6

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Effective Ministry"

Description

F.B. Meyer emphasizes the seven conditions necessary for effective ministry, drawing on the example of Peter's life. He highlights the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit, being emptied of self, and being a person of prayer. Meyer also stresses the need to let go of prejudices, be guided by the Spirit, maintain humility, and seek the glory of Christ in all endeavors. Ultimately, he asserts that true ministry is about yielding to God and lifting up Jesus as the central focus.

Transcript

(1.) You must be Holy Ghost filled. Peter was filled thrice; once in the second chapter of Acts, and twice in the fourth chapter. He was a Holy Ghost filled man in character, and therefore he could count on the co-operation of the Spirit. (2.) You must be emptied. Peter was empty. He spent many days in a farmer's house. I can hardly imagine how he got into such an emptying place. In the first place, it was a very insalubrious spot. Of all hotels it is about the last place I would select.

The odor would be anything but savory. And then, in the next place, as a Jew it must have been defiling to him to be in such close association with carcasses. And yet he spent many days as in a city alley; this apostle, this man who had preached through large regions, who had raised Eneas and Dorcas, got down to the tanner's house. And a man will have to come to an end of himself before the Holy Ghost will work with him. (3.) You must be a man of prayer. Peter was a man of prayer.

Act_10:9 : "Peter went up upon the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour." Some may think that when I say: "Do not pray so much, but take," I mean that they are to give up their lonely hours of fellowship with God. Not at all. No true experience can ever exist apart from communion with God. But mind, instead of asking for so many things that God cannot give, you will ask for a few things definitely, you will be led out in prayer, you will feel you cannot help praying for those few things, and you will have so much to do in praising and thanking God for giving you your heart's desire that your prayer-times will tend to be longer rather than shorter. (4).

You must be willing to give up prejudice. When Peter was first commanded to kill and eat of the creatures let down from heaven in the sheet, he said: "Not so, Lord: for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." But after thinking about the vision, he was willing to give up lifelong prejudices. I have met men in my life who have refused to receive these teachings about the Holy Ghost, which in these latter days God has made known to His church. They have said with Peter: "Not so, Lord."

I believe in the good old way of putting things, and I refuse to accept any further light that may break from Thy Word." That very often stereotypes a man's power. He cannot advance with God. If Peter had refused to advance with God, God would have gone on without him. Be sure to advance with God. (5.) You must be Spirit-guided. This also was true of Peter. The Spirit said: "Three men seek thee; go with them." Now listen. Never take an impulse in your heart as being final. It may be of the devil, or it may be of the Spirit of God.

The devil often comes as an angel of light, but you may always know when the impulse is of God, first, by its becoming a settled purpose. You may always know the devil because he asks questions. The devil always deals with notes of interrogation, and whenever you have a lot of notes of interrogation flitting about your mind, you know it is the dust raised by the devil. When God deals with you He is always definite, and the impression grows stronger every time you pray. But any impression from God's Spirit is always corroborated by two things: by the Word, and by circumstances.

The Spirit of God and the Word of God are parallel lines. And if you are truly called of God, circumstances will coincide with the spiritual impulse. The inward impulse, the Word of God, and the outward circumstances will be in line. So it was with Peter. The Spirit said: "Three men seek thee," and suddenly he heard three men rapping down stairs. Always wait for the knock of the man, as well as the impulse from the Holy Ghost, agreeing with the Word of God. (6.) You must be humble.

When this Roman of-ricer fell before Peter the fisherman, Peter lifted him up, and said: "Stand on your feet; I also am a man." There was nothing of the priest about Peter. In our country the priest is rather glad to have a man at his feet; but Peter, a sincere transparent servant of God, did not look down, but said: "Man, stand up!" A truly humble soul is necessary for the co-operation of the Holy Ghost. (7.) You must seek the glory of Christ. My secretary and I agree upon our sermon for the magic lantern service before we start; and if you want the Holy Ghost to help you in your preaching, you and the Holy Ghost must agree together what you are going to preach about.

If you are going to talk about social reform, I should not be at all surprised if the Holy Ghost should say: "If you are going to preach that, you must do it yourself, for I will have nothing to do with it. You will say: 'I want to preach on the last political crisis.'" The Holy Ghost will answer: "Very well, go on; but you must go your own way. I cannot help you with that." Or you will come to the Holy Spirit, and say: "Blessed Spirit, what shall I preach from?" and there will steal into your heart the name "Jesus!" and the Holy Ghost will say: "You may begin where you like, you may deal with any historical subject you like, but you must end with the Lord Jesus Christ."

Some time ago one of my friends went out with a little boy who was leading him across the common from the railroad station to the house. My friend said to him; "Go to Sunday-school?" "Yes." "What did your teacher talk about last Sunday afternoon?" "O, he was talking about Jacob." "And what did he take the Sunday before that?" "O, he was talking about prayer." "Well, did your teacher talk about Jesus?" "O, no," said the little fellow, "that's at the other end of the book." Now I hold that Jesus is not at the other end of

the Book, but He is all through the Book, and every chapter and every verse and every incident in the Bible may somehow be made a road to Jesus.

I do not say that on week evenings a minister may not deal with public questions. No doubt the world will stand still until he tells it what to do. But I do think that whilst he has a desire for the discussion of those great problems, with the reporters listening, whether on week evening or on Sunday, for the most part--I am not offering to lay down any absolute rule, because in the case of arbitration, when fear spread over our hearts that our two great sister countries might be embroiled in strife, the pulpit spoke out and saved (as I believe) the question from becoming serious on each side of the Atlantic--but for the most part there must be the constant uplifting of the Lord Jesus Christ in His glory as the Savior of men.

And as you dare to do that simply and humbly, the power of God the Holy Ghost will witness to the living Christ in your church, in the Sunday-school. It matters little enough to God what you are in intellectual power, or natural gifts and eloquence. He simply wants a nature yielded absolutely to Him, and a voice raised for Jesus, and the Holy Ghost will do everything else.

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