

The iFollow Discipleship Series



Every Believer

God's Calling and
Gifting for Ministry

by
Monte Sahlin

iFOLLOW

Copyright © 2013 by North American Division Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists.

Available from *AdventSource*
5120 Prescott Avenue
Lincoln, NE 68506
402.486.8800
www.adventsource.org

All rights reserved. No portions of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, scanning, or other—except for brief quotations in critical reviews or articles, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published by *AdventSource*, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Cover art by Natalie Falk.

The Resources for Spiritual Growth and Other Voices sections of this guide are taken from the broader Christian community. They are not intended to imply the endorsement of teachings of the individual quoted.

ISBN 978-1-57756-029-6

Printed in the United States

The iFollow Discipleship Series

Every Believer

God's Calling and
Gifting for Ministry

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	vii
About the Author	vi
Foreword	vii
Chapter One	
The Priesthood of Every Believer	1
Chapter Two	
The Giftedness of Every Believer	15
Chapter Three	
The Discovery of Every Believer	31
Chapter Four	
The Service of Every Believer	45

Chapter Five
The Trap of Every Believer 57

Chapter Six
The Development of Every Believer 63

Appendix
Spiritual Gifts Inventory95
Recommended Resources 105

Introduction

After three decades of emphasis on spiritual gifts, Adventist pastors across North America are convinced that church members must be empowered for ministry. They often preach the scriptures that state plainly that “each” and “every” member of “the body of Christ” has been given a special gift “for ministry” which, when utilized properly, “builds up” the church (see Ephesians 4, Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12). Yet, when it comes to actual practice, it often seems easier and quicker for the pastor to attempt to do the work of ministry him or herself than to enlist and equip the church members to share it.

This has become increasingly true in the 21st century as the average household invests more and more of its time in occupational responsibilities. Three out of four women work outside the home, and most of these have a “second shift” of housekeeping too. This has been shown to be true in surveys of Adventist women, as well as among the general public. The average work week in the United States has moved from 39 hours in the 1970s to 53 hours in 2005. As the supply of “free time” decreases, there is greater competition for it—more recreation, hobby, and cultural opportunities are constantly being generated. This is especially true in metropolitan area where many jobs have a very high level of demand, especially among professionals and managers, and the opportunities for avocational pursuits are endless.

As it becomes more difficult to get helpers, the tendency is to pile more and more on a handful of long-term, faithful workers in each congregation. Increasingly, lay leaders in local churches feel burned out, and some drop out of the church because of these feelings. An interdenominational survey of Protestant church lay leaders asked directly if they were “burned out as a leader in the parish.” More than half responded in the positive. Only a third said burnout was clearly not a problem. I have replicated this study in several Adventist congregations, and found the same response with more alarming results.

There is a profound negative effect on church life “when one out of four key lay leaders is exhausted, cynical, disillusioned and self-deprecating,” says Roy Oswald, director of the interdenominational study. He asks, “Is this a reason why morale in some congregations is low? Is this one of the reasons why some congregations fail to grow?” He places this issue in a theological perspective. “The church’s primary ministry is with people and to people. In order to be effective the church must use its own human resources. What is the church’s record in the stewardship of its human resources?”

Although neither Oswald’s research nor mine among Adventist churches is based on a large enough sample to be conclusive, they do give some hints as to why there is such a high degree of exhaustion and negative attitudes among lay leaders. These people are very busy in every aspect of their lives. Not only do they volunteer at the church, but they are heavily involved in other family, business and civic activities. They are the doers of the church and the community.

The self-absorption, materialism and ambition which have become dominate trends in American culture not only make people less interested in volunteering, but explain the new demands made when people do agree to volunteer. They want clear and limited tasks, short terms in office, plenty of helpers, and direct feedback about how they are doing with lots of affirmation. One out of four said that they often have difficulty delegating work to others in the church and holding them accountable for the jobs they have accepted. In my surveys, Adventist lay leaders indicated the same.

The church is up against powerful and sophisticated competitive forces when it seeks the involvement of its members in ministry. It must become more intentional and competent in recruiting, placing, training, supporting and managing volunteers. The heavy-handed attempts at guilt and manipulation that are often used simply do not work. Where should we start?

Every Believer lays the foundation to begin guiding members into understanding the New Testament principle of the priesthood of all believers (Chapter 1). It provides a biblical framework (Chapter 2) to not only teach the importance of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ (Chapter 3), but also the importance of using one’s gifts (Chapter 4) and not falling into the trap of consumer religion (Chapter 5). We will also spend time on how to develop the gifts of each member and the role of leadership (Chapter 6).

The goal is to understand how to have an active relationship with Christ. To be an authentic follower of Jesus means being active in ministry. As

Ephesians 4 clearly teaches, spiritual gifts provide a primary way in which the Holy Spirit works in the lives of believers. In order to grow spiritually, every believer needs to understand this topic and the role it plays in their relationship with Jesus.

Obviously this small group resource does not provide a detailed, comprehensive guide to setting up a complete support system for volunteer ministry in your local church. It is intended to set down some initial stepping stones and to begin moving members toward service. Other resources, such as the Connections seminar (see Recommended Resources in the back of this book) give additional pieces to a more thorough approach that will result in a healthy, growing church.

If you are a leader in your local church, I would encourage you to gather a small group to study this guide as a way to engage more members in meaningful service in your church. If you are a member who has either not found a niche in which to be involved or you feel drained because you are in a place of ministry that doesn't really match your gifts or you are one of the few faithful members carrying most of the responsibilities in your local church, then it is time to engage more people in an active relationship with Christ and encourage the involvement of *every believer*.

Monte Sahlin
Dayton, Ohio

About the Author



Monte Sahlin has been a Seventh-day Adventist minister since the summer of 1967 when he went as a student missionary to work in an inner city neighborhood in Los Angeles. Over the years he has served as a pastor, community organizer and church administrator. For several decades he has devoted much of his work to research, producing 21 books and more than 100 reports. He is an adjunct faculty member in the urban studies department at Eastern University and in the Doctor of Ministry program at Andrews University. He is a senior consultant for the Center for Creative Ministry and executive secretary of the multi-faith Congregational Studies Partnership based at Hartford Seminary.

Chapter One

The Priesthood of Every Believer

Are you of royal descent? Some people love to study their roots to determine if they have connections to a historical monarch. It's seen as a mark of distinction, something to brag about. Of course, there are many impostors who fabricate genealogical lines that don't really exist. Some are desperate to raise their social status a notch or two. Others are looking for a possible monetary windfall from great-great-great grandpa's estate. Since records are limited, the number of people who claim to be of royal blood is more than those who can actually prove it.

So imagine Michael Hastings' surprise when Tony Robinson showed up on his doorstep while working on a documentary titled, "Britain's Real Monarch." According to Robinson, and a growing number of historians and genealogists, King Edward IV was an illegitimate son of Richard of York. The rightful heir should have been his younger brother, George, the Duke of Clarence. Which means every king and queen of England since 1461 came from the "wrong" bloodline.

Hastings was unaware of his rightful claim to royalty when Robinson traced the lineage of Richard of York's other son all the way down to him. When he immigrated to Australia in 1960, he was content just to be Mike from New South Wales. He worked as a forklift driver and would rather be a "regular bloke" than Michael I or, more formally, *His Majesty Michael I, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of His Other Realms and Territories King, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.*



ADVENTIST VOICES PAST AND PRESENT

- The major role of the pastor is to equip members as disciples of Christ to use their gifts in witness for the Master. Jesus focused most of His attention equipping His disciples to be powerful leaders and soul-winning evangelists. The church is not a social club where people of like interest gather each week to make one another feel good. It is the arena of God's grace where the people of God meet to be filled with His grace, equipped to serve, and prepared to be sent back into the community to make a difference for the kingdom of God. – Mark Finley, "Recapturing the Passion: What the Priesthood of Believers Means to the Body of Christ" (*Adventist Review*, August 12, 2010).
- Throughout the centuries this vision of the involvement of all believers in mission was lost. With few exceptions, such as the Waldensians, only a select few shared the good news of the gospel. While Martin Luther in the sixteenth century fought against the priesthood of the few, he did not advocate a mission task for the many. The Moravians broke with tradition and sent out their first lay missionaries in 1732. Mission, they said, is an important part of one's religion and must be exercised for spiritual health. By 1792 William Carey—a self-educated cobbler—insisted that the New Testament command to preach to all the world was binding in his days on all believers. –Nancy Vyhmeister, "Why Mission?" (*Adventist Review*, September 12, 2013)
- The priesthood of all believers is not a Protestant invention. It originates in the New Testament [1 Peter 1:1; 2:5–9] ... This text leads us to the inevitable conclusion that the holy and real priesthood mentioned by the apostle is a corporative priesthood. In the whole New Testament there is no reference to a priesthood of individuals, except in the case of our Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently, the difference between ministers and laymen should be considered as a difference of function and not of dignity. Emphasis on the role of the ministry can be made only with full consciousness of the equal status of all Christians before God. Ministers and laymen form a "holy nation, a peculiar people." Any tendency to convert the minister into a priest according to the model of the ancient Hebrew dispensation and to make of the layman a passive individual falsifies and contradicts the teaching of the New Testament. –Enoch Oliveira, "The Universal Priesthood," (*Ministry Magazine*, August 1972)
- Carlos Martin, a professor at Southern Adventist University, points out that the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century began to discover this biblical truth and called it the priesthood of all believers. They said that baptism was not sprinkling water on babies before they knew what was happening to them. Instead, baptism should take place when a person is old enough to repent, surrender their life to Jesus Christ, be taught the basic principles of the Bible, and *be ready to minister to the needs of others in service and outreach*. As the candidate for baptism was standing in the water, the pastor would not raise his hand toward heaven, as is often the case now. Instead, he would place his hand on the head, signifying an ordination to a lifetime of ministry. Being baptized "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" was recognized as the time at which God gave the candidate power to live a godly life, which included service to God and others. –Dan Serns, "From Basketball to Bible Studies: How to mobilize your members for ministry", *Adventist Review*, January 27, 2005

Some dynastic fortunes may hang by a thread, but, according to Peter in the text above, every true believer in Jesus Christ is of royal lineage, by faith a child of the King of Heaven. We are “a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession” (1 Peter 2:9). All of the privileges of the literal nation of Israel have been given to the Christian community, the body of Christ, the church. To be connected to spiritual Israel, you do not need to trace your literal genealogical bloodline. You become an heir by faith (Romans 4:13). Many believers are like Michael Hastings, surprised at their royal connections and unaware that they are part of the Christian priesthood.

The True Meaning of Laity

Traditional terminology in the church plays down our true status in Christ. People often speak of “the clergy” and “the laity.” They think of a distinct wall of separation, as if one were above the other. But such a view is not supported in Scripture. In speaking of “God’s special possession,” Peter uses the Greek word *laos* which means “the people,” literally “the people of God.” It has evolved into the English word “laity” or “layman” through the Latin translation of the Bible. Today, in English, it is common to refer to a “layman” as a person who is not professionally trained in a field, such as, “I am not an astronomer, I am just a layman who enjoys looking at the stars.” But the truth is *every believer*, regardless of their gifts, is part of the people of God.

In contrast, those who serve as pastors or priests are called “clergy.” Actually, the Bible never uses the word clergy. It was invented after the New Testament was completed. The stratification of this term into professional clergy and lay people is something that was manufactured outside the Bible. In fact, Protestants don’t believe in the lay/clergy division at all. One of the founding principles of the Protestant movement—the Reformation—is “the priesthood of all believers.” Every believer in Jesus, regardless of their education or status, may pray directly to God and secure their salvation through faith in Jesus. No one is dependent on another person to gain access to Christ.

But the priesthood of every believer means even more than this. This teaching from Scripture speaks to the role of every person who follows Jesus. It is often assumed that only pastors or clergy have a ministry. The rest of the church just helps out (or watches), but unless you are up front preaching, you don’t really have a “ministry” in the church.

If you look carefully at the role of Protestant pastors in history, they are considered to be facilitators and teachers, not priests. They may lead out in worship,



INSPIRED THOUGHTS

- The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. – *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 9.
- The Saviour's commission to the disciples included all the believers. It includes all believers in Christ to the end of time. It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of saving souls depends alone on the ordained minister. All to whom the heavenly inspiration has come are put in trust with the gospel. All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men. For this work the church was established, and all who take upon themselves its sacred vows are thereby pledged to be co-workers with Christ. – *The Desire of Ages*, p. 822
- The Lord has blessed many of you of late. What reason did you assign for this enlightenment? Did you think that God had blessed you simply that you might sit down and be happy, while others were left to perish for the want of the knowledge and experience that you have obtained through the mercy and forbearance of God? Were you willing to be content and gratified that you had received so rich a blessing? The Holy Spirit was imparted to you in order that you might become agents by which God could communicate that blessing to others. ... "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." ... The religion that does not reveal itself in good works, in true righteousness and goodness, in saving the souls of poor sinners, is of no value in the estimation of God, and it will not save the souls of those who possess it. – *The Review and Herald*, December 12, 1893.

but it is not required that worship leaders be trained or ordained. Their spiritual authority comes from their spiritual gifts as equippers and leaders, not from the laying on of hands. The ceremony of ordination is recognition of spiritual gifts that have already been bestowed by the Holy Spirit. Ordaining a man or woman does not suddenly give them a jolt of giftedness.

The ministry of pastors in the body of Christ is understood by most. What is less clear is the ministry of the rest of the believers. According to Scripture, each of the members of Christ's body, the church, have spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11). God expects every single believer, without exception, to serve Him either in His body or in the world. What can be described as the overriding

RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH



- Definition of “Priesthood of All Believers:” A doctrine of the Protestant Christian Church: every individual has direct access to God without ecclesiastical mediation and each individual shares the responsibility of ministering to the other members of the community of believers. –“The Priesthood of All Believers,” Merriam-Webster.com (accessed October 2013)
 - Nearly five hundred years after the Reformation, there are rumblings in the church that appear to be creating a climate for something so powerful that we can call it a New Reformation. The New Reformation seeks nothing less than the radical transformation of the self-perception of all believers so that we see ourselves as vital channels through whom God mediates his life to other members of the body of Christ and to the world. –Greg Ogden, *Unfinished Business: Returning the Ministry to the People of God* (Zondervan, 2003), p. 18
 - The church by definition is the greatest gathering of potential servants in the world, but she is also the most notorious vehicle for disappointing, discouraging, and even destroying them. –Sue Mallory, *The Equipping Church* (Zondervan, 2001), p. 37
-

single theme of this service? How can it be defined concisely as compared to the ministry of pastors or clergy?

The primary role of pastors and elders (and other spiritual leaders) in the church is to “equip” God’s people for “works of service” (Ephesians 4:12). In other words, the ministry of pastors and elders focuses mostly on helping believers in the church. That means the principal ministry of the laity is to the non-believers outside the church. The church is a missionary agency. It is a sending organization that directs members out into the world to do the work of God in the secular context. If you are not a pastor or elder, then your chief duty to God is to serve His unsaved children in the secular world. If you are not doing this, then you are unfaithful to the call of God on your life.

Prime Ministers

Another term that can cause confusion regarding the use of our spiritual gifts and the role of pastors (which is really only one of the many gifts given by the Spirit) is the word “minister.” We often exclusively assign this title to ordained clergy. But in the Old Testament, the word could speak of attendants in a royal court, or assistants to high ranking officials, or to priests who served in the sanctuary. The Hebrew word, *sharath*, simply means “to serve.”

The same is true of its usage in the New Testament. The person who was a volunteer under the direction of a leader was a minister. The attendant who handed Jesus the scroll of Isaiah in the synagogue in Nazareth was a servant or minister. John Mark “ministered” to Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey as an assistant or helper. Public servants were also ministers, along with government officials and court officials. It was not intended to be an exclusive title to separate pastors from members. Every believer was called to do ministry, that is, to be servants of Christ. The church is built up and made strong “as each part does its work” (Ephesians 4:16).

The title “prime minister” often conjures up in our minds a high ranking official who is the senior minister of a cabinet in the executive branch of a government. We think of rolling out a red carpet and treating such people with great respect. Quite literally, this title means this person is the “chief servant” to the monarch in his or her country. The word minister originates from the Latin word which simply means servant. In a biblical sense, we all should speak like the apostle Paul who often spoke of himself as servant or bondservant (Titus 1:1) of God.

Have you ever said (or heard someone say), “It’s the pastor’s job”? As Protestants who reject the idea of priests as a superior class, we should hesitate to draw hierarchical distinctions between clergy and other members. Such differences do not exist in Scripture. While some members are set aside for particular functions in the church as spiritual leaders, this does not remove responsibilities from the rest of the body. Every part has a work, every member has a particular function, and each person has been gifted to serve somewhere.

Unlike other religions of the time of the New Testament, the Christian faith was not conceived as an organization in which professional priests served a clientele. The church was not organized for “sitting,” it was marshaled for “service.” When church members expect a select few to do all the serving, leaders burn out and the congregation tends toward viewing the church as a place to which they “pay” for religious services. (More on this in Chapter 5.) Seventh-day Adventists expect every church member to participate in the work of ministry.

Ellen White observes, “A working church is a growing church.” She states that it is the purpose of the pastor to “get the full membership of the church actively engaged in various departments of church work” (Gospel Workers, p. 198). Pastors “cannot do the work that the church should do” (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 4, p. 69). In fact, it is essential to our Christian life to be involved in service. “Let ministers teach church members that in order to grow in



- The purpose of human life is to serve, and to show compassion and the will to help others. –Albert Schweitzer
 - No man will make a great leader who wants to do it all himself, or to get all the credit for doing it. –Andrew Carnegie
 - The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others. –Mahatma Ghandi
 - It is not the style of clothes one wears, neither the kind of automobile one drives, nor the amount of money one has in the bank that counts. These mean nothing. It is simply service that measures success. –George Washington Carver
-

spirituality, they must carry the burden that the Lord has laid upon them” (Gospel Workers, p. 200). “God bestows various talents and gifts upon men, not that they may lie useless, nor that they may be employed in amusements or selfish gratification, but that they may be a blessing to others by enabling men to do earnest, self-sacrificing missionary work” (The Youth’s Instructor, Nov. 6, 1902).

My Job or My Ministry?

Another way we lower the value of the ministry of every member in the body is by how we talk about our service. Sometimes we speak of “job” descriptions in the church. We might ask someone about their “duty” or “work” or ask, “Have you put in your time in Beginners Class?” as if someone were serving time in jail! It really degrades the importance of different types of ministry. If you shovel a sidewalk in front of the church so that people can safely park and walk into the building, is that less important than teaching a Sabbath school class? Would unsanitary bathrooms negatively impact the evangelistic efforts of the church? (Actually they would!) Paul tells us that the less visible gifts in the church are sometimes thought of as less important (1 Corinthians 12:22, 23), but it is these gifts that often lubricate the joints that make the body of Christ function smoothly.

It’s easy to think of the essence of a children’s Sabbath school teacher as “communicating Bible truth” to kids. But what is the core purpose of a person who volunteers to assist with fellowship dinners? Is it “to set up tables and chairs for a meal, put them away, and then vacuum, sweep, or mop up the messes on the

floor”? How much better for us to realize that such people are “providing a comfortable atmosphere for fellowship and ministry”! (I heard one pastor say that he has led more people to Jesus over a plate of food than from the pulpit.) People who cut the grass at the church are “creating an attractive and representative facility” (which speaks volumes to the community). Greeters don’t just hand out bulletins; they extend a warm and inviting welcome to members and guests.

When the pastor stands up to preach, there have already been many other gifts of service by members that make hearing the Word of God much more effective. Who cleaned the sanctuary? Who turned on the heat? Who is running the public address system? Who led the song service? Who took up the offering? If it is a one-person show, that pastor will soon burn himself or herself out! The church is compared to a body made of many parts, not a single cell. Our text at the beginning of this chapter speaks in the plural, not the singular.

If you are a genuine believer, you have been gifted. The outline of your work is better defined as a “ministry description” because you are called to serve in the body of Christ. The purpose of the church, remember, is not to feed itself and focus only on caring for itself, but to reach the community and share the love of Jesus with those outside. The facility can be a gathering place for worship, teaching, and fellowship—but all of these exist to strengthen us in bringing the good news to others in our neighborhoods and workplaces.

Compassion For All

The heart of our service as a kingdom of priests is seen in one of our fundamental beliefs as Seventh-day Adventist Christians.

“God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts which each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. When members employ these spiritual gifts as faithful stewards of God’s varied grace, the church is protected from the destructive influence of false doctrine, grows with a growth that is from God, and is built up in faith and love” (Paragraph 17, Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists, emphasis added).

Notice that spiritual gifts are given not only for the church, but also for “the common good of ... humanity” (see 1 Corinthians 12:7). The typical church member is to use his or her spiritual gifts in the secular world for the betterment of his or her neighbors, coworkers, professional associates, acquaintances in the community and the civic population in general. We often think that since our gifts are “spiritual,” they should primarily be used in the church. After all, isn’t

that the most spiritual place in our lives? But when we look at the life of Christ and the activity of the early church, members did not spend most of their time sitting in meetings, they were out reaching the community.

Jesus was once asked, “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29) He responded with a story (which may have been a current event at the time) about a man who was mugged and left to die on a deserted highway. Two respected religious leaders happened by and each left the man in a pool of blood and hurried on, evidently unwilling to get their hands dirty. Then a man despised for his ethnicity and heretical religion came along and immediately rendered first aid, put the wounded man on his mount and took him to the nearest town where he paid the innkeeper to care for the man until he was well enough to travel on his own. “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” Jesus asked His questioner, who gave the obvious response, “The one who showed compassion” (Luke 10:36, 37).

The authentic followers of Jesus are those who recognize their royal status as servants of Christ. They employ their spiritual gifts to show compassion, just as Jesus did, for all who are in need. This is the ministry of the laity, the people of God. This is the priesthood and work of every believer



The Priesthood of Every Believer

Invite

1. Can you remember a time when you performed some function for God's church, either at the church building or out in the community, and had a sense that you were doing "ministry" and not just a "job"?
2. What most prevents Christians from thinking of themselves as doing "ministry" for Christ, of being part of the "priesthood" of all believers?
 - a. How the nominating committee presented the job to them when they were asked to serve
 - b. The feeling they get about their work from the pastor
 - c. Lack of understanding and knowledge from Scripture about the laity
 - d. A feeling of inadequacy within themselves
 - e. Not truly understanding the deeper essence or purpose of their service within the framework of the mission of Christ
 - f. Other...
3. How do you view pastors or clergy in relationship to the rest of the members? Do you see any distinctions? What are they? Are these differences based on the Bible or tradition?

Inform

4. Study 1 Peter 2:9.
 - a. Who is the "chosen generation" spoken of in this passage?
 - b. What does Peter mean by a "royal priesthood"?
 - c. How might the church of today be a "holy nation"?
 - d. Why do you think Peter used the phrase "God's special possession"?



- e. Where do you think Peter intended his readers to carry out the last part of this verse when he writes, “That you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light”?
5. Look carefully at Ephesians 4:11, 12.
 - a. What gifts are listed in these passages?
 - b. How does verse 12 define the work of these gifts?
 - c. Who does this passage say does the work of ministry?
 - d. Does it appear some gifts are “over” others?
 6. Read each of the following passages and ask yourself, “In what way does this encourage every Christian to be part of the priesthood of all believers?”
 - a. Revelation 1:5, 6
 - b. Romans 12:1
 - c. 1 Peter 2:5
 - d. Revelation 5:9, 10

Improve

7. Obtain a list of all the ministries sponsored by your local church.
 - a. Mark an “X” beside those ministries which mostly serve members of your church.
 - b. Mark a “Y” beside those ministries which mostly serve non-members in your community.
 - c. Compare the numbers and ask yourself, “Does this reflect God’s purpose for the church?”
 - d. If you really want to go the extra mile, count the dollars in your church budget for these two groups of ministries. Does it lead you to think anything should change? What things?
8. Based on your study of Ephesians 4:11, 12, which types of offices in the local church would be identified as “equipping” or “preparing” and which would you identify as “doing works of ministry”?
9. Does the nominating committee in your local church have a difficult time in-



BIBLE STUDY

volving people in service in your church? What are practical ways to encourage more people to be involved?

- a. Send around a sign-up sheet on Sabbath morning inviting people to serve.
- b. Advertise some ministry position openings on a bulletin board in your foyer.
- c. Conduct a spiritual gifts seminar that guides people to use their gifts.
- d. Encourage the pastor to preach on the priesthood of all believers.
- e. Train the nominating committee to seek to match people's gifts with places of service.

Integrate

10. What one thing in this lesson spoke most loudly to your heart?
11. What do you think is the greatest challenge in implementing the priesthood of all believers in your local church?
12. Will you commit to do one thing during this coming week to make the priesthood of all believers more of a reality in your life and your church? What is that one thing?