

What Can I Do?

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I Corinthians 12:7-28 gives us an important insight into the function of the local church. It describes a structure where everyone does something different. It also points to the common complaint of the assignment of God in the body. We still hear people describing their service to God as being minimalized. I can't be a preacher if I am a woman; I can't be an elder if I do not have children; I can't be a deacon if I am not married. It seems like we obsess on what we cannot do, and we define our service by our disqualifications.

Many are CAPABLE but not QUALIFIED to a specific service before God. This means that they have the ability. For example, many women have the ability to speak publically or prepare a sermon, but are not qualified by the Scriptures to do so. Not being qualified does not mean we are not able, it means that we have not been CALLED by God. Being called by God means we have been called to a service by the Scriptures.

Consider that in the past many who served God were able to do other things but were not called to do them. Moses was able to be a High Priest and a King, but God did not call him. Deborah was able to be a general, but not called to be by God. David was able to build a temple, but not called be the Temple builder. Daniel was not to be the restorer of the people nor even to return to Jerusalem. Who was more able to speak to the Jews but Paul? Yet he was called to be the apostle to the Gentiles, not the Jews.

How difficult it must have been for Samuel to see Saul mismanage the kingdom; yet in all of these examples they never said "I am able, so I ought to do it". They were not called by God to do it! God's call to service is not based on what we assume (our ability, our interpretation of talent), as God later told Samuel when selecting David as King. God's call is based on His divine (and mysterious) will.

How is it that God calls men if not through ability? God calls us through Scriptural qualities. For example, God calls men (and their wives) to the work of elder and of deacon in I Timothy 3. He calls teachers and preachers in 2 Timothy 2 by describing the qualities of men who will do that work. This is God's calling, not by our emotion or self-will, but by the Scriptures. The Servant's heart in service is to do whatever God's bidding might be.

God's call to service today: what has God called you to do? Are you qualified to accomplish? Then you have been called by God. Do you have the ability? Whether you do or not have the ability is not upon what your calling is based.