

## WHY I ENTERED THE MINISTRY

(A statement made at a church service by Seminarian Bill Zulker on January 10, 1954, prior to ordination to the Gospel ministry of Jesus Christ in 1956 by the Presbytery of Philadelphia,

My answer to this question is found in one of the discourses of Jesus in the Gospel according to John, chapter 15 verse 16. “You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should go and bear fruit.”

This I consider to be my call from God to the ministry. Yet, every day, men talk about choosing a calling. If one is called, he does not choose, for the one who calls does the choosing. Jesus said, “You have not chosen me but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should go a bear fruit.”

This call came to me not in any unique manner or blinding experience on a Damascus road. But it came to me, I believe, as a consequence primarily due to the very devout and Christ-centered home into which I was born. The influence of my parents upon my ministry, both now and in the years to come, I think, is immeasurable. For I was taught at a very early age, not only to pray, to read my Bible, to know the Bible stories and recite the Lord’s Prayer, but I was taught Christianity as a practical way of life in terms of love and sharing and service. Most of all, I think of the lessons I received in good old Christian character, not just in theory but in practice as exemplified in the life of my mother and my father.

Thus, when I was at the age of seventeen and understanding somewhat the meaning of the Christian life, I fully surrendered my life and my future to the Lord; and I asked Him to give me the willingness to follow wherever He led. And since that warm summer day in 1944, I have had an ever growing consciousness of the leading of the Lord into the ministry. Though my father was not a minister, my grandfather was, and many were the hours of instruction and challenge that I received from him. Now, he has gone into the presence of God. But this one statement I hope never to forget. He said it to me time and time again. “Son, if you can be happy and satisfied and content in anything else but the ministry, then don’t enter the ministry.”

This constant happiness, contentment, satisfaction and joy seem to me to be the answer of the Lord when so often I turn to Him and ask, “Lord, are you sure that you want me in the ministry? Are you sure?”

But in the words of the songwriter and poet:  
“It is not mine to question the leading of the Lord,  
It is but mine to follow the leading of His word.  
And if to go or stay, Be it far or near.  
If Jesus goes with me, I’ll go anywhere.”

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