

Global Association of Theological Studies

Ministerial Development

James G. Poitras



Ministerial Development

James G. Poitras

A Global Association of Theological Studies Publication

All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible unless otherwise indicated.

Scripture quotations marked AMP are from the Amplified® Bible, Copyright © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission." (www.Lockman.org)

Scripture quotations marked ESV are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked TLB are taken from The Living Bible copyright © 1971. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations from THE MESSAGE. Copyright © by Eugene Peterson 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group.

Scripture quotations marked NASB are from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Scripture marked NCV taken from the New Century Version®. Copyright © 2005 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NIV are from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations marked NKJV are from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NLT are from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NRSV are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

GATS Edition

©2013 United Pentecostal Church International

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Poitras, James.

Ministerial development / James G. Poitras. -- GATS Edition.

pages cm

"A Global Association of Theological Studies publication."

ISBN 978-0-7577-4423-5

1. Church work. 2. Theology, Practical. 3. Pastoral theology. 4. Christian life. I. Title.

BV4400.P585 2013

253--dc23

2013034596



Global Missions
acknowledges

The Pentecostals of
Alexandria

Alexandria, Louisiana

Anthony Mangun and Terry Shock
pastors,

and its \$5000 contribution to sponsor
the production and translation of

Ministerial Development

By James G. Poitras.

Dedication

Since coming to the United Pentecostal Church International in 1979, I have always admired the Mangun family and the Pentecostals of Alexandria. They encapsulate a local church with a global impact, starting in every corner of Alexandria, Louisiana, and working their way around the world. They truly live up to their vision to be a twenty-first century Apostolic church in principle, practice, and power.

At our School of Missions in 2004, I gave Sister Vesta Mangun a copy of *How Do You Measure Up to the Word of God?* She sat at the back of the chapel, yellow highlighter in hand, marking up my book. I thought I was in trouble and she was locating doctrinal errors. To the contrary, she loved the little book and became one of my greatest encouragers in the writing ministry. Brother and Sister G. A. Mangun were consumed with passing the truth to the next generation. Through the years, they have never forgotten me. I have never forgotten them. I am humbled that they have used some of my materials at the Pentecostals of Alexandria. They have instilled in me a passion to relentlessly pass truth on to the next generation. Occasionally having the honor of attending the Because of the Times conference is always a highlight, and receiving the DVDs of conferences I was not able to attend while on the foreign field was always a joy and blessing.

Bishop G. A. Mangun was promoted to his heavenly reward on June 17, 2010. He impacted the world and left his mark on my life. Multiplied thousands of others share with this sentiment. A portion of his home-going celebration booklet reads, "The level of greatness, sacrifice, consistency, and love for God and people exemplified through the lives of G. A. Mangun and his life's partner, Vestal, is not found in every generation. Only eternity will reveal their impact. They have chartered new waters. They have elevated the bar. They are linked with lives which have changed the course of the world." Thank you, Bishop G.

A. Mangun. I, for one, will never forget. Thank you for linking with my life. As a result, I am forever changed.

In ministry and ministerial development, the Mangun family and the Pentecostals of Alexandria top the chart. My writing pen is lifted in your direction. This textbook on *Ministerial Development* is dedicated to Bishop G. A. and Sister Vestal Mangun, and also honors Pastor Anthony and Mickey Mangun, Pastor Terry and Melanie Shock, and the Pentecostals of Alexandria. You set the pace in ministry. It is a privilege to follow.

James G. Poitras
December 12, 2012

Contents

1. Ministers and Seed of Eternity	13
2. Ministers and Understanding Life	21
3. Ministers and the Daily Climb	29
4. Ministers and Their Calling	39
5. Ministers and Their Role in the Fivefold Ministry	47
6. Ministers and Their Gifting	59
7. Ministers and the Will of God	67
8. Ministers and Vision	85
9. Ministers and Side Effects of Biblical Vision and Purpose, Part I	99
10. Ministers and Side Effects of Biblical Vision and Purpose, Part II	109
11. Ministers and Moving from Good to Great	123
12. Ministers and Time Management	133
13. Ministers and Overcoming Temptation	141
14. Ministers and the Blameless Life	151
15. Ministers and Finishing Strong	161
16. Ministers and Passing the Baton	169

Introduction

Three and one-half minutes rocked the world. The memorable rendezvous was January 21, 2009. It was the day Susan Boyle, with her Celtic twang, encumbered by learning difficulties and shyness, stepped out of obscurity onto the stage of *Britain's Got Talent* in Glasgow. She literally shocked the panel and mocking crowd when she started to sing eight words, "I dreamed a dream in time gone by . . ." One of the judges gave her the biggest yes ever awarded in three years of the contest. She captured and then liberated the hearts of millions. There have been more than three hundred million hits on the YouTube video capturing those short moments. Susan's "I Dreamed a Dream" holds the global record for the most preordered albums of all time. She defied preconceptions and probabilities and set the stage for anyone and everyone with a dream. Susan brings modern meaning to the ancient proverb, "A man's gift makes room for him and brings him before the great" (Proverbs 18:16, *English Standard Version*).

The Nissan Terrano crept, tossing and turning, through the twisting rustic roads. It glided past an African village with a dozen or so weather-beaten huts sporting dried grass-covered roofs. The ocean—with rocks protruding and waves crashing—served as its only backdrop. A few scattered sheep scurried for cover at the sound of the approaching vehicle's engine. A tiny boy, perhaps three or four years old, naked apart from a dirty pair of stained briefs, roused and raced from his perch on a nearby tree trunk. He boldly ran toward us. He was all smiles, waving wildly. With his free hand, he firmly grasped an unusual, unique treasure: a red convertible car. A real toy; not one fashioned from a discarded tin can. Happily, he extended it toward us, shouting friendly words in his local dialect. He arrested my attention. I longed to understand what he was saying. Because I could not understand his words, I imagined what they might be. Perhaps he wanted us, the six foreigners tightly packed in the huge gray machine, to know he had a car too. Or maybe he had a dream that one day he would grow up and drive a vehicle similar to ours. I will never really know. Such

was my short-lived meeting with a merry miniature visionary. You see, everyone dreams. Everyone wants a better future. A billboard I saw encapsulated this thinking. It pictured a boy playing soccer in his neighborhood. The potent words read, "Twelve-year-old Kofi; nation's best striker, 2022. Yes, we believe in the future."

I'm sure we all believe in the future. Yet, too many meander through life's twisting roads, tossing and turning, with no direction and—in the end—no enduring legacy. What a tragedy to live and leave without anyone noticing you ever existed. A Middle Eastern blessing says, "When you were born, you cried, and the world rejoiced. May you live your life so that when you die, the world will cry, and you will rejoice."

All I have ever wanted was to make a difference! To take my talents and place them in the Master's hands, use them for His glory, and hear Him say, "Well done!" That aspiration took me to West Africa over twenty-seven years ago, a week before my twenty-third birthday. I was armed with a degree in education, only three years in the United Pentecostal Church International, lacking religious ancestry, but with a vision of "teaching all nations" beginning in thickly populated Nigeria. I was so naïve back then. I had never traveled overseas. I couldn't sleep that first night thinking that a powerful python was going to crash through the hotel window and rob me of my dream and my life. I survived!

A couple years later, in Africa, I met my wife, a teacher from Alabama. We've been on a journey ever since. Our mutual heartbeat has been unwavering: teach others so they can reach their own people. My relentless dream is to entrust, empower, and equip the next generation. I still dream of taking God's Word to the world, touching people, transmitting truth, and transforming nations. More than that, I get to live out that dream. I am so thankful that God has chosen me to be a minister.

Dear friends and former leaders in Africa, John Paul and June Hughes sent me these words in a card on my fiftieth birthday: "Just think, you're here not by chance, but by God's choosing. His hand formed you and made you the person you are. He compares you to no one else. You are one of a kind. You lack nothing that His grace can't give you. He has allowed you to be here at this time in history to fulfill His special purpose for this generation" (Roy Lessin). Half a century and climbing, I still possess a dream to reach our world.

A. W. Tozer said, "A man by his sin may waste himself, which is to waste that which on earth is most like God. That is man's greatest tragedy and God's heaviest grief." God grieves when I waste my split second in eternity and fail to attempt to measure up to my full potential in accomplishing His divine plan and purpose. An Arabic proverb teaches that the dawn does not come twice to awaken a person. Opportunity knocks but once. An opportunity missed will eventually bring ample repentance. I have one chance to affect my world.

Someone asked, "How will you spend your life?" Life is a currency. Once spent, it can never be recovered. It is gone forever unless you invest it in the afterlife. There, stored treasures are more valuable than hand-held red convertibles that will ruin, rust, and ripple away. No wonder Jesus said, "Don't hoard treasure down here where it gets eaten by moths and corroded by rust or—worse!—stolen by burglars. Stockpile treasure in heaven, where it's safe from moth and rust and burglars. It's obvious, isn't it? The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being" (Matthew 6:19-21, *THE MESSAGE*).

The dreams expressed and experienced by great men and women changed and charted the course of history. Nick Sisco, in his *Pentecostal Herald* (July 2010) article "The Dream Beats On," said, "The dream drove them towards destiny. A dream is a powerful commodity full of possibility. It pushes you forward, giving life, energy, and focus." He went on to say, "Imagination creates the soil in which the dream can germinate, grow, and come to life."

You may struggle, wondering when your dream will come to pass. You may speculate you are wasting your time preparing for a lifetime of ministry from a wooden writing desk in a classroom. You may lament with the amount of your life you feel you have wasted. You may get frustrated performing (what you imagine are) menial tasks for a seasoned senior minister. Remember, all of this has brought you into God's kingdom for such a time as this. Nothing will stop the fulfillment of a God-given dream—unless it is the one presently operating in your skin. Avoid the pain of regret and go for the pain of discipline. "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. . . . Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover" (Mark Twain).

Face it: in our gigantic world, you may feel small and insignificant. Like a butterfly struggling in a cocoon through ministerial development, you are about

to be launched into a lifetime of effective ministry. The world anxiously awaits! Heaven is preparing its animated applause!

Are you ready to embark on the most exhilarating undertaking of a lifetime? Turn the page. Let the journey begin.

Note: Throughout the Bible, God used women, as well as men, to advance His kingdom. Consider Miriam, Deborah, Anna, and the four daughters of Philip the evangelist. *Ministry* has never been gender specific. Therefore, *minister*, as used in this book, is not gender specific. Global Missions happily recognizes the call God has placed on many women who labor as pastors, teachers, and evangelists. Together they join their ministering brethren and form a mighty band of truly Apostolic ministers.