

Subject: Ceremonials – Ordinations – Call to the Ministry

Call to the Ministry By Dr. Ernest Holmes

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(Pages 38 through 43 of the Ordination Manual, section 17.1)

I can talk to you only about why I think this ministry is a wonderful thing to engage in -- as practitioners, as ministers, and as leaders.

First of all, it would be impossible in our field to be a good leader without being a good practitioner. You might as well say you have a dancer who doesn't know to dance. There is no such thing in our field as a teacher teaching people how to practice unless he knows how to practice himself and unless he constantly practices. He can only know that he knows that he knows by the results that he gets. The only authority Jesus ever asked for his word was his work. When they questioned him as to whether or not he had the right to forgive people, he said, "To show you that I do, I will heal this man. Pick up your bed and walk, etc."

We have no authority in our work as practitioners, as leaders, as teachers other than the results. We can give authority legally and technically, as a reward for what the student has learned, is willing to apply -- knows how to apply, and does apply, but that is only showing the road -- nothing else. There is very little that can be taught in any field other than to teach how to think things through until we discover the truths back of the simple presentation of the Truth. In our field we, as individualized centers of the universe, do have back of us and within us all the Presence and all the power and all the action and all the possibility of action there is in the Universe, individualized in and through us in a unique way. Therefore, the first thing we have to study is to be ourselves. The older we get and the more experience we have the less we are liable to give advice. I don't think that is essential in our field. Here is something that everyone has to prove to himself.

Leadership is spiritual leadership. The organizational leadership you can learn about in an organization. Get a good group of intelligent people and let them run it. Your leadership is spiritual leadership. It is a leadership that can only come automatically as a result of your having had spiritual inward experience (and there is nothing egotistical about this) and at least a spiritual experience that is beyond the level of the experiences of those who come to listen to you. Otherwise there is nothing to tell them. There is nothing for them to feel from you because what they really get from you is not what you say. I don't mean that you don't have to say something or that it shouldn't be intelligent, but I think the average person is intelligent. I believe the average person is sincere. It's a rare thing to find a dishonest or disagreeable person. We all have mean traits, but you, as a spiritual leader, must be one who leads people into the realization of

some hope -- some inward awareness that by some different instinctive knowledge they already possess but they haven't experienced it or put it into words; into realities.

I think, to me, the most singularly interesting and fascinating thing about our whole endeavor is being leaders, teachers and practitioners. I can say that many people who will make good leaders will not make good teachers. They don't seem to know how to explain things. There are many people who will make very good practitioners, but won't make very good leaders. I can see how a person can be a practitioner without having to be a leader. I can't see how anyone can be a leader without being a practitioner and teacher. We can't divorce ourselves from teaching and practice because what our audience gets is ourselves, always. It is something that we cannot avoid revealing. It is impossible for a person to conceal himself before an audience. I don't mean we are expected to be paragons of perfection. If we waited for that, it wouldn't be in this life that we would lead or teach or practice, but we must have found some inward experience that transcends the ordinary and, in our field, it must transcend the ordinary theological experience because our who theory and practice is based on the assumption that we, as individuals, do have access to a power that operates independently of us and we have a way of using it that causes our way of using it to operate individually for us. We are called upon to teach the Truth; to practice it and to proclaim it publicly. There is no compromise. This is something a little unique in the metaphysical field -- we do have a very liberal viewpoint of all the arts and sciences; of all the humanitarian efforts. We are not trying to exclude ourselves from the beneficial effects of their working for humanity. For instance, not being superstitious, we know that you can treat a person spiritually if he takes some medicine. It hasn't anything to do with it. Not being dogmatic, we know that we can treat and heal somebody that does not even believe as we do.

Some of our leaders believe in reincarnation. I don't and yet I say to myself, maybe they are right and I'm wrong. In other words, we are not dogmatic. We should have all the latitude that there is when it comes to our practice and teaching, but for us to admit a previous incarnation, or influence from the stars or the numbers that accompany our names or the race history or anything that ever preceded the moment in which we are now teaching, talking, and practicing, is an error that is inexcusable, because we are taught to know, and it is true, that every moment of time extracted from eternity is merely an experience which we call time in eternity, that they intermingle and that every new thought is a new creation in the whole universe because there is only one thinker which is God. There isn't any other thinker, you know.

I am particularly interested in our field above all others because we are the only ones that have admitted the good in psychology, sanitation, diet, medicine, everything that belongs to the mental and physical plane. We still reserve this one thought, which must never be conditioned by these other needs, and that is, there is a larger sphere of action or reaction, or understanding, which includes

the lesser ones and that our whole theory and our whole practice, is based on the theory and assumption that we individually deal with First Cause first hand, but because we are individualizations of it what it does for us it never did for anyone before and never will do again. Now that places each one of us in the unique position of being, so far as we are concerned, not exclusive of others but inclusive in the Universal wholeness. You will never be reproduced; therefore, you will never have to pattern after anybody. But most people are trying to use what they don't have.

The first thing you do is learn to be yourself -- not crude -- just be yourself -- use the simple straight language that comes to you. Don't look for a language that you don't possess. It's a great mistake; it's always suicide and it always stifles the only thing that you have to give and that is yourself.

You give yourself through your conviction and if you haven't got a conviction you can't do it. Never talk about anything as though it was true unless you believe in it because no one else will believe it. We impart ourselves through our words, and what we are is more than the word. Always be sure that what you talk about you have thought about until there is a vast amount or reservoir of consciousness back of what you are going to say so that what you say you think and feel. This is not difficult. It is difficult only when people are trying to use a language -- a terminology and a mode of expression -- that does not belong to that person. Everyone with an ordinary vocabulary has all of the words that he will need. You are there to confess your belief that at least you have had a little more experience than the listeners; therefore, your own spiritual consciousness and awareness must be kept alert at all times. Every teacher in our field must have a reservoir from which the people can drink and there has got to be something in the pool or they will go away thirst. This is a feeling that you have to take the time, the intelligence and the thought to respond to, but what other field is there on earth where it is claimed that independently of circumstances, situations, past, present and future there is still intelligence, a cause, a creativity at our command which is not conditioned or limited by anything, because it makes the condition out of itself as it goes along, in accord with the demand made on it by itself or by us. This is one of the fundamental principles we have. Everything in our field must be an effect of our consciousness or it will have no stability.

It is good to advertise and get an audience but unless there is something there to talk to, the audience wouldn't come back and after a while that possibility is expanded. In other words, that is just the way to get some material together. It is better in my estimation for a person to start quietly with a few people if it is only fifteen or twenty, and do something to those people that they will know has been done. They may not be able to analyze it but they will feel the consciousness as the base of everything.

The things that interest me in our field above everything else (not because I was sick, lonely or afraid or poor) because I was fortunately brought up without fear in

my home. That's quite a heritage, did you know that? I have never known what this kind of fear is that I hear people talk about. If I could have been scared of Hell at one time and thought there was a devil and believed maybe we were all on the way to this place, I would know how people feel who have this terrible fear. I don't. To me it is more like an insanity. However we arrive, we must come to the place where our confidence and our trust are greater than any fear that assails us. There isn't enough appreciation of life. We are afraid to show our love and appreciation for people. Someone will think we are peculiar, if we do. Do the best you can and God will do the rest.

If only people in this field could understand the utmost simplicity of what a public presentation is. You don't want to fall onto the platform or fall off it. It's better to use English that is somewhat correct but I have seen even that murdered and people have a good audience just because they had a consciousness of what they were doing. This person knows what he is talking about. I feel something from him. You can't "make up funny." We have the saying in our home when we see a new actor or a new character we are very fond of: "He's good -- he just thinks funny. He will talk the way he thinks automatically but he can't think not funny and be funny because what he says wouldn't have been funny if someone else said it. You only deliver yourself. Be sure there is that there which may be delivered with simplicity in your own style, in your own way -- must hear you of course. Everyone in our field should, if he doesn't know how, learn to speak presentably no matter what his years. People who go into it professionally can learn. I don't think it is difficult at all. I have heard people who didn't use very good English who did a terrific job because they knew what they were doing. They understood what they felt. They had a love for people and for life. They had compassion and tolerance for living that is way beyond the ordinary. You know it's a very interesting thing. It comes out at places like a funeral. I was at a funeral this afternoon and a lot of these people were professional people. They told me "I didn't know there was anything like this. How can it be so simple?" Everything that's real is simple.

I'll tell you about the first funeral I ever had. My brother was a minister, and he asked me what I was going to do and I said I didn't know. He asked me what I thought of the "Pilgrim's Manual," and I said I thought it was terrible. I couldn't use that. All these words -- they don't mean a thing to me. I don't know what I'm going to do but something does and I said to myself, "What do I wish to do? This is what I think is important to an audience. Why am I having a funeral service? The world will say somebody is dead. If I believe somebody is dead, then I shouldn't have the service, I should go up and weep." This is your lesson. There is nothing that teaches a lesson but the needed experience -- most of which we could avoid if we weren't so ignorant. Every advance in science shows us that we transcend evolution. When I thought it over, I said to myself - "What would I want to know if this was someone close to me? What does his mother want to know? I am sure that she would rather know that he is alive than anything else that ever happened to her right now. That's the way I feel." I had to be sure I

believed what I was feeling. I said to myself, "Do you believe he is alive? If you do, it's all right but don't kid yourself. You can't just use a lot of words and sprinkle rose petals. That's no good. It just a tradition." This is the time you are either going to come forth as somebody or spill a lot of words and get a few dollars for it. Why do you believe that nobody is dead and is there any question in your mind whether there is anybody dead? Somebody looks dead, well, I worked on that and worked on it to know that I would know what to do. I got up and presented my first funeral sermon. It's an audible explanation by a complete conviction that nobody is dead. The undertaker came up to me afterward and told me it was the first service he had ever heard that made any sense. He said, "What do you do?" I don't understand it -- this was the first time that I was ever sure of immortality and why." I didn't try to explain it to him, I just said, "Perhaps this is the first time that you ever thought about it in that way." It was an explanation that satisfied me -- every reason, every emotion, --.... I said to myself, "I shall talk out loud until I know nobody is dead, and then I'll shut up. And I did.

Now, that's merely an example. It is one of the most outstanding in my own life. We can only talk from a conviction.

You are talking to this group of people and they have come to find out if there is anybody living who really knows anything about God. They don't know that this is what they are there for. That's why they are in any church. The whole search of the human mind is after God. This has no connotation of being after salvation. It is a search after satisfaction and assurance, a security that comes only by immediate experience and cannot come by any proxy. You will have to find a reason for everything you ever say in public or the public will not listen to you. Don't try to find it in grand language.

The most perfect poem is Grey's ELEGY. It took the man 20 years to perfect it. There are only a half dozen three-syllable words. There is a stark simplicity. I think it's kind of morbid, but it's very beautiful. It's the complete simplicity of it. Every line is a picture of a feeling. Every verse has four complete pictures. You will find the same things in THE RUBYAT. I think that is a little bit skeptical, but it is one of the most beautiful things ever written. There is a stark nakedness but every line is a picture in the mind of the artist delineating a whole chain of thought. Now this is true of everything in life. When you talk to an audience you are delivering your sentiment, your conviction, your emotion. There must be a deep conviction and that conviction must be beyond anything that the intellect can explain. The intellect is not creative. It is directive only. The heart must reveal its secret.

I am not speaking of grand eloquence. It is something that delivers you. You are giving yourself to your audience; your love, consideration; explaining why you believe what you believe; how they can use what you believe. When you are finished speaking, they must have some definite thing that they can take home

and use. They come to see if you know anything about God. They will know before they leave whether there is some feeling they get – some sense. It may be a straight logical explanation. I believe that logic and feeling should to a very great degree accompany each other. There may be a great deal of beauty in it. I always treat that there will be beauty in what I say, because I am a worshipper of beauty. The audience comes to you, however, and they are hungry to know that there is some intimate relationship you have with the Universe. They are hungry to know that as a result of that, something definite will happen out here. Make everything you do the result of your consciousness. Spend much time treating the audience until you know they are healed. No one should be in this work unless they love people. I mean a love of people no matter what they do, what they say, or how they act, because we are all children. We are all Hell bent for heaven just the same. This is what we must have in our consciousness – a sense of security in what we are doing that will be transmitted to the audience without even talking about it. The whole world is looking for something that it will feel safe in; somewhere at last there is something that will not let them down. You can't give that unless you have it.

A leader is one who works with himself until that which he has discovered within himself he cannot help imparting as he talks. He doesn't have to worry so much about the words; or do I look grand or do I have that terrific personality that we hear so much about. Are you simple? Are you direct? Do you understand what you believe? Do you believe what you say? Do you depend upon anything outside of that consciousness for the completion of life – that consciousness and what it will produce -- then it's nothing to give an audience. We can only feed them the meat that we are. They can only eat that and they will know whether their appetites have been appeased. I think that the ministry in our field is the most profoundly deep intellectually, philosophically and psychologically. It has a very deep element of mysticism, which it must impart. Just cold facts will not satisfy them and just teaching people how to get things will never satisfy them – that's a by-product. It's another kind of a wholeness that people are after. You can't say anything with power unless you believe it. There is a feeling that accompanies it; takes the sharp edges off the analysis. It seems to have a sort of aura of warmth and light and radiance.

We have to speak as Jesus spoke, and as Abraham Lincoln spoke, and as every great and wise person that ever lived speaks. Every leader in our field has to be healing himself all the time in our present state of evolution, I guess, until that which he does is real and until the mouth automatically accents what is in the heart. Can you not reach that thing in you that speaks from the heart even though it uses the intellect? Can you not speak from that center within you out of such experience that you have had until at last, if you only make a few simple statements, no one can believe but that they come from some inner recess of self-awareness which at least will neutralize that which contradicts it?

I consider every talk we ever give an explanation that should work like a treatment for the audience who listens. If it does, it will neutralize that in them which is afraid and uncertain and distraught and I do not believe that anyone should be in our field unless he is willing to give time to treatment and knows how to treat for his audience and what he shall do to them.

There is a certain dedication in simplicity that the self doesn't make to God or to humanity as is ordinarily thought of to God for salvation and to man for humility, both of which are misnomers but a dedication of the self to the self that is shall be truth – something that it feels and knows and at least understands to a degree sufficient to articulate. I take an hour just to let that thing transpire before a Sunday morning sermon. Out of that unborn moment, out of this occasion which never happened before and never will be repeated in the history of Infinity, God, Himself, will go forth anew into his own creation.