



JOYCE MEYER  
MINISTRIES®

# DIFFICULTIES IN MINISTRY

The Twelve Most Difficult Things  
I Have Dealt with in the Ministry

Teaching Notes by Joyce Meyer

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# Difficulties **IN** Ministry

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**Teaching by Joyce Meyer**

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# DIFFICULTIES IN MINISTRY

## The Twelve Most Difficult Things I Have Dealt With In The Ministry

NOTE: These things are not listed in any descending degree of difficulty. They are simply things God placed on my heart to share with you. Hopefully, they will encourage you to press on and see the end fulfillment of your dreams and visions.

### I. Loneliness – “It Can Be Lonely At The Top.”

A. Leadership can be and often is lonely.

1. We want friends like everyone else; and yet, we cannot allow a spirit of “familiarity” to come upon those God has placed under our leadership.
  - a. Beware of becoming “entangled” in the lives of those who are under your leadership.
  - b. Becoming too “familiar” will cause most people to no longer be able to see you as the leader. They will begin to see that you are human; and although in one way they want you to be so, in another way they are disappointed if you are.
2. A “divine connection” that God arranges with a mature believer is what we must learn to seek. I have some very good friends, but they fall into one of two categories:
  - a. Friends in ministry – people doing the same thing I am doing

- b. Friends outside ministry – people who do not work for me and are not directly involved with my ministry – such as my hairdresser, nail technician, etc.
  - 3. Two times I made big mistakes by singling out ladies I wanted to be close friends with, and both times I got *majorly* hurt.
- B. Loneliness often comes from being misunderstood.
  - 1. Jesus’ family did not understand Him and His disciples did not really understand Him or His call. John the Baptist understood more than anyone; and even he said, “Are You the One, or shall we look for another?” John was beheaded, which I am sure left Jesus feeling lonely in a certain way.
  - 2. His brothers were embarrassed by Him – most of the people He grew up with thought He had become a lunatic. His disciples sometimes thought His kingdom would be one of this earth, where they could have great positions of power.
- C. **Hebrews 4:15** – We have a High Priest Who understands us and our weaknesses and infirmities.
- D. People who have the call of God on their lives are frequently “unique” individuals.
  - 1. I was always a little different and just did not seem to fit into the “regular woman mold.” I often felt “misunderstood,” and it was good news to find that Jesus understands me.
- E. **John 2:24-25** – Jesus could not totally open up His life to anyone. He knew the nature of men and was cautious because He knew the dangers.
- F. **Matthew 26:40** – *And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and He said to Peter, What! Are you so utterly unable to stay awake and [pray] keep watch with Me for one hour?*
- G. Nobody seems to understand your responsibility level.
  - 1. It is easy for people to say, “Cast your care,” when they do not need five million dollars.

2. It is easy for others to say, “Lighten up and have a little fun,” when they are not the ones who need to prepare for six upcoming seminars.
- H. Sometimes it seems that everybody you get around wants something, needs something, expects something, has a question, or needs a decision.
  - I. Always remember that birds fly in flocks, but “eagles fly alone.”
  - J. Giant oak trees do not grow in clumps; they are usually by themselves, perhaps on a hill – and they look majestic.
    1. We don’t say, “Oh, look at that beautiful, majestic clump of trees”; but we do admire the, perhaps, lonely but majestic giant oaks.

## II. The Silent Years

NOTE: Not giving up in the foundation-laying years when most of what you see is in the ground of your own heart.

- A. We are Anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit to do those things that the “ordinary” person could not do.
- B. It is “carnal” to give up; it is godly to press on.
- C. **Galatians 6:9** – Be not weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap IF we faint not.
- D. **I Peter 5:6** – . . . *humble yourselves . . . under the mighty hand of God, that in due time He may exalt you.*
- E. **Luke 1:76-80** – John the Baptist had “silent years”.
- F. Jesus had “silent years.”
  1. **Luke 2:21-22, 39-40** – Jesus’ dedication

2. **Luke 2:41-52** – The next time we hear of Jesus, He is twelve years old.
  3. The next time we hear of Him, He is thirty and beginning His public ministry.
- G. Moses had silent years, Joseph did, Paul did, and so does every man or woman who will be mightily used of God.

### III. Learning To Handle Rejection, Judgment, And Betrayal

- A. There were ten women that I trusted who eventually turned against me.
1. They judged me falsely without proper evidence.
  2. They gossiped behind my back while being friendly to my face.
  3. They betrayed me and publicly exposed every fault that they personally knew I had.
- B. **Luke 22:48** – Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss.
- C. **Matthew 24:10** – Betrayal is an end time sign.
- D. Learning to handle it means to go through it and not to be bitter, to have no unforgiveness, to pray for those who hurt you, etc.
1. We can preach it; but can we do it?
- E. **I Corinthians 4:1-4** – Paul was not moved by the judgments of other people.

### IV. Learning To Say NO!

- A. **Philippians 1:10** – Learn to sense what is vital and prize what is excellent.
- B. **Hebrews 12:1** – Get rid of entanglements so you can run the race.

- C. I had a “false sense of responsibility” that caused me to feel “obligated” to do more than I could do and still live a balanced life.
  - 1. **I Peter 5:8** – Be well balanced; for your adversary, the devil, roams about like a lion roaring in fierce hunger, seeking whom he may devour.
- D. Making oneself of “no reputation” must precede the ability to say No.
  - 1. Often we say Yes to people; and we know in our hearts that God is saying, “It is not the best thing for you. It is not wisdom.”
  - 2. God’s voice often comes through peace and wisdom.
- E. Every opportunity is not a God-given opportunity. People, who say they have heard from God that you are supposed to do something, have not heard from God; they have heard from themselves.
  - 1. I receive hundreds of speaking engagement opportunities, and most of the people believe they have heard from God that I am to come.
- F. Know what you are called to do, realize you cannot do everything, and do not try to do what everyone else is doing. **STAY FOCUSED AND KEEP IT AS SIMPLE AS POSSIBLE.**
- G. We cannot avoid burnout if we do not learn to say NO!

## V. **Staying Fresh**

- A. Spending quality time with God and realizing there is a difference between “**working for God**” and “**spending time with God**”
  - 1. **Psalm 27:4-8** – Require God as vital.
- B. Nothing worse than a stale minister
- C. We need everything fresh.

1. Fresh oil, fresh revelation – new wine, new wineskin
- D. The busier we are, the more quality time we need with the Lord.

## VI. Being Consistently Confident

- A. The devil works overtime trying to steal a minister's confidence.
- B. We must "BELIEVE."
1. I hear from God; I have the right word; I am anointed; God has heard and answered my prayer.
  2. I am in God's will; I am making right decisions.
- C. Remain "correctable"; but if the Holy Ghost brings conviction that something is wrong, do not spend your life second-guessing yourself.
- D. I have discovered that if I lose my confidence in the pulpit, the devil immediately gains the upper hand.
- E. **Jeremiah: Chapter 1** – God told Jeremiah not to look at the people's faces.
1. We look to others to confirm us; but we should be looking in our own hearts, where Christ lives, and not to people.

## VII. Enjoying The Ministry

- A. Not the prestige of being a minister, but truly enjoying your work and ministry
- B. Workaholics beware!
- C. Works of the flesh will prevent this God-ordained joy.
- D. **I Corinthians 3:6** – We plant, and we water; but only God can give the increase.

1. I struggled trying to make the ministry grow; and in the process, my attention was turned away from the Lord and onto what “I” could do.
2. When I began to seek His face and not His hand, after a period of time, the ministry began to grow.
3. I have been in ministry for twenty-one years; and when God decided it was “time” (His time), we tripled in two years.

## VIII. Waiting On God’s Timing

- A. Not birthing Ishmael’s
- B. Realizing He is the Author and the Finisher and that He is not obligated to finish anything He did not start
- C. Discerning God’s timing
  1. Stepping out at the right time
  2. Not holding back in fear
- D. Discerning grace
  1. Where God guides, He provides.
  2. Finances, ability, people, buildings, creativity, answers, etc
  3. If I am **continually** struggling in any of these areas, something is missing.
  4. His grace makes what would be hard, easy.

## IX. Boldness To Be Your Unique Self

- A. Freedom to be myself came hard for me, but it is vital to the success of your ministry.

- B. Every minister's wife does not have to play a piano and teach a women's meeting on Wednesday morning.
- C. Some may desire to "work in the office," and others may desire to "stay home and be a homemaker."
  - 1. Be yourself, and do not let the demands and expectations of people place you in a position of being outside your calling.
- D. **Galatians 5:26; 6:4** – We do not have to compare ourselves with others, nor struggle to be like them.

## X. Dealing With People

- A. Realizing that we are all very different
  - 1. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses.
- B. **Proverbs 14:4** – *Where no oxen are, the grain crib is empty, but much increase [of crops] comes by the strength of the ox.*
  - 1. If we want the strength of the oxen, we must deal with the mess in the stall.
- C. We deal with something all the time, and it can be very draining – we get weary of doing it over and over.
  - 1. Question: When do we get to the point where we do not have to deal with something all the time? Answer: Never, as long as we are on this earth and have responsibility.
- D. **Ecclesiastes 5:3** – A dream comes to pass with much business and painful effort.
  - 1. A successful ministry will always have a business side as well as a spiritual side. And those who refuse to either deal with the business or get someone who can deal with it **WILL NEVER HAVE A SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY OF ANY MAJOR SIZE!**

- E. You have to correct people, keep strife out of your organization, encourage people, solve issues between other people, make decisions that are not easy to make, and learn to correct “in the Holy Ghost and in God’s timing.”
- F. Sometimes we just cannot believe some of the things people do or say, but we forget:
  - 1. We have done the same things in the past.
  - 2. But for the grace of God, there go I.

## **XI. Attacks Against My Health**

- A. Enemy takes advantage of the inherent weaknesses we have.
  - 1. Weaknesses may be in the areas of health, finances, marriage, children, insecurities, etc.
- B. God’s Anointing strengthens me to do what God has called me to do.
  - 1. I’ve told the Lord I am not giving up. I will do all He has called me to fulfill.

## **XII. Learn How To Be In Ministry With My Husband**

- A. Working together in ministry
  - 1. Adapt and adjust to having Dave as my head
  - 2. We are very different.
  - 3. Love and respect each other
  - 4. No judging one another
- B. I had a “my ministry” mentality.

1. I birthed this ministry in prayer.
  2. I had been alone in ministry for ten years.
- C. We have learned to respect each other's positions in the ministry.



