This talk was given at a Priesthood Leadership meeting on September 6, 2014. It has been altered slightly to make it more applicable to the Auxiliaries.

Leadership in the world is done through administration. Administering the gospel can, in many ways, be done like running a business. There are goals set by our priesthood leaders that need to be met, lines of authority to be followed in reporting the success or difficulties experienced in our work in the kingdom, and policies laid out by the Brethren in Salt Lake City. In some ways, being an administrator is the easiest part of our leadership calling. If there is a problem, and someone doesn't like what is being done, we can point to the manual and say, "It's not my fault. That's what it says in the handbook."

Leadership in the Lord's kingdom, if done the Lord's way, is accomplished through ministration. We are tasked by Christ to administer his kingdom by ministering to the needs of our brothers and sisters. We have a double obligation. We must administer the programs we have been called to oversee, and account for their success. We must also be improving the spiritual health of those to whom we have been called to serve.

I would like to use hymn #220, "Lord, I Would Follow Thee" to help illustrate how we are expected to teach and reach others while fulfilling our leadership callings. The first verse says,

Savior, may I learn to love thee,
Walk the path that thou hast shown,

Pause to help and lift another,
Finding strength beyond my own.
Savior, may I learn to love thee—

It is difficult to love someone you have never served. Likewise, it is easy to love someone when you have been serving them. When we walk the path the Savior has shown us, that of service to others, we learn to love those whom we serve. This increases our gratitude to the Lord, and our love for the Lord. The Lord said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” He might just as well have said, ‘If you keep my commandments you will learn to love me.’ Love and appreciation are byproducts of service to others.

The path Jesus showed us was one of constant service. He had much to do during his ministry, but he was never too busy to pause to help and lift another person. That always took priority over any other concern. People are always more important than processes. People are always more important than things. Do we remember that in our callings in the Church?

Some leadership callings come with a mantle, a cloak of abilities that provide that person with special gifts needed for that calling. Whether or not we serve in a calling with a special mantle attached to it, we are all promised that when we are on the Lord’s errand we will be strengthened to do the work we have been called and assigned to do. We receive this strength through prayer, fasting, scripture study, and the service we perform for others. The Lord will make us equal to our tasks.

Verse two reads,

Who am I to judge another
When I walk imperfectly?
In the quiet heart is hidden
Sorrow that the eye can't see.
Who am I to judge another?

Despite what some would have us believe, I have never met a perfect family, one with no problems, no odd behaviors, no wayward relatives, or no financial or emotional difficulties. In one way or another we are all dysfunctional. It is especially important that we as leaders be sensitive and keenly aware that everyone carries burdens, invisible to the eye, but no less heavy on the soul than a backpack full of rocks. This

requires that the leader show an extra degree of compassion, non-judgmental behavior, extra forgiveness, greater tolerance, and a greater degree of unconditional love.

If I am offended by a fellow member of my congregation, I can push it off as that person just being a jerk. But if I am unjustly accused or am ill treated by my priesthood quorum leader, Relief Society President, Young Women President, Primary President or Bishop, I am far more likely to slip into inactivity. There is a degree of expectation placed on those in leadership positions that just is not there for the regular lay member of the Church. We need to be extra careful of the pains and sorrows being experienced by those under our stewardship.

Verse three reads,

I would be my brother's keeper;
I would learn the healer's art.
To the wounded and the weary
I would show a gentle heart.
I would be my brother's keeper—

To be my brothers keeper means I know my brother (sister). I know his needs, I know his strengths and his weaknesses. As my brother's keeper I am prepared to help him, strengthen him, heal him, in short, to do whatever is needed to protect him and help him be stronger. The Savior healed everywhere he went. He forgave those who sinned, he healed the sick, restored tortured limbs, and raised the dead. We don't have the same capacity of our Savior, but we have capacity. Are we using the capacity we have to bless and heal the scars of life all around us as we serve in our callings? Are we showing a gentle heart to the wounded and the weary? Are we really concerned about being our brother's keeper?

Finally, verse four says,

Savior, may I love my brother
As I know thou lovest me,
Find in thee my strength, my beacon,
For thy servant I would be.
Savior, may I love my brother—

This is the truest standard of love. Do we love our brothers and sisters as well as the Lord loves us? If we want to be the Lord's servants we must learn to love as we are

loved. “Savior, may I love my brother.”

There are three things we need to be aware of in order to become ministers to others. To teach a person to minister while serving in an administrative capacity we must have:

An awareness of needs

If we are blissfully filling our assignments and not seeing beyond the inventory and tally marks required to write a report then we have missed the point of our calling. We must be constantly looking for needs. They are all around us. In meetings is everyone speaking honestly and being given the chance to contribute? Are we listening to the expressed as well as the unexpressed needs of the various organizations? Have we fallen into a pattern of only paying attention to our pet projects and have begun to ignore other’s needs?

When we meet with individuals, whether as a ministering brother or sister or in an interview, are we accepting the socially polite responses that all is well at home or are we searching for feelings that will tell us that certain questions need to be asked because something is amiss? Are we expressing appreciation for people’s service, and are we understanding when someone is temporarily “off their game” for one reason or another? Do we go out of our way to teach those we serve how much the Lord loves them or how they can find joy by magnifying their callings? Are we expressing appreciation and gratitude for the sacrifices people make in fulfilling their callings? Does that sound exhausting? It can be, but it is also exhilarating.

We must have a knowledge of the gospel and the rules of Church government

Serving others still needs to be done within the framework of the Lord’s Church organization. We need to know when to bring in a person’s Church leader on an issue, when to recommend to a council that something be considered, and so forth. We are not left to serve without any structure in that service. We have ministering sisters and brothers, quorum and auxiliary leaders, Bishops and multiple levels of councils who can step in and assist where needed. The Lord has given us manuals to learn how to minister and administer within the guidelines of His Church. We need to learn these guidelines.

We need to develop a sensitivity to the Spirit

A sensitivity to the Spirit will help us discern when someone has a need, and what that need is. It will also help us know what course of action is most appropriate to address that need. We do not always need to serve others by ourselves. Often the service needed for one person requires an entire auxiliary, quorum, or even ward.

The Lord's kingdom is guided and directed by the Holy Ghost. We need to constantly seek His direction and influence so we know what is appropriate for a situation based on the current framework of the Church, and on the personal needs of the individual or organization we are helping.

Final Thoughts

Whether or not we like it, the members look to their leaders to be the examples they try to live up to and the examples they show to their children. The leaders are high visibility. A leader who does not take this responsibility seriously can do some long lasting damage to testimonies of the weak and spiritually impaired.

Some of our greatest teaching moments will not be at the pulpit or in front of a class. The most powerful lessons we will teach as leaders will happen in moments of service and in the casual acts of fulfilling our assignments.

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Teaching in Leadership Settings