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THE MINISTRY OF THE SAINTS

By simply picking up this book you have entered a high-risk zone!!! By opening these pages you have placed yourself directly in the crosshairs of spiritual alteration. This is where religion is put on trial for it's life and tradition begs for mercy. Only the divinely discontented pass through the portals of these pages with any comfort because here we will without fear challenge the very existence of our present opinion of ministry.

When I first began teaching church government and spiritual order more years ago than I wish to recall, I followed the normal established pattern of gathering the "leadership" of the church I was pastoring. This handful of elders, deacons and teachers became the recipient of "confidential" information, which we concluded was far too deep for the average church member to comprehend. I later realized that in order for the **saints** to fulfill their purpose in the Kingdom this "classified" teaching needed to become the foundation of every member, not just a chosen few.

Now after all these years I am still summonsed by pastors to teach leadership on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings and then preach a "normal" sermon on Sunday morning to the general congregation. We still do not understand that we (the accepted ministry) minister to the **saints** so that the saints may with maturity and understanding minister to their world. *Set Ministry, Multiplicity of Ministry, Spiritual Authority* along with *Membership Maturity* should be Christian education 101.

In this book **The Ministry of the Saints** I am doing what may be called "letting the cat out of the bag." I am certain that the advocates of centralization of pulpit power and the proponents of franchised forms of leadership will scream "bloody murder", but this is not the first time that I have squared off with musty tradition and moldy religious ideology. We must bravely examine our deficiencies and be willing to make necessary adjustments so that the **saints** once again become the object of apostolic ministry, enabling them to effectively fulfill their purpose in the Kingdom of God.

I am aware that the traditional church does not lack for voices speaking to these issues, but it does lack credible alternatives to the age worn ways we continue to approach this

critical training process. The church was always meant to be a place of spiritual learning where the people of God receive training and are eventually allowed and expected to fulfill their personal ministries in the marketplace and through various secular activities. Somewhere along the way we adopted an ineffective plan, which places all ministry in the hands of a singular man. The “pastor” along with a staff of “spiritual specialists” is then expected to be the teacher, encourager, counselor and soul winner while the **saints** play a rather sterile supporting role by faithfully offering their time, talent and treasure to various programs outlined by church leadership.

Paul in his letter to the Ephesian church stated that the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher were for the perfecting (maturing) of the **saints**, the work of the ministry (the ministry of the **saints**) and the edifying of the body of Christ (the **saints**). It is really all about the **saints**. I know it may be hard to believe but the New Testament was written to **saints**, not preachers. Ten of the New Testament books are directly addressed to the **saints** while the other books strongly infer the same. In short, the church was to become a school (kindergarten, grade school, high school, college and graduate school) while the “five-fold” ministry serves as teachers and professors imparting the spiritual education necessary so that every believer becomes part of a great army called **The Ministry of the Saints.**

The church must confront the need for change or risk the continuation of irrelevancy and ineffectiveness. Our present systems reek with insignificance and our stale approach to ministry is narrow and unscriptural. We change or we die. We proceed or the light that we have becomes darkness. With this in mind some of us really do not care about our precious reputations or religious correctness; we just want to see Christ’s Kingdom come in the earth and are boldly proclaiming that the far-reaching vision of Daniel the prophet is to be fulfilled in our day.

*“I beheld, and the same horn made war with the **saints**, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the **saints** of the most High; and the time came that the **saints** possessed the kingdom.” Daniel 7:21-22*

To order a copy of Dr. Hanby’s book, “The Ministry of the Saints,” contact the office at (423)-510-8383 or his website at www.hanby.org

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