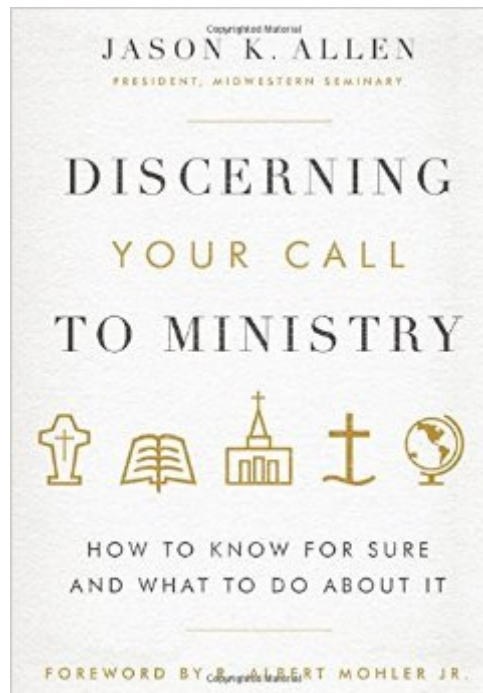


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# Discerning Your Call To Ministry: How To Know For Sure And What To Do About It



## Synopsis

If you are considering the ministry, there are two mistakes you must avoid. The first is taking up a calling that isn't yours. The second is neglecting one that is. *Discerning Your Call to Ministry* will help you know the difference. A tool for seminary students, pastors-in-training, and even current pastors, it serves to confirm or prompt deep thought about the calling to ministry through 10 probing questions, including: Do you desire the ministry? Does your church affirm your calling? Do you love the people of God? Are you willing to surrender? Pastoral dropout rates are high, and seminary admission rates are declining—signs that many of us don't quite know what we're signing ourselves up for. Author Jason Allen, a former pastor and the president of North America's fastest growing seminary, gives readers a better picture of the calling. Presenting a series of diagnostic questions informed by Scripture, church history, and his own experience, he helps those seeking ordination or ministry positions make confident decisions about their service to God, one way or the other.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I remember receiving an email earlier this year from a friend, asking me what I thought it meant to be "called to preach." Something quite strange struck me at that moment. I had been serving on staff at my church for years, and openly telling people I was called to ministry, and no one had actually asked what I meant by that. Although many people in churches are quick to applaud and confirm an individual who senses a call to preach, it may be that very few of them have ever stopped to think what it is they are confirming. One of the reasons that this subject is not discussed

in detail could be the level of emotion some have invested into it. When you try to pry into the issue, things can get messy, as questioning someone if he is sure about a call to preach can seem akin to calling his wife ugly. Of course, we ought to be able to examine these things. If pastors have the privilege of explaining the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15) and give account for how they handled their responsibilities (Hebrews 13:17) then it is of the utmost importance that individuals that sense a call to preach are examined. But on what basis are they to be examined? Certainly, sincerity is not the only criteria. If someone was seeking baptism and membership, and their only conversion testimony was something like "God told me I am saved," would that suffice? Of course not! They need to be able to articulate the gospel and give credible evidence that their conversion experience matches up with the biblical standard. In this book, Jason Allen reminds us that the Bible has a standard for called preachers, too.

We know the concept and are well-familiar with the phrase: "called to ministry." We know that some men are called in a special way to a special task—the task of gospel ministry. But exactly what constitutes the call, exactly how to understand it, exactly how to know we've experienced it—these are matters of more than a little confusion. Thankfully we have been well-served in recent years with books attempting to bring clarity. New to the field is Jason Allen's *Discerning Your Call to Ministry: How To Know For Sure And What To Do About It*. It is a short guide, but one that packs a punch. Allen begins by distinguishing between three related terms: called to minister, called to ministry, and called to the ministry. All Christians are called to minister, and church leaders are to equip the saints for this work—this work that is crucial to the functioning of God's church. In this broad way every believer is a minister. Some Christians are called to ministry, to become involved in a vocation that has a significant ministry component. This might include counselors at Christian camps, coordinators of children's ministries, or professors at seminaries. Then a few Christians are called to the ministry, the formal category defined in passages like Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and similar ones. The Bible refers to these people interchangeably as elders, pastors, overseers, or bishops. It is this final category that is the special concern of Allen's book. The Bible describes the function of these ministers and also describes the qualifications they must possess. Based on these, Allen frames his book around ten important questions. As a man prayerfully reads and considers these questions he will come to a deeper understanding of whether or not he is experiencing God's call.

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