

ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT SERIES

SIX LIMITATIONS TO THE ANOINTING

There are six limitations to the anointing that we want to talk about. That means when we move into the anointing there are certain boundaries that God has set. We are free to move within those boundaries but not outside of them set by God for His anointing.

1. Free Will

The first area is what we call free will. The anointing of God never bypasses the free will of man. In other words, you may desire to minister the anointing to a person but if he or she does not desire it, there is no way that you could force the anointing on him or her. This is one of the limitations that free will imposes on an anointing.

Strangely, when the person is in the presence of the anointing, the anointing can work something in him or her just by being present there. Like in Kathryn Kuhlman's meeting, a lot of people were healed who never went there for healing. In the same way under the anointing of God, I have called out people who never intended for healing to come upon their life. But it's funny how the anointing works because another person who really wanted to be called out for healing did not get called out at all. I tell them that it was not my choice but the Holy Spirit's.

Some people who got healed said, "I went there and got healed and I don't know why since I didn't even ask for that healing. I didn't even wanted that healing."

Some of them say, "I didn't even want to believe." But just being present they got healed. A lot of people when they got healed, they believe but there are also some who got healed and still don't believe. They know they are healed and say, "It's strange that I could receive a healing when I don't believe in divine healing at all."

So the question in people's mind is how come God healed them when they haven't even gone through what I call the basic laws of asking, seeking, praying. Remember the laws of the anointing work differently from the laws of personal faith. The law of personal faith requires asking, seeking and praying. The laws of anointing operate differently.

The fact that the person was in the meeting indicates a choice. Whether they were dragged there, compelled or whatever way was used but their being in the meeting had an effect. But of course we assume that the majority of those people were highly persuaded to be there. Without the persistence of those who brought them they may never be there. Yet you could sense a difference in a person who was possibly brought in under protest. So you see them in a car tied down, struggling violently and dragged to the front row. I would say it would disturb the anointing. It would disturb me if I know those people are there and they don't want to be there.

If you have one thousand people who wanted to be at an anointed meeting and hungered to be there and paid the price to be there and just that one person who doesn't want to be there, the anointing drawn out by these one thousand people may overflow to this guy. But if you have nine hundred of them who were forced to be there and the hundred who were there of their free choice, you possibly cannot move in the anointing at all. The reason is the anointing will not violate the free will of the recipient.

The second factor is the one who ministers the anointing. Lets say you operate in prophecy. No matter how much the anointing that comes on your life and you receive the word of prophecy, the Holy Spirit will not make you walk to the front

of the stage to give the word of prophecy. He will not ask you to do it. He will impress you to do it. He will persuade you to do it. But He will not force you to do it. So the one who ministers the anointing also has a free will. I have a free will as to obey God or not. I have a free will whether I want to listen to what the Spirit is saying to do and obey or not. Sometimes you don't feel like you want to obey because some of the instructions are not quite that easy to follow. I mean if one day the anointing comes upon your life and the Holy Spirit says, "Spit on his eyes." So if I don't want to obey it's my free choice. And the anointing will not work.

See the anointing respects the free choice that we have. If any one operates in the anointing that bypasses his free choice and makes him do things without his free choice and will, that person is not of God. He is like a demon-possessed person who lost his free choice. They don't even remember what they do. But when you operate in the anointing you know what you are doing. So remember there is such a thing as a false anointing. Have you ever seen those mediums in a trance? It's not the anointing that's the devil. But when it's God's Holy Spirit you are intact in your free will. You have a free choice.

The recipient also has a free choice. There are only two occasions God has instructed me. One time when I was ministering God told me to tell the person to go and bring a glass of water and then drink it in front of me. Now the person has a free choice. Will he obey or not? He went and chose a mug of water and not a glass of water. When he came back, the anointing didn't operate for him since he didn't follow the exact instructions. If you operate with God in the anointing long enough, you will know that if you miss that one, you miss the anointing. If God mentioned a glass it means a glass. If he goes and asks, "Lord, can I compromise with coca cola?" it will not work. Your obedience must be very specific to what the Lord said.

William Branham prays for people who get healed. But sometimes he says, "You must go and in three days you are to get baptized in water and your healing will be completed and retained." It is a test of obedience. If the person failed to follow through, he would lose his healing and the whole process stopped.

When Jesus said go and show yourself to the priest do you know they cannot be forced? They could decide to go the next day. And it may affect the anointing of God. Elisha told Gehazi to take a rod and go and lay it on the dead son of the widow. He was told not to greet anyone along the way. Gehazi carrying the staff had a free choice to talk or not to talk. He was not forced not to talk. He had a free choice and he still could talk. So when a person does not want the anointing, there is no way the anointing can be forced upon him. They must want it. They must choose it.

The anointing is subject to a person's free will - it will not bypass the free will. If for example, you are afraid and do not want to fall under the power. You made a mental decision that you do not want to fall under the power. I say most probably you will not. You have blocked yourself out of the manifestation. This doesn't mean that everybody must fall under the power but since you made a mental decision not to fall, the anointing will respect your free choice and you won't fall. God will not bypass your volition. You just blocked the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. God will honor your free choice.

If you say, "Lord, I do not ever want to prophesy," even though the gift may come to your life and stir in your spirit there is no way it's going to flow through you. Mentally you have made a choice not to exercise the gift. If you have made a choice saying, "Lord, I will obey you only in this method," straightaway you blocked out all other methods but the one method you have chosen. So the anointing is limited by our free choice. That is why you must deal with your free choice to open yourselves to say, "Lord, any way, any how, whatever You want to do." We yield our free choice. We yield our will to God so that God could use us to the maximum possible and not be limited in any way.

There may be times that you get the impression that the Holy Spirit is telling you punch that guy when you came for ministry. You better make sure it's the Holy Spirit. But if you shut yourself out from all those things, it will never happen to you. God has a funny way of getting around us. He will slowly persuade you. He will persuade you and reason with you. He doesn't push it on us; He reasons with

us.

Those prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel may seem crazy to the world but to me I know that they are obedient. I admire them because if God gave me the same instructions I may never be as obedient. Think about this instruction that God gave, "Go and shave your head bald." How many of you will do it. God says, "Go and play with the mud and make a city of Kuala Lumpur." Who will do it? God says, "Take your clothes and bury it in the sand in the sight of everybody." Then God says, "Go and dig it up again." God says, "Wear it," and you wear it. And there was Isaiah who walked naked for three years saying, "Thus said the Lord." This is very hard instruction. But yet mentally having shut those things out God will never work in your life. That is Old Covenant but the New Covenant has some interesting things that if we shut our mind and our free will off we stop God from working. We have to open our free will to God. So this is what I call the limitation of the free will.

Turn to Mk. 5 verse 17 after Jesus healed the demon possessed man it says then they *began to plea with Him to depart from their region*. That's marvelous because Jesus went there to preach the gospel to them. Later on you read in the gospel of Mark chapter 6 towards the ending that Jesus went back to that region. But when Jesus originally went there all the people on their free choice told Him not to come. Is it God's will for Jesus to go there? Yes. Otherwise Jesus wouldn't head there. Don't think Jesus went there just to deliver that man and go home. We know that is not true because later in Mark chapter 6 He went to the same place again. It was the perfect will of God for Jesus to enter into the area of Gadarenes to preach the gospel. But because the people rejected Him, do you think Jesus will go against their free will? He never. He went with their free will and He went back. He went home because they didn't want Jesus. Free choice was involved.

Lets give another example here in the gospel of Mk. 1: 43 *And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once*. What did Jesus strictly warned him? Jesus healed the leper. After Jesus healed the leper, Jesus told him not to tell anybody about this.

Once we were having a meeting in Singapore where there was not enough room in the auditorium. A brother who was a businessman offered me about one month before the meeting to pay for all the advertisement. I said please no. If we advertise in the newspapers we cannot contain the crowd. So I say maybe if get a bigger hall I accept that. But we cannot get a bigger hall so I said no for the time being. So it's a situation like this where you don't want the publicity because you cannot handle it.

So here in Mark chapter 1:44 *see that you say nothing to anyone*. Look at what this man did. He didn't obey Jesus' instruction. Now Jesus strictly told him. Jesus warned him. The man went out and he told everyone. He was sincere but sincerely wrong. I mean I can be sincere in a lot of things but sincerity is no argument. Sincere people are dangerous if they do the wrong thing. Now here in verse 45 it says *However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city*. You know what happened He was outside in deserted places. I mean Jesus could have the comfort of those cities and towns but He can't even go in. He had to stay outside the city under a coconut tree. All because this man had a big mouth. Sometimes it's good when you need publicity.

When William Branham went to a place he had to hide from people. If people knew which hotel he was staying in, he would never be able to sleep day or night. I tell you it also gets dangerous when you become well known. So there is this Jesus out there in the desert under the hot sun, counseling people. Now here is a case here a free choice was given to a man and the man didn't obey. And Jesus was affected. His ministry was affected because of this free choice. The anointing was to work in the city. Jesus had His own reason for working within the city. But now He has to go out to the desert places and He cannot go in at all.

At other times He tells the man go and tell others like in Mark 5. That is when they should go and tell. Jesus also told His disciples after Matthew 17 and Mark 9 and Luke 9 when he came down from the Mount of Transfiguration and Jesus said don't tell anybody about it. Because it was not time yet to tell that is why

Jesus kept it from the other disciples. The anointing works but the anointing can be limited by the decisions made by a person's free will.

2. Unbelief

Secondly, the anointing can be limited by unbelief. Mark 6:6 *And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit teaching.* It tells us here in Mark 6 that Jesus could not do any mighty work because of their unbelief. So the anointing is limited to people's faith level. Do you know one reason why the Holy Spirit could work so many miracles through Kathryn Kuhlman? It is because by the time people came, their faith level was built up. I would reckon the majority of you came here tonight just for teaching. And as a result you tap on the anointing of God for teaching. In this place even people who come on Sundays, they come for worship and for teaching. A smaller group wants the ministry. So as a result you get proportionally what you came for. Your expectation and faith level limit the anointing that is able to flow.

There is a place and time for every type of meeting. I mean if every meeting we conduct is for evangelism, you will hardly get any teachings at all. All you get is a beating in your heart – go out and evangelize. You will never grow we need to teach not only just send. Neither can we in every meeting emphasize on healing alone and then give only five minutes to teaching. You will never grow either. So we have a meeting where we preach. There is a place and time to pray. There is time for evangelism and there is a time and place for everything. I am not saying that's wrong I am saying there is expectation level that we have built ourselves in.

And so in the same way we see here that the faith level of the people that Jesus was going to minister to His own hometown was not there. In fact I would call it zero. They didn't even want Jesus to minister to them. They didn't receive His teaching or His ministry. As a result the anointing was not operational to benefit them at all.

Lets look at another case in the gospel of Mark right at the ending in chapter 6:53 *When they had crossed over they came to the land of Gennesaret. That is the place where the demonic who was delivered has been sent out and to broadcast. That's when he was to tell. Now one thing that helps people is testimony. When people hear about what the Lord has done their faith builds up and they come expecting. So here they come expecting in verse 54 And when they came out of the boat, immediately the people recognized Him, ran through the whole surrounding region, and began to carry about on beds those who were sick to wherever they heard He was. Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.*

Notice the faith level was so high. How high was it. The moment He landed they saw Jesus, quickly they ran and get the sick people. Why, they expected the sick to be healed. They have heard their faith level was now higher. When I talk about faith level I have to repeat this here that we have to have faith in God as well as a measure of faith in the instrument of God. We have to tap on the anointing upon.

I have shared this once but its good to repeat it there. The Catholics tend to regard their priests so highly that they are like next to God. There is a positive and a minus in that. The Protestants tend to look at the ministers as equal with them that they say, "What have you that we don't have or can't have?" And oftentimes, they tend to lose the blessings that come from respecting ministers of God that God has set in the church. Under normal circumstances both ministers and laity are equal. But if the anointing comes on their lives, they are speaking on behalf God and not just themselves. I could be your friend we could share fried noodles and pizza together. But if the anointing of God comes on my life and I have a word for you I am not responsible for your obedience any more. My responsibility is to give you the word and if you don't obey I am not responsible. You are responsible to God. I am only the instrument. The Protestants have a way of always downgrading the ministers of God. Sometimes you treat them like employees. After all if we hire you in the ministry, so we can also fire you. This is the extreme on the Protestant side.

The balance is to have enough respect to understand that when someone is called

to an office they are in a sense representative of God in the context of the office, without going to the extreme of idolizing or worshiping them. Some people you can get close with them because they know how to respect you no matter how close they are. But some people you cannot get close to them because when you get too close they become so familiar their familiarity really breeds contempt. Then when you come with the anointing of God on your life, they don't understand that the ministering you do is under the anointing and is God's doing and you are no more the same guy who plays marbles with them. So most of us don't know how to divide between the two roles played by an anointed person – as a minister of God and as your personal friend. So we get mixed up and we missed the blessings of God.

Now here is the area where I want to show why the anointing of God works very high like in the Thessalonians. I Thes. 1:5 *For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.* Look at that the gospel came with power. Why did it come with power because in I Thes. 2:13 *For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.*

In other words, we not only have to respect God's words we have to respect the instrument that God brings when they are obedient. See when Jesus came into His hometown they asked, "Is this not the carpenter?" They were not prepared to receive Jesus as a Messiah. They were only prepared to receive Him as an ordinary carpenter. Because they have no respect for the instrument they did not receive the anointing. We have to have as much faith. I know the devil has in the past few years distorted faith in men and women of God. But let me tell you sincerely in each one of our hearts and lives we all look for role models. Don't forget that it was still Paul who said, "Follow me as I follow Christ." Lets not get rid of those scriptures. That means Paul is saying as he is imitating Christ you still can take him as a role model. So just because of what had happened in these past decade when men and women of God has fallen because of their personal lives you are going to see what the causes are. We turn around and go to the extreme of the pendulum and say, "We do as they say but don't do as they do." I

tell you if anyone who claims to be a man of God and yet cannot say, "Do as I do," but can only say, "Do as I say," such a person is a Pharisee.

So we need to realize that everyone still needs a role model that they could build their life upon. People still need mentors to move and pattern their lives and then move on from there. We don't want to limit ourselves to a person but yet we start somewhere. We have to start somewhere to build in our lives.

One of the reasons why the anointing moved so powerfully in Acts 5 was because they began to esteem the instrument of God higher than before. Look at Acts 5:15 that even the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. Now look at verse 13 don't forget without verse 13 you cannot get verse 15. Verse 13 *Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly.* It didn't say that they esteemed God highly of course they do. But they not only esteemed God now they began to esteem His vessel. When people says to have faith in God but don't have faith in the vessel of God they have locked themselves up. People who talk that way do not know how to tap on the anointing. And they can be in the presence of anointing and because they don't regard the man of God as a man of God they get nothing. They blocked themselves from the anointing of God. Let me tell you. You've got to have faith in the man of God as well as faith in God to receive from the man of God.

When William Branham ministered, he would always ask, "Do you receive me as a prophet of God?" You know why he is asking that? You have to have faith in him too. In his book, "I Believe in Visions," Kenneth Hagin recounted his first vision where Jesus placed the anointing of God on his palm. Jesus said, "You must tell them what I have done for you. You must tell them I have appeared to you. I have put a coal of fire on your hand and I touched your hand and gave you a healing anointing and if they believe what you said they will tap on the anointing." Do you know that is believing in the man of God? Do you know one of the ways the devil discredits men of God who are faithful is by highlighting the sins of men of God who have failed? So that today people have less faith in men of God because they saw one or two fall.

Let me tell you the world is made to operate that way. If you have one hundred sheep all white and one black they will think that the rest are black. For many years and decades let me tell you the number of people who fall are few compared to the silent majority faithfully working their hearts out for God. But the world will never broadcast, "O he has been faithful for these forty years." But just because there is one black sheep there they want to make you think that everyone of them is that way. Do you know why? Because if the world could succeed in getting that kind of mentality into the body of Christ they will straight away cut off the anointing of God that God has put on His men and women to bless the body. Unless the church esteems the gift of God the members will not tap on the gift of God.

If I want to I know how to create an esteem but I prefer to let people intelligent enough to think for themselves. I would know how to put the theatrics out. I mean we are not fools in this kind of areas. I know some people do it in order to try to create that esteem. Let me give you an example, if for example you have very little contact with me. Every Sunday as every member is praying, I hide somewhere in a hidden room that side. Then at a given point in time I will just step in. I mean the excitement and the energy are built up to a high level, then you come in to minister and moved out as soon as the ministry is over. It will build a high level of expectancy. Then why don't you do it? It's not scriptural. But human beings are emotional and easily persuaded by theatrics. I would rather have people build their faith in God and faith in the man of God through teaching them to understand how to exercise faith. You have to if you are tapping on the anointing of God. You have to believe in the men of God who are the instruments as well as have faith in God in order to tap on the anointing of God.

One of the sad things I find here is sometimes when I work closely with people that they forget that sometimes some of the things you are saying have a *thus says the Lord* even though you don't use that phrase and they take it to be merely your own suggestion. And they forget that they are answerable to God for their lives. I know that there are real genuine good people but when people don't understand and when they treat you, "O he is just a small boy" - no more anointing can flow to that person. So it's important for us to know how to flow in God and how to give honor where honor is due.

However, be balanced and don't go to the extreme of idolizing the man or woman of God. When the person gets unscriptural, you also follow him out of scripture. That would be wrong. That is one extreme. Sad to say, in the body of Christ, a few go to one extreme and the other few go to the other extreme. We need to know the balance that is involved so that we can esteem a gift when a gift is there. Just flow along with it.

The anointing is subject to the faith level in two realms. You have to have faith in God and faith in the instrument of God.

3. Calling and Office

The third area is what I call the limitation of the call and the office. When God calls you to be a prophet you don't try to be a teacher. If God calls you to be prophet and teacher then you can be both. But if God calls you to be a pastor don't try to be an evangelist. If God calls you to be an evangelist, you don't try to be a pastor. You learn to be faithful to what God calls you to do. Trouble starts when those who are not called try to do the work of those who are called. We must know where the boundary lines are and not cross them. God doesn't want all of us to be Jack-of-all-trades. He wants us all to flow in the gift and call God has set for you. We have a few cases of people in the bible who crossed those boundaries like king Saul. He was a king and when he tried to do the priest work, God rejected him.

In the New Testament it looks like you get away with it longer. But you don't get away with it in the end. The limitations that you have crossed will cost your very down fall. You don't get away with moving out of the office of God that He has set you in. He has placed you there, so don't move out. Remember if you are in the office in whatever role or position in any church you are not there to serve men. You are there to work with men or women of God or to be a blessing.

Now it works both ways. Just as we need to have faith in the man of God, others are putting their faith in you too. If you yourself begin to grow on the ministry, everything you do becomes a reflection of God. Somebody else is looking at you. Somebody is looking at your life. You may not be the preacher or a pastor but I will say somebody is looking at your life as a role model. So that if you fall somebody else may fall. As long as we are faithful within the office of God, there's no problem. But there have been those who are not faithful to their own office.

Lets look in the book of II Kings 18:1 *Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. And while he was reigning, Sennacherib came and surrounded king Hezekiah. Then in chapter 19:1 And so it was, when King Hezekiah heard, that he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord. Then he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah he prophet, the son of Amoz.*

Hezekiah was a king but he was not a prophet. In a time of trouble Hezekiah is an interesting figure. He stood in one office but he was one of those who know how to co-operate with the other offices. He established the priesthood again. He rebuilt the temple. That means that he helped to establish another office and put it in its rightful perspective. Why, because he had secular power as a king. So he restored the priesthood. But even though he was powerful he recognized the line that he cannot cross. When it came to the prophetic realm, he sent messengers to Isaiah who is a prophet. And he received the word from the Lord. Here is where you see the co-operation of priests, of kings, and of prophets.

And Isaiah received the word of the Lord in the book of II Kings 19:5 *So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. And Isaiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to your master, Thus says the Lord. Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. Surely I will send a spirit upon him, and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."*

This is a tremendous incident here. Because of the fact that king Hezekiah cooperated with Isaiah the prophet and together they brought deliverance to Israel. You may not think much about that but let me say this the word of assurance in a crisis is a great comfort. Hezekiah has no word from the Lord. He was a good king. He was faithful to his office as king and he brought prosperity to Israel. In that situation he needed a prophet's word and even when he reached the end of his role he relied on another ministry, another prophet. He is a king relying on a prophet to bring about the word of the Lord that will bring comfort to the Israelites. This is not the first time. There are several times he did it. Which is why I see the humility of Hezekiah. In his humility you know where your limitations are. And you don't go beyond it. You know the limitations of your call and your office.

At the same time we must realize that a call does not mean an anointing automatically. A call means an office. But the anointing may leave the office. You do not lose your call. The calling and the gifts of God are without repentance. But the anointing may not be there. The anointing will be there as long as the other laws are followed but on you personally the anointing may not be there. Sometimes people have used their office without the anointing. And it still works because of the faith level of people. But for it to function perfectly, you need the office to function with the anointing.

Let me show you an example here. In the book of I Sam. 1:13 *Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk. So Eli said to her, "How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!"* Hannah said she is not drunk she is sorrowful. Now verse 17 Eli pronounced a blessing. *Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him.*" The moment Eli said it, it was done. Who was Eli? Eli wouldn't be one of those priests you say was anointed. But he was in office as a priest. He had no anointing but because of his position and his office, his pronouncement released the blessing. He was not even operating in the anointing. When he saw Hannah he said this is a drunkard woman and he scolded her. One moment scolding and the next moment blessing. When she said, "I am not a drunkard I am just praying for a child," he just said, "God bless

you." And he was not interested in channeling the anointing. He was just saying, "God bless you; go in peace," and it was done.

See when you have an office and a call people who look up to your office and position and call can tap on your *exousia* without *dunamis*. There is *exousia* power and *dunamis* power. *Exousia* is power by authority. *Dunamis* is power by content. So here is Eli one of the fattest men in the bible. His mere words carry enough authority to gladden the heart of a sorrowful woman praying for a child. But in actual fact he has lost his anointing. Because later on God sent a prophet and said that he was rejected although he was still retaining his office. Is there anybody else? Yes. You remember king Saul. Do you know he lost his anointing when he trespassed the office of the priest? Let me show you how he lost his anointing. In the book of I Sam. 16:14 *Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him.* He lost his anointing but he was still in the office. Why, because the human being still didn't know that he had lost his anointing. And he was still their king. He did not lose his call and his office gift. But he lost the anointing.

Sometimes one may lose the anointing but still be in the office for a certain length of time. He remains there due to a grace period while another is chosen to stand in that same office and anointing but is made to wait for God's timetable. Needless to say, the person chosen to fill in that office has to be patient. Remember this if you are not faithful to what God called you to do, God will raise up another. Positions in God's kingdom are not sacred that God has to preserve you no matter what you do. The anointing is precious. You may be called to an office but if you are disobedient, God will remove His anointing first. And after He removed His anointing you can be sure He is going to remove your office.

When the Spirit departed from Saul, God had actually called David and anointed him. Do you know David could have taken over the whole kingdom straightaway? I mean if he could fight Goliath and the bears and the lions, He would have easily defeated Saul in a battle. He was no ordinary man. He grabbed the beard of the lion and he really gave it a good whacking. That's no joke. Do

you know why Saul was afraid of him? It is because Saul knows David had the anointing, which he lost. Saul is afraid because everybody wanted this guy to be king. He is insecure now. When you lose your anointing you become insecure. So when you are insecure you got to try to preserve your own office not by spiritual means but by natural carnal way. Saul took his spear and he tried to kill David. David could have crush king Saul and got rid of him in fact many times but twice is recorded for us. When Saul went into the cave, David cut a piece of the robe and showed it to Saul. If he could have cut the robe he could have cut his head. His own mighty men were with David when they entered into Saul's camp and saw Saul asleep. One of the mighty men said, "David, give it to him." He said no. Do you know why Saul lasted so long in his reign? It is because David did him no harm. All David would have to say is, "Get him," and that would be the end of Saul. He had the office and the anointing to do so.

You could lose your anointing and keep your office and that is the most terrible position to be in. Even in this world you have to be qualified in order to hold any office. Even in the natural it works that way. If you are in a company or business, if you know your work thoroughly and are well qualified, when another new person comes in, you are not threatened. But if another new person comes in and you are not so sure about your work you will feel threatened. Especially if that guy seems to know more than you about the same job that you have suddenly you became a liability.

Now lets put that into the spiritual kingdom. God will continue to raise up five-fold ministry. You could be in the ministry for long. You are there in this church when suddenly a bright young spark fresh from the bible college opens a church down the street. If you still hold a position but have no anointing, you better think about packing your bags. You are insecure. You may throw spears and modern spears are character assignation. People try to destroy someone starting up because they are insecure. If you have the office and the anointing you know what you will do. You will know the limits of your own office and you may even go across the street and ask the new pastor, "Tell me if you need any help." You know why you can do that? Because you are secured. You know you got your own anointing. Like Hezekiah, you know that this guy has the gift. This other guy may have the same type of office but has a different anointing. Or he may hold a different office and a different type of anointing. God has His own gift in

this guy and you know how to fellowship and draw from that guy whatever God has put in him.

We must understand that there are limitations of office and calling. And involved in that is the anointing of God. People should not feel insecure in the ministry. If you ever feel insecure its not the other guy who needs to be checked up; it's you yourself. Sadly in the body of Christ sometimes position are retained where the anointing of God has left. When it has left you can be sure it goes to another. And when it goes to another you may become like king Saul.

The bible tells us here that we need to discern our call and office. You have your particular call. Lets say in this city of 1.5 million people. Even if you have ten churches or fifteen churches with ten thousand people each, you have only touched about ten percent of the population. So why are you afraid of other churches? But there is such a fear in the hearts of pastors. So you realize that it's not enough just to know your call and your office and position. You have to be sure you have the anointing to function in that otherwise all your life you live in insecurity. When we know our office and call and know the anointing know the limitations of your anointing. Don't go beyond that. Just because somebody starts satellite T.V. doesn't mean its God's will for you to go into. It may be right for them but not right for you. Flow with what God asked you to do. Because if you don't its going to be a strain on the budget trying to support a satellite ministry that God never asked you. But if you flow with what God asked you to do its no problem there. So don't copy the ministry but flow with what God asked you to do. Just flow with what God wants you to do. Know your own limits.

You see the limit that God set for you and it may be different from the limit God has set on another person. And they have to be faithful to their own limitations. God may have called you to go to a hundred nations God may have called another person to go to ten nations. And in one year you see that fellow running to and fro to about ten and here you are still running around one. And you look over you feel insecure just because you are comparing your own ministry with that person not comparing your own ministry with God's ministry for you. So before long you start getting a green eye. Then you look around and see why God blesses that guy here and there and you don't because a different calling.

I talked to one person recently he said before I die I am going to set my foot on every nation. So its important for us to know where God called you and what God called you to do be satisfied with that. Know your limitation. See the danger if you don't know your limitations you tend to be doing things that are not anointed. You are doing this because you are doing things to secure your own position. Keeping up with the spiritual Jones. Worldlings may run the rat race in the natural world. But in the spiritual realm you don't have to run the spiritual rat race. Just flow in what God asked you to do.

We have talked about free will, faith level, call and office.

4. Operation

The fourth limitation concerns the operation of the anointing. For example if God calls you to operate in visions, then you be faithful. But if God never called you to operate that way, don't attempt to copycat someone who does. You have to be faithful to the method God has chosen for you. When Kathryn Kuhlman starts operating in her style, Oral Roberts came to her meeting and admitted to her that God never asked him to operate that way. But when Oral Roberts ministers he has to lay his hand on every person. That is his special operation.

See God sometimes calls a man with a message and a method. God has not limited me to a method. But for some people God limits them to a method. Do you know William Branham was also limited to a certain method? He had to use his left hand to hold a person to discern. Sometimes it would break into other people where he could call them out. But he will always uses his left hand. And when he move his left hand he will know exactly what is wrong. God sometimes calls a man or woman with a message and a method. If God gives you a methodology that He says, "This is your special operation," please don't change it. God likes you the way you are. Even no matter how hard you try to imitate another person's anointing by the outward way, you won't have it. God limits a

person to a certain operation. As you flow along remember the limits of the operation that will open onto you.

Now the operation can change with time and season as you progress at each phase in your ministry. Kathryn Kuhlman will never lay hands when she operates. She requires quietness. Benny Hinn with the same type of anointing needs the same thing he wants you to be quiet. Some preachers are funny. They tell you to take notes. And if you don't write something down he will stare at you. Why are you not taking notes? Always carry a pen and a paper. And you got preachers who come and say, "Put down all your pen and paper. I don't want anyone of you to write anything. Just sit quietly open your eyes and open your ears and don't open your mouth." And when you try to write some points down he will say, "Hey you there, put down your pen." There are all kinds of funny preachers. Why? Shall we make trouble with them? So that those preachers who don't like you to write down notes, fill the whole front row with note takers. Then the preacher cannot move with the anointing. Or preachers that need to see people taking notes to help their faith level, put the whole first row of fellows who stare down at them like vultures. I am sure it will affect the anointing.

Learn to flow with each preacher's anointing. It is their limitations of their operation. If they don't have it they cannot flow. That is their pattern and method that God ordains for them to flow with. You may not be happy about it but if you attend their meeting, just flow along with their method. Don't quarrel about that. After all it's their meeting that you are attending. If you are not happy just don't attend. I take notes but I train myself to remember everything. But I encourage people to take notes. At the same time I would like a certain atmosphere of reverence. But I don't require pin drop silence to operate in the gifts. I am more practical that I just require that there will be enough low level of noise where what I say can be heard by the person at the back. When the word is given and if only people in the first ten rows can hear then there is no point. But I can assume that a lot in Jesus ministry when He was ministering the children must have been crying in one corner. Imagine some of His meetings are held without microphone. Some of them are held in the valleys. You try putting five thousand men, women and children in a valley. You can be sure that everywhere children are running about. You can be sure that somebody is talking somewhere. You can be sure that somebody needs to go to toilet somewhere. What I am talking about

is the method that God requires a person to use. Flow with it because that person may be limited to that operation. If they don't have that they cannot operate. They are limited to the mode of operation.

When I travel to New Zealand there was one meeting there that I mentioned that they were to bring their handkerchiefs. Not many brought their handkerchief and so the method was scrapped to operate in another way. But what God wanted to do and operate that way was not operational. But it ended up with another meeting in a different town that we could operate that way that God wanted to. Sometimes when you sense different type of anointing that God wants to operate, if the people flow or if the people don't flow that determines how you could channel the anointing of God. So there is what I call limitations of the anointing. So just flow along. Some preachers may require absolute silence. Some preachers when they give their invitation, says, "Nobody move" and you start moving they scold you. Please return to your seat. I have seen that. "You over there can't you wait thirty seconds for a lost soul?" That person feels so guilty. Can't help it the preacher needs that.

5. Character

God can limit the flow of your anointing to your character. It's very hard to say which came first.

Sometimes its very hard for us to tell whether it's the character that changes because of the anointing or it's the anointing that is flowing with that person's character. If we knew the person from small then we can know and tell. Like for example you met Jacob Kurien. He has a loud voice all the time. You are not sure whether his loud voice was because of his anointing or whether he already has a loud voice and God uses his loud voice to start with his anointing. But if you knew him from small and his voice was very soft then, but as he flows with the anointing, he goes "PRAISE THE LORD' Then you will know that it came from his anointing. The funny thing is that when you start moving in the anointing after a long time the characteristic of the anointing that is required becomes a part

of you. In the natural, in the spiritual there is a pattern.

Let me illustrate from the natural first. Do you think these actors when they act certain bad guy roles, he may act until he really becomes a crook in his real life. And some of the actors have what I call stress – actor stress. They act the part so long that in real life they cannot tell whether they are still the person or not. And they find themselves in real life becoming like the person like originally acted. That's in the natural world. So some of those actors began to resign and go to other profession because they find they cannot cope up with that kind of stress. So that's the stress they have.

In the spiritual realm there is no doubt if God wants you to be an evangelist and you move into many areas where there is no microphone, God may naturally endow you with a tremendous voice. It is a part of you and sometimes naturally you talk that way. Like some of our soul winners here. Even the way they normally talk is very aggressive. When the anointing comes to win souls they are very aggressive. Even after the meeting, they speak in the same loud, aggressive manner, "You must come for supper." Same tune. They are still playing the same instrument. You don't know whether it's the anointing or it's just them.

We understand that the anointing can come irrespective of character. But certain types of anointing require a change in character. If you were as timid as a mouse and you are called to be an evangelist and soul winner, you have got to overcome your timidity. You may say I am not that character. You have no choice. If you are called and if you say you are not going to change then the anointing cannot flow in your life. You have to be very out going.

I find that God has changed me a lot. I know definitely that change is because of the anointing and not because I changed first. The anointing come first and then the change in character. I am normally more introvert and a very quiet person. In a group I will not start a conversation. You want to talk to me you have to start the conversation. But you cannot pastor a church that way. You cannot say I am what I am. Anybody want to talk to me they have to come to me. When you are

in the group you have to learn the normal art of conversation. As a pastor you have to. It's easy you just say how are you. That's what I do in a group I will reach out and ask a question which normally I would not. In my natural self I am a chess player. You wouldn't believe it but I have no girlfriend at all in my school days. Not because I was that sanctified but because I never approached people. I had my own world, my own chess world. Always reading my book. You invite me to a party I bring my book along. While everybody else is dancing I will be reading my book. I only attended one party in all my school days. That was my character but as God began to show me His call I had to change. I am sorry to say that I did not change instantly. I wish I could have said that. It took me three to four years to learn to approach people, learn to flow with people.

And for some of us we maybe in an area where our character limits us from public speaking. You may never have spoken. But if God calls you to be a teacher to the body of Christ, you are going to start somewhere and it may be harder to start because of that. But somehow you have to break it and let it become a part of you. So there is what I call limitations of character. There is a positive and there is a minus. It doesn't mean that just because you have a loud voice you are most probably called to be evangelist. You may not. God may in fact change you from the loud voice person to be a soft spoken pastor. Think about the apostle Paul. He was one of the most educated men in his days. Brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. Pharisee of the Pharisee, well-educated, top man. And God sent him to the barbarians. You wouldn't send him to the Gentiles. God sent him to the barbarians. The Gentiles in those days were called barbarians. And the Jews here they are educated and God called this Peter who always engages his mouth before he thinks; loud speaking, brash in his habit, uncultured in his style, fisherman, man in the street, talk rough, and yet God sent him to the most educated. Here is fisherman proclaiming the gospel to doctors of the law. In Paul, God sent a doctor of the law to the barbarians. Strange are the ways of God.

So don't interpret your character to mean that's where His call. There are limitations of character that we must understand. We must overcome some areas of our character in order to facilitate the anointing through our lives. In some areas we must develop a new character in God. What we are not in ourselves we have to change until the day comes you are so conformed you are the call and the call is you. When people look at you, you fit exactly into the mould that God

made you to be your part in the body. Our character had to change and conform to that which God so desire.

6. Body

Then we come to the limitations of the body. Our body is not a new body yet. We must realize that no matter how anointed you are or how much God uses you, our body has a limitation. Even Jesus in John 4 felt tired. Jn. 4:6 *Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well.* Jesus had a physical body that felt tired. And in His Gethsemane experience in Matt. 26:43 *And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy.* I want you to notice this in verse 40 and 41 He asked them why are you asleep, can't you watch with Me? But then when you turn over to Mk. 14:41 Jesus said *"Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough!"* Now what does He mean by *it is enough.* Then in Lk. 22 in verse 40 and 46 *Pray that you may not enter into temptation. Verse 46 Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation."* In Jn. 18:1-2 *When Jesus had spoken these words, "He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. And Judas, who betrayed Him also knew the place for Jesus often met there with His disciples. Verse 4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"* Now in Gethsemane here is Jesus and it says He knew all things. So Jesus prayed to the stage where He knew that it was time to deliver Himself. It's too late now to pray. He said it's enough to pray. And He tells His disciples arise let us go. See there is a time to pray and there is a time to sleep. Sometimes when you are tired you need to continue the work like in Gethsemane. At other times when you are tired and the work is finished you need to rest. In fact one of the miracles of feeding of the five thousand was when Jesus said let us go to rest. He wanted to rest. He wanted to get some time away from the crowd because there is much coming and going. And the crowd followed them. We need to know when to rest. There are limitations of the body. In the book of Phil. 2 *Epaphroditus because for the work of Christ he came close to death.* In other words he over worked himself and he nearly died.

Let me give a little example also from natural realm. If God call you and an

anointing comes on your life when you are a little child lets say 12 years old and God's gift starts operating, which can happen. In America there are a few boy preachers. And some of them would preach the word and their parents would take them and hide them. They had no chance to be little children, no change to grow up like a child. They will be hidden like little hermits. When ministry time comes, let them out of the cage. They are supposed to read the word, pray and they got no chance to play with other children. When they grew up, some completely turn their backs from God. They had spiritual development but they didn't have natural development. They were imbalanced. We need to be skillful in balancing the spirit, soul and body. Too much of the physical is bad but you cannot live fully spiritual and ignore the natural without facing consequences.

Let me give a simple example that may be of value. When I was young in the ministry, I felt that it was not important what you look like. In the whole of my seminary, I never owned a comb. I don't have my hair combed neatly like today. I figure out that it was not important. It's not important what you look like on the outward after all what's on the inside that counts. Which is true but it's half the truth. The reason is what happens on the inside becomes reflected on the outside and people find it easy to accept you. You could be the greatest prophet in the world. But you come with long fingernails full of dirt, and your hair that has never been washed for about six months because you were praying a lot in those days. And your clothes are so messy because you couldn't be bothered with folding your clothes. Then your shoes have so much dirt because you have been evangelizing all over the place that literally it was a dirty shoe. And you have no time to wash your shoe because you spent your time with God. You ask me, "Don't the smell bother you?" No, because I only smell the spiritual fragrance. Even if you are a true man or woman of God it's very hard to get people near you enough to listen to the prophecy you have. And so through time I realize that personal grooming was important to a certain extent. You don't have to overdo things but its important to have a good image. That was half the truth that I mentioned I had. Do you like everybody to be like you? No, then what do you like everybody to be like then dress like it. So it's important as we see here that the physical realm is important to a certain extend. Small, small things can disturb and close doors to your ministry.

If you travel to some places in some countries and if you wear an open neck shirt

to preach no one will want to hear you. Its funny I don't know why but some countries have that attitude towards preachers. So even though you don't feel comfortable wearing a necktie, you have to do so for the sake of the hearers in that country. Even though today most of the time I wear a necktie but when I first started in the ministry I hated ties. But I have to learn to like it. I have to train my outer man to present myself properly in the Lord. So for that reason there is nothing wrong with wearing jeans. But you will never find me in one, why because I want people to have the right message.

Let me tell you this if you are in the ministry there is a certain image that you convey in the natural. You learn as you flow in the ministry. The funny thing is the Spirit teaches you how to carry yourself in God. Why are these things important? If people cannot get close enough to you to hear the word, the word that you have is not worth it. Although they say don't judge the book by its cover everybody knows that they buy books by the cover. In one bookstore at one time I was talking to this salesgirl and there was this horrible looking book that had the devil's face drawn on it. And the person said, "I tell you this book could hardly sell." Why? There is a cartoon picture that is not pleasant. So presentation is important.

Then it comes to your physical body. When it's the time to rest you need to learn how to rest. Do you know that there were some people who are so active whether in business or in ministry who don't know how to sleep? They need pills to sleep because they are so highly strung and stressed. We got to learn how to rest our body properly. Sometimes men or women of God with wonderful ministries die prematurely because they don't know how to take care of their body. No matter how greatly God use you remember your limitations of your physical body. And in the 1950s a lot of people with great anointing fell. But some men and women of God pushed themselves beyond natural. Although the anointing will sustain you, it will sustain you to a certain extent and you have to use your common sense and wisdom. Beyond it God is not going to protect you if you deliberately overwork your bodies. I had to learn the hard way because sometimes I minister so much I hardly get time to catch up on my reading here and there. So sometimes after all those hectic times of ministry, I just sit down and read. Why, that's my hobby and at the same time I want to learn, I want to grow. There are times where for one year at a stretch I will sleep very little and

push myself and read and then when I fell sick, I was forced to rest. You don't want to get sick. Why, because here you are preaching the word and when you get sick, it is not a very good testimony. Its not easy to explain to people because people will have their own reason why your are sick. Ah he disobeyed God here, disobeyed God there. You got to just know your body. And know to what extend you could push your body.

Some people tend to overwork their body and some people tend to underwork their body. If you have never pushed your body to the limit you do not know what a versatile body God has given you. In those days when I had to organize camps and all those things in the seminary we work with just 2 hours of sleep for 48 hours just to get the job done. And sometimes when I see others in the ministry coming up and they have these things to do and they complain I said, "You don't know the price we have paid to reach there." We have to learn to push ourselves to the limit then we know when to rest and when not to rest. There are times you got to learn to push your body. But at the same time when you push you better take a break and rest when it's required. Don't say, "No time to rest." You are heading for disaster street in fact not disaster street it's I.C.U. ward. Then you are forced to rest. So know the limitations of your body.

The anointing is limited to that realm. If you are persistently not sleeping very well and you are pushing yourself and you claim God is behind it, when you fall sick, you wonder whether it was God or not. God is the one telling me to sleep at three wake up at four. Then later when they fall sick they wonder whether its God or not. If it's really of God, there's no problem. Moses was for forty days and night with God. There are limitations but you have to check yourself if it is your own zeal that has been over done.

Now in some areas all of us has an element of religious zeal. Just remember don't push it on another person. Encourage but don't push. Everyone has his or her own limitations. In my early days when anybody stayed with me in the ministry early morning you hear my voice that wakes you up purposely. I will come in the middle of the night and say 'PRAISE GOD' at midnight I will say, 'PRAISE THE LORD'. And it will be exactly midnight when I wake them up. Then in the morning I will say 'PRAISE GOD' and say its time to pray in tongues. Sometimes

people are still having that in the ministry. They made the ministry like military camp. You can do it some of the time but don't do it all the time. Remember the limitations of the physical body. So don't push your zeal on others, which I used to but now repented. Let each grow at their own pace.