

Dag Heward-Mills



Why YOU Must BECOME A SHEPHERD

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Unless otherwise stated, Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

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First published 2008 by Lux Verbi.BM (Pty) Ltd, PO Box 5,
Wellington 7654, South Africa
Tel +27 21 864 8200
www.luxverbi-bm.com
Reg no 1953/000037/07
1st Printing 2008

ISBN 13: 978-0-7963-0914-3

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Chapter 1

You Can Become a Shepherd

In this chapter, I want to show you that there are many scriptural reasons why I believe you can be a shepherd/pastor. I believe that at a point in your Christian development, you can be a shepherd, at least at some level. The Bible teaches from many angles about you being fruitful in ministry.

The Word also teaches us that "many" and not "few" are called to the ministry.

For many are called, but few are chosen.

Matthew 22:14

One Scripture which teaches us about fruitfulness in ministry is Ephesians 4, verses 11 and 12.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors [poimen] and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Ephesians 4:11,12

The usual interpretation of this Scripture is that God gave special ministerial offices to the Church for three principal reasons:

1. To perfect the saints.
2. To do the work of the ministry.
3. To edify the Body of Christ.

This is true. However, we must be aware that the translators of the Bible added punctuation, which sometimes gives an unfortunate interpretation of the text. When you remove the commas from Ephesians 4:12, it gives a

completely different meaning, which I believe is more accurate. Remove the punctuation marks in Ephesians 4:12 and look at what the verse is saying now.

And he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors [poimen] and teachers for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Ephesians 4:11,12

It is saying that God gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers "for the perfecting of the saints for the *work* of the ministry".

In other words, these special ministerial offices are given to perfect ordinary saints to enable them (the saints) to do the work of ministry. What does this mean? This simply means that ordinary saints can do ministry work. It also means that ministry work is not the sole preserve of certain apostles and teachers.

Laymen can satisfactorily accomplish a large part of the ministry.

When you interpret Ephesians 4:11,12 this way, it puts the responsibility of ministry on all of us and not just on a few special people. This must be the case, because the Bible says *many* are called!

God never called a few people to do His work. God has always called many more people than have responded.

If you were God and you had a huge task to accomplish - the task of saving the whole world, would you call a few people and send them out? Of course not! You would call as many people as possible and send them out.

Unfortunately, few people respond to the call, therefore, few are eventually chosen to serve in the vineyard.

Chapter 2

The Call Is Supernatural

Is the Call Such a Big Deal?

We have made the call of God to be some mystical experience involving the hearing of voices, seeing of visions, and having of spectacular spiritual experiences. That is an erroneous generalization. Many are "called", but many have not seen visions of Jesus. The Bible teaches us that we are "called" to be saints.

**To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, CALLED
TO BE SAINTS...**

Romans 1:7

Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, CALLED TO BE SAINTS...

1 Corinthians 1:2

It is the saints who are expected to do the work according to Ephesians 4:12. Now let us be honest. In our calling to be saints, how many of us heard supernatural voices? How many of us have had thunder and lightning frighten us to salvation? How many of us fell down on the way to Damascus? Very few Christians have had such dramatic calls to God.

That, however, does not mean that we are not called to be Christians.

All born-again Christians have a supernatural calling on their lives to be saints. It may not be spectacular but it is certainly supernatural. **If you call yourself a Christian, then you have received a call to which you have responded.** I am informing you that without knowing it, you have actually heard a call and responded to a divine call.

What was that call? That call was simply a conviction that came upon you about the reality of Jesus Christ. That same conviction led you to give your life to Christ, and made you a born-again Christian.

Sometimes people looking out for the sensational miss the real supernatural move of God. *In the same way that we are called to be Christians, God will call many of us to His service at one level or the other.* You may not be called to a breathtaking level of ministry like Elijah, but it is still a calling!

Look at the ministry of Samuel the prophet. Samuel was in the temple when he received the call of God.

And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli...

1 Samuel 3:1

But notice that Samuel did not know what the call of God was. In fact, he thought it was something very natural, a man's voice. Many

people are called, but think that because it feels natural, like a thought, an idea or even a conviction, they are not called. Since the call of God is not so different from natural things around us, many just assume they have not been called.

The prophet Samuel went to his father-in-ministry, Eli, thinking that he was calling him. He could not distinguish between a natural human voice and the supernatural voice of God. What does this mean to us? It means that many times the supernatural is not as dramatic as we expect. If it was that dramatic, Samuel would have immediately known that he was not hearing a human voice.

...THE LORD CALLED Samuel: and he answered, Here am I. And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; FOR THOU [Eli] CALLEDST ME...

1 Samuel 3:4,5

It was Eli (his pastor or father-in-ministry) who helped him to recognize the call of God on his life.

The Allergic Pastor

I have watched many of my church members grow up in the Lord. I have watched God calling them and have seen how many of them did not recognize the call of God on their lives. In fact, some of my best pastors were once allergic to the subject *of being called* to the ministry.

One particular pastor did not want to accept the possibility of the call of God. So he developed an allergy to the topic and did not want to discuss it with me at all! Today, he is a successful pastor in full-time ministry, obeying the call of God on his life. You see, you can be called without even knowing it, just like Samuel. He was called but did not even know it!

The call to a small ministry is still a call. It is still supernatural. It may not be outwardly impressive, but it is still a call. I have not had the experience of thunder, lightning and heavenly voices calling me to the ministry. But I am just as called as any other minister.

...but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire A STILL SMALL VOICE.

1 Kings 19:11,12

God often speaks by this still small voice. It was the still small voice of conviction that brought me into the ministry. I have just had a quiet conviction. It is that conviction that I have followed up until this time.

Be Open to the Call

Pastors ought to encourage their members to be open to the call. This will release many more Christians into useful ministry. **It is this secret of releasing the masses of lay people into the ministry that brings about church growth.** One man can do very little, but many people can do a great deal. One pastor can probably remember the names of only one hundred and fifty people in his church.

How can one man, who does not even know the names and problems of most of the people in his church, effectively pastor thousands of people? That is why we need the help of lay shepherds and lay pastors.

In the church I pastor, I encourage everyone to be open to the call to the ministry. In fact, if you ask my congregation whether they are called or not, most of them will respond, "I believe I am called!" The Bible said that many are called and not a few.

Samuel stayed in the temple and was able to hear the call of God. *Serious Christians, who spend a lot of time in church doing the work of the ministry, are likely to hear the call of God.*

I also think that Christians who spend time at discos, parties and the like do not hear the voice of God. Even if they are called, they will not be able to hear it because of the other distractions in their lives.

Who Is Ordained?

We all quote this famous verse of Scripture on prayer.

Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

John 15:16b

We believe that whatever we ask the Father, He will give it to us. In fact, we have great confidence that this Scripture applies to all Christians and not just to the apostles. However, what does the first part of that verse say? It says,

...I HAVE CHOSEN YOU, AND ORDAINED YOU, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain...

John 15:16

Is this ordination and choosing not the same thing as a calling? It certainly is! If you believe that God, the Father, will hear all of our prayers then we must believe that God has chosen and ordained all of us to go and bear fruit. This

leaves no one out, including you. **This means that Christian doctors, lawyers and businessmen are also ordained ministers who are expected to bear much fruit.** What is the fruit that he is talking about? The fruit of souls brought to the Lord. The fruit of people being established in the Lord. Who does that? A shepherd.

If you expect God to answer all of your prayers, you must first bear much fruit. **Many people are fainting and are being scattered because there are not enough shepherds.** There are a lot of big-time men of God but there are not enough shepherds.

Let me now show you ten reasons why I think every Christian can do the work of a shepherd.

Chapter 3

Reasons Why Every Christian Can Do the Work of a Shepherd

1. All you need is a desire.

The Bible says if anyone has the desire to become a bishop, he has desired a good thing. Let us not deviate from the Word of God.

This is a true saying, if a man desire the OFFICE OF A BISHOP, he desireth a good work.

1 Timothy 3:1

The Word is telling us here that in order to become a bishop all we need is a desire. Let it be clear that a bishop is simply a shepherd or pastor.

The Greek word translated bishop is *episkopos*, which means an overseer of God's people.

Apostle Paul's vision was to enjoin more people to do God's work. He therefore asked Timothy to look out for people with a desire to be involved in ministry. After locating people who had a desire to do the work, Paul instructed Timothy to ensure that they were of honourable reputation. *All the qualities that Paul asked Timothy to look for were matters of character and not talent, ability or anointing.*

Paul was making it very easy for anyone to become a shepherd. All you needed to do was to have a desire and an unquestionable character. Pastors, look out for people who have a desire for God's work and who have an honest and faithful character.

If that is what the Bible teaches us to look out for, then we cannot be more spiritual than God. Some of my most fruitful pastors do not look outwardly anointed or talented. But, because God was looking for their faithfulness and integrity they have grown to be very successful in ministry.

2. Becoming a shepherd is a natural stage of development.

FOR WHEN FOR THE TIME YE OUGHT TO BE TEACHERS, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

Hebrews 5:12

When Paul wrote to the Hebrew Christians, he made it clear that he was disappointed in the fact that when they should have been teachers themselves, they still needed instruction. He talks about a time when you need to be a teacher yourself.

There is a time in every Christian's life when he must be able to teach. This is a natural stage of development. It does not require any special or spectacular experience with God to be able to teach. **Teaching is the principal duty of a good shepherd.** Teaching is the same as feeding the sheep.

I have found out that when Christians do not develop normally into shepherds they often turn into something bad. A time comes when some of the church members know exactly what the pastor is going to preach. They know how he will begin the message and how it will end. They heard the same message two years ago. They end up becoming critical.

In the medical field, when a person has more food than he uses the food is converted into fat and the person becomes obese. Obesity is a dangerous disease that can kill you. It is simply caused by being overfed and under-exercised. That is the problem of many Christians; they have nothing to do with the knowledge that is

being imparted to them Sunday after Sunday. They never use the knowledge they have. They never feed anyone. They never minister to anyone. They then become a danger to themselves!

A dangerous sign that you should look out for in your own life is when you become full of criticism. People who criticize a lot are often not involved in the work of God.

I remember one critical friend. He had many comments to make about different men of God. However, he himself did not do much in the ministry and was more like a commentator. Beware of commentating Christians! They fill your mind with poison!

Let's all grow up naturally, and begin to teach when we need to teach and shepherd when we need to shepherd. Pastors, encourage your members to become shepherds and feeders of sheep under you. Allow them to become solvers of problems and helpers of the weak. Everyone can do it!

I remember a doctor colleague whose wife went into the labour ward to deliver a baby. Unfortunately, the woman was permitted to labour too long and the baby became distressed (short of oxygen). Eventually the doctors took a decision to operate on the lady and she gave birth to a child who had brain damage. I never saw this child! About five or six years later, I met someone who had visited this lady and I asked about the child: "How is the child doing?"

She said, "Oh pastor. It's a pathetic story. This child is six years old and cannot talk or move. He sits in a chair and defecates and urinates all over himself. He is growing into a boy but has no control whatsoever of any of these functions!"

She said to me, "It's a sorry sight. Because when a baby messes up, it's quite different from when a grown boy does the same thing!"

She went on, "What an embarrassment it is to the parents. And how difficult it is for them to cope with the situation."

As I reflected on this story, the Spirit of the Lord showed me how similar the condition of this child was to the condition of many Christians. When they should be performing certain functions naturally, they still need to be carried about, fed and cleaned by someone else. Spiritually, that is also a pathetic situation! A situation of no growth and no development.

Recently, I had a call from a young man. I got to know this young man about seven years ago, when he was just nineteen years old. At that time he was a student, but hadn't taken his education seriously.

I said to him, "You have to take your education seriously!"

I tried to help him to continue his schooling. I even promised, "I will pay for every single one of your books, if only you will go to school."

After I made that promise, I did not see this young man for a long while. He just wasn't interested in his studies. The next time I saw him

was at a family funeral. When I saw him, I wondered what he was up to. I didn't speak to him but then out of the blue, seven years later this young man gave me a phone call.

"Hullo!"

"Yes," I answered. He mentioned his name.

"Oh, I see. It's been a long time. What can I do for you?"

It was his birthday. He told me his story and said, "Things are difficult for me now. I am twenty-six years old and I have no man to help me now."

I said, "I see. What can I do for you?"

"Since I have no one to help me now I wanted to ask you if you could start helping me. And if I could be coming to you for pocket money."

"Pocket money!" I exclaimed.

This was a twenty-six-year-old unemployed man who wanted to collect pocket money from

me on a regular basis. What he had failed to realize was that there is a time you can receive pocket money and there is a time you must work.

In every sphere of life, you are expected to develop and grow into the next stage. If you fail to do so, you will become an anomaly in society.

I said to this young man, "Come and see me in my office."

When he came I told him, "The days of collecting pocket money like a child are over. You must work now! Nobody is going to give you pocket money at this stage of your life. We can help you go to school or help you get a job, but you cannot expect regular handouts from me."

You must develop into a teacher or shepherd who feeds God's people. You are expected to develop and become a feeder according to Hebrews 5:12. If you fail to do this you will become an awkward, critical, malformed, and retarded Christian.

3. There is a great need for shepherds.

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Matthew 9:36

In this Scripture, Jesus makes it clear that people are fainting and are being harassed because there is no shepherd.

When I was growing up as a Christian, I learnt a lot by talking to senior Christians (who were like shepherds to me). Every difficult question I had, I directed to them. They were easily accessible people I could talk to. When I had difficult questions like, "Who created God?" "Why did Jesus have to die?" and "Who was Cain's wife?" I always had somebody to ask.

Today, in some of the big churches, pastors are almost unavailable because the reality is that one man cannot attend to the personal needs of so many thousands of people. Yes, he can preach to

thousands, but he cannot personally talk to thousands. He cannot answer questions and spend time with the needy thousands. He is likely to have a breakdown if he tries to.

I believe in preaching to thousands from the pulpit, but I believe in having shepherds on the ground who minister one-on-one to the multitudes.

Although I preach to thousands, I still enjoy attending to the personal needs of as many of the flock as I can.

When you decide to become a shepherd, the lives of certain people will be changed forever. If you do not become a shepherd, perhaps many lives will never become stable in Christ.

When you, an ordinary Christian, decide to become a shepherd (someone with the Word of God and solutions), people will begin to gather around you. It is then that you will minister to them Living Water.

4. God's people are scattered without a shepherd.

And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.

Ezekiel 34:5

I remember when I was in Achimota School in Accra, there was no Scripture Union (SU) fellowship on the western compound. You see, Achimota School, being one of the greatest schools in Ghana, has two compounds, the east and the west.

There was a vibrant SU fellowship on the eastern compound but none on the west. I took it upon myself to begin a fellowship on the western compound. After a while, there was a gathering of the western compound SU members into the western assembly hall. This western compound SU fellowship became so dynamic that some easterners even began to walk to the west to attend these meetings.

What am I saying? The SU members (God's sheep) were scattered on the west when there was no shepherd. But with the rising up of a shepherd God's people began to gather and were blessed.

The devil wants us to be scattered because he knows that he can get the sheep when they are alone. **When the sheep are together in a group they are safer and the devil knows it!**

That is why Satan does not want you to be a shepherd. Satan wants the sheep to be scattered. The devil wants to prevent you from becoming a shepherd because it is the shepherd who will gather the sheep. That is why the devil has blinded the eyes of many pastors; preventing them from seeing the potential shepherds and lay pastors amongst the congregation who could help greatly in the work.

5. In order to fulfil the great commission.

Jesus' last words to His disciples on top of a lonely hill were, Go ye...and make disciples...*teaching* them..." Traditionally, we

think of the Great Commission as an evangelistic command. Yet, when you study the instructions of our Lord very carefully, you will realize that the Great Commission is also a shepherdorial commission. It is a pastoral commission. It is a mandate for shepherds to move out and to begin to teach the Word of God.

Christian friend, it is up to you and I to go out there and fulfil the Great Commission.

The evangelist has an anointing to preach and to lead people to Christ. That was the first instruction Jesus gave to Peter: "Come and I will make you fishers of men."

His last words added something to the first words - the teaching element.

I once read about a famous evangelist who was holding mammoth crusades in every city of the world. One day, this evangelist returned to one of the cities where he had held a crusade and did a survey of all the people who had taken decisions for Christ during his last crusade.

The result of his survey was frightening. It showed that only 5% of the converts of his last massive crusade were still Christians.

I don't think the evangelist was very happy about these results. The poor results led him to establish a strong follow-up ministry. You see, the evangelists' preaching alone does not fulfil the Great Commission. There is a need for shepherds to rise up to finish his work.

A cell leader is a shepherd. A pastor is a shepherd. A bishop is a shepherd. It is the same ministry operating at different levels. You must decide to develop into a shepherd so that you can help to fulfil the Great Commission. Jesus said we should go and teach them because they (the sheep) need shepherds. After you have received for so many years, it is time for you to give.

Teaching builds people. Teaching builds churches. Teaching fulfils the Great Commission.

Chapter 4

Reasons Why You Can Also Do the Work of a Shepherd

1. So that you can obtain a good degree.

I went to the university in 1982 and finished in 1989 with a degree in medicine and surgery. That degree is intended to help me for the rest of my life on this earth. Many Christians do not know about the existence of a heavenly degree. Really, just as a university degree will guarantee you forty or so years of comfortable living on this earth, a good heavenly degree will guarantee an eternity of comfort and blessings.

Make no mistake my friend. God is not blind! God is not a fool! God is not mocked! Whatever you sow on earth you will reap.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Galatians 6:7

Paul said that if anyone used the office of a deacon (which is a church helper or a shepherd), he would have a good degree in Heaven.

For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves A GOOD DEGREE, and great boldness in the faith...

1 Timothy 3:13

God wants all of us to have this degree. *Some of you might not have earthly degrees but you can obtain a heavenly one when you function as a shepherd.*

If you have been a good shepherd you can be bold when you think about going to Heaven. Your degree will help you up there!

2. So that you can combine material and spiritual progress.

But godliness with contentment is great gain.

1 Timothy 6:6

You may never enter into full-time ministry. You may pursue a career and acquire all the houses and cars you want. There is nothing wrong with that.

Understand that God is not against your material prosperity. All that the Bible is saying here is that, if you are able to add godliness or spiritual blessings onto your material blessings, then you are truly blessed.

While in the medical school, I trained to become a doctor. But I didn't just become a medical doctor. I started a church when I was in my fourth year and by the time I qualified with my medical degree, I was also an experienced minister of the Gospel. I had a material and a spiritual degree. I had them both! I did not have one without the other.

I wasn't a spiritually bankrupt doctor. I was a doctor who was a shepherd as well. Many have one but not the other. Strive to have both and not just one. It is a greater blessing (great gain) to have both. This is what the Bible means by godliness and contentment.

In my case, the "godliness" was in becoming a pastor and the "contentment" was in becoming a doctor.

You can have that too! You can be a businessman and at the same time a minister of God's sheep! You can get all of the money you desire and at the same time fulfil your God-given ministry of being a shepherd.

Most of the pastors in my denomination are lay pastors. They work very hard in the secular world, and there is nothing wrong with that. Some of them are millionaires and yet they pastor God's sheep as well.

Isn't that a blessing? What more could you ask for?

3. People are hungry for the truth.

People have a hunger in their spirits that can only be satisfied by the Word of God.

...should not the shepherds feed the flocks?

Ezekiel 34:2

I remember when I was a young Christian, I would always have biblical discussions with Christian leaders. That helped me a lot in my spiritual development. Let's ask ourselves: when the pastor preaches on one topic, how does he meet the needs of a thousand different people at the same time? That is why we need shepherds of all degrees who will feed the sheep at every level.

The Disastrous Fast

Some sheep need attention that a particular pastor may not be able to give. There is a need for all kinds of shepherds. God needs lady shepherds to do His work as well. Sometimes

when a male shepherd tries to help a female sheep in the "mud", he may get his feet dirty. Perhaps a female shepherd may be more suitable than a male one.

I remember a lady who came to see us in the church office. She had a problem with fornication and adultery. I asked, "What have you been doing about this problem?"

She said, "So-and-so evangelist came to our church to preach and minister deliverance. Afterwards he called and asked me to come for further deliverance at his home church."

"Did you go?" I asked.

She said, "Yes."

"What did he tell you at his home church?" I inquired.

"He said that he had discerned by the Spirit that I needed extra counselling and deliverance. So, he decided to fast with me for seven days," she replied.

"Did you get delivered after the seven days?" I queried.

"I hope so!" She said.

"At the end of the seven-day fast, when we were praying together in his house, we fornicated."

She continued, "It happened several times."

Please notice that the pastor was so kind as to actually fast for seven days with this sheep who needed counselling and deliverance. Not all pastors would lay aside their stomachs to help a sheep in need. Unfortunately, his help ended up in disaster. Perhaps a lady pastor or shepherd would have been a better person to fast and counsel with this sheep.

Make no mistake about this, it is not only a physical hunger that people have, they also have a spiritual hunger. Even in Europe and America, this same spiritual hunger leads them to go after the occult and witchcraft.

4. Spiritual hunger is real.

Once, while in Geneva, I decided to attend a church service in a very large and old building. I wanted to see how the churches in the land were faring. In the church were eight old men and women. You could see that they didn't have much more than a few years to live. There was no young person in the church. The church building was virtually empty!

Most Swiss people have virtually stopped going to church. Many of them no longer believe in God. Yet, they still have a spiritual hunger - a great spiritual need. When I saw a large occult/witchcraft shop, a few blocks down the road, I was not surprised.

I have heard that Switzerland has a very high number of such cults and witchcraft activities. The reason for the multiplication of false cults and witchcraft is obvious. The spiritual vacuum has to be filled by something!

Since there are no shepherds, the devil is

having a field day in such places. The Bible says in Matthew 9:36, "He was moved with compassion...because they fainted...as sheep having no shepherd."

5. People need to be visited and strengthened.

One thing that cannot be replaced by any other is a visit from your pastor. It is a blessing for a shepherd/pastor to come to your house. Remember, Jesus visited the earth for only three years and the earth has never been the same. A visit is a very POWERFUL ministration. People need to be visited.

A visit is different from a phone call. A visit is different from a powerful ministration of the Word in church. The sheep need to know that they have not been forgotten. They need to know that someone knows where they are.

God needs more shepherds to go forth and strengthen the sheep. The Bible says that love never fails. When the sheep are visited, they feel that the pastor genuinely loves them. You

may be a mature and successful Christian who has a lot within you that can strengthen other people. Make the time to be a shepherd who visits somebody.

Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them...

Jeremiah 23:2

Instead of watching useless films on television and sleeping for twelve hours, get out of your house and minister to someone. Be the shepherd you are called to be!

Do You Know Whether You Are Called?

Do you know whether you are called? That is a good question. **I cannot tell whether you are called by looking at your nice face.** No one can tell whether you are called by listening to you speak. As you do the work, you will begin to realize the talents and anointing within you.

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for writing or drawing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

One night, whilst studying as a medical student in a remote town of Ghana, God miraculously anointed Dag Heward-Mills as he waited on the Lord. He was supernaturally anointed and heard the words, “From now on you can teach...” This supernatural call is what has ushered him into a worldwide ministry.

Today, his Healing Jesus Crusades are conducted throughout the world with thousands in attendance and many accompanying miracles. These phenomenal miracles, attested to by medical doctors, have included the opening of the eyes of the blind, the restoring of hearing to the deaf, the emptying of wheelchairs and even the raising of the dead.

Dag Heward-Mills, an author of several best-selling books, also founded the Lighthouse Chapel International, which has become a worldwide denomination. His radio, TV and internet programs reach millions around the world. Other outreaches include pastors and ministers conferences and the renowned Anagkazo Bible and Ministry Training Centre.

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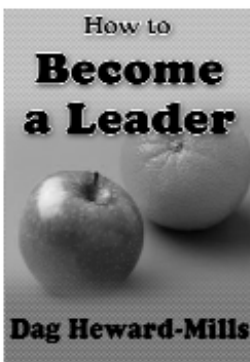
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