Are you called to ministry?

* How do you know that you are called?
* What does it mean to be called?

1. Do you sense the internal call from the Lord and are you qualified?
   1. 1 Timothy 3:1 says that a man should aspire for the office of overseer. Paul says that it is a fine work that he desires to do. Many men who are called to ministry sense of passion for the work of pastoring and leading a flock.
   2. However, this internal zeal is only one side of the coin. The other side of the coin is his character, giftedness, and sound doctrine (1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-9). The current leaders of the church should be able to identify these character qualities in the man who expresses an internal call to lead. The spiritual maturity and doctrine must back up this passion and desire to lead. This process of maturity in their life and doctrine often takes years to develop. So, be patient.
2. How are you active in your church?
   1. You must not only begin the training to grow in sound doctrine, but also you must immerse yourself in the local church. Go to everything that they offer—Sunday service, Lifegroup, discipleship, ADS, mission trips, various trainings, and serve the church on Sunday mornings.
   2. Get to know the families of the church. Get around godly men who will challenge and encourage you to grow in your faith and leadership.
   3. Place yourself under the eldership of the church and submit to their leadership. Honor them in your heart and find ways to serve them. Let them know your heart for ministry. Let them guide you in the next steps to be trained. This takes time, so be patient. It takes a whole Body to raise future elders and pastors.
3. Have you been confirmed by the current elders of the church?
   1. Have they confirmed your character? This will make or break the decision to move on in your training for ministry.
   2. Have they confirmed your doctrine? Do you align with the teaching from the church? Do you study the Word and desire to live it out (Ezra 7:10)? Do you desire to handle the Word with accuracy and integrity (2 Timothy 2:15). Do you align with the current doctrine and teaching of the elders that you yourself will one day teach (Titus 1:9)?
   3. Have they confirmed your gifting/skills? Can you teach and preach (1 Tim 3:2; 2 Tim 4:1-2), shepherd (1 Peter 5:1-5), equip the saints to do ministry (Eph 4:12), and train other leaders (2 Tim 2:2)?

Seminary may end being an option for you, however, do not just assume you are ready and go on your own. Don’t send yourself to be trained, for the Bible does not affirm self-made ministers. The healthiest way to be affirmed and sent is through the local church.