

GIVING AND RECEIVING INPUT

At Solid Rock, our desire is for all of our Ministry Leaders to remain open to input from people whom they serve in their ministries.

Sadly though, a few rude, selfish people can cause a leader to withdraw and close themselves off from input. This is what the Bible talks about in:

*Ecclesiastes 10:1 As **dead flies** give **perfume a bad smell**, so a little stupidity cancel out great wisdom.*

A few rude, selfish people can give all of those who give Godly input a Bad Smell. J Thus, their ignorance outweighs the wisdom of ministry leaders remaining open to input.

We want our Ministry Leaders to always remain open to input from God's people. To help our ministry leaders stay open we provide Bible guidelines for giving suggestions to a Ministry Leader.

These Bible guidelines keep our ministry leaders SAFE and thus they remain open to Godly counsel and input from Godly people.

Here are the three Bible questions to ask yourself before giving suggestions to a Ministry Leader.

1. Did you LISTEN before Talking?

This Ministry Leader knows TEN TIMES as much as you do about this ministry. They have experience, wisdom and perspective that you could never see unless you approach to listen.

*Proverbs 18:13 He who **Answers BEFORE Listening** that is his **folly** and his **shame**.*

It is the height of arrogance to come in giving suggestions before you ask this Godly person to please share their heart on this subject.

Here are the word choices that we recommend when you contact this person.

* May I hear your heart on this subject?

* I have a concern in this area. Yet I realize that I do NOT see nearly as much of the big picture as you do in this area. Thus, I would really appreciate if you could please help me to understand your heart in this area.

Please humble yourself to listen first. You will probably gain great insights and wisdom by listening first.

Proverbs 11:2 When **Pride** comes, then comes **Disgrace**, but with **Humility** comes **Wisdom**.

Proverbs 18:2 A **FOOL** finds **NO PLEASURE** in **UNDERSTANDING** but **DELIGHTS** in **Airing his OWN OPINIONS**.

2. Are you a TAKER or a GIVER?

This Ministry Leader gives to you ten times more to you than you give to them.

Can you name at least five separate times that you went out of your way to appreciate and serve this Ministry Leader before giving even one suggestion?

They serve you but they are NOT your servant.

They are over you in a position of spiritual authority in your life.

Although I am the Senior Pastor of Solid Rock – YET - when my children are in children's ministry, I submit to the Children's Leaders as the Spiritual covering in this situation.

As Senior Pastor, I set the direction for our Children's ministry and I am their covering.

However, when it comes to my children, I submit to their wisdom and experience in Children's Church. I desire to be a Giver who constantly serves and appreciates them for their ministry to my children.

When you approach a ministry head, you are approaching a spiritual covering in your life. There are strong warnings in God's Word about being a BURDEN to your spiritual covering versus making their life a JOY.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a **JOY** --- **NOT** a **BURDEN**, for that would be of no advantage to you.

There are certain people that a leader – SMILES when they see a phone call from them. There are certain people that a leader – GRIMACES when they see a phone call from them.

Are you a gracious, kind, appreciative, GIVER- or a self-centered, prideful, opinionated TAKER?

1 Peter 1:5, 8 For this very reason, **make every effort to add to ...godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.** ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in **increasing** measure, they will **keep** you from being **ineffective** and **unproductive** in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Did you ASK permission to give a Suggestion?

At SRM we teach all of our people ARP. ARP stands for A dvice R equires P ersion

This is based on 1 Cor. 13:5 Love is not rude

1 Peter 2:17 Show **proper respect to everyone**:

There is nothing more rude than giving advice before you ask permission.
Thus, AFTER listening well and hearing the heart and input of this Ministry Leader – related to your area of concern - we ask you to take a PAUSE.
Take a couple of days to pray over this situation.

Ask the Lord to search your heart to see if you have served and blessed this Ministry Leader and if your heart is to serve them.

Ask the Lord to search your heart to see if you truly might have some wisdom ideas that may bless this Ministry Leader.

If the Lord then gives you freedom & you have blessed and served this Ministry Leader many times recently – you are then ready to ask this Ministry Leader for permission to dialogue on some suggestions or ideas you have.

At Solid Rock we have some of the sweetest, nicest most giving people on the planet. This is not an accident. We are very intentional to honor Bible boundaries so that Solid Rock will always be a safe, sweet place to serve the Lord.

Thank you for desiring to be a long term blessing to every person in your life.