

Christian education, ministries to senior citizens, leaders of worship services, song-leaders, and moderators and masters of ceremonies of dinners and meetings.

### 3. Invitations to provide music

These would include singing or playing an instrument, either singly or in a group, either to present music or to accompany.

### 4. Invitations to participate in services or ceremonies by praying or reading Scripture

In these two messages we are focusing on the public ministry of the Word.

## B. Should all invitations to speak be accepted?

As a general answer, I think that we must reply "no" for reasons that should be obvious. One reason is that a person can't be in two places at the same time (although this fact does not seem to deter some people from accepting two invitations for the same time!)

If then we must be selective in our acceptance of invitations, what criteria should we employ? (whether we have two invitations for the same time or only one) I believe that we should ask ourselves at least the following questions:

1. Is the date and time open in my schedule?
2. Do I have the requisite gifts, learning, skills, experience, and energy for the task?
3. How does the proposed engagement fit with my other obligations, responsibilities, priorities, and plans?
4. Am I scripturally free to accept the invitation? That is, will my participation be used to build up the Church of Jesus Christ, or to help build up a heretical or apostate work?

If the invitation conflicts with my answers to these questions, then I must graciously decline the invitation. If I am undecided, I should take the contact's telephone number, and get back to them within a specified time period.

But suppose the invitation does not conflict with my answers to these questions, and I am tentatively inclined toward acceptance?

Then I must ask:

## C. What items of information should be discussed, once I am tentatively inclined toward acceptance of an invitation to speak?

I already know the date(s) and time(s)

I already know the general location of the church or school