

Every Christian A Minister

No. 149

Introduction.

- I. Once a Sunday school teacher, named Teri, asked her Sunday School class to draw pictures of their favorite Bible stories. She was puzzled by Kyle's picture. It which showed 4 people on an airplane. She asked him what story it was meant to represent. Kyle answered, "The flight to Egypt." I see..and that must be Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus. But who's the fourth person? "Oh, that's Pontus - the Pilate." Yes, little children sometimes misunderstand names and scriptures and Bible stories and sometimes even big people misunderstand these things. I pray no one will misunderstand the lesson today. It is a lesson intended for every man, woman, and child who is a Christian. It is a lesson intended for every Christian from the time of his new birth to the time of his death.
- II. One of the most misunderstood words in the religious world and in the church of our Lord today is the word "minister." This word is too frequently used to refer exclusively to "the preacher" of a congregation. Often the local preacher is called "the minister" of the church.
- III. This is not scriptural use of the word "minister." The New Testament nowhere teaches that a preacher is "the minister" of the church. It teaches in explicit language that very member of the church is "a minister" or "servant" of the Lord. This is not an academic play on words, but is a vital point!
 - I. **Hurt The Church** - A misunderstanding of this vital fact has greatly hurt the church.
 - A. Some Christians have too long looked up the preacher as "the minister" of the church. They do not **visit the sick**. They do not **comfort the bereaved**. They do not **teach Bible classes**. They do not **teach the lost**. But they expect the preacher to do all these things because he is "the minister" of the church. They say, "After all he is paid to do these things."
 - B. This attitude has caused thousands of churches to be much weaker and much less effective than they should or ought to be. A church with one, or even two ministers, will never be the light of the world and will never please the Lord.
 1. **A preacher is a minister of the word**. He is to preach and teach God's word to the church and to the lost world.
 2. A preacher also has the privilege and responsibility of doing the things I mentioned a moment ago, but he has no more responsibility than any other member of the church to do these things.
 3. **Every Christian is a minister**. The congregation here does not and should not have one or a few ministers, but it should have 250 ministers because we have 250 members of the church.
 - II. **Scriptural Proof For These Statements** - There is abundant scriptural proof for these statements.
 - A. **Matthew** records these words. (Matt. 20:20-28).

MAT 20:20 Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons, bowing down, and making a request of Him. **21** And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Command that in Your

kingdom these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right and one on Your left." 22 But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you are asking for. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They said to Him, "We are able." 23 He said to them, "My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father." 24 And hearing this, the ten became indignant with the two brothers. 25 But Jesus called them to Himself, and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. 26 "It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, 27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. "

1. Carefully observe that Jesus taught the great one in the kingdom of God would be the one who was a "minister," that is, "a servant."
2. The context clearly reveals Jesus was not talking about a group of preachers.. He was teaching that every Christian is to be minister and that this is the way to be great in the kingdom.

B. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 16:15.

1. People are addicted to many things. A lot of people are addicted to harmful drugs. A lot of people are addicted to alcohol. A lot of people are addicted to nicotine or coffee. A lot of people are even addicted to doing nothing.
2. But the word of God teaches that the Christian is to be addicted to ministering to others. It is to be his eat and drink, his sweetheart, his object for living because by serving God is glorified.

C. The Hebrew writer wrote. (Heb. 6:10b). He is talking to all Christians.

D. Matthew the 25th chapter tells us of the great judgment to come. .

MAT 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? 38 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 39 'And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40 "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.' 41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; 42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; 43 I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' 44 "Then they themselves also will answer, saying, 'Lord,

when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' 45 "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' 46 "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

1. Observe that those who gathered around Christ were not just preachers. All the nations or peoples of the earth were gathered around Him. Those who ministered to others were blessed with eternal life and those who did not minister to others were condemned to everlasting punishment.
2. Brethren, if we want to be saved, if we want eternal life, we must broaden our concept of the word "minister" or "servant." Every Christian is a minister.

III. Ways Every Christian Must Minister - Let's consider some ways every Christian must minister.

A. Every Christian is to show hospitality to others. (Rom. 12:13).

1. This hospitality is not to be limited to our close friends, but is to be manifested also to strangers. (Heb. 13: 2).
2. Furthermore, we are to use our homes for Christ without murmuring. (1 Pet. 4:9).
 - a. Servants of Christ who use their homes to the glory of Christ gain great blessings.
 - b. Those who murmur and complain about the expense and trouble lose many of the great blessings of God.

B. Every Christian must comfort the bereaved

1. Some people have the erroneous notion that "the minister" of the church has a special obligation above everyone else to comfort the bereaved. Some even get quite upset if "the minister" is not the first to contact the bereaved.
2. **One lady called the preacher of the church where she worshiped.** She complained because a person had passed away a few hours before and a denominational preacher had already been to the deceased home. She evidently thought that preachers are to have a race to see which one can reach the bereaved home first. She did not seem to feel that other members had that kind of obligation.
3. **Most preachers**, including myself, count it an honor and a privilege and a duty to do all they can to comfort the bereaved.
4. But the Bible certainly does not teach that a preacher has more responsibility than others in this area. (Rom. 12:15; Gal. 6:2).

C. Every Christian must minister to the sick

1. The sick often need our **visits of encouragement and cheer.**
2. They also need our **visits of assistance.** The servant of Christ will look for things that need to be done and do them. He will not back out of a dirty house or out of situation where people need other types of help and say, "There is not anything I can do for you, is there?"

D. Every Christian must minister to **erring Christians**.

1. Many Christians are weak and on the verge of falling.
2. Who has the responsibility to restore them? Gal. 6:1; 1:13; Jas. 5:19, 20).

E. Every Christian must **help the needy** (Jas. 2:14-17; 1 Jn. 3:17, 18).

F. Every Christian must **pray for others** (1 Sam. 12:23).

1. All of us are to engage in the ministry of prayer.
2. God forbid that we ever neglect to pray for another and for all men.
- 3.. We should not miss a day praying for others.

G. Every Christian must **teach the lost**

1. The early church grew very rapidly. On the day the church was established there were 3,000 converts. This number rapidly grew and multiplied throughout the world.
2. Why?
 - a. Was it because they had one or two or even a dozen paid ministers to do all the work?
 - b. No. It was because every or nearly every member was a soul-winner. (Acts 5:42; 8:1, 4).
3. Beloved, the church today will experience fantastic growth when we come to grips with the fact that every Christian is to be a soul-winner, every Christian is to be a minister.

Conclusion.

- I. A preacher once told the **story of Sam a slave** who, as soon as one piece of work was done returned at once to his master's doorstep in order that he might always be ready for instruction from his master. A girl, who had been impressed with this example, prayed: "O Lord, make me just like Sam" and resolved to truly a minister or bond-servant of Jesus. May each of us addict ourselves to the service of Christ. May each of us serve our Master as Sam served his master.
- II. The **Czar of Russia** was thrown off his throne by the Bolsheviks. One morning at five o'clock a guard opened his door and said, "You are to die in two hours." Soon they took him out and poured a volley of bullets into his body.
 - A. Suppose death laid his clammy hands on you today and said, "You must die in two hours." Would you be ready? Would you be ready to stand before the judgment seat?
 - B. The only way a person will be ready to meet Him is to live for Him and serve Him every day.
 - C. We urge those out of Christ to come to Him today and confess your faith in Him and be baptized. We then urge you to be a faithful minister of Christ. Come as we sing!

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