

A Minister? Who, Me?

Joe Slater

Are you a minister? Some might answer, “No, I’ve never preached a single sermon.” The ladies might protest, “Joe, you know the Bible doesn’t authorize women preachers!” While it is true that preaching the gospel is “the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4), not all ministers are preachers!

A minister is a servant. Service is a synonym for ministry. In that sense, every Christian is to be a minister. Preachers, elders, and teachers today use the inspired words of the apostles and prophets “for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry” (Ephesians 4:11, 12). These men are not to do our work for us. Rather, they are to equip us so that we can serve (minister) effectively.

What is your ministry? To put it another way, how are you involved in service to the church (and thus in service to God)? Some members of Christ’s body have the mistaken idea that when they have attended an hour-long meeting on Sunday morning, their ministry is complete. We even refer to this gathering as a church “service.” I fear we may be under the illusion that when we return home, we stop serving.

Another popular, but mistaken, notion is that service (ministry) is fulfilled by taking a leading role in the assembly (e.g. leading a prayer, leading the singing, etc.). These things are service, to be sure; but we must not restrict service to Sunday-at-the-meeting-house activities.

Colossians 4:17 contains a rather startling statement as Paul singles out a brother named Archippus for this exhortation: “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.” Paul doesn’t specify just what Archippus’ ministry was.

Did he visit the sick? Tend to the needs of the poor? Preach the word? We simply don’t know. Whatever the case, Paul saw the need for the church to urge Archippus to get with it! If he were writing to the church in Justin, Texas in 2016, I wonder how many of us would receive a similar admonition. It’s a little embarrassing just to think about it!

Paul also exhorted Timothy to “do the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry” (2 Timothy 4:5). Timothy’s ministry happened to be preaching, but legitimate application can be made to any ministry (service). We must do the work to fulfill the ministry. If one’s only activity for the Lord is attending meetings, ministry will remain unfulfilled. After awhile, even attending meetings will seem pointless. One solution to sluggish attendance would be to find your post of service (other than in the assembly) and get with it!

How can you use your time and abilities to the glory of God? Be a minister!

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Jesus: The God-Man

God in human flesh

As much man as if He were not God at all

As much God as if He were not man at all

Not half God and half man

Not all God and no man

Not all man and no God

But God-man

The God-man came to this earth, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, was nailed to a cross, and with a broken heart died for me.

--via House-to-House/Heart-to-Heart

Ways I Deepen My Faith (when I read Revelation)

I approach Jesus more humbly (chapter 1).

I was a BUICK—that stands for a Brought Up In Church Kid—and I saw the flannelgraph pictures of Jesus in his white robe, blue sash, soft flowing brown hair, kind eyes, a lamb around his shoulders, and children on his lap. I saw a gentle Jesus, a nice Jesus, a “Mr. Rogers” Jesus.

While Jesus is certainly meek and humble of heart, the danger for someone like me is that I can put Jesus in my theological dryer and shrink him. He just becomes my size XL buddy. When you declaw the Lion of Judah, when he simply becomes a warm and fuzzy household pet, you can lose your reverence, fear, and awe.

But not if I read Revelation. In Revelation 1, I am overwhelmed by this glorious, dreadful vision of Christ. This is not the gentle Jesus with children on his lap. This Jesus speaks in Niagara thunder. He blazes with blinding supernova brilliance. This Jesus could play kickball with our planet. This Jesus could flick his finger and send our solar system spinning off into space. He is clothed in glory and majesty and splendor and power and authority, and this is not a Jesus in whose presence you can just casually stand around. This vision of Jesus washes over you, crushing you like a tidal wave and leaving you fighting for your life, your very breath. John fell at his feet as though dead (1:17).

So I am warned: Jesus is not a smiling buddy who winks at sin. He is not, as Tom Howard reminds us, “a pale Galilean, but a towering and furious figure who will not be managed.” When I read Revelation, I approach Jesus more humbly, more reverently, with awe.

--Matt Proctor (via *Christian Standard*)