

MOST NEEDED MINISTRY

VALUABLE SERVICE ALWAYS IN LOW SUPPLY

"I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied."

~ 1 Corinthians 16:17

1. Ministry Shortage

- a. Religious men desire to be called rabbi, master, reverend, pastor → Matt 23:1-12
- b. There is no shortage of people who want a pulpit (influence, instruct, direct, rule, boss)
- c. There is extreme shortage of people willing to serve in a more important ministry
- d. This ministry is given much more time, honor, importance by Paul than pastor.
- e. It is in short supply in Corinth, what is it? Hint: it is not fathers ... 1 Cor 4:15-16

2. Faithful Followers

- a. Paul did not send Timothy to be the pastor of Corinth - 1 Cor 4:17, 16:10
- b. Stephanas, Fortunatus, Achaicus not named for their pulpit work - 1 Cor 16:17, 13-18
- c. Smith's Bible Dictionary entry on Achaicus, "the name of a Christian"
- d. Their addiction is not to attention and approbation, but to "ministry of the saints"
- e. Ministry requires making yourself available, work gets done with those you can trust

3. Work of the Ministry

- a. Preparing saints for ministry work is the goal (not to be pastor) - Eph 4:12, 2 Tim 3:16
- b. The work of the ministry done here not only by ordained elders - 1 Thess 1:3-6
- c. The difference between Corinth v. Thessalonica was not the pastor, but the people.
- d. In every epistle of Paul he describes good works, but not as earning favour with God.
- e. Who is doing the marking? Not Paul, nor a named pastor - Rom 16:17, Phi 3:17
- f. 1 Thess 5:14, Col 3:12-17, Eph 4:1-3 not written to pastors or leaders.
- g. Edification is a ministry of every member of the body - Eph 4:16, 1 Cor 14:26
- h. Grace removes good works as means to an end, it is now in service to God - Gal 5:13

4. Ministry of Communication

- a. The church communicates truth, not only by delivering a sermon.
- b. Ministry of communication not done by the teacher (gratitude, grace, follow) - Gal 6:6
- c. The Philippians conversation was partaking in needed ministry - Phi 1:27-29
- d. Phebe and Tertius were also responsible for the delivery of Romans - Rom 16:1-2, 22
- e. Timothy communicated what Paul did not know and comforted him - 1 Thess 3:5-7
- f. Paul wrote Colossians because Epaphras reported to Paul - Col 1:7, 4:7-9, 4:16
- g. Mark and Carpus and travel brethren make ministry happen - 2Ti 4:11-13, Phm 24
- h. What matters more than the man's name on the letter, is the means and the message.

5. Service to the Lord

- a. Governing power holds responsibility as ministers of God - Romans 13:4-6
- b. Doing business is doing service to God and others - 1 Th 4:11-12, Eph 4:28, 2Co 8:21
- c. Serving masters (even unbelieving ones) for the Lord - Titus 2:8-10, 1 Tim 6:1-2
- d. Marriage is personal, but now a picture of Christ and the church - Eph 5:31-33
- e. Children, obedience to parents is a service to the Lord! Col 3:20, Eph 6:1
- f. In churches, the people who attend/watch/labor/support are what keep ministry going.

6. Most Needed Ministry

- a. There is a reason Paul ends all his letters with a long list of names. Rom 16
- b. A church without faithful workmen, is entertainment, man following, or dependency.
- c. A church can survive without a pulpit... but it cannot survive without faithful servants.
- d. The most needed place of service to the Lord is not behind a pulpit, it is in people.