

MINISTERIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
SEMINAR V

**Theme: “The Pentecostal Minister and the Work
of the Church”**

*Specialized Ministries
in the Local Church- Part 2*

BY LARRY G. HESS

V. EVANGELISM

Ministers must be committed to make a difference for God and to win the lost to Jesus Christ. Through faithfulness, sacrifice, tenacity, courage, hard work, and compassion, ministers impact the world in immeasurable ways.

Ministers have not only been called of God to ministry but also planted by God in places of ministry. Planted in congregations where they can love and care for the needs of people. Planted in places where they can equip men and women to share their faith and touch the lives of hurting people who are lost without Christ.

Through the eyes of faith and senses in touch with the Holy Spirit, ministers can come to understand the great potential harvest of souls which exists. People are hungry for God. People can be won to Christ. A church can reach the lost and see many people saved.

If we spend our lives waiting for the ideal church or situation to activate people for ministry, we will never see it happen. We need to look beyond our limitations and discover methods that God will bless and anoint to evangelize our communities.

We need to view from God's perspective the place to which we have been called. As a minister, we sometimes find ourselves in situations we dislike, working among people unlike any we have ever known. Endurance must be transformed into adventure. We need to settle in and assume responsibility for the work God has placed before us and claim our community for God.

If we are to produce disciples and soul winners, we must welcome people into our hearts, love them as family, and inspire them to accept the Great Commission. The future is now! The whole world is our mission field. We can discover ways to get beyond obstacles and evangelize our world in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Personal evangelism requires knowing how to talk to strangers. Some suggestions to remember in talking to strangers about salvation are as follows:

- ◆ Ask questions; do not just dump a prepared, memorized presentation on people.
- ◆ Seek to understand people and get to know them.

- ◆ Build bridges by starting a conversation and look for natural bridges to share Christ.
- ◆ Know the basics of God's Word so we can be "prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks...the reason for the hope that (we) have" (1 Peter 3:15).
- ◆ Focus on presenting the grace of Christ and do not get side-tracked into arguments on doctrine.
- ◆ Depend on the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ Be part of a witness team or ministry group and encourage each other to keep on reaching out to the unsaved.

The book of Acts is a great model of the importance of evangelism in the early church. Various passages in Acts demonstrate the priority of the evangelization of the Gospel.

- ◆ Evangelism was done wherever the church was dispersed (5:42).
- ◆ Opportunities of distress were turned into occasions for evangelism (8:4).
- ◆ The church evangelized, even in the face of the enemy (8:9-12).
- ◆ Evangelization was a continual task of the church (8:25, 40).

- ◆ Evangelism was done one on one by individuals as well as preached to the crowds (8:35).
- ◆ Evangelism was part of the proclamation of the Lordship of Christ (10:36).
- ◆ Evangelism was presented across cultures (11:19, 20).
- ◆ Evangelism was the message of the resurrection (13:32).
- ◆ Evangelism was part of the ministry presented, even to those who came for healing (14:7-10).
- ◆ Evangelism was part of the outreach to cults and pagan religions (14:15).
- ◆ Evangelism was the message declared in the midst of victory over persecution (14:21).
- ◆ Evangelism was at the heart of the missionary call (16:10).
- ◆ Finally, evangelism was not stopped, even though there were skeptics who tried to hinder it (17:18).

Christ's command to "make disciples of every nation" (Matthew 28:19) does not mean every country. It means every "people" or distinct cultural group. Today there are 24,000 people groups worldwide. Every local church should be mobilized to evangelize the world for Jesus Christ.

The church must be mobilized to strategic prayer and giving. Prayer is the key to the successful fulfillment of the great commission. Paul, the great evangelist, writes the following to Timothy and to the church.

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting” (1 Timothy 2:1-6, 8).

Paul wants Timothy to organize the church so that prayers are said everywhere on behalf of all men and women. Our prayer should be that people will come to realize that they are lost without Christ. This is difficult because “the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving” to the Gospel (2 Corinthians 4:4). We must not only pray for people to be saved, but we should also pray that God will meet their greatest needs in life and use these answers to prayer to open their eyes to the Gospel.

Jesus loves sinners. When He was on earth He demonstrated love and concern for all people. Christ has given the

church the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome the demonic forces of satan. Revelation 12:11 shows us how victory will be won: “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”

If we are going to reach our world for Christ, we must not be ignorant of the schemes of the devil.

“Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Ephesians 6:11, 12).

Satan’s weapon against the church is to cause anger between Christians. “Neither give place to the devil” (Ephesians 4:27). You must not give the devil any area of opportunity to divide. Christians must practice immediate forgiveness to one another.

“Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Ephesians 4:28-30).

Unwholesome words destroy evangelism. They tear down rather than build up. Even when we speak the truth it should be done with grace and in love. Truth without grace is devastating. Paul exhorts in Ephesians 4:3 that we are “to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Evangelism requires that we are “strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might” (Ephesians 6:10). Our battle is a spiritual battle, which must be won in the heavenlies. Strongholds of satan must be broken if we are going to experience revival.

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

There are four characteristics of strongholds:

1. Strongholds are located in the mind.

“For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Romans 8:6, 7).

2. Strongholds are often made up of good thoughts.

Notice how Christ responded to Peter's human thinking in Matthew:

“From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:21-24).

Following Jesus means leaving behind our own understanding and submitting to God so that every thought is captive to the obedience of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). Our own self-sufficiency is the material of which the “lofty things raised up against the knowledge of God” are made.

3. Strongholds often develop in the shadow of our strengths.

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will

not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:12, 13).

The areas of our life where we feel most confident are the areas in which we are most likely to develop overconfidence. Evangelism requires a dependence on God for guidance and anointing.

4. Strongholds create double-mindedness resulting in spiritual and emotional instability.

“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways” (James 1:8). Strongholds are not to be remodeled; they are to be destroyed.

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up” (James 4:7-10).

Before we can do evangelism and bring down satan’s strongholds over our cities, we must destroy all the personal strongholds, or fortresses, he has placed in our life. Everything opposed to the will of God must come down.

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity. I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting” (1 Timothy 2:1-8).

VI. CARE AND COUNSELING

Jesus began His public ministry by sounding the clarion call to help others (Luke 4:18, 19). Jesus is our example of the living sacrifice and our example of loving service and compassion. Every local church needs to be actively involved in providing care, counseling, and support for hurting people. In the past, congregations have primarily looked to the pastor to provide most of the care and counseling needed in the congregation. In most situations today, it is impossible for the pastor to provide this ministry himself/herself to the congregation.

There will always be a place and need for counseling pastors. Many individuals turn to their pastor first when they realize that they are losing the ability to cope and control their emotions. A pastor who is concerned about human suffering must, therefore, be prepared spiritually, mentally, and academically to meet these challenges.

Every pastor needs a primary level of training in counseling skills. This training will help the pastor build trusting relationships within the congregation, provide necessary counseling, and enhance his/her own personal life. The trained and skilled minister gradually becomes a counselor at heart. In all relationships, a caring attitude comes through. It will come through in sermons, in teaching, in hospital visitation, and in family relationships.

A pastor is at all times a teacher, a role model before people. The pastor can, by example and through motivation, equip men and women to effectively carry on a local church ministry of care and counseling. It is becoming increasingly more difficult for the pastor to carry a heavy counseling load. Because of the many duties and responsibilities pastors face, they do not have time to enter into effective intervention with a person's complex needs.

Pastors can help more people by training and/or motivating others in the congregation to become part of a local church

ministry of care and counseling. If the pastor is a trained and professionally skilled counselor, he/she can equip others as a mentor and personally shape and guide the development of a counseling center or ministry in the local church. When the pastor is unprepared academically to educate and train counselors and support leaders, he/she can take advantage of some excellent materials available to help establish this ministry.

By the term “counselor” we include the concepts of a role model, teacher, equipper, motivator, helper, facilitator, and effective leader. A minister is on duty whenever he/she is in the presence of a parishioner. They are conscious, even in casual discussions, of their primary role as caretaker and counselor.

Every pastor knows that the greatest potential for reaching people for Christ is when people are in crisis. A very disturbing fact is that today the church itself is in a crisis. The result is that people are not finding in the church the help and direction they need. This may be due to the lack of momentum and lost sense of direction within much of Christianity. The body of Christ in the world today is in great need of renewal and revitalization.

It is clear that we need a mission statement and philosophy for local church ministry of care and counseling. We need models for people to follow. Finally, we need methods to disciple workers.

A.METHOD FOR DISCIPLING HURTING PEOPLE

Methods of care and counseling based upon our own capacities will be flawed and limited. We must not rely on our own intuition, skills, talents, insights, or dreams when our objective is to conduct effective ministry.

The church is a supernatural organism and if we are to be and do the work of ministry, we must live in that supernatural realm.

1. Start with the Power of the Holy Spirit

Teach and encourage people to live in the power of the Spirit and to be obedient.

2. Use the Method Modeled by Jesus

- ◆ Tell them what to do
- ◆ Tell them why
- ◆ Show them how
- ◆ Do it with them
- ◆ Let them do it
- ◆ Deploy them

3. Know Where We Are Going and How to Get There

- ◆ Make sure we have a plan.
- ◆ Explain our plan.
- ◆ Present a model of how we plan to work.

4. Seeing the Unique Vision

Someone else's vision will not work for us. We must follow a method of ministry that fits our situation.

5. Strategizing for Ministry

In care and counseling, we must remember that we are often dealing with broken people who have difficulty in getting along in relationships. Local church ministries of care should seek to accomplish the following:

- ◆ Involve many people in the ministry of care.
- ◆ Plan to disciple new converts.
- ◆ Teach dysfunctional people to overcome.
- ◆ Develop character in people.
- ◆ Help people discover their gifts.
- ◆ Build a community of love and support.
- ◆ Allow for a diversity of ministries and methods in care giving.

B. Five Stage Method of Helping

- ◆ Stage 1: Listening and understanding
- ◆ Stage 2: Helping people rethink the problem(s)
- ◆ Stage 3: Formulating workable action plans
- ◆ Stage 4: Supporting people as they implement the
action plans for growth and recovery
- ◆ Stage 5: Follow-up with continued love and support

Most effective counseling is not done by professionals, but by ordinary people. When people have problems, they turn to friends and family. Therefore, training for lay counselors is important.

VII. YOUTH AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A very essential part of the work of the local church is in the specialized ministries of Youth and Christian Education. An effective program of Christian Education and discipleship ministries should be designed to reach people of all ages. It should teach God's Word, and it should nurture and motivate laity for ministry involvement.

Within the areas of Youth and Christian Education the following possible positions are important in a complete program of Youth and Christian Education:

1. Minister of Christian Education (C.E.)
2. C.E. Board members and team leaders
3. Discipleship Ministries coordinator
4. Sunday school leadership team members
5. Sunday school teachers and workers
6. Sunday school department coordinators
7. Children's Ministry pastor/director
8. Children's Ministry leadership team

9. Girls Club coordinator and team
10. Boys Club coordinator and team
11. Minister of Youth
12. Youth Ministries director/leadership team
13. Youth Ministries sponsors and workers
14. Youth Ministries advisory team
15. Teen Discipleship leader
16. Youth sports and recreation director
17. Youth minister of music/choir director
18. Youth ministry drama director
19. Adult Ministries director and team
20. Senior Adult Ministries director and team
21. Single Adult Ministries director and team
22. Adult Ministry Care group leader
23. Bus Ministry coordinator and workers
24. Evangelism Ministries coordinator and team
25. Family Ministries coordinator and team
26. Family Training Hour coordinator and team
27. World Missions coordinator and team
28. Coordinator of greeters
29. Ushers team coach/leader
30. Hospitality Ministries coordinator
31. Intercessory Prayer Ministry coordinator

32. Media Ministries director
33. Media Ministries staff
34. Training coordinator for Leadership Development
35. Teacher/worker training team

These many ministries of Youth and Christian Education are described in great detail along with descriptions in the book – “*The Great Big Book of Church Ministries for Youth and Christian Education Leaders and Teachers.*” It is also available on CD. Check out www.extremegen.org for more details.

VIII. FUNERALS

Whenever death strikes a family the minister has the responsibility to provide support and care to the loved one. The minister will often play a large role planning and conducting the funeral service. It should be remembered that the proper object of the funeral service is the worship of God and the consolation of the living. A funeral service is not an evangelistic meeting. It is not a time to eulogize out of proportion. It is not a time to build false hopes or fears. A Christian funeral is a time to express faith and hope in a resurrected Christ.

The service should be conducted in such a way that it brings assurance of God’s love and hope for eternal life for all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord. The comments of the minister should

help the hearers avoid bitterness and the loss of faith through the cultivation of a mature mental attitude.

Funeral services should be as short as possible. Services that are too long can intensify grief and cause unnecessary agony. It is important to remember that there is probably no greater need for a minister's ministry in a person's life than when that person experiences the death of a loved one. No other opportunity in life gives the pastor a better opportunity to minister to people.

A. Following a Sudden Death

Following a sudden death, the pastor should consider the following suggestions:

1. All appointments should be cancelled, if possible, and the surviving spouse and/or family should be visited.
2. Comfort and pray with the family; share relevant Scriptures containing words of comfort.
3. When necessary, make arrangements for a spouse or a grieving loved one(s) to be assigned to a trustworthy person who will stay with them as long as needed from the time of death until after the funeral. It can be really important to have someone to drive for them, cook for them, or many other tasks.

4. When the family members arrive from out of town, or even close by, the minister should make another visit to the home.
5. It is important for the minister to go by and check on the family as often as possible, without intruding on their privacy. Telephone calls to check on them are good, but do not take the place of personal visits.
6. Sometimes it is very helpful for the minister to go to the funeral home with the family when the arrangements are being made. If they do not want you there you can usually tell. The minister's advice during this meeting can be a great value in many ways.
7. The minister should be at the funeral home when the family first views the body and then greets friends. Have prayer with the family prior to them seeing the body and help them to realize that what they will see is the remains but that the soul of their loved one is not in that casket. If the deceased was a Christian these situations are much easier for everyone.

8. Before the funeral, the minister should talk to the family and be sensitive to their needs and wishes. Allow them to request special events during the funeral such as special songs, Scriptures, etc.
9. Make sure the church has sent flowers in plenty of time to be there at the viewing.
10. Make every effort to learn and understand local customs and procedures concerning funerals.
11. Make sure all who are participating in the funeral are prepared, informed, and scheduled to arrive on time. Plan a back-up whenever there is any hint of a problem for the participants.
12. Have your church plan to help with food for the family before and/or after the funeral. It is often good to have a meal planned and announced for the family following the funeral. The church fellowship hall is usually a good place and can be much better than at the family's home.
13. The minister should, if possible, go by the home before the funeral and have prayer with the family. It is important for the minister to arrive early at the church or the funeral home (thirty minutes to one

hour prior to the service). Check all of the arrangements for the funeral.

14. The minister (along with any other participants) should be seated on the platform before the family marches in to be seated. Have everyone stand as the family comes in the chapel/church. In some funeral homes, the family will be brought in a side room before the service begins. If so, the minister should go to that room and meet with the family for prayer and to encourage them to be strengthened by God and to maintain their composure and help make the service a fitting tribute and Christian act of worship.
15. As the minister stands in the pulpit, the head of the casket is usually to the right. After the sermon, the minister usually goes down to stand by the head of the casket. Sometimes the casket will be opened and people will pass by to view the body or the congregation may be excused from the back leaving the family last to exit. If the family is in a side room they are usually taken out while the congregation exits.

16. The minister should remain at attention by the head of the casket until the casket is escorted out. The minister should walk in front of the casket, which will proceed head first, all the way to the vehicle for transportation to the grave.
17. The minister may sometimes ride in front with the funeral director or ride in his own car. Either way the minister will be in front of the hearse leading the way to the cemetery. Make sure you know the directions to the cemetery.
18. When arriving at the cemetery, the minister should quickly get in place at the back of the hearse and be ready to escort the body to the grave. The minister will walk slowly at the head of the casket and lead the way to the grave.
19. At the grave, the minister should take his/her place, standing at the head of the casket (the director can tell you for sure where to stand). Wait patiently for the family and friends to get in place before starting.
20. Be sure to talk loudly enough and slowly enough that you can be heard and understood.

21. Remember that the grave side service should be short and should consist of the following:
 - ◆ Opening greeting and comments
 - ◆ Scripture (maybe a poem also)
 - ◆ Brief words of encouragement
 - ◆ Closing prayer and official committal of the body to the grave.
22. After the committal, the minister should move first to the family, starting with the oldest or the spouse and then shake hands and express concern and support to each one.
23. Do not rush off at this point, but stay around as long as the family members are at the grave visiting and talking.
24. Be sure to make frequent contacts with the family in the days after the funeral to assist them in any way possible.

B. A Typical Funeral Service

A typical funeral service might follow this suggested outline:

- ◆ Organ prelude
- ◆ Opening words from the pastor
- ◆ Brief Scripture(s)
- ◆ Opening prayer

- ◆ Vocal solo
- ◆ Reading of the obituary (optional)
- ◆ A eulogy (optional), could consist of more than one participant
- ◆ Prayer of thanks to God for the life of the deceased loved one (optional)
- ◆ Song/solo
- ◆ Short sermon
- ◆ Prayer
- ◆ Benediction

IX. WEDDINGS

The Bible sets the highest moral standards for believers and describes marriage as honorable and blessed. “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” (Hebrews 13:4). In Ephesians, chapter five, Paul elevates marriage as the highest type of human relationship. Therefore, ministers must promote the permanency and sanctity of marriage.

Ministers should guard carefully their own marriage relationship in order to remain a suitable model for others. The Christian education program of a local church should provide young people with clear instructions on Christian marriage. A

proper foundation must be laid through the youth ministry of the church and the modeling of parents at home.

Pre-marital counseling will not replace or make up for the absence of a solid foundation of teaching and modeling. However, pre-marital counseling can be of tremendous help in preparing oneself for a successful marriage.

A minister bears a great responsibility in performing a wedding ceremony. A minister should feel that he/she always has the right to refuse to marry a couple if it cannot be done in good conscience. For example, when a couple want to marry on the spur of the moment without time for counseling, or when there are unresolved questions about the past or the intentions of a person, a minister may refuse to marry the couple. A minister may refuse to marry a couple when so doing would violate his/her own theological convictions.

In all cases of refusal, the wise minister will take time to affirm the value of the persons, and express love and concern for them.

A Christian wedding is not just a ceremony, but a worship experience. The music of a wedding should be carefully selected to reflect a worship setting. Ministers should seek to avoid getting too involved in the details of wedding planning, if possible. There are many wedding handbooks and individuals who specialize in

directing weddings. These resources can help in the coordination of the wedding plans.

The minister should keep a proper register of the names of all persons whom he/she marries (date, time, location, witnesses, etc.).

X. SACRAMENTS

A sacrament is a binding covenant of God to man. It is a pledge between God and man. Also, a sacrament is a symbol of God's grace. The Church of God recognizes water baptism and the Lord's Supper as sacraments. We also believe in and practice the washing of the saints' feet.

The minister should make the remembrance and celebration of the sacrament a regular part of the life of the church. Sacraments serve four specific purposes:

- ◆ They call the church to remembrance of Christ and His ministry.
- ◆ They provide an experience of worship for the believer, which visibly invites participation by the body of believers.
- ◆ They are a sign and token unto the Lord and others of the faithfulness of the Christian.
- ◆ They are opportunities to express obedience unto Christ in specific acts that He commanded to be followed.

A. Water Baptism

The authority and commission to baptize can be found in different New Testament passages, especially Matthew 28:19. Water baptism was intended by Christ as a part of the ministry of the church. It is a demonstration of the overcoming power of the Lord (Matthew 28:18b). Water baptism is a vital part of the evangelistic ministry of the church. It is a significant part of the discipleship and growth of every believer.

- ◆ Water baptism does not replace repentance and salvation.
- ◆ Water baptism is an event in which the whole church participates as an act of corporate commitment.
- ◆ Water Baptism is an outward visible sign of an inward invisible work. It is a declaration of a personal covenant with God. It signifies one's death and burial to sin as he/she is lowered into the water and illustrates newness of life and faith in the resurrection of Christ as one is raised from the water. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

B. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a communal meal of the church that remembers Christ's work and active presence in the church. The precedent for this type of celebration was in the peace offering of the Old Testament (Leviticus 3:1-17; 7:11-38; 22:21). In it a fellowship meal with the Lord as Host was celebrated by each family. Now, the Lord Himself is the Host through the person of Christ. Christ commanded the disciples to celebrate the communion as an act of remembrance. This remembrance extends to the recognition of His presence in the midst of those worshiping in communion.

Therefore, theologically the Lord's Supper is:

- ◆ A communal meal remembering the Lord
- ◆ An offering of thanksgiving
- ◆ Identification with the suffering of the Lord
- ◆ Participation in remembrance of the Passover Meal

First Corinthians 5:8 says, "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

"NOT WITH OLD LEAVEN." A terrible sin had been committed by one of the members of the Corinthian church.

Instead of the other members mourning, they had become “puffed up” and boasted of their own personal holiness. Paul said, “Your glorying is not good.”

Even though such vaunting may seem small, it only takes a tiny bit of leaven (such as yeast) to affect the whole loaf of bread. Therefore Paul says, “Purge out the old leaven” of boasting and pride and remember that it was “Christ our Passover” who was “sacrificed for us.”

“NEITHER WITH THE LEAVEN OF MALICE.” Malice is that evil habit of the mind which makes everything look bad and evil. The early church father, Clement, said that malice is the “forerunner of all other sins.” It is looking at every single sore and diagnosing it as malignant. Such evil judgments must be purged at the Lord’s Table.

“NEITHER WITH THE LEAVEN OF WICKEDNESS.” A heart of malice will inevitably lead to a wicked life. Hatred leads to murder, lust to fornication, and covetousness to robbery.

“But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner--not even to eat with such a person.” (1 Corinthians 5:11).

“BUT WITH SINCERITY AND TRUTH.” The word translated “sincerity” comes from a compound word meaning “to judge” and “sunlight.” Therefore, to be sincere is to be found pure when examined by the sun’s light. The English word SINCERE comes from an old Latin expression meaning “without wax.” It referred to a custom of finishing certain pieces of furniture with hard wax instead of genuine wood. One would set the furniture in the noonday sun to test if it were genuine or sincere or without wax. If it were not “sincere,” the wax would quickly melt, revealing the piece of furniture to be a false imitation.

Therefore, we come to this holy repast without false pretensions or deceits. Our lives are true. When placed under the warmth of the rays of the Word, we are found to be genuine and sincere.

First Corinthians 11:24-29 says,

“And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be

guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.”

C. Washing the Saints' Feet

Washing the saints' feet is an ordinance of the church even though it has been questioned by many in church history. Yet, Christ practiced and commanded this observance. It is an act of worship unto the Lord that emphasizes the humility of service unto one another and unto the Lord. It was a regular practice in the early church. It is explicitly named in Romans 12:13; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8; and 1 Peter 4:9.

The primary text for this teaching of the washing of the saints' feet is found in John 13:1-20. It was a major part of the event of that night. It illustrated Christ's humility and His commandment of love. This was not to be a one time act, but was to be carried out with a continuing obligation.

“If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you” (John 13:14, 15).

CONCLUSION

Successful ministry in the local church requires the involvement of many people who are committed to the mission and the purpose of the church. Effective organization and administrative leadership enables the church to utilize resources and personnel in fulfilling the vision of making God's love and grace known to all people.

In looking at the many areas of specialized ministry in the local church, we are reminded that as a church we:

- Exalt Christ through worship
- Proclaim a message of hope and spiritual power
- Develop well-equipped disciples who are empowered for ministry
- Seek to care for and to heal the hurting
- Encourage and reassure people through compassionate and active outreach ministries
- Promote the responsibility of every believer to live disciplined and accountable lives
- Emphasize a life of holiness and obedience through the indwelling power of a spirit-filled life.