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CHRISTIAN MINISTRY





How not to Minister

1

Do not substitute anything for personal work.

2

Do not neglect personal purity.

3

Do not fail in family responsibilities.

4

Do not be a loner.

5

Do not duplicate other ministries.

6

Do not seek popularity.

7

Do not adulterate the message.

8

Do not bypass the poor.

9

Do not be moneyminded.

10

Do not violate Scriptural principles.



How not to Minister

Introduction

- More ministries and preachers today than any time in Church history; but we have not accomplished much.

eg) Just 120 disciples turned the world upside down; but today even 120 Churches don't impact a city.

We have printing presses, public address systems, electronic gadgets and so many facilities that the early disciples did not have.

Reason: We have forsaken the Biblical methods.

- The benefits of the Bible are innumerable. One of its outstanding benefits is the warnings it serves against folly and deception —
Psa 19:7-11 ... *by them Your SERVANT is warned ...*
Yes, primarily for God's ministers!

Preachers and Pastors must not read the Bible just for personal enjoyment and pulpit use —
v10 ... *gold ... honey ...*

- A crucial choice in doing God's work —
Applause of men or approval of God?
Gal 1:10 ... *If I still please men ...*
I cannot be the servant of God ...

- A beautiful picture of God's work —
 - 1 Cor 3:9 ... *"God's" fellow workers... field ... building ...*
 - What an honour and privilege!
 - Whatever be our ministry —
 - vv 6-9 ... *plants ... waters ...*
 - Each farm will have its own rules and regulations;
we are to follow God's rules in God's field.
- Christian ministry: Privilege and Responsibility
 - Rejoicing over the privilege,
without realising the responsibility,
makes us casual, careless, carnal and corrupt.
Both must be balanced.
- As the Church is active, the devil is hyperactive.
 - If he cannot destroy the work of God,
he will try to defile it and deviate the workers
from God's ways and purposes.
 - As an *"angel of light,"* he can make his false workers
appear as the *"ministers of righteousness"*
(2 Cor 11:14,15)
- God's work must be done God's way;
 - God's way is revealed in God's Word.
 - Too many worldly methods and philosophies
have crept into Christian ministries.
These lessons are meant to flush them out.
- These lessons are not only for fulltime ministers of God
but also for every believer,
because every child of God is called to "serve" Him!

How not to Minister

1. Do not substitute anything for personal work.

- OT: Two categories: Priests vs. People

The other two types of leaders —

- a) Prophets ... Moral leaders
- b) Kings ... Political leaders

Only these 3 groups were “anointed” —

But in the NT,

all the believers are —

- Prophets: Acts 2:16-18 ... “*all flesh*”

No sex distinction: *sons and daughters*

No age distinction: *young and old men*

No social distinction: *servants and slaves*

- Priests & Kings

1 Pet 2:4,5 ... Priests for worshipping (Praise)

:9 ... Priests & Kings for witnessing (Proclamation)

Priesthood of **all** believers

Prophethood of **all** believers

No clergy and laity!

Only clergy, no laity!

A Reformation truth in “theory” only!

- No non-gifted member in the Body of Christ—

5 talents ... 2 talents... 1 talent

Single-talented members: the silent majority

: the spectators

The single-talented man did not **lose** the talent;
he did not **use** it!

“wicked and lazy servant” (Mt 25:26)

■ No unimportant/insignificant organ in the Body

1 Cor 12:27,18 ... As God **pleased** ...

“A specific purpose”

Don't excuse yourself saying,

“I am not gifted spectacularly!”

□ God's answer to Gideon: Judg 6:13,14 (empowerment)

“Go in this might of yours ...”

□ God's answer to Moses: Ex 4:10,11,12 (eloquence)

“Who had made man's mouth?”

□ God's answer to Jeremiah: Jer 1:6-8 (experience)

“Do not say, I am a youth!”

What is **your** excuse?!

■ Start with Personal witnessing —

Jesus was a Personal Soulwinner, first and last —

□ Nicodemus (religious leader) Jn 3

□ Zacchaeus (tax-collector) Lk 19

□ Samaritan woman (outcast) Jn 4

Open up a natural conversation —

eg *“Give Me a drink!”* (Jn 4:7)

Jesus saved her and made her a Soulwinner!

Handplucked fruits are the best!

I was saved thro' personal witnessing.

I became a personal soulwinner in the college.

I was *“faithful in small things!”*

- Do not despise *small beginnings* (Zech 4:10).
- *Though the beginning may be small ...* (Job 8:7)
- “*mustard seed*” (Mt 13:31)

- Don't wait for favourable conditions —

Eccl 11:5,6 ... *morning ... evening ...*

eg) Sadhu Sundersingh — tract distribution

One of the tracts distributed by him in the train
thrown away by a passenger, saved one under a bridge
who was contemplating suicide!

- Do as **much** as you can —

... *waters ... many days ...* (Eccl 11:1)

Sow bountifully (2 Cor 9:6)

*sow sparingly ... reap sparingly ... sow bountifully ...
reap bountifully ...*

eg) Tract distribution

- Rural Evangelism:

India (over 75%) lives in villages.

Sing ... Preach ...

Don't be satisfied with **supporting** God's work.

Each one, reach one!

“*Woe unto ME if I preach not the Gospel*”

1 Cor 9:16,17 ... Not optional but obligatory!

How not to Minister

2. Do not neglect personal purity.

- All the children of God are called to be His Servants ...

1 Pet 2:4,5

Christ is the “*Living Stone*” (v4)

Christians are the “*living stones*” (v5a)

Built up as a “*spiritual house*” (Church)

The **entire** Church is of “*Priests and Kings*” (vv5,9)

For a 2-fold purpose —

a) To worship (v5)/Praise

b) To witness (v9)/Proclamation

There’s one characteristic that stands out — “holiness”

a) “*holy*” Priesthood (v5)

b) “*holy*” nation (*people*) (v9)

The basic condition for acceptable service is holiness—

2 Tim 2:21 ... **IF** anyone cleanses himself ...

Based on this truth,

Paul admonishes Timothy personally —

v22 ... *flee ... lusts ... pure heart*

- This is the primary preparation that

God took everyone of His servants through —

□ Moses — *sandals ... I’ll send you ...* (Ex 3:4,5)

□ Isaiah — *lips ... Whom shall I send?* (Isa 6:7,8)

Moses — *feet* — To go for God

Isaiah — *lips* — To speak for God

□ Jeremiah (Jer 1:5)—*sanctified you even before your birth!*

These were all Prophets: They spoke for God.

Next, some examples of Priests —

□ Aaron ... Ex 28:2,3 ... *holy garments*

□ Joshua ... Zech 3:1-5 a) *Robes = Life*

 b) *Turban = Leadership*

See how Satan opposed it!

“A holy minister is an awesome weapon in the hands of God!”

□ All those whom God used to write the Bible —

 2 Pet 1:21 ... ***holy*** men of God spoke ...

- In course of time, these religious leaders and ministers lost the vision of God’s holiness —

 That’s why Jesus had to rebuke them —

 Mt 23:24-26 ... *outside ... blind ... guides ... leaders*
 i.e. hypocritical holiness

More concerned about what people think about us rather than what God knows about us!

Therefore Jesus restored this truth —

 Jn 17:17,18 ... *Sanctify them ... send ...*

□ Do not tell people, “Do not look at me; look at Jesus!”

 1 Cor 11:1 ... Paul’s challenge:

“Imitate me as I imitate Christ.”

□ Do not be blinded by success.

 “How does God bless my ministry

 if He is not pleased with me?”

 This is one of the great deceptions.

God blesses a ministry, mainly because

- The task is huge but the labourers are few.
- The needs of the people are great.

■ Practical guidelines —

- Do not neglect Quiet Time.
- Have periodic self-examination.
- Set matters right then and there.
- Beware of dangerous beginnings.
- Be strict on yourself.

A warning —

If you are too busy to spend time to keep your life
in order,
you will lament:

SS 1:6b ... *“They made me keeper of the Vineyards,
but my own Vineyard I have not kept!”*
(The Shulamite woman)

On the other hand—

A Promise: 2 Chr 16:9a ...
*“The eyes of the Lord ... to show Himself mighty
... whose heart is perfect ...”*

(See also Pages 267-269, 332-334, 778-780)

How not to Minister

3. Do not fail in family responsibilities.

- The salvation of our family members is our first responsibility —

Our family is our first congregation!

Acts 16:30,31 ... The question was for “personal” salvation;
but the answer included the “family.”

It was not just a theory;
the entire family experienced salvation —

v32 ... *Preaching* to the “entire” family

This means the Jailor took these Apostles
immediately from the jail to his house!

v33 ... *Baptism* of the “entire” family

v34 ... *Joy* in the “entire” family

- That’s why Jesus said, “*Weep for your children*” Lk 23:28
Why? v29 ... More difficult days are ahead.

Yes, the temptations and challenges our children will have
to face are more severe and difficult than what we faced!

That’s why Prophet Elisha wanted
a “*double*” *portion of the Spirit* that was on Elijah! (2 Ki 2:9)

What was the ministry of Elijah?

Lk 1:17 ... First ... *Fathers/Children*

Second ... *Disobedient/Just*

Third ... *A people for God*

i.e. First, Family; Next, Evangelism; Third, Church

- Similarly, on the Day of Pentecost —
The question of onlookers: “*What must we do?*”
The answer was for their families also!
Acts 2:37-39 ... *you ... your children ...*
- This is what attracted God towards Abraham —
Gen 18:17-19 ... *he would command his children*
- The husband is responsible for the spirituality of his wife—
1 Pet 3:7 ... *weaker vessel ... grace of life*

See also Eph 5:25... *no selfishness*

:26... *sanctify + cleanse, not criticize always*

:29... *nourish ... i.e. build up the person*

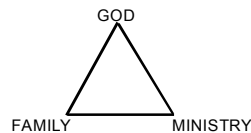
- Similarly, the wife is responsible for the husband’s spirituality —
1 Pet 3:1,2 ... *won by the conduct of wives*

Wives! Don’t go about telling every preacher
to pray for your husband!

You do **your** homework!

- Parents are responsible for the children’s salvation
1 Tim 3:4,5 ... *having children in submission*

Let not ministry take this place!



Do not sacrifice:

Family Altar... Family Time... Family Outings

- Does this mean we cannot do anything for God
if our children go astray?

No! You must do your best
and leave the rest in God's hands!
"Salvation is **of** the Lord!" (Jon 2:9c)

eg) Prophet Samuel did all he could to train up his children—
1 Sam 7:15-17
"He always returned to his **hometown!**"
But his sons went astray — 8:1,3

- Another truth —

There's no better ministerial team
than husband and wife.

A classic example:

Aquila & Priscilla (Acts 18:2; Rom 16:3,4)

This couple is mentioned atleast 6 times in the NT!

Paul & Barnabas did not take their wives alongwith them for
ministries, because their ministries involved extensive travels
(1 Cor 9:5,6)

If wives keep travelling, the children will be neglected.

Whenever possible and wherever possible,
take advantage of your spouse's help and companionship,
especially while ministering to families —

A family can minister to another family
more effectively than an individual.

God called Abraham as a "family" —

In him *all the "families"* of the earth were to be blessed!
(Gen 12:3)

How not to Minister

4. Do not be a loner.

- Under Lesson One, I said,
Do not substitute anything for personal work.
While we emphasize “personal” involvement in God’s work,
we do **not** encourage “over-independent” activities.
- The Church is a **Body**.
No organ can function independent of the others —
Eph 4:16 ... *whole body... every joint ... every part ...*
eg) Eating: Eyes see the food.
Nose smells.
Fingers pick up.
Mouth opens.
Teeth chew.
Tongue tastes.
Throat swallows.
This is “operation in cooperation!”
- Jesus is the perfect Model for a Servant of God.
He was never a loner.
 - a) Recruited associates not at the end
but at the very beginning (Mt 4:17-19)
*“The 12 **with** Him”* (Lk 8:1)
A Team ministry.
 - b) He sent His disciples *two by two* (Lk 10:1)
The principle of Eccl 4:9-12

“labour” — Mutual effort
“struggle” — Mutual help
“battle” — Mutual support
“warmth” — Mutual encouragement
“threefold cord” — Mutual strength

It’s not easy to work with an associate
especially if he is a strong personality—

but, Prov 27:17 ... *iron sharpens iron*

eg) Peter and John

Peter: A desire to be the spokesman for Jesus & team

John: A desire to be too close to Jesus

Rivals (even after resurrection) (Jn 21:20-24)

But the Holy Spirit melted them and fused them together:

Acts 3:1 ... “*Peter and John together*”

The Apostles consistently operated on this principle —

eg) Even after following a disagreement and division,
Paul picked up an associate ...

Acts 15:39,40 ... *Paul “chose”* — A deliberate act

Even in writing the Epistles, Paul had associates —

1 Cor 1:1 ... *Paul & Sosthenes*

2 Cor 1:1 ... *Paul & Timothy*

Gal 1:1,2 ... *Paul & brothers*

Phil 1:1 ... *Paul & bishops and deacons*

Col 1:1 ... *Paul & Timothy*

1 Thess 1:1 ... *Paul, Silvanus & Timothy*

2 Thess 1:1 ... *Paul, Silvanus & Timothy*

Phile 1,2 ... *Paul & Timothy*

So often with Timothy even though Timothy was such a junior—

“father-son” (Phil 2:22)

- Not only in Evangelism, but also in Church ministry —

plurality of leadership:

elders = shepherds = pastors = bishops = overseers

eg) Church (singular) in Ephesus: Acts 20:17 ... *elders*

- What is team ministry?

Praying together (Acts 13:1,2)

Planning together

Working together (according to gifting & strength)

Learning from one another

Being accountable to one another

Giving opportunity to one another

eg) When William Booth (1829-1912), the Founder of Salvation Army, could not attend a major gathering to address it, he sent a telegram to the organisers, “Others!”

My testimony: Though the Founder leader of BYM, no panicking, nothing to hand over, when posted for open heart surgery in 1996.

From the inception of the organisation, I as the CEO chose to be called as the “Coordinator” only.

- There is nothing meritorious in seeking others’ help in a crisis —

Have associates while working normally;
then they will help in crisis —

See Eccl 4:9 ... normal days ... *two better* ...

:10 ... critical time ... *if they fall ... lift up* ...

Similarly, v11 — Normal days ... “warmth of fellowship”
v12 — Critical times ... “warfare”

- There are several reasons why we normally choose to be loners—

a) Elijah mentality

We think we are unique,
and no one is so earnest like us.

1 Ki 19:14 ... “Zealous ... alone left”
:18 ... 7000!

b) Unwillingness to share the credit

Solo players unfit for a football or hockey team.
When an Indian athlete wins gold in Olympics,
it’s the **Indian Flag** that’s lifted and waved.

Any servant of God can accomplish so much
if only he is least bothered about who gets the credit!

(See also Pages 59-61, 303-306, 350-351, 380-384, 517-519,
642-646)

How not to Minister

5. Do not duplicate other ministries.

- The tragedy:

Too many people
spending too much time
doing the same work
leaving too much undone!

eg) India: 4% Christians; 96% non-Christians

But over 90% of Christian ministry is focussing on the
4% of Indians only.

We are evangelising the evangelized,
comforting the comforted,
baptising the baptised,
reaching the reached,
but neglecting the neglected.

Jesus was against this way of doing things—

- Lk 4:42,43 ... *other towns*
- Jn 10:16 ... *other sheep*

Apostle Paul caught this spirit —

Rom 15:20,21 ... *not building on another's foundation*
:22 ... Saying “no” to several (things) invitations
2 Cor 10:16 ... *not boasting of others' labours*

- Because everyone goes after popular ministries,
too many general practitioners!
No specialists!

eg) Gal 2:9 ... Peter & Co. ... *to the Jews*
Paul & Co. ... *to the Gentiles*

This does not mean that Peter could not address the
“Gentiles” —

in fact he was the first to preach to Gentiles (Cornelius);
but his primary ministry was to Jews.

Similarly, Paul spoke to “Jews” in Jerusalem several times;
but he was burdened more about reaching Rome (Rom 1:13-15)

So many missionary journeys!

Today, of our top evangelists in India,
who is primarily targetting non-Christians
and caste Hindus?

Even Hindu convert Preachers are mostly addressing
Christians only.

- Each one should *remain in his calling* —

1 Cor 7:20

Repeated verbatim in v24

Calling and Gifting: Eph 4:11 ... Pulpit gifts

Don't go lusting after these.

There are other gifts as well —

1 Cor 12:28 ... *helps ... administrations ...*

:29 ... “*All are Apostles?*”

This series of questions is with respect to spectacular gifts only!

“*Helps*” not included in these questions !!!

- 1 Cor 12:17

If the whole body were an eye ... hearing?

If the whole body were ears ... smelling?

- □ Every Preacher need not sing!
Preachers must not yield to the pressures of people.
- Everyone need not send missionaries!
There are already so many under-staffed Missions
and under-paid missionaries —
Why not play a supportive role?
Be creative —
eg) **Missionaries Upholders Trust**
This group takes care of the
unmet needs of missionaries.
- Imagine:
What will happen if the **heart** wants to perform
the function of the **kidneys**?
or, the **brain** that of the **liver**?
But this is what's happening today —
eg) Several evangelists and itinerent preachers
become pastors because the latter looks more secure!
- Venture hard work —
Josh 14:10-12 ... 85 year old Caleb tells Joshua:
*Give me this **mountain!***
Hagg 1:8 ... *Bring wood from **mountains,***
not from timber shops or another building,
to build the Temple.
- Think of the least concentrated areas/groups —
Drug addicts
AIDS & Terminally ill patients
Rickshaw pullers
Lorry drivers
Commercial sex workers
Poor & marginalized

Jesus' ministry: *The poor have the gospel* (Mt 11:5)

i.e. the helpless, neglected,
marginalized, downtrodden, untouchables

- Duplication invariably leads to **competition**.

Then we forget our real Enemy,
and start fighting against the other servants of God.

That leads to envy, bitterness, backbiting, slander, etc.

How not to Minister

6. Do not seek popularity.

- Seeking popularity is detrimental to our very faith —

Jn 5:44 ... Popularity seeking results
from a feeling of insecurity.
“believe” = secure in Christ ...
no threats to our position

This does not mean we must be against all applause of men;
but it’s wrong to “love” *the praise of men*

more than *the praise of God* —

Jn 12:42,43

Man gives “awards!”

God gives “rewards!”

- When we seek popularity in Christian ministry,
we actually steal God’s glory!

There had been many prophets;
but according to Jesus,
none greater than John the Baptist (Mt 11:11a)

The secret? Jn 3:30,31 ... *Increase ... Decrease ...*

Unless we decrease, Christ cannot increase!

That’s why Jesus said,

“John was a **burning** and shining light”

Burning means decreasing! (Jn 5:35) — like a candle

Popularity seekers never become great “before God” —

Lk 1:15a

- A warning in the OT:
 - Jer 45:5a ... *Do you seek great things for yourself?*
Seek not!
- Resist the temptation to do things in limelight —
 - Heavenly work is a “hidden” work —
 - Isa 6:2 ... *seraphim ... covered his face ... covered his feet*
 - Joel 1:13,14; 2:17 ... Cry unto God in secret.
 - We must learn to do things secretly even at the level of “devotional” disciplines —
 - eg) Almsgiving ... Praying ... Fasting (Mt 6:1-18)
 - This mindset will then extend to “ministerial” activities.
- Don't yield to pressures from friends —
 - Jn 7:2-10 ... Feast of Tabernacles
 - ... *show Yourself to the world ...*
- Don't go after crowds forgetting individuals —
 - eg) Jesus spent so much time with the 12;
 - Similarly, Paul with Timothy & Titus
- Don't exaggerate reports —
 - God is not glorified but we give a chance to the devil to accuse us of falsehood —
 - Mk 6:5 ... *“He could do no mighty work ...”*
 - Honest reporting!
- Don't allow anyone heroworship you —
 - “No flesh should glory in His presence.”*
 - 1 Cor 1:29,31
 - eg) Paul & Barnabas at Lystra
 - Acts 14 ... *ran away ...*

These days there is even organised garlanding!
Instead of learning from Christ,
we copy cinestars and politicians!

“We have not so learned Christ!” (Eph 4:20)
God put the Church in the world;
the devil has put the world in the Church!

■ Young Preachers!

Don't do anything just because
senior preachers are doing it!

The majority is usually wrong ...

Devil's majority vs. God's minority
“Broadway” vs. *“Narrow gate”*

■ A warning:

Don't try to be in the forefront of everything—
The first shall be last! (Mt 19:30)

How not to Minister

7. Do not adulterate the message.

- Satan's primary attack from the beginning
has been on God's WORD —
How he tempted Eve: Gen 3:1
"Has God indeed SAID?"
God is jealous about His Word —
That's why curses on addition or deletion —
Rev 22:18,19
- Do not dilute the message to please people —
Gal 1:10,11
Not preaching FOR the people but TO them.
Not preaching what they **want**,
but what they **need** — 2 Tim 4:3,4
... according to their own desires ...
- Remember we are under orders —
2 Cor 2:17 ... *"in the sight of God"*
We are just "stewards" — not "owners!"
1 Cor 4:1,2 ... *stewards to be found faithful ...*
Just like a postman!
- Superficial healers —
Jer 6:13,14 ... *Peace ... Peace ...*
It's mainly because of **covetousness!**

- Jeremiah's suffering and boldness —
 - Jer 18:18 ... *plot against him* — “slander”
 - 20:2 ... *beaten ...*
 - But he could not be silent —
 - 20:9 ... *fire in bones*
 - :11 ... *The Lord is with me ...*
 - mighty and awesome!***
 - The rule: “*Do not diminish a word!*” Jer 26:2
- Similarly, John the Baptist:
 - Both in public and in private —
 - Mt 3:1-12; Mk 6:18-29
 - Even though it meant him his head!
- Similarly, the apostles:
 - If they had preached a “sweet Jesus,” no prison, no pain!
 - But they thundered —
 - “There’s no other name under Heaven!”*
 - Acts 4:12,13
 - In India, the Gospel will become popular
 - if we leave out **Resurrection!**
 - Then preaching is a waste! (1 Cor 15:14)
- Too many “Fear not!” sermons —
 - Result: No fear of God also.
 - No hesitation to commit sin.
 - But, prophesying: 1 Cor 14:3
 - edification ... exhortation ... comfort*
 - Only comfort is emphasized;
 - the first two left out.

- Too many “Worry not” sermons —
Result: No burden for the lost
No concern for the perishing
- Making people “happy” than “holy” —
The usual question to congregations:
“How many are happy? Lift up hands!”
But the Biblical call: *Lift up “holy” hands!* (1 Tim 2:8)
- Overoccupation with physical/material blessings —
But Jesus’ emphasis: (spiritual)
“*First Kingdom ... Righteousness*” (Mt 6:33)
“*Hunger and thirst after Righteousness*” (Mt 5:6)

Jesus’ miracles were ultimately to prove who He was —
(John’s Gospel)

eg) *I am the Living Bread* — Feeding the 5000 (6:1-14,35)

I am the Light — Healing the blind (9:1-7)

I am the Resurrection — Raising Lazarus (11:25-44)

- Another reason for diluting the message —
Compromise in lifestyle (Mt 5:19)
... breaks commandments ... teaches men so ...
- Don’t preach visions and dreams to excite people —
Jer 23:28,29 ... *wheat ... chaff ...*
Preach the “Word” to **edify** people.
- Spend sufficient time in meditation and preparation —
Be rich in content.
Use Study Bibles & Study Aids (See pages 125-127).

Don’t go from milk to watery milk to milky water;
but, milk to meat! (Heb 5:12-14)

How not to Minister

8. Do not bypass the poor.

- In our enthusiasm to preach the Gospel
and bring people to Christ,
we must not forget the poor —
Gal 2:9,10 ... **“Remember the poor”**
— the main thing the senior apostles stressed
to the juniors as they entered missionary work.
Paul was *already “eager” about it!*
- The very first purpose of the Spirit’s anointing —
Lk 4:18 ... *“poor”* ... Do not spiritualise this.
“The poor have the gospel preached to them” (Mt 11:2-5)
Why is it missing in our Crusade wallposters?
- When we talk about “gifts,”
we are more anxious about how far they are “spectacular”
rather than how much they “serve” people—
eg) Rom 12:6-8
5 out of these 7 gifts are for **service** —
“*ministry*” = helping people
“*exhort*” = personal counselling
“*giving*” = spending for others
“*leading*” = caring and modelling
“*mercy*” = compassion (eg. Mother Teresa)
- “Prayer” ministries are springing up everywhere —
Popular phrase: *“standing in the gap”*
What is the context? Ezek 22:29,31
... mistreated the poor ...

Similarly, fasting — A popular programme

But what's God's *chosen fast*? Isa 58:6,7

"... to share bread with the hungry ..."

- So many meetings for the "Spirit anointing" —
Frequent quote: What happened in the house of Cornelius—
*While Peter was **still** speaking* (Acts 10:44)
Secret? "*Almsgiving*" (vv 2,4,31,32)
- The underlying reason for this deficiency
in our ministry to the poor is
the defectiveness of our **message** itself —
John the Baptist: Lk 3:10,11
Share clothes ... food ...
Not a higher lesson in Christian life;
but the ABC of it!
— as a preparation for baptism!
He attacked people for their pride of "religious heritage" —
"children of Abraham" (v8)
But when Zacchaeus repented of his failure in almsgiving —
Jesus declared,
"He is also a son of Abraham" (Lk 19:8,9)
"Heaven or Hell" is decided by charity — (Mt 25:41-45)
Sheep to the right, goats to the left
Sins of Omission > Sins of Commission
- Each Church must have a substantial and sustained
ministry to the poor —
Why think about Dollars and Deutchmarks
the moment you talk about orphans and widows?

No Church is too poor to help the poor —

2 Cor 8:1-4 ... *deep poverty ... abounding liberality*

- Even if you minister to the poor, what is your motive?

eg) Judas ... Jn 12:3-6

Is it to cover up your extravagant lifestyle?

Is it to covet more offerings from people?

Several Pastors have become millionaires after the Tsunami of 2004. They look forward to another Tsunami !!!

- A concluding observation:

There will be more poor people than the rich in Heaven—

1 Cor 1:26-29 ... *not many mighty ... noble ...*

but weak ... despised

Rich man ... camel ... needle (Mt 19:24)

- Study the next Topic, “*Helping Others*” (pages 569-610), for a better understanding of this subject.

(See also Pages 34-37, 248-250, 423-425)

How not to Minister

9. Do not be moneyminded.

- Once it was “money for ministry;”
now it is “ministry for money!”
Jesus forewarned about this in His commissioning address
itself to the twelve —
Mt 10:7,8 ... *Freely received ... freely give ...*
He knew that religion could be commercialized,
especially charismatically gifted ministries!
eg) Special prayers for special offerings —
Mt 23:14 ... Similar to forgiveness tickets sold
by the Pope to build a Cathedral
“widows” — Taking advantage of helpless folks
in their crises
“*Freely give ... because ... worker worthy of food*”
(Mt 10:8,10)
Not to be unduly anxious,
but *seek the Kingdom ...* Mt 6:31-33
- Challenging examples to emulate —
 - Prophet Samuel: 1 Sam 12:3-5 ... “*God is witness.*”
 - Apostle Paul gives the same testimony:
1 Thess 2:5 ... *Covetousness never ... God is witness...*
Consistent testimony
Farewell address to the Ephesian elders —
Acts 20:33-35 ... *not coveted ... shown every way ...*

A slogan for every servant of God —

“It’s more blessed to give than to receive!”

That’s what a **Good Shepherd** is —

Jn 10:11 ... *gives his life ...*

(Definition of a good Pastor!)

“Spend and be spent” (2 Cor 12:14,15)

— The heart of a Parent

□ Apostle Peter: *“Silver and gold have I none!”* (Acts 3:6)

Even though people had laid

large sums of money *at the apostles’ feet!*

Money at their *“feet”* — not in the *“fist”* (Acts 4:37)

■ Moneymindedness too common in ministries —

Phil 3:17-19 ... **many** ... *belly ... earthly things*

Paul challenges Timothy to be different —

1 Tim 6:9-11 ... **“But you, O man of God!”**

So many evils: Especially 3 evils —

Gold — பொன் — the first

Girls — பெண்

Glory — புகழ்

Christianity is plagued with coveteousness —

Jer 6:13 ... *Prophets ... Priests ... least to greatest ...*

Small preachers ... Great preachers

Especially in the matter of accounting —

2 Cor 8:20,21 ... *public money ...*

... not only before God but also before men ...

- Do not associate (support) with moneyminded preachers.
 1 Tim 6:5 ... *“withdraw from such”*
 We become responsible in spoiling them.
- Do not go after the rich — (offering special seats, etc.)
 Jesus was hard on the rich.
 eg) Camel & needle/Rich fool/ Rich man & Lazarus
 Many were offended! (Mk 10:24,25; Lk 12:20; 16:19-31)
 Similarly, Paul to Timothy: **“Command the rich!”** (1 Tim 6:17)
- Beware of the temptation to become popular by preaching
 a Gospel of material prosperity —
 Jn 6:1-15 ... *Feeding ... Prophet ... King ... departed*
 :32-51 ... *spiritual bread*
 Mk 8:36,37 ... *gain whole world ... lose own soul*
- A suggested Prayer for every Servant of God —
 Prov 30:7-9 (Words of Agur: v1)
 “Give me neither too much nor too little!”
 This will keep our faith alive and active!
 “Faith for finance” will affect for good
 the other areas of ministry also.

(See also Pages 52-54, 104-106, 439-440, 676-679, 755-758)

How not to Minister

10. Do not violate Scriptural principles.

- God's Work must be done God's Way;
God's Way is revealed in God's Word.
 - Pattern for God's Work: Holy Scriptures (2 Tim 3:16,17)
Power for God's Work: Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8; Zech 4:6)
eg) Human strength vs. Divine power (Dt 11:10-12)
- This principle runs throughout the Scriptures —
 - Noah ... Gen 6:22; 7:5... *"according to ... thus so ..."*
 - Moses ... Ex 39:42,43... *"according to the pattern"* (Heb 8:5)
 - God tells Joshua ... Josh 1:7,8 ...
"This Book ... all that's written"
 - Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount ... Mt 7:21-23
Prophesy ... will of God (= Word of God)
"Therefore ... sayings of Mine ..." vv 24-27
 - Apostle Paul's admonition: 2 Tim 2:5 ... *athletics ... rules*
 - Apostle Peter's admonition: 1 Pet 4:11a
... according to the oracles ...
- Some negative examples:
 - Moses ... *strike ... speak ...* (Num 20:10-12)
 - King Saul ... *"To obey (God's Word) is better than sacrifice"*
1 Sam 15:22
 - David ... *ark of God ... on a cart* (2 Sam 6:3,6,7)
This was Philistine method ... (1 Sam 6:2,7)
But God's method: ... *shoulders ...* (Ex 25:14)
 - Each man's work *tested by fire* (=God's Word) 1 Cor 3:10-15

- Study from the Bible:
 - How to lead someone to Christ
(Samaritan Woman, Nicodemus, etc.)
 - What is the Gospel? (1 Cor 15:1-5)
 - How to lead folks into the Holy Spirit Baptism?
Examples from Acts (8:14-17; 9:12,17,18; 10:44; 19:1-7)
Do's & Don'ts in ministry.

Frequent examination of our methods in the light of the Bible.

- Saturate yourself with the Scriptures to avoid deviation —
 - John the Baptist (Lk 3:2-6)
 - Jesus Christ (Lk 2:46,47; 24:27,44)
 - Apostle Paul (1 Cor 4:6)
 - Timothy (2 Tim 3:16,17; 1 Tim 4:15,16)

- Read my books:
 - Preachers & People*
 - Happy Harvest*

Watch my DVDs:

Ministry or Business? (English-Tamil)
How to Preach Better (English-Tamil/Hindi)
How to be a Good Pastor (English-Telugu)
Fruitful Ministry (English-Telugu)
