

Studies of Ministry

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What is Ministry?

By definition from the Merriam-Webster's Dictionary they are as follows:

- The office, duties, or functions of a minister
- The body of ministers through of religion: clergy
- A person or thing through which something is accomplished

The most accurate description of the word most appropriate for this course is the third definition. A person or thing through which something is accomplished is the concept, which will bring you to the full understanding of ministry. Often times when people think of a ministry, the first thought that enters their mind is that of licensed and/or ordained clergy. It is accurate to say that they are in a ministry, but those are definitely not the only forms of ministry. It is important to understand that every one of God's children has a ministry. The problem comes in when everyone begins to attempt the same ministry, and such does not achieve harmony of the Body of Christ. The obvious example or quote is that, "everyone cannot be an eye." We will later look at some references from the Bible and practical life examples to further develop this understanding.

Forms of Ministry

Ministry is available in various forms, too many to list for they extend beyond our limited boundaries of understanding. Your ministry could be as simple but extremely important as always having a positive attitude, which motivates others to doing well. On the other hand, your ministry may be extremely complex and barely noticed by anyone except God, yet no matter how small you may feel your individual ministry is, it is invaluablely important, and absolutely recognized in the presence of the Father. Don't be discouraged! These are some general categories that your ministry may fall under:

1. **Clergy Work** (must be called by God) – Many times even in the world of clergy you will find confusion. The problem is that even these ministers often desire to be the titles that they were not called to be. The Bible teaches us that some will be pastors, some will be prophets, some will speak in tongues, some will interpret, etc. The point of that is to let us know that we will not all hold the same offices, and each office is just as important as the other is. So often though, individual clergymen feel that their title/office isn't glamorous or powerful enough and thus, out of the will of God, seek the offices of others. Some examples of clergy offices are pastors, teachers, priests, prophets, and apostles. The final other conflict occurs when someone that is not called jumps into one of the offices of clergy. Just because you go to a seminary and get your Ph.D. does not mean that you are meant to be in the pulpit, and likewise, just because you only finished High School and had no college or technical education doesn't mean you are not qualified.

2. **Church Administration** – These are the secretaries, drivers, security, and all other supportive people that keep a church or ministry going. Without that support, the churches would be greatly hindered from achieving functioning to their full potential.
3. **Congregation** – Though many don't believe it, as a member of a congregation, you play a vital part in the kingdom of God. As members of the congregation, you not only support the works of the Father through your monetary offerings and sacrifice of time, you also provide the image of Christ to the world, bringing glory to the LORD. As members of the congregation, you are the witnesses of that particular vision, that particular work of God that you are worshiping with. The congregation members are the strongest tools of evangelism because they represent the fruit of the labor, they represent proof of the effectiveness of the ministry, and they represent the image of Christ on a day-to-day basis. This is why it so important to carry yourself with righteousness because someone is always watching you. Finally, if there were no congregations, there would be no need for the pastors and other officers of the church because there would be no one to receive the word of God.
4. **Occupation** – Your ministry may also be as simple to understand as your occupation. Sometimes God will just place you into a certain job so that He may use you to witness to the lost souls that are there. The other side of the coin is that God provides all of us with particular talents and gifts to use for our survival. Understand one element though, that our talent is not necessarily our ministry. Our talents, or gifts, can be our ministry and often are, but they may also be just supplemental to our primary ministry to support our ministry or someone else's. An example is how my talents in the arts are not used for my primary ministry, but they do support it. I do believe however, that if we were to truly use our gifts that God gives us, whether they are primary or supplementary, that prosperity would be guaranteed. Every gift that God gives us is supposed to be used for His glory, and what better way for Him to be glorified than through our success in what He has blessed us with. The problem that arises is when our faith is not strong enough to pursue those things which he has provided, as well as when we do not fully understand what it is that He want's us to do. Both of those can be overcome by drawing closer to Him in all aspects of our lives. The best advantage to our gifts is that He makes them enjoyable to us; therefore they will be easier for us to accomplish. One of the best examples of occupations/gifts is in the story about the talents. Whether you use the talents in the form of money or gifts, the principle remains the same. You can either use what you receive and be prosperous, or bury it and achieve nothing.
5. **Personality** – The final example that I will use is the ministry of our personality. For some people this may be their only or primary ministry. As a personal testimony of this, I have been often told that because I'm always so cheerful and smiling all the time, it has helped others to feel positive and joyous when their day was not so good originally. You may know someone who is extremely confident all the time, and it motivates you when you see

them, or someone who is strong no matter what and it encourages you through your own storms. If you do then you can easily understand how important such a ministry is to other. You'd never know personally how valuable you are to the faith of someone that is watching you.

Jesus Christ (The Supreme Ministry)

The importance of Jesus Christ is immeasurable, and could definitely not be contained in mere words. As the Apostle Paul stated, the work of Jesus could not be contained in all of the books of the world. Here we will have an overview containing some general aspects of His life and the ministry that He performed. The references include the books of John, Matthew, Mark, and Luke of the Holy Bible and this outline will cover specific points of His life and accomplishments. (Matt; Mark; Luke; & John)

His Birth

- Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary by the imparting of the Holy Spirit. It was confirmed to her husband, Joseph in a dream while he was in effort to privately divorce her.
- In the land that Jesus was born, the King Herod ordered that all babies be killed so that the Messiah would not be able to grow and achieve his purpose. Jesus was hidden in Egypt during this time and later arrived to fulfil His mission.

His Ministry

- Jesus fasted in the wilderness 40 days and 40 nights and was tempted of the devil before He returned to begin His ministry.
- Jesus was baptized in the water by John the Baptist. As He came out of the water the Spirit of God fell upon Him like a dove and God spoke to the witnesses saying, “This is my son of whom I am well pleased.” Immediately He was empowered to cast out demons, heal the sick, revive the dead, etc.
- Jesus is the only person who was anointed in every gift of the Spirit, and He lived a life without sin, which gave us strength and freedom from the act of sin, which caused death, of Adam.
- Jesus spread a message of love saying, “Repent: for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” He journeyed around, teaching, healing, and performing all sorts of miracles, while giving God the glory for all that was accomplished.

His Death and Resurrection

The death and resurrection of Jesus is perhaps one of the most invaluable and amazing aspects of the life of Christ. Though the Lord faced the most terrible types of infliction known to us, through Him we no longer have to. Christ Jesus actually paid the penalty for every sin and trouble we might face and because He overcame it all, and He is in us, we now also have the victory in all of our life problems.

- Jesus paid the ultimate price that we might be saved and have everlasting life. The type of death He faced was a crucifixion, which is one of the most evil methods of

punishment delivered by man. After his “death,” He went to Hell and defeated Satan, and then was resurrected on the third day. He took our sins and sicknesses with Him and returned with the victory and glory for us all. That shall conclude the information for the section for to try and go any further into the greatness of Christ without making the entire work about Him would only create a limited injustice.

Understanding & Accepting Your Ministry

The next step in the topic of ministry is accepting your personal ministry. Yet, how can you accept it if you cannot understand it, and how can you understand it if you do not recognize it?

Many people move too quickly in determining their ministry. They find excitement in the glamorous aspects of what they feel like it should be and jump after it head first without Godly consultation. Usually by doing so they miss out on seeing the specifics of their own particular specialty in the Body of Christ. This is exhibited when the music minister wants to be the pastor because he felt good saying a few motivational words, though his anointing remains in music. There are many other similar examples to that such as the pastor wanting to be an evangelist because he enjoyed travelling as a guest speaker. Of course though, often times it may take years to fully understand the entire scope of your particular ministry, and sometimes your entire life will be filled with searching because your purpose is evolving with each new level you enter. That doesn't mean you cannot go forth in the areas that you already understand, for usually by using what you already have, your eyes and understanding will be opened wider to where you are going.

As far as recognizing your ministry, there are many factors that come into play that you will be able to notice. Traits to look for include but are not limited to:

- Fun – your ministry will be enjoyable to you.
- Ability – your ministry will contain something you are strongly talented in.
- Endurance – your ministry will be one that you can do all the time without tiring of mentally.
- Unique – your ministry will be uniquely fitting to your particular personality.
- Revelation – the Holy Spirit will also reveal your ministry to you. Upon this revelation, refer to the previous four factors along with prayer to confirm the understanding of the revelation.

Once you do recognize and understand your ministry, you will need to accept it. Very often though, the time will come to accept it before you fully understand it, and in that case, accept each level as you move into it. The reason why accepting it is so important is because many times we as people have the tendency to run from our calling. There are no specific reasons, but they probably include fear of accepting the responsibility, as well as the internal battle between the spirit and the flesh. One thing you can pretty much rely on is that if God has an important ministry for you, He can and sometimes will break you down completely in order to have you submit and accept what He has given you to do. It is an honor though, to receive your call.

Additional Information

Don't be discouraged when you first receive and accept your call for your ministry. Whether your call is to be a clergyman or a secretary, it is yours. You do not need approval from mankind. Often times, man will tell you that your call isn't true, or that you weren't truly called. People will often tell you that because of your past, or their perceptions of you, that you would be of no use to God. People will come against you, and sometimes you might even come against yourself, but by hanging in there it will all prove worthwhile. Don't be afraid of your change for righteousness. A great scripture that has helped me, as I often remind myself is that of 1Cor15: 31, which says "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." Though we have to make that change, its reward is bountiful and we should in turn, rejoice.

Conclusion

Finally, to conclude, we have discussed enough information to establish a base level of understanding equivalent enough for a Bachelor's degree. This will provide you with a firm level of knowledge to pursue your individual ministry and go to greater and higher levels of efficiency in what God has called you to do, and from there obtain a true level of excellence. It is important that you not only review this information for degree obtaining purposes, but for life application in a personal way. I am sure that the information contained in this course will be completely beneficial and rewarding for you throughout your life, and I congratulate you on taking this step toward a higher level of education and enlightenment.

By the grace of God,
Rev. Kelvin N. Broadus