

# **The Anatomy of a Ministry**

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## Introduction.

God needs to restore your perspective as you continue to make a valuable contribution to the work of God.

### I. The anatomy of a ministry is our topic today.

#### A. A friend of mine serves on the board of several missions organizations.

1. He doesn't speak much but he is insightful, asking about the bottom line on issues.
2. What's the bottom line of the Christian life and ministry?
3. How will your life and ministry be evaluated in the end?
4. This question is evaluated by three questions taken from one Scripture.

#### B. Make it your aim to present yourself to God as one approved, who does not need to be ashamed, correctly handling the word of God. (2 Timothy 2:15)

##### 1. Is the Lord well pleased with you?

- a. It is possible to be successful with men but displeasing to God.
- b. We can serve God in the flesh and please men but fail to please God.
- c. I realized early on that I am dependent on the response of people to me as I minister.
- d. If someone thanked me I was pleased, but this led me to realize I was serving people, not God.
- e. This is a shallow plane where most of us live.
  1. During a plane delay the passengers were verbally upset with the stewards who tried to appease the irate passengers.
  2. I was impressed with one steward who showed much patience with a particularly upset passenger.
  3. She later told me she works for Jesus Christ, and every day she prays for opportunities to witness for Christ by words and by actions.
- f. We will all stand before the Lord to give an account of our lives.

- g. If we don't have the right perspective we will be more concerned with what people say to us than what Christ says.
- h. Jesus was pleasing to the Father, delighting to do his will, and Jesus delighted in the will of his Father.
- i. Have you ever realized that notable leaders will be demoted in the kingdom of God and that little known servants now will eventually be promoted in the kingdom?
- j. God looks for those who will serve wholeheartedly in whatever position they are placed.
- k. We become the products of what we read, so I want to recommend three books.
  - 1. J. D. Philips' *Your God is too Small*.
  - 2. A. W. Tozer's *The Knowledge of the Holy*.
  - 3. J. I. Packer's *Knowing God*.

2. Is the work you do well done?

- a. This involves the pursuit of excellence, as a workman who does not need to be ashamed.
- b. People with gifts tend to arise rather than develop.
  - 1. Michelangelo destroyed art work that was not right.
  - 2. Many students are like Niagara Falls, where the power goes over the precipice.
- c. Why will some people be ashamed workmen?
  - 1. Operating without standards;
    - i. Allowing the culture to flow into your life.
    - ii. Mediocrity is not fitting for God.
    - iii. My father was a military man, introducing me to Napoleon, who countermanded the order to shoot a man named Napoleon, telling him to either change his name or change his behavior.
  - 2. Operating without sacrifice.
    - i. Quality work costs us something, as David who would not offer up to God that which cost him nothing. (2 Samuel 24:24)

- ii. Service that counts is service that costs.
- iii. We need to do our best work for the Lord.
- iv. Navigators will give account for every letter you write.

3. Is the word well used?

- a. This involves a passion for truth.
- b. One who correctly handles the word of truth is like a skilled craftsman.
- c. This involves three things.
  - a. You must know the word of truth, not just memorize it, and your knowledge needs to be increasing.
    - i. There is a famine for the word of God today.
    - ii. Many have had an experience, but few really know the Word
    - iii. Fewer evaluate their experiences in light of the word.
  - b. You must live the truth.
    - i. A simple but real understanding of the word is worth more than much sophisticated veneer.
    - ii. I spend much time with Christians and find it enjoyable to spend time with pagans who are real in their unbelief.
  - c. You must share the word.
    - i. No Christian can spend too much time in the Christian community without shriveling up.
    - ii. I minister to the Cowboys to share the word of God and heard a football player talk about reading in the word about how God gives boldness to speak the word to the world. This man won the Super Bowl and had a chance to share how the day he received Christ was greater than the day he won the Super Bowl.

C. We all want to come to the end of our ministries by realizing that the Lord is well pleased.

- 1. Some of the greatest ministry at Dallas Theological Seminary is done by students ministering to other students.
- 2. As we minister to each other we function as a body that pleases God.
- 3. God greatly blesses and used us as we minister in ways that are pleasing to him.