

The True Minister

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I. Introduction. Text: I Corinthians 4:1-7.

II. The responsibility of ministers.

A. There is no idea of a single pastor in a church.

B. Every Christian is in the ministry, but there is a special sense of ministry for those who are teachers.

C. Paul wanted the believers to look at those with a teaching ministry as servants of Christ or “under-rowers” not leaders who domineer.

D. Ministers were not to be servants of the board or the denomination—they were to be servants of Christ. (Galatians 1)

E. The minister is a steward of the mystery of God.

1. He is responsible for dispensing the truth of God.

2. The mysteries make life possible.

a. The mystery of the kingdom of God—God at work in history.

b. The mystery of lawlessness helps us to understand why we are mixed up.

c. The mystery of godliness helps us to stand in the midst of life’s struggles—it is the secret of Christ’s life imparted to the believer.

d. The mystery of the church is God making an impact on the world.

F. Stewards must be found faithful at dispensing the mysteries of God.

III. The proper evaluation of ministers.

A. The Lord is the one who judges the minister.

B. Types of congregational pressure.

1. Adulation, which swells the head.

2. Manipulation, which ties the hands.

3. Antagonism, which breaks the heart.

C. There is societal pressure.

D. There is personal pressure.

E. Our lives must ultimately be evaluated by the Lord.

1. The Lord does not condemn the believer, he commends.

2. Paul is not saying one is not to judge others' actions.

3. One is not to judge motives of another.

IV. The freedom ministers are to exercise.

A. Congregations are not to be puffed up in favor of one over another. It will eliminate rivalry among them.

B. It will destroy the minister's tendency toward conceit.

Application questions:

1. In what ways does the church fail to view ministers properly today?

2. Why is it important for the minister to get his evaluation from the Lord and not others?

3. How can you support your own minister in a way that will encourage him but not lead him to conceit? Explain.
