

Why I Minister As I Do

- I. This sermon will take on a personal aspect.
 - A. I want to set forth the biblical basis for N.T. ministry.
 - B. I want to set forth what drives me in this work and what my goals are.
 - C. I want to set forth some personal reasons for ministering as I do.
 - D. A challenge that I have faced in pondering this topic is a matter of self-examination: am I seeking to explain myself or justify myself?

- II. I am totally persuaded that I have the preserved word of God at hand and that it is the ultimate authority in all matters of conscience, creed and conduct. **PSA 119:128; 2TI 3:16-17.**
 - A. If I am not thus persuaded, what business do I have proclaiming myself a minister of the word of God?
 - B. The words of men do not profit as does God's word. **JER 23:32; 1TH 2:13.**
 - C. As such, I do not sit in judgment on God's word; it sits in judgment on me.

- III. Ministers are called to be faithful ministers of Jesus Christ. **1CO 4:1-4.**
 - A. Those that are called to be faithful ministers of Christ are enabled by Jesus Christ Himself. **1TI 1:11-12.**
 - B. The ministry they are given and for which they are enabled is a New Testament ministry. **2CO 3:5-8.**
 1. They do not sit in Moses' seat (**MAT 23:3**) but stand and proclaim Jesus Christ the Lord. **2CO 4:5-6.**
 2. Therefore, if I in ministry do not make Christ the center and proclaim Him above all men, I am not performing my duty and am at odds with God the Father Who has given Him preeminence in all things. **COL 1:18-19.**
 3. When I teach you things from the O.T., I strive to never displace Christ thereby but rather relate such to Christ Who fulfilled the Law's righteousness, shadows, types and prophecies. This is lawful use of the law. **1TI 1:8.**
 4. Because Christ and His work deserve all honor and glory (**REV 5:11-13**), I reject:
 - a. all assimilation, adoption and imitation of pagan religious concepts or elements for the service of Christ and for relating to God. **2CO 6:14-18; MAT 6:7.**
 - b. all man-made doctrines and traditions of religion for they diminish the word of God, nullify worship, and assume that the true order of God which Christ lived and died for is deficient. **MAR 7:6-13.**
 - c. all corruptions of biblical ordinances like baptism and communion which should properly portray Christ's one-time, all sufficient work of salvation by His death, burial and resurrection from the dead. **ROM 4:25; 6:10.**
 - d. all insinuation that the works of sinners must be added to the work of Christ to bring sinners to God in glory so that men could boast. **EPH 2:8-9.**
 - e. all forms of artificial or super-holiness that are ultimately more "holy" than Jesus Christ Himself (**COL 2:20-23**), Who could become angry because of zeal for God's house, angry at hard-hearted hypocrites, angry at His own disciples, curse a fig tree, show mercy and patience to publicans and harlots, call a king "fox" and cut through the dung of high-minded elitists with plain doctrine which the common man heard gladly. **MAR 12:37.**

- IV. The Apostle Paul is the example and pattern for N.T. ministry.

- A. The Holy Spirit selected Paul's epistles to be 14 of the 27 books of the N.T.
- B. He is especially the apostle to the Gentiles. **ROM 11:13.**
- C. He gives the most prolific instruction to N.T. ministers (three pastoral epistles) concerning proper government of the church. **1TI 3:14-15.**
- D. N.T. ministers should emphasize Paul's teaching. **2TI 2:2.**
- E. With a minister preaching Paul's gospel and a church following Paul's gospel and example, brethren can be spared from following the wrong shepherds unto destruction and also enjoy the company of the God of peace. **PHIL 3:17-19; 4:9.**
- F. Paul was bold in ministry and sought prayer for the same. **1TH 2:2; EPH 6:19-20.**
 - 1. He was bold towards the gainsayers. **ACT 13:45-46.**
 - 2. He was bold towards his converts. **2CO 7:4; 10:1.**
 - 3. His was not a namby-pamby, "yes and no" kind of ministry. **2CO 1:17-20.**
 - 4. I preach with authority also (per my Lord, **MAR 1:22**), authority of divine origin and delegation (**MAT 28:19-20**), out of conviction that God is true when all men are liars (**ROM 3:4**) and to save my own skin (**1CO 9:16**), none of which makes any sense unless I am persuaded about the inspiration and supremacy of Scripture.
 - 5. My intent is to make you argue with God, not with me (for my opinion is as worthless as yours).
- G. Paul knew that he was nothing outside of God's grace and mercy.
 - 1. That he was made a minister was owing to grace and mercy. **1TI 1:12-14.**
 - 2. His diligent labors were by the grace of God. **1CO 15:10.**
 - 3. He knew his sinfulness: he did not presume to paint himself purer than other men because of his extensive knowledge. **ROM 7:18, 24; 1TI 1:15.**
 - 4. I minister to you from the same footing. I know what I was, what I am yet by nature, and how undeserving I am of salvation or the ministry.
 - a. I therefore minister to you accordingly as one whose heart is as yours. **PRO 27:19; 2CO 11:29.**
 - b. I am painfully aware of the fact that every time I point a finger, three fingers are pointing back at me.
 - 5. Like Paul, I know I have the treasure of the gospel in an earthen vessel (**2CO 4:7**), subject to cracking, leaking, failings, insecurities, fears, etc. but the word burns within me and I must speak it regardless. c/w **JER 20:9; 23:29** c/w **ACT 18:5.**
- H. Paul was gentle and parental in ministry. **1TH 2:7-8, 11-12.**
 - 1. He instructed ministers to do likewise. **2TI 2:24-26.**
 - 2. I freely admit that I look upon you as my children (**GAL 4:19**) whom I sincerely love with tender regard and discipline, and I suspect that this parent-child relationship is often reciprocal.
 - 3. One of the battles I fight personally is determining when I as a preacher-parent should step in and regulate your lives or let the good Lord and bruised shins instruct you.
 - 4. I can tell you that I certainly do NOT desire to be an all-powerful surveillance pastor who doesn't just watch for your souls (**HEB 13:17**) but over every aspect of your lives like your personal business, jobs, choices, preferences, intimacies, etc.
 - a. I deem it better that indifferent matters and matters of personal foibles be supervised and corrected personally by God. I strive to differentiate between questionable conduct that is imprudent and that which is perilous.
 - b. God Who knows the hearts of all men (**1KI 8:39**) knows best when hidden things of darkness should be brought to light and He will do so. **1CO 4:5.**