

Opposing God's Minister

- I. Ministers are closer to God's lightnings than others. **JAM 3:1.**
- A. They are to preach what the flesh despises and this often generates opposition. **2TI 4:2-3.**
 - B. They are continual hypocrites for preaching a flawless code of righteousness.
 - 1. This fact is not a license for uncharitably attacking or rejecting a minister or making him an offender for a word or something of little account. **ISA 29:20-21.**
 - 2. Nor is it a justification for a minister to avoid preaching against his own "issues" or justifying in himself a dissolute lifestyle rather than repent. **MAT 23:28.**
 - C. They especially offend all. **JAM 3:2.**
 - D. They will incur God's wrath directly for self-muting or dereliction of duty under pressure. **EZE 3:18-20; 1CO 9:16-17.**
 - E. They are not exempt from being made castaways. **1CO 9:27.**
 - F. The greatest of ministers are subject to correction. **GAL 2:11; ACT 23:1-5.**
 - 1. Jesus Christ characterized true faith as recognizing the need to submit to authority as well as exercise it. **MAT 8:8-10.**
 - 2. Christ submitted Himself to the authority of flawed humans. **LUK 2:51.**
 - a. Therefore, the lack of moral or judicial perfection in legitimate authorities does not justify someone's refusal to render any fidelity and submission to such authorities.
 - b. Even the authority of the Scribes and Pharisees was to be honored. **MAT 23:2-3; ACT 23:3-5.**
 - 3. Hence, saints should submit to faithful ministers doing their job and ministers should heed faithful corrections from saints where justified.
 - 4. Two issues are at large in opposing the minister: *when* is it justified (and when not), and *how* should just opposition be undertaken? **PRO 27:6.**
- II. We ought not to be ignorant of Satan's devices (**2CO 2:11**) which are many and varied: moral pollution, doctrinal corruption, exploiting emotional weaknesses and lusts, fomenting strife and division, etc. These all have a common goal: separating you from the truth which links you to God through Jesus Christ. **JOH 14:6; 1JO 5:20.**
- A. One of his devices is to prejudice your mind against the man whom the Holy Ghost has made your overseer. **ACT 20:28.**
 - 1. Sometimes this is done by spreading contrary doctrine, diluting allegiance. **GAL 4:13-18.**
 - 2. Sometimes this is done by inventing false reports about the man of God. **ACT 6:10-13; 14:1-3; ROM 3:8; GAL 1:10; 5:11.**
 - 3. Sometimes this is done by feigned appeals for superior direction. **2SAM 15:1-6.**
 - 4. Sometimes this is done by sniping from the shadows about the minister's foibles. **2CO 10:10.**
 - B. Another device is to use afflictions and challenges to alienate God's people from the minister and his message. **EXO 5:19-21; 6:9.**
 - C. Because a minister represents the Lord, sometimes God's people take out their frustrations with God on the minister.
 - 1. We are warned against murmuring as did Israel. **1CO 10:10-12.**
 - 2. Israel's argument was really with God. **EXO 16:2, 7-8.**
 - 3. Israel sought different leadership when they disapproved of God's leading through Moses and Aaron. This was an act of rebellion. **NUM 14:1-4 c/w NEH 9:17.**

- III. Beware of speaking against the man of God because he does something that you dislike, but God allows. Aaron and Miriam learned this the hard way. **NUM 12:1-16.**
- A. They spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman he had married. **v. 1.**
 - B. Their criticism of Moses was expressed in their claiming that God had not only spoken by Moses, but by them also. **v. 2.**
 - C. They concluded that because they had been used of God, they could therefore speak against Moses.
 - D. The Lord replied to this **SUDDENLY. vs. 4-5.**
 - E. God replied that He had dealt with Moses in a manner superior to the way that He had dealt with other prophets. Therefore, they should have been afraid to hastily speak against Moses. **vs. 6-7.**
 - F. Their speaking against Moses angered the Lord and Miriam ironically became leprous, white as snow. **vs. 9-10.**
 - G. As a result, Aaron's attitude toward Moses underwent a radical change. **vs. 11-12.**
 - H. Even though Moses made intercession for Miriam's healing, God still made her bear her shame for seven days. **vs. 13-15.**
 - I. God's actions towards Miriam were to be a memorial. **DEU 24:9.**
- IV. Heed some things Scripture says about the relationship between church members and the minister which God sends to them.
- A. He is the minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, the highest authority. **MAT 28:18.**
 - B. He is the church's *overseer* (**ACT 20:28**); he is *over you in the Lord*. **1TH 5:12.**
 - C. His biblical rule is to be obeyed and submitted to. **HEB 13:7, 17.**
 - D. His faith is to be followed in view of the end of his conversation. **HEB 13:7; 1PE 5:4-5.**
 - E. He should be held in reputation. **PHIL 2:29.**
 - F. He is to be esteemed very highly in love for his work's sake. **1TH 5:13.**
 - G. He is not to be rebuked like a sibling or underling but intreated as a father. **1TI 5:1.**
 - H. Uncorroborated accusations are not to be received against him. **1TI 5:19.**
 - I. If he rules well, he is worthy of double honour. **1TI 5:17.**
- V. So many of the abrasions and conflicts that invariably arise between the minister and church members could be resolved by simply talking respectfully to the minister about the issues.
- A. You might find your minister to be reasonable, amenable to correction, willing to consider your situation.
 - B. Do not resort to underhanded sniping, passive-aggressive resistance, politicking to rally support for your own cause and other such carnal methods because you are too cowardly to address a matter in a godly way, or because you know that your cause will not bear examination. **PRO 15:12.**