
OBSERVATIONS
FOR THE
MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST

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PART I - Three things that you must pay close attention to as a minister of Jesus Christ:

1. Evaluate your level of connectedness to God – Ministers must devote themselves to prayer, studying of the Word, fasting, and meditating (thinking on and internalizing; taking in the Words of Jesus). Why? He is our model for life, godliness, and ministry. These are all areas that prepare us to effectively carry out our service for the Lord. We must be very careful to organize our time to become involved in spiritual preparation because we are always ministers. In every situation, we are ministers; in every aspect of life, we are ministers. We must be very careful not to neglect our callings.

2. Identify the challenging behaviors that attempt to interfere with your growth in the knowledge and understanding of the Lord – Godly knowledge and understanding are key for ministers because we must proclaim and instruct. The goal is to abound in knowledge and understanding of the Lord Jesus (Growing in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior.) When there are consistent character challenges or sin in the life of a minister, it hinders, competes with, and brings confusion to his/her mind. We carry God's presence on the inside of us; and, participating in areas that bring on defilement can negatively affect our witness and cause frustration. As ministers, we know the place we are to remain in with the Lord; and when we choose to ignore that position, we feel a grieving from the Holy Spirit. As a result, we can experience a lack of peace until we return to a devoted life with the Lord. Therefore, it is important to know what areas set you

back easily and pursue intervention in those areas to avoid the stressful effects they can cause.

II Timothy 2:20-21:

²⁰ But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. ²¹ Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.

3. Be aware of and discern the work of Satan – He is your adversary. He wants to destroy your ministry because you have come to destroy his works and break the chains of darkness off of those he has blinded to the truth of Jesus Christ. In Matthew 4:1-11, see how Jesus handled him. He wanted to destroy the work that Jesus came to the earth to accomplish. He is your adversary and wants to disrupt your effectiveness as well. He will use any avenue he can to get you off focus and to get your attention away from your ministry. Do not allow him to do this to you. Again, it is important to pay close attention to how Jesus handled him in Matthew chapter 4:1-11. He will use the same tactics with you. You will notice that he **(1)** *attempted to get Jesus to fulfill a selfish desire;* **(2)** *attempted to get Jesus to do something to harm himself and test God's protection;* and **(3)** *tried to offer Jesus a secular life filled with material things in exchange for his ministry and devotion.*

There are (4) categories of evil from a dark spirit world that will attempt to fight against your ministry (*Ephesians 4:12*) They consist of:

1. Principalities
 2. Powers
 3. Rulers of the Darkness of this World
 4. Spiritual Wickedness in High Places
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Your greatest weapon is the Sword of the Spirit – God’s Word. *The Word of God is quick, living, and sharper than any two-edge sword. (Hebrews 4:12)*

Part II - Evaluation of the Minister

Romans 10:13-15

¹³ For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.” ¹⁴ How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!”

As a Minister of Jesus Christ, it is important to build values and beliefs. This is a conceptual framework for how you approach everything in life. From this framework, you believe, speak, and live out your life. There are two questions that we must ask ourselves as preachers: (1) what is my view? and (2) how did I arrive at that view?

Point#1 - The values and beliefs are not mere concepts for intellectual processing, but must be evident in the minister’s life, thus producing a conviction of the heart.

A conviction is something that you stand on and live by regardless of ideals, concepts, theories, situations, or circumstances that may suggest otherwise, (see II Corinthians 10:3-5). There will be things opposite of your established values that will attempt to exalt themselves above the knowledge of God. Notice the use of the word “war” in verse three. This means that a struggle between what is secular and what is spiritual will take place. The battleground for such a fight or struggle is our

minds. Our minds are the factories that produce all of our words, choices, and actions. Whatever has a more dominant position in our minds will have a better chance of influencing our words, choices, and actions. This is a very sensitive area for a minister because our ministering to others is a reflection of how we think, speak, and live. The fight to gain access to our minds (factories) is very critical and can sometimes be intense. We are God's representatives and it is our duty to keep our minds protected against such invasions. Verse five exhorts us to do two things when we are faced with attacks from ungodly thoughts—*"Casting down and Bringing into Captivity"*. That is driving out and seizing foreign intruders (thoughts) to keep the sanctity of our minds pure toward our service for the Lord.

Point #2 - Are your views shaped solely by the knowledge of God's word or are they susceptible to other influences?

Our leader, Jesus Christ, knew the level of confusion and contradiction that could occur by lending our minds to the influence of an ungodly culture; therefore, he instructed us to hold fast to the words from God, as his representatives, by leaving no room for any other form of secular or ungodly knowledge. He said that He was *the way, the truth, and the life* and no one can come to the Father except by Him, (*John 14:6*). This means all other forms of knowledge in their innocence derive from the one who possesses all knowledge, which is our Heavenly Father, through his Son Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Spirit. As ministers who represent a Holy God, we declare and bear witness of only Jesus Christ as the source and pathway to God, along with the revelation he provides for insight into an earthly life. Read what Jesus said in Matthew 6:24,

²⁴ *“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”*

Notice the words he uses to describe how a person will feel toward one or the other when it comes to devotion and loyalty. He said a person will *either love one or hate the other; but cannot (it is impossible) serve (live for) two masters*. Do we believe this as ministers? Do you believe it is possible to be completely devoted to two opposite forms of knowledge and influences of life? Our Heavenly Father wants us to discern that there are two opposing sides that are offered to us as ministers: (1) The knowledge of God and (2) A sensual, ungodly, knowledge produced through a secular world/culture. It is abundantly clear that they are opposites; therefore, God is always reaching to us as his ministers to view life from his perspective.

The entire time that Jesus was preaching and teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, he was aiming to convert people to God’s way of life. Whenever you attempt to convert others, you do so with a passionate urging from your heart because you understand and believe God’s way of life is best for all human beings. There is, however, a secular culture, which people love, live by, and have adopted into their way of thinking. Read what Jesus said in John 3:19. *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil*. In seeking to bring people out of darkness, you may experience resistance and, at times, a bit of hostility. This is normal. It happened quite often during the public ministry of our Lord.

Point #3 - Is the Bible the foundation of knowledge for life?

This is the center and foundation of your influence. It will be the primary source that you reference when approaching life choices and actions, and when faced with situations.

I Corinthians 2:1-5

2 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

The Apostle Paul is an example of a preacher who refused to employ the wisdom that comes from the world when declaring or speaking about the testimony of God. He did not want to confuse the people concerning knowledge and direction for life. He chose to rely on the only person who could represent such knowledge, which is Jesus Christ. Notice that He says, in verse two, *“Jesus Christ and him crucified.”* He also reveals the manner in which he spoke, resisting any pride or arrogance. Notice, in verse three, the words *weakness, fear, and much trembling*. Paul knew that what he spoke, people would believe, follow, and live by. He wanted to be very careful about what he gave out. This is very important because we have access to the knowledge of God’s word in preaching it to others. If we do so from a heady, high-minded perspective, it can taint the purity that others need from our lives and position in Christ. We want to make sure that we are always pointing the people to their Lord

and Savior concerning all matters of life. Our aim is to keep them focused on the *Way, the Truth, and the Life* (John 14:6). Another example of a god-fearing preacher was John the Baptist, (see John 1:22-27).

²² *Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"*

²³ *He said: "I am
The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
"Make straight the way of the LORD,"^[a]
as the prophet Isaiah said."*

²⁴ *Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees.* ²⁵ *And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"*

²⁶ *John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know.* ²⁷ *It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."*

John the Baptist knew his position and where his knowledge came from. He did not lose sight of that reality, although he was baptizing and helping to convert others. He knew his calling was to represent and prepare the way of the Lord.

Our callings, along with all other preachers who lit the torch before us, carry the same responsibility, which is to represent and prepare the way of the Lord. This is why the Apostle Paul and John the Baptist refused any other form of information or influence in helping people comprehend the "God" kind of life. They were convinced (convicted in their hearts) of Jesus Christ being the only way to God. Let's go back to something the Apostle Paul stated in I Corinthians 2:4-5, ⁴ *And my speech*

and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Notice the underlined words and phrases. A preacher is responsible for speaking and preaching, not with enticing words from human wisdom, but in demonstration of (relying on) the Spirit and with Power (God's authority and understanding). This was important for the Apostle Paul, John the Baptist, and us today, because of what is stated in the latter part of verse five, *That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but the power of God.*

Note: *A preacher is a very influential person, used to communicate on behalf of God. People build and grow their faith based upon hearing and receiving words. What kind of words, who is speaking, and the context will determine what people believe (II Timothy 2:15-16).*

The objective is to help people build and grow in their faith toward God. Giving the words of God will help people get closer to him and rely on him in their lives. The preacher is not the one who the people should ultimately rely upon. God is their source, not him. The preacher's responsibility is to focus and direct people toward God, through Jesus Christ (the Word), by the Holy Spirit (*I John 5:7*). Neither Paul nor John allowed people to make them out to be "The One" but continued to point the people to Jesus Christ. According to God's word, people will rely on preachers to proclaim, teach, and provide direction (*Romans 10:13-15*); but no preacher can be a replacement for one having a relationship with Jesus Christ. It is important that we disciple and teach the people in the knowledge of God's word to help them live out their

faith; but, we are to know our place when it comes to the position that the Lord is to occupy in their lives.

Point #4 – I Corinthians 2:6-16 helps us understand the condition of the people in terms of their thinking. In a culture where there are various means of information, beliefs, and influences, it can be difficult to relay the message of Jesus Christ.

Our forerunners faced the same challenges in their day. Notice what the Apostle Paul wrote concerning the *natural man vs. the spiritual man* (v.14-15 below). He made a clear distinction between the two, placing them on opposite sides of understanding.

As Preachers sent by God to declare his words, your insight into both natural and spiritual things will be elevated. This elevation comes behind studying, comprehending, and making application of spiritual truths. You will notice two types of audiences as you endeavor to share God's word:

1. *Those who comprehend spiritually*
2. *Those who attempt to comprehend spiritual things rationally or by their senses.*

There are those who are open to spiritual truths (believers and followers of Jesus Christ) who will embrace them as they unite with Jesus Christ. These are they who open their hearts to his message, repent of their sins, and become born of God's Spirit. However, you will also encounter people who are trying to philosophically, logically, or humanly make sense of God's Words. They will not be able to ascertain the

knowledge of God solely through those means. As a minister, you will encounter people who are under the influence of a secular culture that will attempt to nullify and discredit what you are speaking. In such cases, do not become agitated or frustrated. They will need to be born of God's Spirit to comprehend spiritual things, (Read the conversation that Jesus had with Nicodemus in *John 3:1-12*).

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ²This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

³Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

⁴Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

⁵Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' ⁸The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

⁹Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

¹⁰Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? ¹¹Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. ¹²If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?"

As you just read, people who are not born of God's Spirit will not be sensitive to or able to discern where you are coming from because you are speaking spiritual words, not merely words from a book. God will deal with the heart of people; and as his representative you should pray for his dealings with them. Satan has blinded the minds of people in this secular culture, through the use of prestige, material things, cares of this life, and many other gratifications of the flesh (*II Corinthians 4:1-4*). Remember, he also tried to blind the mind of Jesus Christ, as told in Matthew 4:8-9.

⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."

This is his way of perverting and corrupting the minds of good people whom God really loves, but they cannot see it. They cannot comprehend a life beyond the physical one. They cannot comprehend that Jesus gave his life for them. They are blinded to such beautiful truths and that is why God chose you to share his message. Be mindful, however, that Satan's pull on them is very strong and they may put up a bit of resistance. They may challenge you concerning the truth; and this is when you must remember what Jesus told Nicodemus—*that which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of spirit is spirit (John 3:6)*.

Remember, also, that I Corinthians 2:14 declares, ¹⁴ *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

Point #5 - Our Aim is to give our lives over to the Lord and Return to him having completed our service.

The most enchanting and passionate piece of writing of a minister under the leadership of Jesus Christ can be found in Philippians chapter 3:7-14. It captures the sincerity of a devoted life with Christ along with apprehending the necessary knowledge in furthering his cause. It reveals that the primary focus is on Jesus Christ and fulfilling the objectives of the Kingdom of God. In addition, it illustrates how the accolades attained in the minister's earthly life pale in comparison to the ones that await him when he kneels before his Lord, upon completing the work given to his/her hands.

This passage is filled with great depth and conviction that can only be inspired by the Holy Spirit. It displays what happens when God truly gets a hold of someone and that person allows God to do the work within him or her. What a joy it is to read phrases such as, *"I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord* or *"That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.* It is clear that transformation had taken place in this minister's life (Apostle Paul). He had understanding beyond the physical in seeing the eternal benefit of preaching and preparing others concerning God's purposes. He made no other aspect of life a priority over his calling and election into the Gospel Ministry.

The Apostle Paul was a well-balanced representative of Jesus Christ and knew what it was like to be successful in both his spiritual and practical life. We can live successfully in our practical lives, provided

that we keep the values of our spiritual one as top priority. Take note of this preacher's passion, attitude, and heart as it pertained to his relationship with the Lord: *Philippians 3:7-14*,

⁷ But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

May the Lord bless you as you continue to pursue his purpose for your life and ministry on earth. There is no greater honor given to a person than to share in the cause that started over 2000 years ago by our Lord, Jesus Christ. --- *Galatians 2:20*
