

Bedford Bulletin

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**“GOD
Made us
Alive...”**

**Together
with Christ**

Ephesians 2:5

The Good Minister And The Good Church

The Good Minister – Part One

The local congregations are often seen in two parts. The preacher, evangelist or minister and the members. Although this is incorrect, many see the “modern church” in this fashion. Fact is the properly organized church has Jesus as its only Head (Col. 1:18), elders or overseers as the shepherds (Acts 20:28), and evangelist or preachers and teachers (Eph. 4:11-13). But too often to many lay upon the shoulders of the elders and the preachers the entire workload, whether verbalized or not, some have come to “let” the elders and preachers do the work that the entire church is called to do. People say let them evangelize and let them teach and let me alone. Physically there is work that must be done like cleaning the building, mowing the lawn, repairing and such. I know of congregations who have 150 plus members, and it is always the same few who make commitments to share in this work.

Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

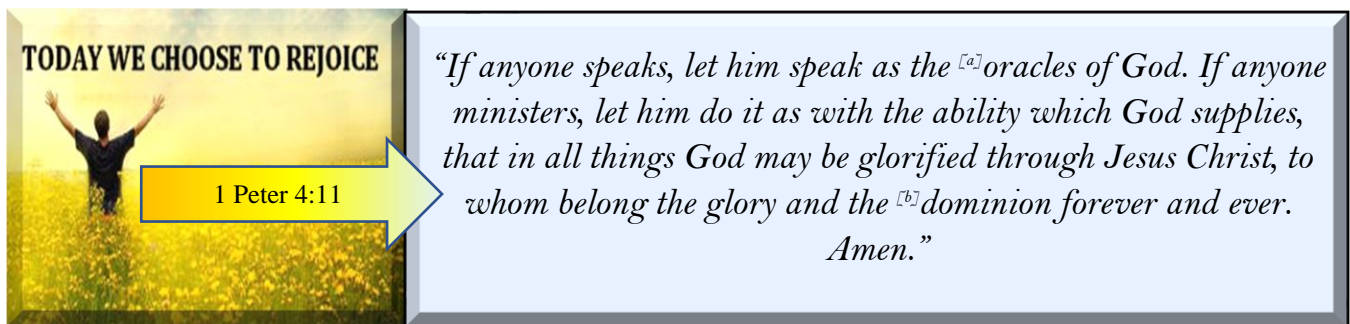
With that being said, I would like to focus on myself. I have known preachers, some of whom we have had here to preach meetings, others I have meet along the way, and some have been my teachers. Most of them have been preaching the gospel most all their lives, defending the faith “where’re they go”. I think of their example and of the Word of the Lord which they preach and strive to learn ways I can improve and become a better servant to the Lord and to the members. Below are some things I must do if I am to be a good minister.

I must strive to preach the word of truth irrespective of the consequence and regardless of the rebuke that often follows. According to Paul this is the primary work of the preacher. Three little words “*Preach the word!*” Don’t preach human theory, don’t preach the “*doctrine of men*” (Matt. 15:8-9) or of demons (1 Tim. 4:1). Don’t teach a “*perverted*” gospel (Gal. 1:6-10). No, Paul said, “*Preach the Word!*” (2 Tim. 4:2). When brethren have the unity of the Spirit, this is an easy task, but where there is sin or disunity this is very difficult for the preacher. But there is great value in preaching the truth of God’s word as Paul also admonished, “*...speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ...*” (Eph. 4:15). When truth is spoken in love and gladly received the saints grow up! No doubt Paul knew what it was like to preach the word, in truth and love those who were opposed to it. For preaching he faced stoning, scourging, imprisonment and hatred for the truth he preached. Yet he still asked the Ephesian saints to pray on his behalf saying, “*that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel*” (Eph. 6:18-19). He didn’t say, Lord let someone else do this. I haven’t yet been stoned or scourged for preaching, but I have experienced hate and coldness yet I honestly can say the love I have for all the saints is not contingent on reciprocation, love me or not, I love you.

Also, I pray daily that I may become a good minister of Christ serving every member and doing all that God commands me, that I can through preaching and teaching help make a strong church. My greatest fear? That I might fail God and, in the process, fail you, my beloved fellow saints. That by not being strong enough in the faith, or in my methods of teaching brethren may not be encouraged to grow in the faith and good works (Tit. 3:8). Paul said Timothy, “*If you instruct the*

brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ...” (1 Tim. 4:6). Therefore, a good minister will make every effort to instruct brethren in doctrine. I forget and need reminding, and more than some of you, but we all need reminding from time to time. Since we forget so soon, we often need reminders, to be, “...*nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine...*” (1 Tim. 4:6), and before Peter’s death he told the saints, “*For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth*” (2 Pet. 1:12). Reminded of the power of God, of the saving blood of our Lord Jesus, of the need for daily Bible studies, of the need to love one another, of the need to assemble, and of the work of the church. So, do not get upset when you are instructed and reminded of your duties.

Something Peter said is often in my thoughts that as a minister, and a loving brother I need to stir you up. He wrote, “*Yes, I think it is right...to stir you up by reminding you*” (2 Pet. 1:13; See also 3:1). Many things need to be stirred up to stay



“good”. Paint needs to be stirred often or the color pigment settles to the bottom and the color will change. You must stir your sauce frequently while cooking or it will burn. In Peter’s second letter he wrote, “*Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder)*” (3:1). The Hebrew writer: “...*consider one another in order to stir up love and good works*” (Heb. 10:24, NKJV). The word translated “*stir*” is [paroxusmos, παροξυσμός]. According to Thayer’s it carries the meaning of “an inciting, incitement: (A. V. to provoke unto love)”. Paul, the inspired ambassador of Christ saw need to remind Timothy, “...*stir up the gift of God which is in you...*” (2 Tim. 1:6). Spiritually all of us need a good stirring up from time to time so that we don’t get settled and change our color, and so that we don’t burn! Right?

Some things I avoid to keep-my-course-true. I know of preachers who somehow are able to be involved in everything that is going on among brethren! An outing, if a group of members on Friday eat and play games, a cookout, they’re there. I see their posts on Facebook all the time, and wonder how they do it, how juggle time for

sermons and to go out and evangelize? Listen now carefully, I am “NOT” implying that preachers who can manage their time and enjoy all these things are in any way sinning, because they are not. I am saying I can’t, my brain has limited capacity and as I would like to be a part of everything, with every member, I know it would eventually hinder my studies, and frustrate my effectiveness. Paul told the preacher Timothy: “...*exercise yourself toward godliness*” (1 Tim. 4:7). For me to stay the course, I need to study daily, learning and doing my best to be ready to give answers (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 3:15). To evangelize not keep silent (Luke 19:40). I need to go out and tell others about Jesus (Matt. 28:19; Mk. 5:19; Lk. 7:22). For me to be a good a preacher and evangelist every minute of every day must be redeemed (Col. 4:5; Eph. 5:16).

Some things we just need to flee from and some things we need to pursue. Like Joseph, preachers need to flee from sin (Gen. 39:7-12) and as Paul wrote, “...*flee from idolatry...*” (1 Cor. 10:14). Then we must “*pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace*” (2 Tim. 2:22). “...*pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness*” (1 Tim. 6:11), “*Pursue peace with all people, and holiness...*” (Heb. 12:14). A good minister strives to do these things!

I must try my best to be balanced in my preaching. Sadly, too many today only want to hear what is soft, uplifting and positive and get indignant when a preacher speaks about sin. But both positive and negative preaching is necessary and commanded. In the Old Testament Jehovah told Jeremiah: “*See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant.*” (Jer. 1:10). Notice that Jehovah instructed 4 negatives and 2 positives! In the New Testament Paul charged Timothy: “...*Convince, rebuke, exhort*” (2 Tim. 4:2). Two negatives and one positive! We could say, “we should be glad then, for the Lord has made it easier on us”.

Final thought, almost everything in this article can and should be applied to every child of God, whether you are a preacher or not. Every member of the body should strive to live by these standards so that, we all glorify the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Love

David Scarpino

“If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.” (1 Timothy 4:6)

Come Worship with Us!!!



Times of Our Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	9:50 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:30 PM

What Must I Do to Be Saved?

1. Hear the gospel -----John 6:45; Romans 10:17
2. Believe the gospel -----John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6
3. Repent of sins -----Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30
4. Confess Christ -----Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized -----Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38
6. Remain faithful unto and until death -----Revelation 2:10; Matthew 10:22