

Authority and Ministry

Definition

AUTHOR'ITY, n. [L. auctoritas.]

Legal power; or a right to command or to act; as the authority of a prince over subjects, and of parents over children. Power; rule; sway.

Testimony; witness; or the person who testifies; as, the Gospels or the evangelists are our authorities for the miracles of Christ.

The only person who can authorise ministry is God. Others may be delegated the right to authorise ministry by God but if God has not authorised the ministry, either directly or indirectly through delegated people, it is not His ministry.

MIN'ISTRY, n. [L. ministerium.] The office, duties or functions of a subordinate agent of any kind.

Ecclesiastical function; agency or service of a minister of the gospel or clergyman in the modern church, or of priests, apostles and evangelists in the ancient. Acts 1. Rom 12. 2 Tim 4. Num 4.

Business; employment.

You must be authorised by God for any ministry you do. If He has not authorised the ministry then it is not of Him but of man.

Authority exercised properly does not force you to do things. It asks you to do them. If you respect their authority you will do what they ask.

God never forces us to do things. He asks us too.

We then must consider the results of doing or not doing the activity God requested and according to what we consider the benefit to us our response will be determined.

This is why faith is required to see the benefits of obeying God because they may not be visible in earthly eyes.

This is why service correctly done to God in the right attitudes is so important in the eyes of God because it is done voluntary and out of Love for God.

God said:

Mat 20:25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

Mat 20:26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; (meeting the needs of others)

Mat 20:27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

Mat 20:28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Ministry should be done in the quality of God's Love so that it is done for the benefit of the person being ministered too otherwise it is a profit making venture for the benefit of the minister or someone associated with them.

Out of love Jesus voluntarily gave up all to serve you as requested by The Father who He voluntarily obeyed. He emphasised 'service' done for the correct reasons as being very important.

If God had wanted complete obedience He would have made us Robots. But He desires our Love reflected in pleasing Him and obeying His requests of us which is why He gave us free will so that we could accept or reject His requests of us.

Service to Jesus will have five qualities:

It will be best for all concerned

It will be for the purposes of The Kingdom of God

It will bring God Glory

It will show God's Love in all that happens

It will be correctly carried out in the way requested of us by God.

God gave us free will so that we could accept or reject what He asked us to do. He desires us to obey Him out of Love for Him and appreciation of what He has done for us or He would have made us robots.

Unless a person in authority is respected for who they are as a person and how they do things and are obeyed not just because they have a delegated authority given to them service to them will not be the same as if they served a person they respected and appreciated serving.

An overview of Authority and Ministry

The Holy Spirit is the guide and teacher of the Church

He guides us (Teaches us the interpretation of God's Bible, Shows us God's Will in a matter, Teaches us how to relate to and serve God)

He empowers us (as we need, not as we desire)

He is the one that Unifies The Body of Christ (Denominations divide The Body, All fellowships are equal in worth there is no superiority of one over the Other or of one person over another)

The Father provides for the church

Every good thing it has comes from The Father.

He draws us to The Body and The Holy Spirit regenerates our spirit so that God's presence can exist in our spirit marking us as belonging to The Kingdom of God

Jesus is the Ultimate Church Authority

He must be obeyed

Man cannot modify His directions

Man cannot set up a separate system (denomination) that satisfies their beliefs or imagined differences. (If all churches were correctly obeying Jesus there would be unity and no denominations.)

The reasonings of man cannot be used to modify God's Bible, Laws or His Church structure.

The Holy Spirit interprets Bible and God's Law the same way to all.

Correct interpretation of the Bible will not cause people to see the need to set up a separate denomination.

Reason cannot be used to Structure how a local assembly is ordered.

The structure is God ordered (based on maturity, based on spiritual authority, based on whom God says is in charge for that particular event).

The local assembly is guided by The Holy Spirit not by man (which means you need to learn to hear The Holy Spirit, need to learn the ways of God in ministry, and must want to seek this guidance of The Holy Spirit).

Jesus give gifts so we can minister to others

The purposes of the Gifts of The Holy Spirit is so that we can minister to others. The person who ministers to you is given temporary authority over you by Jesus which is accepted by you so that they can spiritually help you. This authority only lasts as long as they minister to you. This relationship means you must be willing to accept their service.

All authority has these parts

For the period of authority and in the area concerned that person has been given Authority by Jesus to do this.

The person submitting has to do this only in the area that the authority has been delegated to the person expressing it to them and in no other area.

In submitting to this authority they are really submitting to Jesus who has given this authority to that person.

Without this authority from Jesus to minister in an area you should not be ministering in that area.

Relationships

Ministry is done for the purposes of God to living entities.

Physical (Family, Other Christians, Non-Christians)

Spiritual (God, Angels, Demons)

You cannot relate to a non-living thing as it cannot respond to your overtures to it to have a relationship with it.

Authority levels

Delegated (Mark 16: 17) To defeat Satan, To demonstrate the Kingdom (miracles), to mentor and encourage others

Given according to need and not desire (According the Service required to be done, To the degree God determines you need to do this service)

Designed for growth of people not growth of buildings, possessions or power and prestige

Designed to further the kingdom and not give greater power to a person for selfish gain.

We serve Jesus and through this we also serve God

Service as directed by God.

True service (Ministry to Him and then others as He directs) is a form of worship and an Act of Love.

Service is guided by The Holy Spirit (We serve as He directs, How He directs, Using His provision, Where He directs, In accordance with His Laws).

It promotes God and/or His Kingdom and not people.

Service as determined by denominations:

Requires certification by the denomination, and authority levels are based on certification.

Denominational guidelines limit the input of Holy Spirit.

Denominational rules limits expression of gifts (only certified people can use them if at all)

Denominational rules limit where you can serve (need to be certified to serve in certain areas)

Some Principles in expressing Authority

Luke 9:5 -62

You must do what God wants you to do anywhere He desires you too

Do not associate with people who are not interested in serving God

Do not let family hinder you from doing the work of God

Luke 10: 1-24

v3 The proper pattern is to minister in pairs - preferably husband and wife. They assist each other as is necessary and lead as necessary. God is their head and The Holy Spirit sorts out all problems when the answer is not clear.)

v4 God promises to supply our needs if we seek His kingdom so we only need to take what He tells us to take with us..

v5 If you are accepted by a person stay there, wish peace on the house and blessings to it. Accept what is given to you by the host as He has provided it on behalf of Jesus.

v9 And heal the sick that are there, and say unto them, The Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. (Healing the sick involves driving out the demons causing or maintaining the sickness).

v 7 Demons will be subject to your authority

Luk 10:19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Luk 10:20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Ministry to Jesus

(MSG) Rom 12:1 So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life--your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life--and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.

All we can offer Jesus is ourselves for Him to work through and express His authority through. He is Lord of all and so we serve Him alone. The King rules the life of every citizen of their kingdom and it is no different with The Kingdom of Heaven. Remember that earth is God's training ground for heaven.

Your purposes will be that of your King in heaven

Col 3:1-3 So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ that's where the action is. See things from his perspective. Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your real life even though invisible to spectators is with Christ in God. He is your life.

Then you will be open to what your King desires and will serve Him as He desires you too. You will also not be affected by the world around you trying to get your attention as your focus is on Jesus and His Things so that He can use you to express His Authority to all around you. This is the basis of Holy living and service to God.

Authority Levels in Eph, 5

Christ head of Church = Spiritual

Husband head of wife = domestic (1 Pet 3:1-6 shows that it can only be in respect of a domestic headship).

If Jesus leads the marriage the only headship in the marriage will be His Lordship over the couple.

No hierarchical structure between Jesus and us as Holy Spirit's presence is in us and He represents Jesus as He is God.

Both relationships have no intermediary between them and Jesus.

There is no hierarchical structure between man and wife for the same reason. There was none between Adam and Eve in the Garden, just different areas of responsibility. They were partners and not a Lord/Servant relationship.

Jesus and The Church has no intermediary either as we are the church. As God's presence is in us there is no need for anyone to go between us and Him. He can speak to us directly or send mature people to help us but not to replace His authority over us.

Are women equal in ministry?

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

This verse plainly says that when you are in the body of Christ (in Jesus) there are no cultural, racial, sexual or employment differences. You are all equal before Him as individuals He died for. Any of these differences exercised is from Satan who seeks to destroy this oneness in the Body of Christ.

This means that the sexual roles we have in our domestic relations are not to be used as a basis for spiritual authority as they do not apply. In other words, a man is domestic head of the house but he cannot use that relationship to assume spiritual authority over the woman as this verse says the sexual roles in the domestic relationship are irrelevant for determining spiritual roles.

Also, at Pentecost, the anointing was poured out equally on men and women anointing them to minister for Jesus.

The implication of this for ministry is that women can have the same roles as men. They can be leaders, pastors prophets etc. and not just be submissive to the Males in the church.

The only requirement is that their relationships with Jesus and others is properly in place and they carry out their domestic roles properly. This is because in God's scheme of things spiritual

maturity (a result of obedience) is the determining factor for authority and not man's schooling or promotion.

So people who are against women being ordained or leading in churches and who claim spiritual authority over them are disobeying scripture. No wonder so much strife occurs as Satan has a wonderful time playing men and women off against each other.

However, God's plan is for a man and a woman to minister together as His Character is more completely shown in a married couple than in a single person. This is why it is always better to have a spiritually mature couple in charge than a single person.

It is not safe to use Ephesians Ch 5 to claim a man has spiritual authority over a woman because the headship there is domestic or it would contravene the headship mentioned in 1 Pet 3:1-6. In the books that can be safely attributed to Paul women have equal roles with men and one is not superior to the other.

Releasing Power and Authority

To release the Power and Authority of Jesus you need to minister with the same quality of love that He ministers in. You need to also minister for His purposes and the purpose of The Kingdom of God. This type of ministry brings Him Glory.

Ministry for the sake of ministry or self-esteem meets your own needs and does not Glorify God as it brings you glory. It is not done out of love for the person so has little power or authority. It does not seek the purposes of Jesus in the way He requires them to be sought and does not serve The Kingdom of God as He desires it to be sought as this type of ministry is not based on His Love and possibly not authorised nby Him..

This is why, in acts 6, ministers were to give them selves to prayer so they could hear from God what the spiritual needs of the congregation was and meet them. Because the deacons looked after the administrative side of the church the ministers would not be distracted by this.

The Key to releasing God's authority and power is to minister in the same Love He has for the person, for the His purposes and the purposes of The Kingdom of God.

Empowerment Acts 1:8

Acts 1:8a But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:

This is because we are to be empowered by The Holy Spirit and not by our fleshly desires.

God tells us His Will.

We then declare it or command it

The Holy Spirit sees it is in accordance with The Will of God and within our delegated authority

And then performs it for God

Through this bringing Glory to God

And also to us by us being used by God.

Remember! It is not what I can do can do for Jesus but what Jesus desires to do through me.

An overview of what happens

Whenever you do anything for The Kingdom of God each member of The Trinity is involved.

The Father gives you what you need

The Lord Jesus as ruler of all protects it

The Holy Spirit as our guide and teacher shows us how to do it and anoints us to do it.

Each of these three should really be addressed when praying or doing something for The Kingdom. In reality anything we do out of obedience to God is for The Kingdom. But remember The Father is the key person we pray too according to Jesus as unless He gives what you need Jesus and The Holy Spirit have no part in the request being fulfilled.

Each should be thanked for their part after the matter is finished.

This is different to talking to them as a friend and as part of the personal relationship we have with each of them. But still they all play a part in this also.

The Father in bringing you into The Kingdom so that you can have this relationship

The Lord Jesus protecting it so you can have it

The Holy Spirit in helping and guiding you in how to relate and talk to each of them.

And each should be thanked in the evening for the day and greeted in the morning and the day given to them to be in charge of.

Note:

These must not be legalistically said because it becomes a religious exercise and God may not hear them. They must be said:

Out of your love and for appreciation of each member of The Trinity

As an expression of your relationship with each member of The Trinity

As a true expression of your faith in The Trinity and as an extension of your Christian life and its faith.

Ministry

When one ministers it must be:

To Jesus

Out of Love for Him and the person being ministered too

In the Name of The Father (The Will of The Father)

For the purposes of The Father's Kingdom

In the Name of Jesus (The Authority of Jesus)

Using the authority delegated to us by Jesus

In the empowerment and guidance of The Holy Spirit

Not for gain or reward

Desiring to bring Glory to Jesus

Anything else is of self and God cannot accept it.

Ministry is firstly to Jesus our King and then it flows outward to others.

Ministry is an act of Love to God, as we serve him to help others know Him and His Love.

Ministry is not done for expectation of reward as we minister just as God ministers to us in all things out of His Love for us without any expectation of reward. Ministry is an act of grace.

All ministry is to Jesus as He is our King and as He directs us we minister to others. This means we should only minister when He tells us too. To do so any other time may be wrong as we may not meant to be ministering then or we may not have the knowledge we need to minister then.

To minister out of God's timing can lead to the rejection of what God wants that person to know as they react to you. God can still use it at times but it does not serve Him or the person as it should and may even be sin at times where it is done for the sake of ministry and not out of love for Jesus or that person.

Service is done with the intention of a benefit being obtained to the person being served regardless of whether the service is for reward or out of compulsion. Church ministers are servants and not ministers in the biblical sense as they are paid for their work.

People in churches also call themselves 'ministers' but if they get paid to do what they are doing they are really servants and not ministers. This perhaps gives a little more understanding to Matthew 20:26,27:

But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

If you would be great in The Kingdom of God and minister then serve others out of Love and not for reward. If you would be a paid worker in a church (these are usually in charge of areas of the church e.g. worship, prayer, pastoral duties) then remember you are a servant. You will not be as great in The Kingdom as those that serve out of that love and not for reward.

Serving God should be a result of thankfulness and love for what He has done for us apart from the fact there are rewards for being faithful servants.

How do we minister to God?

All ministry is to Jesus, our King and has its outworking directed towards others in the Love of God manifested in us and through us. Any ministry not done in Love is not of God but of self.

Ministry is actually a form of worship of Jesus through obeying Him as you are saying He is worthy of being obeyed. Ministry and obedience to God are also out of love for what He has done for you as well as love for the person being ministered to.

Ministry, as most do from duty or because of the position one is in, may not be true ministry as it is based on what is required and not what God may want.

This is why true ministry is guided by The Holy Spirit and not the arrangements or plans of men, church bodies or denominational requirements unless, of course, they are guided by The Holy Spirit. Those led by the Holy Spirit are called the sons of God as they do the Will of their Father.

This presents a problem for most churches that no longer consider The Holy Spirit as personally guiding or even working in the church today. So how can they be guided by someone they are not listening for or looking to guidance from.

This would seem to disqualify them from able to be 'sons of God'. Another problem is to assume what God is going to do something because that is the way He has done it in the past. God is original so you must always ask for guidance just in case He has changed the way He wants something done.

Duties of a Minister

A minister firstly ministers (serves) Jesus and from this basis ministers serves on His behalf to others. He is not a servant of the denomination or local church but of Jesus and the moment the denomination or the local church influences him adversely so that He is not ministering to Jesus he is no longer a servant of Jesus and minister of The Gospel.

They are too:

Proclaim the gospel of Jesus and The Kingdom

Ministers to those God has trusted them with

Stand up for Jesus and His laws and not condone the compromising of them in any way

They are to live as citizens of The Father's Kingdom

They are to exhibit the Character of God

They are to show The Love of God

They are to teach others the intimacy they have with Jesus, The Father and The Holy Spirit.

A Minister not doing these is not a minister of Jesus but a hypocrite as he is proclaiming himself to be something he is not! And will be punished by God accordingly if He knowingly does not do these things.

Ministry and Self-esteem

Many people ministering do not realise they get their self-esteem from ministry and as it becomes like an idol they must protect it or else feel inadequate. Thus control many exercise to keep their 'ministry position' in a church.

This has caused many problems in the churches and anyone ministering must examine their motives for doing so (God's Love) to ensure there is no other motive such as self-esteem. There is ministry is for purposes of self-esteem it will then be primarily to meet their own needs and not to serve Jesus or the needs of the person being 'ministered to'.

Ministry is an outworking of your love towards God. The self-esteem is a result of this type of ministry. The result of seeing God's Heart and Love for you and wanting others to see this also.

This love for God and the desire for people to see Him as He really is, so they too can relate to Him in Love and Worship as you do, is the basis of all true ministry. Anything else has self and flesh in it and is not true worship or true love to God and actually has idolatry in it as we put a part of our fleshly desire before God.

Ministry and Relationships

The Bible is a book of relationships - how people interact with God and each other. This principle of relating correctly is so important that salvation and eternal life are the result of a relationship (Jn 7:3). There is even an order in these interactions that must be obeyed for life to be as God wants it to be:

Relationship to God

Relationship to your family

Relationship to friends and people where you work

Relationship to people you minister to.

We are given guidelines on how to relate that can be summarized as follows:

Love God wholeheartedly and love others as God love you. Then we will have the conscience void of offence to all.

God wants people who love others as He does and who can minister in that love. While you have offended others and do nothing about it you are not showing love to them. While you have unforgiveness in our heart to another you are not loving them. You are a hypocrite and you cannot come before God and will lose your salvation.

Until you love as God loves He cannot use you as He desires too and may not be able to accept what you give or do for Him and you may even be going to hell.

God is Love. We are His followers. We should Love as He does. Remember in heaven Love is the overriding attitude so we need to develop it on earth in preparation for life in heaven.

How do we not offend?

We represent Jesus so when we do His will if anyone is offended when we are representing Him then they are offended by Him as we are only the messenger. The exception to this is when we do not do things in love, humility and meekness and thus promote ourselves as having some part in what is being done instead of just being bearers of the Will of Jesus.

So how do we offend?

Correcting others or disciplining others from our own reasonings and not what Jesus says should be done. The Bible is the only law we can use to correct people with and not our opinions or attitudes.

Not correcting in meekness and humility

Not showing God's Love in all we do and thus causing a person to be hurt in some way.

Any time our selfish desires are the source of ministry it is guaranteed we will offend someone in some way.

Can you lead a ministry if your family is not in order?

If your house is not in order then the relationships are not in place. If you cannot get the relationships close to you in order how can God trust you with others? Pastors and elders must also have their house in order and the relationships in their house in order.

Ministry versus Leadership Qualifications

A study of the New Testament shows that the qualifications for a leader of a church are different to that of a minister. A person can minister with their house and family in disorder but a person cannot lead unless their house and family are in order. If this was not the case very few would be able to minister

Unless both sets of qualifications are met, ministers should not be in charge of a church! To be a leader, a man must rule his household properly and meet the other qualifications of a leader (deacon/elder).

Ministry is required of all as faithful stewards of the Gospel and they ministers to and on the behalf of Jesus. Every Christian is called to minister to another but not all are called to lead.

Be careful that you are where God wants you and do not be a leader if your household is not in order as Satan has every right to attack you as a result.

In Ephesian Ch 4:11 there are five roles mentioned in the church: Apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher. Deacons are mentioned in Acts and Bishops and priests are mentioned in Pauline books. So there may be no Biblical authority for these latter roles. There is no where in the Bible that these are called offices. An office is elected and may be hereditary. They are called 'gifts' to help people mature as Christians and not called to be roles of authority in a church.

The roles are not hereditary or elected but appointments by God for service in the church. They are gifts to help the church grow as well as to guide or counsel it and not to administer it or rule it in the fashion most do these days. Remember, gifts are given by God to help others and not to rule them.

Eph 4:11-12) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

There were no worship leaders, church secretary or other roles appointed as the deacons would have done all this and should be the people doing these things. (along with the elders as appropriate). Pastors should be pastoring and not administrating as that is not their function! Neither is administration a function of the other four roles mentioned in Ephesians.

The role of a Minister

A (Pastor) minister's role is to guide and lead by example. The moment they start to control they have stepped out of their calling and have set up a Nicolaitan system which Jesus hates. They are to teach and demonstrate spiritual things and not physical things as their role is spiritual.

Deacons look after physical things in an ekklesia under the guidance of a minister (if needed). God has made this separation so that pastors will not be distracted or burdened from their spiritual roles by the 'cares of the world'.

When this arrangement is not adhered too all the ekklesia suffers and disorder occurs (a lack of God's order) and the work of God is not done as it should be as the pastors are not spending the time they should be in prayer and hearing what God wants, dialoguing with God about things He wants done as well as what to do about problems the ekklesia and its members have.

This division was known in the Old Testament where the spiritual leaders did not do the day to day running of things but concentrated on the spiritual side of things (Ex 18:1-27, Du 1:1-18, Nu 10:29). This division is reflected in the New Testament by those that ministered in spiritual things and those that did the day to day running of things.

in Acts 6 this division is dealt with:

Act 6:2 - 4 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

There are categories mentioned here:

Those who the spiritual leaders, gave themselves to waiting on God for His direction.

Those who were involved with the 'day to day' running of the group gave themselves to serving others in this capacity.

The people ministering in the spiritual side of things have four main functions:

To teach about Jesus and His requirements

To teach others how to live as a Citizen of The Kingdom of God

To teach others to go out and do work Jesus has called them too

To comfort and counsel those who need it.

Because there roles are not observed and a minister in a church holds all power he does not do the work he should usually do.

Are these roles in heaven?

People who have been to heaven have not seen these roles in heaven. All are ministers and Jesus is the leader. These roles are no longer relevant in heaven. There are teachers in heaven but all are pastors in a sense, caring for the welfare of each other. Evangelists, apostles and prophets are no longer necessary there. It is interesting that the two roles of service remaining are the only ones left in heaven.

Summary of Roles

Ministry or Role	Area allocated to minister in	Relationship to Church	Duties
Apostle	Global	Ministry to the whole body	Set up Churches
Prophets	Global	Ministry to the whole body	Guide and encourage the Body
Evangelists	Global	Ministry to non-Christians	Reach the lost outside the body
Bishop (Senior Pastor)	Local area of Churches	Ministry to pastors in the local area	Oversight of local pastors - meet their spiritual needs
Pastor	Local Church	Pastor the Ekklessia	Meet the spiritual needs of the local Ekklessia especially elders
Teacher	Local Church	Teach the people in the church how to live The Christian life	Meet their spiritual knowledge needs
Elders	Local Church	Assist the Pastor in spiritual matters	Meet the spiritual needs of the people entrusted to them
Deacons	Local Church	Serve in the administration of and physical day-to-day running of the church	Meet the physical need so the people of the church at all levels
Fellow Helpers	No recognized ministry	Mature Christians using their gifts	Assist fellow member of The Body
Babes in Christ	Unable to minister	Immature Christians learning about how to live The Christian life	Learn from whoever God places there to teach them

The above are the stated ministry roles in the New Testament either in the writings of the apostles. Nowhere is there mention of theological colleges, seminaries or missionary boards or of globally or even county wide central administration. Just Holy Spirit led people training others as they lived with them in the way they were trained..

On Leadership

What is a leader? As we are talking about a Christian leader we are discussing spiritual things so the qualifications of God need to be examined.

A leader:

Is appointed by God (Ps 75:-6,7)

Is led by The Holy Spirit (Rom 8. 4) and

Is an adopted son of God living in obedience to God (Jn 4:!5) and doing His Will in all things.

His objectives are to disciple people who will be able to become leaders (2 Tim 2:2) and who will raise others to become leaders.

His family must be in order

God must be central to all He does

He must be a mature example for all to follow.

He serves Jesus and no one else, not even Himself!

What does a leader do?

We are told in Acts 6:I-7 that the apostles (the leaders) gave themselves to praying fasting and the ministry of The Word while general administration and the day-to-day running at the church was given to the deacons.

So what exactly are these three things a leader does?

Prayer is more than just asking for the needs of themselves and others. These leaders walk in constant fellowships and dialogue with God, and as they pour out to Him the problems of the people they shepherd God tells them what to do to help them.

Fasting, in the eyes of God is not from food but from the things the world offers (Is 58:5-6). It is part of the pursuit of holiness and is not separate from it. While they separate themselves from Satan and the his world system they will not separate themselves from the Spiritual battle with the world and the rescuing of people from it spiritually, either as evangelism or deliverance.

The ministry of the Word is the doing for another (on the behalf of Jesus and out of love for Him and they) what Jesus wants done for that person . It is not just preaching or teaching for the sake of knowledge. It is saying and doing what Jesus asks them to do so it has the power and authority of Jesus behind it!

It is the ministry of Jesus, the Logos, The Word, the expression of God.

They focus on Jesus and how to have a salvation relationship with Him rather than on knowledge about the words of the Bible so that their words have authority and power as Jesus is their focus and not just knowledge about Him.

Note: Jesus told someone that 80% of Christians would not go up in the rapture because they knew about Him but did not have a relationship with Him (Jn 17:3)

Their life is continual worship to Jesus by their continual submissiveness to His Will (Rom 2:3) and they minister in humility having a true and proper perspective of their relationship to God! They look above to the things of God as they know their eternal future is tied up with them so their life is continual focus on God and the things He lovingly asks them to do (Col 3:3).-

They willing sacrifice their own life for Jesus as they love Him (Phil 2:8) and trust that He will reward them (Rom 8:28, Heb11:6). Reward is not their motivation though, their love and gratitude to Jesus for what He did for them drives them. They have been with Jesus in the dark night of the soul and have seen His Love and deliverance out of this and their subsequent love for Him drives them to tell others so they too can mature and relate to Him as they do!

They love as God Loves and desire to see fulfilled what He wants and long for His Kingdom to be established on earth and for all to be free from Satan and his ravages!

They are one with Him in spirit and heart and are willing vessels for Him to work through and use regardless of the cost to them or their self. They trust God's Love and know He will never abuse them but only ever work for their good so they uncomplainingly endure what He puts them through for the resultant good it will bring to others.

Their life is Jesus and none but He can truly satisfy their heart so Satan cannot corrupt them and they destroy His works and he cannot stop them as Jesus is behind them in all they do! You want to be a leader and do great things for God? Then count the cost. It is every thing you have including yourself.

Leaders should pray and minister the word and concentrate on the people God has given them to train so they will go and train others and not head organizations and administer them so that the gifts that made them leaders are no longer of primary importance.

There should be no organization with the leader at the top as a figurehead or focus.. He is there to consult with and minister to those he has been given to train and not promote an organization and what it offers. He should be promoting only Jesus. After all, they are only there because of what Jesus has done for them and can take no glory for what they do because they have only been faithful servants doing what another has organized and brought into existence through them.

The objective of leader or teacher is to make them self redundant so that his disciples are self-sufficient and only occasionally need to consult him over matters. This means they are trained to go out and train others as he has trained them and then if he leaves he can easily be replaced by one trained to do so.

The moment an organizational or denominational structure is set up this is broken as people serve the organization and not Jesus and seek to promote the organization or denomination and not Jesus.

Leaders are not there to promote organizations or their materials. They are there to promote Jesus and his Kingdom. To promote anything else is to make these things promoted into an idol unless these things help people get closer to Jesus or promote His Kingdom. If they are not promoting Jesus and His Kingdom and helping people draw closer to Jesus then they have lost their focus and purpose.

This loss of focus occurs as they do not understand The Kingdom and their role in The Kingdom. They also do not understand Matthew 6:33 and its principles. They also do not understand the function of the church which was a place of fellowship and not a regimented social group. The sooner churches get back to the principles of the early church the sooner the members will be able to minister to each other as Jesus desires them too and the sooner will the work of Jesus get done.

Leaders are stewards of whatever has been trusted to them by God and thus are not owners. Thus the need to devote themselves to prayer and dialoguing with The Holy Spirit to be able to hear the owners instructions as to what to do with the property they have been trusted with.

Limitations of Ministry

People specialize as they misunderstand anointing and the so called fivefold office. They limit themselves to one of these 'offices' and do not work on other areas. An example are prophets who ignore evangelism, teaching and pastoring as they are 'prophets'.

You have the fullness of Jesus and The Holy Spirit so all these roles are in you but in different proportions and God will use them according to His need and not what we declare we do. That is one reason the church has been so limited as people are either afraid to move out of their 'role'

or don't know how too.

This fear or lack of interest in learning more of the giftings or not using those you have that Jesus has given you dishonours God.

Anointing is for ministry as God asks us to minister and not as we believe we should minister and thus limit ourselves accordingly. True that one 'office' will be stronger than another but all should be able to pastor, evangelize and teach in a way as required by God. Anointing (authority) is given as people need it not as they think they should have it.

People also go through stages as they mature. Their giftings increase and mature as they grow as a Christian.

We should always be ready to give a basic account of the hope that is in us (being with Jesus in heaven) as well as how that hope arose (the Gospel), guiding people to that hope and how to live in that hope (teaching and Evangelism) removing hindrances from their former lifestyle (deliverance and healing) and comforting them in trials as they mature (pastor).

"Despise not small things" (Zech 4:10)

We are called to do what God gives us. We are not to look at what others do and compare our task to theirs as He is in charge of others and they are doing what He has directed them to do. We will not be accountable for what they do but only for what we are given to do or do not do.

God does not have to give us anything to do so that everything He gives you is a privilege out of Love for us so that we will grow and mature as we need too to get to heaven.

Our focus should be on Jesus and His requirements of us and not what He requires of others. Each of us has our own personal plan formulated by Jesus for our best and to look at the plan He has made for another and compare it to our own is to be dissatisfied with His Love, Control and Plan for you. It is also a form of idolatry.

We will be judged for what we did with what He gave us and not what another had we did not have.

Phil 2:4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

This verse would seem to imply we look at others work. This is a special case as we look to their labours to see if God wants us to help them and not just to compare their endeavours to ours for purposes of superiority or self-esteem.

Ministry - purpose of

The purpose of the ministry is not to teach theology but an appreciation of the Love of God, an appreciation of the way God works in the life of people, an appreciation of whom God is as well as helping them endure, increase their faith and obedience as well as mature in their relationship with God. It is not theology but will include understanding about God for those who are interest in this and will also, at the same time as giving this understanding of 'basic theology'. It will also teach about God's Love and Character and increase the faith of those being taught.

The purpose of ministry is to teach people:

How to relate to God,

How to relate to each other,

How to be good stewards of all God has given them,

What God has done for them

What God requires of them as well as A proper perspective of who they are in Jesus.

They are also to train others how to teach and do these things (2 Tim 2:2).

Central to this will be the Love and Compassion of God.

They are also a comforter bringing the comfort of God to all who need it and encouraging them through times of trials.

Theology for the sake of theology is a waste of time. It is only as the principles of Christianity are applied does it have any meaning. Otherwise it may as well be religious philosophy - words of 'knowledge' but useless to get you to heaven and to develop a relationship with God. Besides, the devil knows theology and the Bible better than any living person but He does not know Jesus in a personal relationship and rejects His authority which is why he is in hell!

Remember that the first temptation was the promise of knowledge at the expense of their spiritual relationship with God.

You do not go to heaven because you know about God. You go to heaven because you have a living, personal, relationship with God which results in Jesus being Lord of your life.

The citizens of God need to obey Jesus and transform themselves into the image (character) of Jesus and in doing this Jesus can use them to build His church - not use just the so called fivefold ministries but each one who follows Jesus. To limit it to the fivefold ministry is to emphasize the hierarchical state of the church and not the fact all are called to minister and all have a gift that Jesus can use.

When people use their giftings for the purposes of Jesus in obedience to him, society will be transformed.

Change people and as they obey society will be changed by His church. It is to be noted that Jesus did not use institutions to do his work but people. The purpose of ministers is to help people change into the image of Christ so they are to give themselves to prayer and fasting and not concern themselves with the day to day running of a congregation.

Pastoral Ministry - purpose of

The purpose of the pastor is not to teach theology but an appreciation of the Love of God, and the way He works in the life of people, an appreciation of whom God is as well as showing them how to increase their faith. It is not theology but will include understanding about God for those who are interest as such and will also, at the same time as giving this teaching of 'basic theology', show God's Love and Character and increase the faith of those being taught.

His purpose is to teach people how to correctly

Relate to God

How to relate to each other

How to be good stewards of all God has given them,

What God has done for them and

What God requires of them as well as how to do what God requires of them.

Central to this will be the Love and Compassion of God as well as His provision for us to be able to do what He requires of us.

The pastor is also a comforter bringing the comfort of God to all who need it and encouraging them through times of trials.

Theology for the sake of theology is a waste of time. It is only as the principles of Christianity are applied does it have any meaning. Otherwise it may as well be religious philosophy - words

of 'knowledge' but useless to get you to heaven and a relationship with God.

The calling of a minister

Jesus is the King, the one who calls people to serve Him, and tells them where to go, how to serve Him as well as when to serve Him. Unless you are led by The Holy Spirit this cannot occur and reason and qualifications will be used to send people to minister to a church and not who God says should be there. The work of Jesus may get done but not as He would want it and it will not be as it should usually or prospered as it should be as His blessing cannot be on something that is not in His Will.

You can rationalise all you want that God allowed it because it has happened but it happened because His Will was ignored and it is His permissively Will and not His perfect Will that is in effect. There may be blessing but not as it should be.

The Purpose of a Minister

The purpose of a minister is to mature people to the level Jesus wants them to so that they can do the work of Jesus and can then go out and do the same with others. In a sense the minister makes himself redundant and is retained as a mentor and no longer a discipler. A minister in leadership not doing this is not doing the work of Jesus.

2 Tim 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Teaching theology is a barrier to this as Satan has emphasised this so that a good knowledge of theology is necessary to minister in most position of authority. Theology maintains the class structure between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. Those theologically trained or certified to minister and those who are not certified who would gladly minister in any way but cannot in a denominational structure except in a cursory way.

This stops the Holy Spirit using people. Knowledge becomes more important than hearing The Spirit. Reason becomes more important than being led by The Spirit and being used and matured by Him.

Where are the Disciplers?

I was talking to someone and she said men had said to her they would not have divorced their wives if they had been like her. And the Lord reminded me that mature women were to teach the younger women and walk with them and not just hold a seminar and walk off leaving the younger women to try and work it out.

We are to teach but in the days this was written you lived with or near people to teach them, our example being Jesus who lived with the disciples for two and a bit years. In those days you lived with the people you taught as they were your neighbour and you did not rely on visiting preaches because the distances were too great and few travelled the world as it took so long and you could not be away that long from your business usually.

So when Jesus said 'teach' it meant live with and disciple not have a seminar then move on. So where are these disciplers today or do most ignore 2 Tim 2:2, the advice Paul gave to Timothy in regard to ministry training of people? Which was to train others so you are no longer needed by them. A good teacher ends up making himself redundant

When the church brings back 'parents in the Lord' who will disciple and walk alongside those they are given responsibility for, teaching them how to fulfill their roles in the marriage and deliverance is practiced on those that need it then the church will grow and there will be fewer divorces. If proper Lordship is in place and they are led by The Holy Spirit here will no longer be divorces in the church.

Stewardship of Ministry

Ministers are stewards of the service they are to give others and will give an account of this to God when they face Him for judgement of their life. They are servants and this the ministry God has given to them.

In reality we do not own anything as God made all things and so owns them. So in reality all we do is a form of stewardship which means we need to be able to hear the Holy Spirit so God can guide us to use what He has given us in the way He desires us to use them.

Why minister?

Out of Love for Jesus- you want everyone to know about this wonderful friend and Saviour as well as what He has done for them and to have the freedom from the ravages of Satan's kingdom that Jesus offers to all!

As Good citizens of The Kingdom of God you tell others about your King and His Kingdom and what He has done for you and can do for them.

As a good citizen of The Kingdom of God you set free people from the kingdom of darkness and heal the hurts they have from that kingdom.

Many ministers do not really minister that much. They are more like deacons or professional administrators, like firemen putting out spiritual spot fires between the members, elders and keeping relationships smooth other churches in their denomination. Any minister not giving themselves completely to prayer and fasting and the ministry of The Word are behaving like deacons and are not following the patterns in Acts.

Who can minister?

I use to say that ministry was to Jesus and then from him to others but I realise that is only half the story.

Jesus said if you loved Him to keep His commandments - in other words to do His will. Ministry is doing His will. So ministry is firstly, to be done out of Love to Jesus for what He has done for you and then out of love for the child of The Father you are ministering too. Any other motive for ministry is wrong.

You should not minister because you are paid too or it is expected in your position. Ministry should be an expression of love - to Jesus and The Father and also to the person being ministered too.

It should be done in Joy that you have been chosen worthy to serve Jesus and The Father and be trusted with another soul to help.

As it is also according to the Will of God it is not to everyone around you but to whom God tells you to minister too.

As it then is a command from God we should expend all effort to fulfill it regardless of the cost - even unto prison and death.

Now I understand what drove the early Christians. They understood these things.

Burnout occurs when people minister to everyone, including those God does not want them to minister too, and because of this it is in their own strength trying to meet the requirements of others or to satisfy a need for recognition or acceptance in their life. This is what I believe God is trying to remove from our ministries and replace it with one based on Love towards Him and the person He tells you to minister too.

You are always to minister to whom God says too and not to those whom others say you should minister too. This help will stop ministry burnout. This one reason there are church elders to help the minister meets the needs of those the minister is not sent too minister too.

Anyone who is a Christian can minister. However, there are various levels of service according to Christian maturity and the danger is to minister at a level higher than you are ready for or have been authorised by God to minister at. Unfortunately the latter happens often when people use man's methods to determine the ministry of a person and not those of God!

The persons whose heart is to minister does not count the cost of ministry or look to any reward as He does the ministry because He loves Jesus so much and obeys the directive of Jesus to him as to where and when to minister.

The duties of a minister (a servant of Jesus and not the paid position))

A minister ministers to (serves) Jesus and from this basis ministers on His behalf to others. He is not a servant of the denomination or local church but a minister of Jesus and the moment the denomination or the local church influences him adversely, so that He is not ministering to Jesus, he is no longer a minister of Jesus and minister of The Gospel but a paid servant of the denomination (a man made entity) and possibly out of God's Will as to what Jesus desires him to do.

Ministers are too:

Proclaim the gospel of Jesus and The Kingdom of God, demonstrating its power and authority.

Ministers to those God has entrusted to them

Stand up for the Name (authority) Jesus and His laws and not condone the compromising of them in any way

They are to live as citizens of The Father's Kingdom

They are to exhibit the Character of God

They are to show The Love of God

They are to teach others how to obtain the intimacy they have with Jesus and The Holy Spirit.

In other words they are to demonstrate the Authority of The Kingdom of God and live as a Citizen of it should, teaching others how to be a Citizen of This Kingdom of God as well as teaching the correct attitudes a Citizen of The Kingdom of God should have. A person ministering and not doing these is not a minister of Jesus but a hypocrite as he is proclaiming himself to be something he is not! And will be punished by God accordingly if He knowingly does not do what God requires of him.

Can A Woman Minister to or lead a church?

Men and women are spiritually equal. It is only in the domestic relationship that she is to submit. As long as she fulfills all the domestic role as a wife, partner, and/or mother that she can in her spare time minister. This is why women are called usually to minister in their 50's after the children are old enough to help her so she can have time to minister.

Spiritually, there is no difference between male or female:

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

If she is not married then Jesus is her betrothed (domestic head) and spiritual head.

The only qualification is that a woman must not minister alone to a single man to avoid immorality.

How should we approach people?

We should ask The Holy Spirit what the Father's will is for you in regard to that person and then do it.

If the Holy Spirit is silent then you must use the guidelines of The Bible as to how you are to relate to others (in love, sound positive edifying speech, servant heart, illustrating The Kingdom of The Father.)

To do anything else is to disobey God!

The challenge is to ask Holy Spirit every time we minister or even meet people:

What is the Father's Will for that person?

What do you want me to do about it?

How does Satan distract Ministers and Ministry leaders?

He gives them administrative things to occupy them, 'possessions' too look after and take up their time or a public image or public prominence so they will be asked to speak a lot and take up even more of time (unless they are in a season where they are to preach and teach in public). By these devices he removes them from the ministry of The Word as well as prayer (spending time with Jesus) and by this he also reduces their effectiveness.

When they should be training others to go out and minister as they do, they are elsewhere where Satan has diverted them too using the distractions he has placed in their path. He cannot mislead them in scripture (unless they use tradition as a guide instead of The Bible) so must distract or divert them from what they should be doing.

Satan also tries to convince them that God has prospered them by what they do so they do more of it and desire more prosperity to show they are doing what is right and being rewarded on earth for it and by this he also distracts them even further from what they should be doing.

God's rewards are spiritual prosperity and not physical prosperity (which is a result of spiritual prosperity being reflected in the physical).

To stop Satan from distracting you it is necessary to ask The Holy Spirit what to do so Satan cannot distract you and not just assume you are to do what you do every day. This being led by The Holy Spirit will stop Satan being able to lead you astray.

We are to test the spirit behind every thought that does not seem correct or which takes away our peace so we know whether or not it is Satan behind it.

Revival and Ministry

What is revival?

Revival is the restoring of the intimacy man originally had with God. This is why the person who has this intimacy with God does not need revival and is used by God to bring revival

It is not signs, wonders or miraculous occurrences. It is the presence of God because the intimacy is so strong!

How do ministers bring in revival?

They don't! Jesus does! They preach as He tells them too and The Holy Spirit does the rest.

Revival requires warfare prayer to remove the influence on them of Satan and his kingdom.

It requires mature, Holy Spirit led people to guide and teach those in the revival.

It requires teaching materials to explain aspects of Christianity to the people in the revival. It may require people who can do deliverance and teach others to also do deliverance

It requires sound teaching of doctrine and how to live as a Citizen of the Kingdom of God and as a member of God's Family.

In All things to do with the revival:

Jesus must be central

His Kingdom is to be furthered

He alone is to be obeyed and served

Intimacy with Jesus needs to be foremost and cultivated as a priority

You are to be guided and empowered by The Holy Spirit and not by man.

Revival and ministry require a sense of holiness

A minister should be in awe that The God of this universe uses them and the response of the minister should be separating themselves to serve God which is done through holiness and worship. Worship occurs through unswerving obedience to Jesus showing He is worthy and not just in prayer or similar.

All ministry should be carried out in this attitude and should result in Glory coming to God in some way. The focus is on Jesus and His requirements of the minister and what he asks the minister to do should be carried out in the reverence of one whom God has given a great favour too - the ministry on behalf of God to another.

The King of The Kingdom has honoured you and by this shows you are a worthy subject of His Kingdom

God Promotes

Ps 75: 6-7 For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

The apostles would have known this principle but ignored it to select the Apostle to replace Judas. In stead of Going to The Holy Spirit, they used cast Lots, an Old Testament device before the Holy Spirit could be consulted. As a result they elected Matthias who is never mentioned much in the scriptures as God had rejected this choice. As they did not listen to God, Satan was able to help them decide.

God's choice was Paul and looking at the effect of Matthias and Paul on the New testament it can be seen that Matthias was definitely not God's choice.

The apostles after this listened to The Holy Spirit in choosing people (an example is the choosing of deacons).

The church has lost this principle of men being appointed by The Holy Spirit and resorted to approved qualifications as being the criteria. Satan succeeded in subverting one of God's major influences on the Church ...the selection of God's workers.

So it will be with revivals in that God will promote His people to lead it and not necessarily pastors or ministers or denominations.,

Preaching and Lifestyle

God will, not let you preach a message or prophecy a warning if you are not living the lifestyle you are preaching. It would be hypocrisy and God is not a hypocrite.

He will also not let you take the spiritual reward of another or share in a reward for which you have not laboured. That would be inequitable and God is not like that. It would also go against His principles in scripture (Gals 6:7-8)

You also have to finish the race He has set before you to earn the reward:

1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

And also believe He is a rewarder so you will endure to the end of the service God has given you:

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Why People Do Not Minister and other Hindrances to Ministering

They are not in a position to minister

Not being a Christian

Not being right with Jesus and the Holy Spirit

Too Immature

Lack of Maturity as a Christian

Not able to hear the call of God to minister to the person

They minister according to natural wisdom when the advice of the Holy Spirit (Word's of knowledge or wisdom) is required.

No spiritual growth so not in a position to minister

Lack of appreciation of their giftings so they don't minister in the areas these gifts were given to minister in so any ministry is not as effective as it could be

Fear of Man or ridicule

Indifference to a persons's need

No Desire too minister

Lack of love for the person being ministered too

laziness (may have desire but too lazy)

No opportunities as none prayed for ('Lord use me' prayer!)

They does not understand the freedom Jesus offers people

Not enough knowledge or organisation

Not being in the will of the Father in regards to what needs to be ministered to a person.

Do not know how to in the circumstances

Ignorance of the need to minister

Disorganised so lack of time

Lack of belief in their ability to minister

Lack of belief in their authority to minister

Ignorant of the knowledge necessary to minister

Other Hindrances

Circumstances

Too tired to minister

Prevented by higher authorities in the spiritual (Jesus, demons) or the natural (Minister, Church government local or regional)

The person will not give you authority to minister

The Problem with the Nicolaitans

*“So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.”
(Rev 2:15)*

The Nicolaitans

The word means “one who controls the people and refers to a sect that rewrote doctrine for their immoral purposes and had this doctrine imposed on their adherents by those in charge. In other words, a group who controlled the rest of the people for their purposes

The root of the word Nicolaitans comes from Greek ‘nikao’, to conquer or overcome, and ‘laos’, which means people and which the word laity comes from. A good translation of Nicolaitan would be “those who prevail over the people.”

What difference is there between these people and people in charge of denominations that bring into the denomination things not allowed by The Bible like homosexuals and same-sex marriage and appoint people to ministry the Bible does not consider worthy of a holy office because their lifestyle contravenes what The Bible says.

Nicolaitans are rife in many denominations today allowing things that The Bible strictly forbids and these people promote things as ‘doctrine’ using it to replace Biblical doctrine.

Jesus never set up or endorsed a hierarchical system of clergy and laity (ministers and congregation). In His system we are all under Jesus, guided by The Holy Spirit with no one to be an intermediary between God and us. God’s presence is in us so we do not need this intermediary.

Any authority that willingly promotes a clergy/laity division is false authority. It is not what Jesus desires as these people have setup their own kingdom and it can be argued they do not belong to The Kingdom of God as they cannot serve Jesus and themselves.

Most have not been taught this system is wrong and are acting in ignorance. When they find out it is wrong and continue in it willingly they then are no long in The Kingdom of God. In the Church, there are some folks who operate by the spirit of the Nicolaitan type people who will attempt to control you anyway they can using anything they can: being older than you, guilt,

blackmail, bribery, wrong spiritual authority. One of the most obvious Nicolaitan manoeuvres is often related directly to the preacher and their pulpit misusing authority by browbeating the people from the pulpit using the sermon to manipulate them the way the minister desires

Ministers are often so busy with programs and similar things that they neglect the work of Jesus and have to become Nicolaitans in a sense to keep these programs going 'encouraging' the congregation to support these projects at the expense of the work of God.

Another tell tale sign of a Nicolaitan spirit is the lack of desire or inability of a leader to allow those under him to lead in ministry or start a new ministry because they are too protective of the power they have.

A true leader is secure in who they are in Christ and this allows them to encourage others to mature through experience and to help them in trouble and failure and learn at the expense of the leader's, control, position or authority as the leader hands these over to the person so they get experience in these areas and can mature as a future leader and mentor (2 Tim 2:2).

Jesus never setup a hierarchical system, He was Lord Messiah and all obeyed Him.

The structure of the Apostles was not hierarchical. They waited on the Holy Spirit for guidance and direction and ministered spiritually to the people. Others did the daily administration of the running of the ekklesia.

They met for meals in houses where the host and hostess, whoever they were, supervised the proceedings. Mature Christians ministered as there was no one permanently in charge of ministering as all ministered as were led by The Holy spirit.

This the structure Jesus will bring back to those who minister as He requires, and who will Minister when, where and how he says too.

They will minister in houses, coffee shops, restaurants, walking, etc. They will be small groups, fellowshiping as they do this. Ministry will not be at the whim or timetable or location of the minister but as needed. The person in charge will be the Holy Spirit and not man.

The clergy /laity structure is only there for control purposes and to administer and preserve the property and influence the denomination or church has. Churches should have treasure in heaven, where Jesus said to have it, and not here on earth where it consumes valuable resources maintaining something that has no eternal significance and only really caters to the pride or self worth of people. Churches and denominations are the breeding ground of Nicolaitans which Jesus hates and as a result they do not do the work of The Kingdom and may even risk losing their salvation.

Examine your ministry carefully in' case you are a Nicolaitan or partly one so you can repent and will be spared their punishment.

Verses used for the Spiritual Authority of a Pastor or Similar Authority

1 Tim 5:12-13 refers to a situation where someone is mentoring a person spiritually and does not refer to a group situation. This is in line with 2 Tim 2:2.

Heb 13:7 This again refers to spiritual oversight again and not administrative oversight.

Heb 13:17 refers to the role of these overseers in regard to nurturing and caring for the souls of the people not in ruling over them.

(Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23; Col. 1:18) The pastor is not the head (i.e., supreme and final authority, commander-in-chief) of the church.

All these verses refer to the pastor as a spiritual counsellor and not a ruler. Remember, deacons ran the church and the pastor was told to concentrate on the spiritual so references to a pastor is

only to the spiritual side of ministry. Even then it was under the guidance of The Holy Spirit so the pastor did not make any rules or conditions for ministry but only carried out that which The Holy Spirit told them.

Delayed Ministry

People are frustrated because they believe their spouse is holding up their ministry. First of all it is not their ministry. It belongs to Jesus and He can do with it what He desires with it when He wants too. His desire is for the other spouse to be saved or mature in Him and what these people miss when blaming the other spouse is that God is using the situation to mature them more to his image as they turn their affections to the spouse and their salvation or maturity in Jesus.

God is using this situation to teach them His Love for all as well as mould them to the image of Jesus (if they handle it correctly). Remember Jesus is King and He desires all to be saved or reach their maturity in Him and your task is to work with Him in this and not desire that He will not give you until you have finished the task He has for you in regard to your spouse.

If you cannot love and minister to your spouse how can He give others to you to love and minister to. This is a principle. If you cannot Love and minister to your family, how can He give others to you to minister too!

So you need to be in communication with The Holy Spirit so He can guide you to minister as Jesus desires to your spouse and when you have fulfilled this test, then to others as He directs.

Where is the church I can fellowship with?

Their leader is Jesus

Their Guide is the Holy Spirit

It is The Holy Spirit in us that make us part of the true church not a denominational assembly

A church can be you and Jesus as Led by The Holy Spirit (Matt 18:20)

As you walk led by The Spirit He will bring you to those He wants you to fellowship with not those you think you should

The problem is most don't walk in The Spirit as they should so they still use too much reason.

It is a leadership problem because the people are looking for the wrong type of leaders - ones appointed by man and not by God!

Denominations and The Kingdom

When you became a Christian you became a citizen of The Kingdom of God. Your primary allegiance is to your King, Jesus. You do not become a member of a denomination or house church or similar except for the legal purposes of man.

The moment a minister tries to take away the authority of Jesus by interposing themselves between Jesus and you they have overstepped their authority. They have taken His place. Instead of nurturing and serving as gifts from Jesus to the church they rule as masters instead of servants.

Ministers are guides not rulers according to Jesus. They are to give themselves to prayer and fasting according to the Book of Acts and not to administrative work. This fasting is as God defines it in the Old Testament.

Jesus is King (ruler) and The Holy Spirit the guide of those in the Kingdom of God so if these are not in place in a persons life and another has usurped their role, in some way, of their rule in a person, then it is possible that the person is not in the Kingdom of God and at best they are not in a correct relationship with God.

We have man made structures and this is the problem with churches. They attempt to unify through man's methods and administrative structures and not through the unity The Holy Spirit provides. Thus reason and man's methods becomes the criteria for unity. The Holy Spirit is not considered necessary or used as a guide as the rules of man have become more important than The Holy Spirit's guidance.

So more of the world's methods are used and The Holy Spirit becomes less and less important. The successful methods of management and expansion are used (of people and assets) are copied as they work. They are no longer led by The Holy Spirit and are comfortable in the system they have created.

To restore the church God has to remove the system they have created and this is starting to happen. Churches are having problems balancing budgets as God removes disillusioned people from them and the money coming in is reduced. Also natural disasters are wiping out churches and their surrounding areas removing ministers and their livelihoods.

Jesus will continue to remove the infrastructure until they have nothing left but Him. This reaches its peak in the tribulation. We are being trained for this time of cleansing in the church and we need to be ready to step in and point those that will listen to Jesus.

Are you ready to survive what He is going to do and minister to those in the church who have lost all in this purging?

Unity in The Body of Christ

While the Gifts may be used for evangelism to show the Love of God the main reason for them is to build up and heal the body of believers that forms the true church. Man's reasoned ways and management systems cannot meet the spiritual need of the body of Christ. This is why church management programs and counselling based on man's psychology (and similar) and do not meet the needs of this spiritual body and they cannot remove the demons often behind problems. This is why churches neglecting the Gifts of The Holy Spirit eventually 'die' spiritually having the form of Christianity but not the power to show they are different to man's organizations and also by this difference showing they belong to the Kingdom of God.

The church becomes irrelevant and no longer a force or focal point of the community and what they do or believe will mean little to the community as they cannot see it as a reason to become a Christian.

The church is one and indivisible, not a denominationalised system where each has their own viewpoint on theology and denominational rules. Paul deals with this and the unity of the body after he lists the gifts.

1 Cor 12:12 - 14 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many

We are not baptised into a denomination if we are a follower of Jesus! We are baptised into the church of Jesus - one, indivisible, each part needing the others. If one part does not play its part all the other members will suffer in some way!

That there should be no divisions in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

When this verse is fulfilled then will the true church be in unity defeating the enemy of God completely using the authority of Jesus and the Gifts and Power of The Holy Spirit as they should be used.

Spiritual Authority in the church

Note: church of Jesus and denomination are different entities.

The denomination is made up of man's rules and people are authorised by the denomination to work in it but this is administrative. The denomination has no right to authorise spiritual authority as it is a man made society and not a spiritual one, even though it tries to control the spiritual.

The church is The Kingdom of God on earth. It can only be ruled by Jesus but it does have mature Christians to be advisors and help guide people and do His work. This advising is the work of the roles in Eph 4:11.

The denominations promote their denomination as its ministers are sworn to follow its rules and thus have a conflict between the Kingdom of God and their denomination. But the citizen of The Kingdom of God promotes only Jesus and His will and by this automatically will come into confrontation with denominations, unless the pastor is a maverick and preaches Jesus before the denominations' requirements. This conflict is obvious when the Bible is secondary to the administration of the denomination and things that are not Biblical are allowed by the denomination (e.g. homosexual marriages).

Pastor

The Hebrew word is used mainly for "keeper of the sheep". The concept is Old Testament and is carried over into the new.

Bishop

The words used in the Old Testament instead for 'bishop' that are relevant for this discussion, are 'overseer' and 'office'. The New Testament word means 'overseer'. They are mentors to the church.

So what is the role of a bishop or pastor?

They deal with the spiritual side of things so are the spiritual counsellors of the church but do not run the administrative side or get involved with the finances or other worldly matters except to advise what God's attitude to the problem is.

They are to resolve administrative disputes if they are referred to them as they are to give spiritual guidance in these and not reasoned guidance. God is original and does not need to do the same thing the same way which is why it is not safe to reason out what God desires but to ask The Holy Spirit in case it is to be done a different way..

Spiritual guides do not promote the church but promote Jesus. Expansion is not worldly but spiritual and administrative problems in regards to this expansion are dealt with by the deacons. The Pastor's work is to teach people how to live and fight for the King so that The Kingdom of God is expanded and not the physical kingdom of the church.

So what does a shepherd do?

He takes the sheep to food but they must eat themselves (Bible). He takes them to water but they must drink themselves (Holy Spirit)

He helps them when they have problems (As does Jesus)

As God provides the earth and water for the physical needs of the sheep He provides any spiritual guidance and training they may need.

The bishop (overseer) is a pastor to pastors (he has been the role of helping) to help them and guide them as necessary.

The role of pastor and bishop is to a specific circle of people and outside that circle they may have other roles and should minister only in the roles they have for the area they are ministering in at the time.

The Authority of the Pastor

The one verse that mentions pastors is in Eph 4. Elsewhere the New Testament refers to them as “shepherds” which categorises their role succinctly. The passage that mentions them is as follows:

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Their role is not to control but to minister, building up and guiding people to be like Jesus. Mentoring is not control but guidance which is why they are mentors and not rulers.

Another verse that indicates the role of a pastor (elder) is 1 Tim 3:4-5

1 Ti 3:4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

1 Ti 3:5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

Notice they are to take care of the church of God. You take care of something on behalf of the owner of the item which in this case is Jesus. Once again I do not see Jesus delegating his rule of the church to people only its care and maturing (stewardship of and not authority over).

How then is the church run? It is to be run by deacons led by The Holy Spirit in regard to the physical side and by The Holy Spirit on the spiritual side through Godly men who obey His guidance and minister to those who need ministry.

In a sense a pastor is mentor to his elders and the Bishop is a mentor to pastors and may not even have a church to pastor himself. The needs of the church cannot be met by a sermon on Sunday that is general in nature but is met as pastors meet with elders and problems are discussed and as fathers of families study the Bible and teach it to their children. This is what the Bible advises and the church has usually rejected or neglected.

How does Jesus desire us to minister?

In Matthew 20:25-28 He stated how one is to minister.

25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

We are not to rule others as kings and governments do as that is the way of Satan and the world system. To be great (note great and not a ruler) you minister to others and to be chief you are their servant (not ruler). This is the example of Jesus who was joint ruler of all in creation and gave that up to serve. This is the lesson for ministers and all who would minister and be great in the Kingdom of God and unfortunately it is ignored by most of the church today.

To minister you must be a servant. If you are not a servant then you are not ministering. This is the example of Jesus and should be our example.

Who are they accountable for?

Denominational things to denominations

Pastors to Jesus as stewards of the spiritual things of his church

Deacons to Jesus as stewards of administrative things of the church.

How are they judged?

Jesus said they are judged by their words (what they say) and by their fruit (what they do).

How are they punished?

If they will not listen to correction they are cast out of fellowship and given over to Satan in the hope they will repent. If they repent then they are to be allowed to minister in accordance with The Holy Spirit's directions.

When ministers understand their role in the Kingdom of God and discipline according the rules of this Kingdom then will the Kingdom grow.

They know they are not judge but The Bible is the judge and in humility all they do is point out what The Bible says and punish people in accordance with its guidelines. Anything else makes them a king/judge and not a servant.

The Calling of a Minister

The calling of all Christians is to serve and represent God, the ruler of all things, to show His Majesty and Power and bring Him Glory through our life and its activities as well as to teach, preach and demonstrate His Kingdom and all it stands for. As you do this He will give you promotion in His kingdom and honour as well. In this sense we are all ministers.

This honour and promotion will not be found in the things of this world as these have been ordained and brought into being by Satan, the enemy of our King and are designed to replace The Kingdom of God with the kingdom of Satan. Honour and promotion will be found as we serve others and further our King's work in this world and bring Glory and honour to Jesus and The Kingdom of God.

What should our life be like then? It is obvious that following the things of this world and what it presents to us in its communication (media and people) will not usually serve the purposes of The King as his enemy is normally behind their preparation and we are encompassed on all sides by this war against our king.

How do we protect ourselves against the error around us? We study and meditate on the guidelines of our King so we can see the errors around us and not be trapped by them. Because we know the errors around us we can better show how superior The Kingdom of our King is as well as warn people of the errors and lies that this world of our King's enemy offers to all. In a sense we learn God's requirements and practice holiness, without which no one can enter heaven and be with God.

How are we to evaluate our life and service? We use the guidelines of our King so that we are not trapped into the web of deception our enemy has made to control his subjects and thus have our effectiveness reduced in regard to the service of our King.

As we walk in The Holy Spirit's guidance we will avoid these problems and minister where Jesus wants us to and how Jesus wants us to. Every one who ministers who is not walking in the guidance of The Holy Spirit may actually be hindering the work of Jesus.

So the calling (purpose) of a minister is to help Christians avoid the traps of Satan made against them designed to take them to hell as well as teach them how to live as a citizen of The Kingdom of God (which is different to being a churchgoer). This means a minister must know what these are and how to avoid them as well as how to defeat the strategies of Satan.

An error to avoid

Jesus said: *"I will build my Church"* in Mat 16:18 and that *"My kingdom is not of this world"* in John 18:36.

There is an error where people proclaim that the physical Kingdom of God is on earth and that we should be building it. How can they build something Jesus says is not on earth or not himself building. He states He is building His Church on earth, not The Kingdom of God. Besides, the earth is defiled by Satan so cannot be a part of The Kingdom of God.

It is the right of the God to build His Kingdom and that is in heaven and it is the right of the head of the church, Jesus, to build His church which is on earth. What then is our role? We are to serve Jesus as directed so that he can proceed with his overall plan for building His Church on earth as well as allow The Holy Spirit to prepare us as the Bride of Jesus for our marriage feast in heaven.

The preparation for this marriage feast is on earth as earth is the preparation and testing ground for preparing us for life in heaven and determining if we go to heaven.

What should be taught to build this church?

As Jesus is our Lord we need to obey Him and minister to Him in all we do. Anything else is idolatry as it places our desires before that of our Lord Jesus. We have the example of Jesus to follow, the most perfect man that ever lived.

So we need to be taught how to live as a Citizen of The Kingdom of God, following the example of Jesus who came to earth to show us what God requires of us to live as a citizen of The Kingdom of God which is what Jesus taught His disciples and apostles.

What did Jesus teach and how should we respond to this?

We should be teaching what Jesus taught.

He taught the principles of living and serving God to all who would listen (discipling) as well as those who did not know them (evangelism) and warned those that knew them but ignored them to repent.

He demonstrated the authority, power and character of a servant of The Father.

Our lives should also show the authority of Jesus over demons, illness and infirmity (both spiritual and physical).

He died for the purposes of The Father. If we love The Father we will die for His purposes if need be but only as He tells us too.

He lived a life led by its guide (The Holy Ghost) bringing honour to The Father. We should be led by The Holy Spirit bringing honour only to Jesus and The Father.

He lived a life of Love, showing the Character of God (Love) and the attitudes a follower of God should have. We too should be noted for our Love and moderation as well as the other attitudes a Christian should have.

He defended God's Name and Laws against His enemies. We too should defend the Name and Laws of The Father when His Name and character is blasphemed, abused, mocked, ridiculed, used inappropriately in comedy or movies etc.

(Satan never attacks The Father but will attack The Holy Spirit's ministry and Jesus).

He sought His Father's Will in all areas. We should seek the Will of God in all we do in preference to our own.

He defeated Satan and destroyed his workings. We too should be able to do this as He has delegated to us the Authority to do this.

If you are not doing these things then examine if you are really following Jesus as your Lord or at least trying too just in case you are not really saved. Remember the warning to the seventh church in the book of Revelation to repent and do His will or be spiritually violently thrown out of The Body.

General Comments on Churches

When I talk about a church I do not mean the building or a denomination. I mean the people as they are the church. The building is just a convenience to meet and associate together but a house or hall is just as useful for this as the dedicated buildings and cost less to maintain. Buildings glorify man and not God and Satan uses them to stop money being used for the purposes of The Kingdom and diverting these to the purposes of men.

An example is church which built a multi million dollar church that sat only 6 people more than their old building but which they thought was appropriate for their status as a ministry when God want them to open youth centres and reach the youth throughout their area. \$6 million plus was diverted from the work of The Kingdom to satisfy the egos of men.

The Purpose of The Temple

In 2 Chron 2:5, Solomon states in regard to God "*...who am I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?*" The purpose of the temple, according to Solomon, was for sacrifice. Sacrifices were two types: For thanksgiving and for sin.

The thanksgiving ones may have been dictated in the Law and required by it, but they were still given in an attitude of gratitude (that they were able to give them) and faith. The Sacrifices for sin were for reconciliation with God. So the temple was a place where you came to God and thanked Him or went there and repented before God and re-established the relationship.

In the time of Jesus the temple had become commercialised so He drove out the commercial element. It also had become institutionalised and clichés formed and He warned them against the hypocritical religion they espoused where love, mercy and compassion no longer existed.

God's Love, Mercy and Compassion was shown in the forgiveness of sin and the restoration of the relationship with God that man had originally been given by Him, as well as the provision

that allowed men to give thanksgiving offerings to God, but Love and gratitude to God as well as appreciation of God for these things was mostly missing in the legalism of the temple in the time of Jesus.

As for the synagogue it was originally a place where people gathered to worship or receive religious instruction. It was the local meeting hall of the town. It was not a place where sacrifices were made as that was reserved for The Temple and any gifts were to the temple but because of distances were dealt with by the local rabbi as representative of the temple and not the local synagogue.

What then of church buildings? Originally, the early Christians met as families for fellowship, teaching exhortation and a communal meal. They did not sacrifice in the temple as they were the temple. They gave, as tithing was not done away with, and this was organised possibly by the leader of the local assembly but was not given to an organisation or church structure as there was no such thing then. It was given as The Spirit directed to those they were directed to give it too.

What then is the purpose of a church building?

The church building is not a temple or is it the way the early church met. It is not found in the Bible as a formal structure or assembly place. Early meetings were in houses and not formal buildings. The church is a formal building of which the only one mentioned in the Bible for worship, was the temple.

But the Citizen's of The Kingdom of God on earth are the temple now so the church is not a place required for formal worship. In many small towns the local meeting hall is also the church hall and in this they are more closely worship like the early church would have worshipped,

What then is the place of a dedicated church building in Christian observance? and what is the place of those that promote and tend it?

Well, the church is supposed to be a meeting place of families where the person appointed by God maintains order. There is no formal structure as the heads of each family rule their family. People may be appointed to guide and encourage others but it is not a formal structure as it is Holy Spirit led. The only rules in the early church were those of hospitality, love and for order in the meeting.

So a church does not need anything more than that to assemble. Any dedicated church structure is not found in the Bible. Any set building where people can show the greatness of their church organisation is not in the Bible. Mega churches and their associated enterprises are not Biblical unless the temple in its depraved state at the time of Jesus is considered Biblical.

Ownership of building solely for the purpose of “worship” or “instruction” is not Biblical and ties up God’s money. Perhaps that is why many that meet in public halls and cinemas prosper as they do not seek to build a “big church building” with lots of “church activities”. Perhaps that is why the church that tore its building down and lived its faith in the community made such a big impact.

We need to rethink what a church building is used for and what a church service really is.

How Satan has tied up much of God’s money by having a special building used only a few hours a week where the ‘church’ meets for the few activities it carries out in this building which the church usually has to use a good percentage of its income to maintain.

The modern church is like the temple:

God says we cannot build a house/church to contain Him. So we build places where we go to meet with God and worship Him there even though Gods presence is in us and everywhere around us.

Is 66:1 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?

We have someone placed in front to lead and guide us to meet God, even though God is in us and we can hear Him without the need for an intermediary. So all focus on the leader and led by them even though we are unified by The Holy Spirit in us and are able to be led by Him directly.

We give authority to the minister over us even though we serve Jesus alone and are not to serve any man by giving them authority over us. To minister to others you need to be their servant. The minister is chief and according to The Bible is to be your servant.

Mat 20: 26-27 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

Thus Satan hides the true nature of these things so people do not worship as they should and serve as they should.

The minister is a co-ordinator, educator councillor

Church Structure

I am going out on a limb with this and will probably upset many but I think many do not understand the structure of The Kingdom of God

It is not hierarchical like Satan's kingdom or denominational churches are. It is a flat structure based on a personal relationship:

You and Jesus!

All are in this personal relationship guided by The Holy Spirit so we do not need leaders because we have one called Jesus whose Spirit's presence is in us guiding us.

What we need are mature Holy Spirit guided people to help others.

That is different to a leader and is how Jesus described these people in His teachings – Servants, who helped to mature people and not control them.

The structure of The Kingdom which the church has should reflect Jesus when it is guided by The Holy Spirit

Mature people are called to guide and help and mentor others and preach as directed but none are called to control another.

This is why a person can be out of the established church and still serve God as the structure of the body is flat and they have The Holy Spirit to guide them.

The problem is not the structure it is man's obedience and willingness to listen to The Holy Spirit.

What happens in the Sunday meeting?

A few verses below give us a synopsis of what should occur in the Sunday meeting.

Acts 20:7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

1 Cor 16: 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

1Cor11:20-22 When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's

supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

Heb 10:24-25 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Eph 4:11-12 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

Acts 6:2-4 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

Mat 26: 25-25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Now how do all of these fit together?

Ministers are servants who do not rule others as rulers,= as people in authority, but guide through people through their accepting their maturity and advice (this is part of their service) because of their example as Christians. The administration of the meeting is with the deacons. The ministers are to give themselves to prayer and fasting so they can build up people to the maturity Jesus wants formed in them and also so the church will be unified and not having divisions and cliques.

The meeting is a meal to remember Jesus. At the meeting there is the giving of money for the needy, words of encouragement, teaching and whatever else The Holy Spirit desires to be done. All done in the guidance and unity of The Holy Spirit and in the “bond of peace”.

This is what happens in the house churches and which is why they are growing.

Seven types of Churches

The Subject of this chapter is the warnings given to the Seven Churches in the Book of Revelation and their relevancy to Today’s independent Churches and Denominations.

Some people consider the seven churches stand for seven different church ages but in reality the seven are cumulative so that all seven are present today. This means we can see what is necessary to correct error in the six churches that have a warning from Jesus and what is going to happen to the remaining church that has no warning but only commendation.

Note that at the end of each description it is said:

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches;”

In other words the comments are for all churches to hear as a warning of what to avoid and not just the one the statement is connected with.

Ephesus

This church served Jesus diligently, according to what The Bible said, however it was done out of duty and not love for Jesus. This was a legalistic, Pharisaic, church that did everything according to The Book but left out love. They sought righteousness at any cost and did not tolerate evil.

Ephesus was one of the key pagan worship cities and pagan worship is legalistic and ritualistic and when they became Christians they carried this over into their new faith. This is what the warning in Luke 9:62 seeks to prevent.

Love is so important for ministry that this assembly was in danger of no longer existing as an assembly representing Jesus - even though it was doing all the right things but for the wrong reason.

To the legalistic church that is run by denominational law and rigid legalistic Biblical interpretation Jesus says to remember His Love and Mercy. Even though this assembly does all the right things, if it does not do these out of Love for God then it is not acceptable to God and the assembly is in danger of dieing.

Smyrna

This is the persecuted church. Satan is trying to destroy it but it continues to suffer for Jesus even if the assembly's members have to die to uphold the name of Jesus. It will be tried ten days (God's ordained period). It suffers in spite of the material poverty it has as a result. Jesus commends it, as it is spiritually rich.

This church Loves Jesus and is grateful for what He did. They do not have much to look forward to in this life but they have Jesus in the next and this satisfies them.

It is interesting that this is the second church mentioned because two in the Bible means witness and this Church witnessed to Jesus.

Pergamos

This is also a church under trial that upholds the name of Jesus but for the sake of unity tolerated people in the assembly that openly showed they had erroneous non-Christian beliefs. This is the assembly that seeks unity at any cost and is willing to compromise its beliefs to achieve this unity. It will be the basis for the one world church that will usher in the Anti-Christ and his world religion.

It is appropriate that his church is mentioned here as Pergamos had the altar of Satan who controls the antichrist.

It is founded on liberal theology that rationalizes for the sake of church unity.

Thyatira

This church exhibited the fruit of The Holy Spirit but let in a domineering spirit (Jezebel) that had gained control of the assembly and led it astray. This represents those churches where the Holy Spirit is active but the order of God is usurped by demoniacally guided people, who have all the appearance of spirituality.

Sardis

This is the church that has the appearance of life but has nothing to really show for its work as it basically just perpetuates its own existence and does little for The Kingdom of God. It is really just going through the motions and while it may satisfy denominational guidelines it fails to satisfy Jesus and any one outside its gathering.

Philadelphia

These are the people of God who do His will and uphold His name in spite of being rejected by the 'normal' church. They have little strength, having suffered so much at the hands of the 'acceptable churches' but still persevere.

They will be kept from having to go through the Tribulation.

Laodicea

This is the church that has everything except a relationship with Jesus - thus His advice to them that He would enter into a relationship with anyone who would accept Him in fellowship. This is the worldly church whose god is money, power and self-glory. This church will go through the Tribulation and be stripped of all it has so God can rebuild it.

These are the seven types of churches today and the warning is for every assembly to keep examining itself to see if it needs to change anything to be approved by Jesus or whether is it in danger of doing anything that will lose the approval of Jesus.

The general thread overall is to uphold Jesus and the authority and Commands of God - no matter against who, no matter what the cost - and to ensure you are in a proper relationship with Jesus and The Father, doing all out of Love for Him, guided by The Holy Spirit and exhibiting the character of God fulfilling your responsibilities as a citizen of the Kingdom of The Father with all its requirements and rewards. People doing this are the true church, which will be the only one really ready for the Tribulation and the Return of Jesus.

Ministry in the early church

Jesus spoke little theology. It was all how to live for God as a Citizen of The Kingdom of God. Amongst His enemies were the theologians, church leaders and those with a vested interest in the then current religious system. As a result theology was not a part of a faith that was mainly made up of gentiles who had no theological training, but knew Jesus and how He wanted them to live for Him

When a person needed ministry in the early church he did not look for a someone qualified by a university or bible school (they did not exist). He did not look for a place that had offices or special areas set aside for ministry (these came in hundreds of years later). He found it around the communal table at their love feasts, or as they walked with a fellow Christian or in the public areas of a house.

He did not get it from people who had been trained for four years, or who had done prescribed courses, or pastors who ran a church, but from mature Christians who knew Jesus, not much theology and had little learning. But they knew The Bible and how to apply it.

Today we have the education, the prescribed courses, the special places but we do not have the miracles of the early church that had none of these. Perhaps that says it all.

The Body of Believers

Who does God work through?

The local church?

The denomination?

The Individual?

If they let Him! In most places God is waiting to work. It is just that denominational guidelines and rules often get in the way.

How limited is the scope of Gods plan and how is it carried out?

(Eph 4:16 YLT) Dependent on Him, the whole body--its various parts closely fitting and firmly adhering to one another-- grows by the aid of every contributory link, with power proportioned to the need of each individual part, so as to build itself up in a spirit of love.

Paul stated the whole body worked together not just as isolated pockets on their own. It may appear that churches or people work in isolation but those that listen to God and obey Him are part of a master plan that involves every Christian. We cannot see the whole plan but only our immediate area and the circumstances we are in. So we should not try and work out what God is doing as the plan includes His activities in the whole world.

So what do we do?

Well our ministry is to Jesus so we do what He says and let Him concern Himself with how it fits into His plans. What we do is for the sake of The Kingdom, for the building up of it, for the rescuing of people from the kingdom of darkness so they can join it, and it is beyond our scope to understand the full plan.

(Isaiah 55:8) For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

(Isaiah 55:9) For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

We may be given parts of it to encourage, guide or warn us but few will ever see a large portion of the plan as it is beyond our comprehension.

So how should this affect us?

We must remember we are not alone but are part of the master plan of God. We do what God tells us to (not man, churches or denominations), trusting His love and plan and do not concern ourselves with anything else or we will be side tracked from His Purposes.

Why is God using nobodies

People have been called to wondrous ministries and wonder why. They are nobodies and wonder why God has chosen them for these global or national ministries. Well today I was told. They are people who can be in these ministries because God alone has gotten them there. They know there is nothing they could have done to be there, doing what they are doing. So they can never say "*Mine own hand has done this*" and will rely on God in ministry as they have in His moulding of them to get them there.

He desires people who know they need Him, who will walk close to Him which is the reason for the fiery trials they have all been through where all was removed except him.

As they wait on Him in worship He is moulding them to what He needs them to be for His service so He can send them forth. Many are called but few are chosen (because so few respond to the calling) and how they handle the trial determines if they are chosen or not. This is how they are sorted out.

Those that will not respond He does not waste time with and these have what appears to be an easy Christian lifestyle. Those who respond he pushes to their limit to make them the best they can be and so worthy to be used by Him in the three waves of revival to come.

Length of Ministry

Many worry about not ministering for God. They forget the training is really for eternity so ministry starts here and continues in heaven. Beside He determines when He needs you to minister and to do it at the wrong time could cause problems.

So if you come to the required level the day you die, while you may not get many rewards here you are ready to serve in eternity as Jesus desires you to and you will have the relationship with Him now you should have in heaven before you get there.

Service and rewards for service do not finish on earth. They continue in heaven. Heaven is a place of Love and the nature of Love is service. This is the pattern in heaven and is also the attitude we should have on earth as we prepare for eternity as a citizen of The Kingdom of Heaven.

To serve with expectation of reward is employment and is not the expression of God's Love. So prepare now for eternity. Serve out of love for the person with no earthly expectation of reward but with expectation of God to reward you in heaven (Heb 11:6)

Servanthood

Jesus told us that leaders are servants and that role of a minister of Jesus, and thus a servant, was to be desired if you would be 'great' in the Kingdom of The Father.

This servant attitude reflects that of God and by this you show you are His servant reflecting His nature.

God keeps us all alive (both good and wicked) and provides for our needs. He does not force Himself on us as He has given us free will. He guides us to help us make the right decisions but gives us the freedom to reject His advice.

This is the second aspect of a servant. He is a teacher. The true teacher is also a servant.

So the role of a servant is defined as:

Assist others to help themselves when they are unable to

Bring people to a knowledge of truth of God and of His works

Encourage all they help

This was the nature of God's servant, Jesus - the greatest servant of all

The Way we Work

The way we work can be used to:

Glorify God by our attitude to the task (remember God does not look at results but at the attitudes used in achieving the results).

Prepare us for service in heaven (earth is God's training ground for heaven).

Develop skills that can be used to help others

Develop our self-esteem, as we are serving God in a ministry He has given us (He believes we are worthy of being used by Him)

Show our attitude and acceptance of God's will as we do tasks we do not like but which He has given us.

(2 Th 3:10) For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

Is this verse a cure for the dole and the 'hippy' culture?

Things that are not done or Misunderstood in regard to churches

Nine things that are wrong with Christianity

When the Kingdom of God is not demonstrated then Christianity is no different to any other religion.

When the Christians stopped meeting in public places and used special buildings they became a closed society and no longer informally met people in the public places to discuss the Christian faith as the early church did.

When they stopped hearing The Holy Spirit they became like any other religion and had to use man's way of doing things and became hierarchical as well as denominational as each espoused their belief as being correct.

When they stopped expressing the delegated Authority of Jesus over demons and their work they stopped being followers of Jesus and became poor copies of a Citizen of The Kingdom of God because they were no longer obeying commands of His that made them different to other religions.

When they stopped laying up treasure in heaven they laid up treasure on earth and grew wealthy and worldly

When they stopped showing God's Love and Mercy to people they had to find a new direction and purpose for being a church and justifying their existence as well as formulating methods and processes rather than compassion and personal relationship with those they were helping or evangelising.

When they lost their personal relationship with God they lost their identity of whom they were.

When they gave authority to a person (pastor apostle etc.) they placed themselves under man and not God and thus lost direction and purpose being guided and driven by man and processes rather than God.

When they paid others who were 'certified and trained' to do their social work and evangelism they lost their purpose for being a Christian.

When they became insular and self orientated, promoting their own church or denomination they lost their focus on the world and God's heart for it.

These are the problem with most western churches which is why Christianity is dying in the west in many places.

What is not usually done by the denominational church (according to what Jesus showed me)

Jesus told me:

They do not demonstrate the authority and power of Jesus over His enemy

They do not publicly stand up for the values and purposes of the Kingdom of God

They do not worship in public

They do not take ground from the kingdom of the enemy so the enemy takes ground from The Kingdom of God

They have given Satan the earth and all on it rather than fight Satan and increase the influence of the Kingdom of God on the earth.

They tolerate the sins that resulted in so many dying in Israel and Judah and eventually resulted in the people being removed from the land!

They do not teach the true cost of what Jesus did on Calvary!

They not teach personal practical holiness and sanctification and so become compromised by the world!

Their worship became fleshly and self-centred, no longer being led by The Spirit, as they no longer praised me or my finished work at Calvary!

They enjoy the chief places at the feasts and the importance of having large churches. Numbers are more important than humility or holiness!

They not use my weapons of warfare and so are easy prey for my enemy!

They do not protect my flocks adequately because they use their own weapons and defences and not mine!

They do not fulfil my requirements for true religion' loving you neighbour as you love yourself! And do not help the widow, orphan the sick and the needy!

They not grieve in their heart over the lost and the fallen!

They are too busy building 'organisations' and using the latest 'approved' method to listen to My Spirit's Leading!

They spend their money on buildings and personal 'junkets' and 'necessary' luxuries, rather than on the lost and needy around them. Many of you also have a lifestyle better than the people you are supposed to Love as your self! They have and do not share with those in the church who are in need.

They are too busy playing 'important pastor' to develop intimacy with me. Their activity on my 'behalf' is no replacement for a vital, close, relationship with me!

They do not develop the gifts of the people under their authority!

Unless they are 'trained' or 'officially' approved, they cannot minister in 'their' church!

They condemn many to consider themselves inadequate for the service of Jesus because of this!

They do not teach people to minister to those outside the church. but only 'trained' people are allowed to minister 'officially' outside the church!

They do not teach my people what my love was so they could show it to those living around them, and by this, win many to Jesus!

They do not properly disciple new followers but processed them, so many do not mature and fall away.

They rejected the prophets calling them to repentance but listen to those who 'tickled' their ears with promises of prosperity and ease!

They do not learn how to share in my fellowship of suffering or teach others what it means!

They do not carry out my commission in Is 61:1-3, or Math.28:8-20, or teach 'their' church to do so!

They do not used my gifts, or delegated authority, properly' and used them to build numbers and not heal and send people forth to a lost and hurting world!

How to stifle a church

Do not make God a personal God

Do not make Him relevant for daily living - only for special occasions such as Easter and Christmas

Do not make His miracles to be for today, but only for the time of Jesus and by this stop showing Jesus and The Kingdom actually exists

Do not believe or teach the personal guidance and power of the Holy Spirit

Do not make The Word more important than reason, tradition or denominational rules

Do not make the work of God personal - use agencies for charity and evangelism and not church members

Do not teach Lordship, holiness or correct stewardship (that they are only stewards not owners doing what God wants with what they are stewards of).

What is not preached

Hell and God's Judgment: We are really not told what we are saved from so that salvation does not become imperative. Restoration and deliverance do not mean anything as there is nothing to be delivered from. We do not realize our potential as we are not delivered from the effects of the fall on the 'flesh'.

The Victory we have over demons and temptation won by Jesus at Calvary and that we are their major target so that we need to know how to deal with them which is also not taught.

The rewards of the Kingdom of Heaven: so we don't know how much better they are so that we do not realize that the pleasures of earth are not worth holding onto as they pale in comparison to what is going to be given to us in heaven.

The Love of God expressed towards us: so we don't know how special we are to God or what He does for us each moment of the day. We are not taught the extent of God's Love towards us!

Salvation as a personal relationship: so God becomes impersonal to us and the depth and quality of the relationship with Him is not realized. Thus we do not serve Him out of love but of necessity. This is because knowledge has become the guidelines and not spiritual maturity in the western church. So they teach about Jesus but not how to know Him.

The Grace of God is not taught. How much God gives us and gently deals with us out of no benefit to Himself. That it is God's unmerited favour towards us.

They do not fully teach who Jesus is and what He gave up for us: so people do not appreciate His Love for us and what He gave up to help us. Thus we do not realize any sacrifice we make pales in significance when compared to what He gave up for us!

What it means to be a citizen of God's Kingdom: so we do not realize what it means to be a citizen of God's kingdom and all it requires of us and as well as the rewards offered toward us!

The gifts of The Holy Spirit and the delegated authority of Jesus so that the church is sick and without power and has nothing with which to do the work of Jesus and show the reality of The Kingdom of God.

The return of Jesus when all will be restored on earth and things will be as they should have been.

The complete work of Jesus at Calvary so that people are emotionally crippled by guilt, shame and condemnation instead of being released from these.

Does it Matter?

Does it matter how good your theology is if there is one person going to hell because of it?

Does it matter how good your church programs are if there is one person who has not heard The Gospel?

Does it matter how wealthy and prosperous your church is if there is one person who is hungry?

Does it matter how good your facilities are if there is a child sleeping in the streets?

Does it matter that the needs of the congregation are met but the wounded spirit and the broken hearted outside the church are ignored?

Does it matter how well your church is run if those outside it are not ministered to as they need it?

Does it matter?

Will it matter when you face Jesus?

A Simple Quiz

I leave the reader with eight Simple Questions I ask you to answer the question before looking at the answer on the page or even better have someone else ask you them so you cannot see the answers.

What Gospel did Jesus preach?

The Gospel of The Kingdom - He preached The Father's Kingdom and Rule.

What was the ministry of Jesus?

Rescue people from Satan's Kingdom and heal them of the ravages of that kingdom and He also taught the requirements and blessings of The Father and His Kingdom

Who owns your church building?

Jesus

What are the two main purposes of the church?

To Love, serve, worship, honour and bring glory to God

Become the bride of Jesus and be presented as such to The Father!

Can person get to heaven without knowing of Jesus?

Yes! if they follow the guidance of The Holy Spirit in their conscience and do not reject Jesus once they know and understand who He is. Over 60% of people who have ever lived have never heard of Jesus. (Paul dealt with this question in Romans).

What two things are churches doing that hinder the return of Jesus?

Preaching the Gospel of Salvation and not the Gospel of The Kingdom.

Not being a restrainer or hinderer of God's enemy and not rescuing people from his kingdom.

Why must denominations destroy the church of Christ?

Because they divide the church and Jesus said a house divided cannot stand so denominations must fall one day for the true church to be seen.

What do we take with us when we die?

The way we dealt with the relationships God placed us in or allowed us to be in and how we dealt with what He gave us (Stewardship). Christianity is about relationships (Jn 17:3, Jn 13:34,35) Holiness and Stewardship.