

“Concerning Ministers (Continued)”
By Brother Kenneth Ray
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This week we continue with a topic that we began last week: Concerning Ministers.

We deal with people. You may try to get around it, but you can't. Even if you use the Internet (Facebook, Twitter, E-mail, etc.) or use your cell phone for text messaging, at some point, human interaction takes place.

This is because Jesus is the God of humans. Didn't He say that He was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matthew 22:32)? He died for the sins of mankind. People can become the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 6:19), and then the Holy Ghost can deal and rebuild other temples.

God didn't make us all the same. Some people are good at computers, but not so good at actually talking to people. Others are good at talking to people, but not so good at computers. Stop saying, "I'm not good at..." Just let God work through you. You should be saying, "Ooh, ooh, me, me!" (Here am I., Lord, use me!)

The message:

As a minister, we carry a message, but the message is not ours. That message is the Gospel. It's not our way, it's the way. Our lives help make it real to the people that we share the message with. It's exciting to see what happens when the Gospel opens eyes. If you tap into the Gospel, and you choose to stay tapped into it, then the lights are on and somebody's home. Your light shines out (Matthew 5:16). Remember Elijah and Elisha? After Elijah was taken up, the sons of the prophets could see that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha (2 Kings 2:15), but Elisha couldn't see it (2 Kings 2:14). Sometimes you don't see it, but the people who need to see it do.

Did you ever read a book, and then go see a movie based on that book? Sometimes seeing things in motion helps you to mentally understand. I'm an electrician, and sometimes I have customers who don't really know what they want, so I'll put something up ("No, that's not it."). They know what they want when they see it. That's a lot of work. Being a minister is a lot of work, too.

Luke 2:49 ...I must be about My Father's business?

You are about your Father's business.

John 4:34 ...My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

What is God's work? Watch the ballgame this afternoon, and somebody will hold up a sign that says, "John 3:16." That verse pretty much sums it up.

Will <G2307> -- desire, pleasure.

As ministers, our desire is to do God's will. As human beings, that's sometimes a hard pill to swallow.

All things work together for good (Romans 8:28). Say that with enthusiasm. I am happy that my meat is to do the will of God. His pleasure makes me happy. A minister is enthusiastic about doing His work. It doesn't matter what anyone else thinks about it; God is One, and He is the majority.

Ministers have an enthusiasm about the whole package of God. Some people like to witness; that's one part. Some people like to teach Bible studies; that's one part. Some people like to preach; that's one part. Some people like to listen; that's one part. Some people have the gift of helps. Some people have patience. Some people are long-suffering, you know, slow to speak, slow to anger. Those are all parts.

I was at the RTC Chapel recently; I had to do some work on the electrical panels in the storeroom where they keep their Bibles. I looked at all the different versions; it was horrifying, because you know they don't all say the same thing. We should all speak the same thing (1 Corinthians 1:10), but these different versions each represent someone's opinion of what the Bible should say. If it's not broke, don't fix it.

Matthew 8:8-10 ...when Jesus heard it, He marveled...

Marveled <G2296> -- To wonder, admire, have in admiration.

He made Jesus marvel. This man's faith and view of the whole package that is Jesus gave him such confidence. This confidence, which comes from the things that Jesus does, is the fuel that runs the minister's high-octane engine. We're not low on fuel; He's got plenty of fuel for you.

We can't stay on the sidelines (Here am I, send me!); give me the ball. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me (Philippians 4:13).

Hebrews 10:39 But we are not of them that draw back into perdition...

We're talking about being ministers, not church-goers. We are actively engaged; we're burning good grease. Some want to be on the field for every moment, others need to come off the field and get a breather. It's no shame to get help. We need to learn to work together as one unit.

Does everybody that works the road have the same job? You have some people that lay concrete, some that lay asphalt, etc. What are you going to find working the road? Landmines? maybe. A fishing hole? maybe. You may also find problems, victory, and triumph. I've never read in the Bible that after you get baptized, everything is just a bed of roses with no thorns. The Bible does say that a righteous man will fall seven times and get back up (Proverbs 24:16). I'm not ashamed to admit that I've made mistakes.

There's bound to come some trouble to your life, but that ain't nothing to be afraid of. There's bound to come some trouble to your life, but that ain't no reason to fear. I know there's bound to come some trouble to your life, but reach out to Jesus; hold on tight. He's been there before and He knows what it's like; You'll find He's there.

Remember the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace? We know who the fourth man in the furnace was (Daniel 3:25).

A minister goes through seasons:

James 2:1 ...have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

Every idle word (Matthew 12:36)

James 2:14 ...though a man may say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?

Ministers go through feast and famine; productive and lean times. Keep going. It makes a track record to lean on for encouragement, and an example for others to see. Joseph, in Egypt, lived through seven years of plenty, and seven years of famine (Genesis 41:28-40). But, because he worked, and planned ahead, during the seven years of plenty, they were able to get through the seven years of famine. You're going to go through some things. Ministers keep plowing; they don't get stuck in any of it. The power of God rests on you. Why do you do the things that you do? because God's still alive and the Gospel doesn't change.

There is a question that ministers have to answer: "Lovest thou Me more than these?"

Jon 21:15-17 ...Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me?...

We answer that question every day. Ministers should not be grieved, no matter how many times He asks of us, "Lovest thou Me?" But, if we do, one of the most important things a minister can do is to know when he is being a hypocrite. We go through lean times. I've been through some. We need to know when we're just playing church. Peter said, "I go a-fishing," (John 21:5) and he literally went fishing. Jesus later said, "Come and dine" (John 21:12). Come and dine with Christ. Come. Let us reason together (Isaiah 1:18). You don't have to stay in that shape. I'm not asking you to come up and tell me if you've just been going through the motions, that's between you and God. When we are fully converted (Luke 22:32), we can strengthen our brethren. But, sometimes I need to be re-strengthened. God has an open-door policy.