



Leadership Forum • September 24, 2011 “Ministry Skills”

RESOURCES

- *One-to-One Bible Reading: A Simple Guide for Every Christian*, by David Helm
- *Liberating Ministry from the Success Syndrome*, by Kent Hughes
- *The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift that Changes Everything*, by Colin Marshall & Tony Payne
- *The Heart of a Servant Leader*, by C. John (“Jack”) Miller
- *Love Walked among Us: Learning to Love like Jesus*, by Paul Miller

WHAT IS “MINISTRY?”

From Latin *ministerium*, from *minister* (servant), from *minus* (less)... translates NT Greek *diakonia* (service)

Used of Martha’s *servicing* (Lk 10:40); Judas’ apostolic *ministry* (Acts 1:17, 25); the daily *distribution* of food to those in need (Acts 6:1); the *ministry* of the word to which the apostles devoted themselves, along with prayer, rather than *servicing* tables (Acts 6:5); *relief* sent to Jewish Christians by the hand of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 11:29; 12:25); the *ministry* that Paul received from Jesus to testify to the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24).

Ministry is *not* about jockeying for positions of influence or power in order to effect changes you want, to “fix” things. Ministry is not about being a glorious leader, but about being a *servant* (*diakonos*), even a *slave* (*doulos*) of all (Mk 10:35-45). Glory-type ministry exalts the minister. Slave-type ministry exalts the Lord.

There is no such thing as a baptized believer who is not called to do ministry (Eph. 4:12). Each disciple is to make disciples who make disciples. Ministry is about sharing the love of Christ in relationships with people. “Love is not efficient” (Paul Miller, *Love Walked among Us*).

MINISTRY MOTIVES

Read Ps. 115:1.

“I find it hard to believe that anyone who wants His glory will be long without some clues as to how to express that glory in a form of service to Him” (Jack Miller, *The Heart of a Servant Leader*).

“Getting the glory of Christ before your eyes and keeping it there—is the greatest work of the Spirit that I can imagine” (Jack Miller).

MINISTRY “SKILLS”

Repentance and Faith (“When our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, said ‘Repent,’ he called for the entire life of believers to be one of repentance” [Martin Luther, *95 Theses*]. “Repentance not only always follows faith, but is produced by it” [John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 3.3.1].)

Prayer

Humility (Honesty, Self-Forgetfulness, Demonstrable Dependence on Grace)

Love (Care, Compassion, Sympathy, Sacrifice)

Listening (see next page)

Gospel Counseling (If the goal of ministry is to exalt the grace of God... *then exalt the grace of God!*)

Next Time... “The Westminster Confession, Chapters 1-11” (3pm Sat., October 22)

Read the assigned chapters and write down any serious questions or reservations you might have. We may address some of these questions in the group, or, if you like, Eric can schedule a follow-up appointment with you to discuss your particular questions.

FIVE LEVELS OF LISTENING

Level 5: Not Listening

Tuning someone out. Thinking about something else. Not paying attention.

“I’m sorry, what did you say?”

Level 4: Listening to Tell Your Story

Not really listening to what the other person is saying. Instead, taking that time to prepare your remarks. The intent is to share how your story relates to (or trumps) the other person’s story, often for your own self-satisfaction, and not for their understanding and learning.

“You think *you* had it bad... Let me tell you what happened to *me*.”

Level 3: Listening for Judgment

Making assumptions and conclusions before you hear the whole story. Once you reach a “judgment,” you tune out.

“Here’s your problem...”

Level 2: Listening for Application

Being able to listen to understand what you might take away from another’s comments. Requires the suspension of assumptions and judgments. Requires us to listen harder. Very useful in groups gathering to learn from each other.

Level 1: Listening to Understand

Listening simply to understand, not to judge or even apply. To understand “what it’s like to walk in the other person’s shoes.” Appreciating that, by active listening, not only is the other person truly heard, we as listeners are improved. This one takes deliberate, conscious effort and practice.