



Using the Word “Minister” in the Way the Bible Uses It

Who is a “minister”? It is common today for that word to be capitalized (“Minister”), as a way of designating a title given to someone (both in a government and in a religious setting). In the church, the word is used almost exclusively as a title for those who preach, those who work with the youth, and those who are hired by the church to fill other roles. How does the Bible use that word?

In the Old Testament, the word “minister” is most often used as a verb, to describe those men who served as priests, when they came to “minister to the Lord,” “minister in the holy place,” “minister before the ark of the Lord,” etc. It was a term used almost exclusively for the priests and Levites.

In the New Testament, the word “minister” is much broader and is used in describing a variety of persons and their labors. Note that it is not used exclusively of a select group of individuals. We might most often think of the word being used to describe the work of Paul (1 Cor. 3:5; Eph. 3:7), Apollos (1 Cor. 3:5), Timothy (1 Thess. 3:2), Tychicus (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7), Epaphras (Col. 1:7), and others. However, the word is not being used in those passages as a title for those men, but instead, it was used to describe their labor. How can we know that?

The Greek word for “minister” that is used in each of those texts to describe those men is the word diakonos. That word is used in a variety of ways for a variety of individuals. As we have noted, it is used of various preachers. It is also used for “deacons” in the church (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8, 12). The same word is used of civil rulers, who are “the minister of God” (Rom. 13:4), and it is also used to describe “Satan’s ministers” (2 Cor. 11:14-15). A sister in Christ in Cencrea was also called a diakonos (Rom. 16:1). Thus, that word is used of many different people.

The noun diakonos is most often translated “servant” (as in Matt. 20:26; 23:11), and the verb form diakoneo is most often translated “serve” (as in Matt. 4:11; Luke 10:40). Jesus Himself said that He came to diakonos (i.e., to minister, to serve) (Mark 10:45). So, what’s the point?

The word “minister” is not used in the New Testament strictly in the form of a title for the local preacher at the church. It is a descriptive term of a “servant,” which is a quality that a preacher should have, but it is a universally-needed quality and an action in which every Christian must engage (Heb. 6:10; 1 Pet. 4:10). In other words, every Christian is a “minister,” in the Biblical sense of the word, and not just the local preacher. It is not wrong to call him a “minister,” but let us recognize that all of us are “ministers” just as much. ~David Sproule

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Meeting Times:

Sunday Bible Study 9:30 am

Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00 pm

Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 am

Sunday Night Worship 6:00 pm

Elders:

Clarence Botts: 509-521-3344; ccbotts@hotmail.com

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Minister:

Casey Rice

Faithful Sayings

We are in a time where trust and acceptance of someone’s word is at a premium. It is difficult to find information that we know is true and won’t change. It should be obvious that God’s word can be a source of truth. In writing to Timothy and Titus, Paul included, “This is a faithful saying” before some of his inspired comments. These faithful or trustworthy statements are always so, no matter the year, culture, or circumstance.

“It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...” (1 Tim. 1:15a). It was the point and purpose to redeem mankind (Gen. 3:15; Eph. 1:4-12; 1 Pet. 1:18). The grace of God has appeared to all men, even Paul, the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15). In this context, Paul mentions that it was given to him abundantly so that “Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life” (1 Tim. 1:14,16). For God desires all men to be saved (2 Pet. 3:9). No person is beyond the grace of God. Paul perpetrated terrible acts against the Christians, and yet he still obtained mercy from the God of heaven. So can we.

“It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself” (2 Tim. 2:11-13). The grace of God and eternal life is something that is conditional. This is evident by the many conditional statements in this passage. Paul tells us that if we be “dead with Him” then we can live with Him (Gal. 2:20). It is a truth that if we endure with Jesus the Christ then we shall be saved.

“For bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance” (1 Tim. 4:8-9). While there might be a little profit in the discipline of the body it pales in comparison to the benefit of godliness. Godliness is a blessing for this present life and the life to come.

“This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men” (Titus 3:8). “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). “They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed” (Titus 1:16). May we consider these faithful sayings in our daily service to the Lord. ~ Josh Blackmer

³⁴ Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. ³⁵ Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. ³⁶ Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. (Jn 4:34-36)

<i>Keep These Dates in Mind</i>	<i>October Birthdays and Anniversaries</i>	
Oct 17 – Fellowship Meal after Sunday morning worship	Kenneth Winstead 10/6 LaVern Engelke 10/8 Clarence Botts 10/22 Melinda Botts 10/25 Harvey Jones 10/25	Blessed are those who wash their robes so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates.

Those with ongoing health Issues:

Pansy Caywood, Shirley Childers, Sandi Gray, Linda Lafferty, Pat Lindsay, Karen McBurney, Lupe Mendoza, Tami Pennington, Eunice Petros, Helen Pierce, Jim Preston

Bible Studies

Adult Bible Classes Sunday a – 2 Samuel Wed p – Minor Prophet	Young Adults class- Teen Room (led by Danny Mendoza)	Ladies Class (Contact Sandi Gray for information)
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Gerald Funnell seriously damaged his ankle and lower leg last week and was scheduled to have surgery to correct the damage. But the doctors chose not to do surgery due to high blood sugar issues. They are using alternative means to repair his leg. Keep him in your prayers as he begins to recover.

Keep **Leonard Peters, Kimberly (Staten) Stevens** and all the Staten family in your prayers as they grieve the loss of **Kimberly’s husband William**, who died last Sunday due to Covid complications.

Both surgeries that were scheduled for **Al Lindsay** went well. His eye surgery occurred with no complications. It was done as a normal cataract surgery and no stitches were required.

Keep **Jim Preston** in your prayers (and Holly) as he is continuing to struggle with vertigo and severe migraine headaches and is not responding to the treatments and medicines tried so far.

Casey Rice as he is traveling and settling in so that he can work with this congregation as a minister and preacher.

Our Ministries

Mountain States Children’s Home

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. (James 1:27)

Peru Ministry – Oscar and Anna Maria in Peru

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the son and of the Holy Spirit

Food Pantry - If you are in need of food assistance, please contact one of the men of the congregation and they will be able to help you with this need.

“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.” (Proverbs 19:17)

Having the Right Attitudes

“And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven’” (Matthew 5:1-3).

Viktor E. Frankl, who endured the Nazi death camps and survived, stated, “Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms - to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way”. As the opening passage above indicates, Jesus understood the importance of our choosing to have the right attitude in any given situation. As He began the Sermon on the Mount, what attitudes does Jesus think we should have (Matthew 5:1-11)?

First, Jesus teaches that we need to be “poor in spirit” and to “mourn” (Matthew 5:3-4). In developing a proper attitude to live life, we need to understand our weaknesses. We are totally dependent upon God to save us from our sins (cf. Romans 3:23; 5:8). Throughout His sermon, Jesus stressed that a right relationship with God involves not only “doing” the right things, but also “thinking” the right thoughts. For example, it is not good enough to simply not commit murder or adultery, one must not hate their fellow man or lust after the opposite sex (Matthew 5:21-28). When we understand our own weaknesses and mourn over our own sins, only then will we reach out to God and seek His help to enable us to become all He can make us to be for His glory. Thus, we will strive to have a “pure heart” that seeks to act out of pure motives which helps us to be able to “see” God (Matthew 5:8).

Second, Christ said we must have an attitude of “meekness” (Matthew 5:5). Meekness is “strength under control”. How different this was from the attitudes of the Pharisees of Jesus’ day who, instead of displaying meekness and humility in their service to God, tried to “show off” before others their service to God in their charitable deeds (Matthew 6:1-2), prayers (Matthew 6:5), and fasting (Matthew 6:16). One who is meek is not concerned with “showing off” to please men, but is concerned only that God sees and is pleased in their service to Him (cf. Matthew 6:3-4, 6, 17-18).

Third, our Lord stressed how we need to “hunger” and “thirst” for righteousness (Matthew 5:6) even to the point of enduring persecution for trying to serve God (Matthew 5:10-12). In His sermon, Jesus spoke about the “hunger” and “thirst” people have over material things (Matthew 6:19-21). Many people allow their drive for material things to consume them and it fills them with worry (cf. Matthew 6:25-32). Jesus stressed we need to seek first His Kingdom (Matthew 6:33), be careful about following the paths our piers are choosing (Matthew 7:13-14), and to build our lives upon His teachings as we “hunger” and “thirst” for His guidance and direction in our lives (Matthew 7:21-27).

Finally, Jesus encourages us to be “merciful” in our dealings with others (Matthew 5:7). Our Lord understood how tempting it is for us to begin to look down on others and judge them while failing to consider our own weaknesses (cf. Matthew 7:1-5). A gracious and merciful attitude towards all those around us enables us to be the influence God would have us to be (Matthew 5:13-16). Thus, we can better be “peacemakers” (Matthew 5:9) and even learn to “love our enemies” (Matthew 5:44-48).

~DAILY DEVO, Susquehanna Valley Church of Christ