

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

April 19, 2020

Such as I Have

It is impossible for any of us to give something we do not possess. This is especially important to understand in the area of spiritual ministry. A person can only minister that which is presently working in their own heart and spirit. If the spirit which is working in us is not of God, it is impossible for us to minister anything of God to the people.

When Peter and John came upon the lame man who was laying at the gate called *"Beautiful,"* Peter told the man something that reveals one of the greatest secrets of ministry. He said, *"Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee:"* Acts 3:6. It was only because Peter had received something from God that the lame man was healed and went *"...walking, and leaping, and praising God."* Acts 3:8. The Apostle Paul confirms this, saying, *"The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits."* II Timothy 2:6. If a minister does not personally possess the realities of Christ, it is impossible for them to minister the reality of Christ to others.

John, the Apostle, when writing about "love," said, *"which thing is true in him and in you."* I John 2:8. Not only is God's love the reality in Christ, but it is also the reality in those who know Christ. In fact every reality that is true in Christ is also true in those who know Christ. If righteousness is true in Christ, then righteousness is also true in his

people. This is why John wrote, *“Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”* | John 3:7. The words a minister speak are of vital importance, but if what they speak is not *“true”* in them, their ministry is not ministry at all. When such a person begins to minister, they can only give what they possess in their heart, regardless of what they say with their mouth.

Over the past several years, certain ministries have published surveys stating that around 68% percent of men and over 50% of pastors in evangelical churches admit to consuming pornography on a regular basis. While I confess a bit of skepticism about these numbers, one thing is certain. The multitude of pastors involved in pornography is the reason so many in the congregation are bound in such horrible darkness. If the pastors are unclean in their heart, those who partake of their ministry are drinking from a contaminated fountain. An unclean minister is a fountain of uncleanness flowing into those who eat and drink at their table.

After God rejected Saul from being King over Israel, the Bible says *“...the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him.”* | Samuel 16:14. Saul had rebelled against the word of God, so God turned him over to an evil spirit. What is astounding about this is that when the evil spirit came upon Saul he prophesied, just like he had when the Spirit of God came upon him. The difference is that now an evil spirit was the source of his prophecies. King Saul had fallen from being an instrument of God and became the instrument of an unclean spirit. It was while the evil spirit was upon Saul to

prophecy that he attempted to kill David with a javelin. I Samuel 18:10-12. A minister who is unclean at heart may indeed have supernatural manifestations, but you can be certain their “manifestations” are not coming from God, but from the same spirit which works uncleanness in them.

Ministry is not an intellectual exercise. Neither is it a product of talent or cinematic knowhow. Sadly, such has become the case in many places. True ministry must proceed from the Spirit of God. If it does not, it is mere religious activity. When a minister is content with something less than the reality of Christ that is exactly what they will possess. But such a minister should take heed. Paul was speaking first of ministers when he wrote *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”* 11 Corinthians 5:10. Every minister, including myself, will stand to be judged, not only for what they have spoken, but for what they have given. ***“Such as I have give I thee.”***