

The Qualities of an Excellent Minister – Pt. 3

1 Timothy 4:13-16

March 13, 2022

Pastor Gary Hollinger

Paul has been inspired to lay out important responsibilities of an excellent minister.

I. An excellent minister focuses on the key aspects of church ministry. (v. 13)

A. The public reading of Scripture,

So Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the Levitical priests, who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. Then Moses commanded them: “At the end of every seven years, in the year for canceling debts, during the Festival of Tabernacles, when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose, you shall read this law before them in their hearing. Assemble the people—men, women and children, and the foreigners residing in your towns—so they can listen and learn to fear the LORD your God and follow carefully all the words of this law. Their children, who do not know this law, must hear it and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.” (Deuteronomy 31:11-13)

Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4:16-21)

After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea. (Colossians 4:16)

So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

Ezra the teacher of the Law stood on a high wooden platform built for the occasion... and he opened the book. All the people could see him because he was standing above them; and as he

opened it, the people all stood up. Ezra praised the LORD, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.

The Levites...instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there. They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read.

Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and teacher of the Law, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, "This day is holy to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

The Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for this is a holy day. Do not grieve."

Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them.

(Nehemiah 8:2-12)

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any double-edged sword, piercing even to the point of dividing soul from spirit, and joints from marrow; it is able to judge the desires and thoughts of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

B. to preaching/exhortation

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort. (2 Corinthians 1:3-7)

The apostles and elders, your brothers,

To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia:

Greetings.

We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul—men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.

Farewell.

So the men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter. The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message. Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers. (Acts 15:21-32)

From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them to return to Jerusalem. From Perga they went on to Pisidian Antioch. On the Sabbath they entered the synagogue and sat down. After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the leaders of the synagogue sent word to them, saying, “Brothers, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, please speak.” (Acts 13:13-15)

But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. (1 Corinthians 14:3)

C. and to teaching (doctrine).

II. An excellent minister uses his God-given spiritual gifts. (v. 14)

Miraculous (Sign) Gifts

- Apostleship
- Tongues
- Interpretation
- Miracles
- Healing
- Prophecy (foretelling of future events)

Personal Gifts

- Faith
- Discernment
- Wisdom
- Knowledge

Church Life Gifts

- Evangelism: passionately leading others to the saving knowledge of Christ
 - Prophecy: boldly and fearlessly proclaiming God’s truth
 - Teaching: making clear the truth of God’s Word with simplicity and accuracy
 - Exhortation: motivating others to action, application, and purpose
 - Shepherding: overseeing, training, feeding, coaching/leading
 - Serving: providing practical help both physically and spiritually
 - Mercy-showing: identifying with and comforting those in need
 - Giving: releasing material resources to further the work of the Church
 - Administration: organizing, administering, promoting, leading
- (Romans 12:6–8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11; 1 Peter 4:10–11; Ephesians 4:11-13)

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. (1 Peter 4:10)

But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. (2 Timothy 4:5)

Laid hands: (Gr. Epithesis, *ep-ith'-es-is*) 4x

The imposition of hands was a sacred rite transmitted from the Jews to the Christians, and employed in praying for another, or in conferring upon him divine blessings, especially bodily health, or the Holy Spirit (at the administration of baptism and the inauguration to their office of the teachers and ministers of the church).

Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about cleansing rites, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And God permitting, we will do so. (Hebrews 6:1-3)

They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. (Acts 6:6)

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. (Acts 13:2-3)

III. An excellent minister devotes himself to personal growth. (v. 15)

Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. (Philippians 1:12)

Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me. (Philippians 1:25-26)

Cultivate these things. Immerse yourself in them. The people will all see you mature right before their eyes! (The Mssg.)

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen. (2 Peter 3:15)

IV. An excellent minister knows and shows that belief governs behavior. (v. 16a)

V. An excellent minister stays the course because the stakes are so high. (v. 16b)

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” (Romans 10:14-15)

So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter. (2 Thessalonians 2:15)