

Ministering to the Lord

Many people have no idea what it is to minister to the Lord or if it is even possible. They think that when we go before the Lord it is all about our laundry list. We are in for ourselves for what we get out of it.

The Word of God teaches that we can and should minister to the Lord.

Acts 13:2-3 "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. [3] And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

Ministering to the Lord simply refers to "*be an attendant, that is, wait upon*" Although service is involved in ministry, there is a part of ministering to the Lord that doesn't necessarily involve working, serving, or doing.

- i) Contrary to what some people think, we are called to minister to the Lord and we do not need a platform, pulpit nor microphone.
- ii) Our first ministry has to be to the Lord. Before we think about ministering to other people, we must first of all minister to the Lord. This is true for each believer, not just preachers.
- iii) As we minister to the Lord, God speaks. If you can't hear the Lord, minister to Him.
- iv) Ministering to the Lord renews our strength (Isaiah 40:31 "But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.")

In the Old Covenant, sacrifices were offered unto the Lord through burnt offering and many

more. In the New Covenant, we can also minister unto the Lord—not through burnt offerings but sacrifices without lighting fire and so forth.

1. Sacrifice of Salvation and relationship with God.

A. 2 Corinthians 2:15 “For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:”

a) Our relationship with God is a sacrifice that ministers unto the Lord.

b) This passage of Scripture teaches that we are the sweet smell that Jesus gives off unto the Lord.

c) How do we become a *sweet savor* unto the Lord? By accepting Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior. We have to believe that He died and rose again from the dead.

d) We are a burnt offering that was made by Jesus and it is acceptable and well-pleasing unto the Lord.

B. Proverbs 15:8 “The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.”

2. Sacrifice of Praise

A. Hebrews 13:15 “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”

a) Praise is an act of thanking and exalting the Lord for what He has done. For His provision and goodness. Praise focuses on what the Lord can do and what He has done, but worship focuses on the person more than what He does.

b) Praise could be a lot easier than worship because it looks at what the Lord has accomplished for us and in us and praises Him for it.

3. Sacrifice of Worship

- A. Worship is a form of ministering to the Lord. It is a time not to ask for anything, confessing anything but His goodness, declaring of His goodness, singing, and giving thanks. This ought to be done continually.
- B. Worship is quite close to praise, but it is not praise. Worship is more of an adoration of the Lord. It is a time we adore God for who He is not what He can do or what He has done.

C. Alabaster Box

- a) Matthew 26:6-7 “Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.”
- b) Mark 14:3 “And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she broke the box, and poured it on his head.”
- c) Luke 7:37-38 “And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.”
- d) John 12:3 “Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.”
 - i) This was quite a display of adoration and worship of the Lord like no other and it was quite a good one because it was recorded by the four different Gospel writers (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). This woman—Mary (John 12:3), was ministering to the Lord.
 - ii) She was giving her all and her best to the Lord. I don't want to get into the cost of this Ointment, but it was such an extremely expensive substance that speaks volumes of how much she valued the Lord to spend and break all this on Him.

- iii) Some people when they see you ministering to the Lord, they get jealous and that exactly what we saw with the disciples and their unjustified indignation against her.

4. Sacrifice of Thanksgiving

- A. Psalm 69:30 "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving."
 - a) Thanksgiving magnifies the Lord. When we begin to thank and appreciate God for His goodness, we are ministering unto Him.
 - b) Whatever magnifies the Lord, it ministers to Him.

5. Sacrifice of Joy

- A. Psalm 27:6 "And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle **sacrifices of joy**; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD." (Emphasis mine).
 - a) This sacrifice of joy works along with the other sacrifices. It is not independent. When we are thankful and full of praise and worship unto the Lord, the result of that is joy—sacrifice of Joy.
 - b) We can be joyful unto the Lord in the middle of problems and hardships. Joy is not the absence of problems.
 - c) Joy ministers unto the Lord. It is a sacrifice that gives off sweet-smelling aroma and scent unto the Lord.

6. Sacrifice of Giving unto the Lord

- A. Proverbs 3:9-10 "**Honor the LORD** with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine" (Emphasis mine) and Isaiah 43:23.

- a) Some people have not come to fully grasp that giving is one of the major ways we minister to the Lord.
 - b) The Word of God makes this clear that giving honors the Lord.
 - c) May I say that whatever honors the Lord ministers to Him. We can take of what the Lord has given to us and give back to Him in worship, honor, and adoration.
- B. 1 Kings 3:3-4 “And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.”
- C. Philippians 4:17-18 “Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, **an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.** But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”
- a) These verses were speaking about giving. Paul called the giving and the financial support of his ministry from the Philippians “**an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.**”
 - b) Giving unto the Lord is a sacrifice that ministers unto Him.
 - c) Notice verse 19. It is commonly quoted, but it follows that statements Paul had made in the preceding verses. When we minister unto the Lord in our giving, there is a release of supply for all we need.

7. Mary and Martha

- A. Luke 10:38-42 “Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. [39] And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. [40] But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. [41] And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: [42] But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall

not be taken away from her."

- a) It's important to understand that we need both Mary and Martha in ministry, but true ministry starts as Mary did. Mary was busy ministering to the Lord while Martha was busy serving. Those who are busy serving get upset with those busy sitting at the feet of Jesus.
- b) We need to learn to take time and sit at the feet of Jesus and quit being busy. There is a difference between ministering **to** the Lord and serving the Lord (ministering **for** the Lord).
- c) True ministry will later produce service, but it doesn't and should not start that way.

8. Be with Him

- A. Mark 3:14-15 "And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, [15] And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:"
 - a) Jesus ordained the twelve to **be with Him** (relationship) before He ever commissioned them to go preach and perform miracles. Our relationship with the Lord supersedes our service for and to the Lord. It is true that our relationship will yield service unto the Lord, but we must be careful not to let our service precede our relationship with Him. Our service ought to be a byproduct of our relationship with Him. We must **major** in spending time with the Lord while **minor**ing in serving.
 - b) Being with the Lord does not necessarily mean activity. It is rather a time of inactivity. A time of being still. It is quite similar to a time a child spending with his father doing nothing but just staring at each other.

9. Singing

- A. Acts 16:23-26 "And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed."

- a) We can choose to minister to the Lord under any circumstances. We should not only minister to the Lord when things are going our way and well. While in jail and pain, these men started to sing praises unto the Lord. Now, that is quite an example of ministering to the Lord. They prayed and sang praises to the Lord.
- b) Simply put, they ministered unto the Lord.
- c) Furthermore, they were not doing this for deliverance. They were not praising God to be freed. If they were, they would have run out of the prison as soon as the doors were opened, and the chains fell off of them. They were praising God because of who He is. They were ministering to the Lord. Whether deliverance came or not, they were going to praise the Lord anyway.
- d) These verses are recorded to encourage us to do the same. We can and have the Spirit of God on the inside of us to empower and enable us to this.
- e) **Sing unto the Lord—not unto men.**
 - i) When you sing, who do you sing unto? It ought to be unto the Lord. When was the last time you sang unto the Lord?
 - ii) There is a difference in singing and singing unto the Lord. We ought to do all we do as unto the Lord not unto men—this includes singing.
 - iii) Psalm 27:6 “And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle **sacrifices of joy**; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.” (Emphasis mine).

10. Speaking in Tongues.

- A. Acts 10:44-46 “When these men spoke in tongues, they magnified God. When we speak in tongues or pray in the Spirit, we exalt and magnify God.”
- B. 1 Corinthians 14:16-17 “Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.”

- a) We give thanks well when we speak in tongues. This is one of the highest or the best form of thanksgiving.
- b) When we speak in tongues, we minister to the Lord in one of the highest forms.

II. Prayer

A. Acts 16:25-26 “And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.”

- a) Another way we can minister unto the Lord is through prayer.
- b) **Prayer simply means communion with the Lord.**
- c) It is not just a time to petition and drawing out your laundry list like many have presented it to be.
- d) As we spend time talking to God, we are ministering to Him.
- e) If you use prayer to complain and only ask for things, you are not ministering to the Lord.