

“Ministers of the Gospel”

Ephesians 3:7-8; Matthew 18:1-7, 10

A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL. v.7-8

- We have made “minister” a term for someone in full-time ministry. The NT uses the word differently.

1. What is a minister?

- Gk. **διάκονος** servant, helper, minister (where we get the English word ‘deacon’)

2. Who are the ministers?

- 2 Cor. 3:5b-6: *...our sufficiency is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.*
- 2 Cor. 4:1: *Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart.*
- 2 Cor. 5:18-19a: *All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself...*

→ According to the NT, all Christians are “ministers” of the Gospel.

3. Being a minister is “according to the gift of God’s grace.”

- Grace = undeserved favor. (Or, ‘getting something good which I do not deserve.’)
- This was a gift of grace to Paul... to me... to you... to the church.
- This ministry is “by the working of his power.” Ref. Paul’s prayer in Ephesians 1 (esp. v.19-20).

4. To bring to the world “the unsearchable riches of Christ.” v.8

→ Paul was a recipient of, a participant in, and an ambassador for the gospel of Jesus Christ. So are we.

THE MINISTRY OF COVENANT LIFE CHURCH

- Our mission: to connect people to Christ, to one another, and to service for God’s kingdom.
- Our strategy: Make Disciples Equip Families Transform the City

Equip Families... Matthew 18:1-7, 10

Core needs and longings of a child...

- Connection and belonging, unconditional love and acceptance
- Basic care and nurture (bathing, healthy food, shelter, medical care)
- Safe and secure environment
- Consistent reinforcement of personal worth
- Repeated messages that the child is valued, unique, and special
- Encouragement to grow and develop personal gifts and talents
- A pathway to fellowship with God
- Safe physical touch (and therefore model how to give others safe physical touch)
- Someone to draw out feelings and to teach how to express and navigate feelings and emotions

Some questions to consider...

- Would you add anything to this list?
- Do you see these as “childish” or as legitimate & necessary God-given needs in a child? In yourself?
- How many of these were met in your family of origin?
- What percentage of children in Sarasota are being raised in homes where these are met?
- What happens if these needs are not met during childhood years?
- What happens if lack of these needs are combined with abuse, pornography, alcohol, or drugs?

→ How does healing and change happen? Answer: _____

→ This is the context in which we are called to “minister” the unsearchable riches of Christ.

→ www.ohmin.org