

# MADE TO MINISTER

(Colossians 1:23-25)

Dr. Jim Cecy

## Introduction:

Colossians 1:23 "...which was proclaimed in all creation...and of which I, Paul, was made a minister."

Colossians 1:24-25 "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God."

*We were called to be ministers of the gospel.*

1 Peter 4:10 "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

1 Corinthians 12:7 "...to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

Ephesians 4:15-16 "...we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."

*I was called to be a born-again child of God. Therefore, I was made to minister.*

## I. Effective ministers of the Gospel are called to be energetic and obedient servants of God.

Colossians 1:23, 25 = minister = Greek: diakonos

1. A deacon/deaconess (i.e. an officer in the local church) (1 Timothy 3, etc.)

2. A servant (i.e. one who executes the commands of another)

"...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve..." (Mark 10:45)

3. One who raises the dust

*A minister of the gospel is someone who is called by God as an obedient servant who kicks up some dust for Jesus!*

"I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision..." (Acts 26:19)

"For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel." (1 Corinthians 9:6)

The believers in the early church "turned the world upside down" for Jesus (cf. Acts 17:6, Amplified Version)

"I was made a minister." (Colossians 1:23, 25)

made = Greek: egenomen = becoming a minister "Ministers are made; not born"

"...according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power." (Ephesians 3:7)

"To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ" (Eph 3:8)

"I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service; even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor..." (1 Timothy 1:12-13)

*The Mandate of 2 Corinthians 5:17-20*

*We are called to be Ambassadors of Christ.*

*We are called to be Ministers of Reconciliation*

## II. Effective ministers of the Gospel are called to be joyful sufferers.

Colossians 1:24 "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body which is the church in filling up that which is lacking in Christ's afflictions."

*Sacred history is a history of suffering.*

"...you will be hated by all on account of My name..." (Mark 13:13)

"rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for his name." (Acts 5:41)

"...for I will show him (i.e. Paul) how much he must suffer for My name's sake." (Acts 9:16)

2 Corinthians 11:23-28 "Are they servants of Christ? — I speak as if insane — I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches."

2 Corinthians 1:5 "The sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance..."

2 Timothy 4:6-8 "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come...I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."

Philippians 3:10 "...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings..."

### **A. We can expect to do our share of suffering**

2 Timothy 2:3 "Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus."

2 Timothy 3:12 "Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."

2 Timothy 4:5 "But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."

### **The history of persecution in Europe...**

*The greatest spread of true Christianity has been in those times when the blood of Christians was being shed.*

### **B. We can expect to receive our share of blessing**

1 Peter 3:14 "Even if you suffer for the sake of righteousness, you will be blessed..."

Romans 8:18 "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

2 Corinthians 4:8-11 "...we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh."

2 Corinthians 1:5 "For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ."

Colossians 1:24 "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up that which is lacking in Christ's afflictions."

"Learning is a gift. Even when pain is your teacher."

### **III. Effective ministers of the Gospel are called to be faithful stewards.**

Colossians 1:25a "Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit..."

"stewardship" = Greek: oikonomia = management/administration of a household (oikos)

— i.e. the execution of a plan to properly manage a household, property, or someone's affairs.

1 Corinthians 4:2 "...it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy."

2 Timothy 2:2 "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."

### **IV. Effective ministers of the Gospel are called to be passionate proclaimers of the Word of God.**

"...that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God" (Colossians 1:25)

"Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another..." (Colossians 3:16)

"testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts 20:24)

"...shrink from declaring...the whole purpose of God." (Acts 20:27)

#### **• Teaching by precept and example**

#### **My Gospel Ministry Dedication**

*I accept God's calling in my life as a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I do hereby commit myself to actively serve My Lord faithfully and obediently as an energetic servant, a joyful sufferer, a faithful steward and an effective proclaimer of the Word of God. In the name of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior.*

## Prayer Requests:



# Growth Group Homework

For the week of June 3, 2012

SERMON SERIES: COLOSSIANS  
Message Title: "Made To Minister"

Dr. Jim Cecy  
June 3, 2012

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. In the sermon this week we learned that ministers of the Gospel are called to be joyful sufferers. Can you think of a time when you suffered joyfully for the sake of Christ and the Gospel?
2. Based on your experience, do you think there is a misconception among Christians that only full-time pastors and specially gifted leaders are "called" to ministry?
3. What ministry do you feel called to? What ministry do you find the most fulfilling?

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## DIGGING DEEPER

4. In the third century, Tertullian – a Church Father in Carthage, Africa – wrote: “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” Why do you think the Church often grows more when watered by persecution rather than prosperity?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What should be our motivation for suffering joyfully?
  - Philippians 3:7-11
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - Romans 8:18
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What does Paul mean in Colossians 1:24 when he says, “in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions...?” Do you think there is a special fellowship with Christ that comes through sharing in his sufferings? (Philippians 3:10)

## TAKING IT HOME

7. As you reflect on this week’s sermon, what one principle or insight stands out as being the most helpful, insightful, or difficult to grasp?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Pastor Jim concluded the message by challenging us to dedicate ourselves to ministry: “I do hereby commit myself to actively serve My Lord faithfully and obediently as an energetic servant, a joyful sufferer, a faithful steward and an effective proclaimer of the Word of God.” How do you plan on putting this into action?