

Who Wants to Be a Minister? Part 2

Message for Sunday, September 13, 2020
by Bruce Fraser

Children's Message:

“Hi, Mommy, what are you doing?” asked Susie.

“I’m making a casserole for Mrs. Smith next door,” said her mother.

“Why?” asked Susie, who was six years old.

“Because Mrs. Smith is very sad; she lost her daughter and she has a broken heart. We need to take care of her for a little while.”

“Why, Mommy?”

“You see, Susie, when someone is very, very sad, they have trouble doing the little things like making dinner or other chores. Because we’re part of a community and Mrs. Smith is our neighbour, we need to do some things to help her. Mrs. Smith won’t ever be able to talk with her daughter or hug her or do all those wonderful things that mommies and daughters do together. You are a very smart girl, Susie; maybe you’ll think of some way to help take care of Mrs. Smith.”

Susie thought seriously about this challenge and how she could do her part in caring for Mrs. Smith. A few minutes later, Susie knocked on her door. After a few moments Mrs. Smith answered the knock with a “Hi, Susie.”

Susie noticed that Mrs. Smith didn’t have that familiar musical quality about her voice when she greeted someone. Mrs. Smith also looked as though she might have been crying, because her eyes were watery and swollen.

“What can I do for you, Susie?” asked Mrs. Smith.

“My mommy says that you lost your daughter and you’re very, very sad with a broken heart.” Susie held her hand out shyly. In it was a Band-Aid. “This is for your broken heart.” Mrs. Smith gasped, choking back her tears. She knelt down and hugged Susie. Through her tears she said, “Thank you, darling girl, this will help a lot.”

Mrs. Smith accepted Susie’s act of kindness and took it one step further. She purchased a small key

ring with a plexiglass picture frame—the ones designed to carry keys and also display a favourite picture. Mrs. Smith placed Susie’s Band-Aid in the frame to remind herself of loving friends every time she sees it.

Thanks to Meladee McCarty, author of *Acts of Kindness: How to Create a Kindness Revolution*, for this. She was on a radio talk show when someone called in with this story.

In the Bible, the word “minister” means “someone who loves and serves other people.” Do you see how someone who is six years old can be a minister? *Everyone* who follows Jesus is a minister!

Message Who wants to be a minister? - part 2
Last week I confessed that I had shamelessly stole the idea for this sermon series from the television show *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* I’m focussing on the call to ministry for *all* Christians. Last week we looked at some Bible passages which tell us that:

- As followers of Jesus, all of us are called to be ministers. Jesus is our model for ministry. He came as a servant, and told us to follow his example.
- God is full of grace and love. One way he shows this is by filling us with the Holy Spirit, and giving us spiritual gifts. Therefore, whatever gifts we have, whatever service we perform, the glory and honour go to God.
- We have these gifts for the purpose of ministry; they are for building up the whole church, not just our own lives.

Martin Luther King Jr. put it this way:

Everybody can be great, because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You don’t have to know the second theory of thermodynamics to serve. You only need a heart full of Grace. A soul generated by love.

At the end of last week’s message, I gave a list of possible ministries, just to get you thinking. I asked you to think about this and pray about this, so that each of us could see where God may be pulling us.

I’d like to go back to 1
to get you thinking ab

- What gifts do I think God has given to me?
- What am I passionate about? What gets me excited and full of enthusiasm?
- Is God pulling me towards some particular area of ministry? Is there something that I think I'd like to try doing?

I'm conflicted right now. I was thinking about having you pair up with someone near you, and share your answers to those questions. That's good, because sharing vision is encouraging. But asking you to do that puts you on the spot, and you might feel uncomfortable. So I will ask you to do that on your own initiative.

Now, to finish off today's message, let's have a bit of fun. Since these messages were plagiarized from the game show, I thought we'd actually play the game right here in church! Each of you has been given a high-tech digital signalling device. I'm going to list four people from the Bible. Each one had a gift from God, and used that gift in some kind of ministry. If you think you can tell me what chronological order they came in, hold up your high-tech digital signalling device (a.k.a. "finger"). The first person who has the right answer will be today's contestant.

- Esther had the gift of faith
- Martha had the gift of serving
- Samuel had the gift of prophecy
- Solomon had the gift of wisdom

This is the order they come in:

- Samuel anointed David to be king of Israel
- King Solomon was the son of King David
- Esther remained in Persia after most of the exiles had returned to Israel
- Martha was one of Jesus' friends.

(I got the rest of the congregation involved by mimicking the special effects on the TV show: someone waving a flashlight, people oohing, etc.)

Questions for the contestant

The first question is worth 1,000 points. Your score doubles after that with each correct answer. If you get all eleven right, you will have 1 million points! (The answers are at the end of the message).

Just like the TV show, you have three lifelines:

- 50-50 (remove half of the possible answers)
 - poll the audience
 - ask a friend
- 1) What is your name? (Wow, that's a hard one!)
 - 2) Add up all the hours that all the people have given this past year for the work of the church: preparing and teaching Junior Church, mowing the lawn, visiting sick and shut-ins, practicing and playing songs, baking pies, and so on: How many hours does it add up to?
 - a) 500
 - b) 2,000
 - c) 4,000
 - d) Only God knows
 - 3) How many people were involved in doing all those jobs?
 - a) Bruce, and he only works for one hour on Sundays
 - b) 20
 - c) 40
 - d) Only God knows
 - 4) Which is the most important ministry of all the jobs that are done in the church?
 - a) Handling the money
 - b) preaching
 - c) cleaning the toilets
 - d) All are equally important
 - 5) Which of the following is not spiritual enough to be called a ministry?
 - a) Handling the money
 - b) preaching
 - c) cleaning the toilets
 - d) None of the above
 - 6) Which of the following is the most important qualification to be involved in ministry?
 - a) Intelligence
 - b) Willingness to serve
 - c) Highly skilled
 - d) Living a morally righteous life
 - 7) What type of ministry would you like to be involved in?
 - 8) Various passages in the Bible lists various spiritual gifts. Which one is the most important?
 - a) Love
 - b) leadership
 - c) speaking in tongues
 - d) All of the above
 - 9) What does God want us to do? On that theme someone came up
What does *WWJD* Created with

- a) Who wants Jesus deeds?
- b) We will justice do
- c) What would Jesus do?
- d) Why we just do (it).

10) The Bible contains at least four separate lists of “spiritual gifts,” and each list is different.¹ Some people think this means that these lists are not meant to be all-inclusive. Which of the following items is *not in one of those lists*, but could be considered a gift from God for his service?

- a) playing music
- b) helping others
- c) giving
- d) teaching

11) How long have people been using this building as a base from which to serve Jesus Christ in various forms of ministry?

Since:

- a) 1853
- b) 1867
- c) 1893
- d) 1908

Congratulations! You’ve won 1 million points of God’s favour! Wow! God must be really impressed with your Bible knowledge and all the work you do for him!

Well, not really. The New Testament teaches us, over and over again, that we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, not by our good deeds and good life.

Titus 3:4-7, New Living Translation:

God our Saviour showed us his kindness and love. He saved us, not because of the good things we did, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins and gave us a new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us because of what Jesus Christ our Saviour did. He declared us not guilty because of his great kindness. And now we know that we will inherit eternal life.

When we use our gifts as servants and ministers, it is not to gain a reward. It is the *result* of the reward. It is a way of saying, “Thank-you, Lord Jesus. You have given me such love, such mercy, such blessing, that I will burst if I don’t share it with others.”

¹ The four places are: Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:8-11, 27-31; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Peter 4:9-11.

I pray that all of us have that prayer in our hearts.

Next Steps:

- Pray through those questions:
 - What gifts do I think God has given to me?
 - What am I passionate about? What gets me excited and full of enthusiasm?
 - Is God pulling me towards some particular area of ministry? Is there something that I think I’d like to try doing?
- Share your ideas with someone else. Listen to their ideas. Encourage one another.

Answers to the game questions are on next page.

Answers:

- 1) your name
- 2) d) Only God knows
- 3) d) Only God knows
- 4) d) All are equally important
God teaches us in the Bible that “All of you together are Christ's body, and each one of you is a separate and necessary part of it.” [1 Corinthians 12:27].
- 5) d) None of the above
The word “ministry” simply means “service.” Anything you do in the name of Jesus Christ is ministry. *Anything!*
- 6) b) Willingness to serve
God gives us gifts, not because we are “good enough,” but simply because he loves us:

Romans 12:6, New Century Version:
We all have different gifts, each of which came because of the grace God gave us.
- 7) whatever answer you give is the right answer
- 8) Both a) and d) are acceptable answers.
We saw in 1 Corinthians 12:27 (see question 4 above) that all the gifts are equally important. But that chapter ends by telling us that love is the greatest of all:

“Eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you ***the most excellent way***. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, *but have not love*, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.”
[1 Corinthians 12:31-13:1]
- 9) c) What would Jesus do?
- 10) a) Playing music
- 11) a) 1853