



The
FLOW
Adult CURRICULUM

#43

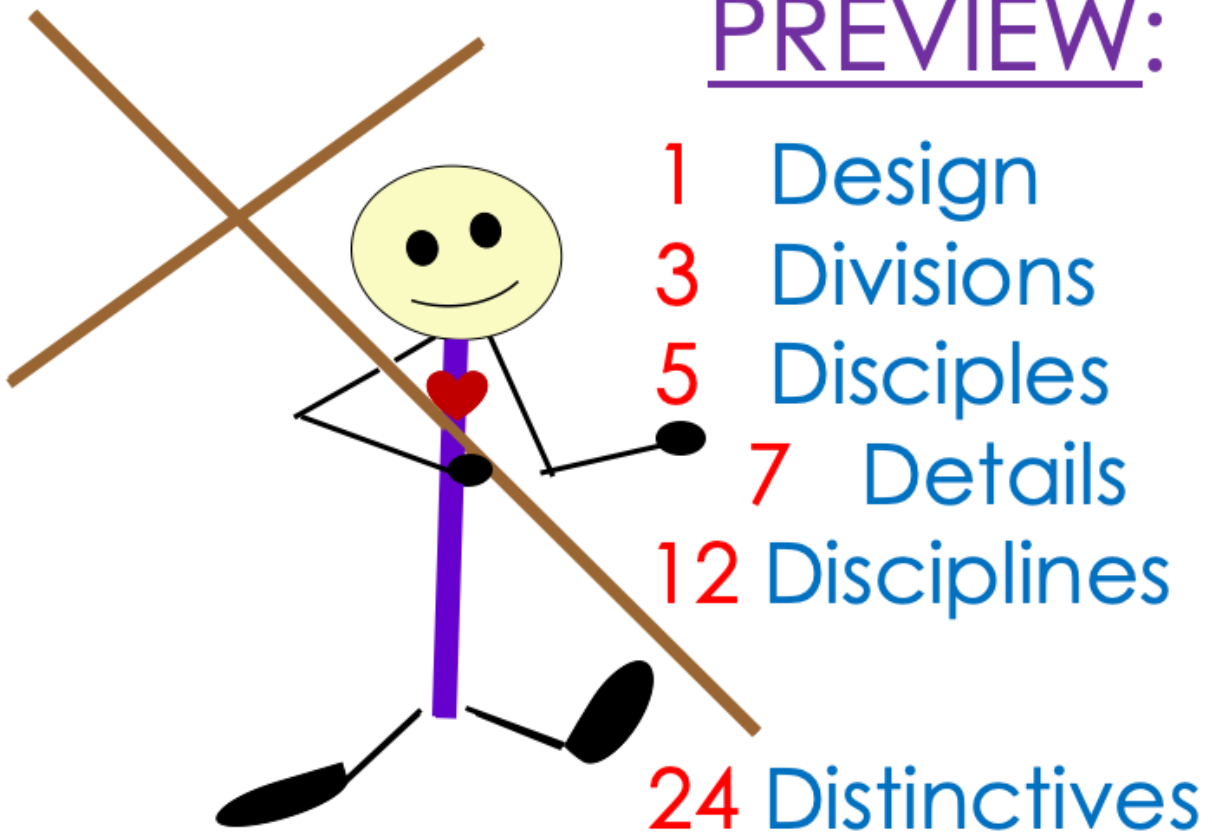
Ministering As Ambassadors

1 Corinthians 11:1

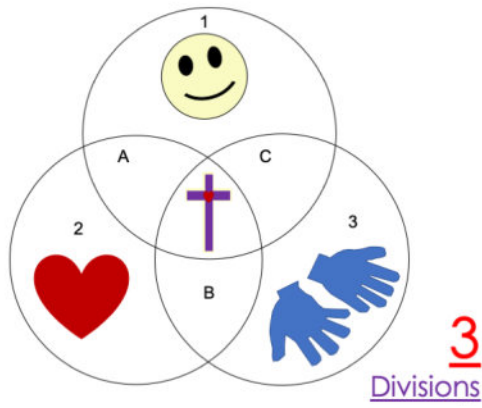
(Come And See Christianity book pages 106)

The FLOW

PREVIEW:

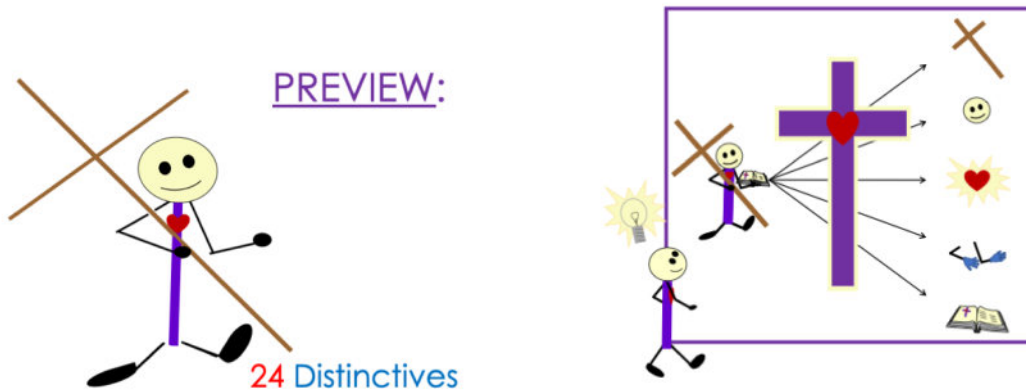


SECTION SIX: 12 Disciplines



The Disciple's "Hands" put into **action** the **truth** & **love** of God's Word, God's will, & God's ways. In short, when **each Christian's Head, Heart, & Hands** are united in purpose & power, the family of God is **living** as the **Body of Christ!**

24 Family Distinctives:



24 DISTINCTIVES:

The “distinctives” are a family portrait... When you add God’s Word, God’s Spirit, God’s Truth, God’s love, and God’s people all together, the distinctives are what we look, love, & live like :-)

We are...



Ministering as ambassadors

INTRO:

As we begin to **see the beautiful, biblical portrait of Christ's faith-filled family** defined and described by God's Word, will, and ways, it is critical to remember that the Holy Bible is to ALWAYS BE our ultimate source, authority, and interpreter in ALL things pertaining to one's understanding of reality and application of truth in love.

Remember,
The biblical Church is Christ's missional family...
Moreover, God's Word reveals our Father's will and His family's ways.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17**so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Here are **24 defining & describing HANDS-on DISTINCTIVES of Christianity:**

True Christians are biblically, miraculously, intentionally, missionally, and imperfectly...

1. *Responding to grace*
2. *Repenting of sin*
3. *Trusting the Bible*
4. *Obeying God's Word*
5. *Growing in Christ*
6. *Living Spirit-led*
7. *Praying for guidance*
8. *Following by faith*
9. *Dying to self*
10. *Carrying our cross*
11. *BE-ing The Church*
12. *Loving one another (truly loving one another)*
13. *Equipping the saints*
14. *Exemplifying supernatural unity*
15. *Ministering as ambassadors*
16. *Discerning matters shrewdly*
17. *Worshipping God vertically*
18. *Experiencing Him horizontally*
19. *Proclaiming the Gospel (no matter what)*
20. *Fishing for men*
21. *Making disciplined warriors*
22. *Winning spiritual warfare*
23. *Loving our King*
24. *Serving His kingdom*

PRAYER:

LORD, we seek to bless You with all that is within us. Help us here, we pray, to be that blessing as we come to better understand You and Your eternal truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). Help us to see with Your eyes and love with Your love, all that You would reveal to us through Your Word, Your will, and Your ways. May we grow in our grasp of Your realities, Your means of restoration, and Your mission of reproduction. In the holy name of Jesus, we pray. Amen and Amen

CONTEXT:

Macro

This lesson marks another major transition point in our curriculum's eye-opening explanation of Christianity. By way of review, we began in Section One with the reality of Almighty God having 1 Divine DESIGN (also known as a biblical worldview and the eternal application of Jesus Christ's Gospel). In Section Two, we addressed the 3 DIVISIONS (Head, Heart, and Hands) that make up the "being" in every human being. Next, in Section Three, we demonstrated how Christianity accounts for, defines, and describes all of humanity, every person, past, present, and future. We noted that all people can be identified as one of the 5 DISCIPLES – Lost, Lover, Learner, Leader, or Lifer. Moving forward, Section Four revealed, engaged, and explained the 7 fundamental DETAILS of God's Divine DESIGN... because **we all need to know what we need to know**. To be more specific, those seven truths are: The Foundations, The Framework, The Facts, The Fight, The Faith, The Family, and the truth about Forever.

Then, in Section Five, which we just completed, our focus shifted from HEAD based truths to 12 HEART shaping exercises or disciplines - each having the potential to strengthen one's personal relationship with Christ, His Church, and their collective mission: bringing God glory by finding & growing more glorifiers.

We used the acronym **J.E.S.U.S.'S. P. S.W.O.R.D.** to outline and harmonize a biblical, missional, and intentional methodology for growing in God's love - & His loving witness. The 12 HEART DISCIPLINES are: **J**ournaling... **E**ating-nothing (fasting)... **S**cripture-intake... **U**nderstudy of Scripture... **S**tewardship... **S**olitude... **P**rayer... **S**erving... **W**orshipping... **O**utreach... **R**elationships... and **D**evelopment.

Now, our curriculum and study will transition to The HANDS. This is where **Christians demonstrate to the world that Christ is in their worship & witness**. Whereas our time spent in the HEAD sections (1-4) focused on the truths that Christians need and seek to LEARN, and our concentration on the 12 HEART DISCIPLINES of section 5 helped us to grow in God's LOVE, our sixth and final section will **walk through the 24 DISTINCTIVES, which explain & exemplify how Christians are to faithfully LIVE... and fully BE The Church... together** – all by God's grace & ALL for His glory!

God's Word puts it this way:

"Let us not love with word and tongue but in action and truth." – 1st John 3:18

And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, [47](#)praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. – Acts 2:46-47

I. **DISTINCTIVES are FRUIT:**

It is important to realize that God's miraculous and authentic **Christian DISTINCTIVES are the FRUIT of saving grace and faith** (Ephesians 2:1-10). As Jesus described in John 15, people can do nothing outside of their abiding in Him and obeying His Word, will and ways. In short, there will be no fruit unless one remains attached to and provided for by the true Vine and divine Root. With that said, a cautionary note is worth sharing here, beware the counterfeits that abound around the world. ***Plastic fruit is deceptive vs. DISTINCTIVE!***

Galatians 5:22-25

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

II. **DISTINCTIVES are FAMILY:**



DISTINCTIVES, by definition, are those “distinguishing characteristics that are notable for having a special quality, style, and/or attractiveness” (Dictionary.com).

When it comes to God's family, the true Church, each Christian and their individualistic DISTINCTIVES are as unique as their potential. At the same time, in the same way that a billion unique snowflakes can be combined to make a single snowstorm, or countless swatches of scrap fabric can be sewn together to make a single quilt, so it is with God's family. The LORD creates His Christian family with a both/and combination of DISTINCTIVE uniqueness, as well as DISTINCTIVE love and defining unity.

Christianity's DISTINCT family (ecclesia) has a DISTINCTIVE unity (koinonia).

“By this all people will know that you are My disciple, if you have love for one another.”
– John 13:35

“The more genuine and the deeper our community becomes, the more will everything else between us recede, the more clearly and purely will Jesus Christ and his work become the one and only thing that is vital between us.”

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

III. **DISTINCTIVES are WITNESS:**

The most biblical and healthy understandings of Christianity will include an embrace of two overarching and DISTINCTIVE purposes. Namely, per God’s Word, will, and ways, every Christian has received miraculous, saving grace, as well as the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to:

1. Bring glory to God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

*So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do all to the glory of God.*

2. BE Christ’s witness.

Acts 1:8

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, **and you will be My witnesses** in Jerusalem (locally), and in all Judea and Samaria (regionally), and to the end of the earth (globally).”*

God’s DISTINCTIVE people have been filled with His Holy Spirit for the express purpose of living DISTINCTIVE lives. When the world sees the LORD’s loving family living out their divinely empowered and God-honoring worship, work, and warfare, the resulting fruit will serve as a faithful witness, built with supernatural, grace-based, and missional DISTINCTIVES.

“God created me—and you—to live with a single, all-embracing, all-transforming passion—namely, a passion to glorify God by enjoying and displaying his supreme excellence in all the spheres of life.”

- John Piper

The Christian Distinctive

What distinguishes Christianity from all other religions is that it is a *revealed* religion. Christianity is not about our search for God or our means of finding him. Christianity is not a religion that works its way upward. It is all about God coming to us — God in grace making himself known to us and making a way for us to enjoy fellowship with him.

And so, at the very heart of Christianity is, simply, a message — a message from God to us about what he has done to bring us to himself.

If Christianity is distinctively revealed religion, then it is also uniquely *authoritative*. It does not offer itself as the best and highest of human thinking about God or even the best or most successful of human efforts to know God. It professes to be nothing less than the unique word from God, his very own self-disclosure and the record of the actions he has taken in Jesus Christ to bring us into fellowship with himself.

One of Rudyard Kipling's characters declares, "The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone; He don't obey no orders unless they is his own." That is to say, human religions lack authority — they form their own ideas and "discover" their own beliefs.

By contrast the Christian is "under orders," because unlike human religions, Christianity is a revealed religion — divinely revealed. We Christians are not our own touchstone of truth, and we do not confuse our ideas about God with His own self-revelation. We learn truth about God not from "inner lights" within ourselves but from God's own objective Word.

And apart from this external authority, there is no Christianity. This, at bottom, is Christianity's leading distinctive.

And so, we **Christians prize Scripture as God's Word. We joyfully submit to it. And we enthusiastically proclaim its message of grace in Jesus Christ to the world.**

- Dr. Fred Zaspel

Micro

"It is a great honor to be allowed to do anything for the Lord. When the day of recompense comes, our only regret will be that we have done so little for Him, not that we have done too much."

– *George Muller*

"I may not be able to fill someone else, but I have a responsibility to empty myself with the hope that it fills someone else. I may not be able to light up someone's lamp, but I also have the responsibility of shinning my light with the hope that it lights someone else."

– *Kingsley Opuwari Manuel*

Message

"The whole question is: "How precious is He (Christ) to us now?" If we do not think much of Him, then of course to give him anything at all, however small, will seem to us a wicked waste. But when He is really precious to our souls nothing will be too good, nothing too costly for Him; everything we have, our dearest, our most priceless treasure, we shall pour out upon him, and we shall not count it a shame to have done so."

– *Watchman Nee*

What does it mean to be an ambassador for Christ?

In a letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul discusses the ministry of reconciliation, and he uses the term "ambassadors" for Christ: "All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. *We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us*" ([2 Corinthians 5:18-20](#), emphasis added).

Generally speaking, an ambassador is a respected official acting as a representative of a nation. Sent to a foreign land, the ambassador's role is to reflect the official position of the sovereign body that gave him authority. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul likens his own calling to that of an ambassador, and he urges all Christians to consider themselves ambassadors for Christ. The gospel of reconciliation was always at the heart of Paul's preaching: "For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel" ([1 Corinthians 1:17](#)).

Our reconciliation with God is possible only because Christ went to the cross and received the punishment due for our sin. When our Savior cried out, “It is finished,” the barrier between sinful man and Holy God was removed, making all those who trust in Him “holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation” ([Colossians 1:22](#)). Our reconciliation is based on the salvation Jesus provides, and it is accepted by faith ([John 3:16](#); [Ephesians 2:8-9](#)).

Christians are God’s ambassadors in that they have been “approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel” ([1 Thessalonians 2:4](#)). As we go through this world, we represent another Kingdom ([John 18:36](#)), and it is our responsibility to reflect the “official position” of heaven. We are in this world, but not of it ([John 17:16](#)). God’s ambassadors are to be “as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves” ([Matthew 10:16](#)). Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we must take the message of our King to the “ends of the earth” ([Acts 1:8](#)), imploring men and women everywhere to be reconciled to God.

– [GotQuestions.org](#)

*“Faithfulness to one’s calling is ultimately the only true measure of success.
By your faithfulness you will change people and creation
according to God’s plan.”
– Charlie Peacock*

BIG IDEA: MINISTERING AS AMBASSADORS proves the Christian’s collective commitments to BE-ing grace-based, missional-servants... all in the context of active, Christ-like privilege and responsibility.

PREVIEW:

1. MINISTER-ING
2. “ING”
3. AS AMBASSADORS

TEXT:

1 Corinthians 11:1
Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

1. MINISTER-ING

Illustration:

“Personal ministry is not about always knowing what to say. It is not about fixing everything in sight that is broken. Personal ministry is about connecting people with Christ so that they are able to think as he would have them think, desire what he says is best, and do what he calls them to do even if their circumstances never get “fixed.” It involves exposing hurt, lost, and confused people to God’s glory, so that they give up their pursuit of their own glory and live for his.”

– Paul David Tripp

Explanation:

What is a Christian minister?

A minister is, literally, a “servant,” but the word has taken on a broader meaning in religious circles. Today, a Christian minister is seen as someone authorized to conduct religious services. A person who leads worship services, administrates a church, or conducts weddings and funerals is considered a Christian minister. Synonyms of *minister* are *clergy* and *pastor*.

In the Bible, the role of minister is not linked to licensing or being an “official” wielding some kind of authority. In [Romans 15:16](#) Paul says that he was called to be “a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. [God] gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”

Following in Paul’s footsteps, **any person who desires to serve God by “proclaiming the gospel so that . . . others might become sanctified by the Holy Spirit” is a Christian minister.** Broadly speaking, being a servant of Christ makes one a Christian minister.

Individual churches can define more specific roles for that church’s ministers or pastors. Although Scripture indicates that the spiritual authority of a local body should be a man ([1 Timothy 2:12](#)), other ministering roles are available to both men [and women](#). In most non-Catholic churches, a senior minister is responsible for the majority of the preaching and for overseeing church government. In the New Testament, such men are referred to as “overseers,” “elders,” or “shepherds” ([Acts 20:28](#); [Titus 1:7](#); [1 Timothy 3:1-2](#)). These terms are referencing “ministers” in an official capacity—those having been called by God to lead a church.

There are strict guidelines for those aspiring to the office of overseer. An elder or minister must be “blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient . . . not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.” ([Titus 1:6-9](#))

[First Timothy 3:1-7](#) adds that the role of overseer is “a noble task.” Also, a minister should not be a recent convert and must “have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap.”

Even in the first-century church, there were some who infiltrated the church, posing as ministers but motivated only by greed and lust ([2 Peter 2:1-2, 19](#); [Matthew 7:15](#); [Acts 20:29](#)). Not everyone who calls himself a Christian minister is worthy of that title. God takes such imposters seriously ([Jude 1:12-13](#)). A true Christian minister is someone gifted by God for church leadership ([1 Corinthians 12:28-29](#)). He has been ordained by a like-minded governing body ([Acts 6:6](#); [13:3](#); [2 Timothy 1:6](#)). And he lives in accordance with the Scriptures defining his role. – GotQuestions.org

Application:

God’s Word, will, and ways clearly command and call for every Christian’s consistent commitment to loving, grace-based, faithful obedience. Consider, ***worshippers live worshipping. Followers live following.*** And no surprise... ***true, miraculously transformed ministers (also known as spiritual SHEEP) live missionally ministering!*** At the same time, the opposite is also true. ***Those whose lives lack true, Gospel empowered (Acts 1:8) witnessing, worshipping, following, & ministering are NOT biblical witnesses, worshippers, followers, & ministers.*** In short, per Jesus, ***living-contradictions to God’s Word are deceived GOATS and/or deceiving, counterfeit WOLVES!***

*Brilliance, intellectually speaking,
is not required of the ministry, but integrity is.”
– May Sarton*

*“Jesus’ final act of public ministry was to address the needs of a widow,
his own mother, whose eldest son was dying before her very eyes.”
– Carolyn Custis Jame*

2. "ING"

Illustration:

"God trains His soldiers, not in tents of ease and luxury, but by turning them out and using them thru forced marches and hard service. He makes them forge through streams, & swim through rivers, & climb mountains, & walk many a long mile with heavy knapsacks of sorrow on their backs."

— *Charles Haddon Spurgeon*

Explanation:

"Beware of any work for God that causes or allows you to avoid concentrating on Him. A great number of Christian workers worship their work. The only concern of Christian workers should be their concentration on God. This will mean that all the other boundaries of life, whether they are mental, moral, or spiritual limits, are completely free with the freedom God gives His child; that is, a worshiping child, not a wayward one. A worker who lacks this serious controlling emphasis of concentration on God is apt to become overly burdened by his work. He is a slave to his own limits, having no freedom of his body, mind, or spirit. Consequently, he becomes burned out and defeated. There is no freedom and no delight in (that) life at all. His nerves, mind, and heart are so overwhelmed that God's blessing cannot rest on him."

— *Oswald Chambers*

"We forget that God's primary goal is not changing our situations or relationships so that we can be happy, but changing us through our situations and relationships so that we will be holy."

— *Paul David Tripp*

Application:

*"Ah. I smiled. I'm not really here to keep you from freaking out. I'm here to be with you while you freak out, or grieve or laugh or suffer or sing. **It is a ministry of presence. It is showing up with a loving heart.**"*

— *Kate Braestrup*

"A fruitful ministry will not abandon the gospel by over-contextualizing to its place & culture, nor will it privatize the gospel by under-contextualizing to his place and culture."

— *Stephen Witmer*

3. AS AMBASSADORS

Illustration:

"...if you want to do something great for God, then get ready to be tested greatly first. You'll be tested greatly so you can be trusted greatly."

– Louie Giglio

"God's family is our true family... Just as the family you grow up in shapes your identity such as your name, beliefs, and values, being part of God's family is a new identity. Our individual relationships and families still matter, but our new status as sons and daughters of the living God comes first."

– Rebecca Sharley

Explanation:

2 Corinthians 5:20

...we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us...

CALLED BY A NEW NAME (per 2 Corinthians 5:1-21)

In Proverbs 13:17, Isaiah 18:2, 30:4; 33:7 and Jeremiah 49:14 we find the word 'envoy', meaning an *ambassador*. In the New Testament the Apostle Paul speaks of himself as Christ's ambassador (Ephesians 6:20), and of all Christians as the *ambassadors* of the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:20).

What is an ambassador? In 2 Corinthians 5:20 Paul says, "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors..." An ambassador is a **REPRESENTATIVE** – one who represents another. He goes to a foreign country and represents the Throne and the Government of his own people. Now this is true of ambassadors for Christ, representatives of the King of heaven and of heaven itself, in a foreign country – this world. His position is one of great **RESPONSIBILITY**, so think of this in its spiritual significance. Christ is our representative in heaven (Hebrews 9:24) and we are His personal representatives on the earth (2 Corinthians 5:20). However, none of us can truly represent the Lord in our own strength, but when He sends us out, we go with all the **RESOURCES** of heaven behind us. He is our sufficiency, and we go in His Name. Compare 2 Corinthians 6:1. Let's notice the **Marks**, the **Message**, and the **Motive** of God's ambassadors.

A. The MARKS of an Ambassador of God

1. (1) ***He must be a citizen of heaven.*** No alien can ever represent our Queen or her Government in a foreign Court. Now look at 2 Corinthians 5:17, because a true ambassador must be “in Christ...”, “a new creation...” & “redeemed...with the precious blood of Christ...” (1 Peter 1:18-19).
2. (2) ***He must be above reproach.*** Our Queen would never send out a man of doubtful character; and the Lord requires that His ambassadors should live lives that are above suspicion. Notice again in 2 Corinthians 5:17: “...the old has gone, the new has come...”, and compare Philippians 2:15. He is the object of the closest scrutiny, and in every relationship he must be blameless.
3. (3) ***He must be selfless.*** He must be willing to put aside completely his own interests so that he might do the will of his king. Is the whole determined attitude of our lives, ‘Not I, but Christ’? Do we “die every day”? – look up 1st Corinthians 15:31. Have we entered, by faith, into the experience of John 12:24 and Galatians 2:20?
4. (4) ***He must be in constant contact with the Throne.*** He will make use of every modern method of communication. In the same way, by prayer we can be in constant contact with the Throne of God – how necessary for a true ambassador!
5. (5) ***He must be steadfast and loyal.*** Look up Ephesians 6:20. The Apostle Paul is in prison, but how willingly he suffered these “chains” for Christ’s sake! How faithful and how utterly loyal he was to his King!
6. (6) ***He must be diplomatic.*** Diplomacy is the art of negotiation. We have no wisdom of our own and we certainly do not have the wisdom needed to win souls and to represent the Lord before men; but we have a great promise that God will fulfill in us if we ask Him (James 1:5).
7. (7) ***He must know the language of the people among whom he lives.*** How important it is for the ambassador to be able to communicate in a foreign country. The language that we, as ambassadors, need to learn is the language of love. Look up Luke 10:33-35.

B. The MESSAGE of an Ambassador of God

This is clearly defined in 2 Corinthians 5:19-21. We are to proclaim the fact that at infinite cost to Himself God has made a way of reconciliation possible; that He has done this by sending His own Son to die for sin; & that through His sacrifice the barrier of sin has been removed and God & man have been brought together in Christ, by His *at-one-ment*. The ambassador is to proclaim this message & to tell men & women that these are God’s terms for reconciliation, & he is to press them to accept these terms & to be reconciled to God. ***The ambassador’s message is therefore one of absolute certainty; it is one of great heavenly and spiritual authority – for it has been “committed to us” (v. 19), and we proclaim it “on Christ’s behalf” (v. 20); & its proclamation calls for great loyalty on the part of the ambassador.*** Philip was a good ambassador – look up & compare Acts 8:5 & 35.

C. The MOTIVE of an Ambassador of God

1. (1) **The love of Christ** (verse 14). His great love for us, and in us (Romans 5:8) compels us to go out with His message of reconciliation.
2. (2) **The Judgment Seat of Christ** (verses 9-10). One day our King will recall us, then – Romans 14:12 and 1 Corinthians 3:13.
3. (3) **The dire need of the lost** (verse 11). The fact that men are lost and bound for a Christ-less eternity should stir us, not only to live so that we truly represent our Lord, but to proclaim with passion the message that He has committed to us. This passion was in the heart of the Prophet when he wrote – Isaiah 62:1, and it was certainly in the heart of the great Apostle himself when he wrote – Romans 9:2-3. It is the passion of our beseeching God that burns within us, that becomes a part of us and that finds its expression as we pray for men and women “on Christ’s behalf” that they will be reconciled to God.

– Francis Dixon

Application:

AMBASSADOR is arguably God’s greatest description of a Christian. This title speaks to both divine privilege and missional responsibility. The Gospel’s grace is apparent in the AMBASSADOR’s gifted appointment, while God’s glory is evident in the position’s supernatural power, promise, and purpose. May each and every Christian live as the righteous AMBASSADOR that Christ died to empower them to BE!

“Vocations are a mask from God. That is, God hides Himself in the workplace, the family, the Church, and the seemingly secular society”

– Martin Luther

“The sermon of your life in tough times ministers to people more powerfully than the most eloquent speaker.”

– Bill Bright

CLOSE:

“Will you not this day make it your prayer? “Lord, help me to glorify Thee... Thou hast put me in this world for something, Lord, show me what that is and help me to work out my life-purpose.”

– Charles Haddon Spurgeon

What Is The AMBASSADOR’s MINISTRY Of Reconciliation?

The ministry of reconciliation in [2 Corinthians 5:18](#) refers to the work believers have been given to do and the message they declare: you can have a restored relationship with God through Jesus. The verse says this: “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.”

The ministry of reconciliation involves the proclamation of the [gospel](#) and its assurance that forgiveness of sin is available in Christ. Sin prevents us from having a relationship with God, but Jesus’ perfect sacrifice on the cross made atonement for sin ([Hebrews 2:17](#)) and brought harmony to mankind’s relationship with Him. **Jesus reconciled us to God. Now we can proclaim that people can repent of their sin and be right with God again through faith in Jesus** ([Romans 5:10](#); [Colossians 1:20–21](#)).

We need reconciliation with God because our relationship with Him was broken. God is holy and righteous, and our sin separates us from Him ([Isaiah 59:2](#)). Sin made us His enemies ([Romans 5:10](#)). On the cross, Jesus took our sin upon Himself, satisfying God’s justice. **Jesus’ death made it possible for us to have peace with God**, as [2 Corinthians 5:19](#) says, “God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them.” Now we can be called God’s “friends” ([John 15:15](#)) and Jesus’ “brothers and sisters” ([Hebrews 2:11](#)). Those who have been justified through faith ([Romans 5:1](#)) by Jesus’ blood ([Romans 5:9](#)) no longer have their sins counted against them. They are reconciled with God.

God has given believers the ministry of reconciliation; that is, He uses us to tell the world that they can be reconciled to God through Christ. In this way, we become “Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us” ([2 Corinthians 5:20](#)).

Verse 19 describes this ministry of reconciliation as proclaiming “the message of reconciliation.” The message we are to share with the world is this: “Be reconciled to God” (verse 20). We are to tell people of the wonderful opportunity they have to be made right with God through Jesus. We implore them to believe in Christ. Sins do not count against those who are reconciled to God through Christ, because “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (verse 21).

This ministry of reconciliation is a big responsibility. God is “making his appeal through us” ([2 Corinthians 5:20](#)). The ministry we’ve been given to turn hearts toward God is urgent and it is vital—it’s truly a matter of life and death. Jesus paid the price for our reconciliation because God loves us ([John 3:16](#)), so we must share this message of reconciliation in love, & our lives need to reflect our message ([Ephesians 4:1](#)). Jesus is the One who saves, & the Holy Spirit is the One who convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness & judgment ([John 16:8](#)), yet we have been given the privilege of being ambassadors for Christ.

Every believer plays a part in this ministry of reconciliation. One plants; one waters, and God brings growth ([1 Corinthians 3:7](#)). As we proclaim the gospel, we act as peacemakers, and God blesses such ([Matthew 5:9](#)). We tell and live out His message of reconciliation, lives are changed, **and God gets the glory.** – [GotQuestions.org](#)

For What?

*“Men are God’s method.
The Church is looking for better methods; God is looking for better men.”*
— *E.M. Bounds*

“Jesus gave gifts to men so that they can function in their calling.”
— *Benjamin Suulola*

*“The Church does not need brilliant personalities but faithful servants of Jesus
and the brethren. Not in the former but in the latter is the lack.”*
— *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

“What is important to God is that you remain faithful to Him in your ministry”
— *Sunday Adelaja*

“All ministry must be God-centered, but it must also be man-purposed.”
— *Samuel Waldron*

*“My job as a Christian is not to get people to heaven when they die,
it’s to get heaven to people while they’re alive”*
— *D.R. Silva*

*“Excellent ministers cannot be those who yearn for earthly applause. Neither
can they be lovers of earthly comfort. The life of ministry is not a life of leisure.
The notion that ministry can be both effective and painless is a lie.*
— *John MacArthur*

So What?

*“Surely, if there could be regrets in heaven,
the saints might mourn that they did not live longer here to do more good.”*
— *Charles Haddon Spurgeon*

*“In many cases, our need to wonder about or be told what God wants in a
certain situation is nothing short of a clear indication of
how little we are engaged in His work.”*
— *Dallas Willard*

“The true character of ministry is a servant’s heart.”
— *Harold Warner*

*"Character can never be traded for ministry.
Character is the very foundation upon which the ministry is built"*
– *Dr. Lucas D. Shallua*

*"It's when you humble yourself as a servant
that people want to follow you as a leader."*
– *Levi Lusko*

*"I would never want to reach out someday with a soft, uncalloused hand -
a hand never dirtied by serving - and shake the nail-pierced hand of Jesus."*
– *Bill Hybels*

*"Let every man abide in the calling wherein he is called, and his work will be as
sacred as the work of the ministry. **It is not what a man does that
determines whether his work is sacred or secular, it is why he does it.**"*
– *A.W. Tozer*

*"Has what you do for God become more important to you
than the Lord Himself?"*
– *Colin S. Smith*

"To do the work of others is slavery. To do the work of God is true liberation."
– *Anonymous*

Now What?

"If you can't pick the fruit... don't bruise it."
– *Linda O'Dell*

*"That physician is no better than a murderer,
that negligently delayeth till his patient be dead or past cure."*
– *Richard Baxter*

*"I find that I keep offering God my service when
what He wants is my fellowship"*
– *John Paul Warren*

*"**Ministry's not an option for a Christian; it's a privilege.**"*
– *Lori Hatcher*

*"If I could relive my life,
I would devote my entire ministry to reaching children for God."
– Dwight L. Moody*

***"Harmony is produced in ministry when everyone seeks to be a servant."
– Elizabeth George***

*"[I pray] that we might not outlive our usefulness."
– David Brainerd*

*"Use your ministry to build people... NOT people to build your ministry."
– Jacquelyn K. Heasley*

*"Keep your minister's table well provided, and you shall be fed with the finest of the wheat; see that his earthly cares do not press on him painfully, and your own hearts' burdens will be lifted by his heavenly teachings; supply him with this world's needful comforts, and he will not fail to bring you solace and consolation in the time of your extremity. If he has sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if he shall reap your carnal things?"
– Susannah Spurgeon
(wife of Charles Spurgeon)*

PRAYER

Dear heavenly Father, thank You so much for the Truth and Love of Your Word, will, and ways. Please help us to absorb and apply ALL that You have shared and commanded in the Bible. May our heads be infilled with Your defining Scriptures, for the express purpose of informing, inspecting, and inspiring our sanctified hearts and serving hands.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen and Amen

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March 29, 2009
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