

Building A Foundation For Personal Ministry

Sample

Section One

THE FAST OF MINISTRY

Isa 58:5-8 You humble yourselves by going through the motions of penance, bowing your heads like reeds bending in the wind. You dress in burlap and cover yourselves with ashes. Is this what you call fasting? Do you really think this will please the LORD? "No, this is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people. Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. "Then your salvation will come like the dawn, and your wounds will quickly heal. Your godliness will lead you forward, and the glory of the LORD will protect you from behind." NLT

**God has called us to
MINISTER
to the needs that are before us
whether
physical or spiritual
whether
home or abroad!**

Section One - Chapter One

THE VALUE OF MINISTRY

Mat 25:14-30 "Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip. "The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and

hid the master's money. "After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, 'Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.' "The master was full of praise. 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together! ' "The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.' "The master said, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!' "Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, 'Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate. I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.' "But the master replied, 'You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn't plant and gathered crops I didn't cultivate, why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.' "Then he ordered, 'Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' NLT

I have to admit something here at the very beginning. Throughout a long period of my life, even into my ministry, I felt sorry for the servant with the “one talent”. I thought the master was somewhat, well okay, “really” harsh with this poor guy who “*only had ONE talent*”. Come on now, if you are only given “*one talent*” and your fellow servants are given “*two or five talents*” doesn’t that show that the master doesn’t really trust you very much anyway? Should he really expect much from someone who was given so little?

BUT THEN - One day I was reading this story in a new Bible I had bought, a Thomas Nelson Bible, and in the footnote under each verse that spoke about the talents it gave the amount of money that talent of silver would be worth in today’s money. It said that the one talent would be equivalent to \$384,000! Now I know that we are not sure of the exact value of a talent of silver in Bible days and I have read estimates that were much lower and some that were much higher, but whatever the amount - it was a “pretty hefty chunk of change”. Suddenly my attitude toward the “one talent servant” changed dramatically. In my mind I said, “You lazy, good for nothing, wicked man! You had all of that and did absolutely nothing with it! You didn’t invest it! You didn’t even put it in the bank! Your master TRUSTED YOU with SO MUCH and you did SO LITTLE!”

I’m sure you can think of many people that only exhibit one real talent, perhaps a carpenter, a mechanic, a teacher, an artist, an athlete; yet they invest their talent wisely and make a very nice living for themselves, their families or even others around them.

A lady in the church I grew up in had multiple talents, but she directed most of them toward one goal. She taught the “Beginners” Sunday School class. Her goal was that every student that came into her class would learn about every “major” story in the Bible. She and her husband built displays and story boards that depicted the stories.

She didn't testify often. She didn't sing solos. She focused most of her energy toward using that one "teaching" talent because she understood the value of that talent.

Understanding the value of the talent God has trusted us with is a STONE that can't be laid aside when building the FOUNDATION of your PERSONAL MINISTRY.

There is no monetary value that can be placed on our God given talents, because we can't put a value on a soul. Nothing we do as a ministry unto the Lord has temporal value only. Everything has eternal affects.

Most major denominations have done studies about the demographics of their churches. I used to check some of them every few years to see their findings. One of the things they were most interested in was "why someone chose to make a church their home church." During the time span that I was checking their studies, the number one reason, every year, regardless of denomination was the cleanliness and care of the building itself. It didn't have to be a fancy building with a lot of amenities. Visitors just wanted to see that the people of that church cared enough to keep it clean and neat. Flowers or neat landscaping and a lawn that was neatly mowed was a plus. Clean walkways and porches along with clean windows on entrance doors were things that were often mentioned. It wasn't the preaching or the singing that made the most impact. It was something that almost anyone has a talent for. Visitors just wanted to see that things were well maintained.

We might think that sweeping a sidewalk is not very spiritual, but when we realize that someone may choose our church as their home church based largely on that, it changes our perspective doesn't it? What if that visitor doesn't know Christ and they base their idea of all churches on the cleanliness of our church?

Everything we do for God, from sweeping to singing, from painting to preaching or from washing windows to witnessing might very well have an eternal impact on someone's soul!

The value of "just one" talent is beyond measure!