

# A Minister and a Steward

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Date: 28 June 2018

[ 0 : 00 ] Take your Bibles, if you would, and turn with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 4. 1 Corinthians chapter 4. James, tonight is a big night. I remember very distinctly the night I was ordained and how excited I was to believe that somebody believed in me.

For all of us tonight, we're not calling James into the ministry. God does that. We're not gifting James for the ministry. God does that.

We haven't done anything but recognize what God has done, and that's what we're doing tonight. We're simply recognizing it. There have been great men of God that weren't even ordained, and D.O. Moody was a great man.

He wasn't ordained, and Charles Spurgeon wasn't ordained, and so you don't have to be ordained. But ordination is special to a young man because in a certain way, it's like I have reached a point in my life where people are saying, I believe you are a man of God.

I recognize in you that you have the call of God on your life and the gifting of God on your life to do a work. And so it's like a great point to reach. On the other side of it, it's like you hadn't started yet.

[ 1 : 11 ] And so tonight you get to start. It's like we give you a driver's license. You know, Cason and I are both pilots of small airplanes. And when you get your pilot's license, what they tell you is now go learn how to fly.

Because basically you didn't kill the instructor and you didn't kill the tester, and you still don't know what you're doing. So go try to learn how to fly. And so tonight, where are you, James? Are you even in this bill?

There you are. Tonight, we are recognizing that. I want to share with you a passage of Scripture I think sums up. And yes, if you look, you recognize I actually preached this on January the 12th, 2017.

Right here for one of you old ladies that writes it in the margin of your Bible. I did this at another ordination service. That was for you, babe. Look at 1 Corinthians. Look at 1 Corinthians chapter 4.

Let's read these two verses. Then I want to put them in context. Then I want to walk through them. I have a little more time. I don't usually get to speak much at our ordinations because we have so many preachers. But since everybody's traveling, I get some time tonight.

[ 2 : 14 ] Look at 1 Corinthians 4.1. Let a man so account of us as the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.

Father, I pray for the young men in this room that you will call to the ministry later and that our church will have a part in ordaining. And I ask you to deal with their hearts and touch them and help them to see how vitally important this is.

I pray tonight for James, Lord, as you are already using him and already sending him out. And we are simply recognizing that. I pray for all of us that are in the gospel ministry already that we would take to heart these gospel, biblical truths about who we are and what we do.

And I will give you praise for what's going to happen now. In Jesus' name, amen. I think it's very interesting. If you look at verse 1 with me, it says, Let a man so account of us. Now, you need to get the context of that because it's not even God counting of them.

He said, Paul said, I wish a man, when he thinks of us, would say about us, they're ministers of Christ. I want men to say they're ministers. And minister here is just a servant.

[ 3 : 23 ] It's basically like being a deacon. It's like saying, I just want him to look and say, yeah, he's a good waiter. He knows how to bring the tea to the table. He knows how to bring the beans on the plate without spilling them.

He's just a good minister. And he's a steward. And a steward is also another word. It's really a servant word. A steward is a guy. He's the butler. He's the guy that's in charge of the house, makes sure everything's where it's supposed to be.

He said, tonight, I wish men would look at me, Paul says, and think of me as a good waiter and a good butler. I wish they'd think of me as a good waiter and a good butler. Now, I'm a butler of the mysteries of God.

They're not my mysteries. They're God's mysteries. They don't belong to me. They belong to God. And I just got to be faithful with what God gave me. Now, go back in your Bible, if you would, in 1 Corinthians 3.

And let's get the context of that verse. 1 Corinthians 3 and verse 18. I mean, honestly, you need all the three chapters. But just get this picture. Because it helps you understand when he says, let a man so account of us.

[ 4 : 23 ] I want people's opinion of me to be Dr. Bottle Stopper. Nope. I want people to think of me as the great rabbi. Nope. I want people to think of me as the great preacher whose name is in all the magazines.

Nope. Look at 1 Corinthians 3.18. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise.

Quit trying to feel like a big shot. Quit trying to feel like you know so much. If you think you know so much, you all just go ahead and admit it you're an idiot. Basically, that's a rough translation of verse 19. 19.

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. It is written, he takes the wise in their own craftiness. You could be smart in this world and everybody would think you're somebody. But God's like, you ain't anybody.

And you don't know anything. People write me all the time. They say, well, you think about this thing that somebody said in Facebook. And I'm usually like, I don't care. You know? Worldly wisdom is just not important to us.

[ 5 : 22 ] But that brings us to get our context. And look at the context. Verse 20. Again, the Lord knows the thoughts of the wise. They're wasted. They're empty. They're vain.

They're of no value. Wise people know nothing. Human people know nothing. People don't know anything. Verse 21, he said, therefore, let no man glory in men.

Look, for all things are yours. Y'all shouldn't be going around bragging about a man because he's just a man. And then he goes to explain that. Verse 22. I don't want you bragging on Paul. I don't want you bragging on Apollos.

I don't want you bragging on Cephas or Peter or the world or life or death or things present or things to come. All are yours. And you are Christ. And Christ is God.

He says, you know, guys, there's a lot of junk going on down at the Corinthian church. And you guys are all going around saying, I really like Peter. He's my favorite preacher. Some of y'all got YouTube favorites. And some of you got book favorites.

[ 6 : 15 ] And you're going around bragging about them. And if you need to know what something means, you don't study your Bible, you go check out what Dr. Bottle Stopper says. And that'll become the way you know what's right. And Paul says, man, what are y'all doing bragging about that thing?

And then he says this. Well, let me just say what I want y'all to think of when you think of me. I don't want you to think I am wise. I don't want you to think that I know everything. I don't want you to think that I'm somebody.

I don't want y'all to put me in your list of your heroes. I want you to think of me as a servant of Christ. Look at that. That's a pretty beautiful thing. Paul said, I want you to say, I want men to say.

God say what he wants. That's not what he's telling. He's telling that church. And some of y'all go around saying Trent's the greatest thing in the world. All of a sudden, we just put up with him. And some of the rest of you go around saying Jimmy's the greatest thing in the world.

We just put up with Trent and Austin. And some of you go around and say, Robert Canva, he's the real man of God. And some of you going around saying Jeff Bush, he ought to be the pastor. And y'all playing all that game. And Paul says, stop playing these games.

[ 7 : 14 ] I'll tell you what I want you to say. If you want to talk about me, Paul, just say this. He's one of God's servants. He's just one of God's servants. You're not going to Japan because you're so smart. It's going to take a long time if you get old enough for them to think you know anything.

I mean, you and Confucius still got a few years between you. Is he even Japanese or he Chinese? See there? This worldly wisdom, I got it working. But the point is, let a man so account of us as a minister of Christ.

I'm just one of his servants. I'm just one of his servants. And then he said, if you look at the next part, he said, and I'm just a steward of the mystery of God. Now that in our terms is an administrator.

When you go down to the local Walmart or Kroger or Publix or wherever you go, they got a guy in there and they call him the manager. Let me explain something to you about the manager. He doesn't own the place.

They'll fire him in a heartbeat. They'll walk in one day and say, this is not your business. It's my business. If he decides to start taking money home any way he wanted to, they'd say to him, you know what the rules are about managers, don't you?

[ 8 : 15 ] They got to be found faithful and you ain't. And so you're fired. That's a pretty strong sense. See, he says he's a steward of the mysteries of God. And what are stewards required to do? Keep good books.

Manage the store right. Do a good job. And God's made you a steward. You got a copy of the word of God in your hands. You'll soon have a copy of the Japanese Bible in your hands and you'll stand in a pulpit and you'll share the gospel.

And you ought not be trying to get a following. So, you know, it's not about how many likes you get on YouTube. It's not how much, what is it now, Instagram, Snapchat and whatever else they're going to make up tomorrow.

It's not about that. It's are you handling it right? Are you sharing it right? Are you teaching it right? You're a servant. You're not in charge. You're a servant. We independent Baptist preachers have a real problem with that because we're the, we're all, we all say we're servants, but you need to know that I am the biggest servant in the room.

And biggest servant doesn't mean I do more serving. It means y'all serve me, but you can call me a servant. But just remember, I am the boss servant. That's not what it's saying here. Paul didn't say that. Peter don't know diddly.

[ 9 : 15 ] I know. And Paul could have probably said that because in the book of Galatians, he basically did. And he could say that because in other places he had arguments, but here he doesn't say that. He said, when y'all think about Peter and when y'all think about Apollos, who's the great orator, and you think about me, can I just go ahead and tell y'all what else you think when you think about me?

There comes Paul. He's just one of the boys that serves Jesus. That's all he is. And there comes Paul. He just runs a gospel dispensation station. And it's not his, and he doesn't own it.

He doesn't own the ingredients. He doesn't get the credit. You know, I don't know if you realize this, but when they advertise at a Walmart in Alpharetta made a lot of money this year, and it hits a home office, somebody may talk about that manager.

But the truth of the matter is, they don't really care. They replace him about every two years anyway. It's not the manager. It's the owner or owners. Let a man be, let a man think of me as a minister, a servant of Christ, as a steward, an administrator, a manager of the mysteries of God.

I have in my hands the Word of God. I get to explain the Word of God. And I need to do that. And I need to be really careful because it's required of all managers. Everybody knows that. It's required that a manager be found faithful.

[ 10 : 26 ] I'd like to say to you, you need to go to Japan and walk in there and say, it's not about what James Miyasha thinks, and it's definitely not about what Vision Baptist Church thinks, and it's not about what Austin Gardner thinks.

Let's read the book and see what the Word of God says. I just managed this book right here. I don't even manage this book. I just managed teaching you this book because this book is managing me. You're not going to be anybody big.

You're not trying to be a big missionary. And if you were trying to be a big missionary, Paul would say, maybe you ought to read 1 Corinthians 3, where I said, don't try to be a big missionary. Don't try to be a big shot. Just think of yourself as a servant.

Think of yourself as a guy we sent out to sell some shoes. And the shoes are what's important. You're just a seller. The gospel is what's important. So be careful. Don't complain. Don't whine. You're a servant.

You're a servant. And servants don't always get treated well. A servant's basically supposed to be invisible. I mean, when you go to the restaurant, the last thing you want is a waiter says, can I sit here with you?

[ 11 : 17 ] Well, I'm your waiter tonight. I'll sit here and eat with you. We can talk. You'll be like, look, chatty Kathy, move on. I ain't got time to talk to you. Just bring me my food and make sure my glass is full.

Be here when I need you and don't be here when I don't need you. You're just a servant. That's the way the Lord wants us to do it. We've got to be faithful. You need to be there every service. You need to be in the Bible every day. You need to love your wife.

You need to love those Japanese people. You need to make sure that you know who you are. A minister, a servant, a butler, a manager, a steward, an administrator. And you need to know what's important.

It's what you get to hold in your hands, the word of God. Father in heaven, I thank you for the opportunity to be with your people tonight. And I thank you for the opportunity to pray over and bless one of your men.

God, in no way do I or do the deacons, church staff here, think we made James Meashta. I know our men, and I know we know that we're just standing here watching you.

[ 12 : 16 ] We're just a midwife standing here watching you give birth, watching you do a work. We give you all glory and all honor. God, we ask you to take your man doing your work to your place to share your gospel.

We ask you to bless Rosie that she would be the kind of wife she ought to be and a blessing to her husband. And I pray to your God that tonight you would deal with other young men in this room that are going into the ministry.

And I pray that you would help them to grow and learn. And God, help us all to be careful to only be servants and managers that handle your truth and obey you.

And we respond, we answer to, we're accountable to you. And I will give you praise and honor and glory for all that you do. In Jesus' precious name, amen.