

## SECTION TWELVE : MINISTERS AND AMBASSADORS IN CHRIST

Each one of us are ministers and ambassadors in Christ.

At APC we try to emphasize that 'every believer is a minister'. This is what the Scriptures teach us. Today we will explore a few insights in relation to this.

### 121. HEAVENLY CALL, IN CHRIST JESUS

#### **Philippians 3:12-14**

**12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.**

**13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,**

**14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

Speaking of his own spiritual journey the apostle Paul makes it clear that his focus is to keep moving toward the finish line (goal) for the victory prize of the divine, heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

In Christ, each of us have this divine invitation, a heavenly call, a purpose for which Jesus has laid a hold of us (vs 12), and we are living for the completion of that purpose.

### **Fulfill your ministry**

#### **Colossians 4:17**

**And say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."**

The apostle Paul wrote encouraging this man Archippus, to keep on in the ministry which he received "in the Lord" and complete it.

Our ministry, work of service, is "in the Lord", that is, it comes from Him, it is because of Him, it is all for Him. It is His work through us because we are in Him.

## Labor in the Lord

### **1 Corinthians 15:58**

**Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.**

It is good to look at where life is leading to, the end of life's journey, what will all this amount to, will all this be worth the time, effort, sacrifice, and investment we are making? The apostle Paul assures us that "the work of the Lord" is our "labor...in the Lord" and it will not be "in vain". It is not a wasted life.

Therefore, we can be constant, unshakable, and always increasing in our labor in the Lord.

## 122. THE WORKS FLOW OUT OF OUR LIFE IN HIM

### **Romans 15:17-19**

**17 Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God.  
18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient—  
19 in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.**

We will read Romans 5:17-19 from The Passion Translation:

### **Romans 15:17-19 (TPT)**

**17 Now then, it is through my union with Jesus Christ, that I enjoy an enthusiasm and confidence in my ministry for God.  
18-19 And I will not be presumptuous to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me. For many non-Jewish people are coming into faith's obedience by the power of the Spirit of God, which is displayed through mighty signs and amazing wonders, both in word and deed. Starting from Jerusalem I went from place to place as far as the distant Roman province of Illyricum, fully preaching the wonderful message of Christ.**

Paul is confident to speak of the ministry that he was able to do through his being in Christ Jesus. He recognized that his ministry for God flowed out of his union with Jesus Christ, his being in Christ Jesus. It was what Christ accomplished through him.

This reminds us about what the Lord Jesus spoke of His ministry. The Lord Jesus, especially in the Gospel of John states often, that 'I can of my own self do nothing. I do what I see the Father do. The Father who is in me, He does the works' (John 5:19; John 14:10-12,19).

When we look at our call to serve God and to do His ministry, we must see it as flowing out of our life in Christ. We are in Him. He is in us. He does these works through us.

### **123. MINISTER BOLDLY IN THE LORD**

Since, we know that the works flow out of our life in Him, we speak and minister boldly in Christ.

This is what we read about the apostles Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey.

#### **Acts 14:3**

**Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.**

We are ministers empowered by the Spirit of God, and so we can speak boldly.

#### **2 Corinthians 3:5-6,12**

**5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God,**

**6 who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.**

**12 Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech—**

Operate from your place of dominion in Christ (Ephesians 2:1-6)

### **124. IN HIM, TO BEAR MUCH FRUIT**

As we live out of a place of being in Him and He in us, we are able to be very fruitful. The Lord Jesus expressed this by drawing an analogy of the vine and its branches, which we are all familiar with.

**John 15:5,8**

**5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.**

**8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.**

(also John 15:16)

Hence we must understand that fruitfulness in our life and ministry comes as we live out of Him, and not based on our own selves, our own skills, etc. Learn to live and minister out of who we are in Him and who He is in us.

## **125. NURTURING PEOPLE IN CHRIST**

**1 Corinthians 4:15 ,17**

**15 For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.**

**17 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.**

What is the fruit we bear? It is expressing the life of Christ in and through us. It is other lives being birthed into the Kingdom of God, in Christ. It is nurturing others in their spiritual journey in Christ. As we minister out of our life in Christ, we are to nurture others and help mature (perfect) them in Jesus.

**Colossians 1:28**

**Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.**

## **126. IN CHRIST TO BE HIS AMBASSADORS**

**2 Corinthians 5:17-20**

**17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**

**18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,**

**19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.**

**20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.**

We celebrate that we are in Christ and are new creation in Him. But right after that Paul goes on to teach us that being in Christ come with this responsibility of being ambassadors for Christ.

Ambassador in Greek literally means a senior representative.

The Greek word that is translated "ambassador" was a very dignified word that was used for a general or governor of an ancient Roman province. It referred to a diplomat, a high official.

We are Christ's ambassadors, diplomats, high officials to represent Him and act in His behalf and in His stead. Our goal is to see people reconciled to God.

## **We represent Christ faithfully**

As His ambassadors we must represent Him faithfully. When we speak, we must be conscious that we speak as being "in Christ". We are speaking for Him, representing Him. This is also true, as we minister the Word of God. Paul the apostle, held the ministry of the Word with a lot of care and caution.

### **2 Corinthians 2:17**

**For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.**

### **2 Corinthians 12:19**

**Again, do you think that we excuse ourselves to you? We speak before God in Christ. But we do all things, beloved, for your edification.**

## **Our sufferings are in Christ**

As ambassadors, if and when we suffer, make sacrifices, etc., we understand that these are also "in Christ". We do this with the strength and grace that flows from being in Him. There is no shame or regret, in enduring such things.

### **Philippians 1:13**

**so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ;**

## 127. CO-WORKERS IN CHRIST

Paul recognized others who were serving, ministering, and working in the Lord. Note how many times he mentions “in the Lord” and “in Christ Jesus” in these verses.

### **Romans 16:2-3,7-13,22**

**2** that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.

**3** Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,

**7** Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

**8** Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.

**9** Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.

**10** Greet Apelles, approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

**11** Greet Herodion, my countryman. Greet those who are of the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

**12** Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Lord. Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Lord.

**13** Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

**22** I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, greet you in the Lord.

### **Ephesians 6:21**

But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you;

We recognize that others are also ministers in the Lord and hold them in honor.

### **Philippians 2:25,29**

**25** Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;

**29** Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem;

### **1 Thessalonians 5:12**

And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,

### **Philemon 1:23**

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you,