

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2026**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES —
FIRST AND SECOND TIMOTHY AND TITUS**

Message Seven

A Good Minister of Christ

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 4:6, 12; Ezek. 3:1-4; 1 Cor. 1:10; Rom. 15:6; S. S. 4:11

1 Tim. 4:6—If you lay these things before the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, being nourished with the words of the faith and of the good teaching which you have closely followed.

1 Tim. 4:12—Let no one despise your youth, but be a pattern to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

Ezek. 3:1-4—Then He said to me, Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel. ²So I opened my mouth, and He gave me that scroll to eat. ³And He said to me, Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your inward parts with this scroll that I am giving you. And I ate *it*, and it was like honey in my mouth in *its* sweetness. ⁴Then He said to me, Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them.

1 Cor. 1:10—Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and *that* there be no divisions among you, but *that* you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.

Rom. 15:6—That with one accord you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

S. S. 4:11—Your lips drip fresh honey, *my* bride; Honey and milk are under your tongue; And the fragrance of your garments Is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

I. First Timothy 4:6 says, “If you lay these things before the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, being nourished with the words of the faith and of the good teaching which you have closely followed”:

- A. A good minister of Christ is one who serves people with Christ, ministering Christ as Savior, life, life supply, and every positive thing to people.
- B. If we would minister Christ to others, we ourselves must be nourished; a good minister of Christ does not merely teach others about Christ but ministers Christ into others as food—Matt. 4:4; Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 3:1-4; John 6:57, 63.

Matt. 4:4—But He answered and said, It is written, “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God.”

Jer. 15:16—Your words were found and I ate them, And Your word became to me The gladness and joy of my heart, For I am called by Your name, O Jehovah, God of hosts.

Ezek. 3:1-4—Then He said to me, Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel. ²So I opened my mouth, and He gave me that scroll to eat. ³And He said to me, Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your inward parts with this scroll that I am giving you. And I ate *it*, and it was like honey in my mouth in *its* sweetness. ⁴Then He said to me, Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them.

John 6:57—As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 6:63—It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

- C. We need to lay before the saints the things with which we have been nourished by the Lord through the ministry; we need to present the saints with the riches, the groceries, the Lord has shown us from the Word; let us first be nourished ourselves and then minister this nourishment to all the people of God.
- D. We need to minister the riches of Christ as spiritual food to others that they may be nourished and grow in life; the word of God is likened to milk and solid food, which are for nourishment—Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Cor. 2:2; 1 Pet. 2:2.

Heb. 5:12-14—For when because of the time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you what the rudiments of the beginning of the oracles of God are and have become those who have need of milk and not of solid food. ¹³For everyone who partakes of milk is inexperienced in the word of righteousness, for he is an infant; ¹⁴But solid food is for the full-grown, who because of practice have their faculties exercised for discriminating between both good and evil.

1 Cor. 2:2—For I did not determine to know anything among you except Jesus Christ, and this One crucified.

1 Pet. 2:2—As newborn babes, long for the guileless milk of the word in order that by it you may grow unto salvation,

- E. We should aspire to be good ministers of Christ who “speak the same thing” (1 Cor. 1:10) “with one accord” and “with one mouth” (Rom. 15:6).

1 Cor. 1:10—Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and *that* there be no divisions among you, but *that* you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.

Rom. 15:6—That with one accord you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- F. A good minister of Christ exercises himself to be “a pattern to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity”—1 Tim. 4:12.

1 Tim. 4:12—Let no one despise your youth, but be a pattern to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

- G. The saints who have been raised up by the Lord’s up-to-date ministry have a taste for this ministry, and this taste is the controlling factor in the Lord’s recovery; those who have been raised up by this ministry will reject a taste that is contrary to it; this means that if you speak something contrary to the taste of

the Lord's recovery, your speaking will be rejected, and you will suffer loss—cf. Psa. 34:8; 1 Pet. 2:3.

cf. Psa. 34:8—Taste and see that Jehovah is good; Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him.

cf. 1 Pet. 2:3—If you have tasted that the Lord is good.

II. In order to be a good minister of Christ, we must aspire to have the following organic characteristics so that we can be channels of supply to the saints for their growth in life and enjoyment of Christ —Phil. 1:25; 2 Cor. 1:24a:

Phil. 1:25—And being confident of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of the faith,

2 Cor. 1:24—Not that we lord it over your faith, but we are fellow workers with *you* for your joy; for by faith you stand.

A. We must love the Lord to the uttermost to be filled with Him and overflow Him into others with the resurrected Christ as our authority—Psa. 18:1; 91:14; 97:10; 116:1-2; 119:140; John 21:15-17; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; 1 John 4:16, 19; Num. 17:1-10; Matt. 19:26.

Psa. 18:1—I love You, O Jehovah, my strength.

Psa. 91:14—Because He has set His love upon Me, I will rescue Him; I will set Him on high, because He has known My name.

Psa. 97:10—O you who love Jehovah, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His faithful ones; He delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

Psa. 116:1-2—I love Jehovah because He hears My voice, my supplications, ²Because He inclines His ear to me; Therefore I will call upon *Him all* my days.

Psa. 119:140—Your word is very pure, And Your servant loves it.

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

2 Cor. 5:14-15—For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

1 John 4:16—And we know and have believed the love which God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him.

1 John 4:19—We love because He first loved us.

Num. 17:1-10—Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, ²Speak to the children of Israel, and take from them rods, one for each father's house, twelve rods from all their leaders according to their fathers' houses; you shall write everyone's name upon his rod. ³And you shall write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi, for there shall be one rod for the head of *each* of their fathers' houses. ⁴And you shall place them in the Tent of Meeting before the Testimony, where I meet with you. ⁵And the rod of the man whom I choose shall bud, and I will put a stop to the murmurings of the children of Israel against Me, which they murmur against you. ⁶So Moses spoke to the children of Israel. And every one of their leaders gave him a rod, one rod for each leader according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods, with the rod of Aaron among their rods. ⁷And Moses placed the rods before Jehovah in the Tent of the Testimony. ⁸And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds. ⁹And Moses brought out all the rods from before Jehovah to all the children of Israel, and they looked; and each one took his rod. ¹⁰Then Jehovah said to Moses, Put back the rod of Aaron before the Testimony to be kept as a sign against the rebels, so that you may put an end to their murmurings against Me, and they not die.

Matt. 19:26—And looking upon *them*, Jesus said to them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

- B. We must maintain our victory in Christ by having a revived living and a labor in shepherding—Rev. 3:18-22; Hosea 6:1-3; Rom. 6:4; 7:6; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:1-4.

Rev. 3:18-22—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire that you may be rich, and white garments that you may be clothed and *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be manifested, and eyesalve to anoint your eyes that you may see. ¹⁹As many as I love I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore and repent. ²⁰Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me. ²¹He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne. ²²He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Hosea 6:1-3—Come and let us return to Jehovah; For He has torn *us*, but He will heal us, And He has stricken *us*, but He will bind us up. ²He will enliven us after two days; On the third day He will raise us up, And we will live in His presence. ³Therefore let us know, let us pursue knowing Jehovah: His going forth is as sure as the dawn, And He will come to us as the rain, As the late rain which waters the earth.

Rom. 6:4—We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.

Rom. 7:6—But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that in which we were held, so that we serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of letter.

1 Pet. 2:25—For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Pet. 5:1-4—Therefore the elders among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory to be revealed: ²Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly,

according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly; ³Nor as lording it over your allotments but by becoming patterns of the flock. ⁴And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

- C. We must enjoy the Lord in the Word early in the morning to have a new start of each day—Psa. 119:147-148.

Psa. 119:147-148—I anticipated the dawn and cried out; I hoped in Your words. ¹⁴⁸My eyes anticipated the night watches, That I might muse upon Your word.

- D. We must abide in the fellowship with the Lord daily and hourly—1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:3-4.

1 Cor. 1:9—God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 John 1:3-4—That which we have seen and heard we report also to you that you also may have fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴And these things we write that our joy may be made full.

- E. We must accumulate the experiences of Christ (Phil. 3:8-10, 12-14) and keep a rich storage of the Lord's word (Col. 3:16; Psa. 119:11, 15; John 8:31; 15:7; 1 John 2:14).

Phil. 3:8-10—But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count *them* as refuse that I may gain Christ ⁹And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God *and* based on faith, ¹⁰To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Phil. 3:12-14—Not that I have already obtained or am already perfected, but I pursue, if even I may lay hold of that for which I also have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus. ¹³Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing *I do*: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, ¹⁴I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called *me* upward.

Col. 3:16—Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.

Psa. 119:11—In my heart I have treasured up Your word That I might not sin against You.

Psa. 119:15—I will muse upon Your precepts And regard Your ways.

John 8:31—Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples;

John 15:7—If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

1 John 2:14—I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong and the word of God abides in you and you have overcome the evil one.

- F. A good minister of Christ aspires to maintain his joy so that he may live in the reality of the kingdom of God and in the Holy Spirit—Rom. 14:17:

Rom. 14:17—For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

1. A good minister of Christ sees that God wants to please man and make man happy and satisfied with His presence—Gen. 2:8-9; Psa. 16:11.

Gen. 2:8-9—And Jehovah God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there He put the man whom He had formed. ⁹And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Psa. 16:11—You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

2. A good minister of Christ exercises his spirit to contact the Spirit as “the oil of exultant joy” (Heb. 1:9) so that he may be Christ’s partner “to bring good news to the afflicted” and “to bind up the wounds of the brokenhearted” (Isa. 61:1).

Heb. 1:9—You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of exultant joy above Your partners”;

Isa. 61:1—The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon Me, Because Jehovah has anointed Me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent Me to bind up *the wounds* of the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of *the eyes* to those who are bound;

3. A good minister of Christ habitually calls on the name of the Lord as the joyful way to drink from the fountain of God’s salvation (12:3-4) and the enjoyable way to delight oneself in God (Job 27:10).

Isa. 12:3-4—Therefore you will draw water with rejoicing From the springs of salvation, ⁴And you will say in that day, Give thanks to Jehovah; call upon His name! Make His deeds known among the peoples; Remind *them* that His name is exalted.

Job 27:10—Does he take delight in the Almighty? Will he call upon God at all times?

4. A good minister of Christ eats God’s words as his spiritual food so that they become the gladness and joy of his heart—Jer. 15:16.

Jer. 15:16—Your words were found and I ate them, And Your word became to me The gladness and joy of my heart, For I am called by Your name, O Jehovah, God of hosts.

5. A good minister of Christ habitually contacts God as his “exceeding joy” (Psa. 43:4) so that he does not have a cheerless countenance when he contacts people; he enjoys the salvation of God’s countenance (42:5) so that God can be the salvation of his countenance (v. 11).

Psa. 43:4—And I will go to the altar of God, To God my exceeding joy; And I will praise You with the harp, O God, my God.

Psa. 42:5—Why are you cast down, O my soul? And *why* are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I will yet praise Him *For* the salvation of His countenance.

Psa. 42:11—Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I will yet praise Him, The salvation of my countenance and my God.

III. The revelations the prophets received were the burdens they received; without a burden, there is no ministry of the word, no prophesying for the building up of the church—Isa. 1:1; 2:1; 13:1; 15:1; Zech. 12:1; Mal. 1:1; Acts 6:4; 1 Cor. 14:4b:

Isa. 1:1—The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, the kings of Judah:

Isa. 2:1—The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

Isa. 13:1—The burden concerning Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw:

Isa. 15:1—The burden concerning Moab: Indeed in a night it is devastated—Ar of Moab is cut off. Indeed in a night it is devastated—Kir of Moab is cut off.

Zech. 12:1—The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. *Thus* declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him,

Mal. 1:1—The burden of the word of Jehovah to Israel through Malachi.

Acts 6:4—But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.

1 Cor. 14:4—He who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but he who prophesies builds up the church.

A. The Lord's burden is that which weighs on His heart for His people to live and serve in the reality of His eternal economy; His burden must become our burden.

B. Our burden is to release God's revelation to man, and God's revelation is released through the words of revelation that God gives to us—2:11-16.

1 Cor. 2:11-16—For who among men knows the things of man, except the spirit of man which is in him? In the same way, the things of God also no one has known except the Spirit of God. ¹²But we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit which is from God, that we may know the things which have been graciously given to us by God; ¹³Which things also we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things with spiritual *words*. ¹⁴But a soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him and he is not able to know *them* because they are discerned spiritually. ¹⁵But the spiritual man discerns all things, but he himself is discerned by no one. ¹⁶For who has known the mind of the Lord and will instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.

C. In order to have God's speaking, the one who ministers the word must have "the burden of the word of Jehovah" (Zech. 12:1a); if we have a burden from the Lord,

we will be living and flourishing with a fresh message from the Lord to His people (Mal. 2:7; S. S. 8:13-14; Eph. 5:26-27).

Zech. 12:1—The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. *Thus* declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him,

Mal. 2:7—For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and *men* should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of Jehovah of hosts.

S. S. 8:13-14—O you who dwell in the gardens, *My* companions listen for your voice; Let me hear *it*. ¹⁴Make haste, my beloved, And be like a gazelle or a young hart Upon the mountains of spices.

Eph. 5:26-27—That He might sanctify her, cleansing *her* by the washing of the water in the word, ²⁷That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

- D. If we serve according to obligation instead of serving with a burden, such service will cause us to lose the Lord's presence—Mal. 3:14; Deut. 4:25.

Mal. 3:14—You say, It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His charge and have walked mournfully before Jehovah of hosts?

Deut. 4:25—When you have brought forth children and grandchildren and have languished in the land, and you have spoiled yourselves by making an idol, the form of anything, and have done that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah your God so as to anger Him;

- E. We need to release the Lord's burden, His vision, with express words—special, fresh, and vivid words of the Lord's utterances, His oracles, that convey divine revelation—Ezek. 1:3; 1 Pet. 4:11.

Ezek. 1:3—The word of Jehovah came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of Jehovah was upon him there.

1 Pet. 4:11—If anyone speaks, as *speaking* oracles of God; if anyone ministers, as *ministering* out of the strength which God supplies; that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom is the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.

- F. The revelation we receive from the Lord is burned into us through suffering; the word is produced in us through trials, pain, defeat, and darkness; no minister of God's word should be afraid when God leads him into such circumstances—2 Cor. 1:8-9; 12:7-9:

2 Cor. 1:8-9—For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of our affliction which befell *us* in Asia, that we were excessively burdened, beyond *our* power, so that we despaired even of living. ⁹Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;

2 Cor. 12:7-9—And because of the transcendence of the revelations, in order that I might not be exceedingly lifted up, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, that he might buffet me, in order that I might not be exceedingly lifted up.

⁸Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.

1. When we are seemingly in darkness, the Lord is imparting Himself into us as “the treasures of darkness...the hidden riches of secret places” —Isa. 45:3. **Isa. 45:3**—And give to you the treasures of darkness And the hidden riches of secret places, That you may know that I am Jehovah, who calls *you* by your name, The God of Israel.
2. “Do not rejoice against me, O my enemy; / When I fall, I will rise up; / When I sit in the darkness, / Jehovah will be a light to me” —Micah 7:8.
3. “If I say, Surely darkness will cover me, / And the light around me will be night; / Even the darkness is not dark to You, / And night shines like day; / The darkness is like the light”—Psa. 139:11-12.
4. “What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, proclaim on the housetops” —Matt. 10:27.
5. Sufferings and trials are often ordained by the Lord for us that we may experience Christ as our all-sufficient grace and dispense Him as the riches of grace into others with the words of grace—2 Cor. 12:7-9; Luke 4:22; Eph. 3:2; 1 Pet. 4:10.
2 Cor. 12:7-9—And because of the transcendence of the revelations, in order that I might not be exceedingly lifted up, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, that he might buffet me, in order that I might not be exceedingly lifted up. ⁸Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.

Luke 4:22—And all bore witness to Him and marveled at the words of grace proceeding out of His mouth, and they said, Is not this Joseph’s son?

Eph. 3:2—If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

1 Pet. 4:10—Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God.

IV. A good minister of Christ sacrifices himself and puts himself aside in order to keep the absoluteness of the truth; the truth cannot be entrusted to a person who walks according to his feelings; a man must stand on the side of the truth to oppose himself:

- A. The condition of an individual has nothing to do with God’s truth; what you are personally cannot affect what God’s truth is, because the truth is like an immovable pillar—1 Tim. 3:15.

1 Tim. 3:15—But if I delay, *I write* that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

- B. Some people lower down the truth a little when they are wrong, and they lift up the truth a little when they are right; this means that they are like elevators, and the truth goes up and down with them; only those who have dealt with themselves are able to maintain the truth.
 - C. If we can take the truth as the unique standard, and we have the courage to admit that we are wrong, new light will come to us; if we do not sacrifice the light, the light will uplift us; blessed are those who can go along with the truth.
 - D. On the one hand, a man cannot preach the truth unless he has the experience; on the other hand, a person has to know that the truth has nothing to do with him; if a man is brought to a point that he can no longer withstand God's word, if he does not sacrifice the word, and if he finds the word condemning him, he will receive the light; this is the secret to receiving revelation.
- V. A good minister of Christ is a good steward of the varied grace of God, who speaks oracles of God for the glory of God, the expression of God (1 Pet. 4:10-11; Eph. 1:6); he does not seek his own glory to express himself (1 Thes. 2:6; John 5:41, 44) but continually exercises his spirit to reject the self, not preaching himself but exalting Christ as Lord and considering himself as a slave to serve the believers (2 Cor. 4:5; Lev. 14:9 and footnote 1; 1 Cor. 10:31; Isa. 43:7).**

1 Pet. 4:10-11—Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God. ¹⁴If anyone speaks, as *speaking* oracles of God; if anyone ministers, as *ministering* out of the strength which God supplies; that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom is the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.

Eph. 1:6—To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved;

1 Thes. 2:6—Nor did we seek glory from men, neither from you nor from others, though we could have stood on our authority as apostles of Christ.

John 5:41—I do not receive glory from men.

John 5:44—How can you believe when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that is from the only God?

2 Cor. 4:5—For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.

Lev. 14:9—And on the seventh day he shall shave off all his hair; he shall shave his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair. Then he shall wash his clothes and bathe his flesh in water, and he shall be clean.

1 Cor. 10:31—Therefore whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Isa. 43:7—Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created, formed, and even made for My glory.

- VI. A good minister of Christ ministers life according to the principle of the tree of life, not the principle of the tree of right and wrong (Gen. 2:9; John 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:6; 4:10-12; 1 John 5:12, 16a); in facing the**

problems in the church, we must never get into the realm of right and wrong; instead, we should concentrate on Christ “as our unique center appointed by God, that all the problems among the believers may be solved” (footnote 2 on 1 Cor. 1:9).

Gen. 2:9—And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

John 10:10—The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly.

1 Cor. 15:45—So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul”; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

2 Cor. 3:6—Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2 Cor. 4:10-12—Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. ¹¹For we who are alive are always being delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹²So then death operates in us, but life in you.

1 John 5:12—He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

1 John 5:16—If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and he will give life to him, to those sinning not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he should make request concerning that.

1 Cor. 1:9—God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

VII. A good minister of Christ helps the saints to think the “one thing”: the *one thing* in Philippians refers to the subjective knowledge, experience, and enjoyment of Christ; the *one thing* is the pursuing of Christ to gain Him, lay hold of Him, and possess Him—1:20-21; 2:2, 5; 3:7-14; 4:13.

Phil. 1:20-21—According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death. ²¹For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Phil. 2:2—Make my joy full, that you think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing,

Phil. 2:5—Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,

Phil. 3:7-14—But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ. ⁸But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count *them* as refuse that I may gain Christ ⁹And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God *and* based on faith, ¹⁰To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹If perhaps

I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead. ¹²Not that I have already obtained or am already perfected, but I pursue, if even I may lay hold of that for which I also have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus. ¹³Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing *I do*: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, ¹⁴I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called *me* upward.

Phil. 4:13—I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me.

VIII. A good minister of Christ is like the Lord's loving seeker described in Song of Songs 4:11 —“Your lips drip fresh honey, my bride; / Honey and milk are under your tongue”—cf. Exo. 3:8:

S. S. 4:11—Your lips drip fresh honey, *my* bride; Honey and milk are under your tongue; And the fragrance of your garments Is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

cf. Exo. 3:8—And I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.

- A. Honey is sweet, and it restores the weak and stricken ones (Psa. 119:103); milk feeds the immature ones (1 Pet. 2:2).

Psa. 119:103—How sweet are Your words to my taste! *Sweeter* than honey to my mouth!

1 Pet. 2:2—As newborn babes, long for the guileless milk of the word in order that by it you may grow unto salvation,

- B. The sweetness of honey and the nourishing milk under the tongue of the Lord's loving seeker indicate that she has stored up the riches of the Lord as her spiritual food; she has stored so many riches within her that food seems to be under her tongue, and she can dispense this food to the needy ones at any time—Psa. 119:11; Col. 3:16.

Psa. 119:11—In my heart I have treasured up Your word That I might not sin against You.

Col. 3:16—Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.

- C. Her indwelling treasure of the Lord's sweet and nourishing words is not produced overnight; it comes from a long period of gathering, inward activity, and careful storage; this is the unique possession of one who is taught by God with the healthy words of the healthy teaching of God's economy—1 Tim. 1:10; 6:3.

1 Tim. 1:10—For fornicators, homosexuals, kidnappers, liars, perjurers, and whatever other thing that is opposed to the healthy teaching,

1 Tim. 6:3—If anyone teaches different things and does not consent to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness,

IX. Whenever we minister God's word, the primary thing is for us to exercise our spirit so that we may bless others with the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity (Num. 6:22-26); we must exercise our spirit to employ and enjoy the entire Blessed Trinity by praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping ourselves in the love of God, and awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ in the day of His victorious appearing so that we may become the totality of the eternal life, the New Jerusalem (Jude 19-21).

Num. 6:22-26—Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, ²³Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the children of Israel; you shall say to them, ²⁴Jehovah bless you and keep you; ²⁵Jehovah make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶Jehovah lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

Jude 19-21—These are those who make divisions, soulish, having no spirit. ²⁰But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹Keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.