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THE WORK OF MINISTRY
by Paris Reidhead

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Summary: Paris Reidhead emphasizes that every Christian is called to full-time ministry through their daily actions and character, reflecting Christ's love and ethics in the world.

Duration: 45:10 Topics: "Ministry"
Scripture References: Ephesians 4:11

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DESCRIPTION

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In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the true meaning of Ephesians 4:11-12. He argues that a mistranslation has kept the Church in the dark ages for 400 years. The speaker believes that the work of the ministry is not solely the responsibility of pastors and evangelists, but rather every Christian should be engaged in full-time Christian service. He encourages believers to have a genuine passion and longing to see the body of Christ built up and to actively serve others in their relationship with Christ.

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CONTENT

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Will you turn please to Ephesians chapter 4, the work of the ministry. Perhaps some seeing this would suppose that it applied to those that are in so-called full-time Christian service. If you are not in, if you are a child of God and are not in full-time Christian service, there's something radically wrong with your relationship to the Lord and your understanding of his word.

He intended every Christian to be in full-time Christian service. Oh, he didn't intend them all to be supported by the gifts of the

congregation,
but he intended that whatever service they render should be rendered
unto him. In our office behind the secretary's desk is a sign that
says
divine service will be offered here today.

That well could be put over every kitchen sink, that could be put over
every office desk, and could be put in every place of work and labor.
The scripture has made it abundantly clear that whatever we do, in
word
or in deed, we are to do all for the reputation of the Lord Jesus, and
unto the Lord Jesus. If you are working for your salary, you are
defrauding your employer.

If you are working to earn your money, then you are still defrauding
him. He hired you, he didn't perhaps know it, but he would hire the
Christian. You ought to be rendering to him something that no one else
can give--loyalty, interest, devotion to the task, sincerity.

If you can't render loyalty and interest and sincerity in your work,
very likely you are in the wrong employment. You are to render it to
those whom you serve, interested in that which is going to promote
their
work. But in the same time, there is a sense in which William Carey
well
understood the relationship between employment and service.

Over his shop, his shoe shop, he had a little card printed which
stated,
My business is to serve the Lord. I cobble shoes to pay expenses. I
feel
at the same time, that he probably made the best pair of shoes in the
city where he worked.

I'm sure if he didn't, then he had no business trying to serve the
Lord.

If he could skimp on the quality of leather and the quality of
workmanship and not do that kind of a job which was commensurate with
his testimony, then certainly he was out of place thinking he could
serve the Lord. The work of the ministry is not for the group that we
have mentioned in the eleventh and the twelfth verses of this
portion--
the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors, the
teachers.

I think I've told you in the past, my embarrassment years ago now,
some
twenty perhaps, not quite, when on a Saturday night I was desperate
for
a sermon for Sunday. Hasn't happened that way for a long time, but it

did in those days. I went to my memory and recalled that that week I had read this portion.

And it's a marvelous outline, you know. Look at it, just see it for a moment. He gave evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

Point one, for the perfecting of the Saints. Point two, for the work of the ministry. Point three, for the building up of the body of Christ.

Right there, introduction, conclusion, and there's your sermon. The only thing the matter with it was, it just wasn't so that way anyway. I preached it, but I wondered at the time why the Lord had so little interest in it, didn't seem to be at all impressed with my homiletics.

And when I read it or studied it in the Greek, I found that I had missed completely the point of this. The way it ought to be is, he gave evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the perfecting of the Saints into the work of the ministry. Doesn't that change it? The work of the ministry is to be done then by the Saints.

An unfortunate translation has kept the Church of Jesus Christ in the Dark Ages for an extra 400 years, as far as this is concerned. For you know, the idea of the clergy as a separate group that do the work of the ministry for the congregation doesn't come from the book. It comes from Rome.

And probably one of our tragic burdens through these 400 years, since 1517, 450 now nearly, was the fact that when the Reformers moved out, they didn't move out far enough. Like the little boy that fell out of bed, and his mother came in and said, what happened? Well, he said, Mommy, I went to sleep too near where I got in. And the church went to sleep too near where it came out, and didn't move out far enough.

And the consequence of it is, there have been so many things that we've had that are superimposed over New Testament Christianity, which are New Testament in origin. I told you perhaps sometime in the past, or someone recently, of my friend, now a missionary, that was called to a little church out in the plains of North Dakota. And his first day there, he wanted to have a little bit of assistance, and so he called one of the elders, the man that had met him at the train and welcomed him.

Now he said, Brother so-and-so, would you lead us in prayer? The old man stuck his chin out and said, that's what we brought you here for, you pray. Ludicrous in the extreme, but nevertheless, it's the attitude that people have had in the past. I've had folk not here, but elsewhere, call me up and say, Pastor, come right over, there's somebody that wants to be saved.

I didn't see why I should come. They'd been Christians for years, and knew the plan of salvation as well as I did, but they felt that they had to have a spiritual obstetrician there if they were to have a proper birth, and they had to have me come and to be there at the time. Oh, what a pity.

What a pity. No, my dear, the thrust of this message today is that you are to do the work of the ministry. You are to do it.

You are to perform the work of the ministry. I, as a teacher and elder with the elders, have been given of God to enable you first to enter into a relationship called the perfecting of the saints. That's the maturing, coming to your manhood in Christ, coming to the measure of the stature, the fullness of Christ.

I'm also here to help you to understand what the ministry is, and it should be that I could say, be an example, follow me as I follow Christ.

And if you know of areas where I cannot, then both pray for me and tell me, because it's certainly the desire of my heart that it should be so, in respect to this matter of the work of the ministry. The elders, not just the one who was set apart to teach, enabled us because of responsibilities, to engage in regular commerce, to earn his living.

That one of whom the Scripture speaks, saying, worthy of double honor, but he's but an elder with the other elders. For the word pastor, as we've pointed out in the past, is the same word that's used of the elder and of the bishop, the overseer. Elder is the term of honor.

Oversight is the responsibility to the group in their meeting, and pastor, shepherd, is the responsibility to the individual. And all the elders have this responsibility. Then the one, of course, who must give himself to study and to prayer for the ministry of the word is but an

elder with them, but with the recognized ministry of teaching.

The elders were given of the Lord to be examples to the flock and to gather labor with that which the apostles have given in testimony, the prophets have given in the Scripture, for the perfecting of the saints,
the maturing of the saints, into, unto the work of the ministry. Now I shan't dwell longer on the matter of perfecting. You know that this is summarized in the third chapter, where he speaks of our being filled unto all of the fullness of God.

This is set forth as the normal Christian life. The doxology that follows is preparation for the work of the ministry. Now unto him that's
able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us.

What power is this? God in his fullness working through you. Therefore you must understand that the work that I am to outline to you this morning is based upon a relationship that you are to have with the Lord
filled unto all of his fullness. I understand full well that none of us
in the meager resources of our sterile personalities can possibly maintain the kind of ministry that I'm about to give you.

But I also understand that God never intended it to be from your meager
resources. Any more than he wants this room to be illuminated by the effort of the bulb that's in the socket. Wasn't any thought of his that
the filaments should rub themselves until through mere friction they become somewhat incandescent.

That isn't his purpose for an electric light bulb, but he wants it perfectly submitted, totally abandoned, resting in the proper place in order that the power can flow through it and it becomes incandescent with a power not its own. And that's exactly what he wants to have happen to you. He wants you to abide in Christ, crucified with him, buried with him, quickened with him, raised with him, seated with him.

And then he wants to abide in you so that his life flowing through the filament of your personality can cause you to become incandescent with his presence. And it's on this basis that the work of the ministry is to
be performed. I can't prove this, but I rather suspicion that the devil's strategy has been to go around and tell everyone that he wants to damn what a real Christian is.

I can hear him whisper something like this, there's a lot of people

that
are going to come around and talk to you about heaven. There aren't
very
many, but that would be his exaggeration. A lot of folks are going to
come around and talk to you about heaven.

But if their lives aren't like this, and like this, and like this,
don't
you believe a word they say? The God of heaven is this kind of a God,
and anyone he sends to represent him is going to be like him. And when
these folks come and you don't find that they have this, don't believe
a
word they say. Then his strategy is to get into the Church and say,
these things aren't important, and they don't matter, and it's just a
matter of believing, and it doesn't make any difference how you live.

After all, it's not salvation by works. And to lower the standards and
send people out in the world who've been stripped of the very things
that he told the unsaved to look for. So when they do come, they say,
well, you aren't the one I was told would speak for God.

I can't believe what you say. Now don't you see the strategy? If we
can
find a company of people that are willing to meet God on his terms
until
they acquire the ministry of a fruit-filled life, we have come up
around
the marginal line that the enemy has put up between us and souls, and
can sweep in and start a landslide for God. We need a revival, but the
revival we need is a revival of Christlike character, and Christlike
ethics, and Christlike attitudes in the lives of Christians.

The fruit of the Spirit. What is it? Love, joy, peace. Galatians 5,
22,
and 23 list the nine for you.

Long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, self-control.
Love, very patient, very kind, never rude, never selfish, never
irritated, never resentful, never filled with worry and tarping
criticism and unbelief, never censorious and sarcastic and bitter and
acid. Sweep with that not just a mock humility, but with the strength
that comes knowing that one is properly related to the King of kings
and
the Lord of lords.

The fruit of the Spirit. Ah, is it there in your life? When the world
looks at you, do they find the ministry of a fruit-filled life, or do
they find impatience and criticism, wrath and anger and variance and
emulations and strife and envying? You know something? I don't know
that

anyone has done this. It just isn't in my knowledge, and if you have, I'm not talking about you.

If I knew it, I'd still say the same thing. I'd rather have someone come into our home and stand up in front of my children and say every vile swear word and word of blasphemy they've ever heard, than to have some church member come into my house and criticize the man or person or the Sunday school teacher from whom my children must learn the truth about God. I could be gentle with the blasphemer in my living room, but I am afraid that I would have to have unusual grace from God to tolerate somebody criticizing the one from whom the truth of God would have to come.

I have heard people criticize to their neighbors the people from whom the truth of God must come, if their neighbors are to hear. I'm not speaking that for my defense. Don't misunderstand me, because I don't think I need it with this congregation.

And if I don't, the Lord bless you, I love you anyway. But the fact still remains that I would say this without any hesitation. It was, I'm going to use names.

Donald McCain, pastor in Nyack, was talking with W.T. MacArthur, one of our great men. He said, Dr. MacArthur, how is it that none of your children ever came to Christ? And the old man had tears run down his cheek. He said, I'm afraid I do of my own children.

He said, I used to come home from meetings and be tired and upset. I'd get home with my family and I'd start to criticize the men in our fellowship. And I'd pick them to pieces in front of my children.

And I poisoned the heart of my own children against the people to whom and with whom I'd given my life. He said, I'm afraid I damn my own family. Absence of the fruit of the Spirit.

Tragic that it's missing in the church. It's got to be there. The ministry, what is it? It's the ministry of character.

It's the ministry of ethics. It's the ministry of attitudes. It's what you are in your relationship to the Lord.

And the world says what you are speaks so loudly we can't hear what you say. You must have the ministry of character, Christlike character, with this supernatural fruit that's never rude, never selfish, never

irritated, never resentful, slow to expose the faults of others, eager to believe the best about others. You, won't it be a terrible thing when you get home to heaven and find that by your gossip you've damned your neighbors, by your criticism, by the attitudes you've expressed, by the lorry and the fretting and the care, the luxuries of self-pity in which you've indulged.

You've robbed your neighbors of the opportunity to savingly learn about Christ. Oh, can't you see the imperative need for the fruit of the Spirit? Fruit of the Spirit. It's background from which everything must be said.

Everything must plow. Now this, the second ministry. The ministry of intercession.

The ministry of intercession. All of God's work depends upon intercession. I could take, and I shall in the future, several weeks to talk to you about the ministry of intercession, because it deserves it.

But now I'm giving it to you in perspective that you may see where we're going and know where you are when we arrive. I want you to see what's before you. I want you to see why it's so imperative for you to put aside all spiritual indolence and carelessness and seek God with your whole hearts until God can fill you unto all of his fullness.

And you must see what's before you. Why should anyone want to get up and go to the neighbor and ask for bread unless he discovers he has a responsibility to be something and do something and share something, and he doesn't have it? His cupboard is empty. Oh, if somehow we can discover the status of our cupboard, what we're to be, what we're to do, what kind of people we're to be, then all the lethargy and indolence and indifference is going to be shed by us in our passionate desire to feed the ones that have a right to look to us.

And they have a right to look to you for Christlike character, Christlike attitudes, Christlike ethics in your life. If they don't find

it, they have no reason to accept your testimony. It must be there.

And so there must be intercession, the ministry of intercession. They prayed, and when they prayed, the place was shaken wherein they prayed.

Because they prayed according to the principles of God's Word and the will of God.

And God heard prayer, and God answered prayer. Charles Finney said he almost became an atheist attending prayer meeting. A hundred and fifty years ago, not quite, a hundred and thirty years ago, Charles Finney became somewhat concerned about his soul, and he went into the churches there in upstate New York near Oneida.

And he attended and he heard people pray, and he went out saying, wonderful, the things they prayed about are going to come to pass this week and this city won't ever be the same again. But that week nothing happened. He went back the next week and they didn't even realize it hadn't been answered, they prayed the same thing.

Nothing happened. Prayed the same thing, said three weeks of that, and he decided the whole thing was a myth, a mockery, and a sham, and there was no use for him to go anymore. And finally he came to the place where he realized that it was just a little superstitious ritual through which the people went.

That they knew nothing about prayer, that they knew nothing about the principles underlying prayer, that they were simply going through a little bit of make, religious make-believe that gave them a pious feeling because of something they had done. But they had never learned the secret of prayer. And I would say to you, I'm not criticizing you, but I simply believe, my dear friends, that the ministry of intercession is almost a totally lost ministry in this church.

And if you want to explain what took place and what transpired in the early days of this movement, you'll never understand it and you'll never explain it apart from the fact that there were some people that had a spirit and a ministry of intercession that could lay hold of God and turn back the powers of hell, and release men and women, and release the funds that were needed for the work. A ministry of intercession. But we are so sadly missing in that.

I'm not scolding you, I'm just trying to be as honest as a loving heart can be. Beloved, where is the thumb? Where is the fruit of the Spirit in your life? Where is the ministry of intercession? Do you understand what intercession is? Do you intercede? You say, well I pray, I say prayers. Good, but not good enough, and sometimes not good at all.

I think we have today among evangelicalism a kind of Americanized Tibetan idea, that if you can get enough people on their knees long enough saying the same thing over and over again, that gradually enough weight will accumulate on the balance of something in heaven, and when the balance tilts, God has to do it. We overcome his reluctance by the amount of time we spend saying the same thing again and again. Beloved, I don't believe that.

A man of like passions, Elijah prayed, and the heavens held their water for three years. The ministry of intercession. No more than there are here that had such a ministry as I am describing to you today, and the world would be shaken for Christ.

We don't need three thousand people more. We don't need to multiply the number we are by ten times in order to have power with God. We won't have any more power with God when there are three thousand of us than three hundred of us, unless there are people that are of a certain quantity.

We have a quantitative concept of what is required to move God. If we could just have three thousand people meeting here every day and having to take a larger auditorium, people would say, oh, isn't it wonderful what's happened at the tabernacle. It might be the greatest curse that could possibly come to us, because we'd get our eyes only at numbers and say they have power with God.

They have power with men, but not with God. It's not how many of us we are, it's who we are and the relationship we bear to him. And consequently, the secret is for you to have a ministry of intercession.

Do you know what it is to be an intercessor, a priest of the Most High God? To go from the presence of sinners, to go from the presence of the

congregation into the presence of God to legally represent the sinner before God? To identify yourself with him in his need and his burden and

his guilt? Do you know? Have you that ministry? That's part of it. You say, well, I've got a Bible school training. Good, that's fine, but do you have the ministry of intercession? I could teach a Sunday school class, we're grateful for you, bless your heart, but do you have the ministry of intercession? Well, I'm an elder, I'm a deacon, that's good,

and we need you, and God bless you, and we're grateful for your faithfulness, but do you have the ministry of intercession? You see, it's, as he said, you ought to have done these, but you ought not to have left this undone.

Nothing will compensate for what we ought to have and don't have, except

broken spirits and hungry hearts that insistently wait upon God until that which is normal to us becomes ours. We're to have a ministry of intercession. Every Christian is.

My friend, I want to just say something, and I'm trusting the Holy Ghost

to indict it to you. If you do not have a burden for the people around you and beside you that are lost, and you have an interest in missions,

now listen carefully, all you can conclude your missionary activity is is a hobby. That's all.

A hobby. A religious hobby. If you don't have a burden for the people that live in the apartment next door, or the little boy that runs across

your yard and steps on your flowers, or the people that jostle you at work and make fun of you, if you don't have a calvary heart for them, there's something wrong.

All you have is a hobby. Anyone that can get burdened about the Barleem

Valley but has no compassion for the doorman, or for the washwomen, or for the neighbors, or for the people in their house, I submit to you that all they have is a hobby. A calvary heart breaks for lost men, for

lost men are found.

It's not geographically isolated. The light that shines the farthest must inevitably shine the brightest at its base. And if you have a heart

that's been molded with calvary love, then you have a burden for the people around you.

How are you interceding for them? Are you concerned about them? I have

in my coat pocket something Brother Roseberry gave me. He said,
Brother
Reed, had you get a blessing out of this, and the blessed heart I
have,
it's a testimony of a woman from Alabama, Jewish woman. Her parents
were
slaughtered and massacred in Russia in the pogroms.

Came here to America, went down south, and became into racial
intolerance. All that little Jewish children are experienced in
certain
communities. When she went to high school, a Protestant teacher in
science destroyed the little bit of faith in God she had.

And then that teacher came to know the Lord. And for seven years,
every
other Saturday, that teacher came to the home of this Jewish girl and
would come in and would talk to her about the Lord. And time and time
again, the Jewish girl would take her teacher and push her to the door
and shut the door in her face and say, don't ever come back.

And two Saturdays later, she'd be back. And sometimes it was every
Saturday for seven long years until finally intercession prevailed and
a
Christlike life prevailed. And there came a time when that Jewish
girl,
all alone in her bedroom, met Christ.

Seven years of Calvary love poured out, living Christ without
impatience, enduring, showing the fruit of the Spirit, interceding. Ah
yes, we come to the third. The ministry of ambassadorship.

Of ambassadorship. Ministry of intercession is to go into the presence
of God in behalf of a person and plead with God as though you were the
person representing that one before the Lord. Ministry of
ambassadorship

is to go out from the presence of the Lord into the presence of the
person, to plead with the person as though you were God.

Second Corinthians 5.21 says, Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ
as
though God doth beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ's head, be ye
reconciled to God. Ministry of ambassadorship.

Oh, may God somehow come upon us as a people and teach us that if
we're
to ever see souls brought to Christ, we must become friendly with
them.

I am afraid we've become so separated from sinners that we have no
opportunity of witnessing to them. The Lord didn't want you to get so

separated that you didn't have an opportunity to speak.

You don't have to drink with them, but you could go in and scrub their kitchen floor when they're sick in the home. You don't need to indulge in their pleasures, but you could babysit for them, you could help them, aid them. There's something you could do, but we've become, we've drawn our skirts so close around us that we don't have contact with sinners anymore.

I would just like to know how many there are in this congregation that do not have enough influence with a single sinner to get them to come to listen to the Word of God somewhere, or to come to the living room, to listen to the Word of God. I'm afraid, my friend, that we have figured that how Christian ministry was in the church, our activities in offices and in our organizations. This is Christian service.

Let me say something to you. Christian ministry does not begin until you leave the building. Everything you do inside the organization is a body service.

The ministry that we're talking about is a ministry by the body to those to whom the head of the church wanted the body to minister. He didn't want us to get together and play religious games, and erect our little official totem poles, and push one another up and down to please us as though this was where God's work was being done. Oh, beloved, that we've somehow so misunderstood that though this is where we serve the Lord.

I was shocked when a little lad at home, my mother, spoke to a lady and said, Mrs. Irwin, are you doing any church work? Oh, she said, I haven't done any for three months. I haven't been to a card party for three months. That was her whole concept of church work, was to go and play cards and contribute to the work of the church.

I'd like to ask you, have you done anything for the Lord? Well, I taught Sunday school. Yes, I know, I'm grateful. And I've ushered, and deked, and elded, and I'm grateful.

But have you had any ministry? Have you had any ministry? Well, yes, I

asked a taxi driver to come to church. I don't remember his name. What about the people that you know? Have you opened your heart to them? Have you opened your home to them? The scripture says, use hospitality without grudging.

And this isn't the day to do it, but dear children of God, someday God's going to let loose a torrent of grief out of my heart. That we've thought of our homes as little sanctuaries that are our preserve. And the scripture says, use hospitality without grudging.

Instead of the place to which we can bring the needy, and the young, and the foreign students, and people that need comfort, and help, and a touch of friendliness. Ambassadors for Christ. You know, it takes time to earn the right to talk to someone about his soul.

We've had an idea that God wanted a lot of impulsive, extroverted, fuller-brush salesmen to witness for Christ. Have no sensibility and no response to what people feel, and they just rush in and trot over the flowers of someone's spiritual life, and dominate the conversation, and force Christ down their throats. And they thought that was what witness is.

You know the proportions of witness? I think I gave them to you. Fifty percent listening, forty percent prayer, and ten percent advised, carefully controlled speaking, slowly and in a quiet voice, and humbly. So different from what the usual proportions are.

Are you an ambassador? Do you have a Calvary heart? Are you willing to invite someone in? Are you willing to go out of your way to put yourself out? Is there anyone you're concerned about? Is there anyone that's on your heart? Is there someone that's so precious to you, because the Holy Ghost has put them there, not because they're a kin or relative of yours by blood. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about someone for whom you have no natural contact, but the Holy Ghost has put them upon your heart until you cry out, oh God, save them or I'll die.

Have you learned what it is to beseech men to be reconciled to God? Ministry of ambassadorship. Then there's the last two, and we touch on them. They each deserve a whole month of ministry.

They're terribly important. This is the ministry of the authority of the body, and the believer is a member of the body, enforcing the victory of Calvary. We talked about this last Sunday in The Christian's Complete Armor.

The ministry of the authority of the body of Christ, exercising, enforcing the rights that Christ secured by his triumph. And then this is the ministry of the gifts of the Spirit, those particular abilities that God has given, those enablements by the Spirit of God that are to be exercised for the edification, the exhortation, and the comfort of the body of believers, that they may in turn be able to fulfill their ministry. Oh, do you see it? The ministry of a fruit-filled life, the ministry of intercession, the ministry of ambassadorship, the ministry of authority, the ministry of the gifts of the Spirit.

All of them together, balanced, integrated, wholesome, harmonious, indispensable, useful. What is the church? I think it's like a company of handless people that are going around without the equipment God intended, the ministry intended them to have, and sort of clubbing the world by criticizing. You shouldn't do that, and you oughtn't do the other, and you can't go there.

And we've been clubbing the world until the world's become frightened of us, because all they hear is a negative thing. We haven't had a ministry. Our weapons weren't to be carnal.

They were to be mighty, to the tearing down of strongholds. I'm afraid we haven't had it. You say, well, why'd you tell us this? Here we are so discouraged.

Oh, I'm glad. I'm glad. I'm not trying to just get you discouraged.

I just want to get you so hungry for God that you're going to sit up nights, and somebody's going to call and say, Pastor, Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so, and Miss So-and-so, and Mr. So-and-so are here in our home. Can you come over? We've just got to have God. Just got to have God.

We've just got to meet the Lord. That's going to be a wonderful day for me. People say, Pastor, you need rest.

Oh, I don't need rest. What I need is to see the truth pierce hearts, and the Word quicken spirits, and folk become hungry for God, and willing to meet him on his own terms. That's the rest I need.

To see the passion, the cry, the yearning, the longing take root in the lives of people, until they become so dissatisfied with everything less than that which is normal to the body of Christ. We can't stand it. Don't you see, my whole ministry is based on Ephesians 4. If that fails, then I don't know a thing in the world to do.

I came determined that we would not build around me. I wasn't going to be here with an inverted pyramid resting on my shoulders, and I have to balance the whole church, and if I move it falls. I came convicted that he wanted every member of his body to be brought into a relationship with Christ.

I could have done a lot of things, don't you know? I was trained by these boys that know how to do it. I went to the same school I've had it. I have to forget more every day than some folks have learned about how to do things in the energy of the flesh, because that's the whole schooling that I had.

But God showed me Ephesians 4, and he says he gave evangelists and pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints into the work of the ministry. I need rest, all right, but what I need is the saints to become so desperately hungry to be perfected, to be matured, to be instructed into the work of the ministry and filling their place as members of the body. That's the rest my soul yearns for, and I doubt that I'll know real rest until I see it.

Let's pray. We thank thee, Father, that thou hast a glorious plan. It wasn't to exploit personality and magnify men and use carnal means, but it was to bring thy people to the cross in union with thy Son, and then to bring them to the place where the things they count gain to themselves they count loss to thee, to present their bodies as living sacrifices, and then fill them unto all of thy fullness, and then lead them into the place where every Christian has a ministry, a full ministry of a fruit-filled life, and the ministry of intercession, and the ministry of ambassadorship, and the ministry of authority, and the ministry of the gifts of the Spirit.

And we're no longer children tossed to and fro, but we've grown up into Christ. Oh God, oh God, thou must do it, thou must do it. Nothing else, Lord, we've nothing else, no other plan, this is all.

Come down upon us, blessed Father, come down upon us, and stir the hearts of these dear people that have served thee so faithfully and so well. Lord, they've been trained by preachers that had the same kind of training I had, the same kind of background. They've lived with it and were part of it, Lord, and the world is so much with us.

Do a new thing, Father, do a new thing. It's time for thee to work, it's time for thee to come down, and to melt down the mountains, and to fill up the valleys, and to make a way for thy going. Lord, we've seen the best that men can do for thee.

We're tired of it, we're weary of it, and here's a little group of people that have committed themselves to seek thee until thou dost come and reign righteousness upon us, to seek thee until thou hast brought us where we ought to be, fill us with thy fullness, and teach us the ministry that's to be ours. O God, one of these days thou art going to break in upon us, and we're going to lose our interest in our lunches. We aren't going to be so anxious to get out and see Aunt Mary and visit Uncle Bill, because God is going to come down and melt our hearts.

And we're going to put first things first, and we're going to let thee do again what thou dost want to do to reveal the glory of the resurrected Christ. Now we're here, Lord, and we've just seen a little bit of what you want us to be, and we go away feeling that we're so, so far from what we were intended to be. Lord, use it, drive it like a wedge right deep down between our indifference and our desire for thee, and split them apart until, Lord, our desire is going to become preeminent and take priority over everything else.

We're going to have to have God. We're going to have to be what we ought to be. So we plead now the precious blood of Christ upon us.

Seal this service to that end, and let us go with a hush of heaven on our hearts to give thee a chance to speak as we leave. For Jesus' sake.
Amen.

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