

Ministry

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God is the great minister. He serves all His creatures in their place and according to their order. He serves out the rain and sunshine and fruitful seasons, filling the heart with food and gladness. And when the need came, He spared not the Son of His love.

The Lord, the Son, is the personal or manifested minister. In every passage of His life He was the servant of man's sorrows and necessity; and though now in heaven He is still the Servant of His people's interests, and will be the Servant of their joy in the coming glory (Rom. 7: 17).

The Holy Ghost is the hidden effectual minister. He is ever tending the church, serving out to each saint the things of the Father and of Christ, and sustaining and comforting and teaching according to God and our infirmities. And thus we get a blessed display of ministry in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The angels are in ministry. "They are not all ministering spirits." And those of them who stand nearest the throne are perhaps the most abounding in ministry; as well they maybe from their nearness to that source of goodness. For Gabriel again and again appears in ministry; and he could say of himself as being thus very near the throne, "I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God."

The church is in ministry, divine ministry, ministry in the grace and presence of the Spirit. And the nearer we stand to Christ, the brighter and more abundant that ministry is, as we have seen in the angels. Thus in Paul, who stood so near to Jesus, what do we see but one unbroken course of self-sacrifice and service? He is in sympathy with every infirmity of the saints. Who was offended without his burning? The care of the churches came upon him daily. If He were afflicted or comforted, it was for others. Death worked in Him, but life in them. But every saint has some office to fill. We are all to be found in the great divine ministry of reconciliation which the Lord is now conducting in this world of sinners. If we are not ambassadors, yet we are appointed to fill some place in the great ambassador's train, if it be but in washing a saint's foot, or being in any wise a fellow-helper of the truth (2 Cor. v.17-21).

And thus we have ministry down from God in the highest to the weakest and most distant companion in the ranks of the redeemed. And when the glory comes, where the kingdom is established, there will be ministry still. The Lamb shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; the Lord of the kingdom will gird Himself and wait on His people; the water of life shall flow forth, and the leaves of the tree for healing; and the heavens will hear the earth, and the earth will hear the corn and the wine and the oil, and they shall hear Jezreel. The less shall be blessed of the better even all through the kingdom. J.G.B.