

“Making My Life A Ministry”

A Study in the Practical Meaning of Ephesians 2:10

- 1) **Course Description:** This course will set forth biblical ideas about how believers need to see themselves in relationship to “ministry.” The overarching aim is to show from Scripture how Jesus and the Apostles viewed ordinary but true believers as actively involved in His Kingdom work. The benefit for each of us is the certain knowledge that God’s Spirit does equip and motivate us to live with great usefulness for His glory. Over a period of 12 weeks we will examine what it means to make our lives ministries, from the perspective that we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared in advance for us to walk in them.
- 2) **Essential Questions:** What does the NT in particular say about good works, ministry and service? What is the Christian’s purpose? How does the Christian’s purpose relate to the purpose of the Church? How does the individual Christian find his own purpose? What kind of skills or abilities does the Christian need to be used purposefully by Christ for good works?
- 3) **Goals and Objectives:**
 - a. To set forth a biblical view of good works, service and ministry which unifies their usage and meaning.
 - b. To set forth the broad patterns of good works, service and ministry designed for believers.
 - c. To set forth the priorities and principles that underlie the Christians purpose
 - d. To set forth the most common biblical practices that guide the Christian into service of good works and ministry.
- 4) **Scope and Sequence:**
 - 01 – Good Works, Service, Ministry
 - 02 - The Priesthood of All Believers
 - 03 – The Ontological and Methodological Priorities of the Church
 - 04 – The Believer’s Call to Much Fruit Bearing – John 15
 - 05 – The Ministry of the Church is the Sum of the Good Works of its Member-ministers. (how the Church Purpose and the Believer’s Purpose are coordinate)
 - 06 – DQT (Daily Quiet Time)
 - 07 – Corporate Worship – What good can I do?
 - 08 – Being Equipped – What good can I do?
 - 09 – Godly Fellowship - What good can I do?
 - 10 – Faithful Stewardship - What good can I do?
 - 11 – Actively Assimilating - What good can I do?
 - 12 – Everyday Evangelizing - What good can I do?
 - 13 – Supporting the Global Work - What good can I do?

“Making My Life A Ministry”

A Study in the Practical Meaning of Ephesians 2:10

01 “Good Works, Service, Ministry”

Lesson Objective: As we are all called to live out the good works God has planned and prepared for us as His workmanship, we need more fully to recognize the Bible’s presentation of the relationship that exists between good works and Christian service.

Ephesians 2:10 “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Introduction: The Ministry “Mystery” - Believers are told that each member of the church is a “minister” and that each one is to have a “ministry.” Because of a narrow view of what makes up for “ministry” we find most believers confused and feeling “outside” of the ministry of the church.

Thesis: Ministry is no more, but no less, than serving others for the sake of Christ by doing them good. It is a living out of the second Great Commandment (as we pursue the Great Commission).

A) **Love in Action: The central core virtue of the Christian life**

The Second Great Commandment - Matt 22:39 – “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Such love is shown by our actions of serving others.

- 1) Sermon on the Mount: Mt 5:13-16 pinpoint good works – these flow out of the beatitudes; Vs 43-48 where loving one’s enemies is the pinnacle of being salt and light, the greatest of good works. (see Luke 6:27-38)
- 2) Good Samaritan Story: Luke 10:25-37 – the application of the Second Great Commandment is to go and show mercy to one’s neighbors, the doing of good works of service towards them – not service of obligation (justice) but of mercy, what you do not owe them or are obligated to do for them.
- 3) I John 3:16-18 “We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.” Note: Jesus demonstrated love in action – this is love’s model, self-sacrificial service to others. So we ought to live and love likewise.

B) **Love in Action: The functional definition of good works**

BB Warfield: “In the synoptic portrait of Christ the trait which stands out most clearly is the love of Jesus. He not only commanded love, but first Himself practiced it. It is not merely His thought but His will, and not merely His will but above all His deed.” (“On The Emotional Life of our Lord.” Biblical and Theological Studies).

- 1) The Apostle Peter summarizes the whole life of Jesus this way: “You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.” (Acts 10:38).

“Jesus went about doing good, and His deeds of doing good were acts of love.” A good deed is:

- a. Any act or deed
- b. that benefits another (a genuine help that fits God’s standard)
- c. that conforms to the second great commandment

- d. that evidences faith in Jesus.
- 2) Good works are to be the representative character of a true believer
 - a. Col 1:10 – “...so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;”
 - b. 2 Tim 2:21 – “Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.”
 - c. Good works are what the Scriptures equip the pastor to be competent for. 2 Tim 3:17 – “...so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

C) Love in Action: What NT ministry is all about.

- 1) The usual word in the Greek that is translated as “ministry” is also translated “service.”
 - a. Acts 1:17 – “For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry (diakonias).”
 - b. Acts 1:25 – to occupy this ministry (diakonias) and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.”
 - c. Acts 6:4 – “But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry (diakonias) of the word.”
 - d. Acts 20:24 – “But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry (diakonias) which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.”
- 2) Service = diakonias
 - a. Rom 12:7 – “...if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching;”
 - b. 2 Cor 9:12 – For the ministry (diakonia) of this service (leitourgia-liturgy) is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God.
 - c. Eph 4:12 – “...for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;”
 - d. Rev 2:19 – “I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first.”

What the NT calls ministry is service, serving others for the sake of the kingdom of God. The actions of serving are good deeds. A good deed is love in action.

Conclusion: We can draw no sharp distinction between ministry, service and the call to do good works in the Christian life. Thus, what we mean by “ministry” is truly whatever good God shows you by His Word or by His providence to do.