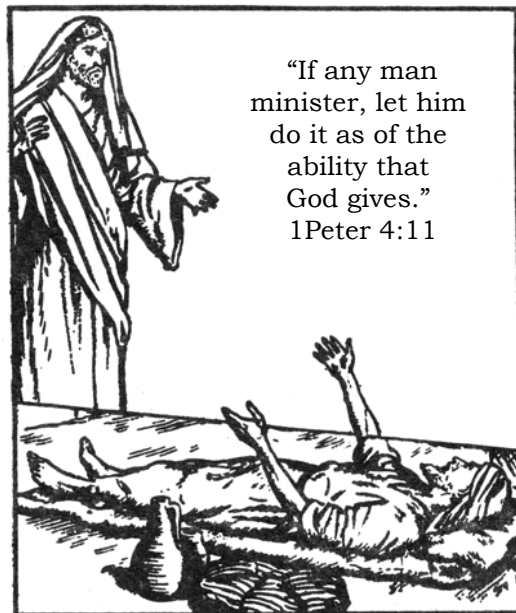


“How Shall They Preach, Except They Be Sent?”

By George C. Clark, Sr.



“If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability that God gives.”
1Peter 4:11

Paul asked, “How shall they preach, except they be sent?” (Rom. 10:15), meaning, of course, that no one can preach except he be sent. No one can understand Paul’s question, however, without first being made aware of the difference between being called and being sent. Jesus called disciples to follow him; then, from among the many he called, the Lord later chose certain men to anoint and send to preach the gospel.

We need to know that no one has ever been “called to preach”. That phrase is found nowhere in the Bible. Rather than “calling men to preach”, our Lord calls men to come be silent and learn of him. Then he anoints some of those followers and sends them to preach his gospel.

In Matthew 5:1-2, we read, “And seeing the crowds, he went up into the mountain; and when he had sat down, his disciples came to him, and he opened his mouth and taught them.” After this

lengthy session with his disciples, teaching them the moral requirements of the kingdom of God, Jesus demonstrated to his disciples the power of God to heal the sick and deliver the oppressed (Mt. 8). Then, in Matthew 10:1, Jesus gathered his disciples and “gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out and to heal every disease and every sickness.” Mark describes the sending of Jesus’ disciples this way: “And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him and that he might send them forth to preach and to have power to heal sickness and to cast out demons” (Mk. 3:14-15).

Notice, please, that these disciples were ordained and sent only after they were called. They had to be called before they could be chosen, anointed, and sent. The disciples were not ordained to preach when Jesus called them to leave their nets, tax office, and so forth. Nor were they ordained when they were being taught in the mountain. It was only after Jesus led them down from the mountain and demonstrated in their presence the power of God that he anointed them with “power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every sickness.” It was then that Jesus ordained his disciples and sent them to preach, saying, “freely you have received; freely give.”

Prayerfully consider, my dear minister friend, the question that I ask in deepest sincerity: Have you been sent, or have you only been called? Each experience is definite and wonderful, but most ministers never speak of anything more than being “called to preach”. There is no reason to doubt that they received a call from Christ; however, their own testimonies of nothing but a call show that Jesus has not sent them to preach. Instead, they are ordained and sent into the ministry by their religious sect.

Men are not able to confer the power to preach the gospel of Christ. Only God can do that. As Peter said, “If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability that God gives.” There is a seminary of God, where the Spirit reveals the doctrine of Christ and anoints with power to preach the gospel.

It was by receiving the power of God to heal people and to deliver them from evil spirits that the twelve apostles were ordained as ministers of God. But here is the big question – and it is at this point

that many stumble – Is this power for healing and deliverance still a hallmark of true ministry? In other words, are the saints today as important to God as those of biblical times? Our answer will have to be “yes”, since Christ puts no difference between his early disciples and us whom he sends to carry his word today. He put his first followers and us on exactly the same level, so far as preaching the gospel is concerned. Surely he who healed so many in the days of his apostles has made provision for people of all ages to receive the benefits of his grace and power, for God is not “a respecter of persons”.

Demons were subject to Jesus’ disciples, just as they were subject to him, for God gave them power to heal the sick, cast out demons, cleanse the lepers, and even to raise the dead. This, of course, was all done in the wonderful name of Jesus. And God gives the privilege of the authority of that great name to every minister He sends.

There are ministers who regard the cleansing, healing power of God as belonging to another age, and altogether out of the reach or right of modern ministry. Who has bewitched them to think this? Oh, my friend, so many people are sick and dying, not because God’s healing power is unavailable but because saving faith is becoming rare. How this must grieve the heart of God, who wills His power of complete deliverance to all His people!

The Pharisees opposed Jesus and his earliest followers because of the power of God they possessed to heal and deliver suffering people. Every unanointed minister today, like the Pharisees of old, senses that the power of God is a threat to his man-appointed ministry. It seems easier for them to fight the power of God than to seek God and receive it. Hear Paul’s description of such religious leaders, and note the warning that follows: “*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those who are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but*

denying the power thereof. From such, turn away” (2Tim. 3:1-5).

What a warning! What a description of every unsent minister who walks after his own ungodly lusts and prophecies out of his own spirit! “*These be they*”, Jude tells us, “*who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.*” May God anoint and send men to heal His divided, hurting people! Only men who are sent from God have God’s answer to our deepest needs.

Every minister must face this issue: “Shall I resist or yield to the power of God - the force that not only cleanses the soul but also heals the body and mind?” This is the supreme issue in the life of everyone who has been called. Many have already answered, either by denying the power of God or by receiving it. Some are evading the issue. Every true and wise minister has or will joyfully yield to it. Their answer can only be as Isaiah’s: “*Here am I; send me!*” And remember that he who said, “*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*” also said, “*these signs shall follow those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.*”

Contrary to what anyone may think, this same apostolic gospel is for us today. Thousands of ministers, ignorant of the true gospel, have established word-only ministries of their own, ministries without the power and signs that Jesus said would follow believers. The unrepealable gospel which Jesus preached is to be preached and practiced by all believers, even to the end of this age. May our God enable us to do so! Amen.

FOR COPIES OF THIS TRACT, AND INFORMATION ON OUR OTHER FREE GOSPEL RESOURCES, WRITE:

ORDERS

P.O. Box 99 - Burlington, NC - 27216-0099

Don’t let this tract die – Mail it to someone.

Visit our Website: Isaiah58.com