

Secrets of Doing Ministry

A New Life of Spirit Led Ministry to Others

There's nothing like doing the thing, especially when what we are doing is something we can be sure that Jesus is doing right along with us! The real Minister, the true Servant, is there on the inside wanting to get out into that hurting, lost world through us His chosen vessels. The secret to kingdom success is letting Him do ministry through you. It is also the secret to never becoming burned out.

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Philippians 2:13 ESV

Our "Secret" of Success

Success in ministry is learning to let Jesus work *in you* and *through you*. We need to let Him work in us so that He can work through us. On good days this can be as easy as child's play. When our trust, love and inward surrender are high, we hardly need any coaching from an article like this. We're good to go! At other times, however, it is as tough as nails.

Why is that?

Because Jesus is in you, the Holy Spirit will lift and lead you into the many joys of working with Him, making you feel childlike and free. Likewise, *precisely because Jesus is in you*, the enemy's camp will work steadily to oppose anything He might want to do through you. At those times you will feel hindered and besieged. Remember, too, that the Adversary doesn't just come at us from the outside; difficulties also arise from all that is still fallen within us. That's why we have to learn to let Jesus work *in us*, in order for Him to keep working *through us*.



There is no escaping this ongoing conflict. Just be ready for it. It is the inevitable cycle of our new life: struggle and victory, seed time and harvest, death to self and resurrection with Christ. Be encouraged: opposition from the enemy is never wasted. God will always overturn it and use it to advance His work. In addition, it often serves as the Lord's "wash and wear cycle"—something that He puts us through whenever we need to be cleansed of self and liberated once again as glad-hearted, unencumbered children.

Why We Need this Cycle of Conflict

We need this "friendly" work of the Lord in us because it is so easy to get caught up in trying to get "results." Our desire to help people can easily be subverted by the enemy. We could focus



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on the problems and lose the peace of Christ, then press forward in our own strength until we've burned out the inner flame. Or, we might seize the reins, trying to manage everything according to our own understanding and our own sense of timing. This always leads to frustration. Without even realizing it, by these and other ways we can take control of the work away from the Lord into our own hands. *This never produces the desired results!*

Success in ministry is letting Jesus have His way with us. His top priority is growing loving relationships—that's the key "result" he's looking for. Are we making the progress there that He desires? (See [Preparing for Ministry](#) for more on this.) As for the work itself, it always goes better if He is in the lead. He alone knows what He desires to accomplish and how to do it. The great thing about this is that He can be immensely pleased even with what may seem to us like miniscule gains, such as stopping what you're doing to give "a drink of cool water" to someone in need.

Learning to follow Him is filled with unexpected moments of purpose and accomplishment when something vital (love, empathy, shared understanding) passes between us and the people we serve. Our service is also marked by times of quandary: Where did He go now? What was *that* about? What is He trying to teach me? Since so much depends upon Jesus doing His ministry through us, we need to understand and cooperate with this dynamic of the work.

The Source of Our Success

Jesus gathered the disciples on His last night with them for a final teaching on how to do ministry once He was gone. Just as they had always done ministry under His leadership while He was with them in the flesh, so now they were to make sure that He remained in charge once He was gone. But catch the wink: He wouldn't really "be gone." He would remain with them as an abiding presence and He fully expected them (and us) to learn how to return the favor by learning to abide in Him. This teaching is so important that we need to study it in detail.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full... You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. John 15:4-11, 16 ESV



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The Importance of Abiding

Our “abiding” is important to Jesus, as well as fruit we are intended to bear. Unless we learn the way of abiding in Him we will be unable to bear *any* fruit. On the other hand, if we abide in Him, we will bear “much fruit.” Bearing fruit glorifies the Father and proves that we are truly His disciples. The stakes are high! If we don’t learn to abide in Him, we not only won’t experience the overflow of His joy, we may actually risk being cast “into the fire.” Indeed, we have been chosen that we “should go and bear fruit.”

Fruit is what the branch (that’s us) produces by abiding in the vine (that’s Jesus). Fruit is not for the consumption of the branch, but for the nourishment of others. In the New Testament there are three basic kinds of fruit: the fruit of the Spirit, the fruit of righteous living and the fruit of advancing the kingdom. We don’t get to pick and choose among the fruit. Every one of us is called to cultivate all three kinds.

Notice the essential role of the fruit of the Spirit—peace, love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. If we don’t abide in Jesus, the fruit of the Spirit are the first to get spoiled! If we aren’t bearing the fruit of the Spirit, whatever “work” we are doing will have a rotten smell to it. According to Paul, even if we have righteous deeds and kingdom advances to boast of, but have not love, then we “gain nothing.” Clearly, the fruit of the Spirit are essential to both life and ministry.

The Key to Our Success

Since abiding in Christ is the only way we can bear fruit, especially the fruit of the Spirit, then *abiding is the key to doing ministry*. In Jesus own words it is impossible to think of doing things for Jesus without also doing everything we can to abide in Him at the same time. It is not a question of one or the other. We do not get to choose between being active servants or being those who abide in Jesus. We must learn to do both! We have been chosen to bear fruit and it is only by abiding that we have any hope of accomplishing our assignment.

If this sounds impossibly hard, it is. We will never learn the way of abiding or of bearing true fruit unless Jesus helps us, but that is exactly what He wants to do. He says that whatever we ask for will be given us. Look what that promise means in this context. Anything we need in order to abide or bear fruit, God will gladly supply! Call on His Name—He will always come to your aid. Return to Him as often as the peace of abiding departs—He will always welcome you back. No one abides in Jesus all of the time. We all lose the peace He gives us, especially in the midst of trials. The great thing is recognizing that you have lost the peace of abiding (once again) and *make a quick return!*

Pressure Can Work for Us

Seen in this light, seeking to be of service to Jesus, “forces” us to learn how to abide in Him, and that in turn ushers in all of the inimitable joys of living in His presence Truly, “His joy” enters us as we learn to abide in Him. Once again Jesus demonstrates that His number one concern

for us as servants is love: “abide in My love.” From that place of strength, service becomes a joy and the fruit naturally follows.

Jesus overturns our natural bent. We want success (results) at the work in order to feel confident we have pleased Him and don't mind striving and stressing to get those results. His approach is quite different. He is pleased if we take our confidence from trusting ourselves to His steadfast love. Then He gets to reap the results He wants through us *while we are trusting*.

Two Necessary Steps

How do we “allow” Jesus to do His ministry through us? Abiding is intimately connected with trusting Jesus with all He allows and all He asks of us. That is a subject all its own (see [Spiritual Health](#)). Nevertheless, there are two steps we need to take at the beginning of any work of ministry. The first step is to consecrate the work to Him; the second step is to consecrate ourselves.

1) Consecrating the Work

This is done by committing our field of service to Him in prayer. Christian work and prayer go hand in hand, because no amount of effort on our part can make up for any failure by us to bring the Lord in as the central player. Always keep in mind that it is His work in us and through us that will win the day. Naturally enough we pray for His blessing, but to ensure that, we commit the work to Him, asking Him to take charge over it and work with us to make sure that His will is done. The Holy Spirit will show what needs to be prayed for and help us with the prayers, but the central thing is truly committing or giving the work to God.

2) Consecrating Ourselves

This needs doing up front in prayer, but it is necessary to keep watch over ourselves all along the way. The key to this is to intentionally place ourselves under His leadership through prayer and the yielding of our wills, just as He showed us was necessary for Him in the Garden: “Not my will, but Thine be done.” Whenever we do this in life or in ministry, we have peace. Any loss of peace is a clear call from the Holy Spirit to repent, return to the Lord, be refreshed in His presence and re-consecrate ourselves to working under His leadership.

More to Explore

[The Heart of a Servant](#) There are two sides to cultivating a servant's heart which we see fully revealed in Jesus. They also dove-tail beautifully into fulfilling the two commands He gave us. First, there is the desire to “be about the Father's business” which keeps us asking “What would You have me do?” This takes us upwards into God's heart and downwards into the humility that



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sets self aside. Second, there is compassion which keeps us looking to the sea of humanity around us, listening for God's call that comes to us through them.

[Inner Healing and Deliverance](#) Basic Discipleship enables us to prune the bad fruit off of our spiritual tree by calling on Jesus in any moment of need. Inner Healing and Deliverance are needed to pull out our deeply buried "root" issues. We all have them. They are unresolved stuff still stuck in us that produce bumper crops of bad attitudes and actions. "Where's there's fruit, there's a root." The great thing is that once you deal with the root, a lot a bad fruit goes away.

Free Downloads

[Doing Ministry in the Spirit \(eBook\)](#)

Scriptures on Ministry

"Will any one of you who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and recline at table'? Will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink'? Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'" Luke 17:7-10 ESV

But as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. Ephesians 6:6-8 ESV

[Not in your own strength] for it is God Who is all the while effectually at work in you [energizing and creating in you the power and desire], both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight. Philippians 2:13 AMP

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For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.



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