

## Philosophy of Ministry #1: “Serving Humility Compassion”

Acts 20:17-19

*Philosophy: A belief held by a person that forms the guiding principle for behavior. Our text: Paul tells of his philosophy of ministry; How he approaches ministry – that determines his actions and attitudes.*

**Acts 20:17–19** <sup>17</sup>From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. <sup>18</sup>And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, <sup>19</sup>serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;

### I. SERVING THE LORD

A. Paul never forgot who he was serving: **V19** serving the Lord...

1. **Paul knew he was not serving people:** People will demand/pressure/manipulate
  - a. Can cause you to do things you know are not in line with God’s will
2. **Paul knew he was not serving himself:** Our own flesh/egos demand that we do certain things – selfishly
  - a. This can stop God’s will: **Matthew 16:22** Never, Lord!
3. At all times we are asking: *What does God want me to do? I am serving the Lord – His will*
  - a. That question should dominate every decision – determine the choices of life

B. If we’re serving the Lord: Our main priority is to have relationship with God

1. You can’t be so busy working for God – that you neglect relationship with God
  - a. **Psalms 63:1** O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water.

1. Starting your day 2. Before any ministry Reading my Bible and prayer are the priorities of life

### II. HUMILITY

A. Paul says he served the Lord with all humility – seems a funny thing to say: *I am more humble than you!*

1. Humility is not false modesty: I am worth nothing/Don’t know why they asked me to sing...
2. Humility is simply honest recognition: *Facing the truth*
  - a. Everything I am/everything I can do is from God! b. God helps me in spite of myself
    1. I have character flaws/can be selfish/serve for wrong motives – pride...
  - b. But God allows me to minister anyway:

B. Humility has some practical outflows/practices

1. **Humility is willing to do what is good for others**
  - a. **John 13:14** If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.
    1. How can I help you? How can I serve your life/your ministry?
2. **Humility is willing to take a lower place:** *Jesus took the form of a servant!*
  - a. Don’t fight for attention. Try to outdo your brother. b. Do good – and shut up about it

### III. COMPASSION

A. We cannot minister effectively if we don’t care for people

1. People can tell if you care or not – you won’t survive problems/disappointments/insults if don’t care
  - a. If ministry is for ego or some perceived benefit – you won’t make it

B. Paul gives his philosophy of ministry is based on compassion : **V19** with many tears

1. Compassion: To feel sympathy inside. Concern or care
  - a. **Compassion begins with awareness:** *Seeing the needs of other people*
    1. **Matthew 14:14** Jesus saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them...
    2. **Gen 40:6** Joseph came in to them in the morning and looked at them, and saw that they were sad.
      - a. Are you aware of people’s needs: Work/church. Those sick/missing/hurting/new...
  - b. **Compassion means you actually care:** The needs of others should bother you – you want to help
2. Compassion does not come naturally to us: **Phil 2:20** *I have no man likeminded, who will care for your state.*
  - a. Pastor Mitchell: *Pray that God will give you a burden for souls, and a love for people*
  - b. *Turning point/my life: I knew I didn’t have – began to pray for/actively get involved in meeting needs*
    1. What about you ? Do you care ? What will you do about your lack of compassion ?