

# What Is a Good Minister?

by Shane Idleman

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*A good minister is one who proclaims the truth of God's Word in a spirit of love and gentleness, even if it means offending some people.*

**Duration:** 7:19

**Scripture:** Acts 2:38, 1 Corinthians 1:18, 2 Timothy 4:2, Hebrews 4:12

**Topics:** "Biblical Ministry", "Gospel Preaching"

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## Description

A good minister, according to the Word of God, proclaims the truth in love and gentleness, not shying away from controversial or offensive aspects of the Gospel. The focus is on preaching repentance, the totality of God's Word, and the power of the Holy Spirit, rather than just promoting good deeds or community. The essence of a good minister lies in faithfully delivering the message of salvation through Christ, addressing sin, judgment, and righteousness, even if it may offend some, as the truth is meant to convict hearts and bring about transformation.

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## Transcript

I want to define for a minute the definition of a good minister. Because in our culture today and with the church as a whole, what is a good minister? Paul says, Timothy, if you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ. He didn't say if you're everybody's friend, if you're Mr. Nice Guy, if you do all these nice things and people love you, isn't he such a great person? No, a minister or somebody called to preach the Gospel must be faithful to the command of Scripture.

So a good minister according to the Word of God is one who proclaims the truth in a spirit of love and gentleness and meekness, of course, but to proclaim the truth. And many times, myself included, we think, oh, the pastors, they've got to be these nice, meek, mild-mannered guys smiling all the time. Never say anything controversial.

Never upset. Never offend. The Bible offends.

So a good minister must proclaim the truth of God's Word. We can't ask, is it going to offend anybody? We have to ask, is it truth? And I think that's what's happening we see in the church today. We don't want to upset.

We don't want to offend. We want to build big churches so we have mass audiences. Let me say, if I say this, I'm going to lose half the crowd.

If I say this, I'm going to lose the giving crowd. If I say this, I'm going to lose the Pentecostal crowd. If I say this, I'm going to lose the fundamentalists.

If I say this, I'm going to lose everybody. If I say this, I'm going to lose those struggling with same-sex attraction. So what do I do? You just preach the Word of God.

That's a good minister of Jesus Christ. Let the chips fall where they may. So Paul's saying, Timothy, that's what a good minister is.

A good pastor, a good leader. Not, of course, they're gentle and understanding and compassionate. But at the end of the day, they've got to proclaim the truth of God's Word.

Looking at God's Word, looking at where the culture is going, the church is coming to a big shift. You're going to see people either embracing the Word of God, or you're going to see relativism sneak in. They're not going to take the Word of God seriously.

They're going to ponder. They're going to contemplate it. They're going to think about it.

I don't know. Is it really true? And there's going to be a big shift. And somebody's going to have to draw the line.

Because people need to know what do we stand for? Living like Jesus is not the Gospel. Whoa, whoa, whoa, hold on Shane. Don't hear me out.

What is the Gospel? Timothy says Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. That's the good news. Sinners.

Under the condemnation and wrath of God, Christ comes to save sinners. That's the good news. But we think acting like Jesus and feeding the poor and reaching out and helping people in compassion, that's not the Gospel.

That's the byproduct of the Gospel. Once my heart has been changed, Christ really rules and reigns in my life. Fill with the Holy Spirit of God.

Now I live like Christ. Now I want to be compassionate, filled with love, joy, peace, contentment, long-suffering. But what we do is we put, we don't want to talk about sin and judgment and wrath and righteousness and holiness and all these things that people get upset about.

So we say that Gospel's about treating people good. Just be like Jesus. Live like Jesus.

Have community like Jesus. That's not the Gospel, sir. That's a byproduct of it.

Of course, we're to do that. The problem is we want to live like Jesus, but we don't want to talk like Jesus. We want to live like Him and turn the other cheek, but we don't want to upset anybody.

You see what's happening? A good minister of Jesus Christ is those who proclaim the truth of God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit. We have to stop talking about acting and being like Jesus. First, we need to save the soul.

We need to preach repentance. And then the Gospel message and then treating others right is a byproduct of that. So you see, and I hear that, I guess maybe I hear it more being a pastor, is that a lot of people say, man, we just need to live like Jesus and treat people and take care of the poor.

Absolutely. Of course. That's been going on for 2,000 years.

But that's not the Gospel. There will be a time when they will not endure sound doctrine. But they will look for teachers who will tell them what they want to hear.

That's why Paul told Timothy, Timothy, preach the Word. Be ready in and out of season. That's all you've got to do is preach the Word.

We need to hear about the hard, difficult truths. Because the difficult truths are the foundation of the Gospel. They're on which everything else rests.

You built on Christ. Jesus came to save sinners. Repentance is our only hope.

Jesus said, go and preach repentance. The men cried out, Peter, what must we do to be saved? Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Peter said, repent and be baptized.

In another chapter, he said, repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out. The times of refreshing will come from the presence of the Lord. John the Baptist is preparing the way for the Lord.

And what did he say? Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Yet, we don't want to talk about repentance. That's what's wrong in the church of America.

Yes, we're not living like Christ. I got it. I understand it and I agree with that.

But we're also not preaching repentance. And that's what the Bible says is what goes and convicts the heart. You want to know what a good minister of Jesus Christ is? It's one who preaches the totality of God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit.

So when I get home and I get negative emails from my radio program or my articles or people upset, I say, Lord, what do You want? I can't be pleasing men. I have to be, Lord, what do You want? I have to ask this question. Is it the truth that offends somebody or is it my attitude? See, if it's my attitude, that needs readjusting.

It needs some love in there, some compassion, some understanding and some gentleness. But if it's the truth that offends, there's nothing I can do about that. Nor should I. The truth should offend.

That's the point of the truth. It's not God's Word. It says like living and powerful like a double-edged sword that pierces even to the joint and marrow It's a discerner of the thoughts and the intent of the heart.

I want people to understand that that is the definition of a healthy church and a healthy, and as a minister, it's those who proclaim the totality of God's Word. We're not going to prepare a message and say, okay, I don't want to offend people. I don't want to say this.

I definitely don't want to talk about sin. I'm not going to ever talk about hell or judgment or the wrath of God. Never, ever, ever, ever because I want people to like me.

That's not a good minister. That's a people-pleasing coward.

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