

Personal/Small Group Study

Week of April 28, 2024 A.D.

Every Christian Is a Minister on Behalf of Christ. Yes! Even You!

Jesus commands Christians to love one another. Jesus also commands Christians to love their neighbors. Love is an action verb which is demonstrated by serving other people. When a person serves another person in the name of Jesus, we refer to that servant as a minister. Therefore, because all Christians are commanded to be servants on behalf of Jesus, we can rightly conclude that all Christians - regardless of their vocation - are ministers for Jesus.

(Note: For every question which appears in this study, always give the reasoning and/or the explanation for each of your answers.)

Read Matthew 20:24-28

1. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "In these verses, Jesus is telling his disciples that each of them has been called to be a servant to other people."
2. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "In the broader context, in these verses, Jesus is teaching that anybody who is a Christian is expected to be a servant to other people."
3. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the verb minister as "to give aid or service." Does this definition support the statement that "Every Christian is a minister of Christ"?
4. In your opinion, do most American Christians embrace or reject the notion that they are full-time ministers on behalf of Jesus Christ? Do you embrace or reject that notion?

Read Galatians 5:13-14

5. Is there a connection between the command to serve (which is found in verse 13) and the command to love (which is found in verse 14)?
6. What is the "freedom" to which Paul is referring in verse 13? How can that freedom be used to "indulge the sinful nature"? Please give examples to support your answer.
7. Is it always true that it is impossible to indulge your sinful nature whenever you are "serving other people in (an attitude of) love"?

Read Philippians 2:1-8

8. Verses 3 and 8 make reference to humility. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "Humility means that you have your own self-interest under control so that all of your desires and actions can be Christ-controlled."
9. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "A Christian should never do anything out of selfish ambition or vain conceit."
10. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "Whether or not I serve other people means nothing to God. All that matters to God is that I claim to be a Christian."

Read John 12:23-26

11. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "The only way that a Christian can make investments in the kingdom of God is by serving people under the direction and guidance of Christ."
12. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "Jesus has commanded me to abandon my life's plans and my goals in this world so that Jesus can use me to accomplish His life's plans and His goals in this world."

Read Ephesians 4:11-13; 16

13. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "The spiritual maturity of a church is measured by the extent to which its members serve each other and serve the world around them."
14. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "The primary role of the pastor is to prepare God's people to serve others in the likeness and nature of Christ."
15. In your opinion, what are the most common obstacles which prevent Christians from becoming servants of and for Jesus? What course of action would you recommend to your church family to equip them to attain "the whole measure of the fullness of Christ"?

Consider: As followers of Jesus, we are called to love Jesus by faithfully serving Christ, each other, and our neighbors. This manner of love can be expressed and enjoyed only when we allow the Holy Spirit to guide and direct the details of our lives. Such a life will always bring glory and honor to God. "You think about that." Amen.