

Editorial.

"The Ministry which thou hast received."

Waters } "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord,
that thou fulfill it."

The Lord of God makes it perfectly clear that
"There are diversities of ministrations, but the same Spirit."
Both in personal gifts and in corporate endowments there
are differences of function.

In the above exhortation to Archippus it would be correct
to underline certain words, "the ministry; fulfill it".
From the beginning the Ascended Lord has raised up or
apprehended "Vocals" to fulfill particular ministries. It was
so among the first Apostles and servants of Christ. Through
the centuries He has done this again and again. Whether
He always been individual; many times it has been
collective; that is, He has raised up a people in and
through whom He has sought to emphasize or represent
some vital part of the whole counsel of God which had been
either lost, ~~was~~ or was falling into a lower place
than it was meant to have. & We are able to see so
clearly that certain persons, and certain movements of God
stand out in history in relation to some particular aspect
of "The Testimony of Jesus". That was the ministry which they
received in the Lord. ^{There have been} ~~Some have been~~ "chief men among
the brethren"; (Acts xv. 22.) The names are too many to mention,
and we have ^{been} just as truly collective instruments, smaller

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and greater, called into being for something vital to all the people
of God. Very much less might be avoided, and unnecessary
division might be avoided if this song of the Lord were more
clearly recognized. Surely it was to this very thing that the
Apostle directed his words - "The eye cannot say to the hand, I
have no need of thee, or again the head to the feet, I have no need
of you." (1 Cor. 12: 21)!

There are those who would have all Christians doing the
same thing, and because some are doing something else
they are suspect. For instance, there are those who think
that the ~~whole~~ Church should be ^{wholly} engaged ~~in all~~ ~~of~~
~~activity~~ in Evangelism. There are others whose sole
interest is in "teaching" and "deepening of spiritual life".
This can be extended ad libitum.

Of course the Church of the New Testament, and any true
best expression of it will be all-poured and full-orbed;
but because the Church has lost its balance or its
function, God has to raise up for the Church universal
that which may be lacking, and so we have those
complementary ministries, and balancing functions
in the Body of Christ.

Without any claims to "Special revelation" or Sovereign
raising up for any great ministry - as such - we do
feel that the Lord has given us a function and a ministry
which represents a solemn responsibility to Him in its
fulfillment. ~~It is our sole work, but not in the way that~~

we do seek to keep a balance or all-roundness. We have a very real concern for the unreached, and people, wealthy and abroad are being led to the Lord. We do not leave them there, but seek most earnestly that they shall be instructed and built upon Christ. Over the years many have gone from us in this twofold purpose to many parts of the world.

But, when that is said, we have to recognize and submit to the fact that all is governed by an indivisible dominating purpose - The Salvation of Christ. It is still purpose, for we do not desire to have attained. We just cannot accept what is partial or less! It was this vision which precipitated the crises in our early history. We were in a denominational connection. To the ministry, spiritually hungry people began to come from ~~the~~ various and many connections. At that time we had a local expression - continuously - of what the Norwich Convention enjoyed for one week in the year - an 'all-oneness' in Christ, a transcendence of all earthly and sectarian divisions. ~~At~~ It is difficult to see what would have happened had not the denomination forced an issue and eventually presented us with an ultimatum to either conform to the denominational requirements or leave the premises. This may have been in the sovereignty of God to get us on to clear ground without a sectarian tradition always somewhere in the background. We are always glad that we were left it was a spiritual issue and not one of a "split" in the way that it has been in

many cases. The Lord wonderfully provided a home for His ministry,
and has blessed it with ever widening and deepening fulness.
But, how terrible it has been misjudged. Objectively viewed,
without knowledge of the real nature and cause, without
understanding that we had only one thought, that was to
be able to meet, and minister to, and have fellowship with all
the people of God, irrespective of labels and connections, our
course was interpreted just exactly to the contrary. We were
said to be "schismatics", "divisive", and "out to form another
sect" or "denomination". ~~But~~ The result was ostracism,
closed doors, and, to this day, antagonism. The Lord knows
how false that interpretation is and how we have striven
to avoid doing any such thing. But we have had to
go on with our ministry; we have been compelled by the
Lord to "take heed unto the ministry received -- that (we)
fulfill it". The ministry is to provide Bread for the
hungry; to keep God's full purpose in view; to
annunciate, and, as He enables, represent the Spiritual
Principles of Spiritual Fulness, i.e., heavenliness, and other
than earthliness; Spirituality, as different from man's
government and direction; universality, as against
exclusiveness and sectarianism. We think that we
have seen in a small way the significance of Christ as
embodying all the Spiritual realities and Principles of
God's "Home", and that the Church is meant to be
conformed to His image in this respect. We ask none to

join anything, come out of anything, or propagate anything. We seek to urge all to go on to God's full end. It is so seeking they find crises precipitated in connections, reconstructions, etc, that is a matter between them and the Lord.

The basis of everything is the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are sure that if the Cross has its place and power in the believer's life and therefore in the life of the Church everything else will spontaneously emerge and take its right place and form.

Fellowship is on the basis of Christ alone, and no other. The Church is as heavenly as He was, and is, and "not of this world". Because this is the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, everything has to be spiritual in the sense that it is "born of the Spirit", "led by the Spirit", "filled with the Spirit", "ruled by the Spirit", and in all things under the Lordship of the Spirit. The Spirit must be the Teacher, through the Scriptures; the revealer of the truth within the Word, and the former of all according to Christ. He demands absolute right of way, and freedom from all shackles of tradition and man constituted orders and systems.