

The Contrast of Kingdoms: **Counselor vs. Minister**

NOTE: Although there is a call from God for all to be saved, and a call for those saved to be sanctified, this position paper deals with the resulting call to service.

Jesus said in Matt 28.19 to, 'go and make disciples' - not 'counselors'

The word 'Counselor' (within the current culture) is associated with someone being credentialed. This intimidates most believers from actively using their spiritual gifts in ministering to others. This has resulted in fewer conversions, personal Christian growth, and active Kingdom workers around the world. It has also significantly diminished the number of people who would otherwise have followed-through with additional training to become effective workers in the Kingdom of God.

The word 'Minister' (as used in the Word of God) describes saints sharing the Gospel of Salvation; the Gospel of Sanctification; and the Gospel of Service. This process is known as 'Discipleship' and is the great privilege and opportunity of every believer.

EVERY believer is called to the 'work of ministry' (Eph 4:12); and is to be recognized as both a 'Priest of the Lord' and a 'Minister of our God' (Isa 61:6; 2 Cor. 6:4)

Most of the training to prepare people for ministry in this world is psychologically based and anti-biblical. The psychological model is problem-oriented. The Biblical model is Christ-oriented. The psychological model digs up people's past while the Biblical model focuses on the present.

Unfortunately, most Christians have based their own training on this psychological model. Therefore, most Christian counselors are practically deficient in doing the work of the ministry. The results then are not as profound and effective as true Biblical Discipleship ministry. Simply getting credentials does not make one competent or wise.

The qualifications to be a minister of the Lord are: 1) born of the Spirit of God, a member of the family of God; and 2) to be knowledgeable of the Word of God (understanding how it works) with the ability to specifically and personally apply it (which is called the Wisdom of God). Any saint armed with the Word of God, empowered by the Spirit of God, can effectively do the work of God. It doesn't take a credentialed professional.

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Every spiritual gift, though different (Eph 4:11, 1 Cor. 12:8-10, Rom. 12:4-8), compliments the overall work of the ministry through every believer. The presence, power and combination of these gifts are determined by the Lord and granted to every believer at salvation, making their personal ministry unique.

Romans 12:4-8 'For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness'

God's Word challenges us to use the correct titles because of the relational impact among believers (as described in Rom. 12:4-8 above). To pursue or rely upon the granted titles of men may create expectations and distinctions that are untrue, unnecessary, and unwarranted in the ministry of believers. And this, in our observation and estimation, is a great tragedy of today's Church.

Matthew 23:8-12 'But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. 9 Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. 10 Do not be called leaders; for One is your Leader, that is, Christ. 11 But the greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.'

The one who has been given all authority in Heaven and Earth says, '*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*' (Matt 28:19-20)

Notice the specifics stated in the above verse. First, all believers (saints) are commanded to go and make disciples. Second, this process consists of teaching and helping a fellow believer to obey what the Word says (instead of just knowing it) thus resulting in the transformation of another's life.

This is why we call our work, 'Biblical Discipleship Ministry' and our workers, 'Biblical Discipleship Ministers'.