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## **Archippus: A Look at the Requirement, Appointment, and Fulfillment of Ministry (Colossians 4:17)**

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**NKJ** And say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."  
**BGT** καὶ εἶπατε Ἀρχίππῳ· Βλέπε τὴν διακονίαν ἣν παρέλαβες ἐν κυρίῳ, ἵνα αὐτὴν πληροῖς.

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### **I. The Definition of Ministry (diakonia, διακονία)**

#### *Used of the work of the Spirit*

- 2 Cor 3:8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious?
- 2 Cor 3:9 For if the ministry of condemnation *had* glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory.

#### *Used of the affect of the law*

- 2 Cor 3:7 But if the ministry of death, written *and* engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which *glory* was passing away,

#### *Used of general help of another*

- 2 Tim 4:11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.
- Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? (angels)

#### *Used of giving to needs*

- Acts 11:29 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea.
- Rom 15:31 that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints,
- 2 Cor 8:4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.
- 2 Cor 9:1 Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you;
- 2 Cor 9:12 For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God,
- 2 Cor 9:13 while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal sharing with them and all *men*,

#### *Used of the serving of food*

- Acts 6:1 Now in those days, when *the number of* the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

#### *Used of all service of believers*

- 1 Cor 16:15 I urge you, brethren -- you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and *that* they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints --
- Eph 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,
- Rev 2:19 "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and *as* for your works, the last *are* more than the first.

#### *Used of spiritual gifts in general*

- 1 Cor 12:5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.

#### *Used of serving as a spiritually enhanced ability to help others*

- Rom 12:7 or ministry, *let us use it* in *our* ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;

#### *Used of the position of apostleship*

- Acts 1:17 "for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry."
- Acts 1:25 "to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."
- Rom 11:13 For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,

#### *Used of general and specific evangelistic effort*

- Acts 12:25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled *their* ministry, and they also took with them John whose surname was Mark.
- Acts 21:19 When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.
- 2 Cor 5:18 Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

#### *Used of the study and teaching of the Word*

- Acts 6:4 "but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."
- 2 Cor 11:8 I robbed other churches, taking wages *from them* to minister to you.

#### *Used of a specific position of leadership*

- 2 Cor 4:1 Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.
- 2 Cor 6:3 We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed.
- Col 4:17 And say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."
- 2 Tim 4:5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

**Likely this speaks of the ministry of shepherding here, with Archippus singled out among all the believers as the target of this command as the one responsible for the care of a congregation (cf. Revelation 2-3)**

## II. The Requirement of Ministry: Diligent Attention

### A. Shepherds Need to Focus on Their Ministry

1. Because each leader is responsible to do what he has been appointed to do
2. Because of the tendency or temptation to do less than what is needed in ministry
  - Fear
  - Laziness
  - Mediocrity
3. Because of the tough challenges and dangers of ministry
  - Dangers and Challenges from the Outside
  - Dangers and Challenges from the Inside
  - Personal Dangers and Challenges (Sin, Distraction)
  - Family Dangers and Challenges
  - The Ongoing Nature of Shepherding
  - The Overwhelming Load

### B. Shepherds Need To Be Encouraged to Focus on Their Ministry

1. Shepherds Need Prompting by Other Leaders – Paul to Archippus in writing
2. Shepherds Need Prompting by Their Sheep – “Each of You Tell Him”
  - Do you criticize your leaders or encourage them?
  - Do you recognize and share the burden or add to it?

## III. The Appointment of Ministry: Divine Assignment

### A. The Position and Place Are Given by God

- Acts 20:24 "But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.
- Col 4:17 And say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."
- 1 Tim 1:12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry.

### B. God Holds a Shepherd Accountable, and Each Will Answer to Him for His Ministry

- 2 Tim 4:1-2 <sup>1</sup> I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: <sup>2</sup> Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.
- Heb 13:17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

### C. God Tells Shepherds What to Do (What Responsibilities/Focuses Are) – Can/Can't

- 2 Tim 2:1-4 <sup>1</sup> You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. <sup>3</sup> You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup> No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.
- Titus 2:15 Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.
- Acts 20:24-31 <sup>24</sup> "But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. <sup>25</sup> "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. <sup>26</sup> "Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. <sup>27</sup> "For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. <sup>28</sup> "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. <sup>29</sup> "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. <sup>30</sup> "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. <sup>31</sup> "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

## IV. The Fulfillment of Ministry: Determined Accomplishment

*Go All the Way – Finish the Job – Complete the Assignment – Finish the Course*

- A. Completing One's Ministry Takes Time (good intentions are not the same as actions)
- B. Completing One's Ministry Takes Diligent Effort (not half-hearted effort)
- C. Completing One's Ministry Takes Focus (doing the right things)