

Christ-Centered Relationships for Ministry Followers Galatians 4:12-20 (Part 2)

Principles for Ministry Followers:

1. **Remember your leaders are your brothers and sisters (12a)**
2. **Don't wrong them (12c)**
3. **Don't misunderstand leadership weakness (13-14)**

He had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (Is. 53:2-3)

4. **Don't succumb to the temptations from leadership weakness (14)**

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. (John 13:20)

5. **See past them to Christ (14b)**

Galatians 3:1

6. **Remember the relationship and the blessings (15)**

7. **Love them and sacrifice for them (15b)**

1 Thes. 5:12-13 We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work.

2 Corinthians 12:15 I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less?

Galatians 6:6

If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? (1 Cor. 9:11)

8. **Remember that their responsibility is not to make you comfortable or happy, but to tell you the truth (16)**

"Many men are angry with them that tell them their faults: when they should be angry only with the faults that are told them. (Venning.)"¹

At the end of your life you groan and say, "I did not listen to the voice of my teachers or incline my ear to my instructors." (Prov. 5:10, 13)

Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy. (Proverbs 27:6)

having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions (2 Tim. 4:3-5).

¹ Exell, J. S. (n.d.). *The Biblical Illustrator: Galatians* (p. 279). New York; Chicago; Toronto; London; Edinburgh: Fleming H. Revell Company.

“The example of the Galatians reminds us that the primary qualification for any Christian minister is that he must preach the Word of God. Too many churches have the wrong expectations of their ministers.... Ministers should not be judged by their ability, appearance, personality, popularity, or any of the other standards ordinarily used to judge them. Ministers should be evaluated primarily by their faithfulness to the Word of God. If they are faithful, then to welcome their message is to welcome Christ himself.”²

“Happy is that Christian society,” wrote the Scotsman John Brown, “when the minister loves his people, and the people love their minister ‘for the truth’s sake.’ ”³

1 Tim. 5:17-18 *Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer deserves his wages.”*

9. Allow them to cultivate a Christ-centered personal relationship with you (17-19)

10. Understand how much you mean to them (19-20)

“This is not some cool, professional preacher. He dares to liken his preaching and teaching of the gospel to a woman giving birth. The pain can be awful.”⁴

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Hebrews 13:17)

For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord. For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God.... For you are our glory and joy. (1 Thes. 2:20, 3:8-9)

11. Understand the goal (19)

“Something happens to people who enjoy the ministry of God’s Word. The more they learn the Bible, the more they start to look like Jesus Christ. They start to think the things he thinks, love the things he loves, do the things he does, even suffer the things he suffers.”⁵

“The church needs people who, in listening to their pastor, listen for the message of Christ, and pastors who, in labouring among the people, look for the image of Christ.”⁶

² Ryken, P. G. (2005). *Galatians*. (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.) (p. 175). Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.

³ Ryken, P. G. (2005). *Galatians*. (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.) (p. 175). Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.

⁴ D.A Carson in *Christ Has Set Us Free*, 99

⁵ Ryken, P. G. (2005). *Galatians*. (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.) (p. 176). Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.

⁶ Stott, cited in MacArthur, 120