

Seeing We Have Received This Ministry

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2 Cor. 4:1-2 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commanding ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

I. Seeing we have this ministry ...

A. We all have this ministry.

1. It is not a responsibility that God has only put on a few chosen people called preachers.
2. We all bear the responsibility to minister the message of the Gospel to others.
3. Preachers have extra responsibilities as pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and teachers, but the ministry of the Gospel is not exclusive to them.

B. All people have received mercy.

1. Those who are saved are keenly aware of it.
2. They are grateful for it and feel indebted to God and his cause because of it.

II. We faint not ...

A. We don't quit.

1. We find his grace sufficient to keep going.
2. Even when we receive persecution and hardship instead of reward.
3. Even when we can see nothing visibly accomplished by our efforts and sacrifices.
4. Even when no one else will go with us.

B. We won't quit.

1. There is too much at stake.
2. The souls of children, family, and loved ones, as well as of other men depend upon our faithfulness.
3. There are souls that no one can reach but us, and if we quit they will not be reached.

C. The reward is too great to forfeit.

1. There will be a time when our faithfulness will be rewarded.
2. There will be a time when all the covers will be taken off and we will be able to see what God was doing with our feeble efforts that we thought were accomplishing nothing.

III. But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, (v. 2)

A. All dishonesty wears a cover to hide itself.

1. It is sometimes very thin and gives the wearer a false sense of being hidden, while everyone can "see right through him."

B. Many who handle the Word of God do so with hidden things of dishonesty.

1. They are not completely honest in what they present to others as the truth of God.

- a) They are troubled in their own heart about what they are saying to the people because of the truth that they have been exposed to.
 - b) They preach doctrines of their denomination or group they have identified themselves with while knowing in their heart that these doctrines do not agree with the Word of God.
2. There are many reasons for doing this, among which are money, position, acceptance, etc.
 3. Men also are dishonest with the Word of God because their own heart is condemned by the truth, so they twist it to suit themselves.
 - a) Many preachers twist the truth to agree with their own experience while knowing that what the Bible says condemns them.
 - b) Many preachers, as well as common Christians, preach only of their experience and very little or nothing of the truth of the Bible.

IV. Not walking in craftiness ...

- A. Not dealing deceitfully.
- B. Not hiding things.
- C. Not misrepresenting things.
- D. Not using trickery and games to control others or to get from them what you want.
- E. Not repeating things that others have said or believe without a true understanding of the matter ourselves.

V. Nor handling the word of God deceitfully;

- A. Deceiving people with the Word of God.
 - B. The devil did this with Eve.
 - C. The devil tried to do this with Jesus.
 - D. So it is one of his most commonly used tricks.
 - E. To use the Word of God to deceive someone and cause them to be led astray.
 - F. This is most dangerous because they are convinced they are doing right because they have Bible verses to back it up.
 1. No one is in more danger of their soul than someone who thinks they are right while someone has deceived them with the Word of God.
- G. Therefore, we should make it an important matter of our life to find the truth and get understanding and make sure we tell others the truth about everything, but especially in the matters of God, sin, and salvation.