

THE MINISTRY & POWER 2 COR. 1:24

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Power trip, power struggle, power outage, or...?

The ministry & power - how do they relate?

I. The ministry is about power!

2 Corinthians 10:8 For though I should boast somewhat more **of our authority**, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

2 Corinthians 13:10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, **according to the power which the Lord hath given me** to edification, and not to destruction.

Every person involved in ministry comes to ministry with an internalized attitude about power. Why is this?

How do we lead? Where is our authority found?

A. Official capacity

Romans 11:13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify **mine office** (τὴν διακονίαν μου):

1 Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop (), he desireth a good work.

1 Corinthians 4:1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

B. The spoken Word

Hebrews 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, **who have spoken unto you the word of God**: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

2 Timothy 4:1-2 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

You should take charge!

If you don't somebody else will!

That somebody else won't lead well!

What about "servant leadership?"

C. Personal character / modeling

1 Timothy 3:2-3 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

1 Timothy 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Titus 1:7-8 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

D. Individual charisma / gifts (or lack thereof)

E. Public functions

2 Corinthians 10:8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

2 Corinthians 10:9-11 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters. For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible. Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present.

2 Corinthians 13:10 Therefore I write these things being absent, **lest being present I should use sharpness**, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

2 Corinthians 13:8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

G. A time-honored & time-proven product

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: **for they watch for your souls**, as they that must give account, **that they may do it with joy**, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

Hebrews 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, **considering the end (τὴν ἔκβασιν) of their conversation**.

II. The ministry is about the correct use of power

2 Corinthians 10:8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us **for edification, and not for your destruction**, I should not be ashamed:

2 Corinthians 13:10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me **to edification, and not to destruction**.

2 Corinthians 1:24 **Not** for that we have dominion over your faith, **but** are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

Colossians 1:28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

Every member should be able to ask several simple questions:

1. What is my pastor trying to accomplish in my life?
2. What does my pastor want from me & for me?
3. What will my life look like **if** I follow him?

Hebrews 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

This has caused me to ask some very hard questions of myself:

1. What am I trying to accomplish in the lives of my people?
2. Am I looking for / working toward families that are healthy, growing and abounding?
3. Do I have the best interests of my people in mind?
4. What if someone really listened to me, what would that look like?

(Other texts to consider: Mt. 20:17-28; Mk. 10:35-45; Lk. 22:24-27; Mt. 23:8-11, 1 Pet. 5:1-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; 1 Kings 12:7)

III. The ministry is about the correct use of power even when the incorrect use “ works”!

2 Corinthians 11:18-20 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise. For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

Paul was in a fight for his life. His authority was under sustained attack not by egalitarians but by totalitarians. The difficulty, then as well as now, is that this form of leadership “works!”

Paul seems to indicate that this “works” by:

A. Simple

“For every difficult, complex, hard question, there is always a simple, clear, unambiguous, wrong answer.

2 Corinthians 11:3-4 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

2 Corinthians 11:13-14 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

2 Corinthians 11:19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

People love

→ the simpler the better!

B. Multiplied & multiplying

2 Corinthians 11:20 For ye suffer, **if** a man bring you into bondage (**καταδουλοῖ**), if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

Proverbs 30:5-6 Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

Deuteronomy 4:2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Revelation 22:18-19 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Matthew 23:4-7 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

The list becomes longer, more intrusive, less Biblical & is constantly changing!

But in some strange way people

C. Impossible &/ unsustainable

2 Corinthians 11:20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, **if** a man devour you (**κατεσθίει**), **if** a man take of (**λαμβάνει**) you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

D. Hero w / personality c

2 Corinthians 11:20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, **if** a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

1 Corinthians 2:2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

2 Corinthians 4:5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.

1 Thessalonians 2:4-6 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness: Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Romans 11:36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

The very nature of hero worship requires that an individual is....

E. Personal

2 Corinthians 11:20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, **if** a man smite you on the face.

1 Timothy 3:3 Not given to wine, **no striker**, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, **not a brawler**, not covetous;

Titus 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, **no striker**, not given to filthy lucre;

2 Timothy 2:23-26 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord **must not strive**; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

This is all about controlling people - controlling people for personal goals. Methods that are clearly unbiblical, yet methods that “work.”

IV. The ministry is about keeping power out of the wrong hands!

2 Corinthians 11:1-4 Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me. For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.