

# First Things

Priorities in the Christian Life

**01.28.18 | Ministry**  
**Romans 12:1, 3-13**

**Romans 12:1, 3-13**

1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. 4 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 We have different gifts,

according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; 7 if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; 8 if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

“When I woke up this morning after watching Avatar for the first time yesterday, the world seemed grey. It was like my whole life, everything I've done and worked for, lost its meaning... It just seems so meaningless. I still don't really see any reason to keep doing things at all. I live in a dying world.”

- Some sad kid from Sweden

Ministry: Through ministry, we make the ultimate reality of God's Kingdom a reality in this world.

Ministry (*diakonia*): basic meaning is “service.”

## **Matthew 21:11-12**

“The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Ministry is carrying forth Christ’s mission in the world.

### **3 Practical Ways to Minister and Serve:**

Ministry through Listening

Ministry through Serving

Ministry through Character

Ministry is participating in Christ’s ongoing ministry as He offers Himself to others through us.

“Those who cannot listen long and patiently will always be talking past others, and finally will no longer even notice it. Those who think their time is too precious to spend listening will never really have time for God and others, but only for themselves and for their own words and plans.”

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together

“Nothing disciplines the inordinate desires of the flesh like service, and nothing transforms the desires of the flesh like serving in hiddenness.”

- Richard Foster

“My soul does not find itself unless it acts. Therefore it must act. Stagnation and inactivity bring spiritual death.”

- Thomas Merton

God, direct my thinking today so that it be empty of self-pity, dishonesty, self-will, self-seeking and fear. God, inspire my thinking, decisions and intuitions. Help me to relax and take it easy. Free me from doubt and indecision. Guide me through this day and show me my next step. God, give me what I need to take care of any problems. I ask all these things that I may be of maximum service to you and my fellow man. Amen.