

Last week – **OFFICE vs. OPPORTUNITY** | Elder – Deacon | **Minister = Participation in God's Plan**

- **When God wants something done...Most often He sends PEOPLE** – Joke (Fleece – Fire – Feline)
    - We are people on mission...mission has risks | **Last Stand Fox Company** | Mission has winner
- Are you willing to participate in God's plan: Bring people into - Develop people for Kingdom of Christ?  
**Endeavor that has determined outcome** | **BI: Minister Through the Trouble with the Triumph in View**

**REVIEW: As Gospel Ministers: (SCREEN) REJOICE – RETELL – RECOGNIZE** | **Value of being a minister**  
**Running Start** - <sup>24</sup>Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. <sup>28</sup>Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. **2** For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

**As we Minister Through the Trouble with the Triumph in View...**

**4. As Gospel Ministers We: Rest When the Work is Finished (28-29)** | How does Paul commit work?

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. *For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.*

**Tornado Country – Toil & Struggle – Why? Provide & Protect | Lives are at stake...Provide & Protect**  
Paul is committed to the work of salvation! (exp.) **Need something done...ask busiest person know**  
**Three Questions: What is the Work? – When is the Work Accomplished? - How is the Work Done?**

**a. What is the work - Win and Influence People for the Kingdom of Christ**

- Win = 'Him We Proclaim' | We better at proclaiming: Cultural Frustrations – Church Preferences
  - What – Why – How me – How you
    - What = Sinners need saved | Eph. 2:8-9 | 5 Words – 4 Words – 3 Words – 1 Word
    - Why = Because God Loves you | 1 John 4:10 'In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins.'
    - How me = Testimony | I was – Then God – Now! | Acts 22:6-21
    - How you = Accept – Believe – Confess | Bible: Romans Road – Bridge Illust. – Story Tract

Be able to get to Gospel...anywhere...any time | What do you know about the Bible? | **Win...influence**

- Influence = 'Warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom'
  - 'Warning' = Admonishment...counsel to a friend...avoid danger | **Pothole** | **Love not Lord**
  - 'Teaching' = Orderly Instruction | **Ignorance isn't bliss** | Go make converts? Disciples = Learners
  - 'Wisdom' = For real life | **Called to Christian Practitioners** | Not learn to learn - Learn to Live!

**b. When is the work Accomplished – People grow up and reproduce**

Paul = Spiritual Father...He doesn't want them dependent on him...but dependent on Christ

- **Discipleship Process is like that of parenting...Proclaim – Warn – Teach – Wisdom...real life**  
**As ministry multipliers we develop people who can/will multiply ministry | Not programs...people**

**c. How is the work done – The power of Christ in us**

*For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.*

We work...Christ provides – Wonderful news...**We know the work of ministry is Joyfully Terrible**

**The work is weary and sorrowful...my power is weak and limited His power is perfect and plentiful!**

**Most pastors won't tell you – You're gonna want to quit...you don't get to quit!**

**His gifts – His opportunities – His strength**

**You're not on your mission...you're on God's mission...He says when we're done**

People will: Hurt you – Leave – Betray you – Ignore your counsel...blame you for their bad decisions

**Do what's right... trust God with the rest** | God's mercy – He will work through you!

The wins are worth the toil and struggling

**As Gospel Ministers We: Rest when the work is finished...when is it finished?**

We go to heaven or Heaven comes down | Only two points today...that was the most meat

**5. As Gospel Ministers We: Root Ourselves in Christ Alone (1-3)**

For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Desire for church...never met – *prison...why bring up the struggle...maturity* | **2 Goals and a Result**

- **Goal #1 - Encouraged in Heart** | 'That their hearts may be encouraged'
  - Modern context 'Heart' = Seat of Emotions | **Warm Heart – Broken Heart – Heart Overflows**
  - Biblical Context 'Heart' = Seat of Emotions – Mind - Will – Decisions – Conscience
    - Not simply saying, "I want your emotions to be uplifted"
    - He is saying, "I want you strengthened so deeply it affects every aspect of who you are."

**We are encouraged by the faithful struggle of others for Christ – One day it may only take one...TIME**

Rev. 6:9-11 'Cry Martyrs' – Special reward...give all...Paul was one...encouraged the hearts of others

- **Goal #2 – Knit Together in Love** | 'Being knit together in love' | **Knit = Welded**
  - **Paul wants welded together...by what? Love** | **Not how well you're loved...how well you love**
    - Selfless vs. selfish | Others-centered vs. self-centered | Unity vs. Division
    - Peacemakers vs. Troublemakers | Forgiving freely instead of harboring resentment
- **Result - The Riches of Christ**  
to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.  
**Read it...see the worth in it...it's the reason we've been ministered to...it's the reason we minister**
- In Christ we find all we need to understand reality and to live a life pleasing to God.
  - Anyone who knows Christ can go to Him to obtain Truth and how to practically live it out
- We have assurance that our convictions about Christ are only source of knowledge and wisdom
  - Then we can combat opposition and false ideologies when they come
  - United together in love, more welded, harder it is for error and false teaching to also creep in  
**Paul wanted the Colossians to stay firm and be fortified → Again our desire should be the same**

**We are Gospel Ministers – Opportunity** – When God wants something done...He sends people  
**Minister Through the Trouble with the Triumph in View**