

The Calling of a Gospel Minister

Dr. Ian Hamilton | taken from banneroftruth.org

What should a church be looking for when it seeks a pastor? This is a question that should deeply exercise not only elders but every church member. What qualities should a search committee have uppermost in their minds as they look to God to provide them with a man after his own heart? Perhaps before you read any further you might want to pause and write down the list of qualities you think should mark a gospel minister.

In 1 Corinthians 4:1, Paul uses two words that, he says, define him as a preaching apostle of Jesus Christ. Paul had a unique redemptive-historical calling as one of Christ's apostles. But what he writes here about himself and Apollos, can legitimately be applied to men called and set apart by God to be ministers of his Word.

First, Paul describes himself as a *servant of Christ*. Paul's usual word for servant is *diakonos*, from which we get our word 'deacon'. It meant originally a 'table waiter', someone who served tables. But here Paul uses a word he uses nowhere else (*hyperetes*). This word described a rower on a slave galley. Indeed, it described someone who rowed in the lowest deck of the galley, the lowest of the low. 'This is how one should regard us', he says to the church in Corinth, as 'under-rowers of Christ'. Paul did not have an inflated sense of his own importance. He did not want anyone to put him on a pedestal (as some in Corinth were doing). Yes, he was Christ's under-rower, answerable ultimately alone to him. But nonetheless he was an under-rower in the service of his Saviour. What a minister thinks of himself is vital. Paul does not begin with what he is called to do, but with what he is called to be. When a church is looking for a pastor, look carefully. Look at how a man 'comports' himself. Ask yourself, 'Does he have airs and graces, does he think he is 'someone'? Or, does he have the attitude of an under-rower of Christ?

Second, Paul describes himself as a '*steward of the mysteries of God*'. The steward (*oikonomos*) of an estate was responsible for the oversight and care of the estate. He was answerable to the estate's master for his stewardship. Like every gospel minister Paul had been given a stewardship; he was to care for and oversee 'the mysteries of God'. The steward had an entrusted charge. He was responsible for carrying out the wishes of his master. So with the gospel minister. Paul was never at liberty to share his own thoughts and notions. He had an entrusted commission to make known carefully and faithfully 'the mysteries of God'. The 'mysteries of God' are not enigmas that only the especially spiritual can understand. They are truths that we could never fathom but which God has revealed. A gospel minister is charged with faithfully and carefully proclaiming the truths that God has revealed, the truths that supremely illuminate the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is why in verse 2 Paul writes, 'it is required of stewards that they be found faithful' - not imaginative, entertaining, funny, relevant, but 'faithful'.

If a church has any wisdom at all, it will ensure at the very least that the man it calls to 'preach the word' is a man who will do just that. He will not parade his own learning, thoughts, insights or whatever. He will declare 'the whole counsel of God' (*Acts 20:27*). It may be good to have a man with his finger on the pulsebeat of the times. It may be good to have a man who understands the technology of the age. It may be good to have a man with a Ph.D. in Hebrew, Greek, or some locus of theology. It may be good to have a man who has imagination. But it is imperative to have a man who knows he is an under-rower in the service of the Saviour and who is a faithful steward of gospel truth.

It is undeniable that a church rises or falls depending on the character and preaching of its minister. This is deeply sobering, for minister and congregation. May it be the unshakable resolve of every congregation of our Lord Jesus to call a man who will mirror the humility and faithfulness of the Saviour.

Announcements

- Prayer Meeting this Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. at the church.
- Evangelism in Woodruff, SC on May 29, 2021 (10AM -2PM)

Vision

Our vision is to see the historic Antioch Presbyterian Church revitalized as a worshipping community to be a blessing to every man, woman, and child in the growing residential hub west of Woodruff and south of Reidville, to the glory of God.

Mission

Our mission as a parish church at the crossroads of Greenville and Spartanburg Counties is the gathering and perfecting of God's people through biblical worship, evangelism, and pastoral care.

Areas of Ministry Focus

Expository Preaching

Biblical Worship

Parish Evangelism

Pastoral Care

Discipleship

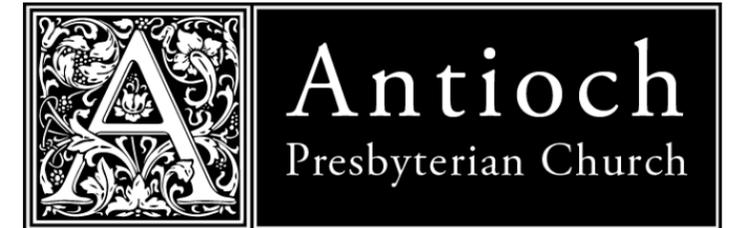
Leadership & Accountability

As a *mission work*, Antioch Presbyterian Church (PCA) is governed and overseen by a *provisional session* of elders serving as a *commission* of Calvary Presbytery. The six men appointed to the *provisional session* are active elders within the bounds of Calvary Presbytery, and they have graciously agreed to serve "above-and-beyond" to encourage the revitalization of Antioch. They include:

Dr. Chipley Bennett, Ph.D. - Ruling Elder, Providence Presbyterian Church
Dr. E. Todd Buchner, D.Min. - Pastor, Reidville Presbyterian Church
Mr. W. Tosh Groce - Ruling Elder, Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church
Mr. Richard Hollifield - Ruling Elder, Roebuck Presbyterian Church
Mr. William Johnson - Ruling Elder, Woodruff Road Presbyterian Church
Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., Ph.D., D.D. - Professor of Systematic & Applied Theology, President Emeritus, Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary;
Organizing Pastor & Moderator of Session, Antioch Presbyterian Church
Pastor Richard Thomas - Senior Pastor, Mount Calvary Presbyterian Church;
Clerk of Session, Antioch Presbyterian Church

Church Staff

Mr. Zachary Groff - Ministerial Assistant
Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr. - Organizing Pastor & Moderator of Session
Mr. Johann Xie - Ministerial Intern



The Lord's Day

May 16, 2021

"The Peculiar Work and
Care of the Minister"

1 Timothy 5:17-21

Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr.

Worship - Sunday, 5:00 p.m.

Prayer Meeting - Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.

3600 SC-417 | Woodruff, SC 29388

864.519.3604 | info@antiochpca.com | antiochpca.com

The Lord's Day

May 16, 2021

Silent Meditation

Psalm 22:22

I will tell of Your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise You.

*Call to Worship

*Congregational Commitment

Minister: Congregation, in whom is your confidence?

Congregation: Our help is in the Name of the Lord, Who made the heavens and the earth.

*Salutation

*Hymn of Adoration

No. 148B

Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah
PRAISE JEHOVAH

*Prayer of Adoration & Invocation

*Revelation of God's Will

Deuteronomy 5:1-21

*Confession of Sin & Supplication for Grace

O Lord, no day of our life has passed that has not proved us guilty in Thy sight. Prayers have been uttered from a prayerless heart. Praise has been often praiseless sound. Our best services are filthy rags. Blessed Jesus, let us find a refuge in Thy appeasing wounds. Though our sins rise to heaven Thy merits soar above them. Though unrighteousness weighs us down to hell, Thy righteousness exalts us to Thy throne. All things in us call for our rejection, all things in Thee plead our acceptance. We appeal from the throne of perfect justice to Thy throne of boundless grace. Grant us to hear Thy assuring voice: that by Thy stripes we are healed, that Thou wast bruised for our iniquities, that Thou hast been made sin for us that we might be righteous in Thee, and that our grievous sins, our manifold sins, are all forgiven, buried in the ocean of Thy concealing blood. Keep us always clinging to Thy cross. Flood us every moment with descending grace. In Thy merciful Name we pray, Amen.

*Assurance of Pardon

1 Peter 1:18, 19

¹⁸ You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

Offering

No. 107A

O Thank the LORD, for He is Good
(stanzas 4, 5)
GOSHEN

*Prayer of Thanksgiving & Supplication

Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Hymn of Preparation

No. 68B

O LORD, Thou Has Ascended
MISSIONARY HYMN

*Prayer for Illumination

*Old Testament Reading

Numbers 18:21-32

*New Testament Reading

1 Timothy 5:17-25

*Congregational Response

Leader: Man shall not live on bread alone,

Congregation: But on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God!

Sermon

“The Peculiar Work and Care of the Minister”
1 Timothy 5:17-21

Prayer of Application

*Hymn of Response

No. 546

God of the Prophets!
TOULON

*Benediction

*Doxology

No. 234

The God of Abraham Praise
(stanza 6)
LEONI

*The whole triumphant host gives thanks to God on high;
“Hail, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!” they ever cry.
Hail, Abraham's God and mine! I join the heav'nly lays;
All might and majesty are thine, and endless praise.*

*Silent Prayer

**Congregation standing, unless physically hindered*

“The Peculiar Work and Care of the Minister”

1 Timothy 5:17-21

Main Proposition

God provides materially and spiritually for the minister.

Outline

I. The Material Maintenance of the Minister (vv. 17, 18)

II. The Personal Protection of the Minister (vv. 19-21)