

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

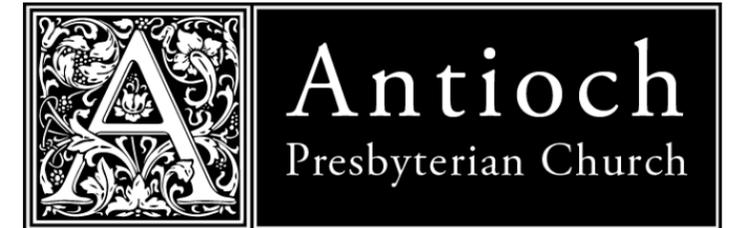
Leadership & Accountability

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 23, 2021

"Some Ministerial Directions"

1 Timothy 5:22-25

Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr.

Worship - Sunday, 5:00 p.m.

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

3600 SC-417 | Woodruff, SC 29388

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The Lord's Day

May 23, 2021

Silent Meditation

Ezekiel 34:23, 24

²³Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. ²⁴And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken.

*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. 210
O God, We Praise Thee
DUNDEE

*Prayer of Adoration & Invocation

*Revelation of God's Will

Matthew 22:34-40

*Confession of Sin & Supplication for Grace

Almighty God, we are sinners. Your Word and our hearts confirm that to us. We have done things You have forbidden and left undone things You have commanded. We have not loved You with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength. We have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. As Judge of the whole earth, You would be just to condemn us. Yet in Your love You sent Christ to bear the guilt of our sin and to suffer our punishment. To Him now we flee; forgive us for His sake, and by Your Spirit help us to live in the light of His sacrifice, a life worthy of Your Name. Judge us not according to our works, but according to Your mercy in Jesus Christ. For in Him we hope and in Him we come before You this day. Amen.

*Assurance of Pardon

1 John 1:8, 9

⁸If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Offering

No. 107A
O Thank the LORD, for He is Good
(stanzas 6, 7)
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. 19A
The Heavens Above Declare
(stanzas 5-9)
ARTHUR'S SEAT

*Prayer for Illumination

*Old Testament Reading

Jeremiah 23:9-22

*New Testament Reading

Revelation 14:1-13

*Congregational Response

Leader: Man shall not live on bread alone,

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

Sermon

“Some Ministerial Directions”
1 Timothy 5:22-25

Prayer of Application

*Hymn of Response

No. 547
O Shine upon These, Lord
DENBY

*Benediction

*Doxology

No. 568
Doxology
GENEVAN 134 (OLD HUNDREDTH)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

*Silent Prayer

*Congregation standing, unless physically hindered

“Some Ministerial Directions”

1 Timothy 5:22-25

Main Proposition

God gives practical advice for the selection and ordination of ministers.

Outline

- I. The Need for Caution (v. 22a)
- II. The Need for Balance (vv. 22b, 23)
- III. The Need for Confidence (vv. 24, 25)