

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Who is the minister in your church?

(Jerry Fite)

A minister is one who serves others. The Greek word “*diakoneo*” denotes the action of serving others without telling us the nature of that service. As we have just noticed, the evangelist in preaching the Gospel is ministering. But is the preacher the only minister in your church?

We might say, “No, for we are blessed with men who serve the local church as ‘deacons’”. So the Apostles could devote their time to “*the ministry of the word*”, they provided for some men to be selected to “*serve tables*” (Acts 6:2-6). They were to make sure the widows in the local church at Jerusalem were served their daily portion of food. The apostles were ministers-preaching, but also were Stephen and six other men-waiting tables. In the local church, qualified men are authorized by the Lord to serve the members, making sure physical needs are met (cf. *1 Timothy 3:8-12*). Scripturally, you could count the preacher and then add the number of deacons in the local church to answer the question. Are these all you have?

No, for all members of the church are ministers, or should be. This is God’s design for His church. The Lord appointed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers “*for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ*” (Ephesians 4:12). The apostles, evangelists and others engaged in teaching were to equip Christians so they could minister in building up or strengthening the church. Each of the members are involved in ministering as “*the working of each several part*” in building up the church in love (Ephesians 4:16).

Each Christian ministers to the Lord by ministering to the needs of fellow members (cf. *Matthew 25:40, 44*). Members who give money to help the physical needs of fellow Christians are “*ministering*” to the saints (2 *Corinthians 9:1, 12*). Following the example of Jesus, we are the greatest when we are serving others (*Mk. 10:44-45*). Humbling ourselves to meet the needs of others is what ministers do. You are a minister, aren’t you?

How would you answer this question? Some, focusing upon the end of the question, would kindly inform the questioner that it is the Lord’s church. Jesus said, “*I will build my church.*” It is the Lord’s church, not mine (*Matthew 16:18, cf. Romans 16:16*)! Others, focusing upon the main thrust of the question, would probably give the name of the preacher who regularly stands before them preaching the Word.

Is the preacher of the Gospel considered a “*minister*” in the New Testament? Timothy certainly was. Paul “*sent Timothy, our brother and God’s minister in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith*” (1 *Thessalonians 3:2*). As an “*evangelist*”, he was to “*fulfill his ministry*” (2 *Timothy 4:5*). Epaphras, in teaching the Colossians the truth of the gospel, was a “*faithful minister of Christ*” (*Colossians 1:5, 7*). As an apostle, Paul was involved in the “*ministry of reconciliation*” as he preached “*the word of reconciliation*” (2 *Corinthians 5:18-19*).