

A Faithful Minister

Faithful ministers feel the sacred obligation of their sacred office, to preach the gospel boldly. They are appointed stewards of the mysteries of God, and it is always required of stewards that a man be found faithful. But how can they be faithful stewards of the mysteries of God, unless they plainly and boldly unfold and make known these mysteries?

They are ambassadors of Christ, and are bound to be faithful to him who appointed them. But how can they faithfully discharge this solemn and important trust, unless they boldly preach Jesus Christ and him crucified, and all the doctrines and duties which he has commanded them to preach?

Paul felt his obligation as an ambassador, and desired Christians to pray for him, that he might be a bold and faithful one. "Pray for me, that utterance may be given me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel: for which I am an *ambassador* in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly as I *ought* to speak."

He felt that he could not be a faithful ambassador of Christ, unless he boldly and plainly made known the mystery of the gospel, and explained and inculcated those important truths, which had been so beneficial to himself and to others. Accordingly, he often appealed to those who had heard him preach, whether he had not given evidence of his fidelity, by preaching the gospel plainly and boldly.

He says to the Galatians, "If any man preach any other gospel unto you, then that ye received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? for if I yet please men, I should not be the servant of Christ." He says to the Corinthians, "Therefore seeing we have this *ministry*, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty; not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by *manifestation of the truth*, commending ourselves to every man's *conscience* in the sight of God."

And in his farewell address to the elders of Ephesus, he says, "And now, behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure for the blood of all men. For I have not shunned and declare unto *all* the council of God." He knew, and believed that others knew, that he had been a faithful ambassador of Christ, because he had preached the gospel boldly, and as he felt he ought to preach it. All faithful ministers feel the same obligation, as ambassadors of Christ, to preach the gospel boldly.

And though they sometimes wish to excuse themselves from preaching some disagreeable and unpopular doctrines; yet they can find no excuse that will bear examination, but after all, feel that they *ought* to open their mouths boldly, in explaining, proving and inculcating the first principles and self-denying duties of the gospel. But to feel their obligation to this duty is one thing, and to fulfill it is another...

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