

## THE MINISTRY

**“Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.**

**See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.” (Jeremiah 1:9-10)**

*(Also see the parable of the sower: Mark 4:3-8)*

A biblical ministry begins with the word of God rooting out sin (v.1) and then, by planting the seed in prepared ground, the work is followed by fruit (v.10). There is nothing that comes close to the joy of teaching and preaching the word of God. God's word does root out, pull down, destroy, throw down, build, and plant.

The six-fold progressive polysyndeton of Jeremiah 1:9-10 reveals God's decisive work in producing a fruitful ministry.

1. Root out and ungodliness (tares among the wheat).
2. Pull down so that carnality cannot find a place.
3. Destroy: remove all the past influence and effect of sin (*a little* leaven affects the whole).
4. Throw down all pieces and parts—complete destruction of useless past.
5. Build or prepare the ground for God's word.
6. Plant the seed of God's word for a fruitful harvest.

Every Christian worker who has been in the ministry of the word for a few years will experience it. You may not see immediate results, but the fruit will come; there is no doubt. Not thinking about the biggest church in the city, this is about spiritual fruit that comes by teaching the word of God without fear or favor. There is a period of time in which the sower of the seed must get educated--no, not necessarily in college or seminary but in the school of hard knocks.

Sometimes it comes through "Whaler University" with Jonah or under a juniper tree with Elijah and perhaps, even a time with Simon Peter, warming and denying around the world's fire but hearing a later threefold: "Lovest thou me?" Every child of God must be prepared in order to find his/her place in God's will. It does not happen fast, and it is not easy.

You will think that your very soul is being ripped apart and that all is hopeless. The maxim is true: the darkest hour is just before dawn. Anybody can quit and many do. Some make shipwreck before reaching the shore. To the dedicated band that works out what is already been worked in, a fruitful ministry will come—in God's own way and time.

In pastoring one church for seventeen years, you see babies grow to teens, marriages, college graduates, couples with children of their own. Buried, married, laughed, and wept over those years but on one thing striving to do your best and stick to the job of teaching the KJB and rightly dividing it.

Tried to "live it" day by day but *no man ever does what he could do*, and no exception is claimed. The good fruit does come in. Teens, thought not to be giving attention, got the word and the word of God got them.

God uses His word to call the most un-expected folks for service and to the mission fields or pastorates. Teachers and preachers and musicians and doctors and nurses and officers of the law and attorneys, and technicians--a great number of them all. But the best thing is that the vast majority are still active in churches or fulltime service and know the difference between the Bible they can trust and others. Every now and then one will show an old drawing they copied from previous lessons and express thanks for teaching them the word of God.—Dave Reese March 2021