

Most important thing



Most of us in ministry are tempted to be controlled by the urgent, rather than what is important. For example, in preparing talks it is so easy to first draw upon the internet for illustrations and impressive quotes or refer to our favourite books and commentaries. There sometimes is a place for this but it is far more important to hear what God is saying first as we wait upon Him in prayer.

The same goes with different fads which churches and organisations pick up from different conferences leaders attend. What worked well in one church or organisation is not necessarily the way God wants to work in our situation. Initially, I use to attend many of these conferences, but as time went on I attend far fewer.

What do you think is the most important thing in ministry? Prayer, sharing one's faith, Bible study, doing good deeds etc? The Apostle Paul gives us his answer.

Bible Perspective

"For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that **Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures, that he was **buried**, that he was **raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures," 1 Cor 15:3,4. Paul is not of course stating that the other matters are unimportant, but this is the crux of the gospel.

Observations

Repentance of sins.

1. The shedding of tears is not necessarily a sign of repentance, but simply remorse.
2. Repentance is often 'a process' rather than an act occurring at 'one point of time'.
3. True repentance enables the empowerment of the Holy Spirit for change.
4. If you consider repentance to be important when did you last experience it yourself?
5. Many churches are full of people who have a Christian belief, but have not turned away from sin 'having a form of godliness but denying its power' 2 Tim 3:5.. The impact is frightening with the church becoming ineffective in impacting society. Popular messages can have poor Biblical content.
6. Walking towards the 'light' (Jesus) means that we walk away from darkness (sin). 1 John 1:5. The more stubborn we are the less we experience Jesus. Learn to hate sin.
7. In Matthew 3:8 John the Baptist challenges "produce fruit in keeping with repentance".
8. We do an injustice to God's people and His name when leaders caught in serious sins are quickly reinstated back into ministry. Through God's abundant grace and through an accountability relationship the fruits of repentance will become obvious in time if repentance is genuine.
9. I have also found that sometimes when people want a fallen leader to be immediately reinstated it's because they have been guilty of similar hidden sins.
10. Fasting as a sign of repentance was an Old Testament experience and is still applicable today.

Suggested Prayer: "See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:24.

Buried

1. He remembers our sins no more. Psalm 75:12 Don't listen to the accuser that brings condemnation rather than conviction. The former is a general sense of failure. The latter is clear cut. We know what we have done wrong.
2. 'We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life' Romans 6:4

Raised from the dead

1. "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness" 1 Peter 2:24 Life changes.
2. The kingdom of God is not of words, but of power. 1 Corinthians 4:20.
3. We have the task of taking this good news to the whole world. Matthew 28: 18-20.

Resources

Download this inspirational video 'I can only imagine' in portraying the power of God at work in changing lives. This Christian song became the most widely sung in recent history.

'Why Revival Tarries' by Leonard Ravenhill.