



Overseas Ministries Training Course

Ministerial Ethics

John E. Klemin



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Foreword

It is my good pleasure to recommend *Ministerial Ethics*. The Reverend John Klemin shares with us from an exhaustive background of forty-five years in Pentecostal ministry. He has spent more than twenty of these years in pastoral ministry in addition to his time as a Bible college instructor and seven years as president of Conqueror's Bible College. He and Sister Ruby Keys Klemin have had a varied and rewarding ministry for all of these many years. Following their marriage, they evangelized, conducted camps, pastored, and were missionaries in Argentina, South America. They taught in Bible schools, served as Associates In Missions volunteers, and are presently in their second term of service as missionaries to the United Kingdom with special portfolio for Emmanuel Bible College and New Life Bible Church, Liverpool, England.

The author hopes that the student of *Ministerial Ethics* will recognize the truths based on the Word of God. The author has not only taught these truths, but has practiced them throughout his Christian life. John and Ruby Klemin have influenced many hundreds of people through the years as they have lectured regarding various doctrinal subjects from the Bible. The exposure they have given from the pages of Scripture has enriched the lives and ministries of multitudes. Brother and Sister Klemin have influenced multiplied scores of pastors, evangelists, and missionaries. Please read and study this book prayerfully and carefully and allow the Lord to enrich you as you prepare to put into practice *Ministerial Ethics*.

Robert K. Rodenbush
Foreign Missions Division, UPCI

Chapter 1

Seven Divine Principles

It would be impossible to write a set of rules or ethical guidelines for ministers that would apply in every country, culture, and situation. Nevertheless, the Word of God contains divine principles for all Christians, whether ministers or laity, that if followed would certainly take care of many problems and relationships throughout this world. Let us consider seven basic principles that should always govern ministerial relationships.

1. The Principle of Submission – Ephesians 5:21; Hebrews 13:17

To have authority means to be under authority. No one has the right to expect submission from others until he or she submits to those over him or her. If a person desires the right to exercise control over others, that person must be under the control of someone.

2. The Principle of Discerning the Lord's Body – I Corinthians 11:29

Ministers often do not think in terms of the whole body of Christ (the church), but of their own little segment. They like to pretend that their particular local assembly is the whole thing. They build their “own kingdom” at the expense of other parts of the body. (See Ephesians 4:11-12.) Unless they properly discern the body, they can devour and destroy each other. A good example of this is Diotrephes in III John 9, who wanted preeminence in the church.

3. The Principle of the Servant – Mark 10:35-45; Luke 22:24-26

Hardly a group or individual is in the world that has not experienced the danger of being destroyed through the miserable ambition of self-seeking. Jesus warned against self-centered desire. A person lives the principle of the servant in giving oneself in selfless service to others, not in reducing other people to one's own service.

In Matthew 20, the disciples fussed over who would wear the crowns in the Lord's kingdom. Yet in John 13, no one stood in line to take up the towel to wash the feet of the others. Jesus Himself laid aside His garments, took a towel, and girded Himself. This is the spirit of Christ that every minister needs to embody. It is the only way to obtain true status, for Paul taught, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:3-5).

In Matthew 20, Jesus impressed upon the disciples the difference between being a leader in His service and ruling an earthly kingdom. Those possessing hereditary rank often rule earthly realms. They rule because of their birthright. The Lord's kingdom, however, is different. In His dominion, a person becomes great and a ruler by first being a servant. Jesus then added the memorable words, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).

Jesus would woo us away from self-indulgence and self-worship so that we might acknowledge ourselves wholly His, gratefully giving ourselves to His service. The first of the twelve to drink the cup of suffering was one of the inner three, James (Acts 12:1-2). He wanted a crown, but Christ gave him a cup. He desired power but became a slave of Jesus Christ. He yearned to rule but became a martyr.