

CHRISTIAN MINISTER'S MANUAL

UPDATED *and* EXPANDED
DUOTONE EDITION

BY GUTHRIE VEECH



This essential tool for ministers features
Scripture readings, sermons, outlines, and practical tips for

- Worship services
- Weddings
- Funerals
- Ordinations
- Communion meditations
- Baptisms
- Dedications
- Hospital visitation
- Evangelism
- . . . and much more!



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silver-edged pages

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PREFACE

For seventy-five years Standard Publishing has published the *Christian Minister's Manual*. It is not the work of one person. It is the work of many ministers. They carefully manage the need for professionalism and the personal contact that changes lives. Since 2006, ministers around the world have sent positive reviews and suggestions for the manual. Recently several hundred Christian leaders were asked to respond to an e-mail survey seeking their advice on making further improvements. It is my desire that this revision with its new features will inspire your creativity and help you with special ministry opportunities.

What is new in this manual?

- How to Use the *Christian Minister's Manual*
- Biblical Exposition Adds Strength to Ministry
- Story Adds Life to Ministry
- The Importance of Evangelism in Ministry
- new ideas for evangelism
- new worship tools
- new Scriptures and prayers for special occasions
- new funeral outlines, ideas for weddings, and Communion meditations
- Using Technology in the Church

You will still appreciate some of the special features of the manual that were added in the 2006 edition. There is a section for baby dedications, which have become very popular. There is also a section on leading seekers to a saving knowledge of Christ. And most churches need ideas in worship reflecting the changing dynamics of modern and blended music. The CD that accompanies this edition allows ministers to personalize ministry tools. With all of the information provided here, this manual is the most affordable tool of its kind in the market.

The ministries of Bill Gaslin, Dr. Robert Wilson, Olin Hay, Leon Appel, John Hasty, Jerry Paul, and Bob Russell are special inspirations. Their words echo throughout this book. My special relationship with Christian college presidents has challenged my life of faith to a deeper level, and I hope that is also reflected in this book.

I am deeply indebted to the churches I have served through the years. They have provided the framework for this project. I am also indebted to everyone associated with Saint Louis Christian College who focuses on excellence in the Word and ministry in the local church. They allow me the honor of serving as their president. Several advanced students at the college did research and wrote Communion meditations for this book. They are Robert Ayres, Anthony Barbee, Chris Daniels, Daniel Pabarcus, Chase Rothman, Patrick Shirley, Brittney Tepovich, Kevin Vickers-Pruett, Skylar White, and Ronnie Wilson. I also want to thank two very special administrative assistants, Deb Pabarcus and Norma Baker. They keep me focused on accomplishing the Lord's work. Terry Golightly from Kentucky Christian University worded many of the prayers in this edition that express her love for God and compassion for people. And Barbara Veech has always encouraged me to appreciate every day the joy of being a minister.

May this resource be an indispensable tool that will sharpen your skills as you minister to others with the Word of life. Never give up!

—Dr. Guthrie Veech

HOW TO USE THE *CHRISTIAN MINISTER'S MANUAL*

In the life of a minister, few days are exactly the same. One day the minister writes a sermon. The next day begins with a funeral and ends with an evangelistic presentation of the gospel. On Friday night there is a wedding rehearsal and on Saturday there is a wedding. In between all these events there are meetings, teaching and preaching, staff encounters, counseling, administration, and study. It is no wonder it is so easy to forget your personal relationship with God and family.

The *Christian Minister's Manual* tries to help you make the task of ministry doable. Ministry takes education, experience, wisdom from God, and a ton of grace from demanding church members. This manual acts as a tool, a handbook, a resource for dealing with the demanding situations a minister faces every day.

"I never go anywhere without the manual." "This little book is a great tool for any minister." "All I have to say is, this manual is one of my teachers. I can run to it for almost anything." "This manual is a perfect resource for any minister looking for answers in the tough situations." All of these statements were made by people in various stages of their ministry—some young, some much more experienced. The *Christian Minister's Manual* is not just for beginning ministers—it can help you from the first days of ministry to the end of your years of service.

Ministers are called people. They are called by God to impact the lives of people through his Word. Regularly ministers need to be reminded of that call. This manual explains that call and how the minister fits into God's purpose.

This book also lays out what you should aim to achieve from day one in the church you serve. A step-by-step guide offers the hardworking minister a path to accomplish what God desires in the church. Most ministers move to several churches during their careers. The section on "Christian Ministry" provides you with a chance to start off (or start again) making the right decisions in ministry. This section discusses staff

relationships, where to turn for help, and time management. It also gives advice to help you achieve faithfulness in the family as well as the pulpit. What minister doesn't need that? By reading and re-reading this section you will discover practical helps you need for effectiveness.

After the first days of ministry, the busy minister must move forward. You desire the church to grow. You desire to talk to people about Christ. How do you make those contacts? The manual encourages those in ministry to build relationships with the unchurched. It provides several model presentations of the gospel. If a minister learns and presents just one of these, men and women can come to know Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Nearly every minister has the privilege to meet with those who are sick and grieving. So many need comfort. What do you say? Sickness and death do not happen according to your schedule. You must move into action quickly. The manual helps you accomplish that with suggested Scriptures, funeral services, and prayers.

Weddings have become much more complex in recent years. For ministers, an upcoming wedding often involves interactions with the couple long before and after the actual service. What do you say in premarital counseling when you don't have a counseling degree? The manual has suggestions for this opportunity to impact two lives. Many desire the old traditions of the past and new models are surfacing on a regular basis. The manual explains the significance of many of these practices, both new and old. Various wedding services are presented as well.

Ministers face issues regarding worship, technology, and everything from baby dedications to ordinations and baptisms. The manual provides practical suggestions for all of these occasions and circumstances.

All of the content of the manual is included in the accompanying CD, allowing you to search electronically for the answers you need when you need them. The CD also provides you with customizable templates for all of the forms, sermon outlines, and programs presented in this book, along with more ministry resources, such as orders of worship and certificates. Be sure to explore this valuable tool.

Are there issues not covered in this manual? I am sure there are, but most of the routine tasks that the minister faces from day to day are carefully discussed. It is our hope that this manual will assist you in your God-given task of ministry. It is a tool designed specifically to help you grow, learn, and enjoy the life of the minister.

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY



THE FOCUS OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Christian ministry is all about leadership. Not just leadership in general—it is about spiritual leadership. Perhaps more than anything else, churches desire a leader who focuses on the spiritual. Regularly ask these questions: Am I growing spiritually? Am I helping Christ's church grow spiritually? You can do all kinds of ministry, but if spiritual growth is not at the heart of that ministry, very little will be accomplished for God. Churches desire that their ministers be spiritual leaders, but spirituality is the easiest area to squeeze out of a busy schedule.

Here are some ideas to help you grow spiritually as a leader in the church.

1. Focus your ministry, first and foremost, on Christ. Ephesians 4:15 presents a focal point for spiritual leadership: "Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ." Spend some reflective time daily praying and determining what Christ has done in your life and in the life of your church.
2. Focus your ministry on love. The heart of ministry is loving God and loving people. In 1 Thessalonians 3:12, Paul gives the challenge and prayer to love people: "May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you." My home church had a theme that has stuck with me through the years: "If there is someone in need, we are brothers indeed." Because you love people, find those needs and meet them.
3. Focus your ministry on the Word of God. Strong churches are churches that are built on God's Word. First Peter 2:2, 3 challenges the church, "Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good." The writer of Hebrews affirms that some need more than mere milk, that those who are more mature need "solid food" (Hebrews 5:14). Make a serious commitment and

allot time to feed your church members both the milk and the solid food that they need. And don't let it get stale!

4. Focus your ministry on your own growth. Ministers who stop growing are ministers who do not remain relevant in reaching people. Second Peter 1:5-8 insists that you “make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Growth develops character, and godly character attracts people to Christ.
5. Focus your ministry on grace and knowledge. The church is a place where grace happens. According to 2 Peter 3:18, that grace does not exist in a vacuum but is based on the knowledge of God's Word. “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.” People desire grace. The Christian leader can show that grace better than anybody else.
6. Focus your ministry on faithfulness. Ministry is a marathon, not a sprint. Second Corinthians 9:10 speaks of the way God multiplies our faithfulness to him. “Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.”
7. Focus your ministry on lost people in your community and around the world. Ministers are Great Commission people. Matthew 28:18-20 states Jesus' vision for the church: “Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’” Making disciples counts enormously in God's economy.

8. Focus your ministry on prayer. The New Testament has much to say about the role of prayer in the church. First, the church is to be known for prayer. “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful” (Colossians 4:2). The whole church, everyone who is a part of it, is to be involved in prayer. “I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing” (1 Timothy 2:8). The prayer is to be world focused. “I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people” (1 Timothy 2:1). As a leader in Christ’s church, do not neglect this all-important ministry of prayer. Excel in it, and lead others to be involved as well.

MINISTRY LEADERSHIP

Someone must lead the church. This is the responsibility of the senior minister. He must be the primary leader of God’s people. Sometimes churches establish a co-leadership arrangement. This can be difficult. Congregations need to follow a strong leadership strategy. Having a divided leadership can become confusing for the congregation.

If the minister is to lead, he must know where he is going. A good description of the minister as leader is the prime minister. He does not lead as a dictator but as a leader among leaders. He primes the pump and gets things going. Often he serves as a cheerleader encouraging the team into action. The minister does not have all the answers, but he does know where he desires the church to go and how to get there. He is not a power broker when it comes to his leadership. He simply has some power, some answers, and some giftedness. According to Ephesians 4:11 he, along with the leadership team, prepares God’s people for works of service. His challenge, encouragement, and direction as a leader among leaders make the church team more effective.

Ministers as leaders must work well with elders. Determine with the elders the priorities for the church. Every church has its own style of leadership organization. During the early years of ministry, it is essential

that you get to know your congregation and their leadership procedures. Work within the system to accomplish the most with approval.

During your first year in a ministry, keep change to a minimum. Change happens slowly in most churches. Memorize this idea. Repeat it to yourself regularly. Making wholesale changes too early can shorten your ministry in the church, and it can weaken or even split the church. First, get to know the people of the church. Then get to know the structure of the church. Changes can be made later.

Jesus is the model for servant leadership. This type of leadership is respected among followers. It is leadership with a towel and basin to wash feet rather than a whip to drive people away.

MINISTRY AS A PROFESSION

A professional call to ministry is a biblical concept. Paul stated the case well in Ephesians 4:11-13: “So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” God has gifted us to minister for him. Throughout history he has used his leaders in ministry to serve him. He chose Abraham to leave his homeland to go to a new land and to lead a new people. Abraham’s ministry for God began in a small way but produced big benefits. He led the Hebrew people in performing God’s works of service. All ministry traces to this event in history.

God works in the lives of his men and women. He uses his leaders to affect history. Here we find the first call of a person to separate himself from family, tribe, and clan and to lead another people for God (Genesis 11:27–12:7; Acts 7:2-8). Another example is Moses. Moses left his home (Pharaoh and Egypt) to lead God’s people out of Egypt, where they had suffered as slaves to ungodly people. He was a national hero for the people of God. His focus was not just leaving slavery, but also turning