HOW SWEET IT IS!


May we notice from this text and others an analogy between the Levitical priesthood and the gospel ministry. You cannot draw a complete, detailed, exhaustive analogy on any one example in the scripture, but you will find a general likeness in principle. There is a likeness and similarity between the Levitical priesthood and the gospel ministry.

I. BASIC FACTS CONCERNING THE LEVITES.

A. The Levites were given unto the Lord.

B. The Levites were set aside wholly for the Lord's work.

C. The Levites were given dwelling places in Num. 35:6-8.

D. The Levites had their daily necessities taken care of by the people, Num. 18:11-14, 31.

E. The Levites did their God-given jobs as long as the people obeyed the Lord.

II. PARALLEL FACTS CONCERNING THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

A. As the Levites were given unto the Lord so God calls His men to give their lives to Him. According to the Law every first-born male belonged to the Lord. The Lord commanded Moses and Aaron to number the Levite male children one month old and upward. The number taken was 22,000. The Lord instructed Moses to number the first-born males of Israel one month old and upward. The number taken was 22,273, Num. 3:39, 42. The Lord set aside the Levites and took them for the first-born of all the Israelites.

The Lord requires much more from some of His men and their families. He calls upon them to give their lives completely into His service just as He did the Levites. As soon as the Spirit leads and the opportunity is available the...
Lord lays it on the heart of the God-called man to completely live for the Lord. Paul considered himself a servant and apostle of the Lord. 

"PAUL, A SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST, CALLED TO BE AN APOSTLE, SEPARATED UNTO THE GOSPEL OF GOD," Romans 1:1. Paul also considered himself a prisoner of Jesus Christ, Philemon 1:1.

B. As the Levites were set aside wholly for the Lord's work, so the God-called minister is set aside wholly for the Lord's work.

God's plan for the Levites was simple. From the age of 20 to the age of 50 the male Levite was to do the work outlined. They were to carry out the purpose for which God chose them and set them aside. The Apostle Paul was called of God to preach His word. Paul, as an apostle, servant, and prisoner of the Lord, was available unto the purpose, plan and position of the Lord. He stated in beautiful language, "FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST, AND TO DIE IS GAIN," Phil. 1:21. Paul lived for, loved to, and longed to preach the word and to do the bidding of his precious Saviour.

After I surrendered to the ministry and enrolled in Texas Baptist Institute I had a great desire to live among God's people and to give my whole life to the work of the ministry. I longed for the time I could quit work and just tell the Lord, "Take my life and let it be consecrated to thee." The opportunity did not present itself the first time I had the desire. I could not devote all of my time to the Lord until my third pastorate nearly six years later.

The problems and pressures involved in the ministry cause the pastor to want to crawl under a juniper tree and go on to be with the Lord. One thing that would kill a pastor, or, at least, kill the desire to live for sure, is to put him on the shelf and not use him. You can take the man out of the ministry, but you cannot take the ministry out of the man. The desire to preach and minister to the people is put in the heart by the Lord. Only the Lord can remove it.

The cares of life and sin may immobilize the preacher, but even when it does the preacher knows deep in the soul he needs to be preaching and ministering to people.

Not every church can support a pastor full time. Thank the Lord for preachers past and present who are willing to work at secular jobs in order to minister to a small congregation. Both the preacher and the church should labor to the end of a full-time ministry.

C. As the Levites were given dwelling places, even so must the gospel minister be provided a dwelling place.

The Levites had no inheritance in the land of Canaan, Num. 18:20. Did that leave them without possession or dwelling place? No, God had a plan and way of taking care of the Levites. God will always have a plan to provide for those He calls into a life-long service. "COMMAND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, THAT THEY GIVE UNTO THE LEVITES OF THE INHERITANCE OF THEIR POSSESSION CITIES TO DWELL IN: AND YE SHALL GIVE ALSO UNTO THE LEVITES SUBURBS FOR THE CITIES ROUND ABOUT THEM," Numbers 35:2-8. A total of 48 cities and their suburbs were given debt-free to the Levites for their service to the Lord.

God's people should seek to provide a dwelling place for their minister. He needs a dwelling place. He must make sure his family has a place to live. They need a home. For years the answer to the problem of a dwelling place for the minister and his family has been the parsonage. A church which is large enough to have a full-time minister usually provides a house and pays the utilities (electricity, gas, phone, water, etc.) This does relieve the financial burden of the pastor and his family.

Some churches are waking up and realizing the need of their pastors owning their own homes instead of living in a parsonage. The parsonage has met the need, but it has also been the cause for problems and even strife in the Lord's churches. Most members consider the parsonage the pastor's home until he wants to change the color of paint or put wallpaper up, or put a different front door up, or re-do the bathroom, etc. At such a moment the parsonage belongs to the church. Some church members even want to choose the materials, design, and color in decorating the parsonage in which the minister and his wife live. It may even take an act of Congress to get anything done to the parsonage. The only time some churches do any work on the parsonage is when they have a change of pastors. If your pastor and family must live in a parsonage treat them like you would want to be treated under the same circumstances. Ask them regularly, "What would you like to see done to the home you live in?"

How sweet it is! I have been trying to preach for nearly twenty years. I have been in pastoral work for nearly eighteen years. For the first time in my ministry I live in my own home and, listen, it is a sweet and satisfying experience. As I think of the pastors in our state I know of very few who are in the ministry full time living in their own homes. Those who are living in their own homes are either working at secular labor or have made investments that have been greatly rewarded.

There are a few churches who have provided a way for their pastor to own his own home. One church in East Texas appraised the parsonage, took off twenty per cent and sold the parsonage to the pastor for the balance.

Another church in the Dallas area gave the pastor the parsonage after 18 years
of faithful service. Grace Missionary Baptist Church allowed the pastor to take up the payments on the parsonage. There are probably a few other churches who have enabled the pastor to live in his own home, but the number in our state is probably less than ten. Pastors who do live in their own homes are given a housing allowance to cover the house payment and utilities. I am glad, thankful, and full of praise to God that I am one of the few who enjoy this privilege, but I feel for the many faithful pastors who have been preaching 10 to 40 years and the people have not recognized their need or they have ignored the need.

Lord, please use this article to wake up your churches to the need of God's man owning and living in his own home.

What does owning a home offer a pastor? Would it help or hinder God's man in the ministry? Would it stifle the Spirit's leadership in the pastor's life? Could it cause him to say, "I won't move to another church because I would have to give up my home?" Some churches may object because they think the pastor will stay with them for a lifetime and they would not be able to get rid of him. I will not stay where I am not wanted and I feel most pastors feel the same way.

Owning a home offers the pastor serenity. To be serene is to be tranquil or calm or peaceful. If the church I pastor does not want me to be their pastor anymore, that is fine. I still have a place to live. I have made an investment in a home that I cannot lose. Inflation increases my investment. A man, not even thinking, will stand by his pastor and, with joy and delight, talk about the $20,000 to $40,000 he made by selling his house. The pastor smiles and says that is wonderful, while wondering why he should not be allowed the same privilege and opportunity. A home offers a handsome investment as well as a more secured future which gives the pastor and his family serenity.

Owning a home offers the pastor survival. We are to live as if the Lord will come today, but plan as if His coming is 50 to 100 years away. If the Lord does not come in my lifetime I had better make some provision for my old age years. My people will love me to death, but if I do not make provision for old age they will not sympathize with me. When I get there and I do not have anything, they probably would tell me I should have made provisions earlier as they did.

If the Lord should call me home in the prime of life, what about my family? How long would it be before the deacons approach my bereaved family to say, "I guess you know you will have to move." The request to move would come between two and four weeks. Your pastor longs to be assured his wife and children will be taken care of in case of his death.

By now I can imagine church people are thinking, "Bro. Charles, you need to have faith in the Lord and trust Him for the future. The Lord will provide for you. Just trust the Lord." You are thinking that while your family is secure in their home with abundant provision made for their security. I do not trust the Lord. The Lord will provide for me, but He will do so through His people. For God's sake think about your pastor's security, satisfaction, serenity, and survival and start making plans to do something about it.

D. As the Levites had their daily necessities taken care of by the people, even so the gospel minister should have his daily necessities taken care of.

The Levites were given every oblation, meat offering, sin offering, trespass offering, the firstfruits of oil, wine, wheat, fruits, the firstfruits of men or beast or their redemption price, Num. 18:8-16. The Lord made provision for the Levites, for "...IT IS YOUR REWARD FOR YOUR SERVICE IN THE TABERNACLE OF THE CONGREGATION," Num. 18:31.
The Israelites were not to forsake the Levites and their needs, Deut. 14:23-29. Under the law system even the oxen was provided for. The oxen doing the work was not to be muzzled, 1 Cor. 9:9.

The gospel minister is to be cared for and his necessities taken care of. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "EVEN SO HATH THE LORD ORDAINED THAT THEY WHICH PREACH THE GOSPEL SHOULD LIVE OF THE GOSPEL," 1 Cor. 9:14. Paul wrote to Timothy, "LET THE ELDER THAT RULE WELL BE COUNTED WORTHY OF DOUBLE HONOUR, ESPECIALLY THEY WHO LABOR IN THE WORD AND DOCTRINE," 1 Tim. 5:17. Double honor actually means double pay. How much is a preacher worth to you who is willing to stand out front and lead, guide and preach the word in truth and sincerity out of a heart of love? Is he worth a good pat on the back and a few words of commendation, but not worth an income that would provide a comfortable salary? Some church members have the glib to ask a pastor, "What will it take for you to get by on?" Most people want more than just to get by. They want a comfortable living and they ought to make sure their pastor gets the same.

A pastor has the same needs you have. He has the same desires you have. His family must be clothed. His family has to eat. His children also need an education. All of his needs must come from the people he pastors or he will have to give time to secular labor to take up the slack.

Besides good clothes to preach in which is a necessity to make a good impression, the pastor must purchase books and other ministerial aids to help him in the ministry. A good library is not given to the pastor. He buys books at his own expense to gain knowledge and, hopefully, increase his effectiveness as a minister. He does this, at times, at the expense of his family.

A major concern and, at times, a problem for the pastor is his transportation. The cost of cars, gas, oil, tires, and mechanical labor is skyrocketing. Churches must recognize the need or the diligent pastor will find the more he visits the more it costs him to do so. Pastors have made numerous trips from 30 to 200 miles away to be with people undergoing surgery. The people are grateful and thankful for his presence, but do not even think of what it costs him to express his love and concern for them by being with them.

Am I complaining or taking my frustrations out on the reader of the article? No, no. I am simply trying to help God's people to understand the needs of their pastor. Most pastors continue to do the work without complaint. They suffer the loss. They allow their budgets to get tighter because they are afraid of criticism or strife. We fail to teach our people about the needs that we have that they are responsible to meet. I remember buying another car and hearing a man jokingly say, "We are going to have to cut our pastor's salary. He has a new car." I wear a new suit and someone says, "Oh, you have another new suit." The way they say it and the expression relates their displeasure.

With the way our present economy is going it is almost a necessity for a pastor to receive a five percent raise every six months or a ten percent raise each year. These figures are below national inflation figures. Churches may not be able to come up with that kind of raise at times, but I have observed as pastor oftentimes the finances are there. It is the willingness to meet the need that is lacking. When the need is not met a pastor often becomes depressed and even wonders if his people really love him. Most churches look at what they are paying and providing a man more closely when they are thinking about getting a new pastor, instead of providing abundantly for the pastor that has been with them for several years.

E. As the Levites did their God-given jobs as long as the people obeyed the Lord, even so the gospel minister is able to do his God-given job as long as church members obey the Lord.

The Levites were to be supported by the people with the tithes and offerings to the Lord. As long as the people obeyed and gave tithes and offerings to the Lord the Levites could do their God-given jobs. What happened if they quit tithing? The Levites would have to work in the fields and not devote full time to the God-given job. They would have to reduce the time in the Lord's service to provide for the needs the Lord's people failed to meet for them.

The gospel ministry is supported by the tithes and offerings of the Lord's people. As long as God's people tithe the minister should be supported sufficiently. When the Lord's people quit tithing the pastor will find himself having to provide for his needs through other means. As long as God's people tithe and take care of the needs of the pastor, and his family, the pastor can devote his full time to the Lord and ministering to his flock. It is not a case of no pay, no minister or ministering. It is a case of how much time can be devoted to the work and how much time he will need to work at secular labor to provide his needs.

This kind of message needs to be presented and considered by the Lord's people. Please pray for and provide for God's man and his family to the best of your ability. This will enable him to devote more time to ministering to the Lord's people.
YOUR SEARCH
CAN BE
ENDED

GLEN E. TROPP

xt: Matthew 11:28

Introduction:
A. Point out peoples favorite verses—and the reason why these verses are our favorites—usually due to some experience.
B. Passage that we will focus our attention on today is Matthew 11:28.
C. Picture a man toiling—another driving him—leading him down—oppressing him—then another comes—relieves him of the slave driver—soothes his fevered brow—and gives him rest—peace—and comfort. That is what Jesus will do. John 10:10.
D. Presentation of the Passage.

The Inclusiveness of This Text.
A. The Statement— we are living in the most restless age.
B. The Situations which substantiate this statement.
1. There was a time when men were content to go for a slow ride in the buggy—then the automobile came along and airplanes—and now we are restless.
2. There was a time when people would go to church and never be in a hurry for the service to end. Today we want preacherettes to preach serenettes to Christianettes.
3. There was a time when men would wait a week for the next train—now we growl when we miss the elevator door.
4. There was a time when we visited our relatives and were glad to spend a day or week. Now we can hardly stay an hour without getting restless.

C. The Scripture—Psalms 55:6

The Infinite Christ
A. This Refers to His Ability.
B. The Reflection of His Ability.
1. His ability demonstrated in creation!
2. His ability demonstrated in healing!
Leper—Blind—Death
3. His ability demonstrated in miracles!
5,000 fed—stilled the raging storm.

4. His ability demonstrated in Promises!
Holy Spirit—Prayer—Heaven—Rest

III. The Individuals
A. The Sin Burdened.
1. Romans 3:23
2. Conviction of Holy Spirit
3. Promise of Jesus— I will take your burden away.
B. The Sin Enslaved
1. We cannot overcome without the overcomer.
2. Examples
C. The Sorrowing Ones
1. Example of the man who lost his family—cried so much that his eyes were affected and he lost his sight. Attended Moody church and was saved. His testimony—"I am glad that I lost my sight in order that I might find Jesus as my Saviour."
2. Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.
D. The Slavery of Doubt and Despair—Unbelief
1. Example of Thomas
2. Others

IV. The Invitation
A. The Personal pronoun in this text—"Me"
1. Not church—priest—or creed.
B. The Personal encounter with Jesus—the woman at the well. John 4.

Conclusion: Jesus said, "Come unto me—and I will give you rest."

........................................

BUILDING
YOUR
CHURCH

D. B. WRIGHT

Text: 1 Cor. 14:12; Col. 1:24; Eph. 3:21

Intro:
A. Edify: 1. Build up, Constructing, Establish—Cruden.
2. "Build, Instruct, Improve"—Webster

B. Church: 1. "The church is a local body of baptized believers associated
together for the advancement of the cause of Christ according to the laws given by our Lord Jesus Christ." — G. E. Jones.

2. "By the term "A New Testament is meant a company of baptized believers in Christ companying together to carry out His commands." — Albert Garner.

C. Five areas of growth desired:

1. Size
2. Spirituality
3. Doctrine
4. Effectiveness
5. Influence (This involves morality.)

D. Reasons why we should desire our church to grow in these areas:

1. Jesus is her head.
2. Jesus is WITH and IN her.
3. His promise to her—Matt. 16:18.
4. Jesus purchased her with His life's blood.
5. God is glorified in her—Eph. 3:21.

E. I believe every member present wants to see your church grow. Do you want to see it grow enough to:

1. To be actively involved in all services?
2. To assume your part of equality?
3. To lead a clean, God-honoring, Christ-exalting, people-influencing daily life?
4. To work for her growth?
   a. Seeking to win the lost?
   b. Seeking to enlist the drop-outs?
   c. Seeking to inspire faithfulness in other members of your church?
   d. Seek the restoration of the fallen?
   e. Serve when and where needed?

F. Let us approach this subject with several very simple but relevant questions.

I. WHO BUILDS YOUR CHURCH?

A. Psalm 127:1a
B. Matthew 16:18b
1. The word "build" in this verse is the same as in our text.

C. Acts 2:47c

D. However, God uses laborers. 1 Cor. 3:9.
1. The church is not ours, 1 Tim. 3:15.
2. He set the Apostles in the church with other officers to build up the church.
   a. 1 Cor. 12:28a
   b. Eph. 4:11-12
3. Paul writes of his ministry as being for the "edification" of the Church, 11 Cor. 13:10.
4. Paul speaks to the members of the church of God in Corinth of ONE EDIFYING SELF OR THE CHURCH. 1 Cor. 14:4.
5. Get the challenge of our text: "Seek that ye may excell to the edifying of the church."


E. God "blesses" and "uses" a united church.
Psalm 133:1; Acts 2:1 (United in doctrine, practice, purpose).

F. God blesses and uses a congregating people.

II. WHAT MATERIAL IS USED IN BUILDING HIS CHURCH?


B. Living stones, 1 Peter 2:5.
1. People who have been made alive, born again by the Spirit of God at the point of personal faith in Jesus Christ.

C. Lighted candles:
1. Eph. 5:8
2. Luke 8:16
3. John 5:35a

D. The Lord's church is built and maintained by living individuals and homes with Godly influence.
1. Acts 2:47b
2. Note the activity of these added. 'And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people.'
   a. Daily in God's house
   b. One accord in the temple
   c. House to house ministry
   d. Gladness
   e. Undivided purpose of heart
   f. Praise for God
   g. Influence with people

   "God blessed their efforts!"

III. WHO IS THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH?

A. Eph. 2:20
B. 1 Cor. 3:11

IV. WHERE DO WE BUILD THE CHURCH?

A. Where did John the Baptist prepare the material with which Jesus started the church? Matt. 3:1.
B. Where was Jesus when He called His church into being? Matt. 4:18-19
C. Where were the 3,000 from whom were added to the church? Acts 2:6a.
D. From where were the guests at the wedding to which Jesus told us about? Luke 14:21b-23.
1. Here is where that "personal influence" comes in.
2. We cannot think, walk, talk, and act like the world and win the world to Christ.
3. We are going to have to take Christ home with us like Peter and John did. Acts 4:13.
4. "The influence of a holy life is often the greatest contribution we can make to the salvation of men." — From a church bulletin.
5. One reads in the Bible that one bad soldier with hidden sin at home caused the "loss of battle" and the "death of thirty-six" fellow soldiers.

BUILDING PLANKS
CONCERN COMPASSION CONVICTION
CONSECRATION COURAGE CONSISTENCY
CONTACT CONGREGATING (MEMBERS)

FOREVER WE'LL BE TOGETHER

Forever we'll be together,
In God's "Promised Land."
Forever we'll be together,
For it was His own plan.

Forever we'll be together,
To see Him face to face.
Forever we'll be together,
In a kingdom that's His place.

Forever we'll be together
In a place bright and fair.
Forever we'll be together,
I pray I'll see you there.

June Cryer
Galena Park MBC

THE STORY OF OLD
BY BRENDA COOPER

heard a story
story of old
story of spender any times told.

story of beauty
story of love
the story of Jesus ent from above.

he came down in glory
in a star-filled night
then gave us salvation by giving His life.

he hung on a cross
on a hill
but He was not sorry
god's promise He filled.

'theme of a Savior
'god's only Son
'he came from Heaven
and God's will He done.

As He hung on the cross
Crown of thorns on His head
A sword in His side
Our Savior was dead.

Then three days later
He rose from His grave
The borrowed tomb
In which He was laid.

He showed His disciples
The scars in His hands
Then gave them the duty
Go teach all the lands.

Then He ascended
Back to Heaven
He went
Now He's with God
By whom He was sent.

I've told you the story
The story of old
The story of spender
Many times told.

GIVING THANKS UNTO THE LORD
Text: Luke 2:36-38 By Charles Swilling

I. Who should give thanks to the Lord?
A. Anna thanked the Lord.
B. Lost people have much to be thankful for.
C. Saved people should thank the Lord,
Psa. 95:2.

II. WHAT SHOULD WE GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD FOR?
A. For the UNSPEAKABLE GIFT of Jesus Christ
   His Son.
B. For our REDEMPTION.
C. For the BIBLE.
D. For our CHURCH.
E. For our HEAVENLY HOME.
F. For our FAMILIES.
G. For our HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.
F. For our MATERIAL BLESSINGS.
I. For our COUNTRY.

III. How can we give thanks to the Lord?
A. By EXPRESSING GRATITUDE TO HIM, Ephes. 5:19,20
B. By LIVING FOR HIM, II Cor. 5:15
C. By SERVING HIM IN ONE OF HIS CHURCHES,
Ephes. 3:21; Acts 20:28
D. By CONFORMING TO HIS WORD.

IV. WHEN SHOULD WE GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD?
A. Give thanks during this Thanksgiving season.
B. Give thanks daily for the Lord's blessings, Ephes. 5:20
C. Give thanks always for all things. II Thess. 1:3
D. Give thanks in good times and bad times.

1 Thessalonians 5:17
PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.

Sounding Out The Word Ministries
Grace Missionary Baptist Church
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REASONS FOR THE CHRISTIAN TO GIVE THANKS

TEXT: Col. 1:12-14

By Gilbert Allen

I. WE SHOULD GIVE THANKS UNTO THE FATHER BECAUSE BY HIS SON WE HAVE REDEMPTION AND THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS THROUGH HIS BLOOD.

A. We were in bondage of sin and it's penalty. Rom. 6:20-23
B. We now have redemption by the shedding of His blood. 1 Pet. 1:18,19
C. We now have forgiveness of sins. Rom. 6:17-19,22

II. WE SHOULD GIVE THANKS UNTO THE FATHER BECAUSE HE HAS MADE US FIT TO BE PARTAKERS OF THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS IN LIGHT. V. 12

A. We were unfit for His kingdom. 1 Cor.6:9,10.
B. We now have an inheritance. 1 Pet. 1:4

III. WE SHOULD GIVE THANKS UNTO THE FATHER BECAUSE HE HAS DELIVERED US FROM THE POWER OF DARKNESS.

V. 13

A. We were lost in the darkness and it's power. John 3:18-21
B. We are now delivered from that realm of darkness. Hebs. 2:14,15

IV. WE SHOULD GIVE THANKS UNTO THE FATHER BECAUSE HE HAS TRANSLATED US INTO THE KINGDOM OF HIS SON. V. 13

A. We were in and of another kingdom. John 3:1-3
B. We are now in the kingdom of His Son. John 18:36,37

IS YOUR CHURCH SUPPORTING THE SOUNING OUT THE WORD MINISTRIES?

We are sending bundles of our paper out to churches who support us. We would be happy to send your church some papers. The paper contains sermon and study outlines by various pastors in our work.

SIX TYPICAL MEN OF ROMANS

BY George White

I. The Guilty Man, Romans 3:9-12.

II. The Justified Man, Romans 3:24-26.

III. The Identified Man, Romans 6:1-5.

IV. The Wretched Man, Romans 7:15-25.

V. The Liberated Man, Romans 8:1-4.

VI. The Yielded Man, Romans 12:1,2.