

Article Title— “Professional Christians”

Article Category— “The Ministry”

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My late mom tried her best to make me into a preacher. My pastor/evangelist dad kinda-sorta supported her in that. Mom’s motives were purely subliminal, I think:

- A. To be able to bask in the admiration of the would-be preacher mommas peer group.
- B. To qualify her for special preacher-momma blessings in Heaven.

The fact that her dad was an uncommonly well known “super preacher” may’ve played a big role in that. She kept telling me I could become the next Oral Roberts and stuff like that. Hmmm...

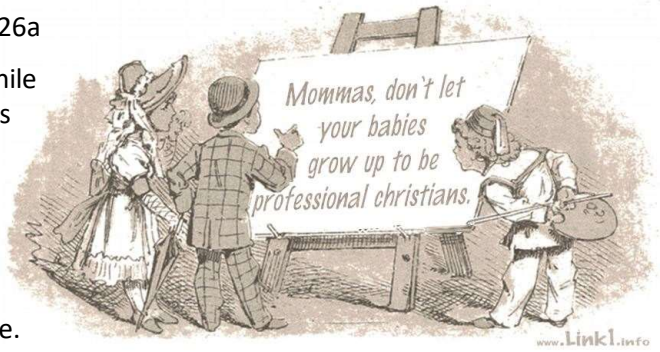
(Read 2 Corinthians 11:5 in several Bible versions to understand why I’ve used the term “super preacher,” here.)

Mom was, in fact, a Godly woman who would actually stop whatever she was doing several times a day and get onto her knees to pray for me. Her prayers were worthy and appropriately effective. They may’ve even been responsible for my acquisition of discernment.<sup>1</sup> Along with that and a touch of Godly wisdom, I have learned to lean much more on my God-given intellect than on my feelings in matters of importance.

<sup>1</sup>"Discernment is telling the difference between right and almost right!" —C. H. Spurgeon

- > “The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it?” —Jeremiah 17:9
- > “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool...” —Proverbs 28:26a

Jesus’ humble disciples who simply practice “being Christian” while earning a living via secular trades and professions are special. (That was Paul’s position...and mine. Preachers, bishops and theologians are NOT special. Instead, their legitimate function within Christ’s body is simply DIFFERENT from yours or mine (1 Corinthians 12). Those who believe otherwise cannot be effective in “the ministry.” The “We’re ‘called and chosen’ and y’all are not” mindset is inappropriate. In fairness, I think it is subconscious for the most part. Still, though, it is readily observable. Who can remedy that?



“The Great Commission” at Matthew 28:19,20 clearly did not assign “the ministry” to career professional christians. Paul made it clear that he was convinced that the establishment of a professional clergy would inevitably corrupt “the ministry.” It is unfortunate that, even after the Reformation. Protestant groups quickly adopted and adapted the business model that the Roman church had used ever since that A.D. 325 Council of Nicea<sup>2</sup>. Then, because “Money talks!”, several of those Protestant organizations also amassed political power. Like the Roman church<sup>3</sup>, accountable to no one, those same Protestant churches have become a lot like manufacturers of lubricants that use all or most of their output to lubricate the machinery with which they manufacture lubricants! (Some may want to read that a second time to understand the profound implications of it.) Are your tithes and offerings going to such an organization? If you pay to play, I’ll bet they are.

<sup>2</sup>[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a359a3\\_c4af14d973ce4388a19751dddfd14ae8.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a359a3_c4af14d973ce4388a19751dddfd14ae8.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a359a3\\_5f0f982f9bd340bbb39ec60aaa586e0d.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a359a3_5f0f982f9bd340bbb39ec60aaa586e0d.pdf)

Among the especially destructive messages of the visible church (as opposed to The Church, which is largely invisible) is that each of us who harbor a desire to serve The Master should receive a “special calling,” much like the remarkable one that Samuel received as a young man. A respected correspondent wrote this about that several years ago: “When a naive believer fails to receive his special calling, the door is left wide open for a preacher’s voice to become ‘the voice of God’.” That, I think, is why so many impressionable young people who admire their preachers come to think they should make lifetime professional career commitments to “the ministry,” too. They’re most vulnerable to such personally destructive mistakes when they feel The Holy Spirit drawing them to a closer personal relationship with Christ.

A megachurch near us is publicly proud of its commitment “to turn out at least 50 new preachers every year.” It is clear to objective observers that the leadership of that church has substantially confused Christ’s assignment to The Church – to make

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I knew what my denomination believed and that’s what I taught.  
Yes, I should’ve checked it out to make sure it was true.

So why didn’t I do that? Well, maybe I didn’t do that for the same reason that you haven’t really checked out what your denomination teaches.

“In religion and politics, people’s beliefs and convictions are in almost every case gotten at second hand, and without examination.” —Samuel Clemens



disciples – with their self-prescribed mission: “to make preachers.” That’s great for bragging rights at the denominations yearly national convention. The problem is that that church is much like the stereotypical visible church across this nation, in that its comfy, and often luxurious pews are filled with lots and lots of Believers and precious few Disciples. There are huge differences, you know. Even devils believe, and tremble! (I think you may remember reading that at least once or twice.)

Like millions of the naive faithful, I waited and prayed for decades that God would reveal His special calling on my life. While I loved my mom and really appreciated the fact that she wanted God’s best for me, I needed Divine confirmation. In the meantime, I pursued things that I enjoyed and was pretty good at doing. Those were secular pursuits for the most part. They yielded a really good living and I had ball, too! Still, though, I often thought that God just didn’t have a plan for me, except maybe to be a good adult Bible teacher and an effective spokesman for our denomination’s “What ‘We’ Believe” franchise.



Much later, I discovered that, all the while, He had been systematically preparing me for TODAY. So, then, what was my assignment during all those previous years? It was to pursue things I enjoyed and was pretty good at doing! Might that be similar to God’s plan for the young people you know and love?


Now, just in case you still aren’t buying-in to all this, consider the life of that evil Pharisee, Saul, who was to become Paul, one of the most effective of Jesus’ apostles: Our Lord had a very special lifetime assignment for him, but the fullness of time for it didn’t come until the amazing series of events on that road that led to Damascus. Saul was full of zeal and as determined and focused as an angry Pit Bull Dog to accomplish his mission. Jesus, having known him even before he was formed in his mother’s womb, knew all about those highly uncommon qualities...and that the apostle, Paul, would pursue a righteous assignment with precisely the same level of determination and aggression.

Paul was also among the most highly educated human beings on Earth during the 1st Century. And he spoke, wrote and understood multiple languages! None of Jesus’ other disciples had those qualities: It was Jesus’ plan, all along, to set Paul on the path of righteousness and to make sure he knew, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that his assignment would be a critical one. When I first considered this scenario, I started questioning the religious-sounding cliché, “God doesn’t choose the qualified; He qualifies the chosen.” Makes absolutely no sense in this light; does it.

Here’s the take-home message—


Preachers are not special. Believers are not special. Jesus’ humble Disciples who simply practice “being Christian” while earning a living via secular trades and professions are special. So please don’t let your babies grow up to be career professional christians. Per our Lord at Matthew 6:5-7, those guys already have their reward<sup>4</sup>. Instead, pray for your babies and encourage them to make lifetime commitments to become effective Disciples.

<sup>4</sup>[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a359a3\\_cd5bfbe00b424db08f20b0ec126ccc80.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a359a3_cd5bfbe00b424db08f20b0ec126ccc80.pdf)

—T. C. Newsome 

PS: Comments? Questions? Scriptural rebuttals? They're all welcome! [www.Link1.info/contact-us](http://www.Link1.info/contact-us).

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