

How to Lose a Ministry

John 3:22-36

Conventional wisdom says that the way to build an organization or a ministry is to do things the right way and have the right person in charge. Follow the right procedures and the right person and you are guaranteed to be successful. However, you can easily become distracted by rituals and personalities and lose sight of your purpose.

In John 3:22-36, John the Baptist's disciples were caught up debating the right way to do baptism and whose ministry was greater. John the Baptist demonstrated that the path to true greatness goes through humility. *A humble servant keeps the focus on Jesus.*

A humble servant recognizes God's sovereignty (22-30)

The ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus overlapped for a period of time. Both practiced baptism as part of their ministries (22-24).

John the Baptist's disciples were caught up in a discussion about the details of baptism (25).

John the Baptist's disciples were concerned that Jesus was becoming more popular than John the Baptist (26). They were jealous and protective of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist understood that all leaders serve at God's pleasure (27).

John the Baptist knew that his role was to be the forerunner of the Messiah (28). The forerunner was to clear the way, prepare the way, and get out of the way.

John the Baptist saw himself as the best man at the wedding (29). His joy came from seeing the bridegroom receive praise and glory.

John the Baptist's role was to promote Jesus and fade into the background (30).

A humble servant recognizes Jesus' superiority (31-36)

Jesus is preeminent because he ...

Came from heaven (31). Jesus' place of origin demonstrates that he can reveal things about heaven.

Shares firsthand information about God (32-33). Jesus revealed truth from heaven but not everyone accepted his testimony.

Was sent by the Father with full authority (34-35). God's former messengers had a limited measure of God's Spirit. Jesus not only had the Holy Spirit without measure, but God placed all things in his hands.

Gives eternal life to those who believe (36). The one who believes in the Son has eternal life. The one who does not believe does not have eternal life and faces God's wrath.

Application

God has different ministries for different people. All leaders serve at God's pleasure. Since all ministry and blessing come from God, we cannot allow competition to get in the way.

Joy comes from serving God, not from a position, title, job description, size, or results. Keep your focus on Jesus and exalt him.

How you respond to Jesus' message determines your destiny.