

Ministering Principles

MINISTERING IS SEEING OTHERS AS THE SAVIOR DOES

*Jesus spent much of His time with those who were seen as different;
He saw their divine potential.*

In our efforts to minister like the Savior, we may be asked to minister to someone who is different from us. This presents an opportunity for us to learn and grow.

Cultural, educational, racial, economic, age, past or present behaviors, or other differences can make it easy to judge someone before we even know them. This pre-judging is at the heart of

prejudice, and the Savior warned against it (see 1 Samuel 16:7; John 7:24).

Can we look past differences and see others as the Savior does? How can we learn to love others for who they are and who they can become?

Beholding and Loving

The Bible tells the familiar story of the rich young man who asked how to obtain



eternal life: “Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me” (Mark 10:21).

When Elder S. Mark Palmer of the Seventy studied this scripture some years ago, a new part of the story suddenly stood out to him.

“*Then Jesus beholding him loved him.*”

“As I heard these words, a vivid image filled my mind of our Lord pausing and *beholding* this young man. *Beholding*—as in looking deeply and penetratingly into his soul, recognizing his goodness and also his potential, as well as discerning his greatest need.

“Then the simple words—Jesus *loved him*. He felt an overwhelming love and compassion for this good young man, and *because* of this love and *with* this love, Jesus asked even more of him. I pictured what it must have felt like for this young man to be enveloped by such love even while being asked to do something so supremely hard as selling all he owned and giving it to the poor. . . .

“[I asked myself] ‘How can I be filled with Christlike love so [others] can feel the love of God through me and desire to change?’ How can I *behold* [the individuals around me] in the same way the Lord beheld the rich young man, seeing them for who they really are and who they can become, rather than just for what they are doing or not doing? How can I be more like the Savior?”¹

Learning to See Others

Learning to see others as the Savior does brings rich rewards. Here are some suggestions that can help as we work toward this goal.

GET TO KNOW THEM

Make the effort to get to know people beyond superficial details. Recognize that building relationships takes time and sincere effort. (See the August 2018 Ministering Principles article “Building Meaningful Relationships” for help.)

EXAMINE YOURSELF

Pay attention to judgments you may be making consciously or subconsciously. Take note of the assumptions you are making about others and try to understand why you feel about them the way you do.

WITHHOLD JUDGMENT

Realize that circumstances don't define the worth of an individual. Put yourself in their shoes and consider how you would want someone to see you if you were in the same circumstances. Separating someone's choices and behavior from their intrinsic value and divine potential can help us see them as the Savior would.

PRAY TO LOVE THEM

Pray for them regularly by name and for the patience to develop a true friendship. Take a prayerful look at your service. Is there a gap between what you are doing and what they really need?



Jesus spent His time with people from many different walks of life: the rich, the poor, rulers, and common people. He was often the victim of incorrect judgment by others when they looked upon Him and His apparently poor or insignificant circumstances. “When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. . . . He was despised, and we esteemed him not” (Isaiah 53:2–3).

INVITATION TO ACT

Whom do you need to look at differently? What will you do to change how you see them?

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES

Send us your experiences as you have ministered to others or have been ministered to. Go to liahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org and click "Submit an Article or Feedback."

Christlike Vision

A sister shares this story of learning to see a neighbor with Christlike eyes:

"Julia (name has been changed) lived by me and seemed to not have any friends. She always looked upset and angry. Despite that, I decided to be a friend to her. Not just a casual friend in passing, but a true friend. I spoke to her whenever I saw her and showed interest in whatever she was doing. Slowly, I created a bond of friendship with her, bringing joy in my heart.

"One day, I decided to visit Julia and ask her about her decision to not attend church.

"I learned that she has no family or relatives nearby. Her only sibling, a brother who lives far away, communicates with her only once a year by phone. As I listened to her pour out her bitterness, anger, and frustrations about her family and the Church, an undeniable feeling of compassion and love for this sister came over me so strongly. I felt her pain and frustrations. I realized just how lonely her life was. It was as though I heard a quiet phrase behind me: 'I love her too. Love and respect her.'

"I sat and listened until she had no more to say. I felt love and compassion for her. This is a sister who has never known what it is like to be loved. Suddenly I understood her more deeply. I thanked her for allowing me to visit with her, and I



left her with a hug and with my love and respect for her. She will never know how much she touched me with that visit. Heavenly Father has opened my eyes and taught me that I had a capacity to love with increased compassion. I am determined in my resolve to not only be a friend to her but also to be family to her."

It's a sacred thing to be invited into someone else's life. With prayer, patience, and help from the Spirit, we can learn to do so with a more Christlike vision. ■

NOTE

1. S. Mark Palmer, "Then Jesus Beholding Him Loved Him," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 115.

DISCOVER MORE

Learn more about being more welcoming:

- Read "We Can Do Better: Welcoming Others into the Fold" in the September 2017 *Ensign* or *Liahona*.
- Watch Church leaders explain these principles at ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/61911.