

THERE IS MORE TO MINISTRY THAN MEETS THE EYE:  
SOMETIMES IT IS A NO-WIN PROPOSITION

- v.14-15 (1) If you are a true minister (spiritual servant), you will gladly expend yourself to enrich others. At no time should your focus/motive be to get something from those you serve.
- v.19 (2) Building people according to God's blueprint for their lives -- challenging their thinking, correcting their behavior, fingering their attitudes -- will often look like you are defending yourself or your own way of doing things.
- v.20 (3) An inescapable agony of ministry is the disappointment that the people your are building are not yet finished -- they will rarely be what you want them to be. This gap between *what they can be* and *what they are* should motivate you to serve them more, not less.
- v.20 (4) You must also live with the haunting knowledge that *you* will not be *what people want*. Their idea of what you should be will frequently differ from what God wants you to be in their lives.
- v.20 (5) You must judge them to evaluate what more they need to have built in their lives. They will judge you according to their own notion of what you should be giving them. As a consequence of their judgment, they will strive with you, be jealous of you, get angry at you, dispute your judgment, slander you, gossip about you, become arrogant toward you and create disturbances to block what you are trying to do in them and in others.
- v.21 (6) There is nothing more deeply saddening than to see people you love refuse to repent from the sins and distortions in their lives. Mourning for them should give you the resolve to try one last time to challenge them.