

MINISTRY STYLE

A RED MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY CHURCH POSITION PAPER

We believe that ministry is of the best quality when it is decentralized, that is, when it is carried out by the rank and file of the Church.

The pattern for ministry given in the New Testament is markedly different from that of the Old Testament. Under the old system, ministry was mainly carried out by the professional priests, those born into the tribe of Levi. It was the job of the priest to represent the people of Israel to God, acting as a go-between or mediator. The priests made intercession for the people and offered sacrifices on their behalf. All of this was to teach the Israel about the holiness of God and to point forward to the sacrifice and priestly ministry of the Messiah to come. Once Messiah had come and fulfilled all that the priestly system was unable to do in actuality, the old system was no longer necessary (Hebrews 7:18-19). Now there is only one high priest and mediator between God and man, the Man Jesus Christ (Hebrews 7:17; 1 Timothy 2:5). Now all believers constitute a royal priesthood and have direct access to God through Jesus (1 Peter 2:9; Hebrews 10:19-22). All believers are therefore ministers of the good news of forgiveness of sins and reconciliation to God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Since all believers are ministers of the Gospel, it follows that the Church works best when all its members are involved. This point is beautifully illustrated by the analogy of the body used by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 12. Each part of the body carries out a unique function that benefits the rest of the body. Each member is important. Likewise, in the body of Christ, which is the Church, each member has a unique combination of giftedness, ministry and empowerment. Through each person a unique work of the Holy Spirit is carried out to strengthen the Church. Thus, the Church's ministry is maximized in every aspect when all of its members are working and working together.