

**CHRIST'S MINISTRY**  
Part I  
*Matthew 4:18-25*

Introduction: The inexorable truth of history proves Jesus to be the greatest personage to grace the human scene. This pristine fact is eradicable, and is indelibly imprinted on the mind of every believer. Jesus is our paragon and ultimate example! This is an absolute fact! Everything we engage in should be patterned after our Master Teacher. Our morals, actions, and lifestyle, should be fundamentally influenced by Jesus and His clear instructions to us recorded in His Word. Instead of dwelling on what secular culture is saying, let's rather examine the teachings of Jesus and how these principles relate to our lives.

I. The ministry of Christ

A. How Christ taught. *Matthew 5:21-22*. Christ was a voice and not an echo.

1. Its *simplicity*. The scholar Wendt says that Christ "aimed at the greatest clearness in the briefest compass." No one could fail to know what He meant when He spoke in *Matthew 6:24*:
  - a. "No man can serve two masters; he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." Simplicity must not be mistaken for shallowness. The simpleton can never be simple.
2. Its *profoundness*. Profound means, "from the bottom," that is, deep. All of Christ's teachings are profound. Profoundness means knowledge and insight and is akin to wisdom. *Luke 2:47; Matthew 13:54*. Note also *Matthew 5:44; John 16:33*.
3. Its *pregnancy*. Most speakers find it difficult to be compact without being obscure. Christ taught in crisp, pointed sentences like: "*The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath*" (*Mark 2:27*); "*Whoever desires to save his life shall lose it; and whoever loses his life for My sake will save it*" (*Luke 9:24*); "*If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all*" (*Mark 9:35*); "*...God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*" (*Matthew 22:32*); "*...many are called, but few are chosen*" (*Matthew 20:16*); "*...it is more blessed to give than to receive*" (*Acts 20:35*). These are unforgettable statements!
4. Its *picturesqueness*. Everywhere are figures, similes, analogies, and imagery, relative to animals, plants, agriculture, and commerce. He speaks of lightning, earthquakes, fire, storm, and light; of trees, lilies, reeds, thorns, and houses; of builders, fisherman, and merchants; of harvest, marriage, tithes, and offerings, as well as fasting and prayer.
5. Its *concreteness*. Christ did not speak in the abstract, but in concentrated terms. He embodied principles in examples. When He urged importunity in prayer, He told a story about an unjust judge. *Luke 18:1-8*. When He contrasted pride and humility, He spoke of a Pharisee and a publican. *Luke 18:9-14*. The parable of the talents and the pounds taught a lesson on opportunity and responsibility. When He instructed on wise or foolish living, He depicted one man building his house on a rock and another building his on sand.
6. The *contrast* of Christ's teaching. He ironically compared the carping critic to a man with a log in his eye. *Matthew 7:1-5*. All His illustrations were adapted to the circumstances before Him.
7. Its *practical character*. He never sets before us impossible ideals and unattainable heights, but He insists that we do what is right. "This do and you shall live." "If you know these things, happy are you if you do them." "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but who does the will of the Father who is in Heaven."
8. Its *brevity*. His teachings are marvels of compression, yet clear and complete. It is like the leaven and the meal. *Matthew 13:33*. A hundred more words could not have made it clearer.

Conclusion: Jesus was the greatest and most effective Teacher who ever taught. There is no valid excuse one can render. The Bible is written so that anyone who reads it can be taught the ways of the Lord.