

An Audience of One

Scripture Reading — Colossians 1:1-8

*You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ ...
Colossians 1:7 —*

D. A. Carson wrote a book called *Memoirs of an Ordinary Pastor*. Much of it consists of journal entries that Carson's father, who was also a pastor, wrote over the course of his ministry. The name D. A. Carson is well known in evangelical Christianity, but until he published his father's memoirs, the name Tom Carson was much less well known.

The book is a testimony to the beauty of ordinary ministry. Tom Carson never served a big congregation that swelled with new converts. He never wrote a book or held denominational leadership positions. Much of his ministry seemed to be characterized by discouragement. Many of his journal entries were accompanied with tears.

Much of ordinary ministry could also be called faithful ministry, and it's not restricted to the work of pastors. The word for "minister" in Colossians 1:7 is most often translated as "servant" in the New Testament. Servants do ordinary ministry, like visiting the sick, befriending the lonely, and welcoming the stranger. This is not glamorous work, and it may not seem to produce much spiritual fruit, in our opinion.

But let's beware of exchanging what God calls faithfulness for what the world calls success. The acclaim of multitudes is nothing compared to the approval of God.

Paul called Epaphras a faithful servant of Christ. Could any better compliment be given?

Prayer

Forgive us, Lord, if we are more concerned with popularity than faithfulness. Help us to serve only you. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Life](#), [Christian Life](#), [Following Jesus](#)

Written by Peter Hoytema — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/peter-hoytema>

<https://today.reframemedia.com/devotions/an-audience-of-one-2012-01-24>

Printed on October 1, 2020

