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Rules for Ministers

John Wesley's 12 Rules For Ministers

The reasons for "Wesley's 12 Rules":

A) To provoke the regular ministers to jealousy,

B) To supply their lack of service towards those who are perishing for lack of knowledge.

1. Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time, nor spend more time at any place than is strictly necessary.
2. Be serious. Let your motto be: "Holiness to the Lord". Avoid all lightness, jesting, and foolish talking.
3. Converse sparingly and cautiously with women, particularly young women.
4. Take no steps toward marriage without solemn prayer to God and consulting with your brethren.
5. Believe evil of no one unless fully proved; take heed you credit it. Put the best construction you can on everything. You know the judge is supposed to be on the prisoner's side.
6. Speak evil of no one, else your word, especially, would eat as doth a canker; keep your thoughts within your own breast till you come to the person concerned.
7. Tell everyone what you think wrong with him, lovingly and plainly, and as soon as may be else it will fester in your own heart. Make all hastes to cast the fire out of your bosom/
8. Do not affect the gentleman. A preacher of the gospel is a servant of all.
9. Be ashamed of nothing but sin; no not of cleaning your own shoes when necessary.
10. Be punctual. Do everything exactly at the time. And do not mend our rules, but keep them and that for conscience's sake.
11. You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore, spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those who want you, but to those who want you most.
12. Act in all things, not according to your own will, but as a son in the Gospel, and in union with your brethren. As such, it is your part to employ your time as our rules direct; partly in preaching and visiting from house to house, partly in reading, meditation, and prayer. Above all, if you labor with us in the Lord's vineyard, it is needful you should do that part of the work which the Conference shall advise, at those times and places which they shall judge most for His glory.

"Observe, it is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care merely of this or that society, but to save as many souls as you can, to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and, with all your power, to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord. And remember, a Methodist preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist disciplines. Therefore you will need all grace and sense you have, and to have all your wits about you."