



CONGREGATIONAL
STEWARDSHIP
WORKBOOK

Getting Personal



Congregational Stewardship Workbook 2000

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Getting Personal

Introduction

As the congregation's stewardship leader, the pastor understands the principles of stewardship and lives them. Being in the spotlight described by that statement can cast some pretty harsh shadows. This chapter of the Congregational Stewardship Workbook will uncover both the light and dark in the pastor's broad practice of stewardship. How those sharp contrasts are handled in addressing the gray issues of managing all of life and life's resources for God's purposes will determine the pastor's stewardship leadership.

In the early 1950s the concept of stewardship as we understand it today was still in its developmental stages. Yet, it was true then as it is now: Pastors were not well prepared as personal stewards nor as stewardship leaders through their seminary studies. For that reason, John E. Herrmann, the synod's stewardship counselor, wrote the classic *The Chief Steward*. This chapter will use that book as a basis for examining the stewardship leadership of the pastor.

As a pastor, you may feel that the following statements represent your feelings as you approach this subject. Consider the commentary following each one.

I can skip this section.

Anyone who has been in the ministry for even one year realizes that he can boycott the consideration of his personal stewardship only at his own peril. The office of the pastor is not a lucrative vocation. More talents are necessary to carry out the ministry God directs than the pastor has. What about the idea that a pastor's time belongs 100 percent to the members? All of these statements predict stress and frustration without a proper balance of stewardship management and leadership.

Pastors are, by nature of their call, good stewards.

Every pastor acknowledges the phrase "by nature" describes our condition apart from God's grace in Christ. "By nature" we can accomplish

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nothing. We are dead in sin. Without God's grace active in a pastor carrying out his call, his life of stewardship is incomplete. Good stewards are formed. God, through the Holy Spirit, desires to work personally with each pastor to form a good steward who can, in turn, form good stewards.

The ministry itself automatically encourages good stewardship.

Although a pastor may outwardly appear to be managing well financially, on the inside things may be difficult. The security of the position may not result in personal financial security. The sedentary aspects of the ministry do not automatically make it a healthy profession. Demands on time can make pastors jealously guard personal moments. Pastors can call on "duty," "faithfulness" and "dedication" as reasons why managing talents, time and personal finances are so difficult.

My day off is my day off.

The day off can become a grim exercise in grasping at all costs one's perceived right to get away from the office and pastoral duties. It can also result in taking a day off from home and family to be alone, to "re-create." Managing so that there is time for playfulness, spontaneity and refreshment interspersed in the week as "little Sabbaths" can be a struggle even for the best stewards.

If it is important that the laity learn that faith is not separated from life, then it is important that the clergy learn this as well. The pastor who, as God's agent, struggles with managing his own stewardship life is hard pressed to provide the leadership necessary to develop stewards who can openly respond to God's love in Christ.

With those thoughts in mind, let us examine the message that John E. Herrmann has to share in this summary of *The Chief Steward*. We begin with an article reprinted from Dr. Al Barry's *President's Newsletter* of August 1996, "Stewardship: A Needed Emphasis."

In a recent visit with some of our pastors, the subject of special stewardship Sundays came up in our conversation. Needless to say, this is one of those items that our congregations struggle with. Pastors are sometimes hesitant to bring the subject up in their preaching and teaching. I think sometimes they are worried about creating the wrong impression in the minds of their hearers. They don't want their people to think that they are "just asking for money." And this is an understandable concern.

Stewardship is part of the Christian life. St. Paul did not hesitate to encourage the Corinthians in their lives of stewardship, for the sake of the kingdom. Perhaps it is best simply to let God's almighty Spirit-filled Word, speak to us on this issue:

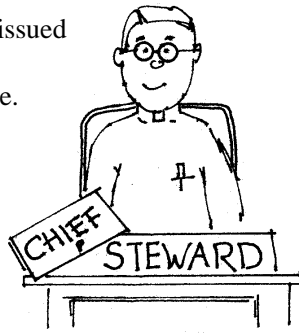
The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. (7) Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (8) And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. (9) As it is written, "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." (10) He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. (11) You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will

produce thanksgiving to God through us; (12) for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God (2 Cor. 9:6-12 NRSV).

Our pastors should not hesitate to speak and even preach to their people about their lives of stewardship. Since we receive such great forgiveness from our Lord, there is nothing inappropriate with discussing our response to Him in the form of our lives of stewardship.

The Chief Steward

In 1951 The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod issued a book written by J. E. Herrmann, who was the Stewardship Counselor of the Synod at that time. The book is titled, *The Chief Steward*. This resource can be accessed through the CD Rom accompanying this workbook.



The book is dedicated to “the great body of our loyal Missouri Synod clergy who are dedicating their lives to the greater building of Christ’s kingdom and our Lutheran Zion.”

In the introduction Herrmann makes the following comment, “In going over the manuscript the author realizes that the reader may receive the impression that he is too critical of the clergy. That is not his intention. The conventional clergyman he had in mind was himself. The writer’s chief regret in life has been that he did not always apply in his own parish ministry that which he now recommends. The true purpose for writing these lines is the author’s overwhelming desire to see our church rise to meet the great urgency of this fateful hour and under God hasten the fulfillment of our Lord’s prayer, ‘Thy kingdom come.’”

While not everyone who reads Herrmann’s book will agree with everything he says, he provides a lot of food for thought. It is with that in mind that the Stewardship Committee of Iowa District East began the process of summarizing the chapters of *The Chief Steward*.

Each chapter is summarized in one section, with the exception of chapter eight. These summaries are meant to stimulate the thinking of pastors especially in the area of stewardship education and their role in it.

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, (21) equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.
(Heb. 13:20-21 NIV)

Chapter One Summary—“The World Is In Convulsions”

“The cause of the Kingdom in our day calls for an amazing amount of courage, daring and enterprise on the part of those who have entered the high calling of the Christian ministry. The clergy must assume greater and more daring leadership.” That is how J. E. Herrmann begins his book, *The Chief Steward*.

Writing in 1951, Herrmann’s observations demonstrate that “there is nothing new under the sun.” He notes:

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- World conditions present a darkening picture of gloom, despair and horror.
- The morals of so-called Christian nations are near the gutter.
- We are witnessing the strange phenomenon of a number of lethargic pagan religions awakening after a long dull sleep.
- Moreover, a new religion of crass materialism has arisen.

And what of the church? Here are more of Herrmann's observations:

- The growing list of members who are spiritual delinquents is disturbingly large.
- The cancer of materialism is eating away at the very vitals of our church life.
- The priesthood of believers is little appreciated.
- Church work has become the responsibility of a few.
- Voters' meetings are on an average poorly attended.
- Our missionary outreach at home and abroad lags far behind our opportunities.
- Personal evangelism on a large scale is still a thing to be wished and prayed for.
- The offerings of our people belie their ability to do much more for a world that has lost its way.

Questions for consideration

1. Since church history records that older church bodies are in danger of losing their first love and of becoming less active per member as they grow in membership, is that what we should expect of our church?
2. Are Christians to be satisfied in being members of a church which, as it becomes older and grows in size, becomes more complacent and self-sufficient?
3. Are pastors, the divinely-chosen leaders of His congregations, to be content with that kind of an evaluation and accept the status quo with a sigh of regret? What most discourages pastors today?
4. Or are they, under God, to revive the church—beginning with themselves? How?

The Lord who calls you to discipleship and the cross will also enable you to fight the good fight of faith. Through His Word the Savior will strengthen your faith and make it an overcoming faith. Read that Word. Meditate upon its great message. Learn to love it more than life itself. It is the one thing needful. Cultivate a close relationship with Christ—thus you will grow in knowledge, wisdom and power. Through Him you will be more than a conqueror over your sinful flesh, the world and Satan.

Are we ready to meet the world head-on by our witness to Christ? In 1927, Rev. George Koenig wrote, "Christianity involves more than church attendance, giving, decent behavior, and occasional church-going. Perhaps church membership has been made too easy. Perhaps it has become a polite gesture where it ought to be a fervent surrender. It is regarded as a soft cushion for tired souls, when it ought to be the West Point or Annapolis of Christian warfare."

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The stewardship life is a life completely dedicated to God through faith in Christ Jesus. Martin Luther said, “If anyone would rap at the door of my heart and ask, ‘Who lives here?’ I would answer ‘Martin Luther once lived here. But Martin Luther has moved out, and Jesus Christ has moved in.’” In giving our lives completely into His riven hands, God uses us to build His beautiful, glorious and everlasting kingdom among men.

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The only Life Worth Living

One of life's greatest and most meaningful laws is the paradox that we cannot find ourselves until we have first lost our lives in some service or wholehearted endeavor. It is only by giving ourselves in complete service to the Savior that we can find our true place in life and fill it, for the true life lies far beyond that which can be discovered by egotistical desires or selfish purposes—the life lived by the unregenerate.

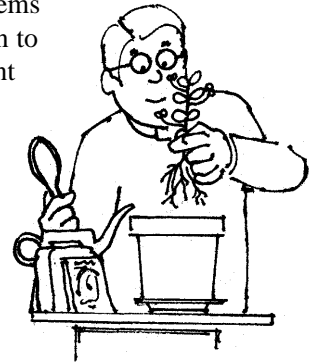
What a name—"steward"! Do you know its history? The word originally was a combination of two old English words "sty" and "ward." A styward was a keeper of the pigsty. But in the course of centuries it graduated to a loftier position, the keeper of a lord's estate. And finally, believe it or not, a derivation rose to be the name of a great and long line of English and Scottish kings. From the pigsty to the throne. What a history! God found men in the grime and gutter and has elevated them in Christ to become His stewards.

Our Status Quo

To this day, the progress of our educational and missionary programs is being slowed down, and even endangered, by the lack of adequate education and training in the principles and practices of Christian stewardship.

The God-pleasing stewardship of time, abilities and material possessions must be more generally recognized and appreciated if greater personal participation on the part of our people in the work of the church is to be realized.

The full requirements of stewardship cannot be met by the most excellent methods or systems of giving or put into operation in the church. We shall never reach a solution of the financial problems of the Kingdom of God by confining our attention to this one phase of stewardship. By forcing the plant we may gather the fruit sooner and in goodly quantities, but the forced plant will never do well again. What we need to do is to carefully cultivate the roots, giving time to the process, so that the plant shall be constantly and richly nourished. Then the fruit will not only be abundant, but there will be a never-failing supply.



Questions for consideration

1. How do most of the members of your congregation view stewardship?
2. A pastor once remarked, "Stewardship isn't my thing." How would you respond to him?
3. What is the pastor's role in stewardship education?

Chapter Three Summary—"The Pastor As Chief Steward"

The Pastor as Stewardship Leader

The levels of Christian stewardship in a Christian congregation are set in the main by the pastor. It will pay every pastor well to consider the entire

Scriptures to answer the question: “What does God have to say about Christian stewardship?”

The principles and practice of Christian stewardship must become the absorbing passion in the pastor’s life. He should endeavor to become the number one steward in his congregation. His entire activities as pastor, his personal life, must be convincing proof that he practices what he preaches. The pastor’s life should be a continuous motion picture on Christian stewardship because stewardship is caught as well as taught.

Preaching and teaching stewardship

The extent to which the Scriptures speak of stewardship should be the measure of our teaching and preaching on the subject. We have stressed and rightly so, the wonderful doctrine of justification. But what is the justified sinner to do? He is to live the sanctified life. Instead of imagining that we as pastors have gained our purpose when we, through the Word, have won a soul for Christ, we need to be reminded that our pastoral responsibilities to that soul have only begun. We must keep in mind that the sanctification of the convert is a gradual, progressive process for which constant encouragement, guidance and training must be given.

We are mending our ways

The Christian life is Christian doctrine in action. Christian stewardship is an outcome of the Gospel; it is the expression of our faith.

The child who has learned to give himself to Jesus; to share his gifts with others; to do deeds of love to God and man; to bring money gifts to the Lord; to spend his time usefully; will become the adult who applies proper stewardship ideas and principles to his entire relationship to God and to the work of the Church.

Some practical observations

Experience teaches that any congregation satisfied with its stewardship performance is so taken up with its own importance that it ceases to do anything really important for Christ. Such a congregation has left its first love and fallen in love with itself. And whom does the Lord hold primarily responsible for such a condition? From the Letters to the Seven Churches we note that the Lord holds the “angels” of these churches responsible—at least in part. These letters were addressed to them not for the sake of convenience but because they were the God-appointed leaders of those congregations. While it is true that God expects only faithfulness, that word covers more than many are inclined to think.

The present situation

That pastoral leadership is needed if a congregation is to effectively practice the fundamentals of Christian stewardship is evident. The problem which often occurs is that the ministry, being a conglomeration of tasks, can divert the attention of the pastor. Sidney Powell wrote in *The Great Awakening*, “The temptation is always there to permit second-rate causes to hinder the primary mission of the church.” “We have done again what the Reformation undid. We have professionalized religion,” said Dr. Paul Scherer.

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It is the work of the public ministry to teach and train others to work with them, not under them, in order to achieve God's purposes. It never was God's purpose to turn over the administrative and organizational functions of the church to the laity while the clergy was to largely monopolize the spiritual functions. This is evident from the fact that the functions of the royal priesthood are primarily spiritual in nature. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, (1 Cor. 12:7-9 NIV). These words are said of those who form the body of Christ.

Questions for consideration

1. What is the primary mission of the church?
2. What is meant by the term "professionalized" religion?
3. Discuss the following quote by Dr. Paul Scherer: "The church life of the majority of our people is characterized by a formal and passive receptivity and nothing more."
4. Is Dr. P. G. Beer being overly harsh when he says: "Our churches are all too frequently weak in stewardship because our pastors fail as stewards?"

Chapter Four Summary—"Pastoral Leadership"

"Whether our congregations will measure up to their privileges and responsibilities in this explosive age of opportunities will depend, humanly speaking, upon the leadership of our pastors." With these words, J. E. Herrmann writes about the importance of "Pastoral Leadership" in the fourth chapter of his book.

Indicating that "People are as they are led," Dr. Herrmann points out that "good leadership is not a common article." "A pastor's position does not make him a leader: it only gives him the opportunity to prove himself a leader. We become leaders. Leaders learn by doing. Whoever refuses to learn ceases to grow as a leader."

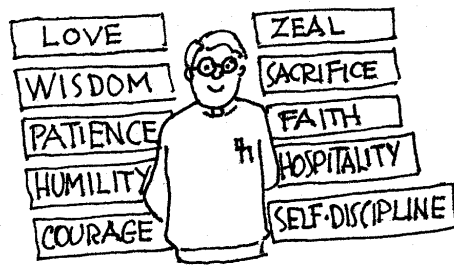
The Pastor's personality

Inward growth takes place through Word and Spirit. Yet a pastor's personality is vital for good leadership. A pastor may be very successful "with books but not with people." Among the personality qualities needed for good pastoral leadership are:

- love [2 Tim. 2:24]
- wisdom [2 Tim. 2:15]
- patience [2 Tim. 2:15]
- humility [1 Tim. 6:11]
- courage [2 Tim. 2:1]
- zeal [1 Cor. 9:17]
- sacrifice [Phil. 3:7]
- faith [2 Tim. 1:12]

- liberality or hospitality
[1 Tim. 3:2]
- self-discipline
[Titus 1:7]

A pastor who practices these virtues develops a personality which will attract. He will not only be a man of God, but truly God's man for the congregation. He will possess a character, lovable in its humility, challenging in its convictions, commanding in its appeal, and winsome in its simplicity.



The pastor as leader

In answer to the question "How can a pastor win his people to accept him as their leader?" Herrmann suggests six items:

- Be an example to the flock.
- Love your sheep.
- Be patient.
- Have confidence in your people.
- Give your people a convincing program for Christ that will challenge their faith and talents.
- Give your people a large measure of responsibility.

An important step in pastoral leadership is frequent self-analysis. He states that "Every so often—and it ought to be often—the Christian clergyman will look at himself. Unless we measure ourselves occasionally we will shrink in stature as pastors and leaders."

The pastor as executive

Dr. F. C. Streufert emphasized four chief requirements of a good executive: "visualize, organize, deputize and supervise." To do this effectively, a pastor must keep in mind that he is not the only administrator in the congregation. There are responsible lay leaders in the church with whom he is to work closely. According to their congregation's constitution, they are responsible to the congregation and not to the pastor. Yet the pastor needs to win their cooperation and support. This requires skillful leadership. "Among the qualities he needs are: deep sincerity of purpose ... tactful handling of all committees and boards ... fairness in catering to no favorite sons (or daughters) on any boards and committees ... loyalty to them as Christian leaders ... exercise of self-discipline in not insisting upon his own way ... sincere commendations for work well done. This is real church statesmanship."

Such statesmanship is necessary, not only with the leadership of the congregations, but with the entire membership. "While the readiness on the part of the membership to accept their ... called pastor as their divinely-called leader is generally evident, it remains for him to prove that he is deserving of all they prayerfully expect him to be." It is a happy pastor who has learned how to "win his way into the hearts of his people."

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Who is able?

Concerned and dedicated pastors ask themselves this question. The answer is found, not in personal skill or human wisdom, but in the Word of God and prayer. In the closing paragraph of this chapter, Dr. Herrmann states, "It is not a question so much of what you can do as what God can do with you and through you. It is absolutely amazing what our Lord can do with a life dedicated to His use. The power of Christ rests upon those who wait upon Him for strength. You have every reason to thank your Lord who has enabled you to be a minister of the New Testament."

Questions for consideration

1. A pastor's personality: how important is it?
2. When might "self-analysis" be damaging?
3. What three things make a pastor a good leader?
4. How does a pastor supervise without becoming a "task master?"

Chapter Five Summary—"The Universal Priesthood of Believers"

"The effective functioning of a Christian congregation depends far more than many pastors realize upon a deeper realization and a more extensive and vigorous application of the glorious Scriptural doctrine of the spiritual priesthood of all believers The priesthood of believers reaches into the entire area of sanctification and the larger stewardship of the total Christian life. The end and purpose of all of these is the glorification of God and the establishment and extension of Christ's kingdom among men everywhere."

Must be appreciated

Dr. Herrmann asks the following questions:

- Why are our lay people for the most part engaged in organizational and administrative functions which deal primarily with the external needs of the parish when their priestly functions are largely spiritual in nature?
- Do pastors generally recognize the spiritual potential of their people and put it to use?
- Do many pastors train their lay leaders and members generally to render spiritual service to God and men?
- How many of our people fully understand the purposes for which God plants congregations?

Herrmann concludes by saying, "Whatever can be done in a practical way to clarify the full and free functions of the priesthood of all believers will redound to the glory of God and the great advancement of His kingdom."

The Name "Priest"

Luther once said that Christians ought to call themselves priests as much as they call themselves Christians, since one cannot be a true Christian without being a priest in the New Testament sense of the word.

The name “priests” belongs to all believers with equal authority, right and force. With it Christ conveys to each of them all the treasures He has given to the church.

Rights and Privileges of Spiritual Priests

1. The spiritual priest has direct access to God. Through Christ, the great High Priest, the way to God is open to him (Heb. 10:18-22). He speaks with God and deals directly with Him. He has direct access to the forgiveness of sins and is in position to mediate it to others for the spiritual and temporal welfare of all men.
2. In bringing to God the offering of his prayers the priest also brings to God the offering of his life as “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.”
3. Each Christian has been commissioned to “preach the Gospel to every creature” and to teach men “to observe all things which I have commanded you.” In cases of emergency he can also preach publicly, baptize and give Communion.
4. The Christian should prize and zealously guard the rights and privileges bestowed upon him in Christ. Christians need to remember that they are free lords over all things and subject therefore to no one (except Christ) but at the same time remember that for Christ’s sake they are the servants of all and subject to everyone.
5. In the calling of pastors the spiritual priests exercise their divinely given rights and privileges. It also is entirely within their province to frame their own congregational constitution and to elect or appoint such officers as are necessary to make it function effectively.
6. The priesthood is to judge the doctrine and life of its pastors. Dr. C.F.W. Walther says: “Rob the congregation of the right to judge doctrine and you give them over to slavery.”
7. Priests are also to exercise discipline in a brotherly manner. Christian discipline is nothing else than applying God’s Word to individual cases and persons. The priest is directly responsible to God for the spiritual welfare of his brother. In dealing with his brother he has the right and duty to exhort and admonish him in a Christian manner. In doing so he exercises the office of the keys. He can absolve his brother of his sins in Christ’s name and in Christ’s stead.
8. As a spiritual priest each Christian is also to comfort the lonely, the afflicted, the sick and the tempted.
9. Priests are not only to be engaged in good works but they are to encourage, coax, persuade and win others to do likewise.
10. Priests should not only be engaged in personal mission work but also in missionary work by proxy.
11. The Christian also exercises his priestly rights and privileges in his home, in his earthly calling, in his capacity as a neighbor and citizen. For him to live is Christ.

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12. In matters indifferent, such as are not commanded or forbidden in the Word, priests are to exercise their Christian liberty.

We do well to remember that the danger in the church today is not so much that the laity will invade the spheres of the ministerial functions as that pastors unintentionally assume certain rights and privileges which belong to the spiritual priesthood. This situation is largely due to the fact that too many of our laity do not recognize, appreciate, and, therefore, do not make use of, their God-given rights and privileges.

Questions for consideration

1. Is our preaching and teaching as pastors pointed toward personal commitment of our members to Christ and the tasks of His kingdom?
2. What are we doing to rouse our people to deeper understanding and a fuller realization of their priestly duties?
3. Do we individually challenge our people with situations which call for the exercise of their priestly functions?

Chapter Six Summary—"The Parish Program"

The work of the Christian ministry is clearly stated by the Lord Himself.

The pastor is to labor in the Word and doctrine. He should work hard. By giving himself continually unto prayer, by preaching and teaching, by giving attendance to reading, especially the Bible; by comforting, rebuking, reproving, exhorting his people; by doing the work of an evangelist by calling on his people and the unchurched of his community; by administering the Sacraments, baptizing and burying, keeping confidential records, etc., the pastor will find an amazing amount of work to be done.

In order to do his work well he must plan his work. The pastor sets certain goals for himself which, with God's help, he must stretch to obtain. Needless to say, no pastor can afford to toy with the forty hour a week schedule while the world is going to hell. He is to make full proof of his ministry, to endure hardness, to spend and be spent for Christ as a living sacrifice. The minister must not only consider himself expendable, he must *be* expended.

This of course does not mean that he cannot give his family reasonable attention. Nor does it mean that he must unnecessarily endanger his health. What it does mean is that he would use his time and energies in such a manner that the Lord and his people receive maximum service. Plan your program. Give certain hours of the day to prayer, study and communion with God. Set aside certain hours for sermon preparation. Give sufficient time to calling on your members and prospects for church membership. Take time to be well prepared for your various classes and groups. Attend such meetings regularly which are vital to kingdom work. Give yourself the opportunity to read good books helpful to you as a pastor. Keep informed on your Synod's work through reading its literature and journals.

Needed: A Functional Congregation

By a functional congregation we mean a congregation alert and alive to its duties. Christ has laid down in His Word the basic purposes and objectives of a Christian congregation. He expects them to be realized. Under the

leadership of the pastor every member is to be active in the realization of these purposes and objectives.

It would be well for congregations to restudy the primary purposes for which congregations exist, to give close scrutiny to their constitution and bylaws, to note whether they are adequate for such a day as this, and above all to re-evaluate their entire programs and set new goals and objectives that will challenge more of their members for vital service in the Kingdom.

When Is a Congregation Functional?

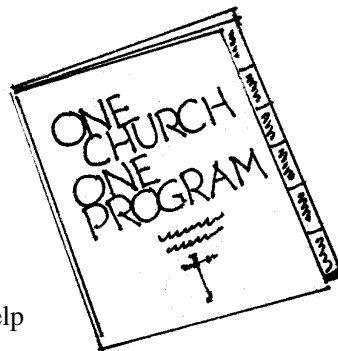
When the vital phases of a congregation's program are properly planned and developed, these phases may be expressed and outlined as follows:

1. Worship and devotional life.
2. Christian education on all levels including training for family living.
3. Evangelism, mission study, missionary activity.
4. Stewardship of time, talents and treasures, including service to the church.
5. Christian action such as welfare work and community service.
6. Membership development, including conservation, reclamation, leadership training.
7. General administration, including organization, properties and finance.

It is assumed that Christian fellowship is a part of all activities rather than a separate division.

One Church—One Program

1. There is only one program given to the church by its Lord. It includes worship, education, evangelism, missions, stewardship, Christian fellowship, care of souls and welfare work.
2. All of the teaching agencies and auxiliary organizations of the parish should exist to help the parish carry out its God-given program.
3. Christian education includes training as well as teaching. It means developing knowledge, attitudes, skills—all three. Activities are an essential part of this program.
4. The work God gave the parish goes beyond its own members and its own community. It reaches to the ends of the earth. It includes the larger work of district and Synod. It involves higher education and foreign missions.
5. To help more parishioners to understand this and participate in this one program calls for an educational process.
6. The whole work of the church is the concern not only of every parish but of every member of Christ.



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While it is true that the Lord builds the church, it is also true that He uses people in the process. When His people plan and promote His work with wisdom and vision they thereby give evidence that the Lord's work is so important to them that the most they can do is the very least they dare do.

1. How would you describe a "functional" congregation?
2. How does your congregation plan for ministry?
3. What challenges are there today in parish ministry that did not exist when Herrmann wrote in the 1950s?
4. Do these challenges change how planning is done?

Some Questions About Lay Involvement

1. Is it true that congregations often have trouble securing sufficient workers for the programs of the congregation?
2. Is it true that the average congregation has only a very limited number of people engaged in essential church work?
3. Is it true that the average congregation could not at short notice launch out on a larger program until more members are available who are willing to work?
4. Does God want His people to be active in kingdom work?
5. Have we preached the Gospel to them?

Chapter Seven Summary—"Enlisting and Training The Laity"

God is not at fault, neither is His Word or Spirit. Then the fault must lie in people. How can we enlist more members for active service?

- Pray without ceasing for more active members.
- Learn from the Scriptures what made the early church such a power. It was their "first" love for Christ. They gloried in the precious salvation won for them by Christ.
- Work with a zeal that will catch fire among your people.
- Preach and teach functionally, toward attaining definite goals.
- Give your people a clear understanding and appreciation of the universal priesthood of all believers.
- Introduce a thorough program of education in Christian stewardship.
- Impress upon the membership the why and wherefore of a Christian congregation.
- Prepare a convincing program of kingdom work which will command attention and action.

- Approach the members individually and offer them a definite opportunity for service.

Additional Suggestions

Your chief appeal: Jesus is calling you to serve. It is the loving call of Him who has redeemed people at so great a cost.

The public appeal for workers from the pulpit no doubt has many things in its favor. This type of appeal has the advantage of being presented in detail, with oratory, inspiration, and conducive environment. We reach individuals here which may be overlooked otherwise.

But do not neglect the advantages of following up this appeal by individualizing it through a personal call.

Suggestions for Training the Laity

1. Vital to the training of church workers are regular and purposeful attendance at church services, frequent attendance at the Lord's Table, the study of God's Word in Bible classes, and the daily reading of the Bible at home.
2. The church worker should know the distinctive doctrines of our Lutheran Church, as well as its practices and customs.
3. A good church worker should know the basic principles of the Christian life and how they apply to Christian living. He will learn by doing.
4. He/she should be taught the glories and the responsibilities of the royal priesthood of all believers.
5. He/she should know the reasons why Christ establishes Christian congregations.
6. He/she should become acquainted with the over-all parish program and know how the work asked of him/her fits into that program.
7. The church worker must know what is expected of him/her, with whom he/she is intimately associated in church work, and suggestions should be made as to how the work might best be done.
8. Books on church, particularly such as touch the areas in which the member is to serve, should be made available.
9. The congregation should arrange periodic meetings of all its workers where the general program of the congregation is discussed.
10. Educational agencies for children, particularly Christian schools, are an excellent means for training future lay workers.

Questions for Consideration

1. Some have suggested that people are not as committed today as in days past. Do you agree? Why or why not?
2. Discuss the joys and frustrations you have experienced in the care and nurture of volunteers.
3. How can we stay away from the "warm body" syndrome? (Anyone will do.)

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4. What additional suggestions would you offer for enlisting and training the laity? (See the workbook section “Building Effective Volunteer Ministry”)

Chapter Eight Summary—“The Pastor and Synod”

The Pastor and Synod

The pastor is Synod’s key man in the congregation. By his words, his actions, his inferences and very attitudes toward Synod and its work, the people of his parish will be profoundly influenced.

When we hear criticism of this or that within Synod, this, in itself, is a good thing provided such criticism is made in love and is of a constructive nature. Thank God that He did not make us all alike! The Scriptures themselves give evidence of what God accomplishes through a wide range of personalities. Since He has use for us, we should have use for each other. That we at times are not drawn to one as to the other, that petty jealousies at times find unsuspecting targets, that we occasionally do not understand one another fully, that at other times we are unduly excited about matters concerning which we have insufficient information—all these things prove we are but mere mortals.

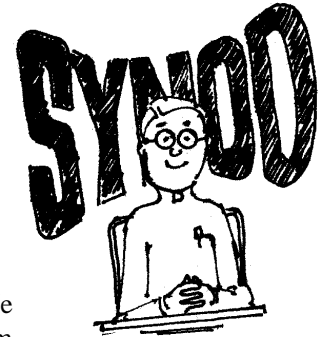
Synod is not a fly-by-night organization. Men close to God were drawn close to each other. God has His hand in it. While the organization was and ever will remain a human institution, its purposes are pleasing to Him and in accordance with His will.

W.C. Brinker wrote, “The decision to organize was a voluntary one. Despite the obvious advantages of having a Synod, and despite the apostolic example for such an arrangement, it was freely conceded that an organization such as Synod was of human origin and that membership could not be forced as a divine ‘must.’ But the arguments for joining were so valid, logical and compelling that the little group of six thousand souls and their twelve pastors joyfully took the important step. Synod, it was said by our spiritual forefathers, is the door of opportunity through which we who are united in a common faith can carry on the Father’s business to best advantage for Him and for us.”

Cooperation with Synod

Why should every pastor in Synod cooperate fully with Synod as local circumstances make this possible?

1. He is a member of Synod. He subscribed to the constitution of Synod and thereby made its principles, purposes, and program his very own. He has identified himself with Synod. He is to share its weal and woe.
2. He owes much to Synod. He needs Synod as much as Synod needs him.
3. His congregation needs Synod. The benefits it receives from Synod are considerable.



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another parish, that parish continued to do well for missions. If they had given little prior to his coming, their record improved remarkably in a short time. On the other hand, pastors of congregations which contributed poorly for missions, upon going to a new parish either spoiled a previously good record of that parish, or if the level of giving for that parish was low, it remained low.

Herrmann asks another question: "Why do some pastors fail to persuade their people to give more generously for missions?" He then gives some reasons:

1. Too many of our people lack missionary zeal because they do not appreciate enough the great treasure they possess in the forgiveness of sins. Since they lack a deep recognition of what they are actually saved from, they do not appreciate as they ought what they are saved for. The Gospel of Christ is not so richly at work in their lives that the love for the lost springs forth in a fuller measure.
2. The poor example of neighboring congregations.
3. Previous pastors who were not persuaded that missionary support is as important as pressing parish needs.
4. The impression in some quarters is that since Synod is an advisory body, the support of its program is optional.
5. Some pastors have personal antagonism toward Synod's program and leadership.
6. Mission boards failed to give guidance and encouragement to subsidized parishes. Their immediate goal was that the subsidized parish become self-supporting.
7. The excuse that the congregation's contributions will little affect the overall outcome one way or another.
8. Available opportunities for missionary education and inspiration have not been fully explored.
9. The people are not given opportunities to regularly contribute to missions, or the percentage in the congregation budget for missions is too low.
10. The false impression that we are already sending too much money away. "The more we give, the more Synod will spend."
11. The failure to use the materials provided by Synod to inform and encourage people to give larger support for our missionary program.
12. An erroneous idea that liberal contributions to missions will have a negative impact on the congregational treasury.
13. The false notion that our people are already giving all that can be reasonably expected.
14. People who do not give to missions are not personally approached and

persuaded that God is counting on them to support His work at home and the world over.

15. The low quotas some districts set for some of their congregations.

Your Congregation and Missions

The mission command is a very important one. No command ever given on any battlefield has ever been more explicit and compelling. Therefore, a pastor will do all he can to bring his people to heed that command. He will, first of all, lead his people by word and example to carry out the Great Commission in their own community. But he will not stop there. The Lord's command reads: "Into all the world." He will not plead local condi-

tions as an excuse for a small or marginal performance for missions but marshal the spiritual and physical resources of his people to adequately meet His call.



The mission budget of a congregation is often referred to as its spiritual thermometer. That congregations provide for themselves is nothing unusual. But when they invest heavily in the work of saving souls the world over, they give evidence that they have caught the spirit of the Master. A church which does not believe in mis-

sions ultimately confesses that it does not believe its own message. If it has nothing to share, it really has nothing to keep. Someone has said that the chief sin of the church today is that it is self-centered, that it feels its main business is to keep its own wheels going.

Questions for Consideration

1. Comment on Herrmann's statement that congregations which bring generous offerings for missions are usually spiritually alive.
2. Discuss how congregations can be intentional about keeping missions before their membership.

Chapter Nine Summary—"I Dare You"

Someone To Stand in the Gap (Ezek. 22:30)

William H. Danforth published a book in 1942 titled, *I Dare You*. In this book he challenges especially young people to “think tall, stand tall, smile tall, live tall.” He writes “to the daring few who are headed somewhere.” Regarding the reception of this book he writes: “Those afraid to dare might as well pass it up. It will weary the lazy because it calls for immediate action. It will bore the sophisticated, and amuse the skeptics. It will antagonize others. It will not be overly popular because it calls for courage, swift and daring. But in the eyes of you, the priceless few, I trust it will become a gleam of battle as you read on.”

The world situation is a daring challenge to all of God's people, especially the clergy. The whole world is ablaze with flames that have reached up from hell itself and threaten the world which Christ died to save. Between the world and that dreadful prospect stand those who have the

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same spirit of the ancient heroes who in their day “subdued kingdoms ... stopped the mouths of lions ... quenched the violence with fire ... waxed valiant in the fight ... of whom the world was not worthy.”

These words are addressed to the “priceless few,” to my brethren in the ministry. Upon these the Lord must depend to rally His forces and lead them to immediate action. We trust that your eyes are a-gleam for battle.

The Question

What, Lord, do you want us to do?”

God’s will is that we train more pastors, teachers and laymen; that we step up the tempo of our church’s work “inasmuch as we see the day approaching.” That is His challenge, His “I dare you.”

This will require a new type of leadership on the part of our clergy. We must become the eyes through which our people see a perishing world rushing headlong to the final judgment. Our sermons, lectures and topic discussions must take on the form of a continuous crusade to marshal in a much greater degree the resources of God’s people to bring Christ to all people and all people to Christ.

Move Out of the Safety Zone

In order to accomplish this glorious goal, our people and their pastors must venture out of the safety zones of doing the ordinary and enter into the sacred realm of sacrificial giving. We must dig deeply for Christ if we are to reach out extensively for Him. Our people must sense the urgency of the hour and catch the new missionary fervor and zeal which should fill our leaders.

We pastors must “break through the numerous social and professional inhibitions we have built up in the course of time....” There may have been times when our motives have been questioned, when our suggestions have gone unheard and when our efforts have gone unappreciated. And so—perhaps unintentionally, but nevertheless actually—we fold our tents and silently steal away to our own little safety zones. We would rather be safe than sat on.



“Surely, this being forever in the safety zone is something utterly foreign to the behavior of the great men of God in Scripture (Heb. 11). Each in his own age and in his own way has dared to do and die in order that the message with which he was entrusted might be proclaimed. Each stepped from the comfort, convenience and protection of the safety zone out into the stream of life.” (H.W. Gockel in “Today”)

I Dare You

The time remaining for action is short while the missionary opportunities are great. Courage, brethren, God is on your side. What He calls for can and must be done. His promise of victory is assured. Hudson Taylor states that “there are commonly three steps in the work of God: first impossible, then difficult, then done.” I dare you! Step bravely in His name from the impossible to the difficult and, in God’s own good time, His will will be done through you. We dare you!

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