

The Practice of the Christian Ministry

Nathaniel M. Van Cleave



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In order to be an effective pastor, one needs the following things:

1. The Lord's Call to the Ministry.

1 Timothy 1:12 ¹² And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry. (NKJV)

2. The Ability to Teach God's Word.

1 Timothy 3:2 ² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; (NKJV)

3. A Burden for Lost Souls.

1 Corinthians 9:22 ²² to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. (NKJV)

1 Corinthians 9:16 ¹⁶ For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! (NKJV)

4. A Sincere and Profound Love for One's Brethren in the Family of God.

1 John 3:14 ¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. (NKJV)

John 13:35 ³⁵ “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (NKJV)

If one has the virtues and experiences mentioned above, such a one is a candidate for the ministry, but in order to function as the pastor of an established congregation one needs to learn well the proceedings and acquire the abilities that are desired of a pastor. In Ephesians 4:11,12, the Apostle Paul describes the general function of a pastor:

Ephesians 4:11,12 ¹¹ And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. (NKJV)

If the pastor's duty is to equip the members of the congregation enabling them to carry out a certain kind of ministry, then that pastor must have acquired a good number of ministerial abilities. It is the purpose of this study to provide instruction in these abilities, procedures and attitudes. Pastors teach by means of the communication of Bible truths; however, they also teach by their example and their attitudes. Pastors also must continue to develop their mental, moral and spiritual capacities which result in a mature character. Writing to the Thessalonians, the Apostle Paul stated:

1 Thessalonians 1:5-7 ⁵ For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. ⁶ And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. (NKJV)

(1). The Pastor's Relations with the Family and the Neighbors

1 Timothy 3:1-7 ¹ This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. ² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; ³ not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; ⁴ one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence ⁵ (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); ⁶ not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. ⁷ Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (NKJV)

It would be difficult to add anything to what the Apostle has given in his admonition to Timothy about a pastor's family. In New Testament times many of the Christian services were held in the homes of dedicated believers.

Romans 16:3 ³ Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁵ Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ. (NKJV)

A passage of Scripture in Acts 21 reveals some significant things about the New Testament church and the New Testament family:

Acts 21:4-6 ⁴ And finding disciples, we stayed there seven days. They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem. ⁵ When we had

come to the end of those days, we departed and went on our way; and they all accompanied us, with wives and children, till we were out of the city. And we knelt down on the shore and prayed. ⁶ When we had taken our leave of one another, we boarded the ship, and they returned home. (NKJV)

When Paul arrived in Tyre he found Christian disciples worshipping in the house of one of the believers. The congregation was composed of complete families. When the Apostle continued his journey, all the families including their children accompanied Paul to the coast of Tyre and all of them including the children knelt down on the shore to pray for Paul that God would give him a safe passage to Caesarea and ultimately to Jerusalem. In order to develop families with their children that were so fully dedicated, it was necessary that the pastor's family would be equally dedicated. If there is discord and lack of dedication in the pastor's home, sooner or later that bad example will pervade the whole congregation. If a pastor cannot influence his own family, he will have less than ideal influence on the home life of the congregation. The necessary ingredients in home influence are Scripture reading, prayer, love and fellowship; consequently the pastor must not permit himself to become so frantically busy that he cannot do justice to his own family.

Ephesians 5:22-25 ²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her. (NKJV)

Ephesians 6:1-4 ¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: ³ "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." ⁴ And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. (NKJV)

While it is important that the pastor maintain in his home an atmosphere of love and Christian discipline, it is essential also that the shepherd develop a friendly relation with the neighbors. Neighbors can be the best friends of the church or its most persistent enemies. Since we have a passion for souls, let us begin with winning the unsaved neighbors to the Lord. If the neighbors cannot be won to the Lord, at least, let them be treated with Christian friendliness and a helping hand to the extent that they will accept the offer. Often neighborly friendliness and helpfulness will present a stronger influence than verbal arguments. Verbal witness is essential, but it is more effective if it has been preceded by friendliness and a spirit of caring.

The Apostle Peter offers instruction on our relation to unbelieving neighbors:

1 Peter 2:11-12 ¹¹ Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, ¹² having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation. (NKJV)

(2). The Pastor's Relations with the Congregation

The Apostles Paul and Peter join in revealing what the appropriate relation should be between the pastor and the congregation which the Holy Spirit has placed in his or her care:

Acts 20:28 ²⁸ "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (NKJV)

1 Peter 5:1-4 ¹ The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: ² Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³ nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴ and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. (NKJV)

Peter could not forget the admonition which he received from the Lord, which is recorded in chapter 21 of John's Gospel:

John 21:15-17 ¹⁵ So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." ¹⁶ He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep." (NKJV)

The title "pastor" or "shepherd" makes clear the fact that the principal responsibility of the leader of a congregation is that of "feeding" or satisfying the spiritual hunger of the people. God has provided the bread of life that satisfies that hunger, namely: "The Word of God." The very last counsel that the Apostle gave to his spiritual son, Timothy, was:

2 Timothy 4:1-3 ¹ I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: ² Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching. ³ For the

time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers. (NKJV)

The second responsibility of the pastor is that of caring for the flock. It is important for the pastor, as far as it is possible, to know personally all the members of the congregation. He or she cannot minister effectively to the spiritual needs of the people unless the people know their pastor well enough to divulge their intimate problems. A pastor cannot come to know the people merely by seeing them seated in the sanctuary; it is very helpful to visit them in their homes and places of business. The shepherd needs to be with the members in the crisis times of sickness, bereavement, and overwhelming circumstances. Every successful pastor will keep a calendar or date book which includes periods of visitation.

The Holy Scriptures reveal the importance of pastoral visitation:

James 1:27 ²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. (NKJV)

Matthew 25:36-43 ³⁶ 'I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' ³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?' ³⁸ 'When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?' ³⁹ 'Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ⁴⁰ "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' ⁴¹ "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: ⁴² 'for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; ⁴³ 'I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' (NKJV)

Acts 15:36 ³⁶ Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing." (NKJV)

In the larger churches the pastor needs to teach the deacons and deaconesses to visit systematically the sick and the discouraged. However, visitation by deacons must never eliminate pastoral visitation. The senior pastor should dedicate one or two days to visitation. It is good practice to reserve one evening to visit new converts and new members. All pastoral visits should terminate with prayer and often with the reading of an appropriate portion of Scripture, especially with visits to those in the hospital.

The prophet Ezekiel had something to say about pastors who neglected

their flocks:

Ezekiel 34:6 ⁶ “My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.” (NKJV)

Another ministry of the pastor is that of counseling. Today’s society is very complex; it is certain that there will be members in our churches in need of moral and spiritual guidance. The pastor should be prepared to provide such counseling. However, let it be clear that the minister of the Gospel must not presume to be a psychiatrist. The pastor can obtain a knowledge of human nature with all its problems by studying carefully the Holy Scriptures; the Bible deals with every possible human frailty. The church should provide guidance, because the Bible suggests: “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly.” Further, the pastor is provided the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The pastor will need some help with the more complex problems, but there are several good books on counseling written from the evangelical point of view. The pastoral counselor needs to avoid the temptation to make decisions for the person seeking counsel. The pastor offers Biblical principles leaving it to the seeker to arrive at a decision after prayer. In our day, making decisions for people leaves one open to litigation. The minister who preaches and teaches God’s Word systematically offers from the pulpit counsel that should be sufficient for the major part of people’s problems.

Perhaps, the ministry most important, after that of preaching, is the systematic teaching of the Scriptures. The Apostle Paul has the following to say in regard to pastoral teaching:

1 Timothy 3:1-3 ¹ This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. ² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; ³ not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous. (NKJV)

2 Timothy 4:1-5 ¹ I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: ² Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴ and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. ⁵ But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

1 Timothy 5:17 ¹⁷ Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. (NKJV)

According to Ephesians 4:11,12, where Paul names the ministry gifts given by Christ to the church, he declares that teaching is the principal ministry of the pastor. By the teaching ministry the pastor equips the saints to minister edification to the body of Christ. The pastor who does not provide a systematic teaching of the Word is going to have a congregation of spiritual babes, according to the author of Hebrews.

Hebrews 5:12-13 ¹² For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³ For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. (NKJV)

There are those pastors who think that a service is good only when it ends with shouts and waves of emotion. No one will deny that we all need blessings from the Lord, and we all are helped by the joy of the Lord being manifested in the worship, but the most enduring blessing results when our joy comes from Bible truths made more real to us through anointed teaching and preaching. Emotion is not an end in itself, but the result of divine truth which results from singing, witnessing and learning in the power of the Spirit. True blessing is not that which lasts only during the service, but that which also endures throughout the week with its temptations and problems. The good and wise pastor is one who has formed the habit of studying systematically the great themes of the Holy Scriptures with the purpose of sharing those truths with his flock. Such a pastor does not neglect to emphasize the basic truths of redemption and the promises that assure us of life eternal.

A very vital activity of the church of which the pastor should be the spiritual leader is that of prayer. The power of a praying church is beyond measurement. The book of Acts is filled with the triumphs of praying churches; a good example of this is seen especially in two passages:

Acts 4:29-31 ²⁹ “Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, ³⁰ “by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.” ³¹ And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. (NKJV)

All the efforts of the leaders of Jerusalem to stop the preaching of the gospel were futile against a praying church. They were in the midst of spiritual warfare as we are in these latter times. Prayer overcame every effort of the enemy to destroy apostolic progress. Praying churches will prevail against all the powers of darkness. Another example of the power of a praying church is found in Acts.

Acts 12:3-5 ³ And because he (Herod) saw that it pleased the Jews, he

proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. ⁴ So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover. ⁵ Peter was therefore kept in prison, BUT constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. (NKJV)

That Peter survived is common knowledge. May the power of prayer be common knowledge to all today, for never was effectual prayer more needful.

(3) The Pastor's Relations with his Assistants and Other Workers

The leaders mentioned include the assistant pastor (in the larger churches there are often more than one assistant pastor), members of the church council, the deacons, the elders, the superintendent of the Sunday school, the head usher, the president of the young people and other voluntary workers.

Some newly organized churches may not have at present the above mentioned leaders and workers; however, when the church grows sufficiently to have departments, the pastor has the responsibility to train workers and leaders for the groups.

The work of the church prospers more when all the leaders and workers form a team and work together as a team, a fellowship:

Acts 2:42 ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. (NKJV)

Philippians 1:27 ²⁷ Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. (NKJV)

It is important that the pastor maintain good relations with all his workers and leaders. Dissension among church leaders may cause a division in the congregation. When Christians fight, the devil never takes sides, he provides the ammunition for both sides.

Every assistant, worker and leader, when solicited, should be given a job description which clearly details that worker's tasks and responsibilities. If a worker or leader is not functioning satisfactorily, the pastor, who is the principal leader of the church, should after prayer counsel with the worker in a spirit of love and helpfulness:

Galatians 6:1-2 ¹ Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. ² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (NKJV)

In the spirit of the above Scripture passage, the pastor would do well to

offer the disciplined worker instruction on how to function in a satisfactory manner.

Since the greater number of assisting workers serve without financial remuneration, the pastor does well to write occasionally a letter of gratitude to his assistant workers. Since the pastor is the principal leader of the church, he or she has full responsibility for the growth and success of the church.

Acts 20:28 ²⁸ “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.” (NKJV)

1 Peter 5:1-4 ¹ The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: ² Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³ nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴ and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. (NKJV)

The pastor leads, not egotistically, lording it over his people and workers; one leads by example as following the pattern set by the Lord, Jesus Christ. The pastor does not need to grab for leadership, the Word of God gives that privilege, but God’s shepherds are first of all ministers, then leaders:

Hebrews 13:17 ¹⁷ Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. (NKJV)

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 ¹² And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³ and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves. (NKJV)

Jesus declared that the laborer is worthy of his wages.

Since the pastor is an example for the congregation and especially for the assistants and the workers, they must in their conversations with them maintain a high standard of Bible morality; likewise the senior minister should demonstrate an elevated level of Christian conduct. The pastor must never give occasion to rumors of improper intimacy with the opposite sex. Furthermore, assistants and workers will have many conversations with their leader, some of which will be personal and confidential, the pastor never violates those confidences or gives place to gossip which occurs far too frequently in many churches. In all counseling, the counselor must not violate the trust of the counselee.

(4) The Pastor and the Use of Time

The good and wise pastor will develop a discipline in the use of time. Otherwise much precious time that really belongs to the Lord, the congregation, and the denomination that have honored the pastor with the ministry charge will be wasted. Every church leader must maintain a well planned calendar of activities.

I offer the following suggestions regarding the development and use of a work schedule. Write in a daily work book, in the order of their importance, all the tasks and activities that need to be accomplished. Upon the completion of each task or activity, write “done” at the end of that entry. If all the tasks for today are not completed, place them in the list for the next day, usually high on the list unless more urgent things arise. Continue the same pattern of activities day by day.

However, there are special activities like sermon study, visitation and counseling that should be given a permanent place on the calendar each week. The permanent activities, as far as is possible should be observed weekly. One method is to devote half days to the permanent activities and the other half days can be devoted to the daily lists of “things to do.” A similar plan of activities is often followed by some of the greatest executives of the business world. The pastor should not neglect his family, where possible one full day should be devoted to the family circle. Discontent in the pastor’s family circle can have an impact on the church family. No doubt there will arise from time to time interruptions in the pastor’s calendar, however, the permanent calendar and work schedule should be resumed as soon as the unexpected events are resolved. If one does not follow a planned calendar, discipline will be lost and valuable time will be wasted. The Bible commands us to “redeem the time” or literally “make the most of every opportunity.”

Ephesians 5:15-19 ¹⁵ Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts. (NRSV)

1 Timothy 4:12-16 ¹² Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Until I arrive, give attention to the public reading of scripture, to exhorting, to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders. ¹⁵ Put these things into practice, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. ¹⁶ Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers. (NRSV)

(5) The Pastor and Evangelism

The word “evangelist” is found three times in the New Testament; it comes from the term that is translated “gospel,” meaning “good news.” An evangelist is one who preaches the Gospel, the good news of salvation, that is redemption through Christ’s atoning work on the cross. Although Timothy was a pastor, Paul admonished him to “do the work of an evangelist.”

2 Timothy 4:5 ⁵ But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. (NKJV)

The evangelist was one of the ministry gifts which the triumphant Savior gave to the church:

Ephesians 4:11 ¹¹ And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. (NKJV)

Acts 21:8 ⁸ On the next day we who were Paul’s companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. (NKJV)

Only Philip is actually called an evangelist. The evangelistic work of Philip is recorded in the eighth chapter of Acts, describing his revival in Samaria:

Acts 8:5-6 ⁵ Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. ⁶ And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. (NKJV)

Evangelism, however, does not apply only to the multitudes. While the revival in Samaria was in progress, the Spirit led Philip to witness to one person:

Acts 8:26-27 ²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, “Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza. “This is desert. ²⁷ So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship.

Acts 8:29 ²⁹ Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go near and overtake this chariot.” (NKJV)

Evangelism has many forms; there is personal evangelism, door to door evangelism, Sunday school evangelism, tract and literature evangelism, street corner evangelism, local church evangelism, city wide evangelism, radio and television evangelism etc. The pastor, to do the work of an evangelist, should support any form of soul winning that he together with his church can carry out. A church will stagnate that is totally inward oriented.

(6) The Pastor and the Finances of the Church

It is universally taken for granted that members of a Foursquare church will give a tithe (tenth) to the Lord. The practical almost never reaches the ideal. Nearly always the members of a church contribute to that church in proportion to their satisfaction with the ministry of the church. It can be said that the church prospers financially to the degree that it prospers spiritually. It is not recommended that the pastor manage the finances of the church directly. The church should appoint or elect a treasurer who has experience in the management of finances. The church's bank account should require the signatures of two persons, perhaps those of the pastor and the treasurer or a member of the church council. The pastor should receive periodically a financial report from the treasurer; a financial report should be made available to the membership once or twice a year.

The manner in which the finances are distributed is the responsibility of the church board or council of which the pastor is the chairman. A pastor does well to guard against extended and emotional appeals for finances at every service. Such appeals usually have the opposite effect from that which is desired. Better results come through prayer and the expository teaching of the New Testament on stewardship, for instance on 2 Corinthians, chapters eight and nine. When a church experiences revival, it nearly always experiences an increase in giving.

(7) The Pastor and the Sacraments or Ordinances

Matthew 28:19 ¹⁹ “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (NKJV)

Acts 2:38 ³⁸ Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (NKJV)

1 Corinthians 11:23-24 ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” (NKJV)

Since water baptism is both a command of the Lord Jesus and an apostolic admonition, it should not be neglected but practiced regularly. Some successful pastors find blessed results in expecting new converts to be filled with the Holy Spirit at the time of water baptism.

Since the Lord, Himself, has admonished us to observe the Lord's supper, we should expect special blessing from conformity to His command. The

following results come from Holy communion: 1) We remember the Lord's atoning work for us (11:24); 2) We give testimony to the Lord's atoning work (11:26); 3) We witness to the Lord's second coming (11:26); 4) We partake by faith of the blessings which the bread and fruit of the vine symbolize (10:16); 5) We examine our attitude so that we partake in faith (11:27,28); 6) We declare our oneness in the Lord Jesus (10:17); 7) With the Apostle Paul we render an act of obedience to our Lord. Many believers upon taking communion in faith receive bodily healing, for they discern the Lord's body as offered for our healing, "with His stripes we are healed" (11:28-30).

(8) The Pastor and his Denomination

In the local church the pastor is the leader; he expects and receives loyalty from his congregation. By the same principle the pastor gives loyalty to the leadership of his denomination, district or national board. There are many programs for the good of the churches, the Sunday schools, and the youth groups that are made available. If the leaders of the district or country have programs of practices that require the cooperation of all the churches, the pastors have the responsibility to give to their superiors the same loyalty that they expect from their congregation and its workers. The pastor who causes dissension in his district or nation will sooner or later experience dissension in his local congregation. On the other hand, the pastor who cooperates with his leaders can expect cooperation from his members and workers. That which we sow we reap. The Lord blesses members of churches who are loyal to their pastor, in the same manner the Lord blesses pastors who cooperate with those whose work it is to plan for the district or country. That which the Lord is working out in a country or district requires the cooperation of all the churches of which the larger area is composed.

All Christian leaders, whether pastors or area leaders need to be guided by the Christian principle of humility and brotherhood. All church organizations will operate much more smoothly if we all keep in mind that all leaders in the kingdom of God are servants; much emphasis is given to "leadership," but just as much emphasis should be given to "servanthood." We can all benefit from listening often to our Lord's admonition given to His disciples in Mark 10:42-45:

Mark 10:42-45 ⁴² But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. ⁴⁴ "And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. ⁴⁵ "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (NKJV)

1 Thessalonians 5:11-15 ¹¹ Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing. ¹² And we urge you, brethren, to

recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³ and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴ Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. ¹⁵ See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. (NKJV)

Acts 14:21-23 ²¹ And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God." ²³ So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. (NKJV)

Titus 1:4-9 ⁴ To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior. ⁵ For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you – ⁶ if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. ⁷ For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, ⁸ but hospitable, a lover of what is good, soberminded, just, holy, self-controlled, ⁹ holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. (NKJV)