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OVERSEERS OF THE FLOCK
By Gideon Brooks Williamson

A Discussion of Pastoral Practice
Beacon Hill Press
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Also By The Author
"The Labor of Love"
And By The Author
And Mrs. Williamson
"Yesu Masiki Jay"
("Victory to Jesus, the Messiah")

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BOOK JACKET TEXT

Gideon B. Williamson

Dr. Gideon B. Williamson of Kansas City is one of the general superintendents in the Church of the Nazarene. Prior to his election to this office, Dr. Williamson was pastor of First Church of the Nazarene in Kansas City, Missouri, and before that served for nine years as president of Eastern Nazarene College, Wollaston, Massachusetts. For two quadrennia he served as president of the Nazarene Young People's Society.

Elected to the general superintendency in 1946, Dr. Williamson was re-elected for a term of four years by the Twelfth General Assembly held in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1948.

In connection with his duties as general superintendent, Dr. Williamson has traveled extensively throughout the United States and Canada supervising the established churches in these areas. In his supervisory capacity he has also visited the mission stations of the church in Mexico and Latin America. He has been the presiding officer in two district assemblies for the Church of the Nazarene in the British Isles held at Glasgow, Scotland. He has also done considerable traveling in foreign lands, visiting the missionary work carried on by the denomination. These travels have taken him to Hawaii, Australia, India, Syria, the Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan, Israeli, Italy, and Switzerland. He has also visited many of our churches in Scotland, Ireland, and England.

His wife, Audrey Williamson, has accompanied him on many of these tours, particularly his travels in foreign countries. She has collaborated with him in the writing of the story of their visit to the mission stations in India. The book is entitled *Jesu Masiki Jay*.

Dr. Williamson is the author of a Christian Service Training text on evangelism entitled *The Labor of Love*, also a book on pastoral theology, *Overseers of the Flock*.

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DEDICATION

For more than twenty years my wife, Audrey J. Williamson, has been my most intimate and valued counselor, and my greatest source of inspiration and encouragement. She has shared my labors in pastoral, institutional, and general leadership. In extensive travels she has been constantly with me in spirit, if not in person. Her prayers have been the secret of my victories. She deserves much credit for any success that has rewarded my labors. To her this book of pastoral practice is lovingly and gratefully dedicated.

* * * * *

INTRODUCTION

For several years pastors and prospective ministers have urgently appealed for a useful, reliable handbook on pastoral practice. *Overseers of the Flock* is the abundant answer to that appeal.

Dr. Williamson's wide experience in pastoral work, which took him from the small village church to the large city church, and his work as college president for nine years, during which time he instituted and participated in an extensive preacher training program and made a thorough study of counseling practices—all these have given him a vast treasure of knowledge, which he shares with his readers in this book.

He does not write from theory or present untried methods. He writes as a highly successful, soul-winning, church-building pastor.

Dr. Williamson has given the undershepherds a book that reflects his utter devotion to the Great Shepherd and to the sheep of His pasture, over which He has made His ministers the "overseers." His experience as a general superintendent in the church for two quadrenniums has given him opportunity to hear reports of several thousands of pastors in the homeland and around the world. His careful study of the reasons for the success or failure of these pastors equips him to write a book which clearly reveals shining paths to still waters and green pastures to which the "overseers" may lead the flock.

I thank God for the book Overseers of the Flock and its author. I commend the book to ministers everywhere.

D. I. Vanderpool

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FOREWORD

Six years ago, during my brief term as pastor of Kansas City First Church of the Nazarene, the Book Committee of the Church of the Nazarene urgently requested that I prepare a book on the subject of pastoral practice. Very soon I was called upon to assume the arduous duties of the general superintendency. The adjustment to this new work, the unexpected changes brought about by the death of three colleagues in less than four years, and almost constant travel in this and other lands have afforded little time for writing and less for reading and research. Therefore this production comes out of the years of personal experience and observation which have been mine. I make no claim to having read widely in preparation for this task.

The material herein contained is admittedly directed to ministers of the Church of the Nazarene. Upon its distinctive polity and usages it is based. The principal purpose in writing has been to help beginning and self-educated ministers to adapt themselves to the work of a pastor, to assist them in the solution of their problems, and to guide them past some of the pitfalls into which others have fallen.

This is not a treatise on homiletics; but, since preaching is such an important part of pastoral ministry, a section on "The Pastor-Preacher" has been included.

Acknowledgment is made of the help rendered by my wife in reading and correcting the manuscript; of the contribution of Dr. L. A. Reed, professor of preaching in the Nazarene Theological Seminary, in compiling the bibliography; and of Dr. Mendell Taylor, professor of church history in the same institution, in preparing the index; and of the faithful work of Misses Mildred Schmidt and Jennie Anderson, typists. Further acknowledgment is hereby gratefully made of the permission granted by the Abingdon-Cokesbury Press to use "Ten Commandments for the Minister to Youth," from a chapter on "Youth" by Hoover Rupert in Pastoral Care, edited by J. Richard Spann. The permission to use "A Modernized St. Paul" as a quotation from Monday Morning was also graciously granted by Editor Walter W. Rankin.

All the labor which the writing of this volume has required will be repaid if those who read "take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

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PREFACE -- AN HOLY CALLING

The vocation of the Christian ministry is in a class by itself. It is both a calling and a profession. It is first of all a choice of God's. Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you" (John 15:16). To Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus Road He said, "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness" (Acts 26:16). The Apostle Paul always looked upon his work as an assignment from God. He said to the Galatians, "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood" (Galatians 1:15, 16). He said to the Corinthians, "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me" (I Corinthians 9:16, 17).

The Divine Call

There are some who have rejected the idea that a divine call is a necessary consideration for entering the ministry. But it is still the only adequate foundation for the largest measure of success in this sacred vocation. Not every one who is called is forced to choose between preaching the gospel or accepting eternal hell as his everlasting portion. But only he who has the persuasion deep in his soul that preaching is God's first choice for his life will possess the necessary qualifications for a ministry that fulfills God's ideal.

The awareness of a divine appointment gives one a sense of mission. It urges him on with a divine compulsion. Paul said, "The love of Christ constraineth us." Very naturally the man who looks upon the ministry as a vocation of his own choosing will feel that, since he started by his own appointment, he may quit when he gets ready. That may explain why there are so many ex-preachers now engaged in secular pursuits. To every preacher there come times of discouragement when adverse circumstances multiply; but if he can rest back upon the full persuasion that it was in answer to God's call that he took upon himself the work of the ministry, new endurance, faith, and courage will be born in his soul.

Without the assurance of a divine sanction, men are disposed to speak apologetically of the gospel. They indulge in speculation. They cater to the demands of carnal and worldly church members. They soft-pedal the rugged notes of the gospel message that make demands upon the conscience. They dilute the doctrines that are pure and changeless. They think in terms of personal advantage and seek the praise of men. They do not speak with authority. The note of conviction and finality is absent in their pulpit utterances.

While a divine mandate is necessary to a large success in this holy calling, yet all the responsibility for fruitful service does not rest upon God. The ministry is a calling. As such, the choice is God's; but it is also a profession and, as such, requires that all who enter its ranks shall give their best to it. Every man must stir up the gift that is within him.

The Personal Responsibility

That God has called him is not a substitute for an adequate period of preparation and diligence in maintaining a life disciplined by study and hard work. Paul said to Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). Every preacher should place all his capabilities at God's disposal and do his best to be a workman without cause for shame.

The preacher is not only the custodian of the unsearchable riches of Christ; he is also charged with the responsibility of saving the souls of men. Jesus placed the value of a soul above that of the whole world. If a preacher trifles with his calling, if he squanders his time, if he defaults his duty, priceless souls will be required at his hands.

This great responsibility carries with it the idea of accountability. Preachers are admonished to watch for souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief. Paul said to Timothy, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

"Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (II Timothy 4:1, 2, 5). Preachers tremble at the thought of an annual report. How will they feel when they stand before the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls to make a final report! Only as one lives with a sense of great responsibility can he anticipate the judgment without fear.

All the scriptural designations for the minister of the gospel imply solemn responsibility to God and man—prophet, priest, servant of God, minister of Christ, man of God, husbandman, bishop, elder, ambassador, angel of the church, shepherd, and overseer of the flock of God. What a vocation, what an assignment, what an obligation belong to all who enter this holy calling! Certainly none should presume to consider himself worthy of such high honor or equal to such responsibility.

The Offices of the Church

There are several phases of the ministry, offering place to many men of various types of mind and personality. Paul recognized this fact. In writing to the Ephesians he said, "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ . . . he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: . . . from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:7, 11, 12, 13, 16).

In the Church of our day there are evangelists, pastors, teachers, and administrators. They all supplement and support one another. Each one supplies something that is needed to make complete the body of Christ. None should feel inferior in his appointed place. None should feel superior because some distinctive gift is his. All are joined together in Christ to minister salvation to needy men and build God's kingdom on the earth.

The Uniqueness of the Pastorate

Of the several positions offered in the Church, the pastorate involves more of the functions of the Christian ministry than any other. In a very real sense a pastor is a preacher, an evangelist, a teacher, and an administrator. To him is given the opportunity to improve his mind and talents by regular habits of study and prayer. He may plan his work and work his plan. He has contact with people and preaches to their need with accurate aim. His task is like that of his Lord and Master. He may say as did Jesus, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18). He may be engaged in a soul-saving ministry. He may feed the flock of God and witness their growth in the grace and knowledge of the Saviour.

No man called of God to the ministry can do better than to begin as pastor of a church. It is the place most suited to an apprenticeship. There the preacher will learn most. His understanding of people will be broadened. His mind and character will gain strength and stability. If he is ever to serve in any specialized field, he needs the firm foundation that pastoring a church will build.

It is difficult to understand why a man who has the soul of a true minister of Christ should ever, by his own volition, leave the pastorate. His restless eagerness to do so may prove he is unfit

for the place he fills, but it may also reveal that he is not prepared to fill the place he desires. To urge a young preacher to remain in the pastoral ministry until an election by the church to some other office is confirmed by unmistakable providences is sound advice.

If one feels the need of a larger place in which to fulfill his call, there is unlimited opportunity for him to broaden his sphere of influence in his own church and community. God seldom allows a man to outgrow his assignment. As the man grows, the opportunity enlarges. Much more frequent is the predicament of a small man trying to do a job too big for him. If he is aware of the ill-proportioned situation, he will be embarrassed. If unaware of it, he will be held in contempt by others.

To be sure, a full consecration to do the whole will of God is necessary. One must recognize the call of duty when that inner voice speaks and, at whatever sacrifice, he must respond by saying, "The will of the Lord be done." But a man who has a call to preach can more nearly find all his heart longs for in pastoring a church than anywhere else. He should assume that a call to the ministry will lead him into the place in which he can develop his own mind and soul according to the pattern set before him in Christ Jesus, in which he can in the most natural way serve God and his fellow men, and in which he can do the most for the building of God's kingdom. The rule is that such a place is the pastorate. Any exceptions prove the rule rather than disprove it.

After all, who knows how far-reaching a pastor's influence may be? He may make his work both intensive and extensive. He may give attention to the spirituality of his church. He may evangelize a community. Directly or indirectly he may make his influence reach other nearby communities and ultimately the ends of the earth. The offerings that his people make unto God may help send the gospel to all the world. The lives consecrated to the service of God under his ministry may become God's chosen vessels to bear His name to the most distant places.

It is to such humble, faithful, God-called servants of the Church that this handbook of pastoral practice is directed.

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SECTION I -- THE PASTOR'S PERSONAL LIFE

01 -- THE MAN HIMSELF

Next to the grace of God, a pastor's personality is the greatest factor in his success. That statement is not based upon any superficial measurement of the man. The fact that he is a good showman or even a good salesman does not define his personality. It is not only the impression he makes upon the first meeting, but how well he wears in a long acquaintance. It not only recognizes the reputation he has gained in the estimation of men, but also the character he possesses in the sight of the all-seeing God.

Personality includes the whole man, physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual. What he attains in personal charm, intelligence, strength, and Godlike capacity will determine his accomplishment in the service of God and the church. His work will be a true measure of the man.

His influence as a spiritual leader can never be any greater than his own attainments would indicate.

In this discussion of the pastor's personality let us begin with those things that are most peripheral and proceed to things central. But let none suppose that even the things that have to do with outward appearance are unimportant. They not only have bearing upon impressions received by others; they also reveal what there is buried in the deeper strata of a man's life.

His Appearance

First, then, let it be said, without apology, that the personal appearance of a pastor is important. A few men who have been careless about their personal appearance have succeeded to some degree, but their scarcity should be a warning to all who are tempted deliberately to follow their example. Possibly extraordinary powers of mind carried such men to success. None should presume to be possessed of such capabilities.

Therefore, a pastor should give attention to the manner of his dress. He need not wear a distinctive clerical garb. He should not feel himself above putting on work clothes if the occasion demands, and he need not fear to soil his hands with manual labor. But when he presents himself for public appearance on the street, in society, or in the church service, he should be as presentable as the profession of the ministry requires.

A preacher's clothing need not be costly. It cannot always be new. It should never be extravagant or out of harmony with the circumstances in which he finds himself. He should not look as if he had just emerged from the tailor's shop, while his wife and family are shabby. He should not dress in such a way as to make his parishioners self-conscious; but under all circumstances a pastor should be clean, neat, and well-groomed.

Even well-worn clothes can be spotless and pressed. A vest bespattered with gravy, baggy trousers not reaching below the ankles, a coat sprinkled with hair and dandruff and with buttons missing, a soiled shirt and collar, with a tie hanging loosely below the collar button, and unshined shoes are all without excuse. Soap, water, cleaning fluid, a clothes-brush, shoe polish, and a pressing iron can all be had for very little, and they can do wonders in keeping a preacher respectable in his appearance.

But the clothes do not make the man. The rack on which they hang is significant too. His hair should be cut and combed, his face shaved and clean, his hands washed, and his fingernails free of dirt. He should cultivate a becoming posture, with shoulders erect. Whether sitting or standing, he should avoid careless and vulgar positions. He should combat excessive weight by disciplined habits of eating and by physical exercise. He should take all proper precautions against body odors and offensive breath. His teeth should receive necessary care, in order to preserve them, as well as for best appearance.

His Health

The pastor's body is the temple of God's Spirit and an instrument consecrated to God for His service. Therefore, all reasonable efforts should be made to keep it well. Indulgence in eating and at irregular hours has undermined the health of many preachers and brought them to an untimely end. Eating three times a day at regular hours and with moderation is a safeguard to good health. Heavy eating late at night is all but suicidal.

Sleep is also necessary to health and a pastor's best performance. Eleven o'clock is a reasonable hour for retirement. Then he will be ready to rise no later than seven in the morning, refreshed in body and mind for another day's work for his Lord and Saviour.

There are many things concerning the pastor's health which cannot be discussed here. Suffice it to say that all the well-known rules for personal hygiene should be observed. These should be supplemented by an occasional visit to a reputable doctor for a complete checkup and a semiannual visit to a dentist.

His Deportment

The third consideration in the measure of a preacher's personality is his manners. He does not need to be bound by all the conventions of elite society to the extent that he is unnatural and ill at ease. Certainly he should not be fawning or effeminate. Nevertheless, it is inexcusable for a pastor to be crude and boorish. He should cultivate the ability to be at ease in polite society. This does not mean that he will feel himself superior to others. To call attention to their lack of culture would be an evidence of a deficiency in refinement on his own part. A mark of gentility is the ability to put everyone at ease regardless of social standing. An air of superiority and obliging condescension is unnecessary and unbecoming. A natural, unassumed grace and easy bearing are the best evidence of good breeding.

It is especially desirable for a pastor to be able to sit down to anybody's table and eat without embarrassing himself or his host and hostess. Some familiarity with table etiquette is therefore necessary. One may not care to memorize all the rules that Emily Post has laid down, but to inform himself on the best procedures at mealtime may save him some humiliating experiences. To be sure, if he lives carelessly below his own knowledge at home, he will not be relaxed and comfortable when a guest in another's home. For his own sake and for the sake of his family, appropriate table decorum should be maintained at all meals and every day.

It is also very important that a pastor shall know how to meet strangers and how to introduce them to others. He may not cater to the people who are socially superior, but he should be able to meet anyone without constraint. He should be able to call in the poorest or the best homes in his community with becoming ease.

Courtesy and deference to all people are appropriate for a pastor. Gracious manners will be a very good recommendation for any representative of Christ. Paul said, "Be courteous"; and the Psalmist said, "Thy gentleness hath made me great."

Among the graces that a pastor should cultivate is that of gratitude. He is the recipient of many favors. He should never allow himself to take it for granted that they are due him. If it be a

kindly word of encouragement or a gift of real worth, it should be acknowledged promptly and appropriately. The pastor should never allow himself to expect gratuities or notice the fact that they are not forthcoming; but when they are received he should let his thanks be expressed in unmistakable ways, whether the consideration be great or small.

A pastor should seek to be a good conversationalist. To be prepared for such a role he should read with some breadth of interest. He should be in command of a good vocabulary and know how to use the language he speaks with intelligence and accuracy. He should avoid egocentric conversation. His clothes, furniture, car, position, travels, attainments, education, family free, and ailments can become very threadbare topics for discussion. He should be a good listener as well as a good talker. A one-sided visit soon becomes boring. Let the conversation be of things of mutual interest.

The indulgence in gossip about other people should always be beneath the pastor's level. Mean people talk about others, to their own discredit. A pastor should never be a talebearer and he should never leave anyone thinking less of another. If he does, it may be himself.

Little people talk about things. Such conversation may easily become meaningless chatter with a multitude of words, in which sin is not lacking. Big people talk about ideas and ideals. Their speech is with grace, seasoned with salt. Their conversation is in heaven, or could be without being out of place. They elevate themselves in the minds of others, and those with whom they speak are elevated too. Here again the use of this kind of conversation in the pastor's own home and with the members of his family will make it more natural elsewhere. And for the sake of his own family it should be practiced. Many preachers' children have become confirmed critics of others, if not unbelieving rebels, because they have heard so much gossip at home.

His Spirit

But the most important factor in a charming personality is one's spirit. There are some men who are by innate tendency of even temperament and agreeable disposition. They have an advantage if all else be equal. But there is no reason for one who is not so fortunate to exercise his bad spirit by admitting that he has an unattractive disposition by nature and assuming there is nothing he can do about it. The grace of God will do wonders for him if appropriated by faith.

Furthermore, self-discipline in co-operation with grace will make a new man of him. One need not yield to the caprice of his own temperament. A suspicious person can cultivate confidence in others. One disposed to melancholy can become cheerful. A pessimistic soul can voluntarily look on the bright side. An introvert can become friendly; and an extrovert can, by his own will, become deep-souled and spiritually minded. Let no man consent to be a victim of his own excesses. With the ideal life of Jesus Christ before him and by the power of God's Spirit working in him, he may become a well-poised and an attractive personality.

His Philosophy

Every preacher should work out for himself a fundamental philosophy of life which is soundly Christian. If one does not think through to such a working philosophy for the guidance of

his own spirit, his decisions and judgments will be warped and his attitudes wrong. He will soon be ill-adjusted within himself and out of joint with people in general.

Humility, or a modest estimate of one's own worth, is at bottom in a Christian philosophy of life. If one can truly feel that everything good which he possesses is a gift from God and that a place of trust among men is more than he deserves, it will contribute largely to his peace of mind and his effectiveness in service. Jesus said, "Whosoever of you will be chiefest, shall be servant of all." And of himself He said, "I am among you as he that serveth." Paul said, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" He also said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Every pastor should consider himself the servant of the Church for Christ's sake. He is appropriately called the minister.

Humility is not voluntarily assumed. It is unconsciously possessed. It is a hidden light that illumines all the virtues of a radiant personality. It not only saves one from egotism with the obvious strut and swagger; it also delivers one from the tendency to be egoistic, and to relate every problem that arises to his own promotion or demotion. It gives him a holy carelessness about what happens to him personally. It enables him to live for the sake of others and for the glory of God. John the Baptist said of Christ, "He must increase, but I must decrease." But Jesus of John said, "He was a burning and a shining light." A man of humble mind can trust God for all the future years. God will see to it that he is not overlooked, underrated, or unrewarded.

Charity is a grace complementary to humility. As certainly as one looks upon himself without pride and conceit, he will look upon others with charity for their shortcomings and with appreciation for their good qualities; whereas one who appraises himself too highly will be disposed to discount others in order that he may maintain his own relative position.

This charity-humility combination will go far toward establishing one as a spiritual leader in the confidence of others. A certain self-reliance is needed for spiritual leadership, but Samuel Chadwick gives three rules for one to follow in maintaining such a relation to others. They are: first, self-abnegation; second, self-ab negation; third, self-abnegation. Then the complement to that state of mind is appreciation of others. A faultfinding, critical pastor is doomed to failure. The ability to see his own faults and admit them and the willingness to correct his mistakes and misjudgments are important beyond possibility of overestimation. At the same time, the ability to overlook faults and mistakes of others and to appreciate them is equally important.

A Christian philosophy enables one to live a life of contentment wherever he may be placed. He has forever resigned himself to the will of God. And he knows that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Resignation to God's will is the secret of contentment. No person who is complaining of his lot, blaming others for his failures, and even feeling that God has not dealt squarely with him, can succeed in the ministry. His ill-content disqualifies him to do anything to change the situation. Submission to God's good and holy will makes him ready to do miracles to bring to pass a happier state of affairs for himself, and prepares him for greater service in days to come.

Contentment is not a passive acceptance of the status quo. Dr. Merton S. Rice preached a sermon on "The Discontented Optimist." Such a person knows things could be worse and is glad they are not. He also knows they can be better and he is prepared to improve them with God's help.

Thus one develops a positive state of mind. Nothing can more certainly predict a man's failure than for him to allow himself to be habitually negative in his outlook. Such a man is already a defeated victim of circumstances. Faith in God and His providences, faith in one's fellow men, and a permissible measure of faith in oneself is the cure for the negative attitude. The positive state of mind makes everything possible.

This Christian philosophy gives one enthusiasm for life, for people with whom one works, and for the task assigned. A passive, phlegmatic soul who has no zest for living and no zeal to serve God and man should never enter the ministry. If he finds himself there, he had better change his state of mind or his vocation. Every preacher in a big place or a little one must keep the romance in his work or he can never master the situations by which he will be confronted. Enthusiasm may sometimes lead him beyond the bounds of well-balanced reason, but he will usually be forgiven for being too enthusiastic. The passive soul will never need forgiveness except for living, for he will never do anything. The only way to make sure of never making any blunders is to do nothing.

The pastor who works according to the Christian philosophy may fail sometimes, but not for long. His spirit will enable him to turn failure into success and defeat into victory. It will help him change his opposition into faithful support. It will keep him happy in making others happy.

* * * * *

02 -- HIS HOME

The Pastor And His Domestic Life

The pastor's home should be the nearest possible approximation of the normal and the ideal. The pastor himself is to be in all things a pattern of good works. If in one phase of his life he is eccentric or abnormal, he must of necessity sacrifice some of the spiritual power and leadership which he should possess. A celibate ministry is abnormal as well as being Contrary to reason and revelation. That is a sufficient argument against it. A few Protestant ministers who never married have been eminently successful. But it is doubtful if any of them have recommended celibacy to others.

Choice of a Wife

A pastor more nearly determines what his home life shall be when he chooses a wife than he does by all other decisions. Therefore, let him choose well. More than anyone else, a pastor-to-be should avoid marriage in haste, of which to repent at leisure. Divorce is always a tragedy, but it is a staggering blow to a preacher. There may be some unions consummated after only a brief acquaintance which prove to be happy and successful. But for a pastor the element of

risk should be eliminated, if possible. Engagement and marriage should be agreed upon only after adequate time has been given for mutual knowledge and understanding to be reached.

It is well to know the parents of a girl. Any quirks or idiosyncrasies that appear in them may develop in their offspring. This is especially true of the mother. "Like mother, like daughter, is quite a reliable maxim. And when a prospective pastor chooses a wife, he chooses a lifelong companion, the keeper of the parsonage, and the mother of his children. Therefore, to know the stock from which she comes is highly advisable.

Mutual Attraction

Between the courting preacher and the woman of his choice there are three points of full agreement that should be evident. There should be a mutual attraction one for the other. A frigid personality with no sparkle in the eye and a cold, clammy hand grasp is seldom transformed into a cordial, lovable person by the ceremony of marriage. If anybody needs love and understanding in life's most intimate relations, it is a pastor. A red-blooded man with an indifferent, prudish wife is certain to be unhappy, and will be an easier prey to the great temptations that are sure to assail him.

Social and Intellectual Equality

The second point of agreement is on the plane of the social and the intellectual. A pastor who desires to marry should assure himself that the woman of his selection is one of whom he will not be ashamed in any circle in which he may be called upon to move. May God have mercy on the man who would rather not present his wife, and may more abundant mercy be shown to the poor woman herself. But more than social culture is needed in a preacher's wife. She should have the intellectual capacity to keep up an interesting conversation with her husband and also provide some stimulation for him. The pastor may go on to higher education; but if his wife has intellectual capacity and an alert and eager mind she need never feel inferior, and he need never feel embarrassed to present her as his helpmeet. He should be sure before he even asks her to marry him that in youth, in middle age, and in advanced years he will be genuinely proud of her as his wife.

Conformity in Religion

The third point on which the two persons considering marriage should agree is in things spiritual and religious. Similarity of religious background and training is important. Understanding each other's experiences, ideals, and convictions is fundamental. A preacher should not marry a woman who is emotionally unbalanced in matters of religion. Neither should he marry one who is only formally religious, with no zeal and enthusiasm for God, the church, and the salvation of men. If there is serious disparagement between two young people before marriage, the gap is liable to widen as time goes on. The consecration of both to God, and of each to the other, must be so complete that in perfect unity they are prepared to bear the burdens, endure the crosses, and accept the hardships that the calling of the ministry may entail in all the years ahead of them.

Character Qualifications

Among other qualities that are desirable in a pastor's wife is a good disposition. She cannot be a touchy, temperamental, jealous, sensitive, selfish person without being extremely unhappy. To be sure, if she is unhappy her husband will be. Perhaps the most essential consideration of all is, Does the woman who is to live in a parsonage have good sense? It is said that Bishop Joyce in lecturing to young candidates for the ministry said: "Young men, get married. If possible get a woman who has both sense and religion. If there are none available who have both, then marry one who has good sense, and if she has sense she will get religion."

If the queen of the parsonage is all she ought to be, most of the problems of that home are solved, or will be. The atmosphere of a pastor's home should be heavenly. Cleanliness, order, devotion, and reverence are all very necessary. The preacher's wife cannot do all that some people think she should in the activities of the church and make her home ideal. To be sure, she cannot be a disinterested, inactive member of the church or be unfriendly and non-communicative with the people. A reasonable amount of activity is good. To be president of the young people's society and the missionary society, teach a Sunday-school class, play the piano, and sing the solos is too much for her good and for the best interests of the church. It is seldom wise for the pastor's wife to serve as a member of the official board. Let her never be officious. Her principal contribution to the progress of the church is in making the parsonage home all it ought to be. Her church activity should be regulated by the time she is able to spare from reasonable home duties. Her place in the church might be comparable to that of a leading lay woman of ability equal to her own. If she be a woman of spiritual insight and strong character, she will be obliged to give many hours to others in counsel and prayer. These unscheduled responsibilities will occupy much of the time she has to spare.

A happy, radiant wife who loves her home and her husband, who prepares palatable meals, keeps the home attractive, makes herself lovable, maintains secret devotions, shows kindness to everyone and partiality to none, is a pastor's greatest guarantee of success.

The Pastor's Children

Children are a necessary part of a normal family life. Happy is that pastor who has a family of children who are a credit to him and an aid to his ministry; and many there are who could so classify. The old idea that the preacher's children are of the worst sort is wholly without support in fact. The records reveal that, of all vocations, the ministry has produced proportionately the largest number of successful men in varied walks of life. Let no child think he is at a disadvantage because his father is a preacher.

On the other hand, preacher's children are not naturally good or automatically successful. They take time, patience, discipline, love, and prayer the same as any others. Therefore, the minister who is a parent should recognize and discharge his parental obligation. Probably parsonage children have been lost more for lack of attention than because they were inherently bad. While preachers are saving others they may lose their own. It is doubtful if God ever required any man to do His work to the ruin of his family.

Every pastor, therefore, should devote some time to family life. Regularity at mealtime, faithfulness to a family altar, fairness in all decisions, firmness always with love, and with discipline when needed, are parental duties no to be superseded by any routine demands of a day. Some time for fun and frolic with the youngsters will make the sacrifices and disciplines of parsonage life more bearable, if not actually enjoyable.

Family Planning

Here a word regarding wise planning for a family is in order. The perpetuation of the human race is not the only purpose in marriage. It is not good for man to be alone. Love is a normal desire of any normal man. But it is very doubtful if a marriage should ever be consummated if there is a purpose to avoid bearing children. Barrenness is sometimes inescapable, but it should be a disappointment and a source of regret by all Christian husbands and wives.

The bearing of children should not be postponed for a long period after marriage. For that reason premature marriage while circumstances do not permit the coming of children is a detriment to the most happily adjusted wedded life. Within a few years, at the longest, plans should be made for a baby to come and bless the home. Children can be too frequent and too many for a preacher's best interest. In rearing a family, however, it is well if the children be not too widely spaced to prevent them from being companions for one another. The number and frequency of children can be regulated according to the advice of a trustworthy doctor who has a conscience as well as an understanding of the physical problems involved. The ideal parsonage family is from two to four children, born within the first ten to fifteen years of married life.

A family of well-trained children, brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, is an asset to a preacher and not a liability. They will help him in the youth activities of the church, do him credit in the services by their example of good behavior in the house of God, and recommend what he preaches to all who observe. Next to his wife, his children will be his most effective helpers.

Family Guidance

It is obvious, then, that a preacher's home life is a very important factor in his happiness and his success. It will justly demand some of his time; but while he is building a home after the true Christian pattern, he is saving a community now and for generations to come. He is also rendering a distinct service to his church in actual results obtained.

To this end let there be complete agreement between father and mother. Let there be mutual sharing of responsibility for the family. One cannot be father and mother both. Each must strengthen the other's hands in understanding, co-operation, and intercession. No compromise should be made with sinful and worldly indulgences, and it need not be made. But where one sacrifice is required to maintain Christian ideals, a compensation in something else can be offered. Parents can be true to their own consciences and the conscience of the church. They need not conform to all the demands of those who have never raised a family or who have driven their children from the church by harsh and unreasonable exactions.

Since bad literature cannot enter the home, good literature must take its place. Since obscene pictures and sensuous music are forbidden, good and uplifting works of art can fill the need. A child's life cannot be regulated or his soul saved by arbitrary prohibitions or inexorable demands. He has a right to know why he must not do what others may. And his normal instincts must be guided by good example and wise counsel.

Above all, the child's heart must be changed until the right way of the Lord is the good way for him to follow. His time and talent must be devoted to worth-while service. A good home with godly influence of parents, love, faithfulness, patience, and never-ceasing prayer will be the safeguard to the preacher's family, and in years to come the cause of undying gratitude in the hearts of his children and children's children.

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03 -- THE PASTOR AND HIS TIME

Budgeting Time

Timesaving devices have shortened the work week for many people, but modern inventions have done little to conserve time for a pastor. More rapid means of transportation and communication, such as the automobile and the telephone, may save him some valuable hours; but they may also increase his accessibility and his responsibility to such an extent that they create demands for more time than they save. This means that the budgeting of time is as necessary for a pastor now as ever before. His ability to accomplish a great amount of work is conditioned upon his ability to use his time wisely.

In guarding his days for the most essential tasks, a pastor finds little to help him and much to make it difficult. There is no time clock to be punched; there is no one to whom he must account for the time he spends, except God; and there are many interruptions from various sources. This means that he must be self-disciplined. In the investment of his time a pastor has excellent opportunity for demonstrating strength of character. He should be conscientious about his work. He should always remember that a church which gives him a home and a living wage for himself and his family is entitled to an honest week's work, just as any other employer has a right to expect such from those employed.

Of course, his love for Christ and his passion to win souls for Him should drive him beyond the bounds that are set for those who are engaged in secular pursuits. He should do much for which he expects no consideration in the way of monetary remuneration. If any man should do some sacrificial service and gratuitous labor, it is the pastor. And if secondary motives are to be considered at all, he might remind himself that his willingness to go beyond legal demands and reasonable expectations will certainly be a factor in his success, his improved position, and his promotion. Above all, he should do his work as one that must give an account, that he may do it with joy and not with grief.

Resisting Inertia

It is well to remember that a pastor faces two great temptations in this connection. First of all is a natural inertia by which the great majority of human beings are afflicted. To use the plainest language, it is just laziness: Everyone must repulse the inclination to take the way of least effort, but for the preacher the temptation to yield is greater than for those engaged in almost any other occupation. Therefore, to him it is a demon to be resisted with special watchfulness and determination.

The ministry is no haven for the indolent, aimless drifter. It demands long hours, diligent application, and hard work. It is probable that more men fail in the ministry from sheer laziness than for any other reason. That one has a small church is no excuse for little work. It should be a challenge to work harder, that it might grow. That the community in which it is located is limited is no sufficient reason for complacency. There are others nearby where the gospel seed should be sown. A pastor characterized by industry, initiative, and ambition to do something for God and men will find plenty to do and a way to get it done.

Resisting Preoccupation

The second temptation that daily besets the pastor is to be preoccupied with things that are incidental, to the neglect of the things that are of primary importance. One noted preacher said, "Preoccupation is the most common form of failure." No one is so sorely tempted at this point as a pastor. There are so many things that can be done and should be done by someone that it is easy to think them necessary. And unless one takes into account those things that are most important, he will be doing what others should do or that could be left undone. It is a case of the good being the enemy of the best. The result is a preacher taken up with trifles, while the great things he has been called to do are left untouched. And worse still, instead of growing into a man of God, great in mind and spirit, he is dwarfed to the extent that he can justify his occupation with petty things.

Planned Recreation

While there are exacting demands upon a pastor's time, he should not omit a day of recreation in each week and a proper time for a vacation each year. His work is such as to keep him under tension much of the time. When he stands in the pulpit to preach he is keyed to a high pitch. He is the arbitrator of many issues that arise between persons and groups in the church. He is alert to meet new people and to recognize those who are familiar wherever he may be. He sympathizes with the sick and sorrowing. He weeps with those who weep and rejoices with those who rejoice. He yearns over the sinner and prays for the prodigal. He is exercised in prayer for the spiritual growth of the church and for its increase according to the divine ideal.

All of this argues effectively for a time to relax the tension and refresh the body and mind. Such periods are necessary, that a man may get his own bearings, adjust his scale of values so that little things will not seem big and large ones small. Rest is required to keep one's mind clear and one's spirit poised. The preacher needs to remove himself from his habitual environment, so that he can be impersonal in his judgment and objective in his appraisals of men and situations. He needs to withdraw to the open spaces that he may breathe a clearer atmosphere. He must get away from the depressing problems that daily confront him and dwell in higher altitudes with God.

Undoubtedly men of the ministry could have avoided nervous, physical, and even moral collapse by taking time for recreation of body and mind.

Observing A Sabbath of Rest

The man who preaches Sabbath observance in harmony with God's inexorable law certainly should practice what he preaches. Sunday is his most strenuous and exacting day; therefore he should choose some other day for his rest and renewing. If he observes all the law, he will not forget that God said, "Six days shalt thou labour"; and in doing so he will be conscience-clear to take the other day of the week for change of occupation and probably of scenery, too.

Usually preachers prefer either Saturday or Monday, but the day of the week is incidental. It should be a time when all work that can possibly be put aside is forgotten. Some hours may be spent in recreation, like hunting, fishing, or a game that suits one's fancy. But at least a portion of the time should be devoted to family life: for the benefit of the pastor's wife, who also needs the change and rest; and for the benefit of the children, who are often deprived of the joy of play with their preacher parent.

The Pastor's Sunday

Sunday is a strenuous day for any pastor who is in earnest about his work. He should be up in ample time to spend at least an hour refreshing his mind with the sermon he has already prepared for the morning service, and in prayer before God that His holy anointing may be given for the delivery of the message. Then he should have a good breakfast at an hour early enough so that the house will not be in a rush to get to Sunday school. During the period that is given to that department of the church, the pastor may give such attention to the school and its direction as may be necessary; but he should find at least a few minutes to quiet his heart, refresh his memory, and commune with God, so that he may enter his pulpit prepared to speak as the oracle of God to the people. When he has conducted the morning worship, delivered his sermon, and greeted the people of the congregation, he has given out lavishly of his physical and nervous energy. It is well then to go home and, while dinner is being prepared, lie down for at least half an hour. Then after he has eaten with moderation, an afternoon sleep for an hour will do much to make him ready for effective preaching again at the evening service. This will leave time for prayer and thought in preparation for his evening message. Before he goes to the service, some light but nourishing food should be eaten. This will leave him renewed in strength and not sluggish in mind from overeating. After the service a man of normal physical strength will without doubt be weary and spent. He may be tempted to accept an invitation to repair to some member's home for sociability and refreshments. This inducement should as a rule be rejected. The practice will tend to dissipate the effectiveness of his ministry during the day. In his weariness he may indulge in overeating as well as excessive talk, while things may be discussed that had better not be mentioned. A much wiser policy is for the preacher to go to his own home, eat a little food easy to digest, commit his day's labor to God, and go to bed in the assurance that he has fulfilled his assignment. He will rest in the faith that God's Word will not return unto Him void, but will accomplish that which He pleases and prosper in the thing whereunto He sent it. Social gatherings on Sunday night are a physical and spiritual

liability to the pastor, and in some degree they are to the parishioners. If he is wise and restrained on Sunday night, probably his people will take the hint and follow his example.

The Pastor's Work Days

With one day out for rest and one day each week taken with Sunday's program, a pastor has five more in which to work for God and earn his salary. The practice of the preacher's spending the morning hours in the study and the afternoon in the work of visitation has proved satisfactory. By rising at a reasonable time he may dress, eat his breakfast, have family prayers, read all that is worth his time in the morning paper, and still be in his study by eight o'clock. There he should stay for at least four hours, five days of each week. Those hours may be interrupted to some extent; but if he will apply himself, twenty hours in prayer, reading, and writing should qualify him to preach with intelligence and power.

At midday the pastor may have an hour to an hour and a half for his luncheon and to give attention to such other items as may require his time. But from one-thirty to five-thirty he should be busy with his pastoral visitation. This will give him as much in his parish as he has spent in his study. And twenty hours a week in that work should save him any embarrassment in recording in his annual report the number of calls he has made.

In order that a pastor may ask his laymen to give unsparingly of their time for church activities, he should set the example of doing a day's work and then giving his time for meetings of boards and councils and committees after work hours. Most of this is done in the evenings, and it will occupy many of them. If any time is still available, there will certainly be plenty waiting to be done.

Some may think such a schedule too heavy. But in each day one may sleep eight hours, work ten and one-half hours (morning, afternoon, and evening), have four hours for eating and dressing, and still have an extra hour and a half to take up the slack. This schedule will be interrupted often, but it should be a guide by which one should seek to regulate his normal work week.

The Pastor's Vacation

Out of each busy year a pastor deserves and should take a vacation of from two to four weeks' duration. Many ministers in larger denominations have vacations of two or three months. Such extended absence from one of our Nazarene churches would undoubtedly be detrimental, and should not be expected or granted unless a pastor's health has been seriously impaired. But a reasonable length of time should be spent on vacation. The pastor will accomplish more while he is on the field if he gets away once a year.

The vacation time should be spent in a restful, body-building, mind-and-spirit-renewing way and place. Holding a camp meeting or a revival is not fair either to himself, his family, or the church he serves. Reading, resting, enjoying his family and God's out-of-doors will send a preacher back to his duties a better, stronger man and a wiser, safer spiritual leader.

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04 -- THE PASTOR AND MONEY

Love of Money A Snare

In the complex system of a modern world money is a necessity. Nevertheless, it is a snare to the souls of men. Even though a pastor's calling is such as to give him concern with things that are spiritual and other-worldly, yet he, too, often becomes a victim of Satan's subtle intrigue, and is ruined or damaged by overmuch concern about money. St. Paul was not unfaithful to warn Timothy and all his successors of this ever-lurking pitfall. He said, "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (I Timothy 6:6-12).

Whether a preacher has little or much is not the question. The danger is in the love of money, and that produces an unholy attitude toward it. One without money may be contaminated with the leaven of the Pharisees, which is covetousness, and go about to get money by means that may not be dishonest but may be hurtful.

There are some preachers whose measure of success is the money they receive. They may even show more concern for an increase in salary than for the salvation of souls. A beginning preacher was once heard to say, "No one need think I am going to preach just to save souls. I expect to be well paid for preaching." Needless to say, few have been saved under his ministry, and scarcely has he ever earned a living at preaching. The greatest security for the preacher, as well as everyone else, is to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Then all the things necessary to life and godliness will be added unto him. God, who clothes the grass of the field and feeds the fowls of the air, will not fail or forsake those who serve Him with undivided devotion.

Getting A Raise In Salary

There may be some circumstances that justify a pastor's asking his church board to increase his salary. But that is seldom necessary, and it is doubtful if the increase so obtained really proves to be a help. When the church prospers and the ability to pay increases, most consecrated laymen will see the need and take action to supply it. If they fail to do so, then it would be well to confer with the district superintendent about the matter and let him find a way to bring about the desired result. Should that method fail, then let the pastor pray for a revival and preach more insistently and kindly on holiness and consecration and stewardship, trusting that as his people walk in the light and grow in grace they will take care to meet the needs of his household. It is better to do without what one deserves than to gain it by hurtful

Business Ventures For The Preacher

Those who have inordinate concern for money are also tempted to seek other means of gaining it. It is admitted that in small churches it is sometimes necessary for the pastor to work on the side to secure a livelihood for himself and his family. But that should be considered a temporary expediency. If God has called a man to full-time ministry, he should give up all worldly occupations at the earliest possible date. It would be surprising in many instances to find how soon a church would undertake to pay a living wage if the preacher would cast himself upon the generosity of his people and trust the faithfulness of God. Some men divide their energies between the ministry and secular employment until they spoil their own chances in the ministry and spoil a church at the same time. The church should soon learn that the laborer is worthy of his hire. And the preacher should soon reach the place in his consecration where he is willing to preach the gospel and live of the gospel.

The question naturally arises as to whether a preacher should engage in business enterprises to secure his own future. That a pastor as well as anyone else should make some wise investments if he has the ability and resources to do so, there can be no reasonable doubt. But that preachers should be dabbling in projects which take time and attention from their church work, for the sake of getting gain, is unsafe. Again, Paul gave wise warning to Timothy. He said, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." A soldier going to war takes but little with him, and has little time to consider the accumulation of a personal fortune.

If the question be raised as to why such diverted attention is wrong, it cannot be answered by a dogmatic denunciation of the thing as a sin. But it does something to the preacher himself that is hard to define. It takes away that utter reliance upon God which makes for strong faith and clear vision. It somehow cools the passion of the preacher's soul. He preaches with less conviction and ruggedness. It is easy for him to lose his holy recklessness and abandon. He slips all but unconsciously into a smug, complacent state of mind. To preach consecration, faith, and dependence upon God with freedom and power, a preacher must live as he preaches. Jesus said, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." It is an inexorable spiritual law. Let no man of God seek to escape its demands.

It is only reasonable that a preacher who has money by inheritance or whose good years have yielded a surplus should husband the same with care, but with a conscience that guides him in his own faithfulness and liberality. Some safe investments in real estate, reliable stocks, or insurance are perfectly right. But all the while a man must keep his heart detached from the love of money.

While those who lack money may be ensnared by covetousness, it is equally true that those who have it may depend upon it and grow selfish, indulgent, and worldly. The safeguard to every preacher is to love God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength; to set his affections on things above and not on things on the earth; and literally to lose his life in saving others and building God's kingdom.

Shall The Pastor Go In Debt?

To those who have limited means there are some dangers. Debt is always bad for a preacher. He had better discipline himself to live within his means. If there comes a time for him to borrow money, it should never be from the treasury of the church, nor is it wise for a pastor to borrow from the members of the church. If he must borrow, it had better be from a bank or loan company. Then the obligation must be discharged in a businesslike way. It is well for a pastor to maintain a checking account in the bank. He should be careful that it is never overdrawn. Bouncing checks are very bad for a pastor's reputation.

But, in general, a pastor should avoid debt. If his income is limited, he had better pay cash for all purchases. He should not buy a car beyond his financial status. If there are payments to be made, he must see to it that they are within the range of his income. There was a day when men pastored churches without automobiles. They are a convenience, but still not always an absolute necessity. Certainly a pastor should not jeopardize his financial solvency by buying an automobile. Neither should the family be deprived of the things they need that a better car may be driven.

The Pastor And The Church's Money

Words of caution are not out of order here concerning the pastor's handling of church money. It goes without saying that if any money for the church must pass through his hands he should never dip into it for his own use. Even though he may be sincere in his intention to refund it, he may forget; he may be asked to account for it when he does not have it to refund; or he may find himself unable to replace it when the time comes. For him to use church money at all is without excuse. Pastor's should not take checks drawn to themselves to pay the church's obligations. Let the treasurer draw the checks to those to whom they are to go. And it is better that he send them direct rather than by way of the pastor. A pastor should never be treasurer of any church funds. He should not be the one to count the offering. If he is by circumstances beyond his control compelled to receive church money through the mail or in person, with utmost care he should deliver it to the treasurer at the earliest opportunity and see that the record is made of its receipt.

These cautions for the pastor are equally applicable to his wife and all members of his family. Far better to lean over backward in all matters related to the money of the church than to be careless and in an unguarded moment be caught in embarrassing circumstances. Once the question of a pastor's integrity in money matters is raised, it is always thereafter a sensitive point. Therefore, in this respect as well as all others, let the pastor walk circumspectly, abstaining from all appearance of evil as well as evil intentions.

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SECTION II -- THE PASTOR-PREACHER

05 -- THE PRIMACY OF PREACHING

The pastor must be master of many skills; but, first of all, he must master the art of preaching. The most accurate measure of the man is his own conception of this great task.

Preaching is the mediation of the truth of God to men through human personality. It is above all other forms of public address. Lectures or orations may be very scholarly, enlightening to the intellect and moving to the emotions; but they lack the element of the divine. Certainly they have their place, but they are no substitute for preaching which is inspired of God. Preaching has more to do with the moral and spiritual strength of a nation than any other factor in its life. It is extremely unfortunate when laymen allow their ideals of preaching to sag until after their own lusts they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, having turned their ears from the truth unto fables. But it is a prophecy of impending doom when the preachers cater to such demands instead of courageously proclaiming the message God has sent them to deliver.

We have the full revelation of God in the Scriptures. Any man who adds thereto or subtracts therefrom is either a heretic or a fanatic, or both. But the man who does not live close enough to God to receive divine illumination of the sacred page, with its deathless and changeless message for men, is not worth his salt when it comes to preaching. If he allows his ideal of preaching to sink to the level of the intellectual without the element of the divine and supernatural in it, he is not a preacher. He is merely a lecturer without divine commission or authority.

In equal condemnation is the man who allows his time for preparation to preach to be lost in idleness, pursuit of pleasure, or preoccupation with secondary considerations. He comes to the pulpit empty in mind and soul, prepared to do nothing better than thresh over old straw -- to feed the hungry sheep nothing but chaff and to substitute a little perspiration for inspiration, expecting much heat to make up for lack of light.

The pastor is primarily a preacher. Any excuse for failure at that point is invalid. God's call is not to be an organizer, a promoter, a mixer, or an ecclesiastical mechanic, but a preacher of the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. The understanding that preaching is primary will have far-reaching effects.

Effect Upon The Pastor Himself

Even the aspiration to be an able minister of Christ produces a salutary effect upon the man who dedicates his life to this high calling.

A Student

The demands for effective preaching are such as to make a man a student. He cannot hope to gather all his material for preaching from life's everyday experiences. It is true that to the man who spends a reasonable portion of his time in study and prayer there will come many ideas for his sermons as he goes here and there to carry out his work in its broader scope. But the pastor who depends too largely on such material to supplement the inspiration he receives while in the act of delivering a sermon will find his preaching light and superficial. It will be a diet of greens and blue John for people who hunger for the strong meat of the Word of God. By study he develops the "homiletical mind"; he does not dissipate it. He discovers that he is increasingly alert to ideas and illustrations from life lived among others.

The preacher must be a student of the Scriptures. His first textbook is the Bible. It is the most inexhaustible source of sermon material to be found anywhere. It provides truth for doctrinal preaching. It is full of ideas for inspirational messages. It is the foundation for Christian experience. It is the guide for character building. It is the manual for practical Christian living. It is filled with great stories and parables that provide excellent illustrations for solid, Bible preaching. Along with the Bible must go commentaries, encyclopedias, dictionaries, scripture expositions, and word studies. The Bible preacher finds such volumes on the must list as he builds his working library.

The would-be preacher must also read sermons. Some of them should be from the old masters such as Jesus, Isaiah, Peter, Paul, Wesley; Robertson Chalmers, Brooks, Bushnell, Beecher, and Jowett. Then he must read from contemporary pulpiteers like Chappell, Lee, Stewart, Weatherhead, Coffin, Vance, and Buttrick. The preacher should be familiar with the writings of the theologians of the centuries from Paul and Augustine, Luther and Wesley, Watson and Pope to Miley, Curtis, and Wiley. He ought to have some knowledge of the productions of such men as Lewis, Neibuhr, Barth, Baile. A Nazarene pastor cannot be pardoned for lack of knowledge of the great holiness classics, and the current books and periodicals now being printed by our Nazarene Publishing House.

To give himself adequate foundations for a sound view of the Church—past, present, and future -- he should know something of church history, including the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, the fathers, the reformers, and the modern Protestant denominations, including the Church of the Nazarene. To give background to all of this, the preacher should have some knowledge of the profane history of the world and the race of man, as well as a more thorough knowledge of our own national history and those countries from which it stems.

Furthermore, the preacher's study should include selections from the wider range of literature, so that the writings of the poets and authors of prose can be quoted with some degree of familiarity. To these may be added volumes on philosophy and science.

Finally, the preacher's range of reading must include the news of the city, which can be comprehended only by some perusal of the daily papers and current magazines of the better class.

It is obvious that if a man covers the area of study outlined above he will have some reason to claim a place among students though he may never be a scholar. And he can speak with commendable ease and intelligence with people of all classes whether in private or in public.

Saint

A worthy conception of his responsibility as a preacher will cause a pastor to strive for saintliness. The result will be a man of soberness, strength, and spiritual poise who has a moral right to a place of leadership in the Church of the living God. Whatever else a pastor is, he must be devout. No man who spends all his time indulging intellectual laziness, a naturally gregarious disposition, and the universal tendency to spiritual drifting can be fit to keep the flock of God.

No pastor can afford to spend his time habitually janitoring the church, doing errands for members of his congregation, or washing dishes, scrubbing floors, and making beds in the parsonage. To do so may keep him humble, but it will not substitute for a life of devotion maintained in prayer and study and sermon preparation. And the people who want him to do it will be among those who will criticize him harshly for poor, uninteresting preaching. Men are sometimes driven necessarily to secular employment, and domestic conditions may occasionally make them housemaids; but pastors, to be preachers, must spend hours alone with God in meditation and prayer and sermon building.

He who does it will be a different man outside his study and prayer closet. He will demonstrate insight into the spiritual needs of men. He will have sympathy for the suffering. He will have compassion for the sinner and the backslider. He will have concern for the believer, that he may be sanctified wholly. He will have joy in the fellowship of the mature saints, and he will have spiritual poise and power and resourcefulness that will make him a respected leader and counselor of the youth of the church.

All of this comes through communion with God, searching the Scriptures, grasping eternal truth, standing in the presence of undying love as revealed at Calvary, viewing sin with its heinous consequences here and hereafter, trembling in the light of God's holiness now, and awed by the contemplation of the judgment with its mercy for the believer and its wrath for the impenitent. Only out of such experiences does personal holiness grow. And such are the experiences of the man of God who faithfully prepares to "preach as a dying man to dying men."

Ambassador

The pastor who realizes the importance of preaching will be impelled by a sense of divine commission, and he will be upheld by the knowledge that his word has the divine sanction, which gives a note of final authority to his message.

Too many preachers go about their work in an easy, casual, if not complacent, state of mind. To them a pastorate is a job which provides a living. The compelling motive is to do this job well enough to get a better one. Such a pastor comes to a charge with no definite objectives before him. He stays until a chance is offered for a change. He leaves without any feeling of accomplishment or regret for the lack of it. The pastor who properly estimates the call to preach always feels the inward imperative expressed in Jesus' memorable words. "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

One under such compulsion has no time for trifles. He is dead in earnest about the most serious business on earth. Along with that sense of mission comes the assurance of God's approval, which enables him to preach as one having authority. This is the distinction between preaching and any other form of public address. It is a message delivered "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

A man of God is like a king on his throne. He speaks, and none can gainsay his message. He is fearless in the face of opposition to truth and righteousness. For that which he has spoken, he

has the "Thus saith the Lord." He is not diverted by opinions of men. God has indited his message and, whether men hear or forbear, the response is their responsibility. This divinely authorized man has faith in the ultimate triumph of "the truth [as it] is in Jesus," and therefore when his work is done he rests his case and awaits the returns in God's own time.

Prophet

By the soundness of his doctrine, by the Christlikeness of his spirit, and by the evidence of God's sanction and anointing upon his life and labors, the pastor is exalted to a place of honor and respect among the people whom he serves. They know a man of God is among them, that he delivers God's message to them, and he is honored as a prophet sent from God. God said to Joshua, "This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee." It is the Divine Presence that magnifies a man as a spiritual leader. Nowhere do men see the evidence of that Divine Presence so clearly as when a man preaches with shining face, vibrant voice, and personality charged with supernatural magnetism; with responsive body, alerted mind, and a soul aflame with holy passion. Other men see God incarnate once more, and hear the message of God with tingling ears and hearts beating with tension and excitement. Men who are the called of God, first of all be preachers!

Effect Upon The Church

Preaching is the first responsibility of the pastor because it has a powerful effect upon the total life of the church. As a means of avoiding issues and solving problems that arise, faithful, anointed, effective preaching is of first importance. Dr. B. V. Seals made this striking statement some time ago, "I am convinced that unless we solve most of our problems by our preaching, they will remain unsolved."

Attendance

There is the ever-present problem of keeping a full church. None will deny that a visitation program is an important aid at this point. A carefully planned and promoted publicity scheme is also of great value. Nevertheless, the greatest single factor in getting people to church is the preaching they hear. According to a recent Gallup pole, 97 per cent of the people who attend church go to hear a sermon. Let a crowd of church members become fired with enthusiasm for their pastor's preaching and they will do much to fill the empty pews. Whereas, if his preaching does not inspire them they may go from sheer loyalty, but they will not manifest that contagious zest for the church and its services which makes others want to hear their preacher too. Furthermore, when visitors do come, if they listen indifferently to a harangue or a series of hackneyed, meaningless platitudes, they may be courteous enough to say they enjoyed the service, but most of them will be absent when the next service is held. It takes a preaching pastor to gather and hold an inspiring audience that fills the sanctuary every Sunday. There are no substitutes such as special speakers or catchy musical programs. People still go to church to hear preaching and they will not be satisfied with anything less. A full church -- morning, evening, and at midweek -- is, as a rule, the result of good preaching.

Membership

Closely related to the problem of filling the church by large and regular attendance is that of the growth of the church membership. No pastor is a success who does not take in sufficient members year by year to make up for losses by death, transfers, and removals, and in addition enough more to show a good increase. There are many factors that contribute to such success, as the pastoral and lay visitation work and the effectiveness of the Sunday-school program. But again, prospective members are often brought to final decision to unite with the church because they hear soul-feeding, character-building, faith-strengthening, work-inspiring sermons from the pulpit. Failure to hear the kind of preaching they hunger for turns many to other denominations or leaves them outside the church. If we would reach the world for the church, we must have pastors who can preach.

Spiritual Tone

Pastoral preaching is also a big factor in keeping a church spiritual. The preaching diet on which a congregation feeds is in great measure responsible for the spiritual longing and capacity of a congregation. Sometimes pastors are heard to say, "My people do not want deep, scriptural, expositional preaching." Well, it is the pastor's duty to make them want it. The desire for it is cultivated by exposure to it. When once a congregation has acquired the love of such preaching, they will be content with nothing less.

By clear, strong, middle-of-the-road, Bible preaching a pastor can lead his people along the narrow way between fanaticism and formalism, between legalism and worldliness, between bigoted, dogmatic fundamentalism and shallow, diluted liberalism, between a disintegrating lack of loyalty and a narrow sectarianism. The character of the church is a true reflection of its pastoral ministry.

With the right kind of preachers in our pulpits we will build maintain the right kind of churches. To keep his church in the middle of the road the preacher must be there himself. He cannot be emotionally unbalanced nor can he be a cold, unfeeling, stiff, unbending repeater of chants and sayer of prayers and reader of essays. He cannot be a ranting, bombastic enforcer of rules of thumb; nor can he be a soft-spoken, tender-footed compromiser of the standards of the church. He cannot be a creed-signing dogmatist, nor can he be a man of such breadth of views that he has no depth of conviction. He cannot be an independent tabernacle bigot with everything centered in himself, nor can he be insulting to everyone who does not pronounce his shibboleth and bear his brand.

The pastor by his life and by his preaching sets the pattern for his church. He can in a few brief years make it what he wants it to be, unless he so forfeits his place in that church that the members will rise up and rid themselves of him.

Finances

The preaching from the pulpit of a church has much to do with the success or failure of its financial policy and security. This is in part accomplished by preaching occasionally on consecration, stewardship, and tithing. But the effect of the pulpit ministry is felt in an even larger

measure by the building of generosity and magnanimity into the very minds and souls of the people. The gospel, when preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and obeyed by sincere believers, broadens the mind, enlarges the vision, deepens the devotions, and issues in abounding grace in the souls of men, making them abundant in every good work. Does a church lack a spirit of liberality? It needs a preacher who can transform small souls into great ones by the power of the gospel which he preaches. Bigger, abler, stronger men in the pulpit, then, are the solution to the problem of church finance.

Unity

Another great problem that every pastor faces is that of keeping a church united. Here again his preaching is his greatest aid. Not infrequently does a pastor find himself installed as the leader of a divided church. By a wholesome nonpartisan attitude on his own part and by a ministry which avoids the personal issues and emphasizes love, grace, and holiness, and which gives the challenge for the evangelization of a world for which Christ died, he can help people to forget their petty, personal grievances and lose themselves in the blessedness of an experience of perfect love, devoting themselves to the absorbing task of getting the gospel to the whole world.

If one can unite a church which is already divided, he can certainly lead a harmonious church and keep the unity of the Spirit, which is the bond of peace. Nothing is so contrary to the gospel we preach as a divided church, bickering over small issues. The healing of such wounds and the avoiding of such situations can in large measure be brought about by a ministry which faithfully and convincingly sets forth the great ideals of Christ and leads people to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Effect Upon The World

The influence of the Church upon the world about it is also determined by the power of the pulpit. We know the Church is to be in the world, yet not of it. But as long as it is in the world, to save itself it must wield an influence for truth, justice, and righteousness that is recognized by all who know about it, and is often felt unconsciously by those who are ignorant of its presence. Jesus said to His Church in the making: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:13-16). If the earth is to be saved from moral putrefaction and death, it must be salted by the influence of the Church. If the darkness of night is to be turned into the light of day, it must be through the Church. The place and power of the Church-in the world but not of it-is in proportion to the strength, the ruggedness, the courage, and the spiritual power of its preaching ministry.

In the Community

A church is not what it ought to be if the people of the community other than its own members never come to its services. There should be something so cordial about its atmosphere

and so helpful in its ministry that people of all faiths, and no faith, come at least occasionally out of sheer respect for its place in the neighborhood. Furthermore, if the pastor of a church is an able pulpiteer, he will be called upon to speak in meetings of community-wide interest such as union Thanksgiving Day services, Good Friday meetings, and other semi-religious occasions in the interest of civic righteousness and progress. Many are the open doors to the man who is master of an effective pulpit delivery, and who has something to say as well as the ability to say it.

As a Force for Righteousness

Thus the Church extends its influence as a molder of thought and public sentiment. It becomes a bulwark for righteousness, an interpreter of moral values, and a source of spiritual power in the life of city, state, and nation. This does not mean that the church building must be a cathedral, or that it be located in a great city, or that it have the prestige of one of the older religious bodies. Indeed, it may be a wayside chapel without any of those advantages; but if it has a prophetic ministry, it can and will be a factor in the total life of the times.

It is the preaching that is done in a church that differentiates it from an ivy-covered symbol of an ancient creed, or a social and recreational center comparable to a clubhouse, and makes it a source of light, life, and power for human redemption and uplift. Are you tempted to think that this is an exaggeration of the importance of preaching? Then read the history of the Church. Read of Isaiah in Judah's history, of Peter's preaching at Pentecost, of John the golden-mouthed of Constantinople, of Savonarola of Florence, of John Knox of St. Giles in Edinburgh, of John Wesley in England and the world, of Charles G. Finney of America. Yes, read and be persuaded. Then dedicate yourselves to a preaching ministry. God save us from a yarn-spinning, storytelling, ear-tickling ministry with no depth of conviction, no grasp of eternal truth, and no courage to call men, great and small, to repentance and judgment. God give us men whose souls have been set aflame with prophetic fire!

In Missionary Enterprise

The outreach of a church in evangelistic and missionary spirit is also measured by the effectiveness of its preaching ministry. People are not automatically possessed of a zeal for evangelism and missions. They must be instructed and inspired; they must be led. A man of dwarfed soul and selfish mind can let a church sink into a narrow, self-centered attitude which will mean it has a local vision, and that a limited one. The pastor will then say, "My church will not support budgets and missions or pay for revivals." Another pastor may lead a church in evangelistic spirit and soul saving. He may give that church vision and burden for world evangelism, and reputation for liberality toward every good cause. But shift those preachers, and in a few months or years at longest the reputation of the churches too will be reversed.

The preacher who has vision and faith for big things can impart his bigness of soul to his people. Likewise, the little, selfish, pygmy of the pulpit can dwarf a church's vision and faith.

A great work can be done only by great men; but all who enter into the spirit of the gospel grow in wisdom and spiritual stature until they become workmen that need not be ashamed. Through the preaching of such men God manifests His Word.

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06 -- THE PREPARATION OF THE SERMON

Sermons seldom spring full-orbed from the mind of the preacher in a flash of inspiration. As a rule time is a factor in their development. Under emergency circumstances an appropriate and effective message may be received in a telegraphic fashion. Often such utterances are to meet a special situation and do not lend themselves to repetition. The sermon that has qualities of permanence is usually a product of hours of reading and prayer and the toil of writing.

Sources For Subjects

The Bible

The first step in the development of sermons is the gathering of seed thoughts. These may be garnered from many sources. The most productive of these is the Bible. To be sure, every preacher should read his Bible studiously, at times engaging in careful analysis of paragraphs, chapters, and books. But constantly and regularly he should read devotionally for the profit of his own mind and soul. As he engages in this most inspiring and stimulating occupation, he will discover texts and themes that will prove to be the germ ideas for his best sermons.

Personal Contacts

Another source from which sermon subjects may be gathered is the contact with people in pastoral visitation, official and social gatherings, business and community relations. Such sermons may have practical and occasional significance. If the people of the congregation recognize some of their thoughts and experiences in the pastor's sermons, it will surely awaken interest and encourage receptivity on their part. They will be gratified to know that they helped the pastor do the preaching.

Observation and Experience

Travel and observation may produce some choice gems like the well-known incident which gave Dr. Chalmers his idea for his famous sermon on "The Expulsive Power of a New Affection."

Familiarity with community, national, and international affairs will also contribute some appropriate subjects for the pastor to discuss infrequently.

Other Sermons

Hearing and reading sermons is very stimulating. However, subjects, skeletons, illustrations should not be appropriated unscrupulously. Some men indulge in plagiarism rather freely. Others are too afraid to profit by the work of their fellow preachers. There is a middle course to pursue. Dr. J. G. Morrison used to give the sage advice, "Take the cream from other

men's sermons but churn your own butter." Few men can lay claim to complete originality. As steel sharpens steel, so let one mind quicken another.

These and other sources will provide the preacher who possesses a homiletical mind with ample supply of sermon seed. As these ideas are suggested, a record of them should be made and filed for future if not immediate use. Indeed, a pastor will do well to file valuable articles and quotations gathered from all his reading. These may be filed according to the subject to which they are relevant. If they are from books in his own library, he may choose only to file the references to pages and paragraphs. Thus one will build for himself a rich reservoir from which he can draw at will. There will be times when it will be a saving factor in a busy week crowded with activity.

Choice of Theme

Many considerations may enter into the choice of a theme for a given day, such as an issue to be faced in the church or a realization of the spiritual need of the people. But the most essential factor is the leading of the Spirit of God as the preacher seeks His guidance.

Accumulating Material

When the subject has been chosen, the next step is to relate it to a text and a scripture setting. These having been decided upon, the preacher is ready to begin a more intensive and systematic search for further light upon his subject. He will dig deeper into the exhaustless mine of truth in the Word of God. He will read commentaries, encyclopedias, word studies, scripture expositions, and seek out appropriate and telling illustrations from reliable sources. This research may require some hours of time. While it is in progress, disordered notes should be kept until one feels he has an abundance of material at hand.

Forming The Outline

The next step in the building of the sermon is to bring order out of the chaos. Thus far there may be no plan for the sermon in mind. But now at least a tentative outline must be made. Such will, of course, be subject to change. It is time now to determine whether the sermon will be topical, textual, or expository.

The outline of a topical sermon is derived from the wording of the topic. Here is an outline for a sermon entitled,

The Beauty of Holiness

Text: Psalms 29:2

I. Holiness is beautiful because it is the harmonizing experience.

II. Holiness is beautiful because it produces the fruit of the Spirit in the Christian's life.

III. Holiness is beautiful because it endows the life with the gifts of the Spirit for Christian service.

A textual sermon draws its outline from the wording of the text. The following outline is based on I John 1:7.

I. The text assures the obedient soul of spiritual illumination. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light."

II. The text promises moral purification. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

III. The text offers the blessedness of Christian communication. "We have fellowship one with another."

The expository sermon is one based upon an entire paragraph or chapter. The outline includes ideas from the context as well as the text. Take for instance Philippians 3:7-15. Use verse 4 as a text.

Subject: Goals for Christian Living

I. "That I may win Christ." v. 8e

II. "That I may know Christ." v. 10a

III. "That I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." v. 12d

The outline and the sermon may be a combination of any two of these or all three.

Methods of Delivery

There are four different methods of delivery. They are: reading from the manuscript, memorization, use of notes, and extempore. Each one has its own variations, and any one of them may partake of any of the others. The effectiveness of one's preaching is not so much determined by the method he chooses to use as by his mastery of that method. There have been great preachers in each classification. Let everyone make up his mind which method will be best suited to his intellect and personality. Having made his choice, let him strive to master his method. No preacher of broad understanding will be egotistical about the method he uses or uncharitable toward those who use another.

Reading from Manuscript

For a church committed to the informal type of service with little ritual and liturgy, reading from a full manuscript is generally considered a serious handicap. It has but seldom been employed successfully.

Memorization

Memorization verbatim is for most men too laborious. There are some who have the photographic type of mind, for whom it is possible, but for most men it is impractical.

Speaking from Notes

Many men find speaking from notes of varying fullness the most natural and acceptable method of delivery. It has some decided advantages. It does require some careful planning and preparation. It serves to keep one from aimless rambling. It is an aid to the memory. At the same time this method gives one more freedom of expression and opportunity to maintain frequent visual contact with the audience.

Ease in the use of this form of public address is not automatic. To use notes as an aid and yet keep them from being a hindrance to the speaker and a nuisance to the audience is an art. Skill in referring to one's notes must be developed, not only by practice, but also by study of the technique. Nothing can more seriously embarrass a preacher than to be confused here. Therefore, let all who elect this method prepare notes carefully, be familiar with their contents, and use them skillfully.

Extempore

The extemporaneous method of delivery is often misunderstood. To some it means that one is speaking without preparation. This is a false conception. In fact, to speak extempore requires even more thorough preparation. The knowledge of the subject matter must be well in hand. The organization of the sermon must be thorough. The writing of a full manuscript is by no means ruled out. There must of necessity be a certain amount of memorization, including the introduction, the outline with the transitional sentences, and the conclusion.

The exactions upon the mental and nervous powers while in the act of delivery are the maximum. To be sure, the indolent and slovenly preacher may take advantage of this method to impose his careless presentation upon a congregation of long-suffering people. But the emptiness and weakness of his preaching will be apparent to all who hear his futile attempts at bluff and subterfuge. Soon he will begin to reap the harvest of his misjudgments in the decline of interest and attendance in his services, in the brevity of his pastorates, and in the difficulty experienced in finding another church upon which to inflict his preaching.

The advantages of extemporaneous preaching are not to be overlooked. It is a great aid to audience contact. A manuscript or even notes may become a barrier between the speaker and the hearer. There is a certain degree of indirection that cannot completely be overcome if one must shift his eyes to read frequently. Direct address is almost invariably appreciated by those who hear a preacher. The enthusiasm of the congregation in turn increases the conviction and freedom with which the preacher speaks. He has more of a sense of exhilaration and divine inspiration in speaking as for the Lord. His listeners are possessed of a feeling that the message has come from God through a human personality. In other words, the awareness of the divine is increased and the consciousness of the human mediation is decreased.

It is admitted that in the use of the extemporaneous method a preacher does sacrifice something in accuracy and literary form. He may forget some of the well-chosen phrases of the written sermon. Indeed, he may fail to recall a whole paragraph or a telling illustration. On the other hand, he will probably be fortunate enough to receive some new ideas under the inspiration of the occasion. It is well to prepare enough material so that some of it may be forgotten or voluntarily omitted. If such be true, the speaker can console himself in that something is left over for next time.

The extemporaneous preacher must demand of himself thorough preparation, logical arrangement of ideas, and complete concentration while in the process of delivery. He must cultivate a reliable memory and a facility in closing the gap should a lapse occur. He must always be in command of his powers of thought and speech. He should never yield to the temptation to digress from his clearly defined procedure or go beyond reasonable time limits. Should he finish what he has prepared to say ahead of schedule, he will do well to stop rather than keep on talking when he has no more to say. Few preachers are criticized for their brevity; many are for their excessive length.

Having decided upon the character of the sermon and the method of delivery, the final form of the outline should be worked out with order, progression, symmetry, and climax in mind. First will come the main points, of which there should not often be more than three and sometimes only two. Under these main headings the varied ideas that are to go into the entire body of the sermon are to be organized in subdivisions. Special attention should be paid to the logical coherence of these thoughts. Let the sermon builder beware of a hodgepodge of unrelated, disjointed parts through which he will be compelled to wend his uncertain way when the hour for delivery of the sermon arrives.

The Final Draft

Now the time has come to put the sermon into its full form, ready for delivery. In almost every instance some writing is necessary for adequate preparation. The maximum amount of writing is to produce a full verbatim manuscript; the minimum is a well-written introduction, a full outline with special attention to transitional sentences, and a carefully prepared conclusion.

Introduction

The introduction should not occupy more than one-tenth of the time to be devoted to the entire sermon. It should be interesting without making the rest of the sermon seem incidental. It can be too commonplace, but it may also produce such emotional response as to make a letdown inevitable. It should be what the term introduction implies, beginning on a level of general and unmistakable interest and opening up the field of thought to be discussed in the main body of the sermon. The first sentence should be brief, composed of ten or twelve simple, suggestive words. It should be a model of unity, clarity, and simplicity.

The subject matter of the introduction should always relate to the theme and climax in a clear statement of the proposition to be presented. It may be an opening of the textual setting. It may

sometimes give the historical setting. It could be an illustration to capture attention without exhausting the emotional capacity of the congregation. It might develop around a current event of community or national interest. Sometimes a poem can be used effectively if the preacher is skilled in such presentation.

The purpose of the introduction, briefly stated, is to awaken the interest of the listeners, prepare their minds for the truth to be proclaimed, and start the preacher on his way through the sermon with ease and confidence.

Body

The first main division of the sermon should carry the greatest weight of the message. Here the depths of the truth declared should be plumbed. If one division of the sermon is to be longer than the others, it should be the first main division. Its profound truth should be expressed in simple language of clear meaning to all who hear. The subdivisions should be coherent and not too numerous. Interest should be maintained and the subject illuminated by the use of fitting illustrations and figures of speech.

All the main divisions should be tied together by sound, logical reasoning and strong, clear transitions. Let all of them be obvious or clearly pointed out. An outline can be too painfully "bony." It is more often and more disastrously obscured. It can be smooth and yet discernible. An outline easily recognized is usually easy to remember. A sermon remembered has most likelihood of accomplishing its purpose.

It is well to arrange the divisions of the sermon in such a way that, if time limits are imposed, some portion of the prepared material may be omitted without making an obvious break or explaining that the omission is necessary. The end should not be reached abruptly. The climax of the message and the conclusion should be attained smoothly and effectively. Presumption in running on ad infinitum should be avoided.

Conclusion

The conclusion should be brief; the thoughts cogent, climactic, and persuasive. The preacher should be down to earth, not up in the air. The congregation should feel that they have heard a message from God and that it was illuminating, convincing, and completed.

Sloppy sermon preparation is revealed in aimless wandering, repetitious and long-winded preaching. It encourages people to stay home, to go to sleep in church, or to think about everything else besides what the speaker is saying. Careful preparation will discipline and furnish the mind of the preacher, make his delivery effective, his message interesting and compelling. It will help him fill empty pews. A well-prepared sermon will cause the people to listen with interest, to rejoice in the truth, to walk in the light; and it will help them to keep blessed and to be useful in the church.

Preachers, for your own sake, for the sake of your congregation, and for God's sake prepare your sermons faithfully.

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07 -- THE DELIVERY OF THE SERMON

Pulpit Ministry, The Pastor's Highest Service

A pastor's pulpit performance is of vital significance. The importance of a sermon is not in proportion to the time spent in its delivery. The good accomplished in that thirty minutes, more or less, is a reasonably accurate indicator of what will be achieved in a full-length pastorate and indeed in a lifetime of ministry. The personal acceptability of a man by his people is not without bearing on his success. His gifts of administration are not incidental. His faithfulness in pastoral visitation and the influence of his godly life all have meaning in the measure of his effectiveness as a spiritual leader of men. But all of these contribute to the power of his pulpit ministry. All his life of righteousness and his labor of love reach their highest plane in his preaching.

The delivery of a sermon presupposes that there is a sermon to deliver. It is also assumed that the preacher has the gifts, the grace, and the character to justify his position at the sacred desk. He need not choose between personal righteousness and powers of public speaking. He may possess both. Nor is he forced to choose between a message with depth of content and one characterized by eloquence and excellence in delivery. He may excel in both thought content, and pleasing and effective utterance. It is true that some men of natural intellectual turn find it easy to prepare sermons that are deep and strong in truth and of commendable literary form. There are others who by nature are gifted in powers of speech. The former may by diligence cultivate that which they do not naturally possess and in so doing become speakers of acceptable ability. The latter through disciplined application to reading and writing may produce sermons of true merit when measured by their content. A successful preacher must have something to say and know how to say it.

Manner of Delivery

Having previously considered the possible methods, it is now time to give attention to the manner of delivery. Here it is pertinent to observe that a preacher may attach to himself certain eccentricities of speech, gesture, and posture that are distracting "mannerisms." Facial expressions may become distorted; wringing of the hands or thrusting them into one's pockets may become a habit. Standing with feet wide apart, teetering from heels to toes, lounging lazily over the pulpit, fingering the Bible, habitual pounding of the desk, twirling the watch chain, removing the glasses or pushing them into place needlessly, all reveal lack of poise and self-possession and greatly distract the attention of those who are trying to listen.

Essentials To Effective Delivery

Directness

Directness has to do with one's audience approach and contact. A preacher must remove the barriers that are liable to stand between the pulpit and the pew. If he appears to be as one

calling across a great gulf, he is all but hopelessly handicapped. That feeling of remoteness must be overcome and a point of contact established.

In Verbal Presentation

The matter presented must be within the intellectual grasp of those to whom one preaches. The speaker and the audience must meet on a common ground of understanding. The intelligence of a congregation cannot automatically be adjusted to the preacher.. Therefore, it is his responsibility to speak on the level of their comprehension. In speaking to a group of children in the Primary age bracket a preacher would not discuss the Advent or the Incarnation. He would tell the Christmas story. A patronizing condescension is always resented by an audience. Talking above their heads will put them to sleep.

The clarity of the preacher's thinking will be a large factor in making his subject matter understandable and acceptable to his hearers. The obscurity of the preacher's ideas is often due to the muddiness of his own thinking. Nothing will enhance his powers of expression so much as clear understanding on his own part of what he is saying.

Comprehension of divine reality is conducive to simplicity of language. An obvious attempt to be profound is a confession that one is speculating in the realm of the theoretical. He has not yet laid hold of reality. The profoundest truths are capable of expression in the simplest language. Jesus is the Truth. He enjoyed perfect conformity to reality. Therefore, when He spoke the sublimest truth it was in the simplest language. Preachers should be well read. They should be in command of a good vocabulary. They do well to avoid the use of words and phrases that are hackneyed and threadbare. But the simple words of few syllables wear the best. Those whose repetition is noted most are the ones which are not used easily and naturally. Let every preacher of the gospel follow the example of the Master-Preacher in the use of simple and familiar words. These may be well chosen and fitting as well as beautifully joined.

Eye Directness

The second contributing factor to directness is a physical one. It is the use of the eyes. This is something so simple that it may seem commonplace. But it is a fundamental rule for public speakers. A conversation between two persons would be very impersonal and unsatisfactory if their eyes never met. It would soon lose interest for either party. A preacher who has his eyes on the congregation, seeing their reactions to his message in facial expressions and watchful attention, has gone a long way toward engaging their thoughts and maintaining their interest. The preacher who never meets the gaze of the audience is forfeiting one of his most effective means of contact.

Some preachers look out of the window. Others look down at the floor, or roll their eyes up in their sockets and stare at the ceiling, while some self-conscious men fix their gaze on a point just above the heads of the people to whom they speak. Such habits are devastating and should be overcome by strong determination to make the eye serve its purpose in gaining and retaining audience contact.

A speaker should be careful to include his entire congregation in the range of his eye—not just the center section, but the sides and wings of the auditorium also; not the front rows only, but those in the rear or in the balcony too. If he has one or two persons of whose presence he is especially conscious, let him forbear boring them with his constant gaze; but let him not avoid their glances, for they may be friendly.

Conversational Form

The third aid to directness is in one's manner of speech. The conversational manner of address is the most natural, the most pleasing, and the most effective. The old concepts of elocution are outmoded. The best teachers of public speaking today emphasize simplicity, naturalness, and individuality. The strain to be oratorical is discounted and discouraged. Circumflex and rising inflections that result in a "singsong" melody are to be avoided. Affectations which have been called the "holy tone" or the "ministerial tune" tend to remove the preacher from his audience. If a speaker can think of himself as holding a conversation with his hearers, who have conceded him the right to do all the talking, he will find he is most natural and at ease. The congregation will be most receptive.

It is well to warn all preachers assiduously to avoid aping others. Almost every preacher is especially inclined to copy the manners of those whom he admires. The danger of this is, he will almost always copy their weaknesses rather than their strong points. Furthermore, no one can enjoy a natural ease when aping someone else, however adept he may be in the skill of imitation. Let everyone be himself.

Distinctness

Distinctness in speaking is also important. What is the use of speaking except to be heard and understood? Paul said (I Corinthians 14:9-11): "Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification. Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me." It will do no violence to this instruction to apply it to the manner of one's speech as well as to the language employed.

Distinctness depends in part upon the amount of one's volume, regulated by the size of the auditorium. Too much or too little, either can be very bad.

Another important factor in distinctness of speech is diction, which is the enunciation of syllables or the shaping of tone into words. Its elements are vowels and consonants. The vowels should be large, round, and open. The consonants should be precise and delicate. Care at this point is a lifelong responsibility of every preacher. Anyone can fall into careless habits of diction. Clear enunciation is one of the greatest aids to effective delivery.

Vocal Elements

Effective delivery includes certain vocal elements.

Pitch

Pitch is the variation of the voice from high to low or the reverse. Its use is an important factor in avoiding monotony of speech. It is observed in the inflection given upon words and in transitional changes of pitch between ideas. It is a means of emphasis particularly by antithesis. It reveals discrimination in thought and intensity of feeling.

Rate

Rate is the degree of movement of speech. It may move with strong and heavy pulsation, indicating deep, profound thought. It may be strong and quick, revealing excitement; or it may be light and quick, suggesting delicacy and informality. Rate includes the idea of pause to give both speaker and hearer time to think. A long pause following a significant truth is a most effective means of emphasis.

Force

Variation in the amount of volume used upon significant phrases, as compared to unimportant ones, becomes a powerful means of emphasis. Intense feeling sometimes tempts a preacher to the excessive use of force, which often results in huskiness of voice and may even cause a temporary inability to speak, and in extreme cases permanent injury to the voice.

Quality

Quality denotes the emotional content of speech and reveals the type and intensity of the feeling. One can imagine the solemnity and sternness with which Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" The change to pity and regret would be obvious when He said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

His compassionate appeal would be heard in His voice as well as His words when He said: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." His tenderness and pardon are intoned in, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

A preacher's voice is his greatest asset in sermon delivery. Its reckless abuse is little short of a sin. For the sake of his own effectiveness in speaking, for the comfort and pleasure of those who hear him, and for the glory of God, he should seek to preserve and improve his voice. Certainly the best possible instrument of speech is not too good to use in the preaching of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Anyone having voice difficulties would do well to consult a speech specialist.

Earnestness

Earnestness in preaching is expected by everyone. No man who has accepted the responsibilities of this holy calling has any right to presume upon the credulity of men or trifle in matters that pertain to their eternal salvation. Every man who enters the pulpit should be in earnest, dead in earnest.

This does not mean that one should never include humor in his preaching. Wit and wisdom are not irreconcilable. Indeed, an appropriate anecdote or a sharp flash of humor often gives light and life to a sermon. Happy is the man who can use such with ease and effectiveness. But a preacher should never let it be truthfully said that he is saying or doing anything just for effect. He should never play to the grandstand. He had far better appear to fail than to leave a question in the minds of his hearers as to his sincerity.

If a preacher is what he is represented to be, he is a man sent of God to deliver a message that has a redemptive purpose. On such a mission a man dare not give place to ulterior and selfish motives. He must believe what he preaches. He dare not dogmatize about things of which he is uncertain. To do so will jeopardize his own intellectual integrity. His uncertainty will soon be evident to his hearers, and they will know that he speaks in platitudes and not out of a conviction of the truth which he declares.

But the preacher must do more than believe what he teaches; he must also live it. He must be the personification of the truth he proclaims. He preaches about love and his life must be the embodiment of love. He preaches holiness and he must practice righteousness. High preaching and low living brands a man a hypocrite.

When a minister of the gospel preaches truth which he believes sincerely and lives humbly, he will enjoy the unction of the Holy One upon his mind and spirit as he preaches. His whole being-body, mind, and spirit-will be responsive. He will be the human mediator of the divine truth. He will think clearly and feel deeply. He will speak with conviction and divine authority. He will be giving his hearers of his own vital energies as he pours out his heart in the utterance of the sublime truths of the gospel. All his powers of speech will be brought into use, his body will be responsive, his mind will be alert, his spirit will be aflame.

Such preaching will call forth a response from the audience. The rebellious will be arrested, the indifferent will be aroused, the careless will be subdued, the devout will be awed. Minds will be concentrated upon the preacher's utterances and all eyes will be transfixed. There will be something about that sermon that will never be forgotten.

When a man has preached in such a manner he will know that "virtue" has "gone out of him." He will be humbled and grateful to God. He will know that something has been done for God, even if eternity alone reveals it.

Such preaching requires a life of prayer, a consecration without reservation, and a preparation for preaching that leaves one with no question in his mind as regards his faithfulness to duty.

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08 -- THE PASTOR'S PREACHING PROGRAM

Long-Range Planning

It is obvious that some forethought must be given to themes that a preacher will use. The pastor who allows the end of the week to overtake him without having decided what he will use as text and subject on the approaching Sunday will often be at the point of nervous collapse because of his uncertainty. Doubtless he will sometimes be embarrassed by his own lack of preparation even when the time to deliver the message is at hand. If he is to live with any degree of peace of mind, he must know by midweek and he should know by Monday morning what his plans are for the coming Sunday. Often the pastor's mind is in a very active state after his Sunday services are over; and while his spirit is in tune with God and the mind and need of his people, he may get some inspiration that will help him to decide what he will use for his next subjects, before he is asleep on Sunday night. A better plan is to outline a preaching program at least a month ahead. There are some who in a general way chart their courses for a full year.

Some may say such a program leaves little room for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in making one's choices. Of course such long-range plans must of necessity be subject to change, and as a pastor prepares his sermons he will find the themes he has chosen to be flexible enough to admit the thoughts that may have been inspired after the outline was made. In any case, it is much safer to make plans and change them than it is to have no plan and go ahead with a hit-or-miss procedure.

There are several advantages in long-range planning. It puts the pastor on his mettle to dig in and prepare sermons according to his schedule. It may save him from yielding to the temptation to coast along easily and pull an old sermon out of his "barrel" and "get by with it." It will help him to cover a wider area of gospel truth instead of going around in a treadmill fashion. It will forbid repeating old material which has lost its inspiration for him and its appeal for the congregation. It will discover to both preacher and hearers the great scope of vital truth that is covered by the men who under divine inspiration wrote the Bible. It will reveal the depths and riches of the exhaustless mine of spiritual treasures in God's Word. It will also goad the pastor to read and profit from the writings of great scholars and preachers. Anything that will have such salutary effects upon the clergy is certainly worth while. A pastor who is a growing soul will inspire the spiritual increase of his people, for his development is an index of their progress.

For A Sunday Morning

As a pastor plans his sermons he will certainly take into account the difference between preaching appropriate for a morning service and that which fits the evening meeting. Morning messages are as a rule directed to the church. They should be designed to feed and bless the people of God. They may be doctrinal, covering in a given length of time all the fundamental tenets of our faith. They may be devotional, designed to deepen spiritual aspirations and lead the sheep into "green pastures" and "beside the still waters." The morning service is an appropriate time for expositional sermons, unfolding the strata of truth that are found in the text and its setting

Inspirational messages that arouse the church to action and challenge it to big undertakings for Christ usually find a more ready response in a morning hour.

For A Sunday Evening

The themes for evening messages are as a rule given a brighter, more popular hue. The evening message may be topical. It may have an appeal for those who are not so deep spiritually. The theme may be one which lends itself to wider and more attractive publicity. To be sure, it must not be trivial. The gospel should not be cheapened to make it appear sensational or spectacular. The pastor is dealing with eternal verities whether he preaches morning or evening. The last service of the day should end on a high plane of spiritual blessing and power. The message should throw open the door to the kingdom of Heaven and lead to an invitation for needy souls to enter therein.

It is usually conceded that more thorough preparation is needed for the morning service. Probably the very nature of the message may justify that conclusion. But if a man desires full pews and fruitful altar services, he must give a proper amount of time, thought, preparation, prayer to the evening message. Careless, shoddy preparation and consequently poor preaching may explain the fact of empty pews in the church on Sunday evening. The evening message may be briefer, more illustrative, and more hortatory, but its preparation should not be slighted. And the responsibility of the pastor to do good preaching in the evening is as great as it is for the morning service.

It may be advisable to reverse the order sometimes. Preach the evening sermon in the morning. Some needy people who would respond to an evangelistic appeal may come only on Sunday morning. Furthermore, all the church may need the stirring that such a message would give them. And the evening crowd may need and appreciate the message that would normally be preached in the earlier service of the day.

Serial Preaching

A series of sermons often proves to be an aid in holding the interest of a congregation. The practice also lends itself to purposes of publicity and may attract the attention of people not in the membership of the church. The continuity of thought will tend to encourage regularity in attendance. The series should not be too long. In some unusual instances there could be as many as ten. Generally four to six sermons are enough for one set. In most cases it will be a series for morning or evening. But some might be appropriate for both services.

The possibilities for serial preaching are many and varied. For morning services there are chapters of the Bible that lend themselves very readily to the plan. There is the thirteenth of First Corinthians, the first of both First and Second Peter, the fifty-first psalm, and many others. There are books of the Bible that could be covered in a series of sermons. Philippians, Ephesians, First Thessalonians, and the prophecy of Hosea are examples. Such sections of the Bible as the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, and the Lord's Prayer are also rich in possibilities. There could be a series on the great central doctrines of the church. Frequently there could be a round of sermons on holiness: the doctrine, the experience, and the ethics.

Then there are certain seasons that are very appropriately adapted to a number of consecutive sermons. The Christmas season might be marked by four or five sermons on the advent of Christ. One year it might be Christ in prophecy. Another year it could be the exposition of the New Testament stories centering around the birth of Jesus. Another year the preacher might deal with the various names given to the Lord, such as Immanuel, Christ, Jesus, and the Prince of Peace.

The Easter season also offers some great opportunities. One Lenten season might be taken up with the seven sayings of Christ from the Cross. Another might be devoted to a delineation of the characters that gather around the Cross. And still another might deal with the meaning of the Cross in Christian experience. A serial exposition of the seventeenth chapter of St. John would be excellent. Each year will discover to the studious preacher some new lines of thought that present the old message from a new approach. All could climax in an Easter sermon on the Resurrection.

Following Easter, sermons on the appearance of Christ after His arising from the dead and before His ascension would be very timely. Or a series on Pentecost, leading up to Whitsunday, would be especially good to a church which highlights that great event in Christian history. Another year a series could be presented on the personality and ministry of the Holy Spirit, based on Jesus' discourse found in the fourteenth to the sixteenth chapters of John's Gospel.

A pastor ought to plan thoughtfully his messages leading up to an evangelistic campaign. A series of sermons on faith or prayer or personal and visitation evangelism would be greatly used of God to prepare the church for effective soul winning. Then when the campaign is over, the fruit of it must be conserved, and to that purpose the pastor's messages should be dedicated. At that season a series of sermons on entire sanctification would be in order. A course in post-crisis holiness should not be overlooked. Or a group of sermons on the Church and membership in the body of Christ would be helpful. It could include themes dealing with Christian fellowship, testimony, and service.

Still there are many lines that lead out into wonderful areas of thought for the evening service. Their development will give profit, inspiration, and pleasure to the pastor himself and will bring to light the priceless treasures of truth that are hidden in God's Word for His people. Most of them can be adapted to an evangelistic appeal. Among these are the parables of Christ. There are seven in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. There are three in the fifteenth of Luke -- the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost boy. That parable of the prodigal offers material for three sermons. They could be called: "The Younger Son," "The Elder Brother," and "The Faithful Father." There are many other parables spoken by our Saviour and all are full of gospel truth and changeless values.

Then there are the miracles of Jesus. What an intriguing study and how wonderfully clear they are in their timely and timeless interpretation! There are almost limitless possibilities in the skillful grouping of Bible characters for sermon series, such as the great men of the Old Testament like Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Samuel, Moses, David, Elijah. Or there is a series in the life story of any one of them. Then there are the lesser lights such as Abel, Lot, Isaac, Joshua, Elisha, Uzziah, and Amos. There are the great men of the Old Testament who failed, as Adam, Saul, Solomon, Absalom, and Samson. From the New Testament one could choose the twelve apostles, or Paul

and his associates: Barnabas, John Mark, Timothy, Titus, Apollos, Demas, and yet others not so well known.

Then there are the great epochs of Old Testament history, including the creation, the fall, the flood, the dispersion of languages at Babel, the exodus from Egypt, the giving of the law at Sinai, the Babylonian captivity, and the return from exile. In all the historical books there are uncounted incidents of striking interest that wait to be discovered and developed into sermons of appeal and power. Some of these are the story of the Passover, the crossing of the Red Sea, the rebellion of Israel at Kadesh-barnea, the crossing of the Jordan, the capture of Jericho, the defeat at Ai, commanding the sun and the moon to stand still over the valley of Ajalon by Joshua.

Another series that would bring blessing could be built around the teaching of the Lord's return. The wise pastor will avoid the controversial and speculative phases of this doctrine. But he will find in it some glorious truth to encourage the faith and strengthen the hope of God's people. Some solemn warnings may be sounded that all may be ready to meet the Lord at His coming.

And yet another series might deal with the many perfections of the life and character of Jesus. Such preaching would open up exceptional possibilities to the pastor for setting ideals of Christian conduct and ethics before those over whom the Holy Ghost has given him the oversight.

Here is presented a suggested preaching program for a year. Of course, such a schedule would be subject to a number of changes due to unpredicted developments. There has been an attempt to offer a wide scope of Bible truth and to include the vital features of gospel preaching and a balanced church program. The plan is set up on the basis of the calendar for 1953.

January 4

a.m. -- The Untrodden Path. Text, Joshua 3:4

p.m. -- One More Year. Text, Luke 13:6-10

January 11

a.m. -- The Constant Companion. (Communion service) Text, Matthew 28:20

p.m. -- Personal Salvation Imperative. Text, Matthew 25:8,9

January 18

a.m. -- The Sure Foundation. Text, II Timothy 2:19

p.m. -- The Wedding Garment. Text, Matthew 22:12

January 21-25

Holiness Convention or Youth Week Services (Guest Preacher)

February 1

a.m. -- Consecration, a Condition of Sanctification. Text, Romans 12:1

p.m. -- Repentance, God's Requirement. Text, Acts 17:30, 31

February 8

a.m. -- Sanctification Applied in Stewardship. Text, I Corinthians 6:19, 20

p.m. -- The New Birth. Text, John 3:3

February 15

a.m. -- Tithing, the Touchstone of Stewardship. Text, Matthew 23:23

p.m. -- The Spirit of Adoption. Text, Romans 8:15

February 22

a.m. -- The Reward of Faithful Stewardship. Text, Matthew 25:21

p.m. -- One Thing I Know. Text, John 9:25

March 1

a.m. -- The Mission of the Church. Text, Acts 1:8

p.m. -- The Gospel of Christ. Text, Romans 1:16

March 8

a.m. -- The Growth of the Church. Text, Acts 2:42

p.m. -- The Great Salvation. Text, Hebrews 2:3

March 11-22

Evangelistic Campaign (Guest Preacher)

March 29

a.m. -- The Kingly Christ. Text, Matthew 21:5

p.m. -- Christ, the Bread of Life (Communion). Text, John 6:35

April 5

a.m. -- The Finality of Easter. Text, John 20:18

p.m. -- Christ, the Water of Life. Text, John 4:14

April 12

a.m. -- The Contemporary Christ. Text, Luke 24:32

p.m. -- Christ, the Light of Life. Text, John 8:12

April 19

a.m. -- Believing Thomas. Text, John 20:28, 29

p.m. -- Christ, the Abundant Life. Text, John 10:10

April 26

a.m. -- Christ's Charge to Peter. Text, John 21:17

p.m. -- Christ, the Eternal Life. Text, John 17:3

May 3

a.m. -- The Upward Gaze. Text, Acts 1:9, 10 (Ascension Sunday)

p.m. -- Justified by Faith. Text, Romans 5:1

May 10

a.m. -- A Mother's Wages. Text, Exodus 2:9
p.m. -- The Great Choice. Text, Joshua 24:15

May 17

a.m. -- The Spirit Promised. Text, John 14:16, 17
p.m. -- The New and Living Way. Text, Hebrews 10:19-22

May 24

a.m. -- The Promise Fulfilled. Text, Acts 2:4 (Pentecost Sunday)
p.m. -- The Inescapable Appointment. Text, Hebrews 9:27, 28

May 31

a.m. -- The Fruits of Righteousness by Jesus Christ. Text, Philippians 1:11
p.m. -- Striving Together. Text, Philippians 1:27

June 7

a.m. -- The Mind of Christ. Text, Philippians 2:5
p.m. -- Shining Sons of God. Text, Philippians 2:15

June 14

a.m. -- That I May Win Christ. Text, Philippians 3:8
p.m. -- The Lord Is at Hand. Text, Philippians 4:5

June 21

a.m. -- That I May Know Christ. Text, Philippians 3:10
p.m. -- The Source of Strength. Text, Philippians 4:13

June 28

a.m. -- That I May Apprehend Christ's Likeness. Text, Philippians 3:12
p.m. -- All Your Need Supplied. Text, Philippians 4:19

July 5

a.m. -- Christian Liberty. Text, Galatians 5:1
p.m. -- Abraham's Call. Text, Hebrews 11:8-10

July 12

a.m. -- Sanctification, God's Will. Text, I Thessalonians 4:3
p.m. -- Abraham, a Man of Prayer. Text, Genesis 18:25 and 32

July 19

a.m. -- Sanctification, Christ's Provision. Text, Hebrews 13:12 (Communion Service)
p.m. -- Abraham's Faith. Text, Hebrews 11:17-19

July 26

a.m. -- Sanctification, the Spirit's Work. Text, I Peter 1:22
p.m. -- Abraham's Reward. Text, Genesis 15:1

July 27-August 14
Pastor's Vacation

August 16
a.m. -- Kindling the Hidden Fire. Text, Psalms 39:3
p.m. -- Moses' Choice. Text, Hebrews 11:23-26

August 23
a.m. -- The Power That Worketh in You. Text, Ephesians 3:20,21
p.m. -- Moses' Rod. Text, Exodus 4:3

August 30
a.m. -- Perfect to Do His Will Text, Hebrews 13:20, 21
p.m. -- Moses' Prayer. Text, Exodus 32:31, 32

September 6
a.m. -- Preserved and Presented. Text, Jude 24, 25
p.m. -- Moses' Failure. Text, Deuteronomy 34:5

September 13
a.m. -- A Heart Perfect Toward God. Text, I Peter 5:10, 11
p.m. -- A Leper Cleansed. Text, Matthew 8:2, 3

September 20
a.m. -- Prayer and Personal Evangelism. Text, Matthew 9:37, 38
p.m. -- The Tempest Stilled. Text, Matthew 8:25, 26

September 27
a.m. -- Prayer and World Evangelism. Text, Acts 13:2, 3
p.m. -- The Demons Cast Out. Text, Matthew 8:32, 34

October 4
a.m. -- Drinking All of the Cup (Communion Service). Text, Matthew 26:27
p.m. -- Prayer and Revivals. Text, Hebrews 3:2

October 7-18
Fall Revival Campaign (Guest Evangelist)

October 25
a.m. -- Heavenly Places in Christ. Text, Ephesians 2:6
p.m. -- First Things First. Text, Matthew 6:33

November 1
a.m. -- Going On to Perfection. Text, Hebrews 6:9
p.m. -- Spirit-filled Christians. Text, Ephesians 5:18

November 8

a.m. -- A Sacrifice of Praise. Text, Hebrews 13:15

p.m. -- Spirit-led Christians. Text, Romans 8:14

November 15

a.m. -- Unity of the Sanctified. Text, Hebrews 2:11

p.m. -- Demas, the Deserter. Text, II Timothy 4:10

November 22

a.m. -- The More Blessed. Text, Acts 20:35

p.m. -- Christ's Return Prophesied. Text, Isaiah 63:1

November 29

a.m. -- The Second Rest. Text, Matthew 11:28-30

p.m. -- Christ's Return Promised. Text, John 14:3

December 6

a.m. -- The Virgin Birth of Christ. Text, Isaiah 7:14

p.m. -- The Sign of Christ's Return. Text, Matthew 24:3

December 13

a.m. -- Behold My Servant. Text, Isaiah 42:1

p.m. -- Christ's Return Described. Text, I Thessalonians 4:16,17

December 20

a.m. -- Unto Us a Child Is Born. Text, Isaiah 9:6

p.m. -- The Anointed One. Text, Isaiah 61:1

December 27

a.m. -- The Enduring Word. Text, I Peter 1:25

p.m. -- God-Our Help and Our Hope. Text, II Timothy 1:12

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09 -- THE PASTOR-EVANGELIST

There is a place in God's order for the office of the evangelist. The Bible is not uncertain at this point. God gave "some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." To fill the office which He has established, God has called many men to be full-time evangelists. In keeping with His call He has particularly endowed them with gifts and graces for the fulfillment of their work. Sometimes the very eccentricities which hinder a man as a pastor help him as an evangelist. Those who have been pre-eminently successful in the field of evangelism have devoted most of the years of their mature ministry to revival work. The church in general owes much to those unique men with a distinctive ministry and message. We desire to make a place for them and to preserve the

office of the evangelist in the church. We want that all shall honor the evangelist and give to him every possible encouragement in the work to which God has called him.

After having declared the foregoing with clear emphasis, it is also necessary to say, however, that in a broader sense every man called of God to preach His gospel is an evangelist. Paul said to Timothy, "Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." The full proof of the ministry is in the souls won for Christ. Every preacher is the bearer of the evangel, the gospel, the good news of God's love and grace made manifest in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Love For The Lost

The pastor must have an evangelist's heart. He must be motivated with impelling love for lost men. He must share the redemptive work of his Lord and Master. He must be the "Herald of a Passion." He must be a "Hound of Heaven," tracking down the straying sinners and pursuing the wayward prodigals. He must absorb the spirit of Christ, who said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." He must feel that there is so much of kinship between the work he does and that which Jesus did that cross-bearing is a joy and bleeding to bless is a pleasure.

The pastor-evangelist of necessity covers the entire scope of gospel truth. But he is to preach all the time, whatever his theme or text, with the conviction that he is preaching to save the souls of men. He must keep his objective in preaching clearly defined in his own thinking, namely, that he is expecting someone, if not everyone, who hears him to render a decision while he preaches. He preaches for a verdict. Maybe it is not the great, momentous decision to accept Christ as his Saviour there and then; but it is a decision to walk in the light received, to answer the call of God, to obey the dictates of an enlightened conscience, to consecrate a life to the service of the church, to do the right thing when tempted to do wrong. Preaching should never be casual, aimless, desultory. Preach to accomplish a purpose. Be forever discontented if that goal is not reached.

Not only is the pastor's preaching to be imbued with the evangelistic spirit; but all he does, whether preparing sermons or preaching them, whether calling on the people or guiding the church through a building program, whether meeting his various boards, councils, committees or attending a Sunday-school picnic or a young people's outing-all must be with the view to saving souls and establishing them in the grace and knowledge of the Saviour.

Evangelism -- The Church's Program

Furthermore, the entire program of the church must tend to the accomplishment of its redemptive mission. It must be fused into the activity of every department of the church. Evangelism includes all that is done to lead men to Jesus Christ and qualify them for a home in heaven at last. Someone has gone so far as to say that "there is only one department of the church and that is the Department of Evangelism." That may seem extreme at the first hearing; but the more one ponders it, the more truth he sees in it. Every ministry of preaching or teaching, every service of worship or fellowship has bearing on the salvation of souls and is therefore evangelistic.

In the Sunday School

The Sunday school is considered by some the educational agency of the church. Certainly its program is to include instruction in the knowledge of God's Word, but it can only succeed in a large measure if it is evangelistic in spirit and purpose. It can be a forerunner in home missionary work. It is our open door to the ungodly world. It offers an excellent framework for visitation and personal evangelism through its organized departments and classes. Evangelistic meetings for children and youth may be conducted in its departments at appropriate times. Even its program of instruction has vital bearing upon the conversion of the unsaved, the sanctification of believers, and the establishment of converts in Christian experience and their progress in building holy character.

In Young People's Groups

The N.Y.P.S. is designed to guide the youth of the church in their devotional practice, in their times of fellowship, and in the development of qualities of leadership. This has evangelistic implications too, and besides there are many things that can be worked into the plan of procedure for the local society to give a more direct evangelistic emphasis. Among them are visitation evangelism; street meetings; services in hospitals, homes for the aged and convalescent, jails, and like places.

In the Missionary Society

The missionary society of the church purports to be for the education of its members in knowledge of the mission fields, and for prayer, and for money raising. But its very name and avowed purpose indicate it is for evangelism. Every department is evangelistic.

In the Sunday Evening Service

The Sunday evening service is an important factor in maintaining the spirit of evangelism in a church. In this meeting the whole atmosphere should be conducive to soul saving. The form and dignity of the morning service of worship can be modified.

The Music

Singing of spiritual songs and choruses that generate enthusiasm and freedom should be the order. Testimonies that are brief, spontaneous, and to the point are helpful. If the people want such to be the order, they should take full advantage of the opportunity when given. The idiosyncratic members of the church should not be the only ones to testify. Of course they will, and they will do no harm if they are surrounded by many others who speak forth God's praise.

The Preaching

The preaching should be candidly evangelistic; not always about sin or hell or the judgment or the unpardonable sin, though it may sometimes be along such lines. It can be doctrinal. Atonement, faith, repentance, prevenient grace, justification, regeneration, adoption, the new birth,

carnality, consecration, entire sanctification, the second coming of Christ, and heaven, all need to be preached and all lend themselves to an evangelistic appeal. Character sermons, expositions of Christ's miracles or parables, great events in Biblical history, all give the pastor-evangelist a limitless store of material for evangelistic preaching. A pastor can preach from the great texts of the Bible and develop them textually or expositionally.

Evangelistic preaching should give prominent place to good illustrations. They need not be horrifying or bloodcurdling. The results of such are seldom lasting.

The evening sermon should be brief; twenty-five to thirty-five minutes is long enough. The message of Sunday evening should always lead up to one conclusion, the invitation to seek the Lord as Saviour or Sanctifier.

Winning A Decision

That introduces the subject of the altar call. Here is where pastors are often sorely tempted to believe that immediate results are the only standard of success or failure. We do want results. We do not want to be in bondage. That people do not come to the altar is no sign that the Word has not been effective. There must be seedtime as well as harvest. Better let the fruit ripen than pick it green.

Many prospective converts and church members are lost because we seek to get them to the altar prematurely. A few people may be ready to come forward to pray the first time they are in a service, but such persons are exceptions to the rule. A great majority must be prepared for that step with diligence and skill. The pastor may need to make a number of calls in the home before that important decision is reached. The confidence of the prospect must be won. A sincere and valued friendship may need to be cultivated. Much prayer may be required to melt away the indifference and lead the will to surrender and repentance.

We ought to consider the fact that many people have come from a religious background that has given them no preparation for responding to an altar call, and may have built up a prejudice against it. To many, talk of the new birth is as mystifying as it was to Nicodemus, who said, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" Yet it is well to remember that when these souls have been won to a vital experience of salvation they may prove to be our most stable and dependable members.

An ultimate victory is far better than a premature response which ends in final defeat. Many have been unduly urged to go to the altar, only to leave it as they came. Patience, persistence, faith, and love will win, whereas zeal without knowledge as seen in a demand for an immediate decision may result in the loss of a good prospect and, what is far worse, the failure to save a soul from death. Therefore, let the pastor-evangelist preach faithfully and then act as though he believes what he preaches. Let him never become weary in well-doing, knowing that in due season he shall reap if he does not faint. And above all, let him never become harsh in spirit and blame the church people, or be impatient because those whom he has worked and prayed to win have not yet responded.

A church can have too many seekers at its altar. It cannot make too many converts to Christ. But it can have a false conception of altar services and insist on everyone's making public confession of every personal need which may be experienced, until the entire church is running to the altar habitually, and stability of Christian character is unknown. Much of the work done at the altar in some churches could more effectively be done in private conversations with confused and temporarily defeated persons. Thereby the altar service would not be cheapened until its distinctive purpose is lost.

A distinction should be made between converts to Christ and seekers at the altar. Under extreme pressure produced by tests and exaggerated emotional appeals many people rush to the altar. Some do not know why they are there. They, therefore, experience no change of heart. They do increase the total number of seekers, but they cannot be considered converts. Altar calls should be directed to three groups of people -- to the sinner who desires to be saved, to the backslider who needs to be reclaimed, and to the believer who is hungry for heart holiness. Indefinite altar calls will produce indefinite results. Clear-cut appeals will be conducive to tangible returns, and the fruit will be abiding. The success of an altar service is measured by the permanent results.

General invitations may be given for those who need encouragement in a united prayer at appropriate times. But such invitations should not be employed to camouflage altars barren because no one has responded to the definite appeal. The drive of our Sunday evening evangelistic service should be for converts, not just for seekers.

At times when special manifestations of God's Spirit are in evidence, altar calls may be prolonged indefinitely. But those occasions are not frequently witnessed in a regular Sunday evening service. Therefore it would be wiser if pastors would not prolong their altar calls. The way to God should always be declared open. An invitation may be given as a rule. Sometimes it may be wise even to omit it. Rarely should it be pressed beyond the time taken for one invitation hymn. Close the service with the note predominant that mercy's door is still open, and seldom let it end in an atmosphere of finality and doom. That which has not been accomplished in one service may be in the next. Even though one may grieve over the fact that some services have witnessed no conversions or sanctifications, yet the faithful pastor-evangelist will probably find at the end of a pastorate of normal length that most of his accessions to the church on profession of faith have been the result of his own pastoral ministry.

At least once in each pastorate, and possibly more often, a pastor may do well to do the preaching in an evangelistic campaign. It is good for him, and it will encourage the church to share in the burden for the meeting, while the pastor may be able to win some to Christ and the church that no one else could.

Instruction and experience have taught us that the secret of maintaining a spiritual church whose evangelistic efforts are fruitful is in keeping the church blessed of God. Dr. P. F. Bresee admonished pastors not to draw the lines too tight and create tension and resentment, but to keep the glory down on the church. He believed that would make sinners want to seek God and believers hungry for holiness. His advice is as sound and valid now as it was forty years ago. The church which maintains an atmosphere of joyful freedom and offers to all men salvation by faith in

Christ will certainly be a successful, growing, living organism. In this confidence may the pastor-evangelist ever rejoice.

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SECTION III -- THE PASTOR-PRIEST

10 -- LEADING THE CHURCH IN WORSHIP

To Protestants the title of priest is not acceptable because of its connotations. Yet we know that it was applied to Jesus Christ, who is our "high priest for ever." It is the false conception of priesthood that has caused us to avoid the use of the term. We believe in the universal priesthood of the children of God. Peter gives us this view in his first epistle, chapter 2, verse 5: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Each believer may now come to God with Jesus Christ as his only Mediator. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16).

Nevertheless, we know that in a very real sense every pastor of the flock of God is a priest. He is a mediator between God and man. He brings the knowledge of the truth of God to the understanding of men. He brings the sins, the sorrows, the perplexities, the burdens of men to God as a true intercessor. He is a leader of the worship. He is the performer of the ceremonies and sacred rites of the church and altar. We may reject the title of "priest," and in practice we do well to do so; yet we cannot deny or avoid the practice of the priestly functions performed by a pastor as the spiritual leader of men.

In The Worship Service

Here is a high office of the pastor-priest. Worship is an absolute necessity in the life of the Christian and in the life of the church. In private, the Christian must meditate and pray until his spirit is in vital communion with his God, and until his mind is "lost in wonder, love, and praise" to Him "that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." But he also needs the inspiration and uplift of social worship in the house of God. Any church which does not cultivate and maintain an atmosphere of worship will be limited in its service and of short life as a vital factor in the experience of those who compose its membership. Zeal for service and good works is commendable. Stress on the freedom which is conducive to evangelistic appeals is essential. Friendliness, cordiality, and informality, to a certain extent, are desirable. But we can never sacrifice the spirit of devotion, reverence, and worship for any of these, and it need not be so.

All the important factors in maintaining an atmosphere of worship can be preserved while these other privileges and blessings are enjoyed. In fact, none of them are in a good state of health unless they are blended together in proper proportion. Worship is not a hindrance to evangelism; it

is an aid. Evangelism is not effective unless it leads to worship. On the other hand, evangelism is no destroyer of worship. It keeps the spirit of love and adoration fervent and sincere.

The Church Building

Of great assistance to the pastor-priest in creating an atmosphere of worship is a building of conducive design and construction. It must be admitted that one may worship God in the temples of nature. Majestic mountains, towering trees with their thousand strings played upon by the winds, peaceful lakes and rivers, mighty seas, broad prairies, and star-studded skies produce awe and reverence for God, the great Creator. But they do not take the place of a house, dedicated to the worship of God, where His Word is preached, where His praises are sung by assembled congregations, where prayer is offered, where kindred spirits blend and "friend holds fellowship with friend" -- in short, where souls do worship in the beauty of holiness.

Men have met God in tents or brush arbors, barns or halls, schoolhouses or tabernacles of crude construction; but no spiritual awakenings that have failed to result in the building of churches for worship have ever been preserved. Where makeshift shelters are necessary, they must be considered temporary. If they are not, the work which has begun under such circumstances will soon disintegrate.

It does not take a great cathedral to produce the spirit of worship. It may be a roadside chapel of plain appointments ~ where plain people gather to worship God in spirit and in truth. Size is of negligible consideration. Indeed, for a few people a small chapel is better. But design and architecture are important. There should be something about the outward appearance of an edifice that marks it as a church. High steeples, massive pillars, Gothic style, are not always necessary. But modernistic design that leaves a building capable of being identified either as a community center, a clubhouse, a theater, a schoolhouse, or a lodge hall is inconsistent with the concept that men have always had of a place of worship. The distinctive character of church buildings can and should be preserved.

Subdued and mellow light, whether coming from the shining sun through stained-glass windows or from a wisely chosen system of artificial lighting, is far more conducive to worship than glaring light in some places that all but blinds the worshipers, while others are in the shadows.

Heating and ventilating systems that make a place of worship consistently comfortable are of far more serious importance than many people judge them to be. A stuffy, overheated sanctuary that must either be kept shut tight or made subject to air currents that hazard the comfort and health of the worshipers is an almost insurmountable obstacle to the successful service of worship. Under such conditions some people are nodding or sound asleep. Others are restless or distracted, and still others move and shift about to relieve their discomfort. Nothing is more important in planning a building for worship than the heating and ventilating system. Concrete or hard-surfaced floors uncovered are a liability to a place of worship. Aisles and platforms at least should be carpeted with material of appropriate texture and color.

The Furnishings

To be sure, the furnishings of the sanctuary are also important. Folding chairs, crude homemade benches, or even opera seats do not fit into the plan and purpose of a house of worship. Pews that are in keeping with the over-all design and that are made for comfort as well as utility are most desirable in the house of God. Drapes about the windows and archways and around the platform add a touch of finish and beauty.

The furnishings of the platform are not to be considered entirely incidental. Chairs of the domestic or office type do not find their place appropriately on the platform of a well-furnished church. Such chairs need not be of the severe and uncomfortable variety, but should fit the scheme of the place of worship as well as the form of those who occupy them.

The pulpit does not need to be massive or ornate. That is especially true in small edifices. It may be plain and not too bulky, and still stand there as a symbol of the authority of the Word of God and the prophet who proclaims it. It should not be pushed aside lightly or discarded by a preacher who plays to the grandstand. When a service of worship is in progress, it should always be in place and upon it a pulpit Bible. Thus it silently proclaims that "the word of our God endureth for ever."

In the appropriate location a communion table should be in evidence. This piece of furniture should not be used for any and every occasion that demands a table. It is designed for a sacred purpose. Let it be so regarded.

Then of special significance is the altar of the church. In a finished sanctuary it cannot be a rude plank. No part of the church should be more thoughtfully planned and carefully placed. There sinners will bow to repent of their sins; there believers will make their consecration for cleansing; there saints will bow to partake of the sacred emblems of the Holy Communion; there Heaven will come down their "souls to greet, while glory crowns the mercy seat." It may be called "the penitent form" or "the mourners' bench," but in its highest significance it is the altar. It symbolizes the Christian's changeless Altar, which is Christ-the Altar that sanctifieth the gift. Children should not be allowed to romp about it, careless people should not step over it, and thoughtless preachers should not stand upon it.

The liturgical church has no doubt gone to seed in its emphasis upon the symbolism of the architectural design and the furnishings of the sanctuary, but some of the informal dissenting groups have gone to extreme in the opposite direction. Some knowledge of the fact that the character of the place of worship has meaning and value should be possessed by all pastors and taught by them to all congregations.

The Order of Service

A prayerfully wrought-out order of service is necessary to an atmosphere of worship. I know about all the objections to a planned procedure in a church meeting, but none of them are valid. To be sure, we do want the Holy Spirit to be in control. We want Him to break up the order when He pleases to do so for God's glory. This He may occasionally do, but normally He will manifest His presence and power in the order instead of by disrupting it. He can guide the thought

of him than, He can the one who waits to get the mind of God at the who plans his service on a weekday as well as, and better moment the next feature is to be announced. Paul said, "God is not the author of confusion." "Let all things be done decently and in order."

For the most part God operates His universe after a pattern of law and order. When He designs to interrupt that procedure, He performs a miracle. In a service of worship God will for the most part be manifest in the orderly way. When He chooses to do so, He will set aside the planned program. The way to save ourselves from formality is ever to be sure our minds are under the control of His Spirit. Then we will be saved from confusion and at the same time lifted out of the ruts and grooves of formality.

A church bulletin is of great value in carrying forward a planned procedure for the worship service. It guides the minds of the worshipers in one direction. It lends dignity by the elimination of many announcements from the pulpit which have interest for only a small segment of the congregation. Some preachers kill the spirit of worship and absorb time of priceless value by long, trite announcements and exhortation pertaining thereto.

The Music

The music in a worship service is a primary consideration. In this respect a pipe organ is an invaluable asset. The electric organs of the Hammond or Wurlitzer varieties are acceptable. Of course, where neither is available a reed organ or a piano will serve.

A musical prelude beginning at least five minutes before the service is very helpful. If such be well chosen, it will subdue the voices of those who are coming in. It will still the clamoring thoughts of the people and bring them into a worshipful frame of mind. Any church organist or pianist gifted in playing a congregation into a state of mind for worship is a harbinger of the millennium.

The processional is an advantage in bringing pastor, music director, and choir to their places in an orderly manner. A brief introductory selection by the choir before taking their seats is also helpful. Of course, the offertory music is a means of bringing the congregation to understand that the offering is an act of worship too. Its meaning should be taught and its use practiced. A recessional may be played: first softly until the pastor has reached his place at the door without the necessity of racing back through the crowd or diving through the basement or ducking out at the back door; then in full volume to let the congregation know that the service of worship is ended.

All of these musical features lend atmosphere and order to a worship service.

The special singing may be either a bane or a blessing. Unaccomplished or self-esteeming soloists are a liability. Discordant duets, trios, or quartets grate upon the sensibilities of people who have a cultivated appreciation for music. A choir can be of inestimable worth in a service of worship, but to make a maximum contribution it must be one that is not only prepared to sing with acceptable technique but "with the spirit, and . . . with the understanding." The special musical number chosen should be carefully and prayerfully prepared, so that there will be blessing and glory in its rendition.

The members of the choir should make a presentable appearance, adorning themselves to attract the least attention. A choir decked out in jewelry is not qualified to sing God's praise. Vivid make-up is unbecoming to a group consecrated to sing to the glory of our God. Pastors and choir directors should see to it that such things are not on display. Perhaps t on Sunday morning in an otherwise well-ordered service, robes for the choir attract less attention than splashes of color of as many varieties as there are persons in the group. All members of the choir should be in a good state of grace. They should accept their places modestly and without thought of personal popularity. Those who sing for love of being in the public eye or for self-glorification are a hindrance and not a help. During prayer all should be prayerful. If the posture cannot be the same as that of the congregation, certainly the state of mind and heart can be. Talking, laughing, gazing over the congregation while prayer is offered are "unpardonable sins" for those who should grace a platform with becoming conduct. Inattention while the sermon is in progress is also inexcusable.

All of the above-mentioned musical features of a service can be present with fitness and with spiritual blessing. But a service is more worshipful without any of them if they are not on a high plane of spirituality. None of the music need be of the classical character. It may not even be of the high church type. Familiar hymns may be so well done that they will be blessed of God and a means of grace to the people.

To be sure, no amount of special music can replace the I singing of the entire congregation. To rob the people of the privilege of joining in the worship of God in singing the great hymns of the church is to trespass upon their rights and impoverish the service immeasurably. A meeting can get along without any "special." It can ill afford to omit the songs of Zion sung by every worshiper. Next in importance to the knowledge of the Bible is the familiarity of the people with the hymnbook.

Here let me state that no songs can take the place of the hymns. Homer Rodeheaver is reported as saying, "Our fathers sang great hymns about God. We sing sweet little ditties about ourselves." He came nearer the truth than we are willing to admit. What can take the place of the fine old hymns with their solemn, stately music and their words of profound meaning? If our people sing them poorly, the blame is upon their leaders. If our people have any distaste for these hymns, it can soon be cured by their frequent use. It will not take long till nothing else will satisfy in a Sabbath morning service of worship. What can substitute for such as these?

Arise, my soul, arise,
Shake off thy guilty fears;
The bleeding Sacrifice
In my behalf appears.
Before the throne my Surety stands;
My name is written on His hands.

* * *

Jesus, hail! enthroned in glory,
There forever to abide;

All the heav'nly hosts adore Thee,
Seated at Thy Father's side.

There for sinners Thou art pleading;
There Thou dost our place prepare;
Ever for us interceding,
Till in glory we appear.

Majestic sweetness sits enthroned
Upon the Saviour's brow;
His head with radiant glories crowned,
His lips with grace o'erflow.

* * *

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home!

* * *

Refining fire, go through my heart;
Illuminate my soul;
Scatter thy life through ev'ry part,
And sanctify the whole.

My steadfast soul, from falling free,
Shall then no longer move,
While Christ is all the world to me,
And all my heart is love.

* * *

Oh, could I speak the matchless worth,
Oh, could I sound the glories forth
Which in my Saviour shine!
I'd soar and touch the heav'nly strings
And vie with Gabriel, while he sings,
In notes almost divine.

I'd sing the precious blood He spilt,
My ransom from the dreadful guilt
Of sin and wrath divine;
I'd sing His glorious righteousness,
In which all-perfect, heav'nly dress

My soul shall ever shine.

I'd sing the characters He bears,
And all the forms of love He wears,
Exalted on His throne.
In loftiest songs of sweetest praise,
I would to everlasting days
Make all His glories known.

Well, the delightful day will come
When my dear Lord will bring me home
And I shall see His face;
Then with my Saviour, Brother, Friend,
A blest eternity I'll spend,
Triumphant in His grace.

* * *

The singing of these great hymns is the best preparation possible for a scriptural message. The expression of profound and lofty truth in song has already elevated the minds of the worshipers to high levels. In such an atmosphere of reverence and praise, it is easy to preach.

The Scripture Reading

In every service of worship the reading of the Scriptures should have prominence. It should never be eliminated or even subordinated to an unimportant place. The length of the selection may vary with the nature of the service. It would tend to be longer in a worship service and shorter in an evangelistic meeting. The pastor should regularly use the pulpit Bible. His ease in doing so is noticeable. It is in good form for the pastor to open the Bible upon his arrival on the platform and close it when the service is dismissed. Or he may open it when he reads from it and close it when the sermon is finished.

Not infrequently, if not invariably, a responsive reading is a desirable feature. It gives the people part in the service, and it familiarizes them with the Word. If selected readings are not available, the people could be encouraged to bring their own Bibles for reading and reference. Protestants rely greatly upon the Bible and its place in their religious life and experience. At least they do so theoretically. They should know it well.

The responsive reading need not take the place of a well-chosen passage to be read by the pastor as a background for his sermon. With such a passage he should have an easy familiarity, so that he can read it with deliberation and expression. In the Word it is God who speaks. An expositional preacher will read his scripture passage just before the sermon. He will then draw upon it freely as he preaches.

Prayer

Prayers also form an important part of a worship service. In our attempt to be informal we have sometimes become careless if not sacrilegious about our praying. In a complete order of worship there are four prayers. They should not be read from a book. They should not be written and memorized, either by invariable usage or direct intention. They must not be hackneyed or threadbare. The audience should not be able to repeat them as easily as the preacher does. Nevertheless, a pastor-priest will give thoughtful attention to his Sunday morning prayers.

The invocation should, of course, be a brief recognition of the fact that God is in His holy temple, that His people are there to worship, and that they crave His blessing, His illumination, His mercy and grace.

The offertory prayer can easily be a formality or a means of grace to all! It can very normally be an occasion for lifting the minds of people to new concepts of the grace of giving and Christian stewardship. Brevity, variety, and beauty may characterize this prayer. It can help to make giving a joy and save the offering from being cheapened or resented.

The main prayer, often called the pastoral prayer, is of central significance in the service. In it the pastor-priest joins the knowledge he has gained of the people and their personal needs with his accessibility to the throne of grace. He can so pray that each worshiper feels he is represented in that prayer, until it is almost as though his name has been spoken and his need described. This can be true only if the pastor has been among the people during the week and alone with God in his study and prayer closet as well.

This prayer should not only bring the worshipers and God near to each other; it can also prepare the minds of the people to receive the message of the preacher with alerted ears, anointed hearts, and responsive wills. Its burden and content will often anticipate the theme of the sermon. It should seldom be delegated to another minister and never to a layman of the congregation. A pastor may be almost if not as much loved and appreciated for his pulpit prayers as for his sermons.

No service is well ended without a closing prayer and benediction. Worship services cannot be reverently concluded in any other way. This prayer may be a brief petition to God to make the Word just spoken fruitful, with a scriptural benediction added, or it may be only the latter. No words can be more appropriate or more uplifting than the great classic benedictions of the Bible. Of these there are many. I call to your attention Revelation 1:5, 6 -- "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Jude 24, 25 -- "Now unto him that is able to keep you from ~ and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Hebrews 13:20, 21 -- "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

I Timothy 1:17 -- "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

I Thessalonians 3:12, 13 -- "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

Philippians 4:20 -- "Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Ephesians 3:20, 21 -- "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

II Corinthians 13:14 -- "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."

Romans 16:24 -- "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

Romans 16:27 -- "To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen."

Genesis 31:49 -- "The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another."

For variety this familiar benediction may be used:

Leader -- "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee."

Congregation -- "The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee."

Unison -- "The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

To be sure, no man can be content to bring a poorly prepared message in such a setting. A service that is well planned is a stimulant to the preacher to do his best. It is also a preparation of the congregation for his sermon. The orderly, worshipful service greatly augments the total effectiveness of the ministry of God's Word. It should be a service in which the sermon is salient and central; the Protestant conception of a worship service has always highlighted the sermon. But the sermon, whether doctrinal, expositional, inspirational, didactic, practical, or evangelistic, needs the setting that will prepare the way for it and make its effect lasting.

A planned service requires a prepared sermon. The prepared sermon can be delivered only by a prepared man. The preparation of the sermon and the planning of the service go a long way toward the preparation of him who is to lead the worship and deliver the sermon. But in another sense there is a preparation that can come only through meditation and communion with God

himself. This cultivation of the presence of God and the assurance that His anointing has been promised is in the end the only thing that will make the service truly one of divine worship.

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11 -- CONDUCTING THE MIDWEEK SERVICE

The importance of a successful midweek service can hardly be exaggerated. Its faithful attendance is a great factor in helping church people to maintain their spiritual glow. It is a refueling station. To those who live and work in a worldly, if not a wicked, environment every day, it is like a pier in the middle to support the long bridge that spans the week from Sunday to Sunday. It has ever been considered the indicator of the spirituality of the church. A church may retain an evangelical creed without a midweek service. But it is very doubtful if it can maintain an evangelistic spirit evidenced by souls being saved at its altars without what has been rightly called "The Hour of Power."

The Pastor's Place

The skill of the pastor in conducting this meeting is probably the greatest single factor in holding the interest of the congregation. Therefore, every pastor should give careful thought to the preparation of himself for this ministry and to the planning of the service. For him to come to the meeting disheveled in appearance, chaotic in mind, and harried in spirit is a deathblow from which it will seldom if ever recover. It is well that he determine not later than noon of the day of the midweek service what he shall say in his remarks. It is also advisable for him to leave off pastoral calling or whatever he may be doing an hour earlier on the afternoon of that day. This will give him opportunity to refresh himself in body and mind, so that he may be rested, alert, and radiant to welcome the people and lead them in what should be one of the most profitable and stimulating services of the church.

Leadership in the midweek meeting is almost if not quite as necessary as in the morning worship. Therefore, with rare exception, the pastor should take charge. This does not mean that he shall consume the time himself. It should in most instances be a people's meeting, not just another preaching service. It is unthinkable that a church which believes that all its members should have a vital personal experience of salvation, and with a clear witness for their Lord, should give those people no opportunity for testimony and praise. Can we expect Christians to be gifted in public expression, or can we long expect laymen to lead an intelligent and spiritual prayer, who have never exercised themselves in doing it?

The ideal is that the pastor shall lead the meeting and the people be given most of the time. The message should not take more than 20 per cent of the time allowed for the service. The character of the address may vary widely. It should be designed to direct the trend of thought for the meeting. It is well that one salient idea shall be set forth. If those present carry away a gem of truth that will encourage, strengthen, and guide them, they will be paid for coming. Furthermore, the brevity and unity of the message will set the standard for the meeting.

There is no demand for sequence in the relation of one message to those that precede or follow it. It is, however, an excellent opportunity to present brief Bible studies. A chapter may be unfolded a paragraph at a time. One of the shorter books of the Bible may be studied with some thoroughness. Or a single line of thought may be developed as it runs throughout a long book. Such lessons will encourage the people to bring their Bibles or Testaments with them. Thus they familiarize themselves with the Word of God and more easily retain the message to which they have listened. Such endeavors on the part of the pastor require careful preparation, lest ineffectiveness become obvious to the congregation and an embarrassment to the man himself.

The Psalms provide an almost limitless reservoir from which devotional messages may be taken. To give change and occasion for participation by the people, it may be good at times to ask for the quotation of precious promises or passages by the members present. Then the pastor could be prepared to offer one of his own choosing and make his comments thereon. If someone else has anticipated him and quoted his promise, all the better. His exposition will have that much more meaning to at least one person.

Helps To A Successful Service

Some incidental matters are of more importance than may seem. To begin the service on time is one of them. The practice of waiting till the people have arrived is sure to encourage tardiness. The pastor should be prompt and start the meeting when announced, if he alone is present. Such practice on his part will be appreciated, and soon the power of example will have its effect.

It is also wise to keep the service within proper time limits. A service habitually prolonged to indefinite length seldom maintains the interest and attendance of even the loyal members of a church. There is no inflexible rule for the length of the meeting. Some churches may have valid reason for holding a service of one hour in duration. Others may carry on for an hour and a half. Perhaps the "in-between" length would be the average, namely, an hour and a quarter. In case of a large attendance and a special spirit of praise or prayer upon the group, the time for closing might be postponed for a few minutes. But a service had far better close when the tide is high and still rising than go on until the interest lags.

If a church is expected to be enthusiastic about a midweek service, the meeting must be alive. It must not be formal. It cannot drift into such deep-grooved ruts that everyone knows what will happen before he leaves home. While the spirituality and spontaneity of a meeting depend in some degree upon those who sit in the pews, yet if the meeting is dead the pastor must take the blame, and if it is alive he deserves much of the credit, whether he gets it or not.

Beside the message by the pastor, a midweek service should have three distinctive features-prayer, singing, and testimony. There is opportunity to keep variety in the meeting and yet keep these elements in each service. Some meetings may turn more to the channel of prayer. Others may be given more especially to praise and witnessing. Yet in some meetings the time for testimonies may be omitted. On rare occasions the time might be taken to a large degree with singing.

Prayer

The midweek service must be of such a nature as to hold the interest of the youth as well as the mature, the young converts as well as the established Christians. This service is often known as the prayer meeting. It should merit that designation; prayer should be a prominent part of every meeting. It is well to call for prayer after one or two songs have been sung. Then just before or after the message, prayer should be called again. In each case two persons could lead and possibly even three. If those called upon are inclined to be lengthy, then two is sufficient and sometimes one is better. At the close one or two brief prayers make a fitting climax to the meeting.

Normally the pastor will do well to call by name those who are to lead in prayer. This may seem to rob the people of their liberty, but there is a liberty which leads to a most enslaving bondage and results in a stifling monotony. Not infrequently does a call for volunteers to pray result in one or two persons taking more than their proportion of time, and it is usually the same ones in every meeting. Often such persons are not gifted in prayer and sometimes very long-winded and dry. If the pastor calls on the ones he feels should pray, he can encourage rotation and thus increase the number who are able to lead a public prayer. He can develop those who are naturally timid and keep the meeting from being dull and monotonous. Occasionally he may open the service for volunteer prayers. There may be some meetings in which a large portion of the time is given to prayer. But in such instances it is better to have several seasons of prayer than one unduly prolonged.

A meeting that is designed to keep the interest of a large number of people can seldom be devoted to long intervals of prayer. It is well to recognize the fact that many will not carry a sufficient burden of prayer to maintain interest in such a service. The times for intercession and seasons of prevailing prayer had better be announced as such, and at special times. It is to be hoped that in any church there are a goodly number who would be present on these occasions to engage in sacrificial supplication.

Singing

Singing is a very important factor in an informal meeting. The songs chosen will do much to determine the character of the service. They should be of the bright and lively kind. As a rule those that give expression to praise and personal experience are best. If a church is fortunate enough to have a music director who is capable and flexible, he may be used to lead the singing, especially the opening songs. Should such a person be wanting, it is well for the pastor to lead the songs himself, unless he is deficient in such ability. If that be true, in the absence of a leader, it may be well to have someone from the group start the singing by mutual understanding with the pastor. The one who plays the piano has a very important responsibility. In fact, this one may save or ruin the singing. Spontaneity in singing is most desirable. There are times when a well-chosen verse or chorus just before or after prayer, lifted without announcement, is of great blessing. Appropriate choruses interspersed between testimonies are also desirable. It is fortunate if the pastor has the ability to start them. If not, he may call for some; and it is well if he lets it be known that anyone is free to lead in familiar lines as the Spirit may direct. Again, a person at the piano who is able to pick up such tunes readily is a valuable asset to a meeting.

Testimony

The time given to witnessing may be determined by the character and mood of the meeting, the number in attendance, and the objective which it is desired to reach. If it is a meeting of considerable size, thirty minutes or more may be devoted to testimony and praise. Sometimes the period may be prolonged if the tide is high; or if response is slow, it is better to change the order, and even an early dismissal may be good strategy. The pastor does well to remember, however, that meetings differ in mood. Brevity and variety should be encouraged. Those who are more reticent may be prompted occasionally. It is sometimes permissible and even wise to call on some to give their testimonies. Young converts should always be encouraged, and the youth of the church should be led out in personal witnessing.

There are some choice spirits that can be depended upon to be ready always with appropriate and helpful testimonies. For such every church and pastor should be deeply grateful. Some are of such blessing to a meeting that the feeling grows that there is something missing without their words of inspiration. On the other hand, there may be a few who are ever ready and yet never seem to be inspired. Their monopolizing of the time or introduction of unprofitable discourse may hurt the meeting. Abrupt remarks of censure will damage the meeting and hurt some sensitive and backward people. Those in need of correction often disregard all admonitions and at times become obnoxious. In dealing with such, forbearance on the part of the pastor is always commendable and may help others to be tolerant too.

It is seldom wise to reprove an offender in a meeting or even "sing him down." If the case is serious enough and does not adjust to charitable guidance, it may sometimes be necessary to deal kindly in a private conference with the one concerned. But let the Spirit never be quenched by unchristian attitudes on the part of the pastor. He is the moderator and leader of the meeting. He will find grace and wisdom to help him solve the most baffling problem. By some means he must keep the midweek service alive, interesting, spiritual, and spontaneous. If he finds himself struggling with the problems involved in doing so, he may profitably make it a point to attend a midweek meeting conducted by someone else to observe his methods.

Success in conducting the prayer meeting will have much to do with keeping a church happy, spiritual, and effective in soul winning. It may have much bearing, too, upon the length and fruitfulness of a pastorate.

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12 -- SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Baptism

The pastor-priest is responsible for administering the sacraments and ceremonies of the church.

One of the sacred rites that a pastor is called upon to perform is that of Christian baptism. He may have an open mind on the subject of the mode of baptism, but he should not allow himself

to think lightly of the importance of this significant ordinance. The history of the Church reveals that this rite has been hallowed by its use not only in New Testament times but also by practically all groups of Christians throughout the passing centuries. A few very devout people have found justification for eliminating it from their practice. But its place as a divinely approved sacrament has not been questioned by a vast majority of the followers of Jesus, who was himself baptized of John. Its disparagement, therefore, either through ignorance or neglect is inexcusable.

The Mode

There are many who have very clearly defined convictions as to the mode of baptism. Their right to maintain them and govern themselves accordingly is to be respected. There are others who feel that the mode of baptism is not a matter for controversy. They are willing for every Christian to inform himself sufficiently to decide which mode will satisfy his conscience. The latter find no difficulty in administering baptism either by immersion or infusion. Those who hold that there is one and only one right way to be baptized may have more difficulty in accepting members into the church whose views do not coincide with their own. They should, however, respect the wishes of the candidate and, if unable to comply with them, make arrangements for him to be baptized by some other minister who can do so without offense to his conscience.

Every pastor should, by reading and observation, learn to perform baptisms with becoming ease and grace. Awkwardness at such times may spoil the meaning of the occasion for the candidate, mar its beauty for the witnesses, and humiliate the pastor. The confidence with which one proceeds reveals his own certain state of mind. He should think his way through the procedure step by step until the doing of it will be natural.

The Candidate

It is the duty of a pastor to determine whether or not the candidate for baptism is worthy. He should have reasonable assurance by observation or by testimony that the one seeking baptism has repented of his sins and bears the fruit meet for repentance in a new life. There should be good evidence that the inward work of grace, of which baptism is the outward sign, has taken place. Without that washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, baptism may only be a sop to a troubled conscience and a cloak of hypocrisy.

The next step is for the pastor to determine by what mode the candidate wishes to be baptized. It is sometimes necessary for him to enlighten his understanding, so that he may intelligently choose. In dealing with unprejudiced people the pastor will probably find it reasonably easy to guide them according to his own views.

It is well to announce in advance the time for observance of the ceremony of baptism. This will give those who desire to be baptized opportunity to make their wishes known. In a church which has equipment for baptism by immersion, candidates desiring either mode may be accepted. But to avoid the obvious difference between immersion and infusion, it might be well to separate the candidates into two groups to be received possibly at two different services.

The Service

At the time and place appointed, the pastor should prepare the atmosphere by appropriately chosen hymns, scripture reading, prayer, and, if he wishes, a message in keeping with the service. The candidates may be called by a general invitation, but it is better to have a prepared list and call them by name to present themselves. When all are assembled in the appointed place the ritual should be read, so that all the company may hear, and the vows taken as a personal testimony before God and men. Then the pastor should ask each candidate his Christian name or names, repeat the accepted formula, and administer the rite of baptism.

The mode of infusion in any of its variations has the advantage of simplicity and dignity. Immersion, however, can be administered in such a way as to leave a lasting significance in the experience of the one receiving it, and it may be a ceremony of beauty and inspiration to all who witness it.

A church well equipped for the purpose is the best place for immersions. Often one may be secured from another denomination if necessary. That being impossible, a carefully selected place in open water, as a lake or stream, can be used. Wherever the baptism by immersion is to take place, all care should be taken to avoid anything that will cheapen the occasion. Proper clothing should be provided. Baptismal robes are preferable. A place for changing to dry clothing should be made available. Some kind of screening should be prepared, so that those emerging from the water will not be exposed. Reverence must be maintained or the sacredness of the service is marred.

The pastor should explore the whole situation before the hour appointed for the service. He, of all people, must be in command of himself. If there are especially large candidates, it is well for him to have another minister to assist him; and if none is available, he may use a respected spiritual layman of mature years. For more specific instructions the young and inexperienced pastor may seek advice and help from those who are his seniors in years or service.

Infant Baptism

The subject of infant baptism cannot be discussed in all its pros and cons in this connection. Each pastor will probably find it necessary to arrive at some conclusions by which to regulate his own practice. There seems to be a decided trend toward the dedication of infants, either with the use of water or without it. About such practice there is little controversy. It makes no pretense to be a substitute for baptism after one has personally chosen the Christian way and been born from above. Its primary meaning is for the parents, who before God and the church pledge themselves to faithful performance of their duty to train up the child in the way he should go. It may be a very meaningful service. Every pastor should seek to be proficient in its administration. He may read the ritual prepared for the occasion. But he may also take liberty to make fitting remarks and form questions to call forth the pledge of faithfulness by the parents. It is well, but not always necessary, to take the baby in his arms while he blesses him in the name of the Trinity and prays for him and his parents. He will name the child as instructed by the parents, even as in a baptismal ceremony.

If a pastor is clear about doing so, he may, when parents desire it, baptize infants. The procedure is not varied greatly. If he is not clear to administer baptism, he may make satisfactory arrangements for another minister who is qualified, to do so.

The importance of either baptism or dedication should not be minimized. It should be celebrated with proper dignity, and it is well for a pastor to keep a supply of certificates, so that he may present one to the parents at the opportune time.

Receiving Church Members

Perhaps there is nothing a pastor does that gives him more satisfaction than receiving members into the fellowship of the church. But judging by the casual and sometimes blundering way in which members are received, one would conclude that it had little meaning for the pastor or those who join. When one stops to think that, in giving the right hand of fellowship to those who are qualified to unite with the church, he is really adding to that Church which is the body of Christ, he ought to make the ceremony as beautiful and impressive as possible. Pastors made uniting with the church more significant, it is possible that people would be more eager to become members. And it might make all who are in the membership of the church more aware of their responsibilities and more eager to be faithful and fruitful in the service of the church.

Preparation

It is not out of place to preach occasionally on the meaning of church membership. A pastor should always be on the alert to find those who are ready to unite with the church. There are times, however, when too great eagerness may be poor diplomacy. It is better to give people time to make an intelligent decision, that they may be prepared to stand by it. One thing is always important, namely, that those who unite with the church shall be informed of her doctrines and the general and the special rules. It is not fair to persons to allow them to unite and then discover they do not qualify. Neither is it fair to the church, for they may never be willing to accept her standards, which means they will either retain membership unworthily or leave with feelings that are wounded. A pastor should be well assured that all who are received are fully enlightened as to what they are joining, and it might be added that the entire church should be frequently reminded of the high standards of conduct that have been approved by the conscience of the Christian community of which they are a part.

A wide-awake pastor will not overlook the importance of receiving children into membership. If they are from Christian homes, they may be received by the time they are eight or nine years old. For several weeks prior to the time of joining, the pastor ought to meet them in a special class for careful teaching of the doctrines and rules and of the meaning of church membership and Christian baptism. He will find great joy in baptizing these candidates and in receiving them into the fellowship of the church. Their growth in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man will be a rich reward for his faithful attention to them in childhood.

All who are applicants for membership in the church should be approved by the membership committee. The Manual provides for such a committee and outlines its duties. In theory they are to seek out persons desirable for membership and recommend them to the pastor.

The reverse is the common practice. Sometimes the membership committee seem to feel it their duty to keep members out of the church. There should be understanding and co-operation with the pastor. If there are persons about whom there is some ground for doubt, it may be well to consult the entire church board. When a class has been approved, the pastor may announce that at a certain time the doors of the church will be opened. All considering membership could be invited to consult him.

Procedure

When the time comes to receive the class, it is good procedure for the pastor to have a list of the persons before him and call them by name to present themselves before the altar of the church. It is well to designate those who come by letter of transfer or commendation and those who unite on profession of faith. They may come together. Those who come by transfer need not give their vows, or they may do so if they choose.

After the reading of the ritual so that the entire audience may hear, the pastor should extend the hand of fellowship and welcome the new members of the household of faith. Then it is good to ask the class to face the congregation and introduce them. It is appropriate also to invite the entire audience to stand and in so doing express their pleasure in receiving the new members. A well-chosen stanza of a hymn is in order. The ceremony may be climaxed with a brief prayer. It is a fine gesture to present each new family with a Manual of the church and a year's subscription to the Herald of Holiness. It is wise for the pastor to call on the new members soon and to urge others to do so.

In case members are joining by letters of transfer only, the above procedure may be abbreviated if desired.

The Lord's Supper

The Holy Communion is the most sacred and significant sacrament of the church. It is not easy to keep it on the high level of spiritual meaning that should be maintained and at the same time avoid formality. Every pastor needs to familiarize himself with ritual and the scriptures that are related to the sacrament. Then he should work out a plan of procedure that will meet the approval of his own mind and to which he can give himself without restraint and self-consciousness. A strained effort to be informal may become a bondage. On the other hand, the same thing may be done in the same way so often that it loses its meaning.

Significance

The avoidance of formality in serving the sacrament, however, is not so much in planning the arrangement of the service as in securing the spiritual experience and understanding of those who partake of it. This is first the responsibility of the pastor. He, himself, must have that deeper insight that enables him to grasp the eternal truth that is symbolized in the Communion. To his experience and the reading of the sacred record he can add much by study of books that deal with the subject. Commentaries, expositions, theologies, and sermons are all helpful. While he deepens his own appreciation he is also preparing his mind and heart to help others to the fuller realization

of the meaning of the Lord's Supper. His message preparatory to the celebration of the Communion will do much to condition the minds of those who are about to partake, to experience, with the joy of reality, the truth represented by the consecrated emblems.

The Occasion

A church should have a communion service four times each year. Too great frequency may tend to allow it to become routine. But careless omission will also lead to the conclusion that it is not important. It is well to space the occasions evenly. Probably the best plan is to observe Communion at or near the beginning of each quarter. This can be adjusted to fit the special seasons like Easter or the conflicts that may come in the over-all program of the church. It is wise for the pastor to announce the service at least one week in advance, so that all the people may prepare themselves by reading, meditation, prayer, and self-examination to partake of the sacrament worthily, for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh condemnation to his soul.

Preparation

A wise pastor will not depend on his stewards automatically to prepare for the communion service. He will contact the chairman on Saturday to make sure that all will be in readiness at the appointed time. If his stewards are new and inexperienced, he may need to give them rather detailed instructions. When the hour for the meeting arrives, all should be in readiness: the communion table in its place covered first with a white linen cloth; the trays with the cups filled with the pure blood of the grape; the plates of unleavened bread or wafers in proper position on the table; and all covered with another white linen cloth.

All churches should be equipped with a complete communion service. If such cannot be had, paper cups and improvised trays and plates can be used and linens borrowed for the occasion. If there are not sufficient cups to serve the entire congregation, the stewards should be on duty to wash and refill them as needed between servings. If the size of the crowd will permit, it is more meaningful to serve the people in relays at the altar of the church. In case of a large group it is better to serve them in their seats. In that event enough cups to meet the need is imperative.

Administration

Those who are to help administer the sacrament should be chosen and instructions given them before the hour of service. If elders or licensed ministers are available, it is well to use them. If not, the senior stewards may help to serve the emblems while the others do the work behind the scene. In any case each assistant should know exactly what he is to do.

Each part of the worship service should make its contribution to the atmosphere and meaning of the hour. Hymns should be appropriate. "Break Thou the Bread of Life" is often used, but it is not the best choice since in that hymn the Word of God is the "Bread of Life." "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," "There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood," "Alas and Did My Saviour Bleed?" "I'll Live for Him Who Died for Me," "I Gave My Life for Thee," "My Jesus, I Love Thee," and the like, are more fitting. The pastoral prayer should point to the feast of which all are soon to partake. The message should be brief and the theme related to the Communion, if not a

discussion of its meaning. One fact should always be kept in mind, namely, that it is the Lord's table. He is the Host and Head, and the communicants are His guests.

When the moment to begin serving the emblems has arrived, the pastor should ask those who are to assist him to come forward and kneel at the altar. He should remove the cloth and the covers from the trays, or direct two of his helpers to do so. Then the appropriate portion of the ritual should be read and the prayer of consecration offered. The prayer may be extemporaneous. The next step is for the pastor to serve his helpers and himself with the bread and then the grape juice. This being done, it is time to serve the first table or the entire congregation. All Christian people are to be invited to participate. Their fitness is a matter for them to settle before God.

In case the service is at the altar by tables, it is well to ask that participants shall come first from one side of the building and fill the entire altar. Then as they are withdrawing, those from the opposite side may come to take their places. This will save confusion in coming and going.

As the altar is filling, the pastor may hand two of his helpers the plates of bread. When all have knelt, he may appropriately ask that they take the emblems in ungloved hands, and that they retain the same until the ritual is repeated, when all shall partake together. It is best that the pastor direct the service and let others pass the emblems. After the bread, the same procedure is repeated with the unfermented wine. Then the pastor or one of his helpers, especially if they are ministers, may dismiss the table with a brief prayer. While the participants leave and others come, the cups may be replaced on the trays and the choir may sing a stanza of an appropriate hymn, or the instrument play it softly without singing. When all have been served, it is well to conclude the meeting with a hymn and a prayer of dismissal. As the hymn is being sung, the trays and plates should be returned to their place on the table and the covers put in position. Then the white linen cloth should be replaced. This adds greatly to the impression of the sacredness of the consecrated emblems.

Probably no pastor will achieve his ideal in a communion service until he has conducted one many times. Even then he may occasionally feel a sense of disappointment. But his earnestness in seeking to enter into the spirit of the service and his practice of the technique will be rewarded. The latter may be varied as he gains confidence. He may take comfort in the fact that his occupation with the procedure is a factor of which those who partake are probably unconscious. The presence of the Spirit of God is the most important consideration. Let Him hallow all with the manifestation of His glory and grace. The pastor should recognize His presence and encourage all to do likewise.

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13 -- OTHER SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Weddings

Every pastor should show a proper interest in the weddings which take place among the people of his flock. He should never be curious or over-anxious about knowing the plans that may be developing until he has actually been asked to solemnize the occasion. Asking leading questions

of the principals is ill-bred. Those ministers who, for the fee that may be forthcoming, advertise their availability cheapen themselves and their calling. Nevertheless, when the plans have been revealed that include the pastor, he should show a courteous concern and a readiness to be of any possible assistance.

To be sure, there are some weddings that a pastor should not accept even when asked. He should always keep in mind that the Manual strictly forbids him to marry divorced persons except it be the innocent party in case of a divorce granted on the established ground of adultery. If he is not sufficiently well acquainted with the contracting parties to know their personal history, he has a perfect right and a duty to inquire of them. It may be advisable for the minister to refer to the civil authorities all persons who seek to be married while a former mate is still living. In so doing he may establish a precedent that will be a lifelong protection to him. In any case it is good judgment and taste on the part of all concerned for such weddings to take place in private.

Prior Arrangements

A pastor does well always to remember that when a wedding is being planned the details should be worked out according to the wishes of the bride. When called upon to do so-and he is very often-a minister may give advice on matters in which he may be concerned. But he should not insist that things be done as he suggests. If he is disregarded in the plans, he must be gracious. If asked to take a secondary place, he should not hesitate. Even if the one chosen to officiate is a predecessor, it is an opportunity for the pastor to be magnanimous.

It is important that a clergyman ascertain whether he is legally qualified to solemnize marriages. In many states and places the civil laws recognize the law of the church and grant authority to all who are thereby qualified to perform wedding ceremonies. There are some localities, however, which have special rulings and authority must be obtained from the court. Certainly one should be assured that he is qualified according to his church law. Should he be lacking in any point, he must candidly say so and offer to assist in making satisfactory arrangements. Should another perform the ceremony, he may, if requested, take a second place in the procedure.

Every pastor should be well informed on the subject of wedding etiquette. A summary treatment such as this does not permit a full recounting of those regulations; but a minister is wise to have at hand a volume or two by recognized authorities for reference, and with them he should be reasonably familiar. Of course, such customs vary in different communities and with the passing of time they are subject to change.

As for the ceremony, there is no set form that must be used. There are many variations. A man may read over a number and choose one as his personal preference. If asked to do so, he may suggest his choice. But again the bride may have some well-defined ideas of her own, or she may wish to read over several ceremonies and make her own decision in conference with the groom. In such instances the pastor will do well to comply with requests that may be made of him.

Weddings celebrated at the home are more simple, but even then the pastor should be well informed as to the best procedure. Some church weddings are open only to invited guests; others

are made open to all who may wish to attend. In either case the pastor is to lend himself to the wishes of the bride. The costume to be worn varies according to the time of the day. The clergyman should learn the plans of the wedding party as regards the style of dress and attire himself accordingly. If he does not possess the appropriate style of clothing, he may for a small consideration rent what is needed. It is reported by reliable authority that a pastor appeared one evening at a very formal wedding, in which the entire party was in full dress, wearing a Palm Beach suit that had not even been to the cleaners for some time. Of course, all concerned were chagrined beyond words. It is to be hoped that he knew enough to be embarrassed. No pastor has a right to be intentionally crude. And there are some mistakes that are hard to overlook even on the basis of ignorance. It is a minister's business to be informed.

In order that a wedding may be carried through smoothly it is always wise to plan for a rehearsal. The pastor should be present for this occasion and be prepared to take his part. It is well that he be ready to offer helpful suggestions or answer questions that may be addressed to him but he should not be obtrusive or argumentative. Sometimes he may find it wise to yield to the ideas of others, even when reasonably sure they are incorrect.

The Ceremony

When the hour arrives for the ceremony, the minister should be there in ample time. It is inexcusable for him to be tardy. Certainly he must have the date and hour well fixed in his mind and marked on his calendar, so he will not be absent. He must also be self-possessed. Regardless of how frightened the bride or the groom may be or what unexpected thing may happen, the clergyman must be poised and prepared to be the saving factor in any emergency. His part is not finished until the recessional has been completed.

It is customary for the minister to be included in all the functions planned for the wedding party. He should show himself accommodating and appreciative. If a reception is planned, he should be among the guests unless there are well-known reasons for his being excused.

In all the pastor ought to maintain a proper reserve and dignity. He should not lend his aid or approval to tricks that may embarrass the bride or the groom. He may at the appropriate time be jovial, and should be relaxed and cordial.

There are very good reasons for a minister to strive to excel in giving satisfactory service in weddings. It is a very sacred time in the life of those whose union he blesses, and he should do all in his power to make it a happy and beautiful occasion. He should receive the marriage license before the ceremony is performed. He is thus assured that legal requirements have been met. If he has been called upon to marry persons unknown to him, he should make certain of that point ahead of time. After the ceremony he should fill in the license and return it promptly to the proper authorities. It is a good thing for a pastor to have a certificate of marriage to present to the couple before they leave. If one has not been otherwise provided, it is well to have one available for presentation to the husband and wife, signed by himself and appropriate witnesses.

If a fee is offered, it is wise to accept it without ostentation. No recognition should be taken of the amount at the time; and if no fee is offered, the omission should have no notice.

After the Marriage

Young people are often attached for life to the pastor who married them. The wise minister will make the most of such affection for spiritual reasons. Soon after they are settled in their new home he should call to see them. Should they be persons who are not in the membership of the church, the contact should be cultivated. There is a good possibility that the man of God may be instrumental in helping to make the new home Christian, and he may be able to add two members to his church if he is diligent, tactful, and prayerful. In any case a link of friendship should be formed if at all possible.

Funerals

Another valuable opportunity of service is offered to the pastor in conducting funerals. Some men have become so much in demand for funerals that one wonders how they can do much besides. Should such a special ministry be thrust upon a pastor, perhaps he would be unwise to curtail it voluntarily. On the other hand, no man should consider conducting funerals the most important phase of his ministry. He should not make it obvious that he is seeking the opportunity to bury the dead to collect fees or enhance his popularity.

Funerals are a normal part of a pastor's service to a church and a community. Those that are turned to him in a natural course of events by members and friends of the church or that come providentially to him should be accepted as a sacred responsibility. Therefore every pastor ought to seek to qualify himself for acceptable service in one of the most delicate relations that he sustains with his people. He should develop a poise and confidence that will make him appear at ease. He is a wise pastor who takes seriously this part of his ministry and seeks to excel in it both in his manner and in his message.

When death comes to a home, the pastor should be there as soon as possible to offer his condolence and his aid. He should not wait to be asked to come. During the sad hours that elapse between death and the funeral he should not be possessive or intrusive, but he should be courteously attentive and helpful. It is a time for the man of God to prove himself magnanimous. If by any chance he has had differences with the deceased or his family, they should be forgotten. Those who sorrow are naturally sensitive; the pastor should never be. Even if he is rejected or ignored, it is well for him to overlook everything and manifest Christian love and charity.

Arrangements

At the proper time he will want to talk over plans for the funeral with the family or their representative. The wishes of the bereaved should be very carefully regarded. If the pastor is asked for suggestions or even to make the arrangements, he will accept that responsibility modestly, and then ask that all his own ideas shall be approved. He may sometimes find the family very meticulous in their requests, even to choosing hymns, scriptures, and the text. They may also dictate the place, the length, and the hour for the service. Except in rare instances the pastor should acquiesce without protest. If there are impossible demands, he may find the funeral director very helpful in adjusting such matters. A clear understanding of procedure between the minister and the

funeral director is always a necessity. In case a pastor is called upon to officiate at a funeral for a person who is not known to him, in all probability the funeral director will have made all the arrangements with the family, and in such case the pastor will only need to carry out his part of those plans to the best of his ability.

The Service

The funeral service should as nearly as possible follow the procedure agreed upon. As for length, there are times when a very brief service is urgently requested. Some people will have no music at all. Others eliminate singing. Some want only a scripture reading and a prayer; or if remarks by the pastor are included, they specify that they shall be few. Most funerals should be about thirty minutes in length. In some unusual cases they may be an hour.

The character and age of the deceased will have much to do with the nature of the service. It is well for a pastor to possess a manual of funeral services. Much that is in it he will never use, but it will provide him some help in finding appropriate passages of scripture, and committal services.

Funerals for people whose lives have been righteous and whose testimony was clear are easy. There is abundant material in the Word of God for such funerals. There is consolation for the grief-stricken and inspiration for all Christians.

The funeral of an unbeliever is different and much more difficult. The pastor must not perjure his conscience nor compromise the solemn truths of God's Word. To do so will not save the dead and it will do the living no good. Sometimes a note of warning is permissible and may bear fruit if fitly spoken. Or the preacher may frankly declare that he is leaving judgment to the Lord while he commits the body to the ground and the soul to the God who gave it. The pastor will find appropriate texts and scriptures, and he can cultivate the skill that is needed under such trying circumstances. It is best he address his message to the living for their comfort and help.

There are times when personal eulogies are appropriate. Usually those who mourn like to hear the virtues of the departed extolled. In doing it, however, the pastor should exercise caution not to be extravagant.

In many funerals singing is desired. The singers should be equal to the occasion. They should seldom sing more than two selections or more than two stanzas of each one.

When the minister has completed his part in the service, whether it be in the church or funeral chapel, it is well to offer a concluding prayer. That could be understood to be the signal for the funeral director to take charge. He will have determined whether or not the audience is to view the body of the deceased at that time and also whether the family desires to take a final look before proceeding to the grave. In any case the pastor will linger close by until the casket is closed. If it seems advisable, he may offer a word of reassurance to those stricken with grief. He will precede the casket to the funeral coach and stand at attention as it is placed in position.

The Committal

Upon arrival at the cemetery the minister will take his place by the coach and precede the pallbearers to the grave. When the casket has been placed and the flowers arranged, he will stand at the head of the grave and give the committal. It is often appropriate to read or quote a passage of scripture such as the twenty-third psalm just before reading the ritual. The final act is always a brief prayer and benediction.

In some cases the family of the deceased may choose to have the body cremated. In that event the procedure for a committal is practically the same except that it will take place at the crematorium instead of at a grave.

After the final rites are performed it is well for the minister to linger for a time, so that he may speak words of comfort to the sorrowing if opportunity affords itself.

Unless there are unusual conditions existing which make it unwise, a pastor ought to call in the home of the bereaved at a very early time. In some instances he may go in the evening of the same day the funeral has been held. At other times the next day is better. But promptness in this respect is invariably appreciated. During those days of adjustment a frequent call is in order.

Whenever a new contact has been established through a funeral service, it should be cultivated. Not infrequently it results in some trophies for the Lord.

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SECTION IV -- THE PASTOR-SHEPHERD

14 -- PASTORAL VISITATION

If preaching is the primary responsibility of the pastor, then the second is all but like unto it, namely, pastoral visitation. Indeed, so essential are they both that neither can reach its highest effectiveness without the other. The preacher who lives entirely in his study, reading, praying, and writing, will develop an aloofness from his people which will make his preaching seem impractical and unreal to them no matter how much he may seek to avoid it.

On the other hand, the man who neglects his study and his prayer closet to be a socially-minded mixer is in danger of allowing his frequency among people to remove the distinctive features of his personal presence. The highness and holiness of his character may be cheapened until "familiarity breeds contempt." People sometimes like the handshaking, back-slapping preacher, but may lose their respect for him as a man unto whom the oracles of God have been committed.

The demands for effective preaching give nobility and loftiness to the mind and spirit of a pastor, which keep him living on a plane that elevates the people with whom he associates. His work as a shepherd of the flock, living with them, sharing their burdens, their perplexities, their sorrows, and their joys, keeps his ministry of preaching practical, personal, down to earth, and it is the bread of life for their hungry souls.

A Complement To Preaching

Some pulpiteers may have enviable success without spending much time in parish visitation, but undoubtedly that success is somehow discounted because they have neglected one important part of their work. No matter how big the church, no matter how gifted the preacher, he needs the common touch that comes to those who call in the homes of the people. Some shepherd-hearted pastors succeed in a measure while giving secondary attention to preaching. But no one knows just how far short of the divine ideal that ministry falls if there is no faithful effort to preach the Word in the demonstration of the Spirit and power.

That there are some men who are limited in preaching ability and blessed with a very desirable pastoral instinct, none can deny. They should not, however, excuse themselves for weak and profitless preaching because they are proficient in pastoral visitation. Such a person should require even greater diligence of himself in sermon preparation. Knowing wherein his weakness lies, he should seek by all means to fortify his ministry at that point. Phillips Brooks said, "The preacher who is not a pastor grows remote; the pastor who is not a preacher grows petty."

It is equally true that the man gifted as a maker and preacher of sermons should not allow himself to overlook the necessity of pastoral visitation. For his own sake, for the sake of his people, and for Christ's sake he should set himself to the task that is distasteful to him and keep at it until he learns to love it. To major on doing the thing one likes best is to admit weakness and lack of self-discipline. The effective pastor should do what ought to be done. He will discover that happiness is found, not in doing what he likes, but in liking what he has to do. Therefore, let the Elijah-like preacher cultivate the Elisha-like ministry that seems commonplace; and let the Elishas strive to become Elijahs too. This does not mean that one is to try to be unnatural in what he does; rather, he is to practice the thing he likes least, until that becomes a joy to him and a blessing to others. To quote again from Phillips Brooks, "The first business of the preacher is to conquer the tyranny of his moods and always to be ready for his work."

There is joy both in pastoral calling and in sermon preparation and delivery. But it is doubtful if one who neglects either has ever tasted the highest joy which comes in the knowledge that he has done his best to excel in both phases of his pastoral ministry. In mastering the art of preaching and at the same time acquiring skill in calling, the pastor has climbed to the highest peak of satisfaction as an able minister of Christ.

Therefore, all who look forward to service in the church as pastors should resolve now that there will be no attempt to rationalize around the duty of calling in the homes of the people. Accept it as one of the two first responsibilities and make up your mind that you will do it until it is a pleasure.

The Technique

Planning One's Calling

A question frequently asked is, "Should pastoral calling be systematic or spontaneous?" Perhaps the safest answer is that it should be both. If one depends entirely upon the spontaneous impulse to determine where he should call, he will without doubt find himself calling in some homes more frequently than is necessary or advisable. That is a point to be jealously guarded, the first reason being that it is liable to cause envy among the members and make them strained in their relations one with another. The second is that it may call down criticism on the pastor himself; and if someone "gets it in for him," he may find himself accused of indiscretion, which could ruin his ministry. Therefore, every pastor should set about to call systematically on all members of his church, making sure that none are omitted in the time allotted for covering the parish.

On the other hand, a pastor must sometimes vary his schedule and go where he is led of the Spirit to go, for there he may find some special need of which he had not been informed. Then, to be sure, there are some home conditions that make calling with greater frequency a duty. In case of sickness unto death it may be advisable to call every day, or in case of prolonged serious illness once or twice a week is necessary. Among the aged and infirm a call a month would be in order. Ordinarily a pastor should take into account the size of his church membership and the number for whom he is responsible, and plan to visit in each home once a quarter or once a year according to the size of the congregation.

Some pastors have made a practice of announcing their coming to a certain street or neighborhood, so that those in that vicinity can be prepared to receive them. Or they may mail out notices of their expected call. This practice may have some advantages. Some might plan to stay at home. But others who need the pastor most, and are not ready to admit it, may plan to be gone. Going unannounced he may miss some, but he can return. If he has made several attempts without success, he may leave his card, so that at least his good intentions will be discovered. The better and more general practice is to go and trust that the time will be appropriate; and if not, try again at a convenient season. By all means calling must not have the appearance of being perfunctory, routine performance. It must be an indication of genuine heart interest and a godly concern of the pastor for the spiritual welfare of those over whom the Holy Ghost hath made him overseer.

Number of Calls

This of course raises the question of how many calls a pastor can and should make in a year. Some pastors report as many as 2,000. That means forty calls each week with only two weeks out for vacation and no irregularities. It is not impossible, but it is doubtful that the average pastor can keep that pace if he gives a proper portion of his time to other duties. One thousand calls a year is a fair average.

Length of Call

Another question asked is, "How long is the call to be?" This also varies as to the purpose of the call and the conditions existing in the place called upon. Sick calls should never be long. From five to ten minutes is long enough, and they may be shorter unless one is detained to minister to others. If the call is made to render some particular service, when the purpose is achieved, it may well end there. It may be to invite someone to a special meeting. In that case it may not even be profitable to go in; or if one does enter, he need not be seated. If a call is made and guests are

present, the proper thing is courteously to apologize for intruding and, with a promise to return soon, bow oneself out. If it is obvious that there is important work in progress, an exceedingly brief pause may be appreciated.

If the call is to lead a soul to Christ, or to talk definitely about church membership or some spiritual problem, it is best to be more deliberate. It may take thirty minutes or even an hour. If such a prolonged stay is expected, it is better to call by special appointment. Then no inconvenience is caused.

Conduct of the Call

Pastoral calls are professional, in the best use of the term. Any call made with a purpose to do good to the souls of men, whether in the home, the office, the hospital, the shop, or the field, may be rightly considered a pastoral call. Therefore, it should not degenerate to the level of a social call. The conversation should be kept on a high level. It can be jovial at times and under proper circumstances, but it should always be on a level that does not forbid the accomplishment of a spiritual objective. Wisecracking and foolish jesting are excluded. Conversation may begin on a plane of common interest such as weather, work, business, crops, politics, or current news of the day; but it should end on the plane of the church, religion, or personal testimony to God's goodness and grace.

Whether to read the Bible and pray or not is to be determined by the character of the home or place in which the call is made. Where it is embarrassing to the pastor or the person on whom he is calling, it is better omitted. Many times, however, a call is not considered complete without scripture read or quoted and prayer offered. The wise pastor cultivates the ability to size up the situation and act accordingly. In any case the scripture reading should be brief and appropriate. It is better to be familiar enough with your passage to know for certain that there are no embarrassing allusions in it.

A youthful preacher was visiting his sweetheart. He was handed a Bible and asked to lead family prayers. Inadvertently he opened the Bible to Hebrews, chapter 13. He started to read: "'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.'" That provoked a laugh from the sweetheart and her sister. While they were getting their amusement under control, the young pastor glanced at a few verses immediately following. One of them was, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." He prepared quickly to read a psalm. That story illustrates the point. Know what you are about to read.

Posture in prayer is not a fundamental problem. Sometimes it is best to stand and pray just before leaving. Sometimes it is wise to remain seated. In a home of known religious devotion or at times when special burden of prayer is experienced, it is best to kneel and pray with earnest desire and intensity. In a hospital or sick room, standing beside the bed is most appropriate.

In pastoral visitation confidences are often gained. Mothers or fathers, wives or husbands may unburden their hearts to their pastor. Such confidences should be sacredly kept. To betray them would bring pain and shatter faith and could do much harm. The pastor himself would not be

the one to suffer the least. Many things should be buried deep in the heart of a faithful man of God and never reported to anyone. A talebearing pastor is as unpardonable as a traitor to his country.

Should a pastor make a practice of taking his wife with him in his pastoral calling? Generally speaking, the answer to that question is no. There may be a few places where it is very important that she should go. Common sense will teach a man when it is necessary. If a woman has matters of a delicate nature to divulge to the pastor, he should by all means take his wife. If conditions in the home are strained and abnormal, she should go. There are times when it is fitting but optional that she should be in company with her husband. Such times would be upon the birth of a baby, or following a funeral or a wedding.

But for a pastor to set up the practice of taking his wife on all his regular rounds as the shepherd of the flock is unnecessary, if not foolish. In the first place it imposes a hardship on the wife. How can she keep the parsonage, take care of her household and family duties, attend the regular and special services, and go with her husband as much as he ought to go? The only reasonable reciprocation is for the pastor to help with household duties, which is not his place of service. Of course, if a maid can be kept, that might relieve both the pastor and his wife for parish duty. But for the most part that is an utter impossibility. The usual result is that the pastor who will not call without his wife does not do enough calling.

The argument that a man may be embarrassed in some homes is a weak one. If a pastor knows and keeps his place, he will seldom find himself where he needs protection by the presence of his wife. If such emergencies arise, he can demonstrate his ability to beat a rapid retreat.

Upon Whom To Call

One of the most important considerations in a pastor's visitation program is whom to call upon. Indisputably his first obligation is to the sick and dying. Indeed, as soon as possible after he has arrived in a new field he should ask for information concerning the sick and get to their bedsides as soon as possible. During the time epidemics are prevalent the pastor may need to devote all his time for calling to the sick. He need not be afraid. Few, if any, pastors have lost their lives ministering to the sick. Of course, he should observe the restrictions of quarantine for the sake of public health; but God has for the most part, at least, given immunity to the pastor who is serving in the line of duty.

A positive, helpful, encouraging attitude on the part of the pastor is always important in calling on the sick. He must be sympathetic but never discouraging. He may be the one chosen to inform a person that death is near. Then he can offer hope through faith in Jesus Christ, and he can give the solemn news with the resurrection promise on his lips. A pastor who has watched beside a dying bed can be a better comforter in the funeral service and at the graveside. His availability at any time, day or night, should be known by all the congregation, both members and friends.

A pastor has special responsibility to the aged and infirm, to the people who have lingering illness, and who are unable to attend the means of grace. The temptations and trials of such persons are as fierce and deadly as at any time in life. A faithful pastor will not forget them. He will see them as often as possible. He will remember them and cause the church to do so at special seasons

such as birthdays, Christmas, and Easter. He will probably find time the first of the week following Communion Sunday to go with his pocket set and give the bread and wine to those who could not otherwise celebrate the sacred feast.

New converts and prospective members will be on the pastor's preferred list. Often a newborn soul needs encouragement and guidance within the first week of his Christian life. A little extra attention from the pastor then may mean continued victory instead of defeat. It may mean a successful Christian instead of just a seeker. He may be waiting to be invited to join the church. He should be a pastor's especial concern.

Persons who are growing indifferent or who are admittedly backslidden and away from God should not be allowed to drift further and further away. The pastor should not depend on the next revival to bring them back. He should be seeking the straying souls, like the good shepherd who left the ninety-nine and went after the one lost sheep until he brought it back to the fold. His faithfulness will in many cases be rewarded by success. At all events, he will have the assurance that he has done his best. Such attention to the faltering, straying ones would save many names to the church roll. The pastor can enlist the help and prayers of others in this work of reclaiming backsliders.

People are human, very human. They are as certain to be wounded and grieved at times as they are to come to church. When such a thing happens, whether he is responsible for the hurt or not, the pastor should hasten to pour in oil and wine and bind up the wounds. Never let time cause the hurts to become callused. Pastor, do your work of restoration speedily and patiently. If factions are developing in the congregation, rise above them to be the shepherd of the entire flock. If people have opposed the pastor even to the point of voting against him in the election, he should watch carefully for opportunity to serve them and be more kind and faithful to such persons than to anyone else.

Yes, the pastor is the shepherd of all the sheep. He will not allow himself to have favorites and neglect others. In his heart of love there is room for everyone.

There are some official members in every church upon whom the pastor may find it wise to call more frequently than others. Possibly some such calls are more for business or counseling than simply as a pastoral visit. Certainly the people who pay the bills and carry the burdens should have their share of the pastor's time and attention. Nevertheless, the entire membership has a right to his gracious shepherding. Even people who live at considerable distance should be visited occasionally. It is certain they should not be forgotten or made to feel they are no longer wanted. In some instances a pastor can afford to take a full half day to make one distant call. In keeping contact with a family at some distance a pastor may be preserving a nucleus for a new church in the near future. And he may be saving some valuable financial assistance to his own church.

Recently a young pastor took the roll-purging spree. A certain family had moved to a town thirty miles distant. He never had called on them. He told a neighbor pastor of his own denomination he was cutting their names off the roll. He was urged not to do it. His reply was, "I don't want them." His neighbor pastor said, "If you must be rid of them, transfer them to my church. I'll keep in touch with them and save them to the denomination." It was done.

The more farseeing pastor has greatly benefited by his bargain. The family has supported the church, given several very generous and useful gifts to the pastor, and when his church was dedicated they pledged \$1,000 for the building fund. No person is without value to the church and to Christ, and none should be lost without faithful effort to save them.

Effects of Pastoral Visitation

The work of a pastor in shepherding the flock has some very salutary effects upon the church. Perhaps the most obvious of these is that the people on whom the pastor calls will in all probability return the courtesy by coming to church. It is an old saying, and as true as it is old, that "a home-going pastor has a church-going congregation." To be sure, a pastor cannot get to every home as regularly as the people ought to come to church. But if he takes note when certain persons are in church and lets them know he does, and if he learns to glance over his congregations to see if all the sheep are folded, and lets people know he misses them when absent, then an occasional call in the home will bring them to the services with increasing regularity and loyalty. A pastor can develop a very keen sense of awareness as to whether the members of the congregation are present or absent. Even in larger churches, with some attention to it, he can almost go down the church roll on Monday and mark the people present or absent. A call in the week following an absence, or a telephone conversation, or even a card as a reminder that they were missed, is all some people need to bring them to regularity.

Such a practice is a great aid to building up attendance at church services. If the members are regular, the visitors will be impressed. They will return. People like to go to church where there is a full house. A full church is not an accident. Neither is it just the result of good preaching. It is the reward for hard work in most instances, and much of that hard work is in pastoral visitation.

Another benefit from pastoral calling is the increased relish for his sermons on the part of the people. Just the fact that the man in the pulpit comes down to their level and talks and prays in their homes makes his preaching more acceptable. It becomes more intimate, more practical, and more personal.

The home-going pastor grows in the personal love and esteem of his people. He then becomes the personal friend as well as the spiritual leader of the church. He is the unifying factor in the church life. A pastor arrived to assume leadership of a badly divided church. He was greeted by a prominent layman who said: "Pastor, God has sent you here to be the shepherd of this flock. You be a pastor to all of us and we will unite behind you as our leader and do things for God." The youthful pastor did his best to take the cue that had been given him. Years of fruitful ministry followed.

For these reasons it is not good for the pastor to delegate the responsibility for calling to someone else. He may have an assistant to do some of it. He may ask the co-operation of lay people, and he should. But to be the best pastor and see the largest results and receive the richest rewards from men and from God, a goodly portion of every pastor's time should be spent in his parish visitation.

To the Pastor

A summary of the effect of this ministry upon the pastor himself is not out of order.

It will make him seem more human and approachable. Too many people think of pastors as "men of the cloth," who for the most part have been immunized to life's temptations and realities. They think they spend their lives wrapped up in moth balls. Pastoral work brings the preacher near the people. The Son of God became the Son of Man to seek and to save the lost. Let the pastor identify himself with the Master.

Pastoral visitation will keep the preacher humble and patient and long-suffering in dealing with slow and erring humanity. He will be simple and sincere instead of vague and mechanical. The gulf between the preacher and his people will be removed. The identification [sic = spelling is correct] will be complete, and yet there will be no cheap, crude familiarity.

The word pastor has almost the same meaning as shepherd. It has been broadened to include all the work involved in leading a church, but the shepherd idea cannot be taken away from it without doing injustice to the word. Neither can the shepherd concept be taken away from spiritual leadership without weakening it immeasurably.

Jesus Christ likened himself to the good shepherd. We mortal men should be honored to be called the shepherds of the flock of God. Do we know our sheep and are we known of them? Do they hear our voices and follow, and will they reject the stranger's voice? Do we dedicate our lives to shepherding the sheep of His pasture? Do we offer guidance and protection to the flock? Are we sure they are led in plain and safe paths? Do we make certain they are all safe in the fold? Do we keep the flock together in the true spirit of Christian unity? Do we feed them and guard them, that there may be many lambs born in the flock to increase its number?

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15 -- ORGANIZING THE CHURCH FOR VISITATION EVANGELISM

Pastoral calling is indispensable to the maximum spiritual and numerical growth of the church. But even the most diligent pastor cannot do all that needs to be done in visitation evangelism. If he could call frequently in all homes, that would be no substitute for interest and concern on the part of the laity. Those who are not spiritually minded often conclude that pastors are interested in them for reasons of personal advantage. They argue that more members mean more money, a name to succeed, and therefore advancement. But if their neighbors who have no personal ends to serve and between whom they recognize no social barriers show concern for their spiritual well-being, it must be for love's sake and for Christ's sake. At least some of their resistance is overcome.

If the work of visitation evangelism is left to the pastor and an exclusive few, it will mean that many in the church will be idle who ought to be busy and that much of the work that should be done will be left undone. There are many thousands of people in easy access of the church to

whom no word of invitation has ever been spoken, and no interest in their salvation has ever been shown. It is, therefore, obvious that if the church is to enjoy its greatest growth in spiritual attainment and numerical increase the entire membership must be active in soul winning.

Through Practice

The zeal and diligence manifest in the pastor's practice will have its effect upon his people. If he is busy making calls, encouraging Christians to be active in the Master's service, and seeking to lead others to Christ, his example will provoke the laymen to good works. Certainly a full time pastor who makes only from three hundred to five hundred calls in a year cannot expect much enthusiasm among his members in lay visitation work. A real burden and passion in the heart of a pastor will drive him out to seek the lost and lead them to the Saviour. Such a spirit is contagious and it will soon be emulated by many of the laymen.

Through Preaching

The preaching of the pastor has much to do with the attitude of the members toward soul winning. Many pastors are able to preach stewardship and tithing with enough persuasion to lead the majority of their people to support the church with their tithes and offerings. It would seem if they understood the importance of it that they might preach on the stewardship of time and talents until the people of their churches would see their duty to God and their fellow men and become active in soul-saving efforts.

Our pastors preach that complete consecration is necessary for entire sanctification. Can one whose life is made a living sacrifice to God be idle and unconcerned about the salvation of others? Should we not preach, then, that the work of visitation evangelism is a practical demonstration of the consecration made when sanctification was received as a second work of grace? Can one keep sanctified wholly without maintaining the completeness of his consecration? Let us preach, then, that the time and redeemed powers of every Christian belong to God and are to be employed in a soul-saving service.

If laymen protest that they do not have the power to do this kind of work, the pastor can cite the promise of God, "Ye shall receive power, the Holy Ghost coming upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Acts 1:8, R.V.). He can also declare that one never has power to perform what he does not undertake. But when the task is begun, the power is available.

Then let the pastor dwell often upon Christ's estimate of the value of a soul. And let him remind his people that those souls among whom they live are each one of more value than the whole world. One soul won for Christ is a sufficient reward for a lifetime of work.

Pastor, preach that time is fast passing, that the judgment is a certainty, that hell is a reality, that eternity is endless. Then preach that mercy's door is open now, that the fields are white to the harvest, and that we must all work while it is day, for the night cometh.

The preaching possibilities in this realm are all but limitless. A pastor need not choose visitation evangelism for his subject every time he preaches. He need not play on a fiddle of one

string. He can relate his sermons on a great variety of themes to this emphasis. He can use illustrations that have point and bearing on this work. He can put quotations in his bulletin that will stir up the minds of his people. It is the constant reminder that produces the results rather than just one strong message on the subject alone.

Methods of Visitation Evangelism

The pastor may also take care to inform himself fully on the methods of approach and promotion. Then he is prepared to instruct his workers. The impulse to win souls is present in the heart of every Christian, but the know-how is also needed. A pastor who will not read and study the books that are made available to him is an unpardonable recreant. Should he feel that a person from outside his congregation could more effectively instruct his class, he would be justified in calling for such aid. Then he should be a student in the class himself. By all means, the work of instructing a group of workers should be done in a well-planned series of lessons, and it is the pastor's duty to see that it is done. The class may need to be repeated periodically. The material presented could be varied enough to make the instruction interesting and helpful to those who have been enrolled in previous classes.

A pastor will not succeed in sending his workers out to do visitation evangelism; he will need to lead them out. He cannot offer the excuse that he has an appointment or that he has urgent work in his office. Except in rare emergencies, he must keep the time for visitation with his people open for that purpose.

When a survey has been made and a list of prospects is compiled, the most important work is yet to be done. It is the follow-up that brings the returns. Some results may be seen in a week, but in some cases it may take months and even years. Such cases are all the more intriguing, and when the victory is gained it is all the more rewarding.

The pastor, in most churches, must direct this follow-up work. He may need to vary the method according to the type of persons with whom he is dealing. Repetition by different workers is sometimes best. Others will be won by the persistent efforts and friendliness of some one person or couple. There are times when sociability is necessary. The barriers of strangeness must be removed. An evening together or a dinner engagement may establish a basis of friendship that will bear fruit eventually.

Literature evangelism is also a part of the follow-through. Keep the new prospects informed of church activities. Make the invitations personal. Give them good reading material to awaken spiritual desire and to inform them of the message of the church and the meaning of membership in it.

All this kind of work cannot be done by the pastor, but it is his duty to see that it is done in a thoroughgoing way that will produce results. Not everyone contacted and followed up will be won; but if any are, it is worth the effort. It is certain that a church so occupied will win souls to Christ, gather enough new people to replace all its losses, and show substantial gains year by year.

Soul Winning

By his example and his instruction the pastor ought to seek to prepare his workers to be personal soul winners. It is good to invite people to church and to Sunday school, but that is not enough. They must be led to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. The gulf of strangeness must first be bridged by skillful approach and an established acquaintance and friendship. The time comes, however, when the real issue should be drawn. It may be introduced in a conversation about the church, the Bible, or the value of having a Christian home.

It may be enough at first to assure a soul one is seeking to win that daily prayer is being offered for his salvation.

When the way has been prepared, the matter should be opened up in all candor. At first it may be resented or brushed aside. But patient persistence will finally be rewarded. When the prospect is ready to talk freely about his spiritual welfare, the victory is well-nigh won. Kindly urging to immediate decision is now in order. An offer to engage in prayer then and there is sometimes accepted. If it is, then a foundation for faith in the promises of God is often needful. And the seeker must be encouraged to exercise his faith for personal salvation.

Some may come through to a clear experience in this first season of prayer. With others it may take several attempts before the burden is lifted. Some may feel they should go to the altar in the church to find victory. In any case the worker should be taught to be patient, faithful, and confident of final and decisive victory. If a clear testimony is borne in the private place of prayer, then it should also be registered in public. Jesus said, "Whosoever . . . shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." The nail should be clinched by open and public witnessing to what God has done.

The personal evangelist must continue his work until that soul has become an established Christian, has gone on to possess the experience of entire sanctification, has united with the church, and is taking active part in the service of Christ.

The pastor should train his workers to bring their prospective converts to the Sunday school and the regular and revival services of the church. It is not enough to tell them about the meetings and invite them to come. The better plan is to go and bring them and if possible sit in the pew with them. At first it may be unwise to invite them to the altar unless the preparation for it has been adequate. But when the strangeness has been conquered, the interested, praying friend will find a kind and courteous invitation to go forward for prayer will have its effect. Long efforts at persuasion are seldom justified. The soul that has reached the time for decision and action will respond. What a joy to see the object of one's prayers walk down the aisle to give his heart to God!

Altar Work

Pastors should also train their soul winners to do effective altar work. They should understand that almost all seekers need opportunity to pray without interruption. If the answer does not come soon, then some instruction and some wise counsel is often needed and helpful. Too much talking to a seeker is often a hindrance. It is especially confusing for a number of people to

be instructing a soul at one time, sometimes in contradictory ways. A promise from the Word may be used of the Spirit to encourage the step of faith. The person who has prepared the way for a soul to come to the altar by prayer and personal work is the one to give him help at the altar. If the aid of another is needed, the pastor or evangelist may be summoned to give the reinforcement desired.

The time comes in dealing with a seeking soul when an appropriate song or chorus is encouraging. It should be well chosen; and if the individual altar worker does not trust himself to start it, he may call on the song leader or the pianist to give the pitch and start the singing. Sometimes a seeker may be asked to raise his hand in token of his surrender or as a first expression of testimony or praise. If possible the new convert should be led to give his first public testimony then and there.

If a new Christian is the first to accept the Lord in his family, the pastor should encourage the worker to join with his first trophy from the household in a faithful effort to bring all the family into the fold. Then that family has friends and they, too, can be won for Christ. Thus the circle grows larger and the results more gratifying.

Place of Prayer

In this work of soul winning the importance of prayer can hardly be overestimated. It is necessary that the pastor himself shall be a man of prayer. A period of time each day should be spent in communion and intercession. Along with his burden for all the work assigned to him and the larger interest of the Kingdom, he should have a prayer list. He should pour out his heart to God day by day for the salvation of those whose names he knows. No man can be a soul winner himself or lead others to be without much prayer for the conversion of sinners, the reclamation of backsliders, and the sanctification of believers.

If a pastor is a man of prayer, he can teach his people to pray. Every personal evangelist should have a regular daily time of prayer to deepen his own devotion, make his life more radiant and fruitful and his service more effective.

He also should have a prayer list. He cannot gain much praying for souls impersonally. One of the indirect results of leading the church members to do the work of visitation evangelism is that it increases the prayer burden, and it makes prayer more urgent, direct, and impassioned. It is petition breathed out of a burdened heart. It becomes prevailing prayer. There should be fasting and prayer. Without it many will never be saved.

Along with the visitation work there should be special seasons of prayer for the workers as a group. Sometimes days or nights of prayer should be called. Pre-prayer services should be encouraged before Sunday evening and revival meetings. Before a group of workers are sent out, they should be called to pray for the success of their undertaking. The person whose life is deepened by habitual prayer and whose heart is filled to overflowing with love for God and the souls of men will not labor in vain. He shall go forth with weeping, and doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

As a pastor sees his church members enlist in the work of soul winning, he will witness the increase of the church in membership and in spirituality. He will see the timid become courageous, the passive become alert and active. The indifferent will be aroused to zealous endeavors for new attainments for themselves, and to see the salvation of others.

The church will also see their pastor grow in spiritual power and preaching ability.

This whole idea is scriptural, Pentecostal, practicable, and fruitful in the building of all departments of the church. The reinforcement of the battle line that reaches around the world will be reassured.

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16 -- A SPIRITUAL COUNSELOR

To many people a pastor speaks as a seer and an oracle of wisdom. Probably some pastors do not deserve that confidence. Nevertheless, many do give valuable guidance to their people on a wide variety of subjects. It is the duty of a pastor to prepare himself as best he can to be a counselor to his parishioners in the myriad problems and emergencies of their lives.

Qualifications

The first qualification for such a ministry is an innate understanding of humanity, accompanied by a moral sense that enables the pastor to do some discriminative thinking in each individual case in which he may be called upon to advise. The second requirement is a spiritual insight and understanding which is imparted through a personal relation to the Holy Spirit and a desire to be guided by Him who is the Spirit of Truth. To these much may be added by reading and study. One cannot hope to give sound spiritual guidance unless he be well instructed in the Word of God. A pastor who has enjoyed the advantages of a liberal education may have acquired helpful knowledge from courses in psychology and sociology. If he has not had reliable guidance in these subjects, he will do well to seek the advice of a dependable Christian scholar who can recommend books to read that are based upon a sound Christian philosophy.

The Pastor's Position

A minister of the gospel should not pose as a psychiatrist. Some do who have no ground whatsoever for their claim. They are an embarrassment to themselves and to the church. All who offer themselves as counselors will do well to let it be known that their advice will be on the basis of spiritual need and a spiritual solution to the problem presented. The minister of Christ should never step out of the role of a man sent of God to diagnose spiritual ailments and offer spiritual cures. His calling is to serve and save sick, sorrowing, and sinful humanity. The pattern for him to follow invariably is Jesus Christ, the Great Physician and the Wonderful Saviour.

Dangers To Avoid

As a pastor thinks his way through, with regard to his own attitude toward people and their problems, there are some things he will need strictly to avoid. He must never be meddlesome. He should not seek to intrude into the private affairs of the lives of others. He should never use any unethical means to acquire knowledge of the conduct of those he would seek to save. His curiosity must not be gratified under the guise of defending righteousness or of saving souls. To follow such a course will close the door to the possibility of helping others, and it will belittle him and bring his calling into disrepute.

Ministers have been known to set traps to catch people in wrongdoing. They have acted as stooges themselves or have asked their representatives to do so. Others have used pressure methods and grilling cross-examinations to extort confessions from persons under suspicion of guilt. A pastor who has allowed himself to stoop to such a level is in no position to give helpful counsel to a person in need.

When anyone in deep trouble or facing a serious crisis has unburdened his heart to a trusted pastor, he should never betray that confidence. He may need to advise the person concerned to make the necessary confession, but his own lips should be sealed. Some of the most bitter complaints ever heard are that a pastor did not respect a confidence.

Another danger of which a minister should be aware is too great intimacy, especially with the opposite sex. There are those characters who will use their confessions to cultivate an intimate acquaintance with a preacher. With others, a sympathetic desire to comfort a person in need may lead to a relaxation of a pastor's vigil against any compromise of right relations with those he seeks to help. If it becomes obvious to him that a conversation is turning in the direction of subjects too delicate to be heard by himself alone, he may either ask that his wife be invited to share in the conference or that the matter be referred to a reputable physician.

Counselor To All

To make himself available to those who may seek his counsel, the pastor may announce that at certain periods each week he will be in his study to receive those who may wish to have time for an interview. Or he may let it be known that appointments may be made at a time mutually agreed upon. Of course, much of this work will be done in the process of his regular pastoral visitation.

In assuming his responsibility as a counselor to all who need his guidance, a pastor must be prepared to face and answer the questions of many different types of individuals. There are basic causes, symptoms, and effects that are similar in diverse personalities. But the pastor must have the insight and imagination to deal with each case according to background, personality, capacity, temperament, and disposition. He will discover that there is no invariable formula to be followed. He cannot run human beings through his mill and find that everyone comes out in exact conformity to the regular pattern.

To Youth

One of the groups to whom a pastor has great obligation is the youth of his church and community. J. Richard Sparm has edited a valuable book entitled Pastoral Care. A chapter on youth has been contributed by Hoover Rupert. He has summarized the specific qualifications for the pastor in "Ten Commandments for the Minister to Youth." They read as follows:

1. Thou shalt understand youth, their needs, the situation in which they live, and the personality factors that stamp them as adolescents.
2. Thou shalt have an interest in their interests and a concern for their concerns.
3. Thou shalt be absolutely honest and fundamentally sincere in all thy dealings with youth.
4. Thou shalt have immeasurable patience with youth and take enough time in thy ministry for them that youth may feel thou art saying, "You are worth my time."
5. Thou shalt have genuine tolerance for youth and always give them the benefit of any doubt.
6. Thou shalt have a sense of humor which permits thee to laugh heartily and to unbend thy stuffy, ecclesiastical self.
7. Thou shalt be undiscourageably optimistic and seek to channel the eagerness and enthusiasm of youth in ways that make for good.
8. Thou shalt have perspective: the ability to see what these irresponsible, boisterous, and trying adolescents can become.
9. Thou shalt have implicit confidence in youth to believe they can develop the divine characteristics God has placed within their lives.
10. Thou shalt seek always to live so close to Christ that thy ability to inspire youth toward Christian decision and Christian faith is always a channel for the will and power of God.

The youth of a church will need and often seek advice concerning spiritual problems and battles. Of course, the most important factor in dealing with any young person is the ability to lead him to a transforming experience of salvation through faith in Christ. But young people often face home situations that are extremely trying. These problems do not all come out of non-Christian families. Sometimes there are maladjustments in the very best homes in the church. Wise counsel from a trusted, godly pastor may help a youth over some of the most difficult places of his life.

There are the decisions that youth must make with regard to an education and a vocation. These are of vital significance to one who faces life seriously. Sometimes parents are not sympathetic and helpful. The pastor may be the one who must give advice and may also need to intercede with parents.

Many boys and girls are hesitant for different reasons to discuss their friendships and love affairs with their parents, and in some cases they would receive no help if they did. The logical person to turn to for advice is the pastor. He should seek to prepare himself for such a ministry and lean upon God to endow him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding in discharging his duty. A pastor may exert a powerful influence through his example, his preaching, and his counsel in leading youth to a sound Christian philosophy. In all particulars, that view of life which is thoroughly Christian should be instilled into the youthful mind.

In Home Relationships

A great many people will seek for a pastor's advice in regard to courtship, marriage, and domestic problems. On some subjects a pastor can be very specific because he will be giving counsel in areas with which he is familiar and in which he will feel no embarrassment. In all these things he must be guided by the established standards and ideals of Christian conduct. With respect to the marriage of a Christian to a non-Christian, or regarding marriage of a person divorced for other than scriptural grounds, the way is clearly indicated in the Bible and the Manual. On the intimate subjects of sex and birth control a pastor will be wise to warn all to keep a clear conscience. For specific instructions he will refer inquirers to a reliable doctor whom he can personally recommend. One who is a Christian is to be preferred.

In case of unfaithfulness between man and wife, a pastor will always condemn sin, but he will recommend repentance on the part of the offender and forgiveness on the part of the offended. Many homes threatened with dissolution have been saved and restored to peace and happiness by the prayers and advice of a wise pastor. God and salvation in the hearts of both the sinner and the sinned against will work miracles in the threatened home.

Many marriages are menaced because of grievances arising out of financial problems. There are basic principles which a pastor may impart to all on this explosive subject. He can encourage living within an income, incurring no burdensome debts, buying for cash, and refusing to use credit even when it is offered. Those unable to pay bills as they are made will probably be unable to pay them when the statements are rendered. Advise clear understanding between husband and wife regarding income and expenditures: spending nothing secretly except for exchange of personal gifts; making the bank account a joint one available to both; keeping careful books; budgeting income and expenses; paying the tithe first and offerings as generously as possible; faithfully saving some portion of the monthly income. This may be done by a savings account, an investment in good stocks, buying a home, or insurance policies.

Pastors may also be asked to give advice in cases where marital relations are strained because of disagreement regarding children. He should advise parents to work out an understanding regarding discipline to which both will agree to adhere without exception. If there is disagreement, a compromise must be reached. Children must never know that parents are not working together. Any differences must be ironed out in the absence of the children. Discipline is a testimony to love, not a denial of it. Restraints must be balanced with legitimate privileges.

In the arbitration of all domestic difficulties a pastor must be fair to both parties. He must be a reconciler. He cannot let his prejudice be known, if he has any. He will do well to show the errors of both sides and the commendable points as well.

To the Sick

A pastor is often called upon to give counsel to the sick. It is advisable for every minister to work out for himself a clear conception of the value and reality of divine healing. This is needful for his own peace of mind, and it is essential to a helpful healing ministry to the sick. The Bible leaves no room for doubt about the reality of healing through prayer and faith. It is not to be preached that healing may always be received by all who exercise faith, in the same way as salvation is obtained.

Salvation is fundamentally in the atonement and is available to all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Healing is incidentally in the atonement and is received in answer to the prayer of one to whom God has given the sovereign gift of faith. It is the will of God that all men shall be saved. It is not always the will of God to heal the bodies of the afflicted. Nevertheless, God has bestowed and does bestow on some the gift of healing. Many could testify to the power of God to heal the body.

A pastor ought also to understand that there are functional as well as organic diseases. The former are sometimes due to emotional and mental disturbances and obsessions. God does heal the body of organic diseases by miracle-working power, whereas functional disorders are often cured by a recovery of a normal state of mind. Some patients suffer from hysteria. The pain and illness are not unreal, but the cause is in the mental state rather than in organic disorder. A pastor may be able to lead such people to a state of mental health through prayer and faith, and in so doing may bring deliverance from the ailment.

Sometimes these mental conditions are due to a guilt session. Under such circumstances confession is often a relief and may lead to pardon and peace through faith in Christ. There are others who are depressed by inward conflicts and frustrations. An experience of entire sanctification in which worldly ambitions are surrendered, self is crucified with Christ, and the will is brought into full submission to God's will, is often found to be the cure for such distraught souls.

In this realm it is better that a pastor shall retain the simplicity of his own faith, and counsel needy people to trust God for healing and health, rather than attempt to lead those to whom he gives spiritual advice to understand their need on the basis of modern psychiatry. He may be fully convinced that the trouble is due to mental disturbances and he may analyze the case correctly, but he will seldom be able to explain those things to those he seeks to help. Give them the promises of God's Word. Pray with them earnestly and in faith. Be positive and hopeful. All will not respond, for there are some who enjoy the attention that being chronically sick assures them. But many will be led to health of mind and body through faith in God. These things are recognized by many doctors, and they welcome the aid of a wise pastor whose faith in a prayer-hearing God is unshaken.

To Spiritually Needy

Pastors must be prepared to give helpful counsel to persons who are beset by doubts in regard to personal salvation. Some cannot understand how they can be forgiven of their many and great sins. They must be led to understand the doctrine of forgiveness because Christ died on the cross, that God might be just and the Justifier of the repentant sinner. Others will need personal instruction that they may grasp the truth of entire sanctification sufficiently to believe God for perfect cleansing.

Young Christians will need to have the difference between Christian purity and maturity explained to them. They must be led to understand that sanctified Christians reach the fullness of Christ only by growing in grace after they have been sanctified wholly. Many afflicted people will need help to understand the mysteries that are presented in the inescapable fact of human suffering. Without guidance some may fall upon the rocks and reefs of doubt and skepticism. Many have been harassed by Satan because they were unable to reconcile their human frailties with the teaching of entire sanctification. They must be led to see the distinction between a perfect intention and a perfect performance and that the differential is made up by the blood of Jesus Christ.

In all the problems that arise in the minds of Christian people a godly, sensible, Spirit-guided pastor can be a great blessing. He should seek to live a life so consistent, so full of faith and good works that he will always be an inspiration to those to whom he ministers. He should live in such fellowship and communion with God that all his people will be disposed to seek and follow his wise counsel.

The greatest aid to right adjustments in the lives of men is a vital personal experience of salvation, a supernatural work of grace in which old things pass away and all things become new. When this is followed by the second work of complete purging of the nature from the pollution of inbred sin and the perversions of the will and the traits of the carnal mind, the solution to many problems will have been found.

The pastor must never overlook the value of an up-to-date relationship with God for all troubled and perplexed humanity. Therefore, let him encourage his people to maintain regular habits of devotion in daily seasons for Bible reading and secret prayer. Let him admonish his people to build and maintain family altars at which all members of the household daily bow to meet God and renew their vows. Let him make his preaching scriptural, practical, and helpful to all who hear. And let him maintain a Pentecostal atmosphere of freedom, blessing, and consciousness of the Divine Presence in the services of the church. These things will not automatically answer every question, but they will settle many of them then and there, and make all others easier to solve.

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SECTION V -- THE PASTOR -- ADMINISTRATOR

17 -- HIS GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The successful pastor must of necessity be a skilled executive. There was a time when it was quite generally proclaimed that men who could preach were incapable of administrative work. They were supposed to be theoretical moralists or ethereal mystics.

If such were ever the case, it is certainly not the true picture of the successful pastor of the present. In any church there must be leadership. There may be a few churches which have such a supply of lay leaders that the pastor does not need to feel that the major share of the burden is upon him. But they are very few in any denomination, and the ratio is still smaller in the Church of the Nazarene. The size of the church may make the responsibility heavier or lighter. The pattern, however, does not vary. The pastor is the leader.

The polity which we have adopted accentuates this fact. Our leaders who have through the years worked to give us our system conceived of the pastor as the "key man" in the local church. The result is a form of government in which the pastor is central. He has no arbitrary authority. He is simply given a place in which he may exercise his leadership and influence. He cannot be bypassed. But he can very easily forfeit his right to guide the affairs of the church by failure to accept his responsibility or by abusing his privileges.

Guiding Principles

Let us consider some of the guiding principles that the pastor-administrator must keep in mind. If one is sound in his basic principles, he may make mistakes and be forgiven. But if his fundamental concepts are warped, he is doomed to trouble and failure.

To Delegate Responsibility

The first of these principles is the delegation of as much responsibility as possible to others. The Manual states:

The pastor shall be, ex officio, president of the local church, chairman of the church board, and head of the church schools, the Nazarene young people's societies, and all other subsidiary organizations in connection with the local church.

The pastor shall have the right to a voice in the nomination of all heads of all departments of the local church.

Thus it is obvious that the pastor has his hand on the controls of the church. Nevertheless, it does not mean he has the powers of an absolute dictator. He may to such an extent insinuate himself into the management of the church that all thoughtful and self-respecting persons will be dwarfed by the pastor's attitude till they cannot work with him.

On the other hand, he may shirk responsibility or be so unwilling to assume leadership that confusion results and nothing constructive will be done. No man is a wise leader who does not know how to choose able helpers and assign responsibility to them, then stand by them in the accomplishment of the work in hand. He must give them his personal esteem, his confidence, and his co-operation in such measure that they will be willing to accept his counsel and to seek it.

Some men are so inflexible in their own minds and methods that they cannot retain capable helpers. They make simpletons of everyone. In reality there are some pastors who are functioning as Sunday-school superintendents, N.Y.P.S. presidents, and if it were possible they would be president of the W.F.M.S. too. No, not in name, but in practice. They lead the singing, sing the solos, play the piano, almost do the ushering, take the collection, and do the janitor work.

The evils of such a policy are many. Those who adopt it drive strong people capable of leadership away or to the outer edges of the fellowship; consequently they are forced to put weak persons in places of responsibility; the pastor develops a complex about the ineffectiveness of lay leadership; finally, the people either reject the preacher or come to believe he is the one "indispensable man" and that when he goes or dies the church will be doomed.

There is a way to use lay leadership to a very great advantage. Pastors who do, avoid giving the impression that they must run everything or be the whole show. They recognize the value of other men's ideas. They know "several heads are better than one." They respect the personalities and opinions of others. They know how to blend their own wishes with those of others to gain the desired ends. They do not give others a feeling of inferiority. They lead without dictating. They surround themselves with the ablest persons in the church. They capitalize upon the resources of the congregation. If they find a man who enjoys the feeling that his ideas have prevailed, they move up close to him and so inoculate him with their own plans and purposes that he thinks he is voting his own program when it is actually theirs. If such a pastor has a "hunch" that a self-willed man will oppose his program in the board meeting, he sells the whole scheme to him beforehand. Most people are susceptible to attention. By giving a little of it, many problems can be avoided.

The pastor who does not know how to delegate responsibility will soon find himself with so much tinkering to do that he has no time to spend in the things with which he should be primarily concerned. Instead of being big, he is small, because he is always doing small things. Instead of being an executive, he is an errand boy. Instead of being a great spiritual leader, he is an ecclesiastical piddler.

To Enlist Co-operation

The second principle is akin to the first and is actually implied in it. The pastor-administrator must know how to enlist all the resources of the church. There is work for all to do, and all need some of it to do. A church where the members are as busy as bees is usually a spiritual church and an aggressive one.

In large churches of 500 to 1,000 members, it is a more difficult task to keep everyone at work. For that reason a church of from 200 to 500 is, for the most part, a proportionally more productive church than a larger one. All able-bodied, normally gifted persons should find something to do for Christ.

Some people have no outstanding capabilities but can be useful in the proper place. Their capacity should be known and some work should be assigned them. Not infrequently some

guidance in study and reading may be given that will greatly increase the effectiveness of otherwise ordinary people.

Organization of a church program is necessary. In a fully departmentalized Sunday school, there is work for many people of varying abilities. The same is true in the fully developed N.Y.P.S. organization. A W.F.M.S. with its chapters also opens avenues of service. There are the Junior Societies and the boys' and girls' camps and Caravans. Each one does something for its members and offers work to consecrated leaders. At the same time it is developing leadership for more responsible positions in the future. Experience is essential to capable leadership.

Training in classes as well as in practice is also very valuable. The Christian Service Training courses are designed for that purpose. They should be offered in every church.

In some instances a person is allowed to continue in one place until he develops the feeling that it is his place for life. This is unfortunate for him because, if the time does come when a change is necessary, feelings are deeply wounded. Three to five years is a good period of service at any one post of duty where there are others equally capable or who may become so by experience. A changing, fluid state of lay leadership is more healthful and more successful than one with fixed positions. By changing occasionally, stagnation is avoided.

Another way to keep people busy is to launch new projects in nearby communities. First a Sunday school may be opened, later a revival held, and eventually another church established. Local preachers, Sunday-school teachers, young people's leaders can thus be kept working and rendering fruitful service.

The concentration of several offices in one individual is a bad policy. In small churches it may be necessary; but as the church grows the responsibilities should be shared, even if some persons at first demonstrate only limited ability.

To Show Magnanimity

Another principle to which pastor-administrators should be committed is to deal with all people in candor and with charity, regardless of the differences that may exist between them. Deceit and insincerity are never justifiable. It is far better to discuss frankly existing problems and conditions. Hedging or straddling may get one by, temporarily, but eventually the plain facts must be faced and the sooner the better. The most embarrassing situation conceivable is to be forced to admit that some previous positions had been taken to avoid the unvarnished truth.

But while candor is a virtue, charity is likewise. A pastor should never allow himself to become harsh or unkind. However vehemently he may disagree with men, however glaring their faults, charity is a virtue. Its mantle should not be worn threadbare with excessive use to cover one's own sins, but it should always be ready for use when others are at fault, or in deep guilt. Let sin and wrong always be condemned, but let the sinner always be loved.

Compromise is never pardonable, but let us not forget the patience and long-suffering of God toward us. And may we ever minimize the faults and failures of men. We should not allow

ourselves to magnify things out of proportion to their true significance. We should as Christians always manifest the spirit of forgiveness, and willingness to restore the erring brother in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted.

Here it is appropriate to advise that where a matter of major importance is approved by a slender majority it is sometimes wise to defer action until the proposition is more generally sanctioned. Big responsibilities should be borne by a congregation that is unanimous or nearly so. If an issue has been drawn and the negative vote carried, then it should be allowed to rest without contention until the tide turns. In the case of large or small minorities, those in the opposition should be treated with respectful consideration. They should never be discounted or abused in any way. In any democratic organization there will be minority groups. Their rights should never be violated. Most of them will fall in line in the spirit of a loyal minority if a Christian attitude is manifested toward them.

To Keep a Sound Financial Policy

A pastor-administrator should always take care to assure himself and all who labor with him that the financial policy of the church is sound.

Plans for gathering money should be reasonable and scriptural. The cheap methods used by some groups are out. Suppers, entertainments, and sales of all kinds for the purpose of raising money have no place among us. The scriptural plan is tithes and offerings. Bible preaching along the lines of stewardship and tithing will go far toward financing the church successfully. The envelope system of gathering funds is probably most satisfactory. In some churches the every member canvass is effective. But consecrated people love to give. They take pride in doing their part to keep the church of God prosperous.

Handling the money of the church is another important part of the financial plan. Let it never be done by the pastor. The Manual provides for a treasurer and a financial secretary. Both should be in regular service. A double accounting for the money of the church is the only perfectly safe procedure. All money should be promptly banked, all bills paid by check, a full report made once a month to the church board, the books audited once a year, and a full report made to the annual church meeting and the district assembly.

The wise spending of the money of the church is just as important as the successful accumulation of it. Money should never be spent unless authorized by the official board. Financial obligations that are beyond the ability of the church should never be contracted. The bills of the church should be paid promptly and regularly. Salaries should be set in proportion to the ability of the church and the prevailing standard and cost of living. Budgets and offerings to the district and general interests of the church should be cheerfully assumed. They should be in reasonable ratio to the pastor's salary. The systematic payment of the same should be observed. A pastor should never consent to have local obligations crowd out the demands for district and general interests.

Pressure methods in the realm of church financing are bad. They drive strangers away. They make members resentful or critical. Free, spontaneous, hilarious giving is characteristic of

sanctified people. Generous, magnanimous support of every good cause is the order in churches that stand for holiness. In all this the pastor is to be a pattern of good works.

To Emphasize Fundamentals

The pastor-administrator never allows the fundamental objectives of the Church of Jesus Christ to be obscured. The purpose is to get the knowledge of God's love and grace to the largest number of people in the most effective way possible. To that end a pastor will build churches that are modest but attractive. He will see to it that the property is kept in good repair and neat in appearance. He will be assured that the lawn is mowed, the shrubs trimmed, the building painted. The whole setting will be such as to adorn the gospel of holiness we preach.

He will also seek diligently to publicize the church in the community. He will use the radio, the newspaper, good-looking bulletins, and signboards. He will try to keep all his people so happy in the Lord that they will "tell the tidings round, wherever man is found."

To Maintain a Vital Program

The wise pastor-administrator will carry forward an aggressive program of evangelism and Christian education that will challenge and inspire his people and keep them united and active. Such a program will also awaken the interest of the people of the community and give them a wholesome respect for the church in their midst.

Personal Qualifications

What about the personal qualifications of the pastor-administrator? Always the personality, the character, the man himself, is the most important factor in leadership. It has been said that "any institution is but the lengthened shadow of a man." We must have men of caliber for leaders if we are to build great churches. They must be intelligent as well as devout. They must be sound in judgment as well as sincere in purpose. They must know how to gain the favor of men as well as the help of God.

Familiarity with the Guidebooks

The first qualification of the pastor-administrator is very elementary. He must thoroughly know his guidebook, the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene. Many a pastor has embarrassed himself and his church for the simple reason that either the Manual regulations were not known or were not obeyed. Of course the latter fault is more serious than the former. For instance, provision is made for extension of the pastoral arrangement of the church for two or three years. But there are conditions attached thereto, namely, that "the recall for one year has been presented and a favorable vote received and that such extended call shall have been recommended by majority vote of all members of the church board and approved in writing by the District Superintendent." Failure to abide by these conditions has been known seriously to humiliate a pastor. In many other situations the knowledge of the Manual and careful conformity thereto will keep the pastor on the safe side of the right road.

Knowledge of parliamentary procedure is also a great aid to a pastor. By it he may save a very tense situation from becoming an occasion for misunderstanding and possible division in the church. To all pastors there are three guidebooks. First is the Bible, as the lamp to his feet in all moral and spiritual problems. Second is the Manual, as the rule book for governing and administering the affairs of the church. Third is Roberts' Rules of Order, so that business meetings may be conducted in an orderly procedure.

Over-all Interest in the Church

The second qualification for successful pastoral leadership is an active interest in all departments of the church. It is true that these departments are under the direct leadership of laymen in the church. Nevertheless, a wise pastor will be present at all important business meetings for counsel and advice, and his hand will be felt in kindly guidance whenever important issues are under consideration. In every organization from the Sunday school to the Junior Society the interest of the pastor should be known and relied upon. If he is actively concerned for the success of the work, his advice will be sought and seldom resented or disregarded. The pastor should never give anyone the impression he is hostile toward or disinterested in any project that is being undertaken. If a rift has existed between some subsidiary organization and a predecessor, he should immediately bridge the gap by sincere and constant concern.

Co-operation with District and General Program

To succeed in enlisting co-operation of his laymen, a pastor must demonstrate a spirit of co-operation with his district and general officers. One who does not give co-operation cannot hope to gain it. A man who cannot fit into the general scheme of things may think he is too big. As a matter of fact, he is big in nobody's eyes but his own. The man about whom everything must center is so dwarfed that he is afraid someone else will make his true stature known. Men who operate independently are invariably egotistical, self-important, eccentric persons. Their concern is for personal profit and self-aggrandizement. Big men can work with others. They know how to submerge petty differences. They know how to disagree and still be loyal to one another and to Christ and His Church.

The pastor who resents his leaders, looks upon budgets as a burdensome taxation, plays the role of "lone wolf," stays away from meetings designed for mutual profit, and does what little he does to save his own head, is on a dead-end street. Furthermore, he is seriously injuring his members. He limits their vision and faith. He isolates them from the higher fellowship in the church and deprives them of spiritual blessings of incalculable worth. The pastor who puts himself and local interests first and makes everything else secondary is doomed to failure and oblivion, while the pastor who puts the larger interests first and himself secondary is building a church that is not only local but world-wide in its scope and influence. He is also building a man whose value will not be overlooked or unappreciated.

A Great Zeal with Endurance

The wise and effective leader of a church must be fired by a contagious enthusiasm. A passive, phlegmatic, or negative personality can never awaken the interest and loyalty of a

congregation or lead them to worth-while achievements for God and a needy world. For this reason there are some good men who are failures in the ministry. There is no discount on goodness. None can hope to succeed in the ministry without it. But goodness without vitality and energy is not enough. Cool, calculating judgment is always to be exercised. But when one has used the best judgment of which he is capable, he must then plunge into his work to do it, or die in the attempt. He must not be discouraged when difficulties arise. They certainly will come. He must not give up when the pessimists say it is impossible and brand him "a visionary." In the faith that "all things are possible to him that believeth," he is to go on even when he furnishes all the faith. Eventually others will see the light and join in the work. The pastor who would succeed must "never say die." He may be forced to accept delays, and it will in all probability take longer to do the job than he expected; but it can be done. The time element is not as important as we sometimes think. In the timing of the eternal God, a day or a year makes very little difference.

Faith is, in part, enthusiasm. But another part is patience. When our co-workers are shortsighted and slow, maybe even negative as well as conservative, we must have patience. Many men have failed of great accomplishments because their patience was short. That is an admission of a weak faith. The faith that overcomes all opposition and all difficulties has in it a large element of patience. The man who leads on to big achievement must have unflagging enthusiasm; but if he has no ability to hold on till others catch up, he will "blow up" and quit.

When Jesus had cleansed the Temple, His disciples remembered that it was written, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Yet Isaiah said of him, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." Evidently the Saviour combined a consuming zeal with infinite patience. His under-shepherds must imitate His example.

Trust in His People

The pastor who will skillfully administer the affairs of the church must cultivate an artful and happy approach to his people and his problems. He must give people his love and his confidence. There can be no strong bond of perfectness, which is love, without confidence. Suspicion has no place in a heart full of love. Therefore a suspicious man who is always expecting someone to sabotage his program or turn against him personally is incapable of leading a church. As spiritual leaders of men, we must trust them. We may be let down a few times, but the rewards for a trustful spirit will far outweigh the disappointments. As a rule, a suspicious person is not trustworthy himself. For the most part in the church, faith will be met with faith, confidence will beget confidence, love will engender love.

In relation to problems, the pastor must be positive and optimistic. A defeatist attitude on his part will certainly scatter gloom and despair everywhere. Problems are ever present, but there is a solution to all of them. "We need to be more power-conscious and not so much problem-conscious." A few people and a wise pastor with God's blessing can find a way to solve every problem. They can turn defeat to victory. They can then go on from victory to victory.

Servant of All

The last and most important of the personal qualifications for the successful pastor-administrator is a basic philosophy which is soundly Christian. The man qualified to administer in the realm of the spiritual must be one who has the mind of Christ. His mind as described by Saint Paul was that of an obedient, self-sacrificing servant. While pastors must be leaders or fail, it must ever shine out in their words and deeds and fundamental attitudes that they are servants of the people for Christ's sake.

Paul bared his own heart when he said to the Romans, "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." That must be the attitude of every man who successfully leads in the church. He must not catalogue his sacrifices and mourn over them. He must not demand his rights, or sour when they are not accorded him. He is debtor to all to give the gospel to them as the power of God unto salvation.

A man whose underlying philosophy is self-centered is certain to end in failure and defeat. Every true servant of Christ and the church must say of a truth: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

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18 -- THE PASTOR AND HIS FELLOW-HELPERS

The most important factor in the success of a pastor is the blessing of God. To lead the flock in spiritual endeavor and attainment, the pastor must be led of God. Next in importance is the ability of the pastor to maintain such wholesome relations with fellow-helpers in his congregation that they will have unquestioned confidence in his sincerity and wisdom and will joyfully follow his leadership.

A Paid Staff

In large churches a pastor is confronted with the necessity of hiring and maintaining a paid staff of workers. In choosing such personnel he should take an active and prominent part. In most instances, however, it is wise to make them amenable to the church board, rather than for the pastor to assume responsibility for adjusting all questions that may arise according to his own will and judgment.

The Secretary

Among the most valuable and indispensable staff members is a full-time secretary. Such a person, if competent and reliable, can do more than any other helper to relieve the pastor of tedious detail work and leave him free to devote his time to the major responsibilities of his calling, namely, the preparation and preaching of sermons and the faithful shepherding of the flock.

The secretary can meet callers and ascertain whether it is necessary for them to see the pastor, then make convenient appointments. She can answer the telephone and call the pastor only when he is actually needed. She can keep the records, file materials, type sermon notes and outlines, mail publicity and promotional propaganda, and maintain an active up-to-date mailing list. It is also wise for a busy pastor to ask his secretary to maintain a calendar of his appointments, so that he will not be burdened with such routine affairs and so that he will not forget his commitments.

A properly equipped office, separate from the pastor's study, is essential to the efficiency of a secretary. The necessary equipment should include an extension telephone, a desk, a typewriter, a filing cabinet, a safe, a mimeograph or multigraph machine, and a comfortable place for persons to sit when waiting for appointments with the pastor.

One qualification of a good secretary in addition to technical training is a personality pleasing to the public in personal contact or in telephone conversation. Friendliness should be combined with proper reserve. Cheerfulness should be maintained without levity and frivolity. Sympathy and spiritual understanding should be joined with enthusiasm and loyalty to the church, its teachings, and its leaders. The ability to respect confidences and keep official affairs out of the category of subjects for gossip is indispensable.

The relation of the pastor to his secretary should be friendly without familiarity. A professional reserve and respect should never be compromised. There must not be any grounds whatsoever for rumors of undue intimacy between the pastor and the secretary.

Other Staff Members

Other possible members of a paid staff are a minister of music, a minister of religious education, a youth director, and an assistant or associate minister. Only very few churches can afford all of these on a full-time basis. Seldom can more than two such functions be combined in one person. As to which to choose there are several considerations. One of these is, In what field does the greatest need and the largest opportunity lie? The availability and quality of local talent may be a deciding factor. Some churches are fortunate enough to have in their membership very competent and acceptable song leaders and special singers. Their use is preferable as long as possible. A Sunday-school superintendent may have unusual gifts and sufficient spare time to promote the work of Christian education effectually. A pastor may be able to organize his laymen for visitation evangelism so successfully that a calling assistant is not needed. As long as volunteer helpers are available and adequate to the promotion of the work, a paid staff need not be considered. The premature move toward full-time workers for the church has sometimes brought about dissension among the laymen, and has added financial burden to the extent that the resources of the church were so heavily taxed that other important responsibilities were neglected.

Another possible solution may be the hiring of available helpers on a part-time basis. Thus aid may be given to a person with inadequate income or to a student who needs support while in pursuit of his education. At the same time the work of the church may be advanced without excessive drain on the financial income of the church. Under no circumstances is a church justified

in contracting for paid workers which it is unable to pay without strain, and without curtailing its obligations to district, institutional, and general budgets.

Ministers of Education And Music

The qualifications for ministers of education and music are obvious. They must be possessed of natural gifts, spiritual graces, and specialized training, so that they will be outstanding in their assigned fields of service. In addition they must have the character, the spirit, the temperament, and the spiritual experience to command respect for their goodness and ability as leaders among the people.

The Youth Director

A youth director may prove to be a bane or a blessing. He must be an exemplary Christian. He must carry a burden for the spiritual welfare of the youth under his direction. He must be loyal to the pastor and the ideals of the church. He must be more concerned about the instruction of the youth in Christian doctrine, experience, and ethics than about the social and recreational activities of the society. He must have poise without being a stuffed shirt. He must be approachable without sacrificing the reserve that will command the respect of youth. He must have limitless stock of ideas; but he must also give all possible consideration to those proposed by the young people, their parents, or the pastor. He must have the insight to foresee those situations that will give rise to criticism, tension, and division, and avoid them. He must be active in all the spiritual program of the church and lead the youth to follow his example.

Assistant Pastor

Associate ministers who share the preaching, visiting, and administration of the church are seldom needed or desired. Some churches do need and employ assistant pastors. Usually they may be found among young men who wish to serve an apprenticeship and who are willing to be understudies to a successful pastor. They may be men who feel the need of lightening their load because of age. In any case the assistant must be unselfishly loyal to the pastor and supremely devoted to the welfare of the church and the salvation of souls. He must never allow himself to be self-seeking, or personally aspire to the place of the pastor in leadership or in the esteem of the people. If ever a hint of division of allegiance between himself and the pastor is heard, he must reject all such suggestions as unthinkable. If such an attitude grows, he will with becoming grace take full responsibility for bowing himself out, for good and apparent reasons.

The Caretaker

Another invaluable and indispensable member of the staff of the church is the caretaker or sexton. His service to the church is more important than the honor or dignity ascribed to his office would indicate. The cleanliness and neatness of the house of God is a matter that cannot be overlooked. The appearance of a building, inside and out, is in some measure a criterion by which to judge the type of people who worship there. A comfortable temperature with ventilation which causes no air currents to jeopardize the health of the worshipers is of more than incidental importance.

A caretaker, therefore, must be a man ready to receive instructions and follow them. He must have energy and flexibility. He must take pride in doing his work. He must seek to make a good impression for the church in the community both by the thoroughness with which he labors and by the spirit in which he conducts himself.

Relations Between Pastor and Staff

In his relation to the members of his staff a pastor may find the secret of his success or failure. A primary point to be emphasized is that a clear understanding must be reached between himself and each of the staff members and among them severally. The duties of each one must be clearly outlined, so that there will be no overlapping of responsibility due to misunderstanding. Then no trespassing can be allowed. The pastor and each employee must respect the rights and functions of the others.

Allowance must be made for the individuality of each person. Liberty to do his work in his own way must be given. The pastor must not be too meticulous or dictatorial. He has a right to expect faithful performance. He should, however, allow for variety of method and manner. He cannot expect perfection, but he should keep a watchful eye upon the whole procedure, so that he can inform his board of how things are going and give unprejudiced advice and counsel. He must avoid emotional explosions that will result in loss of respect for his person and his office. He must be conciliatory with those who disagree with him and a fair arbitrator of differences among others. Above all he must maintain a charitable, Christlike spirit, being ready to overlook human faults and failures and to pardon all confessed offenses.

Volunteer Helpers

The pastor has a much larger group of volunteer workers with whom to engage in the great co-operative undertaking of building and promoting a church program. There are the musicians, organists, and pianists. There are the members of the choir and the special singers. There are the heads of the auxiliary departments of the church: the Sunday school with its officers and teachers, the N.Y.P.S. with its president and council and committee members, the missionary society with its president and secretaries.

It is impossible to discuss here the relation of the pastor to each of these groups. But there are some over-all principles of administration that a pastor should observe which may be applied to all of them. First, he should know what his duties in each organization are, as set forth in the Manual and the constitution of the various departments. And whether he feels the situation at the moment demands his active participation in their meetings and elections or not, he should function nevertheless; for the time may come when he is sorely needed. He may then be set aside or disregarded because his former indifference will be taken as an indication that he feels no concern or responsibility.

Selection

In the selection of all who are in active leadership in the church, a pastor has authority and duty. The spiritual qualifications of a person are the primary consideration. Personal adaptation, including gifts and talents, and intellectual capacity and cultural advantages deserve attention. Seniority in church membership and active service should not be overlooked in favor of a person without an equally desirable background and experience.

Personal favoritism should have no place in the choice of persons who are to do the Lord's work. Those who may have been in active opposition to the pastor should not be set aside without very sufficient reasons being apparent. Haste in removing such persons may turn sympathy to them and arouse more widespread opposition, whereas forbearance may work for restoration to loyal co-operation.

Assignment

The pastor shares responsibility for assigning to each member his task, with its purpose and areas of service clearly defined. He will give different department leaders his advice in the fixing of goals and objectives. He will see that worthwhile projects are undertaken. He takes care that every department is organized and functioning according to the purpose for which it exists and in harmony with the program and plans outlined.

Checks

In the case of youth organizations the pastor will keep a watchful eye that the social and recreational features are not allowed to supersede the things that are more important, such as devotional, inspirational, and evangelistic emphasis. He will make certain that a proper balance is maintained, with priority given to the things that are spiritual.

In the various departments of the church school he will see that the teaching is scriptural and doctrinally sound. He cannot afford to allow erroneous teachings or slipshod methods to go on without correction. In order that there may be competent teachers, he will organize and promote the classes for Christian Service Training. He will encourage and sponsor vacation Bible schools, and weekday religious education in cooperation with the public schools.

All of this work must be assigned to competent lay workers; but the pastor must be the guiding genius in most instances, or it will not be done or will be so poorly done as to be scarcely worth the effort.

Replacements

The problem of replacing incompetent and fossilized workers is often delicate and difficult. Sometimes a pastor will need to forbear action until a providential circumstance gives him the opportunity to bring about the change. When a change is made, it is very important to assure himself that the new arrangement will be better than the old. It is wise to work in close co-operation with the board or council having jurisdiction. Furthermore, it is easier if a person removed from one position can be offered another one in which he may be expected to be more

acceptable and efficient. In making all such adjustments the pastor's attitude should be one of gracious courtesy and kindly consideration.

The Ushers

Among those who serve the church the ushers have very important positions. A pastor ought to take an active part in choosing men who are capable of meeting all who enter the door, greeting new people and visitors as well as regular attendants with courtesy, and seating them with becoming ease and grace. A pastor will do well to learn by observation and reading how the ushering ought to be done. He is then qualified to give instruction and guidance to his ushers. Or he may spend some time conveying his ideas to his head usher, who can then be responsible for training his co-workers. The best, most intelligent, refined, and pleasant-mannered men of the church should be chosen as ushers.

Standing Committees

In a large church committees multiply. But in most churches there are certain standing committees that function regularly in addition to the boards and councils set up by Manual regulations and department constitutions.

The membership committee is required by the Manual and should be used for the purpose of finding and approving new members for the church.

A finance committee can be used advantageously to assist the pastor in the wise expenditure of money, in recommending salary adjustments, and in the support of special projects that are worthy.

The house committee can be responsible for the maintenance of the property, for recommending improvements and repairs, and in the supervision of the work of the caretaker. Their duties include the oversight of the parsonage as well as the church building.

A publicity committee can be of invaluable aid to the pastor in advertising the church.

The benevolent committee is necessary in order that the needs of underprivileged people may be ascertained and supplied.

A flower committee is of real assistance in keeping the church supplied with flowers. Then the distribution of the bouquets to the sick and shut-ins becomes a much appreciated ministry.

The music of a church should be intelligently and carefully planned. A music committee can do much to keep those who desire to participate in the musical features happy and useful. It may also help to make the services attractive and inspiring. It is well to have a person known for poise, fairness, and good judgment, as well as one musically minded, to head the committee. The song leader and the organist or pianist should be included in its membership. One who will fairly represent the views and tastes of the pastor should also be chosen.

These committees can relieve the pastor of much routine work, thus freeing his time for those duties that he alone can perform. He may need to give some personal supervision to each of them until they learn to bear their responsibilities in regular and faithful service to the church and to God.

The Official Board

An aggressive, co-operative official board is a pastor's greatest source of encouragement and his most effective aid to the furtherance of the work of the church. If he can win their confidence and loyalty, he will be able to survive some opposition in the congregation. If he has a board with a negative, antagonistic attitude, he will find the going very difficult. A divided board is also a discouraging barrier to success. With prudence and patience a pastor may win the support of his opposition. Finding himself unable to do that, he will be wise to think in terms of finding another field of service.

Of course, the annual meeting may bring relief by voting some changes. But in bringing about changes the pastor should be careful that he does not create more problems than he solves. Sometimes he is safer in keeping his opposition at close range. In no case should a pastor actively campaign to bring about changes in the membership of his official board. He will do better to leave such matters to God and the people.

Size

The size of a board is not a matter of primary importance. In a small church the matter is disposed of automatically by the lack of material. In a church of average size it is better to keep the board membership within the range of eleven to fifteen. In a large church it may be wise to have the maximum number allowed by the Manual, which would be twenty-five.

Regular Meetings

A pastor should never take upon himself the responsibility for decisions which are obviously the business of the board. Regular meetings should be held at a designated date each month. If because of providential hindrances the date must be changed, the meeting should be held at the nearest possible time. In case of urgent business a special meeting may be called.

Procedure

The meetings should convene promptly at the hour announced. An opening prayer is always advisable. To begin a meeting in a spiritual atmosphere is a great aid to smooth operation and wise decisions. Orderly procedure will expedite business and will often eliminate unnecessary discussion and delays. The pastor, who is ex officio chairman, should know and observe all the Manual regulations regarding the operation and duties of his board. He should know Roberts' Rules of Order. He need not hold to exact formal parliamentary procedure, but he will be wise to avoid flagrant infringement, for too great freedom often results in loss of time and breeds disagreement and ill will.

Business

A pastor is a moderator. He should not expect his board to rubber-stamp all his proposals. He should not precipitate matters of major importance on an unsuspecting board or in a meeting in which the attendance is not representative. He should allow open and unthrottled discussion of all considerations in which there is ground for reasonable disagreement in judgment. If unity cannot be reached, a decision may be postponed by mutual agreement or by laying the question on the table.

Harmony

Discussion is always out of order with no motion before the meeting. If sharp disagreements arise in a board meeting, the pastor is wise to seek to bring about a conciliatory atmosphere before the meeting is adjourned. If he feels any barriers are raised between himself and other members present, he will do well to seek out the persons involved at first opportunity and make every effort to come to full understanding, if not complete agreement. Sometimes it takes more grace and manifests more wisdom to back up than to drive through. A pastor is sometimes wrong; and if made to see it, he should be ready to admit his fault. Even when he is sure he is right, he may accept the views of others rather than be contentious.

Length of Meetings

As for the duration of a regular meeting of the board, it should not take more than an hour and a half and perhaps not more than an hour. It should never be allowed to continue indefinitely. If there are special considerations demanding more deliberation, a meeting may last for two hours; but if more time is needed, another meeting may be called. All meetings should end in an atmosphere of prayer and cordial personal relations among all members.

Organization

It is wise to organize a board so that each phase of the work shall have proper attention. The trustees have some business that belongs to them exclusively. Therefore, it is well to elect a chairman of the board of trustees and ask him to report monthly to the full board regarding their activities. The duties of the trustees are clearly defined in the Manual.

The same is true of the board of stewards. They should be organized and their duties assigned: some to assist in the money-raising efforts, others to give attention to the preparation for the serving of the sacrament. Their chairman should report regularly to the meeting of the entire board.

Officers

The careful choice of officers of the board is very important. A good secretary who will keep accurate minutes and preserve them in permanent form is a must. He can be of great assistance to the pastor in bringing matters before the board in the proper way. It is advisable for a pastor to arrange an agenda with his secretary. The normal procedure is to have prayer, the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting, consideration of unfinished business, reports of special and

regular committees, officers and department heads, and then the introduction of new business. In some cases it may be appropriate for the pastor to present new business. At other times the secretary can do it more becomingly. Of course, any member of the board is at liberty to present legitimate business for discussion and decision.

The board should choose a financial secretary to supervise the counting of all money received and to keep an accurate record of the same. He will hand the money with his accounting to the treasurer, or deposit it in the bank and give the record of deposit to the treasurer. They will both have a record and both should report to the monthly meeting of the board. This will give a double check on funds and will necessitate a monthly comparison of the record.

Perhaps the most important officer of the board is the treasurer. He should be well known for his integrity and his ability to keep his books in order. He should deposit all money in the bank and pay all bills by check. He may be authorized to pay all regular obligations monthly. Expenditures of a special nature should be authorized by the board. He should report all receipts, expenditures, and balances each month. His books should be prepared for a thorough audit by a professional accountant at least once each year.

A treasurer can be too congenial, and ready to write checks more freely than he should. On the other hand he may develop a possessive complex and feel that he is the watchdog of the treasury. One who is free from either extreme is desirable. If a choice must be made, the latter is to be preferred to the former. The pastor is wise to cultivate happy relations and good understanding with his treasurer. He should not, however, seek to dominate him in order to control the money.

The secretary, the financial secretary, the treasurer, and the finance committee are not required by law to be elected from the membership of the board. But it is preferable that they should be. Other committees may be chosen in whole or in part from the membership of the church at large, thus distributing responsibility and keeping more people busy.

Whenever possible it is better not to give one person too many offices, usually not more than one major task. In the election of board members it is better to spread the responsibility by ruling ex officio members as department heads out of consideration among those elected as trustees and stewards.

The Congregation -- The Final Voice

The pastor's success is quite well assured if he is able to work harmoniously with his official family. Nevertheless, he must always realize that there is a reckoning with the entire congregation. The system of government which we have adopted places final authority in the church as a whole. Therefore the annual and called meetings of the congregation are important. Their rights and authorities should never be bypassed. Those transactions that require a vote of the church should not be done without that action taken.

A special or called meeting should be properly announced in two regular meetings of the church. The purpose of the meeting should be included in the public notice. All proposals should be submitted in an atmosphere of candor and fairness. Nothing should be kept under cover, and

pressure methods should be avoided. A vote may be railroaded through, but often the reaction soon follows that is divisive and damaging.

Preliminary to the annual meeting of the church, announcement must be made on two Sundays preceding the agreed date. A nominating committee may be selected to present names to be voted on by the church for the various offices, boards, and delegates to the district assembly. The pastor may serve on that committee. He should see that in its appointment all groups and interests are represented. It is seldom wise arbitrarily to eliminate incumbent members from consideration. As a rule, it is better to nominate them and let changes come as a result of the church ballot. If there are persons who are disqualified according to the Manual, they need not be nominated. It is a good rule to submit at least twice the number to be elected for each board or office. A move to elect by unanimous ballot is not in order in any church meeting and is certainly ruled out in the election of a pastor.

The annual meeting need not be long and tedious. It can move with smooth expedition if properly planned and guided by the chairman. The pastor will preside unless for some good reason it is wise to ask the district superintendent to do so. The meeting may open with a song, a scripture reading, and a prayer. It then has the air of a religious meeting, which it definitely is. After the minutes of previous meetings are disposed of, it is in order to have the report of the nominating committee read. Nominations may be added from the floor; or, if a church chooses to do so, all nominations may be made from the floor.

When the nominations are before the meeting, it is well to begin the balloting. Two or even three boards of tellers may be working concurrently, if deemed necessary. While ballots are being counted, the reports may be heard and any regular or special items of business may be cared for. When the elections are completed, the work of the meeting may be finished. It should be remembered that an election is not official until the report of the tellers is heard and the chairman has declared the election of the persons chosen. It is better to vote until a person has received a majority. The meeting may, however, vote to elect by plurality.

The decisions of a meeting should be accepted in good faith. If there is opposition to the status quo, it should be treated with Christian courtesy and charity. A minority should be given all the rights that are due them. And they should be encouraged to show the spirit of a loyal minority.

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19 -- KEEPING THE MEMBERSHIP ROLL

Membership in the Church of Jesus Christ is sacred. In its deeper significance it means that those who are joined to the church are united with the Lord in a mystic spiritual communion. It also implies that all who are a part of the church are members one of another, even as are the organs of the human body. They are yoked together for mutual profit in fellowship, worship, and service. They are co-workers with Christ in the salvation of men and the building of God's kingdom on the earth. They are separated from the world and consecrated to a holy calling.

By all people of Christian faith and spiritual understanding membership in the church has value in character building, social standing in a community, and spiritual development. Even in civil courts, membership in the church has bearing upon the judgment of individuals.

All who unite with the church should be impressed with the meaning and value of membership in the household of faith. To accomplish that purpose a pastor must himself place a high estimate upon this sacred relationship to God and Christian people. He can never allow himself to treat lightly anything that has to do with the relation of men to the body of Christ.

Keeping the roll of the church membership may seem to be incidental, but it has very serious implications. For members of the church to discover that the record is carelessly and inaccurately kept can but leave them feeling that their part and function in the church is lightly esteemed. The conclusion to be reached would probably be that to join the church is unnecessary, loyalty to it is a matter of voluntary choice, and leaving it would be of little loss to oneself or to anyone else. Therefore, every pastor ought to feel that the keeping of the church roll is a sacred trust, demanding the thoughtful consideration of a competent person.

The Keeper of the Roll

In small churches it is wise for a pastor to keep the record in his own office and personally see that it is kept up-to-date. In larger churches the church secretary or clerk can be charged with responsibility for the actual work and safekeeping of the record, or a special membership roll secretary may be appointed. But in any case the pastor should have easy access to the roll book and should assure himself that new members are properly enrolled and that the names of persons who have been rightly removed from the membership of the church have been dropped from the roll. The names of those uniting with the church should be listed and handed to the secretary.

Keeping of the Roll

The record should be kept in an appropriate permanent form. Books made for the purpose are available at most religious publishing concerns or bookstores. The record should never be kept in a card file or a loose-leaf notebook. The loss of any number of names from the record is too easy under such circumstances. The full name of each person enrolled should be entered, with a record of the manner in which he was received. In event a member has been baptized at or near the same time, a note of that should be made. The names should be neatly written with pen and ink. They can very conveniently be entered in alphabetical order.

As the end of each church year approaches, the pastor should go over the record carefully to ascertain what the net gain or loss in membership has been. This should be the basis of his annual report. In keeping the roll of the church there are two principles to be faithfully followed. The first is honesty. No pastor should excuse himself for failure to know the whole truth about the membership of the church. Furthermore, he is no more blameless for being dishonest about that than for any other kind of falsifying. He knows that he cannot go on adding to the previous year's total membership all those received during the current year with no adjustments made for those that have been lost by death, default, or transfer. To do so is to allow the roll to be deceitfully padded.

The second principle to be observed in keeping the church roll is the Golden Rule. If the pastor keeps an honest record year by year, there need never be a roll-purging time. But if for any reason he has allowed the roll to go on without attention for an extended period, he should certainly bring it up to date before his term of service ends. He has no moral right to leave an inaccurate, cluttered, unreliable membership roll for his successor to straighten out. He would not like to inherit such a condition. Why then should he bequeath it to another? An inflated church membership is the cause for its ultimate deflation.

Adjusting a Poorly Kept Roll

On the other hand, if a pastor has received a padded membership roll from his predecessor it is a great mistake to slash to the bone the first year. It is a reflection on his predecessor which may be justified. But it is a psychological backset to a church which often takes years to overcome. Therefore the wise procedure is to take a period of two or three years to adjust the roll. This gives opportunity to build back as fast as and possibly faster than the loss is taken. It may be also that some who have become indifferent may be renewed, so that their names may rightly be retained on the roll.

Removal of Members

There are four ways in which members may be removed from the roll. The first and most obvious is by death. It is, however, true that some church rolls carry names of those who have already joined the church triumphant. The second method of removal is by letter. This method may be used by the pastor only on request of the person concerned. There are three different classifications of letters. They are letters of transfer to another church of the same denomination, letters of commendation to other persuasions, and letters of dismissal which are designed only to terminate membership without regard to any connection elsewhere.

The third method for removing persons from church membership is by trial. This should be invoked only in cases of extreme and flagrant infringement upon the teaching of the church or open denial of faith in its fundamental teachings. The procedure for a trial is fully outlined in the church Manual. The fourth course of procedure in removing names from the roll is by action of the church board after an extended period of voluntary absence accompanied with failure to keep in contact with the church through appropriate means of communication. This provision is often abused. It is not intended to be applied to persons who are infirm or aged, or to those who have for apparent reasons moved to distant parts but who desire to continue in membership and who answer correspondence and give some support to the church.

It is also contrary to the spirit of the ruling to use it to eliminate persons who have become dissatisfied with the incumbent pastor and therefore find themselves part of a minority in ill favor. Furthermore it should not be applied to members within reach of the church, until every reasonable effort has been made to bring them back into fellowship with God and His people.

Hasty and inconsiderate elimination of people from the membership of the church is as blameworthy as looseness in receiving them, or carelessness in keeping the roll. It tends to degrade the sanctity and dignity of church membership. It is a revelation of a superficial

conception of the whole matter of personal relationship to Christ through the fellowship and faith of the church. Let all remember the words of Jesus, who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

In transferring members, pastors should manifest a spirit of fair play. Some are ready to take but never ready to give. The Manual advises that when members of one church move to another community the pastor is to notify the pastor of the most accessible church and give the address of the person or persons concerned. This, of course, would suggest a readiness to transfer such members upon request. If this were faithfully practiced by pastors, all would profit by it, for there would come commensurate gains to balance the losses. Furthermore, many people who are lost to the church would be saved. Many names removed by action of the church board would be accounted for. It is hard to believe a pastor would refuse to play the game in the spirit of give and take. But some would risk losing a soul to Satan for the sake of keeping the tithe as income to their church.

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20 -- ADVERTISING THE CHURCH

A community must be made conscious of the presence of a church. It is folly to presume that there will be any considerable number of people who will seek out a church and attend it without impression being made upon their minds that it is there to serve and bless all who will avail themselves of its gracious ministry.

A happy, loyal, enthusiastic congregation is the best advertisement a church can have. A personal invitation from a friend or neighbor with a word of praise for the music, the preaching of the pastor, or a testimony of blessing received, is better than impersonal publicity of whatever character or quality. Nevertheless, every means at the disposal of the church should be employed to claim the attention of all who are accessible to it.

It must be remembered that the indirect results of publicity are often more far-reaching than the immediate and direct returns. Occasionally a response can be traced to a specific cause, but that is the exception rather than the rule. The cumulative effect of a carefully planned and consistently operated publicity program must be measured for a long period of time to determine its value. Repetition is one of the effective means of emphasis. In advertising, the church should never be weary in welldoing.

The Church Building Is Important

A well-located church is much easier to publicize than one which is crowded onto a small lot in the middle of a block, or on a narrow side street, or surrounded by an unsightly environment that causes refined people to recoil at the very thought of entering its doors and associating with its people. A location that is easily described and readily found is a decided advantage.

A church surrounded by well-kept lawns, attractive shrubbery, and flowers in season is itself a good advertisement. A building in good repair and well painted is also a publicity feature

not to be overlooked. And when people enter the church they should not feel a letdown because of its unsightly appearance.

At night it is good to have a church building and sidewalks leading to it illuminated by floodlights. This device will make the house of God outstanding in a community, and it will be a reminder of Him who is the Light of the World. The name of the church should be announced by a sign that is easy to see and read by day and by night. A neon sign is always good. An outside bulletin board that can be illuminated after dark, carrying up-to-date announcements, is always helpful. An attractive, artistic poster bearing a short, pungent message is also a good feature. It should be frequently changed to avoid monotony and to maintain interest.

Advertising Features

Signs and Directories

Attractively designed signs along the highways approaching a town or city or on main thoroughfares within the municipal boundaries are often used advantageously. Bulletin boards in railway and bus stations, hotels, and other public buildings, wherever permissible, are an indication that the leadership is alert to make the community church-conscious. Listing in the telephone directories should certainly be used. The pastor's name should appear in the regular alphabetical order, and both church and parsonage phones should be in the classified pages. It is unpardonable neglect on the part of the pastor and the church board if a stranger in a city is unable to locate the church of his choice.

Literature

The distribution of literature is an effective means of publicity. The printed text should be thoughtfully prepared. It should be a true representation of the church and its message. It should have popular appeal without being cheap and sensational. In appearance it should quickly catch the eye. Recent developments in visual art have done much to increase the value of posters, leaflets, pamphlets, and bulletins for free and general distribution. Full coverage of the accessible areas is desirable when special features such as revivals, conventions, anniversaries, guest speakers, or an attractive series of sermons are to be announced. The most effective method of delivery is in person. If residents of a house are absent, the material can be left in a conspicuous place. It is contrary to law to use the mailbox. Wholesale scattering of printed matter has little value.

Mailing Lists

Every wide-awake pastor should build a mailing list. It could be divided into three different classifications: a large list of persons to whom occasional announcements may be sent; a more select list to whom all publicity of general interest may be forwarded; and an exclusive list of friends, prospects, and members who because of hindering circumstances are unable to be in regular attendance, to whom the church bulletin and all printed announcements may be mailed weekly.

Radio Broadcasts

The radio has opened a new avenue of approach to the people. The direct results of radio ministry are not to be discounted. The indirect returns, however, are probably more gratifying. As a means of saving souls and giving encouragement and blessing to Christian people it should not be overlooked. The air waves are laden with advertisements of liquor, tobacco, and worldly and sinful programs. The church should not fail to counteract this propaganda with truth in sermon and song at every opportunity. As a medium through which the church may be publicized, the radio should be used to the fullest measure.

A denominationally sponsored broadcast may be very helpful and should have the co-operation of all local church leaders. Such a program need not be a substitute for a regular local broadcast. A well-planned, high-class presentation by a pastor and his church talent has some decided advantages. The quality of the program should be the best possible. It is better to spot the radio service at a different hour from the regular meetings of the church. In most instances the broadcasting of a Sunday service is a check on the freedom and spontaneity of that service. Of course in these days of transcribed programs this hindrance can be overcome. But a radio service at an hour in which people are in their homes will probably enjoy a larger and more enthusiastic hearing.

A pastor dare not depend on a radio ministry to substitute for his pastoral calling. He should not allow himself to contract so much radio time that he is enslaved by it. From one to three programs a week of fifteen or thirty minutes in length will accomplish as much as several hours and will leave time for other activities. In some cases talented pastors are sponsored by legitimate business concerns. The value of such programs to the church is indirect but is not to be considered negligible. In connection with the broadcast an announcement concerning the church and its regular and special services is desirable and effective...

Newspaper Advertising

Newspaper advertising has long been considered a very good investment. It does not always bring immediate returns; but as a long-range program of publicity is planned, the use of the newspaper cannot be omitted. The Saturday paper usually carries a church page. It is well for every local church to insert a regular paid ad. It may vary in size according to the financial ability of the church. Regardless of the amount invested, such a policy gives the church a standing with the newspaper management, which will in turn be considerate of the church in printing news items.

It is wise for the pastor to make friends with the editor of a paper if he is in a small city or town, or with the church editor in a large city. The personal contact often results in greater generosity with space for news items of general interest. The co-operation of the press is more frequently conditioned upon the wise approach of the church leadership than any fixed policy of discrimination against the church. There are three factors which have to do with the attitude of the publishers. They are: the amount of paid space a church uses over a period of time; the news value of the material offered for publication from the viewpoint of the public; and the wisdom, skill, and genius of those who provide the news.

A carefully picked publicity committee is of great assistance in advertising the church. Nevertheless, in most instances the pastor must take a large share of the responsibility for his publicity program. In all cases he should give guidance to those who assist him. He should never allow any lapse in the regularity of the use of the various means of making a community aware of the church.

The interest of people can be maintained only if the service attended is profitable and enjoyable. No amount of publicity can substitute for good, spirited singing, effective preaching, spiritual blessing, and a friendly welcome.

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21 -- BUILDING A NEW CHURCH

The erection of a new church edifice is an experience which most preachers seem to desire. Many are satisfied never to have that responsibility more than once. Others adapted to the construction work by inclination and experience are happy to find themselves faced with the task in almost every pastorate.

The burdens vary according to the size and ability of the church. It is often true that unless the pastor takes the lead in planning and building there will be no place of worship. Unless a pastor feels that to be his work, he had better pray that it will not happen too often in his ministry. To be constantly engaged with hammer and saw is to be dwarfed in the development of preaching ability and other aspects of spiritual leadership. When a building is completed, the minister had better lay aside his carpenter tools and devote himself to regular pastoral duties.

Whenever it is possible, the burden of building should be on a contractor. If that is not practicable, it should be on an experienced builder who will be responsible for managing the entire undertaking. Construction superintended by the pastor and by volunteer labor is a last resort. In all cases a carefully chosen building committee should be in active oversight of the project. They should be appointed by the church board and made responsible to it.

Is It a Necessity?

Before a decision is reached to build a church, the need of doing so should be frankly considered and wisely determined. A church building should never be erected for show or to gratify the pride of the congregation or the ambition of the pastor. If the need is apparent to all concerned, it will do much to unite the entire membership in the undertaking and probably will help to enlist the interest and co-operation of businessmen and friends of the community.

It is seldom wise to push through a building program over the opposition of a strong minority. Under such circumstances there is almost certain trouble in the making. It is better to allow some delaying action to postpone the undertaking until a greater degree of unity is achieved. In a church of good size, a small minority may be disregarded. But a kindly attitude of conciliation will usually succeed in bringing all reasonable persons into line. Often they can be shown that the new building is a necessity to the progress of the work, and that involved in the whole plan is the

desire to give the church a larger and more permanent ministry of soul saving. Many will support the work if they are persuaded that it has bearing on the spiritual purposes for which the church exists.

Counting The Cost

The cost of a building should always be carefully considered. It should never be extravagant. It should always be within the range of the financial ability of the congregation, without prolonged strain and burden. The amount of cash in hand, the annual income of the church, the financial resources of the members should all be taken into account.

If a loan is to be negotiated, it should be in proportion to the size and ability of the congregation. Every assurance should be had that there will be no miscarriage in the loan agreement before the project is launched. It is better to secure loans from a bank rather than from an individual. And it is, as a rule, better not to borrow from a member of the church. All business agreements should be scrupulously kept. Interest and payments on the principal of a loan should be kept up to date. A church should never be careless or presumptuous in its treatment of a creditor.

There is no reason for extravagance in a building either in outside appearance or inside appointments. The massive and the ornate are out of keeping with the message, the symbol of which is the cross. Simplicity and modesty are the ideals for which we should strive. Beauty can be achieved in simplicity. A building need not be unsightly in appearance. Many of the things that add attractiveness are inexpensive. Every church should have the appearance of a church. A distinctive architecture is the identifying character of a place of worship.

The Design

One point at which a church should never economize is in architect's fees. Too often buildings have been erected without the aid of a competent architect. Usually there is more lost than gained in building operations by such practice. Then there is the long-range cost that accrues in unsatisfactory planning and appearance. A building carefully designed and well constructed remains a joy to those who labored to see it erected and to those who will worship in it for decades to come.

A building should not be too large. It is better to build a modest edifice and see it well filled than to go beyond the needed size. To be sure, the growth of the congregation should be expected and in some measure anticipated. But a better part of wisdom would be to build with a view to the enlargement of the plant. This can be done in several ways. The unit plan of procedure is frequently employed with satisfaction. It may be in a newly organized church that a chapel can be erected that will later be the parsonage. Or a ground floor unit may be the beginning. Again, the sanctuary may be first, with the educational unit to follow. Or the reverse order is sometimes preferable. In any case a long-range view should be taken that makes expansion possible. The need for educational facilities should be considered as well as a place for worship and evangelistic meetings.

It is ill-advised to include a gymnasium in the plans for a church. Its value is questionable. Many churches that have them find they are a burden and a liability. Cost for maintenance is prohibitive.

If the building under consideration is a parsonage, the same basic principles should govern. The cost should be modest. The thought should be to provide comfort and convenience without extravagance. The home of the preacher should be on the level of the better-class homes of his congregation. Its size should be in keeping with the demands of an average family.

The Location

Another important feature in calculating the future development and progress of the church is the location. The character of the community is a very important consideration. New and growing residential areas offer the best opportunities. They are in process of adjustment. Older communities have become static, and the people are fixed in their religious loyalties and manner of life. The middle-class home area where people live respectably and comfortably is, as a rule, desirable. This does not rule out the poor or the wealthy, but it makes possible an appeal to all within reach.

Transportation problems should be considered, especially if a church serves a wide area. In most instances the church will depend largely upon those who live nearby or who drive their own cars for transportation. Therefore a church surrounded by homes has the advantage of one in a crowded business district or on a traffic-jammed thoroughfare. In the present time parking problems often become acute. Therefore, when a location is chosen it is wise to plan for a church-owned parking lot. This is imperative in larger cities.

The following is a summary of the steps necessary to the successful consummation of a building program:

1. The need must be evident. The conviction that the task should be undertaken should be shared by a decisive majority of the congregation and expressed in a vote by ballot.
2. The desirable location must be determined and acquired.
3. The financial resources must be adequate.
4. The differential between the cash in hand and the total cost should be covered by a first mortgage loan. The amount to be raised while a building is under construction should be available for uncalculated costs.
5. Plans should be secured from a competent architect. Ideas can be obtained through the Department of Church Extension at denominational headquarters.
6. The approval of the project and the financial plan by the district superintendent and the district board of church extension must be obtained. (Manual.)

7. A competent person should be engaged to oversee the construction work, preferably a contractor or a qualified foreman.

8. More time should be allowed than is calculated, because there are unexpected delays and the progress is often slower than anticipated.

The observance of those rules will save trouble and disappointment, and will be conducive to a successful termination of a building program with happiness and good will in the hearts of all concerned.

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SECTION VI -- THE PASTOR AND HIS DENOMINATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

22 -- THE PASTOR AND HIS MINISTERIAL CO-WORKERS

The fellowship of his brethren in the ministry, of his own denomination, should be one of the pastor's most rewarding and precious experiences. He should, by all means, lay a foundation for this fellowship in an attitude free from suspicion and prejudice. He should be sincerely magnanimous and charitable. He should be cordial and co-operative.

A Christian Brotherhood

A few men indulge a spirit of criticism which does harm to those against whom their attacks are made but which does immeasurably more harm to themselves. They become bitter and useless. They are left isolated and unemployed. They berate others for their misfortune when they have no one to blame but themselves. Some are ready to believe, enlarge, and repeat every evil surmise that may be started concerning a brother minister. Often they are judging others by themselves, and eventually the truth comes to light. A preacher should find cause for nothing but grief in the misfortunes, indiscretions, or sins of his fellow ministers. He should restore an erring one in the spirit of meekness, considering himself lest he also be tempted. He should believe no scandal until it is undeniably confirmed. He should not be guilty of repeating it unless for the protection of some other soul, or the life of the church. If he does feel it is his duty to give out information that is injurious to a man's character and usefulness, he should be prepared to support it by competent witnesses or signed affidavits. To relate uncomplimentary stories about a fellow minister of the gospel only to discomfit and embarrass him is unpardonable. Every man worthy of a place in the Christian ministry should consider himself above such low-grade behavior.

To be sure, every preacher should bear in mind that he is honor bound to govern his life in an irreproachable manner. He should regard the sacredness of his vows, the highness of his calling, and the solemnity of the day of reckoning. Furthermore, he should never forget that any practice that brings reproach upon himself is an embarrassment to all other men of his profession.

That there are, always have been, and ever will be some unfaithful men in the ranks of the ministry, none can deny. They are the exception, however, and not the rule. The confidence of his

brethren may have saved many a man whose foot had well-nigh slipped. Let all preachers reinforce one another with love and prayers and charitable understanding.

With The District Superintendent

The relation of a pastor to his district superintendent should be mutually helpful. There are many occasions when a pastor seriously needs the understanding, counsel, and help of his superior officer. He does well to keep his confidence and good will. He should never expect that a district superintendent can do for him what his faithfulness and effectiveness do not merit; but he had better always be aware that there are times and circumstances in which the superintendent can do more to help him than anyone else.

When problems arise it is wise to consult him early rather than after the complications are so deep that he is powerless to help. His advice should be sought before important choices are reached. Before a marginal majority decision is acted upon and a strong minority overruled, his guidance should be invited and followed. Some officials may be too dictatorial; but, for the most part, one who readily seeks and follows advice seldom complains that his leaders are dictators.

Often a pastor can cultivate a warm and gratifying friendship with his district superintendent without appearing to court favor for himself. Certainly he can maintain cordial understanding and unquestioned loyalty to those who are appointed to guide him.

A pastor is seldom justified in allowing a barrier to exist between himself and his district superintendent. He should take every reasonable measure to keep the personal relation cordial. He should never allow himself to take attitudes toward his leaders which he would not justify in the members of his church should such attitudes be taken toward himself. Open opposition is justified only when there has been an evident breakdown or consistent failure. It should never be permitted for petty or personal reasons.

Passive indifference is little better than active opposition. Enthusiastic support and co-operation are appreciated and rewarded. They condition one's mind for gaining the loyalty that is so much desired. God puts His approval on the generous, loyal soul.

With The Evangelist

The relation of a pastor to his chosen evangelist is also a matter of importance. It may be a strain and a trial or it may be a boon and a blessing. It is advisable, for the best human relations, to call an evangelist who is personally known to the pastor. If that is not possible, one had better gain information from reliable sources concerning the temperament, qualifications, type of preaching, and methods of the evangelist. Then the pastor will know what to expect.

Once an evangelist has been slated for a campaign, he should not be asked to cancel the engagement except for very serious reasons. The calling of an evangelist should always be with the approval of the church board. Then even if a pastoral change does occur the contract should be considered binding. It is hardly necessary to say that evangelists, too, should be cautious about asking for release or postponement of their agreements.

The pastor ought to do everything possible to give his evangelist a fair opportunity to promote a successful campaign. He is obliged to give him a quiet, comfortable, congenial place to be entertained. A good hotel is considered most acceptable by evangelists. A private home with bathroom facilities that leave no cause for embarrassment is second choice. Many prefer the parsonage home, all things being equal. An evangelist entertained in a home where he cannot enjoy privacy, good food, a comfortable bed, and pleasant, unobtrusive fellowship has a serious handicap imposed upon him.

Thorough preparation should be made for the meeting. The available means of publicity should be employed. The newspapers, the radio, appropriate banners inside and outside of the church, and the distribution of carefully prepared printed material are important and valuable. Better still is a systematic program of visitation evangelism before and during the campaign. The evangelist who is greeted by a full house and a fervent atmosphere on the first evening of a revival is always encouraged and inspired to do his best.

But it is not enough to do these things. It is more important to do that which will bring the blessing and glory of the Divine Presence down upon the meeting. Therefore, preparation for the revival by appropriate preaching, intercessory prayer, and encouragement of faith for victory is all-important.

In conducting the introductory phases of the services a pastor should consider the wishes and plans of the evangelist. Some men who are engaged as full-time evangelists prefer to conduct the meetings themselves from beginning to end. A pastor is wise who accedes to these wishes. It may seem that the evangelist is usurping the pastoral position; but it can be understood that a man will do better work in a plan of service to which he is accustomed than in adjusting himself to a new program in every meeting. Therefore, it is well for the pastor to fit into the plans of the evangelist and co-operate with him wholeheartedly. If the pastor does direct the opening part of the service, he should take particular care to turn the meeting over to the evangelist in good time. Thirty minutes is long enough for the pastor.

A disagreement between pastor and evangelist is very soon detected by a congregation. Therefore issues should not be drawn by the pastor, and criticism had better be withheld. That an attitude of personal understanding and good will should be maintained is basic to the success of a meeting. The pastor should spend enough time with the evangelist to assure complete co-operation and perfect fellowship. On the other hand, he should not monopolize his time with trifling conversation, excessive recreation, and visiting until time for devotional reading and prayer are taken up with incidental things, if not with hurtful indulgence.

The question of financial remuneration has often been a cause for dissatisfaction on the part of the evangelist. In order that such a situation may be avoided it is better to come to full agreement in regard to what the evangelist may expect before the engagement is finalized. There are some who may object to this procedure, but it is in harmony with the usual practice in every other phase of the church program. It should not be so ironclad that additional reward could not be given if the income and results of a meeting justified greater liberality. Nevertheless, a reasonable minimum can be agreed upon.

In considering the price to be paid to an evangelist it should not be forgotten that he has no parsonage furnished, no utility charges provided for, and must pay his traveling expenses out of his offerings. It should also be remembered that a Sunday actually represents a week for an evangelist. Like every other laborer, he is worthy of his hire. Therefore, a weekly stipend of at least 50 per cent more than the acceptable salary of a pastor is not out of reason. The distance he is required to travel should be taken into account. The larger and financially able church should be generous enough to make it possible for an evangelist to accept meetings in smaller churches where he cannot expect adequate compensation. He would then save himself the criticism of being unwilling to serve smaller churches.

A pastor may help an evangelist by a positive attitude of appreciation and commendation expressed both privately and publicly while a meeting is in progress. He may further give encouragement by favorable reports spoken and printed that will create larger demand for the evangelist's services.

A wise pastor will not offer criticism to his evangelist while a meeting is in progress even if there are points of difference in his message and his methods. Seldom are such differences fundamental and therefore they can be overlooked without hurt to the cause. To be sure, in case of obvious departure from sound doctrine and spiritual ideals the error should be pointed out privately and in great kindness. Nothing should be allowed to mar the fellowship between the pastor and the evangelist.

To His Brethren

There should always be a spirit of co-operation and good will between a pastor and those who serve other nearby churches of his own denomination. It is admitted that there are possible areas of friction. Nevertheless, men with the breadth of mind that ministers ought to possess should be able to rise above all temptation to be little or contentious. They of all men should produce the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. Where churches are widely separated geographically the problems are not so numerous or acute. It is in areas where there are many churches in close proximity that the real test is faced.

Under such conditions, members are not infrequently disposed to transfer from one church to another. As a matter of fact, this is often a saving factor to the pastors themselves and may be an aid in keeping people happy who might otherwise become disgruntled and leave the denomination. Therefore, instead of opposing the organization of other churches within reach of those established, pastors would do well to encourage and promote such projects. They may find the transfer of members an advantage.

Of course no pastor would be happy to know that his neighbor was engaged in overt efforts to entice his members to transfer their loyalty. But if persons belonging to one church for any reason sufficient to themselves are disposed to change their membership to another nearby church, there is a way to accomplish it without friction. When they inform the pastor of the church to which they desire to transfer, he should instruct them to go in person to their present pastor and explain to him the reasons for their decision and ask for their letters. Such procedure is fair to the man who

has been their pastor. If he chooses to do so, he can use his influence to retain them in his flock. He should never use undue pressure to keep them, and under no circumstances is he justified in being unkind either to them or the pastor of the church to which they are asking to be transferred. If members have their minds made up to make the change, he should issue the letters without resentment or argument unless there are causes that justify his refusal to do so.

Such a procedure is a protection to the pastor who receives the members in question. It is possible that they are unworthy of membership in the church; or they may be chronic troublemakers. Furthermore, it is an unpardonable breach of etiquette to take members from a church without a letter of transfer. It has been done, and sometimes persons have been enrolled in two churches at one time.

This rule applies to members received from churches at a distance and to those coming from other denominations as well. Under such conditions a pastor may himself ask for the letter, upon the request of those seeking to unite with his church.

Pastors should not be too sensitive about their members' attending other nearby churches on special occasions. In fact, such cordial relations between churches should be maintained that co-operation in all things of common interest should be encouraged whenever loyalty to one's own church is not in question.

Persons ought never to be encouraged to give their tithes and special offerings except to the church in which they hold their membership. They should, however, be made to feel that if their financial ability justifies extra offerings to other churches they would not be criticized for doing as they feel constrained to do.

Fellowship between neighboring pastors should be cultivated. It will often be a safeguard against tension and misunderstanding. In some instances associations have been organized for fellowship and co-operation in promotional work. Wherever feasible this is a commendable gesture of good will. Occasional meetings could be held in any case. It is good to eat together and discuss problems and projects of mutual interest, books recently read, and new ideas gained. Companionship in recreation is also an enjoyable and profitable aid to good will. The best of all is to meet together for prayer and spiritual inspiration.

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23 -- THE PASTOR AND HIS WORLD-WIDE PARISH

Being a member of a denomination imposes upon a pastor some obligations. But it also gives to him some wonderful opportunities. It is true that he has responsibilities to his district and general organization. He must learn to be loyal to leadership. He must devote time to the promotional meetings. He must accept and pay budgets. He must keep his own spirit generous toward all the appeals which come, and he must lead his people into a greatness of mind that gives them the reputation of being a church with a vision.

Advantages Offered By A Denomination

But consider what advantages there are for one whose denomination reaches around the world and brings light and blessing to many nations; whose program includes not only evangelism and missions, but religious education, social welfare, and the publication of Christian literature to be sent throughout the world. In such a connection a pastor shares in the success of every home missionary church that is organized. He has a part in the work of redemption that is carried on in every mission field. He helps to build all the colleges and other educational institutions fostered by his church. He reaches a hand to the erring in the work of social welfare. He contributes to the filling of the earth with leaves of gospel truth that are for the healing of the nations.

The pastor of a denominational church gives co-operation, but he also receives it. And he who learns to follow leaders also finds out how to enlist the loyalty of others. For every investment he makes he receives a more than equivalent return. He is a part of a world-wide fellowship which becomes greater and more gratifying as the years go by.

For every liability that membership in a denomination imposes there are ten more valuable assets. It is obvious that those who seek to isolate themselves in independent churches with only a local outlook are self-centered. They seek to possess all and to dominate and determine all that is done. They build for the satisfaction of personal ambitions. They think in terms of self-exaltation. Their work has a human head. When they are dead or departed for other reasons, the work usually proves to be but a rope of sand. It is soon disintegrated.

The only person less worthy of admiration than the man who admittedly builds with himself as the center of attraction is the one who in pretense is part of a denomination but who in fact thinks first and last of his personal advantage and forgets his obligations imposed by the greater opportunities and the larger fellowship of service to which he has pledged his loyalty.

Obligations Imposed By The Denomination

District Assembly

A pastor justifies his claim to a place in an organization by his faithfulness in attending the regular and special meetings that are announced. The district assembly should be attended by every pastor. He should be there at the opening and stay until it is officially adjourned. There is no sufficient reason for absence except sickness or death in his family. The funeral of a member of his church would be a legitimate excuse for tardiness or early departure. But when such reasons exist they should be made known to those in places of leadership.

To all duties assigned to him the pastor should be faithful. He should not seek or expect positions in his district organization, but when chosen he should serve without reluctance. He may find that his indifference and failure to be present and active will rule him out of some considerations which he would greatly appreciate. If left out simply because others are more desirable, he should never be sensitive and resentful. But if he has been passed by because of duty defaulted, he ought to be ashamed of himself.

The Pastor's Annual Report

A pastor may commend himself to everyone by his report to a district assembly. Brevity is one of its most laudable features. It never takes as long to report what has been done as it does to justify one's failure. The essential factors in a report are: the numerical gains in church membership and in all auxiliary departments; the financial state of the church as related to local, district, and general obligations with total amount raised; the number of calls made by the pastor; and the activity of the church in evangelism and soul saving.

Plans and progress in construction of new buildings may also be reported. Rambling tales of personal or local interest should be omitted. The time needed for a satisfactory report should not be more than two or three minutes. Self-pity and obvious bids for sympathy are inexcusable, as are thrusts and criticisms that place blame for failure upon the church served or the district. Let the report glorify God and give honor to all who have shared in making it possible.

District Conventions

Faithfulness in attending and boosting for the annual and midyear conventions is also a part of a pastor's duty. His failure marks him as a man of selfish and local interests. He will receive blessing for being loyal if for no other reason. And better still, he will be a blessing to others. His positive, aggressive, optimistic spirit of faith will be contagious. He will return to his work with a new enthusiasm and vision for it.

Financial Obligations

The pastor's attitude toward budgets, assessments, and special offerings is an important factor in his success and happiness. He is the key to the situation. Seldom does a church adopt a negative attitude toward its district and general obligations unless encouraged to do so by a pastor. On the other hand, a church will not often overrule the pastor's opposition or overcome his indifference.

It is true that a new pastor may discover that a church is disposed to oppose or neglect its budgets. He will usually find such an attitude has been condoned by his predecessor if not actually advocated by him. He has doubtless encouraged a poverty complex or complained of inequality in the distribution of responsibility. Or he may have been so self-centered as to place his salary and personal interests above those that relate to the larger program of the church.

But the new pastor will do well to set about to change that situation from the very beginning of his ministry. The exchange of pastors in two churches has been known to reverse exactly the attitude of those churches toward their budgets in a single year. The church that had never paid its budgets did pay them and the one that always had paid did not. The pastor is the key to the situation. He ought to know that his own fate and fortune are at stake, as well as the spiritual, numerical, and financial progress and blessing of the church.

Usually pastors who put local and personal interests first find increasing difficulty in meeting even those demands. Those who give priority to district and world-wide obligations, accept all responsibility assigned them, and put local and personal interests second, invariably do

more for others and fare better themselves. Even when a church is engaged with a building program it should give full consideration to the district, general, and special appeals. If diligence is relaxed at any time, it is difficult to get started again. It is a spiritual law that never fails to operate which declares that "there is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

A pastor should take pride in the ability of his church and himself to meet their obligations, and should consider generous assessments and frequent increases as a compliment and a challenge. Budgets should be paid on a regular monthly basis. It is good to divide the year's total into ten equal parts and pay them the first ten months of the year.

There is no exact rule for the fixing of budgets. A set ratio is not possible, for as a church grows in size and resources the percentage of giving to causes beyond its borders should increase. After a certain level is attained, a church can and should give 50 per cent of its income for others. It does seem that any church with a vision and purpose to reach the world with the gospel could give a tithe of its income for world evangelism, and yet another tithe for district and institutional support. It is obvious that as the pastor's salary is raised his budgets should also be increased proportionately.

It is a pastor's responsibility to put heart in the budgets. If he thinks of them as a burdensome tax, he and his church will be dwarfed and defeated. If he sees in a budget a challenge, a privilege, and an opportunity to share in the work of redemption, he and his church will grow in faith and vision.

Giving is a measure of love and gratitude for God's unspeakable Gift. It is a thanksgiving for Calvary's sacrifice. It is a revelation of loving concern for the salvation of lost humanity. To all who have such spiritual insights, giving is a joyful privilege. A pastor certainly should have such a vision and burden for the salvation of souls and the progress of the church that by his preaching and his example in liberality he will lead his church to greatness of spirit which will mean blessing upon it and progress in the world-wide program which it supports.

To the "Uttermost Part"

A pastor and his church may fulfill their obligations to the "uttermost part of the earth" by paying budgets and giving offerings to send those who will surely be called to go and represent them on some far-flung battle line.

To Home Missionary Endeavor

But there are other ways to reach our "Jerusalem" and "all Judaea." There is not only the work of building the church now established, but there are communities unreached in the same city and there are nearby towns and villages where the gospel must also be preached. As soon as a church has become established and housed in its own property, it should be led to seek out those nearby places of need and help to open Sunday schools and organize other churches. No church can adequately serve a population of more than ten thousand accessible people. In a city, there should be at least one church with a holiness message for every ten thousand people, if the

situation is normal. And in smaller centers there should be a church not more than ten miles from anyone, if the population is sufficient to support it.

Where we have the most churches we also have our largest ones. We cannot organize churches as fast as we should until every pastor and church is home-missionary-minded enough to give members, money, time, and work to make the church of his choice accessible to everyone. If a right spirit exists among neighboring churches, they aid and strengthen one another.

A pastor who carries a burden for a revival in his own church and who reaches out to other communities nearby, and has a vision for the extension of God's work in every land, will have a growing conviction that the world is his parish. Nothing will be foreign to him. He will love all and pray and give for all. He will grow greater in spiritual stature, and his church will also grow in grace and knowledge of God. He will see this word of Christ fulfilled in himself and his people, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12).

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24 -- THE PASTORAL SUCCESSION

A pastor has a tendency to develop a possessive complex. He thinks, speaks, and acts as though the church he serves belongs to him. It would be safer for him to assume that he belongs to the church. He should remember that he is there by the will of God and the people, and that he may be removed by the will of the people (which it is hoped will generally coincide with the will of God). Every pastor should think of himself as a sojourner for an uncertain period.

Length Of A Pastorate

The length of a pastorate varies. The ideal duration is between five and ten years. It is admitted that some men seem to do better work in short pastorates. Probably it is wise to consider such qualifications as they may possess and let them govern the length of their stay. Conditions in a church may sometimes be favorable to a short term of service. All things being equal, however, it is doubtful if either a church or a pastor will make maximum progress unless they work together for at least five years. A pastor should never allow himself to become over-anxious for a change in order to gain a promotion. His best chance for advancement is to make the church he now serves bigger and better. Promotions will then take care of themselves. In all cases a young pastor should expect to serve a reasonable apprenticeship, and his faithfulness and enthusiasm in that period will be a good index of his future success.

On the other hand, few if any pastors remain much beyond ten years without a resultant crisis either in the life of the church, or the pastor, or both. Providential developments may sometimes indicate that the duration of a term should either be shortened or lengthened. Such factors may be considered according to their merits.

A Call To Pastor Another Church

Factors in a Call

It is well that a pastor keep in mind just what constitutes a valid call to a church. Men have been known to become quite disturbed when asked to consider a call. Such approaches are sometimes necessarily made in advance of a nomination by the church board. One should not take them too seriously. If the approach is made by the district superintendent, it has some official meaning. If it is made by one or more members of the church, it should be ignored and no encouragement given. The district superintendent should never be bypassed.

Even when a church board has met and nominated a pastor with the approval of the district superintendent, the call is not complete. A prospective pastor could then indicate his readiness to consider the call and give his consent for the vote of the church to be taken. But the call is not actually complete until the church has given a two-thirds favorable vote.

Thus it is obvious that there are three necessary factors in a call to pastor a church. They are nomination by the board, approval of the district superintendent, and election by the church.

In a few instances men have been known to resign pastorates before calls to other churches were completed. Such premature action is without excuse and could cause serious embarrassment. A pastor is wise in not giving a final answer to the church being considered until he has been informed that the election has taken place. Even then he is at liberty to decline.

It is too much to expect that a church will extend a unanimous call to a man unknown to them except by reputation and recommendation. A few negative votes may have little meaning. If there is a large block of unfavorable votes, one should be as sure as possible that he is in divine order in accepting the call. In every instance one should have a clear inward persuasion that he is acting in harmony with the leadings of the Spirit of God. A preacher should never pull wires to gain a call. He should treat courteously any suggestion that a call may be extended. He should not trifle with a call or be flippant in declining it.

In this connection the question is often raised as to the wisdom and desirability of preaching a trial sermon. This old custom is quite generally abandoned now. The weakness of it is that it seldom gives either the man or the church a fair trial. Judgment based on the record and recommendations which a pastor has earned is probably more intelligent than that based on a single pulpit performance. There may be times, however, when a church will request a trial sermon. The pastor under consideration should take a humble attitude toward such a desire; and if his interest in the church is sincere he may do well to accede, remembering that he too will have opportunity to look into the situation on such a visit.

A prospective pastor should never barter with a church to gain an offer of higher salary or other favorable considerations. He does well to avoid the appearance of being too much impressed with his own worth. He had better accept humbly and then seek to make the church bigger and better as he leads it forward. The following quotation from Monday Morning is a good illustration of a wrong attitude toward a call:

A Modernized St. Paul To The Man Or Macedonia:

Doubtless you will recall the invitation you extended to me to come over to Macedonia and help the people of that section.

You will pardon me for saying that I am somewhat surprised that you should seriously expect a man of my standing in the community to accept a call on such meager information.

There are a number of things I would like to know before giving my decision:

First, I would like to know if Macedonia is a circuit or station. There is another item that was overlooked in your brief and somewhat sudden invitation: no mention was made of the salary I may receive. I have been through a long and expensive course of training. In fact I may state, with reasonable pride, that I am a Sanhedrin man -- the only one in the ministry today. Kindly get the Macedonian brethren together and see what you can do in the way of salary.

You have told me nothing about Macedonia beyond the mere implication that The place needs help. What are the social advantages? Is the church well organized? I recently had a fine offer to return to Damascus at an increase in salary, and I am told I made a very favorable impression on the church at Jerusalem. For recommendation write The Reverend Simon Peter, D.D., at Jerusalem.

I will say that I am a first class mixer and especially strong on argumentative preaching. If I accept the call I must stipulate for two months' vacation and the right to make an occasional lecture. My lecture "Over the Wall in a Basket" Is worth two drachmas of any man's money.

Sincerely yours,
Paul

Accepting a Call

Before final acceptance of a call is given, it is wise for the pastor to know more about the church than what salary they pay and if an acceptable parsonage is provided. A knowledge of the history of the church, its location, progress, equipment, opportunity, and spiritual condition may be ascertained. The acquiring of this information may not be a deciding factor in the choice to be made, but it could save disappointment and regret when the decision has been reached.

It is better that one take sufficient time to render a final answer. After a place has been accepted it is always in poor taste to reverse one's decision. It is seldom justifiable to expect an answer to be given without some time for deliberation. A hasty answer might indicate too great eagerness if it is affirmative. Or it may suggest too little appreciation if it is in the negative.

Arrival at a New Pastorate

Upon arrival at a new church it is well to have arrangements made to meet the official board prior to the first public meeting. If such plans have not been previously announced, a call can be issued by the secretary of the board. This meeting will give the new pastor opportunity to

become acquainted with the official family with whom he is to labor. It will also afford time to plan for an appropriate service of induction and introduction. At the same time the new pastor will begin to get the lay of the land as far as the internal conditions of the church are concerned. He may learn about the financial obligations and the plans and program already in effect. Having had this contact, he will be prepared to present an appropriate message on his first appearance in the pulpit.

The preaching which a man does in the first few weeks of a pastorate is very important and may do much to prepare the way for a long and happy ministry. It should be positive, spiritual, forward-looking, and constructive. It need not be spectacular and should not be sensational. It had better be a token of what may be expected as the years go by. It should be marked by an absence of overconfidence and yet ringing with faith and hope. It should be with an attitude of humility, yet with courageous ruggedness that will inspire confidence in the leadership of the pastor as he follows his Lord and Master.

Some pastors are inclined to bring with them too many favorable reports concerning a previous charge. They talk too much privately and publicly about the church formerly served. Such practice is unwise. It is far better to forget the things which are behind. If the comments are favorable, they may lead to the conclusion that the pastor feels himself let down. If they are unfavorable, the new congregation may justly begin to fear that things will go that way again.

Another point at which a new pastor must be cautious is in his attitude toward his predecessor. If he follows a popular man, he will do well to speak occasionally in praise of him. He need not go overboard in extravagant compliments. If the former pastor has carried on in an acceptable but not unusual way, one may feel relaxed and at ease regarding the attitude of the congregation. He need not do other than to give credit and honor where it is due. Only rarely does a man leave a church in such bad repute that no one calls him blessed. If because of some breakdown in his life such a lamentable situation exists, then the new pastor does well to turn the page and begin anew without allusion to the unfortunate predecessor.

Perhaps the most difficult situation to face is in the case of a divided church. Then whatever the new pastor says he may be blamed by one side or the other. If he is silent, the friends of the former pastor will be resentful. If he speaks, the opposition will denounce him. What shall he do? The following advice I recall from a lecture to preachers by Dr. J. B. Chapman. He told how a pastor wrote to Rev. J. T. Maybury, then superintendent of the Washington-Philadelphia District. He said in substance: "I have become pastor of a divided church. What advice can you give me in handling the situation?" Rev. Maybury replied, giving what Dr. Chapman termed a classic formula. He said, "Ignore the differences, preach the promises, and get the people blessed." It is doubtful if that advice can be improved upon.

Regardless of the circumstances under which the former pastor terminated his ministry in a church, it is not good for a new man to come in to revolutionize everything in the first few months of his leadership. He may see that changes are needed, but he will be wise to make them gradually and with patience rather than all at once. He may feel that valuable time is being lost, but he may have miscalculated the time schedule anyhow. It is better to accomplish what needs to be done eventually than to obviate the possibility of ever doing it, by too great haste. The first year of a

pastorate may well be considered a period of adjustment and the laying of a foundation for future achievement

The Pastoral Recall

In the ongoing of a pastor's life the annual or triennial vote is inevitable. There are those who dread that event as a trying ordeal. Men would do well to think of it less seriously. That it is important none can deny, but an aura of dread can be built up around it until it becomes a psychological handicap both to the pastor and to the congregation. It had better be considered a necessary feature in the machinery of the church organization, which has its disadvantages, but which also has some advantages. It gives the pastor a chance to determine his standing and may be an approval, if it be a good vote; or it may be a barb to incite him to greater diligence, if it is not too good. It should be, in any case, a cure for complacency.

The three-year call is a blessing in some instances. In others it may create a problem. If a church grants it willingly, a pastor may be pleased. He should realize that it imposes some obligation on himself as well as on the church. He should not accept it and then ask that it be terminated without sufficient reason. If a church declines to give a three-year call, it may be simply that they do not accept the principle of the extended term, and the pastor would do well to agree to the annual election without resentment.

In anticipation of a vote to renew the call of the pastor, perfect candor and fairness should be observed. Any failure to conform strictly to Manual regulation is almost certain to start trouble. An attempt to circumvent opposition is only to strengthen the case for those who seek a change. There are specific instructions for extending the renewal of pastoral relations for two or three years. It must be at the end of at least one year of service. It must be recommended by a majority of all members of the board. It must be approved in writing by the district superintendent. It must be voted by a two-thirds majority of voting members present. A three-year call may not be properly renewed until the last year of the previous call has begun.

Meeting Opposition

The attitude of a pastor toward opposition is a revelation of his character. Dr. R. T. Williams taught us that a man should look upon his opposition as a test of his leadership. The ability to win over those who have voted negatively is proof of one's spiritual poise and power. A strong man imbued with the spirit of Christ can change his opposition into loyal support if given an opportunity. Too many pastors are tempted to isolate and condemn anyone who has cast a negative vote. The policy is not according to wisdom or the spirit of perfect love.

The right attitude is to seek for every opportunity to befriend and encourage those who have been led to cast a vote for a change of pastors. That will prove they were in the wrong more quickly and effectively. The pastor who denounces those who exercise their constitutional rights, as carnal and undesirable, only justifies the opinion that he is unfit for the place he holds. He is laying the foundation for a larger negative vote the following year and possibly a church division that can never be healed.

Even when a pastor is voted out, he does well to play down the importance of it. Too many men are inclined to identify themselves with the side of God and righteousness, and all who oppose them with Satan and evil. The pastor who has been voted out should seek to eliminate himself with the least possible agitation in the church. He should never ask for another chance in that church. His attitude should be conciliatory and his whole thought should be to hold the congregation together, so that his successor can carry on with the least possible handicap.

Most of our church problems of a serious nature are either chargeable to the pastor directly or they could have been avoided by his wise leadership.

A large negative vote, even if not sufficient to vote the pastor out, may well be taken as a warning to find another field of labor before the time arrives for another ballot to be cast. If he is sure the opposition has been reconciled, he could stay on; but if he has reason to believe that it has grown, he had better eliminate himself even at a loss or inconvenience.

The time does come even in a united and happy church when a change is advantageous both to pastor and people. A God-called man should not be a place-seeker; but when providential circumstances indicate that a move is timely, he will do well to communicate his conviction to his district superintendent and be prepared to follow his guidance in making a change. Most of the pastoral adjustments are made within the bounds of the district in which the man has served. A few outstanding men may be called to churches beyond the district, and sometimes men find it wise to seek a transfer to other districts. The men who can keep a good standing in one district for a long period of years usually find the greatest possible assurance of a satisfactory place to serve.

There are some signs, which should be obvious to a man himself, that indicate the time for a change is approaching. If his success has become mediocre and there are indications that a stalemate is probable, the pastor should know that his work is done. An inward release and relaxation should be experienced before a pastor assumes that the next call will be the one to accept. If he still has the burden and vision for his task, he should not be allured by greener pastures and more generous considerations. He should esteem the welfare of the church above his own advantage. The will of God may be ascertained in all cases and should be followed unswervingly. A resignation ought never to be tendered insincerely; it could be accepted. When once a resignation is offered and accepted, the pastor should not suggest that he reconsider.

Ideally, changes should be made at the time of the annual assembly, but our system does not lend itself to inflexible regularity. Therefore men are obliged to accept calls when they are offered, and midyear adjustments are a necessity.

The specific regulations of the Manual should be observed except in circumstances that justify some exceptions. Close co-operation with the district superintendent in all the adjustments is very important. As to the choice of his successor, a pastor should take no active part unless asked to do so by his district superintendent. He should do everything in his power to bow out of a church gracefully and prepare the way for the next pastor. He should discourage all thought that he is indispensable, and be optimistic for the future of the church. He should commend the people to their new pastor. He will do well to give every possible compliment to the man who will soon be their leader.

Leaving A Church

When a pastor's work is finished, he should find sufficient reason to terminate all direct contacts with the church. If he is not to go to another pastorate, he does well to move away from the scene of his labors voluntarily. Often a pastor remaining in the church or city where he has served becomes a hindrance to the progress of the work. Even if he is retiring, he should move elsewhere. He should not return for weddings, funerals, or to visit friends. If after a prolonged absence he does return, he should not meet with a group of the people except with the pastor present. In cases where the church has been divided, he should not return at all unless there are obvious reasons for which he is not responsible. Under no circumstances is he free to accept the tithes or offerings from friends in former pastorates.

On the other hand, if there are situations which demand a pastor's return occasionally or even his residence in the city, his successor should not be too sensitive. He should accept a reasonable explanation and make no issue of the fact that a former pastor has been seen in town. If tension is caused by such a visit, the knowledge of it should be communicated to the district superintendent, who may be able to solve the problem by a kindly word spoken in season.

In all these delicate relations a fine sense of honor should be cultivated and the highest standard of ministerial etiquette observed. The Golden Rule is always applicable.

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25 -- THE PASTOR AND HIS COMMUNITY OBLIGATIONS

The Church is inescapably a part of the present world order. This does not imply that the distinctions between the Christian community and unbelievers outside the Church are to be wiped out. Indeed, the contrary is true. The Church must ever remain apart from the world. It and all who are included in its membership must be "not of the world." Nevertheless they are in the world. May Christ's prayer be answered. He said, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

The church is a beacon light in a community, pointing wayfaring men to the Saviour. It is a bulwark of righteousness set for the defense of truth against error, and holiness against sin. It has a message of mystic spiritual meaning to the transgressor. The Church is here to show men the way of life eternal in heaven and to lead them to a better, nobler life on earth. St. Augustine thought of the Church as the City of God, separate from the world. He also saw it as a means of grace in the world to save and serve mankind. This indicates that, while the character and atmosphere of the Church are spiritual and heavenly, yet it is an integral part of the society in which it is placed. Here it is the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

The pastor, who is the spiritual leader of the church, must recognize that he is there to serve the community, and exert a powerful influence in it, as well as to serve God and those who compose his own congregation.

That some men go to the extreme in community activity there can be no doubt. But that others pass by many opportunities to exercise a saving influence is equally certain. Let each one find the middle of the road and render to the community a service of which he will be ready to give account to God.

Relations With Other Churches

Every pastor is placed in a position in which he will maintain relations with other churches and their ministers. His beliefs and ideals may differ widely from theirs but he should not take a hostile, antagonistic attitude toward them. The Golden Rule is a safe guide to the spirit and conduct of a follower of Christ in all his human relations. It cannot be violated without doing harm to others and greater hurt to oneself. One is never justified in doing unethical things even if the end in view is a commendable one. The pastor should conduct himself toward his fellow ministers and their people in a way that will allow him to meet them anywhere without being chagrined.

As churches function here in America, there is much overlapping of influence and service. Many different denominations operate in the same community. One may have good neighbors and dear friends who belong to other churches. In many things they agree. In others they agree to disagree. In such a situation the question may arise as to when it is proper for a minister to visit the homes of people of other churches. This is a very delicate matter. Except under unusual circumstances it should not be done. In case of serious illness, if persons facing a great crisis and possible death are being neglected, then a call at the suggestion of a neighbor or friend might be in order. If for any reason a family belonging to another church has attended his services for an extended time, a pastor would be justified in making a brief call to offer spiritual assistance and a cordial welcome to his meetings.

Interchange of Members

Under the prevailing conditions in our country it should be expected that there would be some interchange of members between churches of different denominations. A pastor should seek to avoid what is often called "proselytizing" or "sheep stealing." He should seek to account for the large per cent of his gains by converts which have been made at the altar of his church. The time comes, however, when he is justified in receiving members from other denominations. If they have ceased to be active elsewhere, he may even invite them into membership. He should never use strong persuasion or "pressure methods." If people have made up their minds to change their church loyalty, they will often voluntarily indicate their desire. When the decision has been reached, it is best to ask the candidates to request a letter of commendation. That will give their pastor an opportunity to ascertain the reason for their change and to deal with them as may seem wise. Some extreme conditions might justify an exception to this rule, but in the main it is safe to follow it. Its observance will in many instances save unpleasantness. It gives one ground for saying he has done as he would be done by.

Whenever it is possible, pastors should avoid dividing households between two or more churches. Some people have liberal views along these lines. But there are cases where the feelings are very deep, and relationships may be strained by separating one part of the family from another.

This is especially true between husband and wife. Let every pastor avoid doing anything that would contribute to the disunity and breakdown of domestic life.

Union Meetings

Another question is how far should a pastor go in participation in union meetings with other churches. For special occasions, as Good Friday, Thanksgiving, graduation exercises, and the like, co-operation is permissible and usually desirable. It acquaints people of the community with the church and its pastor. It lends prestige to the church and demonstrates the readiness to co-operate in functions of interest to all people. It is seldom justifiable to close a regular service of the church for a union meeting. Sometimes a group of churches may desire to hold union Sunday evening meetings during the summer season. When such a plan leaves the church closed, it is wiser to decline to participate.

In supporting the big union evangelistic campaigns a pastor is confronted with a serious problem. He may find it helpful if and when the evangelist can be relied upon to preach a good gospel message without drawing issues on matters that provoke dissensions. But another time he may be embarrassed by apparently giving support to those things which are not in harmony with his message. Furthermore, the work done is often superficial. In only a few cases have the city-wide campaigns netted large returns for our churches. There are times when the loss is greater than the gain. A limited co-operation, as announcing and attending meetings, is usually more desirable than official participation.

The Ministerial Association

In most instances it is wise for a pastor to join the Ministerial Association and to attend its meetings with reasonable regularity. To do so he does not need to compromise his views or modify his doctrinal and ethical convictions. It gives him knowledge of the working of other religious bodies and is a valuable contact in the various enterprises of the community. He will be respected for his distinctive message and ministry, and his own testimony and influence may prove a blessing to those who would otherwise be unreached.

Community Activities

There is such a thing as a pastor being drawn into community functions to the extent that his time is too much taken by matters of secondary importance... There are different city-wide projects in which pastors are expected to participate. Among them are the Community Chest drives, the annual Red Cross enlistment of members, and patriotic meetings, especially during times of national emergency. In such efforts a pastor can ill afford to be inactive or indifferent. Even if his church is small and incapable of large contributions, yet he can show his interest in worthy undertakings and he can give his moral support, which will be appreciated.

A pastor is wise who does not allow himself to become involved in political campaigns. It is doubtful if he is ever justified in seeking public office, even if he is asked to do so. In holding such positions he is almost certain to incur the opposition of many people, and thereby limit his usefulness in spiritual matters. Appointments to boards and committees in political campaigns are

not infrequently offered. It is better courteously to decline them. In endorsing candidates for office one must be sure he is doing so without prejudice because of the political party which he may personally favor. In most instances it is better to urge those who listen to his counsel to inform themselves as to the qualifications of candidates, and vote for the one who gives evidence of being most worthy of the position of trust.

When issues are drawn that have a bearing on the protection of a community from the encroachment of evil influences upon its citizenry and especially its youth, then a pastor's voice should be lifted to speak in no uncertain accents. At such times the church should prove to be a fortress for the righteous, and a militant force to withstand the powers of Satan. Some pastors have gained real distinction as crusaders against such evils as the liquor traffic, gambling, and like works of darkness.

As a rule, however, a minister of the gospel does well to reject anything that diverts him from the normal program of a spiritual, evangelistic ministry. His accomplishments will be greater in devoting his time to the transformation of men by conversion than in all his attempts to reform a community by a prolonged crusade. The church and its leaders can do more to change society by leading men to a saving knowledge of Christ than by advocating reforms.

Nevertheless, the full weight of the influence of the church and its leaders should be on the side of every movement designed to improve the community and make it a safer place for people to live.

* * *

We have received the experience of perfect love. We preach that lofty ideal to all who will hear it. By the implications of such an exalted standard we should live. As overseers of the flock of God we should be ensamples to all that believe. Our ethical conduct among those of our high calling, those who follow our leadership, those of all religious groups, and before all men, should be regulated by the dictates of love. Every service we render should be motivated by divine love.

Jesus Christ is the only infallible Ideal. He was the incarnation of the God who is Love. In Him the word love was made flesh. His love was so compelling that He came from heaven to save sinful men; so constant that He continually went about doing good; so unselfish that He was among the disciples as one that serveth; so tender that He wept over the sins of the city which was soon to slay Him; so enduring that from His cross He prayed, "Father, forgive them."

In those ancient, appealing accents Christ is saying to us, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

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