

# **HOW TO HAVE ALL THE MONEY YOU NEED**



**By  
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## **MONEY AND THE MINISTRY: HOW TO HAVE ALL YOU NEED**

### Introduction

This book is for the pastoral student, evangelist, teacher, missionary and pastor. The title is deliberate. Everybody believes they need more money. Although the title emphasizes money, that is not the real issue. What we need to do is help others. I have something you need. You have something I need. God has given each of us an ability to help others. This is life. When there was a discussion of who was the greatest, the Lord answered:

**25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.**

**26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; (Matthew 20:25-26).**

It is true a man may, without God, exercise great authority among men and have great riches for a short while here. **But it shall not be so among you** for God calls us to love Him and love men.

When asked the great commandment of the Law, the Lord gave more than the man wished to be given:

**36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?**

**37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.**

**38 This is the first and great commandment.**

**39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (Matthew 22:36-39).**

A fulfilled life is to love God and man. Any man or woman who determines to do that, will, to the absolute maximum of their God-given talents, be given provision from the Lord to do so. That provision goes beyond money. It reaches into all areas of life. What good is money if you are to die tomorrow and go to Hell? What benefit is it to have money in the bank but have a wretched and tormented conscience? What is the hope of those who gain the whole world only to lose their own soul? A person can have all he needs and have the eternal blessings of God. To those who seek to serve Him, God gives peace, assurance, mercy, grace, and meets every *need*.

Not every person can handle a million dollars, but if you serve God, He will give you what He has designed for you to do. To the degree we are surrendered to Him, He provides the means to carry out that ministry. The man or woman who is faithful with the one talent is blessed far above those with ten talents who only use five of them for the Lord.

**Money?** Yes, you can have all you *need*. All you need is what you can handle. And you can not properly handle anything above what God has enabled you to handle.

God does not require us to do above that we are able. But He does hold us accountable to be faithful in all He has granted to us.

**His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. (Matthew 25:23).**

God may only grant us the ability to drive a Ford. But if we are faithful to God in it, the reward is greater than those who drive a Mercedes for a few short years by craft and worldly wisdom.

**Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. (1 Corinthians 4:2).**

God expects us to apply our common sense, the principles given in His word, and work. Too many Christians never have God's blessings simply because they are not willing to work. Others covet another man's ministry, thinking they are unsuccessful because they can not duplicate his abilities.

I hope this short book will help you see:

1. You are unique.
2. God has equipped you with what you need.
3. Success comes with diligent application of common sense and Bible principles.
4. God will provide all your needs to do His work.

Although the book majors on the pastoral ministry, any person in any ministry, with some adaptation, may apply the principles and receive the blessings.

## **MONEY AND THE MINISTRY**

Here is what you are about to read:

1. First of all, define and justify the main goal.
2. The ability to make quick, on the spot decisions without waiting to have a committee or deacon meeting, is a priority issue when you are dealing with urgent matters.
3. There are no quick fixes, no magic formulas, and no guarantees at any time.
4. Convince and lead a small number of serious and responsible individuals and you will have no trouble with larger numbers.
5. When problems arise, the best course to take is to listen to your critics and if they are right, change.
6. Learn to listen to experienced and successful members in your church.
7. When it is evident something doesn't work, drop it, but make sure it is not your impatience that makes you change.
8. Exercise your spirituality in a closet but roll your sleeves up and get to work on the street.
9. Money alone should not be the major factor in any work, secular or religious.
10. A great marriage is the best thing under the sun; it will get you through thick and thin.
11. If you don't really like where you are or what you are doing, you can not succeed.
12. Keep your eye on the major goal; focus stirs enthusiasm.
13. Hesitancy is a killer.
14. When you are ready to quit, remember anybody can run from a problem.
15. Forget your failures but evaluate your mistakes and determine to not repeat them.
16. Be a compassionate dictator.
17. Concentrate on developing confidence and inspiring people.
18. Break up the big goal into smaller, attainable ones.
19. Have a positive message in all classes and services.
20. Put life into the regular scheme of services.
21. Bring quality preachers into the pulpit for special meetings.
22. Get the right man to do the job and it will be done right.
23. Simplify the budget into broad categories and cut the nonessentials.
24. Above all, get involved in people's lives outside the pulpit.
25. Get together with the key *men* of the church and new prospects, outside the pulpit, at every opportunity.
26. You need a time when you systematically teach the Bible outside regular pulpit hours. Pastors commit a major error in neglecting this avenue or turning it over to others.
27. Do not waste your time on visitation that does not produce fruit.

28. **The most ineffective thing you can do is to try the job *all by yourself*; the second most ineffective thing is to *let others do it all*.**
29. **Give the church a jolt in the arm at least once a year.**
30. **Disband all committees.**
31. **Organization should be based on as simple a structure as possible.**
32. **Church staff members should be added only after they prove themselves as church members.**
33. **Train a “Timothy” to take your place.**

## **Money and the Ministry**

**“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.” (1 Timothy 6:10).**

Another title could be: **“How to Build a Church.”**

A church can not be built without money but every church that is built right will have adequate funds to do its ministry.

Many try to *get money* so they can build a church or increase its ministry. This is getting the cart before the horse. Building a church means interaction with *people*, winning them to Christ and building *people*. God never promises to bless money-gathering efforts; He does promise to bless church building. Go after *people* and the money will come in due season and in the proper proportion.

As I tell you the little I know about money, we need a background. I’d like to give you a personal *case study*. It’s real. I lived it.

Having the dubious distinction of being sued by another pastor involving courtroom, lawyer, jury, and all, money is an interesting subject for me. Twenty-five years ago a church \$350,000 in debt called me as pastor. Reduced to thirty-five members by several inept pastors, the last being the worst, the church was a mess.

It took us one year to straighten most of the financial mess out. Immediately, the former pastor sued the church. The irony of the thing is that the first message he preached at the church was the text above; the last thing the church heard from him was a lawsuit over money. After the lawsuit he began to perm his hair, wear makeup and paint his nails. Now he is dead.

We moved there—all eight members in my household. Neither the lawsuit nor the debt stopped us. Over the period of seventeen years I pastored the church, membership increased, bills were paid, buildings were built, future leaders trained, and an excellent reputation developed. The man I trained has

been the pastor for the past nine years and the church continues to grow. He is a better pastor than I ever was.

Nine years ago my wife and I left that church to enter mission work. We started “all over” again: no money and no promises, and fifty-five years of age. Since then we started twenty-eight churches in the Philippines, trained over fifty Filipinos who are in the ministry, placed thirty missionaries in other fields, started a mission board, and in 2001 received through the mission over \$600,000 which went directly out to missionaries in five countries.

Why did we take a church in debt? Why did we leave it after things were going well? Why didn't we join an established mission board instead of going it alone? These are decisions that make only little sense (to certain people) at the time. Most folks think you have a ministry death wish. All of it has to do with the will of God.

The will of God is not some mysterious, ethereal experience. God is more practical than we are and has much more common sense. I've never had a vision or seen an angel. If I did, I'd run, or get me a 900 number and go on TV. Perhaps in both cases, church and mission, the only “spiritual” thing I can identify was a sense of calm that all was OK. We did pray and ask God to keep us from ourselves but I've learned not to trust *my* prayers too much. After all, “we know not what to pray for as we ought.” (Romans 8:26).

On the practical side, I can point to several reasons.

1. I knew most of the people at the troubled church from a previous pastorate. They are quality people and needed help.
2. At the time they requested us to come I was teaching at a Bible College. Some newly hired professors were moving the school away from the King James Bible towards any new translation that came down the road. I was too much of a Bible believer for most of them and conflicts developed. My classes were full; the majority of their students were “drafted.” Envy and nit picking became frequent and I saw where the school was heading. We decided to go where folks needed and wanted the Book.
3. I've always enjoyed a challenge. It is exciting to stand back and watch the Lord part your Red Sea, put you through on dry ground, and drown your enemies.

The practical reasons for leaving the church and going into missions?

1. We were too comfortable. I could have coasted and rocked on the front porch of our new home. We didn't have to pray anymore about thin tires on the car or where our next meal was coming from.
2. We are convinced that more and more churches in the USA are farming the high places and doing less and less while the majority of the world goes to Hell.

3. We trained sufficient leadership in our church so that a duplication of leadership existed.
4. I knew a little about pastors, their problems, responsibilities, and how they think.
5. We thought about the Red Sea and the River Jordan again.

We do not write these things as experts. Really, I know nothing. I still feel like a novice in church matters. It is like walking on eggs. There are no quick fixes, no magic formulas, and no guarantees at any time. Unless God gets into our lives along the way, all is vanity. When we begin to think God is using us, He is gone. I suppose Paul had this in mind when he spoke of working “out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Philippians 2:12).

A church of 30-100 members is a good proving ground on money matters for a pastor. Convince and lead a small number of serious and responsible individuals and you will have no trouble with larger numbers. The principles remain the same. This is not to say that tribulations are absent. Situations arise that try your very soul and make you write a resignation letter for each one.

When problems arise, the best course to take is to listen to your critics and if they are right, change. Learn to listen to experienced and successful members in your church. Even if they are not right, it might be good to try it out. If we get too old to learn, brick walls break heads. Without good members in that “broke” church, we never would have turned it around.

Flexibility is also indispensable. When it is evident something doesn't work, drop it. Make sure it is not your impatience that makes you change. God did not give you a special dispensation of knowledge when you stuck that “Reverend” on your name. Just remember that a pulpit and common sense rarely meet each other.

Stickability. Staying with the task is usually a lesson learned too late. When you are ready to quit, remember anybody can run from a problem. One more day or week can turn things around. Besides, *if you are doing what God wants done in the way He wants it*, all His enabling is at your hand or else He is not God. If He can't straighten out that little problem, you might as well start flipping hamburgers or selling cars. It could be your goal is right but your method is wrong. It is also possible that your calendar and God's are not in synch. God uses wait time to correct and instruct.

Hesitancy is another killer. Why walk around a chair for thirty minutes? For the love of Pete, sit down! I've seen so many Christians “praying” about petty decisions for months and never getting anything done, it is enough to make you puke. Exercise your spirituality in a closet but roll your sleeves up and get to work on the street. Nobody really cares how long you pray about sitting down; God

doesn't either. When the room is dark, don't pray for someone to turn on the switch. Mash it.

Money alone should not be the major factor in any work, secular or religious. In the move from Bible school to the church, the financial picture looked bleak. I made \$350 a month as a Bible teacher. We had started a church while teaching and the church paid for our house and utilities. I also started several Christian schools during that time that paid the food bill for my wife and me, our five children, and two aged aunts. Taking the broke church meant a cut in pay, stepping into a financial morass, as well as a possible ministerial disaster.

Before I was saved, the majority of decisions were made on the factor of money involved. In 1963 I trusted Christ and left that life. We moved to Birmingham, Alabama and began college without a cent. At that time Sue and I had two children and a Siamese cat. The only thing we lost in the move was the cat. By the grace of God and a good wife, I graduated from seminary in 1970. Did we have to work? Are you kidding?? I worked on vending machines for a while and then for the last six years of school worked second shift in a machine shop. Sue worked in hospitals until babies made it clear to us a Mom at home is more important than money in the bank. (This does not make me patient with anyone who says they didn't go to college because of money).

A great marriage is the best thing under the sun. It will get you through thick and thin. When I quit, Sue was there to make me go again. When Sue quit, I somehow believed it would work out. By the way, marriages based on money are doomed to failure. Sue and I lived in a small two-room apartment when we were married. We had to catch a bus to go shopping for our one sack of groceries. There were no frills, but we loved each other. Love makes pork and beans and chicken soup taste like a five-course dinner. That love still works the same way after forty-four years.

## **ENJOY YOUR WORK**

I almost put "Love Your Work" as a title to this. "Love" is thrown around so much I decided not to belittle the word. The idea of love still carries a higher meaning to me than the way this world regurgitates it at every turn. If you don't have enthusiasm and joy in what your work, funds will be scarce as hen's teeth.

Enjoying the big picture of what we are doing, no matter what the work is, eliminates many battles. Many times, it alone will win the war. Stephen King, one of the most successful writers of our day, said that he never wrote for the money or fame. He writes because he likes to write. We may not agree with his subjects or content but we can't argue with the principle. If you don't really like where you are or what you are doing, you are a flop at all of it. Leave it and get busy doing what you like to do. Many think it is a great virtue to continue what they hate doing, complaining and griping in misery. The Bible records only one Noah, but I



somehow believe even he enjoyed preaching to hardheads and working with gopher wood.

I met a man at the small airport in Iloilo City, Philippines. We've known each other for over twenty years. He used to pastor a church but for the past five years has been in mission work. Beaming, he said, "I've never had so much fun!" I remember him being as sour and sober as a judge when he pastored. His enthusiasm is contagious now.

Recently in a small church in Kentucky where it is evident the "going is rough as a cob" the pastor stirred me with his enthusiasm and plans for the church. He will make it because his excitement will knock the rough places off the cob.

Learning to keep your eye on the major goal stirs enthusiasm. All work has unpleasant tasks. The teacher may not enjoy grading papers until 2 A.M. or hearing an irate parent gripe about Johnny's detention. But the day of graduation makes it all seem like nothing. A pastor may not enjoy the magic moments of marriage ceremonies where foolish people spend thousands of dollars on flowers, rehearsal dinners, and clothes, to only wait for all of it to be thrown down the divorce drain two years later. But looking at those who survived years of trouble and work, still sitting together in church, make a few miscues bearable. Digging postholes and stringing wire are nothing when you look at the finished fence. Several years ago I built our family a house. Sore muscles, hammered fingers, and can't hours faded into forgetfulness when I saw the satisfaction on the faces of my wife and children.

Things don't always work right. I'm writing this portion sitting in our place on the island of Panay in the Philippines. The water and power was on when I went to bed. The Flowers De Mayo fiesta music on the streets blared through my room until 2 A.M. After 2 hours of sleep, I looked forward to the cool morning shower to relieve the sweaty 90-degree heat of a miserable night. I also looked forward to my morning cup of coffee. But when I got up, the power was off. Stumbling around at 4:30 A.M. with my flashlight, I decided on a glass of water and to wait until daylight for my shower. The power came on at 5 A.M. and I got up for my shower. Guess what, no water. Now the power is on but the water is off, and no shower is in sight. Enjoyable? In a couple of hours we travel to visit a village church pastored by one of our Filipino graduates. It is in a poor place and a piggery is adjacent to the building. The pigs will be my cover! No one will ever know. The satisfaction of seeing the church and pastor make the loss of power and water seem like nothing. Far better to be here stinking like a pig and being a part of the work of God in a hard place than to be in the First Church, smelling hairspray and cologne with everyone as dead as a doornail.

I look at the Philippines and see a missionary family. I gaze towards China and see three missionary families. In Mexico I see a missionary family. I turn to

the West Coast and see a pastor. There are many others. The long four years of Bible school hours on Monday and Tuesday nights (after a regular day of pastoral duties) now seem a small price for such a reward. I look at my former church where I labored for seventeen years and see the man I had the privilege to train as its pastor. The church is going strong. Keep your eye on the big picture.

Nothing dulls enthusiasm like forgetting the victories and experiences of the past. Force yourself to remember how God is faithful to you. All of the past is part of the future. Most of what God did in the past was to prepare you for the future. Forget your failures but evaluate your mistakes and determine to not repeat them. Moses, Joshua, and Paul always reminded themselves and others of what God did in the past. When it seems nothing is happening, the ship is dead in the water, or the clock has stopped, force yourself to remember God's faithfulness to you.

Assuming you like what you are doing in the first place, all of these will help you keep enthusiasm in your work. Keep your eye on the big picture and always head toward that goal; accept the fact that if things can go wrong, they will; and above all, remind yourself of God's faithfulness when dullness or deadness creeps in. If all those fail to encourage you, load up the family and get away for a few days. When you return you may have a different attitude.

## **GOALS**

Money goals are not the goals you want to emphasize. A proper ministry produces the money for it. The problem is not to raise money. The problem is how to define, justify, set and meet the intermediate steps to reach a ministry goal. Get a man's heart and his pocketbook comes with it. If you can convince the church the need really exists, they will do it for you.

First of all define and justify the main goal, or better yet, let somebody in the congregation do it for you. For example, the church lighting is not sufficient. The lights are fifty years old and the auditorium is dark. The worst thing you can do is get up one Sunday morning and decide you are going to ramrod the project through if it harelips the devil. You muster up all the pastoral authority you can and pronounce from the pulpit that God "spoke to you about the lights." First of all, that's a lie, and second, everybody knows it. *You* might be the only one who has ever thought about it or even cares about it.

You have to be part farmer in these matters on spending money. Plow the ground, break the clods, make the rows, plant the seed, water the crop, and reap the harvest. It is not done overnight, but it will happen without a church split. This is true whether you have money in the bank or you have to take special offerings over and above the budget to pay for the lights.

Plow the ground. Make subtle remarks from time to time (not every week) about how dark the auditorium is. Magnify the need every time an opportune problem presents itself regarding the old lights. Bulbs are sometimes difficult to find or replace in old light fixtures. Next time Mr. Joe is changing the bulbs be there to help and to remind him what a difficult job he has with those old light fixtures.

If you have some older folks who need more light to read, apologize for the dim lights on the church's behalf. Get you a pulpit light because "you can't see your Bible under the old lights." Mention (in a sensitive way) from the pulpit any complaints about the lights.

Within a few months we needed a new auditorium at the "broke church" mentioned above. Along with it we needed additional restrooms and a paved parking lot but we didn't have the money in the bank to do any of it. So I started plowing and breaking down the clods of opposition.

The former pastors led the church in a massive bond program to buy land and build a new building. The week before we arrived at the church, the new building burned to the ground and the State Fire Marshall cried, "Arson!" All the deacons took a lie detector test and passed. The former pastor refused. The insurance company refused to pay and the local bondholders were asking for their money back. To say the least, it was a touchy situation.

Here's the picture. The church is \$350,000 in debt and no money is in the bank. Offerings and school tuition combined can't meet the bills, and the church's reputation is tarnished in the community. Thirty-five people have to do something about it. Somehow I believed we could do it and I enjoyed the challenge.

I placed a few conditions on the church if I was to be their pastor. I wrote out what I expected from them and required one hundred percent agreement by the deacons. I required them to allow me complete freedom with finances and preaching. What was spent and what was paid, and where I preached and how often I was gone, I would determine. This sounds like a dictatorial stance. It was. But even in that, I knew I had to be a compassionate dictator.

Some practical reasons impelled me to do this. First, I knew the finances of the church could not meet my family's needs. I could preach Bible conferences on Thursdays or Fridays or help some Christian Schools during the week. I also needed the time in other places to keep me fired up. Plus, I did not need any long protracted deacon's meetings questioning why we spent money on the obvious. I did not make the agreement *after* I took the church; it was my condition before I went. What other choice did they have? I was the only idiot who would take such a mess. They agreed and we moved. The ability to make quick, on the spot decisions without waiting to have a committee or deacon meeting, is a priority issue when you are dealing with urgent matters.

I determined to not preach on money or giving, the exact opposite of what is usually done. I preached doctrinal messages on who God is and what He does. I did not buy the latest book on raising money written by big time preachers. Instead, I read what successful business people did. I did not speak on giving money in any message for five years. I emphasized character and honesty from the pulpit and used every Bible example of how God led His people through hard times. In other words, we concentrated on developing confidence and inspiring people.

Break up the big goal into smaller, attainable ones. This doesn't mean to write them out on a board and have everyone memorize them. Have them fixed in your mind and move towards them. Adjust or scrap them as necessary, but always move towards the big picture.

I wanted a positive message in all areas. I didn't want every Sunday School class to hear all about the past church trouble every Sunday. Enough of that went on during the week. We disbanded all teen and adult classes and I taught one "Auditorium Sunday School Class." We continued the nursery and children's classes. It is hard to concentrate when little Betsy has a wet diaper or the toddlers are crawling under the chairs.

We had to put some life into the regular scheme of services. We eliminated the useless reports after Sunday School of attendance, offerings, etc. We also removed the "brag" board on the front wall listing number of Bibles brought, those on time, those present last week, and offerings. I looked at every practice and if it did not serve a real need, we cut it out. Services were streamlined. Announcements were short and sweet. We did not sing thirty minutes; we sang a maximum of three hymns. The main menu was Bible teaching in every service.

We set the Sunday evening service for 6 P.M. (an unheard of thing at that time). On Sunday mornings I preached salvation and practical Christian living messages. On Sunday evenings I got more sensational and drew chalk pictures along with a message on current events and the Bible. On Wednesday evenings I began going through a New Testament book verse by verse. After seventeen years we taught through every New Testament book from the pulpit, verse by verse, except Matthew. Almost all of the Old Testament books were taught.

We began to teach that if you are a church member, you are responsible to be at every meeting of the church. There is nothing special about Sunday morning from 11A.M. -Noon. Monday night is as important as Sunday morning. The Lord is "in His holy temple" (the body of the believer) twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. If you are a church member, you are supposed to be in the church when it meets. One of the killers of church life is to teach or give the

impression that “church worship services” on Sunday morning is more important than serving Him on Tuesday afternoon.

I brought quality preachers into the pulpit for special meetings. Men that could say something without taking all day to say it. Some preachers are jealous of “their” pulpit to the point of only having speakers who are somewhat less in ability than themselves. The preacher feels inadequate and wants to protect his image. Get the most effective speakers, men who are doing something. You and the church will benefit from it.

We had Bible conferences and groups of pastors from other places. When I set the meeting schedule, I put the least effective speakers in the lessor time slots and kept their time on a firm, short schedule. The men who were successful examples and able to communicate were scheduled for the main services.

We showed films and videos-sometimes on Sunday evenings. You have to get the holy starch out of your pants if you are going to get folk’s attention.

Set small attainable goals that move the church towards the end you wish. Be willing to change and adapt the goals to meet the people’s ability. As you reach some of those goals, the church is developing confidence in doing what they thought could never be done. Don’t be afraid to try innovative things, as long as they move you toward the main goal.

## **BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS**

On practical day by day economics, we went to each of the bondholders and personally promised them we would pay them back every cent with interest. We went to those we owed money and promised the same. Keep in mind that the church could have called it quits, declared bankruptcy, and the few members scattered to other churches in the neighborhood. To their credit they did not.

I emphasized the fact that the school was a ministry of the church, not a separate entity. We met with the teachers and promised we would make it. I set a rule for myself that only church members would work in the school. I did not run in and fire everybody that did not agree with me. As the non-members left, we hired only church members. Some of the best teachers are not college graduates, but church moms with a burden for Christian education. We only had K-6 grades but I set a goal for a full school. Enrollment when I began was around fifty and when I left seventeen years later it was K-12 with over three hundred students, thirty staff members with plenty of classrooms and a full gym. We accomplished this mostly by growing our own students and only adding grades when we could afford it. There were times when I taught classes because we had no one else or could not afford another teacher.

We also cut the “fluff.” Every item we could cut from the budget, we did. We concentrated on the essentials to keep operating and did without the other. I simplified the budget into broad categories. School tuition and church offerings were combined to meet the needs. Expenses were handled the same way. On the income and expense lines I kept them separate but in practice we could use any money in the one church checking account to pay any bill. Since the school used all the facilities every day, this was easy to justify. The school was a challenge in itself and I’ll have to include all those battles in another book.

To deal with the insurance company, we enlisted the help of the most hard-nosed, common sense businessman in the church. After several months he eventually got the insurance company to pay up and we were relieved of the bond debt. Get the right man to do the job and it will be done right.

The problem is not money in any situation. Most people waste enough money every week on junk to handle any church need. The problem is for the pastor to eliminate useless and traditional church operations, convince the people of the real needs to reach the big goal, and get them involved in meeting those needs.

## **REACH OUT TO THE CHURCH**

Above all, get involved in people’s lives outside the pulpit. Funds for the work do not come in many cases because the members do not know the pastor, and the pastor does not know them. Don’t be afraid to let them learn you put your pants on the same way they do -- one leg at a time. By the very nature of your office, you are isolated from people in the church. You must find a way to get with your membership outside the pulpit, especially the men. Talking to folks from the pulpit only is the slowest way to get anywhere.

Every few weeks we had “eating meetings”, potluck dinners on the grounds, right after the morning service. At other times we would get together and have a fish fry or a Rook tournament. My wife is an excellent cook and can put a meal for twenty on the table within thirty minutes. We had several families at our home many times for fellowship meals. Most of the time we had the whole church. Those meals and my wife’s hospitality abilities probably did more to build the church than all my preaching. Later, we had too many members to do it. When I had a good family prospect, we would have them over for dinner and my wife’s “new member” dessert. We jokingly said that once you ate it, you had to join the church. And I believe it worked. One hundred percent that ate, joined.

I went after men, not women. I tried not to offend the cooks, but a church that gets anything done must grab the men first. Get the man and you have the whole family. Keep the prissing and effeminate stuff out of the pulpit and preach hard to the men. On Sunday tell them they are lazy and sorry and no good and

then go fishing with them during the week. They will appreciate you for telling the truth and their wives will amen the subject.

I got together with the key men of the church and new prospects at every chance I could. I love to fish but hate to hunt. I froze my butt off many mornings on deer hunts just to build a church. I would stand around the fire after the hunt and listen to who heard what and where the signs were—and I tried to act interested. I love to fish and I concentrated on that. I went fishing with almost every man in the church, those that could and those that couldn't. The man who is pastoring the church right now is one of the best fishermen I've ever seen and he taught me most of what I know about bass fishing.

You need a time when you can systematically teach the Bible outside regular pulpit hours. Pastors commit a major error in neglecting this avenue or turning it over to others. *People who attend extra hours Bible teaching are a major source of ministry support for the pastor, if he is the teacher.* Allegiances are developed in a small group that meets for Bible study. There is a bond between student and teacher that can not be developed elsewhere.

Within a few weeks after my arrival we announced the beginning of Open Bible College on Monday and Tuesday evenings from 630 P. M. to 930 P.M. This enabled me to have a forum other than Sunday morning and evening. I said if we had at least seven students show up we would start it. We had eleven.

I accepted black students in the Bible school as well as the Christian day school—another no-no in the South at that time, and received some flack because of it. This was in central Alabama in the 1970's. You can imagine how popular I was with the ministerial association and the "good ol' boys" in town. Those black graduates are among my best friends today.

The Bible school enabled me to personally teach and train Sunday School teachers as well as many of the future staff. Within four years I had an excellent base of church leadership. They gradually took places of leadership in the church. This one thing is the best move we made as far as establishing a strong foundation for future growth. It was not because I realized at the time all the future benefits. This was one of many things the Lord just threw in, despite my ignorance. By the grace of God this happened,

There are several men pastoring churches in the USA and foreign countries, and seven missionaries on foreign fields who graduated from that school. Many other graduates are teaching the Bible in churches and Bible schools. The Bible school is still in operation.

Raising money is one of the more touchy issues in church work. Mine was intensified in this case due to the previous pastor. If the people can spend some time with you, it will help you to speak more sensibly from the pulpit, stay on

major issues, and seem more practical in their eyes. Personal time out of the pulpit with people will also cover any misunderstandings that arise from our many faults in preaching. Like the little girl said after a sermon, “Daddy, was he just preaching, or did he mean it?”

## **REACH OUT TO THE WORLD**

Most pastors wear themselves out and waste their time on visitation that never works. You may be a great personal soul winner, and if you are, by all means go get ‘em. But most pastors are not the best for initial contacts. They read a book on soulwinning by someone like Jack Hyles and think they can do the same. You can, if you have his personality and ability. But if you are like most of us, you had better do what you can do. Saul’s armor did not suit David. I discovered the most ineffective thing for me was general visiting on Thursday evening. I also discovered it was the most ineffective thing most of the members did. Arrive at the front door on Thursday evening and announce you are from – Baptist Church and you get a horselaugh because they know about the fights in the churchyard a few months before.

The big job I had was to get the gospel out to the town, State, and around the world. But I was up to my hips in alligators. Some things had to be taken care of right away, and no time could be wasted on unproductive efforts. We had to utilize the things that worked for us at the time. We also had to plan so as to be more effective and stable in the future.

Over the years I have tried every trick in the book to get people out on Thursday or Saturday morning visitation. Threats, meals, awards—you name it and I’ve done it. The Bible does not say the pastor is responsible to reach the community. That is every Christian’s job.

I began to emphasize to the whole church that each one was to do what he or she could to get the gospel out. At work and play, we are to be witnesses for Christ. I challenged the members to invite those they worked with or shopped with to church or special services. It worked. Soon we had relatives and acquaintances saved and regular in church. I stopped pushing Thursday night visitation. We still had it for many years and I went, but I visited “hot” prospects on Thursday night. Those parents in the school or those who visited with us the previous Sunday were my best contacts.

Examine what you are doing with regard to winning the lost and reaching new members. If it doesn’t work, drop it. Intensify what does work.

We had street, jail, and nursing home ministries. But I let those develop in a natural way. As the Lord led some to go to the jails, I encouraged them. But I did not try to put a guilt trip on those who did not. If a man had a nursing home ministry, I encouraged him but did not brow beat others to go.



## TACKLING FACILITY PROBLEMS

The church was now meeting in the old, stripped building, which they had tried to sell after the new one was built, but was unsuccessful. Thank God it did not sell. At least we had a building to meet in. We had three areas: a half-underground educational building, a small nursery and office area, and the auditorium. All of it was block with flat roofs and tied together in the most impractical way and all roofs leaked.

We were sitting on folding chairs in the auditorium block building with a flat roof. A long rain brought out the buckets at strategic places. The lay in ceiling tiles collapsed. We tried quick fix methods on the roof but it was so old, ten new leaks sprung up every time we fixed one. I must have personally put 100 gallons of tar patch on the roof before I got an idea to enlist some help. I formed an unofficial roof crew every time we had to repair the roof.

One of the most ineffective things you can do is to try the job *all by yourself*. The second most ineffective thing is to *let others do it all*. You must enlist help, but get in there with them and sweat. Every able bodied man soon spent time on the roof in blistering summer heat and the roof became the main topic of conversation. I apologized to the visitors for the buckets under their feet and listened to the members' suggestions on where "that new leak was coming from." Some of my men began to talk about devils in that roof. I encouraged it. One or two of them saw stopping the leaks once for all as a personal challenge to their manhood. All I had to do was enlist my roof crew each week and wait. The ground was plowed; most of the clumps broken down, and the seed was planted and watered--literally.

It took about a year but finally funds came in to put a sloped roof on over the flat one. Our leaking problem was fixed but now we had a new one. Attendance increased to about a hundred and more folding chairs had to be bought. Soon the old auditorium was crowded. Some of the kids sat on the floor. We bought some infernal church pews. I hate them with a passion. They are the most overpriced, ill-designed, uncomfortable seats in the world. I've often thought if I ever pastored another church, I'd have rocking theater seats with cup holders, not for grape juice but for coffee and cokes. The pews didn't solve our seating problem for long. We had to have more space, but our needs were bigger than our pocketbook.

We needed a jolt in the arm. I took a shoebox out of my daughter's closet, wrote \$22,000 on it and set it on the holy communion table Sunday morning. If we had at least twenty-two slips of folded paper with a name indicating a \$1,000 dollars on each one within two weeks, we would begin a new auditorium on top of the flat educational building. If we didn't have at least twenty-two, we would burn the paper without ever looking at the names. There were twenty-five within

two weeks. We were able to purchase the steel frame and start a new auditorium with that amount. Another step in the right direction.

When we began tearing off the old roof in preparation for the concrete floor and frame, there were about twenty church men working every afternoon until dark. I was right there with them. When we framed up the interior and ran the ductwork for the heating and AC system, I was there. The church members did the majority of every building we built and I was right in the middle of all of it. We subbed out the technical stuff but did every thing we could to cut the costs. As a pastor, I got double benefits from that work; we got the buildings done at a fraction of cost and I got to know my members in a close and personal way.

We disbanded all committees. My practice is to do what is needed and leave the rest of it alone. Why set up meetings or committees just to have something to do? We had deacons meetings when there was a need. There were no school committees, missionary circles, or flower committees. When a person came to me with an idea about something “we” needed to paint or nail, I made him chairman of the board right then and there. That stops useless or ill-timed suggestions.

## **ORGANIZATION AND STAFF**

Organization should be based on as simple structure as possible. Endless chains of command are cumbersome, confusing, and ineffective. At the beginning, we were simply pastor and church. Later, as the work grew and more organizational structure was necessary, we added what worked.

Church staff was added only after they proved themselves as church members. This kept us from a multitude of problems. I hired a couple of people from the outside over the seventeen years and paid dearly for doing it. In both instances we were faced with what we thought was a need. It is better to let the need exist than hire a stranger. Resumes and character references are not enough proof of a person in church work.

From the beginning, I had the greatest secretary a pastor could hope for. She knew how I thought and could cover any situation. Without her I seriously doubt I could have done much at all. She worked at a fraction of the pay she should have received. I tend to lose everything I should keep and my desk looks like a tornado disaster area. She is orderly and knows where everything is located. One of many talents she had was to be able to give me any church member’s telephone number without a moment’s hesitation. Her husband was a deacon in the church and both of them excelled as faithful church members.

God also gave me a great co-worker in my school principal. It was miraculous how he came to the position. He was a member when I first came to the church but after a few years his job moved him to another state. He always

had a burden for the school ministry and was a tremendous help before he left. One day he was on my heart. I needed a school principal. The school was growing and I could not keep up with the day by day responsibilities it required. So, I called him on the telephone. At the very moment I called him, he had just been in a strenuous job meeting. As a result, God worked out many things and he returned to the church as our school principal. He stayed with me for the remainder of my pastorate there and is a dear friend. We worked long and hard hours on school problems and building problems. Every building we built has our marks in and on it, from tile to two by fours. His wife is also one of the most effective elementary teachers I have ever seen. They poured their lives into the work and God has blessed them for it.

After a few years my associate pastor came. I had the honor of training him in the Bible. He worked at a regular job and was faithful in all areas before he ever became associate pastor. After accepting the position, he continued to work and support himself but made the ministry his main concern. He is one of the most faithful men and helped me for over eight years as my associate. Years before, I knew he was going to pastor some church and be successful at it. I prepared him as my "Timothy" to take the work when I got too old or left the church. I really never planned to leave the church. My major purpose was to prepare him to take the ministry if something happened to me, or at least to take a part of the work as it continued to grow. God burdened my heart for missions and then I understood what my associate was trained to do—he would continue the work of the church while we would move into mission work. He has been the pastor of the church since we left ten years ago. He has done so in an honorable and effective way. I often say he is a better pastor than I ever was, and I mean that.

God gave me some men who really took the work to heart. Time fails me to tell you of all these. Almost every man in the church gave himself to the work. A few of the men worked long hours at their job and then worked ten hours on church projects several nights a week. The handful that was critics, I ignored. As long as a critic did not affect the work in any significant way, I let him be. I won some of them and churched a few over seventeen years.

I made many mistakes and made a fool out of myself more than once. I had no inside track with God. The only thing that is perfect on this earth is the Holy Bible. To the degree any person follows it, God blesses. I was a sinner saved by grace, trying to serve the Lord and learning as I went. Most of the folks saw me as more than a pastor. They saw me as a friend who entered into their troubles with them. When I made a fool of myself, they were convinced I had not done a permanent job.

You might wonder what all of the above have to do with raising money. These are not your usual topics. Actually, they are the producers of funds. I am sure that the work we did is not perfect. I am positive it could have been done

much more effectively. But from my small understanding, it was not preaching on money that did anything. If we did it right, to the degree we did it, the funds were there to meet the need. Someone said that if you find what people want and then give it to them at a fair price, they will buy it.

Money is not produced by visualization. Money does not come to us in order to find something to do with it. Money comes because there is something we are doing that is worthwhile.