

## From the Pastor's Desk 1980-1989

### CHURCH MAINTENANCE

It is good to practice responsible and joyful stewardship through our collections, before the Lord. With thanks we receive everything from our heavenly Father. We may enjoy God's good gifts. As our covenant God bestows His covenantal blessings upon us, so we return what belongs to Him.

To write about the principle of financial stewardship is not easy for any minister. This is a difficult subject to touch upon especially when many church members have their financial worries in our inflationary times. Yet Scripture has much to say about finances.

As Christians we have undertaken together projects, ministries, such as foreign and home missions and our local expenses. How do we finance in a equitable way the ministries to which we owe commitment and response? In our denomination we have the "budget system". The budget is averaged out per family and single members. This way of presenting the needs and obligations lends itself to asking the same contribution from every member. However, this is not the intention. The budget amount may be easily contributed by one member, while it may be hard for another. Essentially it means, that one member can give more and another less to the budget, depending on income. We have a Christian duty to share faithfully the responsibility of the support of God's Kingdom. What are some of the spiritual principles for giving? I will mention just two. The first one is generosity and the other is freedom. Scripture abounds with exhortations to generosity. Generosity is not the same as charity as it is generally understood in our culture. Scriptural generosity shows a humble and thankful spirit. Believers give out of humility before their generous Lord and in thanks to their Lord (Proverbs 19:17; 2 Cor. 8:9). Paul speaks about the meaning of generosity in 2 Cor. 8:11-14. As Christians we have an obligation, yet we are exhorted to give freely.

When God told Moses to start gathering for the building of the tabernacle He told him: "You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give." In 2 Cor. Paul says that "Each man shall give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

The reward of such liberality is made clear; "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously" (vs. 6,) and "He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of the righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God" (vss, 10,11).