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Doing the Work of an Organizing Pastor

Those who take on the role of an organizing pastor are involved in a unique kind of work. As was discussed briefly in Chapter 2, an organizing pastor is a man who is specially called of God and is so intensely gripped with the significance of the doctrine of the church that, at the bidding of his presbytery, he is willing to move to a place where he is needed, and to love and serve a group of people temporarily as God builds them into a mature body of Christ and provides them with their own session and pastor.

Consider four special traits that God builds into the life of a man who serves effectively as an organizing pastor:

He has a special call. He is drawn not to a group of people he knows, nor to a place where he will necessarily stay, but to the idea of the body of Christ that God will build through his efforts. That call is so intense and specific that his confidence in it is undeterred by disappointments and discouragements.

He is gripped by the doctrine of the church. He understands the unique privilege of implementing the Bible's teaching concerning the nature and purpose of the church. He takes great joy and pleasure in watching

his labors be used as tools in God's hands to build an individual manifestation of the body of Christ.

He makes a deep commitment to a place and a people. He quickly becomes a part of the community in which the new church is being planted

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and develops a deep sense of compassion and concern for his neighbors. And he commits himself without reserve to the believers that God gathers around him, showing them the love of Christ and an example of faithfulness.

He serves without the promise of permanence. He recognizes that his work is to serve an emerging body of Christ, and he knows that when it matures, it may no longer need his ministry.

What is this work that so powerfully grips the life of an organizing pastor that he is willing to make the sacrifices necessary to see it accomplished? The remainder of this chapter is written to and for the church planter about his ministry in the mission work to which he has been called. But what follows is not so much a job description of what he must do as it is a list of concerns and values which are a part of him and which he must impress upon his people.

Set in Order What Remains

“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you” (Titus 1:5). This was the job description that Paul gave to Titus and has, in effect, become the job description of every church planter. You are to “set in order what remains.”

That is a difficult phrase to translate from the Greek, but the implication is clear. As a church planter, your job is to do whatever is necessary to overcome the present weaknesses and deficiencies of the group that prevent it from being a mature body of Christ that can stand on its own.

Bring the church to maturity

Yours will be the job and the privilege of seeing God bring about the words of Ephesians 4:11–16 in the life of the mission work He has called you to serve. You have the confidence that Christ has made you a pastor and teacher for these people, and you are watching as He equips them for the work of the ministry. Your ministry is pointed toward doing anything and everything necessary to bring them to unity in their faith and the knowledge of the Son of God. And you marvel when they no longer act like little children tossed about by the trickery of men and the perversion of doctrine, but begin to grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ. But it will not be easy. Harsh words and deceitful scheming are part of what you are to expect, because you will also be called to serve as an example of suffering in the process of their coming to the unity of the faith and to a measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Find their God-appointed leaders

Your task is to find those whom God has appointed to be the leaders of the new church. You have confidence that God has called you to do this work. You have confidence as well that if it is to be done, He will raise up those men. So your task is not to make unordained men into elders by your winsome persuasion and skillful training. Rather, it is to do anything and

everything necessary to make all the conditions right for those men to be found, challenged, and equipped, and for the people of the new church to be taught how to choose and follow them.

Care Deeply about People

If you do not care deeply for people, if you do not get along well with them generally, and if you find yourself not liking them nearly so much as you like your books and your study, then the work of church planting will not go well for you. Nothing else in Reformed ministry works very well, including preaching, if you do not care deeply for people. Chapters 1–4 of 2 Corinthians reveal a tenderhearted Apostle Paul caring deeply about the Corinthian believers and about how his harsh, corrective letters were being received by them. Your work as a church planter must be one of caring for people. Here is a minimum checklist of how to care for the people of a mission work:

Shepherd them

“I am the Good Shepherd, and I know my sheep,” says Jesus in John 10:14. As a shepherd of a mission work, it is vital that you care for and protect an expanding flock of God’s people. You must know who they are and where they are both physically and spiritually. Know what they do for a living and the location of their workplaces. Know the condition of their marriages and their family relationships. Know what provokes them and what encourages them. Know the needs of the little ones and the elderly ones in the church. Then use this shepherding knowledge to be there when they

need you, to preach in such a way that they will understand you, and to encourage wisely and rebuke at just the right moment. But be aware that some in the flock have never experienced a shepherd's care, and they may resist it until they learn that your love and watching come from your desire to please the Lord Jesus.

Visit them

Spend time with them in their homes, as Paul did with the Ephesians, teaching from house to house (Acts 20:20). Get to know them where they live. Learn their strengths, their weaknesses, their preferences, and how they relate to others. Read the Scriptures and pray with them there. Encourage them and counsel them when they face difficult decisions. Visit them when they are in the hospital, and read the Scriptures and pray with them there. Generally spend time with them to give them a clear sense of your pastoral presence and love for them.

Pray for them

Your care for the people of the mission work must go beyond your knowledge of them and your presence with them. Praying for them is an absolute pastoral necessity which cannot be neglected. It is just as much the work of a pastor as is the preparation and delivery of sermons. So develop a system to pray for each member and family of the mission work regularly. Make the system flexible enough so that new people can be added as the church grows. Also, make the time and do the praying, remembering that such unseen work that shows no immediate result is often tempting to omit from a busy schedule. And let the people of the mission work

know that you are praying for them, not as a means to win their love, but to show them a pattern for what they need for their own spiritual well-being and for the blessing of the developing church.

Assimilate them

The word *assimilation* is often identified as a Church Growth technique. But it is really a Biblical concept when linked with that of caring for the flock. When God adds to the flock, as is anticipated often in the life of a new mission work, some important Scriptural dynamics come into play. The new sheep in the flock need to know when and where their feeding will take place. They need to know how the flock behaves when danger threatens. And because they are loved by the Good Shepherd, the other sheep of the flock need to be taught to accept and trust them. Assimilation is really just the constant work of seeing to the needs of the flock as the Good Shepherd enlarges it. A wise organizing pastor knows the addition of new families often poses a threat to the stability of the flock. But his care for people extends to assimilating new families fully into the life of the mission work and using their Spirit-given gifts to bless and further mature the developing body of Christ.

Be Concerned for What Is Believed

In Galatians 1:8, Paul says, “Even if we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.” It does not appear that Paul would advocate, in the name of reaching the lost, that we should soften the message and dilute the Reformed faith to only its most basic elements in order that it not be rejected. As the orga-

nizing pastor of a mission work, you must never compromise the truths which you hold dear in order to reach people, or you will have sold your birthright. Be bold and caring at the same time. Work out the best means of articulating the whole counsel of God both to those in the community and to those in the mission work. Here are three aspects of what it means to be concerned for what is believed in the life of a mission work:

Prepare well-balanced meals

The metaphor of pastor as shepherd is usually the one employed when discussion centers around feeding the people of God. But being a wise organizing pastor sometimes means being a good mother to God's children. Mom plans the menu well in advance and spends much time preparing both tasty and well-balanced meals. You must preach and teach the whole counsel of God and not just your interest or specialty. You must remember that your goal is to bring a young body of Christ to maturity, and that requires a healthy and well-rounded diet of teaching.

Be self-consciously Reformed

As a church planter, you must make it plain from the beginning of your preaching and teaching ministry that the rich doctrinal teaching of the Reformed faith is necessary in order to understand the Bible in all its fullness. Make the Westminster Confession of Faith available to your people and refer to it in your public ministry. Help them to memorize the Shorter Catechism. Let them know that being "Reformed" is being "Biblical." Introduce them to books about the doctrines of the Reformed faith, and let them know that it is not being sectarian, divisive, or unbiblical to be identified as a Reformed Christian.

Integrate your doctrinal standards into church life

As the organizing pastor of an Orthodox Presbyterian mission work, you already have a sound tradition of doctrinal beliefs to undergird its ministry. Your people do not have to spend months or years coming to conclusions about how to interpret the Bible. The Confession of Faith and Catechisms embraced by the OPC supply a framework of Biblical understanding that allows a mission work to be unified in its doctrinal belief from its earliest days. But if they are to have the time-honored beneficial effect they were intended to have, the OPC's doctrinal standards must be integrated into the life of the church. Refer to them in your sermons. Explain them when you visit in the homes of your people. Comment on portions of them in church bulletins and newsletters. Do all you can to help your people appreciate the rich doctrinal tradition they have inherited.

Reach Out to the Unsaved

The unchurched, the pre-Christians, the unbelievers, the pagans, or however they are referred to, are not Arminians, Baptists, dispensationalists, or charismatics. With the unchurched you do not have deep theological discussions to win them over to your way of baptizing. With these you

At this location in the online manual, the text of Biblical Evangelism Today, now out of print, may be accessed and downloaded.

talk about basic truths and ultimate issues. Do you believe God can change their hearts? Can He call an unbeliever tomorrow afternoon

from darkness into light? Yes, He can! As a church planter, you should care deeply for those outside of Christ because they are candidates for

the kingdom, just as you care deeply for those who are in Christ because they are members of the kingdom. In a marvelous book published in 1954, but now out of print, entitled *Biblical Evangelism Today*, Calvin Knox Cummings and John Murray put forth just this case. More will be said about this in Chapter 5. Here are three things you should keep in mind about outreach as a church planter:

AS A CHURCH PLANTER, YOU SHOULD CARE DEEPLY FOR THOSE OUTSIDE OF CHRIST BECAUSE THEY ARE CANDIDATES FOR THE KINGDOM, JUST AS YOU CARE DEEPLY FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST BECAUSE THEY ARE MEMBERS OF THE KINGDOM.

Be in contact with the unconverted

It will be easy and tempting to spend all your time with believers. But you are also an ambassador of Christ, imploring men to be reconciled to God. That means you must intentionally and purposefully spend time with unbelievers, forming relationships with them, getting to know their needs and concerns, and earning the right to share your faith with them. You must have a plan and stick to it until it becomes a natural part of your ministry life. Your motive in this is to reach out to the unconverted out of love and concern because you are following the example and the instructions of the Lord Jesus.

Be clear that the issue of growth is faithfulness

If you are consistent and effective in spending time with unbelievers, the people of your mission work and other Christians will soon learn of it. You must be clear with yourself and with them about what you are doing. You are not doing this so that the church will have more people

in attendance at worship services. Your activity of cultivating relationships with unbelievers does not have to do primarily with the growth of the church, but with being faithful to God.

Encourage others to follow your example

Reaching out to the unsaved is not just the responsibility of a pastor or a Christian leader. It is the responsibility of every believer to bear witness to the grace of Jesus Christ. So let your example serve to encourage others to do the same. Make clear to your people that not everyone in the church is called or gifted to be an evangelist, but that is not what this is about. Show them through your example the significance of being salt and light, and stress the importance of faithfulness rather than success.

Be Concerned for How Things Are Done

In the midst of addressing problems in the church in Corinth which appear to be far outside the norm of what we have come to expect today concerning Christian conduct and ecclesiastical practice, Paul makes two astounding statements in 1 Corinthians 14: “God is not a God of disorder

ONE OF THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF REFORMED WORSHIP IS THAT WORSHIPERS MUST UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY ARE DOING AND WHY THEY ARE DOING IT.

but of peace” (verse 33), and, “Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way” (verse 40). He was advancing a Biblical attitude that spoke to the servant-leaders of the church

about their need for organizational skills and the personal character traits of integrity, propriety, and excellence. Such an attitude will be shown in today’s Reformed church by a pastor and people who give attention to the

details of public gatherings and show respect and consideration for people. As a church planter, you should be concerned about how things are done in the mission work in which you serve. Consider these aspects of public ministry which require your constant attention as an organizing pastor:

Worship decorum

One of the guiding principles of Reformed worship is that worshipers must understand what they are doing and why they are doing it. The regulative principle of worship, set forth in WCF XXI.1, requires that when God's people gather for worship, they are to be both active and knowledgeable. This manual makes no attempt to prescribe specific elements or circumstances of Reformed worship. But worship decorum is an important aspect of your work of establishing sound worship practice in a mission work. Here are three aspects of worship decorum that are important to consider from the earliest days of your work as an organizing pastor:

Plan worship carefully. From the salutation to the benediction, the parts of worship should be planned so that they fit together to form a dialogue between God and His people. Select with care the Scripture passages which will be read publicly, and practice reading them aloud. That which is sung should be chosen both for the content of the words and the appropriateness of the meter and the melody. Plan and order the petitions of your public prayers as carefully as you prepare your sermon. Make the time in your busy schedule for the planning of worship, just as you make the time for other important aspects of the conduct of your ministry.

Lead your people in worship. Knowledgeable, Reformed worship does not merely rely on an adopted order of service. The people of God should be

carefully and wisely led in their worship by the one who has taken the time to plan and prepare for what will actually be read, heard, prayed, and sung. Consider it a privilege to lead your people in the worship of God, providing appropriate rubrics to announce the parts of worship and tie them together, and keeping them informed about the purpose of each thing that is done.

Speak and act appropriately in worship. As the OPC Directory for the Public Worship of God explains, “A service of public worship is in its essence a meeting of God and His people.” So your leadership of the worship service must be done in such a way as to point the people of the mission work to God while avoiding calling attention to yourself. Your words should be chosen carefully. Grammar, voice inflection, and pronunciation all matter. Your movements and gestures should be measured and thought out beforehand. And your clothing should be chosen to reflect the care with which you have planned the worship service.

Printed materials and electronic media

With the availability of today’s computer technology and the skills of people who can make use of them, there is no excuse for poor-quality printed or electronic communications. But choosing the right words is still a difficult process, and creating an attractive format to blend with those words takes time. In a larger, more mature church, there are often gifted people who are assigned the task of ensuring that the congregation’s printed materials are produced with quality and effectiveness. But in a mission work, the job of ensuring excellence in printed materials often falls to the organizing pastor. Since it is often difficult to decide how to convey necessary information in the right way, consider these suggestions for choosing the appropriate print format:

Church bulletins announce. Keep them factual and make sure people of all ages can read them. They are rarely kept for more than a few days, so their content should be written for immediate use. But they may be the only introduction to the ministry of the mission work that newcomers receive, so their design and format are important.

Email messages provide facts. They can serve as reminders of previously announced information, or they can be used to schedule or reschedule a time and place for a meeting. But they should be used with caution and great care when conveying new information or concepts to church members or visitors.

Letters inform. They convey both facts and explanations. Keep them concise and anticipate that they will be retained for several weeks. An attractive and informative letterhead is important.

Newsletters communicate philosophy. Whether sent by surface mail or distributed electronically, they serve both to announce events and ministries and also to express what the mission work is about. Because of this dual function, they must be carefully written, usually with the help of others. Since they are often retained for a month or more, their standard formatting should contain much factual information about the church.

Brochures convey purpose. They express to interested outsiders the aims and desires of the mission work. They should be written in such a way that outsiders can comprehend how the new church's aims and desires apply to them. And they should convey enough factual information to substitute for your business card.

At this location in the online manual, samples may be found of attractive and effective printed materials from various mission works.

Websites identify. They convey both purpose and philosophy and are often used effectively both as means of communicating with the congregation and with those who are inquiring about it. A church's website often serves as the primary means by which those outside the church learn what it stands for and when and where it meets. For these reasons, a church's website must be well designed and maintained in order to make it a useful tool.

Congregational communication

In the life of a maturing body of Christ, the need for good congregational communication is important and the opportunities for misunderstanding are many. As the organizing pastor of a mission work, you must work hard to ensure that communication is done well. Keep your people informed about decisions which have been made on their behalf by others. In the early days of a mission work, many such decisions are made by the borrowed elders. You must work hard to announce them carefully, both in writing and from the pulpit, so that misunderstanding will not arise. And it makes sense to continue this kind of informative communication throughout the life of the church. You should also structure venues for your people to discuss church life with you and the borrowed elders of the mission work. It is important to be able to talk through the issues of congregational development, officer training, and church decision making in a "town hall" kind of meeting, where matters can be discussed without the pressure of conducting a business meeting. This kind of congregational communication is an important aspect of building and preserving the peace and unity of the church.

Structuring productive meetings

Gathering for worship is not the only time the people of a mission work or their elders get together. Holding meetings to discuss, review, evaluate, or decide are routine parts of life for an organizing pastor. But often those meetings produce few results and much frustration. Here are some suggestions to consider when you have responsibility for leading or moderating a meeting:

Plan meetings carefully. Think through what needs to be accomplished and what actions will probably be taken. If possible, arrange the order of business so that quick, easy, and mutually agreeable decisions can be made near the beginning of the meeting. Allow enough time for the discussion of difficult questions, but do not hold all sensitive matters until the end of the meeting. Do not try to manipulate or control the meeting, but rather assist everyone in their decision making with a good meeting plan.

Allow time for new ideas to be evaluated. If you or someone else wants to make a proposal for something new to be undertaken, allow for a brief introductory discussion of the idea, but with no provision for a decision to be made on the matter. Then schedule further discussion on the matter at a later meeting. Good ideas often take time to gain mutual acceptance, and the implications of bad ideas often take time to assess. In either case, a decision on the matter is not harmed by waiting.

Summarize the decisions made at a meeting. At the close of a meeting, it is often helpful to note what has been decided. This provides attendees with a sense of accomplishment, and it clarifies what has to be done as a result of the meeting. In session meetings, this practice also allows

all members to come together in ownership and articulation of their decisions.

Ensure that decisions are implemented. It is often assumed that the minutes are a sufficient reminder of what needs to be done as a result of the meeting. But following a meeting for which you have responsibility, it is wise to make a list of the actions taken and the decisions made. Then assign each item to yourself or to someone else for implementation.

Meeting place ambiance

The meeting place of a mission work is almost always a borrowed building. But during the time it is being used as your worship location, the room and its surroundings reflect directly on your theological commitments and your personal understanding of the nature and purpose of worship. As the organizing pastor, it will often fall to you to ensure that the functioning and the ambiance of the meeting place reflect the Reformed character of the mission work.

The room where worship is to be held should be carefully and neatly arranged. The chairs should not be crowded together, and locations

At this location in the online manual, you can find a list and descriptions of portable keyboards, sound systems, and recorded musical accompaniment CDs and tapes that mission works have found useful over the past several years.

for greeting people and displaying literature should be selected. Flowers and plants often help to make a stark facility a more hospitable location. Musical instrumentation

in a rented facility often poses a significant challenge.

There are also other considerations concerning the use of borrowed or rented facilities for worship. External signs should identify the church's

meeting location and should be large enough that their wording can be read from a distance. And there should be enough external signs so that some of them may be used to point visitors directly to the entrance of the facility. Internal signs should clearly mark all meeting areas and rooms that are being used by the mission work. If child care of some sort is offered, whether it be a full nursery or a play area for children following worship, great care must be taken that it is well supervised, that parents know where to find their children, and that caregivers are screened and formally approved for their work. Additionally, restroom facilities need to be checked for cleanliness and serviceability during their time of use by the mission work.

Encourage the Church to Grow

The natural tendency for the conscientious Reformed pastor and session is to care for the flock they already have. They have counted their hundred sheep and know them well. And precisely because so much time and energy was spent to bring the straying ones back, they are not very enthusiastic about seeing their flock double in a decade. Reformed sessions and pastors must see numerical growth as something Biblical, vital, and necessary. As the organizing pastor of a mission work, it will be your job to keep before both the elders and the people the message of Ephesians 4:16, that Christ is causing the growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. Biblical, numerical growth is something you must sincerely desire for the glory of God and for the sake of His kingdom here on earth. And you must be willing to do the extra work, to provide the extra hospitality and nurture, and to do the simple teaching that will be necessary to

encourage the church to grow. Here are three things to consider in your role as the encourager of the numerical growth of your mission work:

Carefully analyze your harvest field

Your harvest field is the circumference of that geographic area surrounding your meeting location from which interested families and persons are likely to travel to visit your public services of worship. Remember that your harvest field overlaps with the harvest fields of many Bible-believing churches which the Lord is also using to gather in what He has planted and tended. These churches are not to be seen as “the enemy” or “the competition,” but are to be accepted as part of God’s harvest plan. While never compromising the consistency of your Reformed beliefs as you do your harvest field analysis, your focus should be on identifying and working to reach three distinct types of people in your harvest field. There are the misled, who have been exposed to wrong doctrinal teaching and need to know the truth. Then there are the underfed, who have never feasted on the depth of sound Biblical teaching. And there are the spiritually dead, who, though they may have a formal relationship to a church in your community, do not have a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Overcome the internal obstacles to growth

It will also be necessary for you to dispel misconceptions and fears about numerical growth within the body of believers. Some will argue that holding consistently to the doctrines of the Reformed faith prevents the church from growing and that small size is an indication of faithfulness. But the Scriptures do not teach such a concept. Rather, 1 Corinthians 3:5 teaches that God gives the increase. The size of a

local church is God's business and not ours to determine. And others, fearing that numerical growth will result in a lack of spiritual care or pastoral attention, or suffering from a lack of desire for the growth that God may be providing, or believing that preaching is the only acceptable form of evangelism, will oppose ministries of outreach. You must state God's case clearly to those who oppose the proper, Biblical growth of the local church.

Lead the church to growth

Leading the church to growth means articulating the Bible's vision of a bountiful harvest and a growth in numbers that is caused by God. It also means articulating the Reformed faith's zeal that all people may know the truth. But all of this must be applied by making plans for the mission work to see itself as part of God's harvest storehouse, by taking concrete steps to reach out with the gospel, and by making provision for more people to become part of the church.

Manage Yourself and Your Family

The qualities and spiritual traits of an overseer expounded by Paul in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 must be abundantly evident in the life of a church planter.

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described in this passage. Nothing which this manual equips you to do as the organizing pastor of a mission work will prove effective without your

prior preparation for, and continuing devotion to, your personal development as a man of God. Here are five aspects of personal management of yourself and your family which are vital to your effectiveness as a church planter:

Conduct your ministry with integrity

In order to understand and appreciate fully this aspect of personal character development, you are wise to observe it in the lives of godly ministers who are senior to you in years and experience. No amount of discussion on the topic of integrity in the ministry can replace the personal experience of watching godly servants of Christ react to trying situations of ministry with the demonstration of the character traits of 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9. Conducting your ministry with integrity involves being a man who stands on principle, whose word can be relied on, who uses the Scriptures honorably and respectfully, and who has a clear conscience before God. And it will show itself in your ministry by your ability to shepherd the whole flock which Christ has entrusted to your care, including the weak and difficult ones.

Avoid impropriety, temptation, and sin

Following the godly example of mature Christian servants and learning to conduct your ministry with integrity also means that you will work hard to actively avoid sin and conscientiously refrain from practices that might lead you into temptation or compromise. The life of a Reformed pastor is one of constantly serving as an example to other believers. But this means that others will often assume that you have mastered sin and temptation in your own life, and you may even start to believe it yourself. The ministry is fraught with temptations and opportunities to stumble

or to fall into grievous sin. It is imperative that you guard yourself from these. For instance, when visiting, counseling, or working with a woman, give serious consideration to doing so in the presence of her husband or when accompanied by your wife or other mature members of the congregation. Be very circumspect in your ministry to children, and ensure that others are always present when you are counseling or teaching them. Say no to the various forms of pornography that are available on the Internet and in your community. Paul's words to the Romans should speak to the heart of every man who ministers the gospel amid the temptations of the twenty-first century: "Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature" (Romans 13:14).

Be a servant-leader

Jesus reminds us in Matthew 20:25–28 that our leadership style in the church is to be in contrast to the leadership style of the world—"Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant." The church needs leaders who will set an example for people to follow, show the way through difficult circumstances, take responsibility for the care of Christ's flock, and hold firmly to sound Biblical principles of conduct and ministry. As the organizing pastor, you must serve in that leadership capacity or the mission work will falter. You must take the initiative and do what needs to be done when others are in doubt or unwilling to help. You must set a godly example and lead the people of the mission work to discover and operate on the basis of sound Presbyterian polity and Reformed doctrine. And you must ensure the sound ministerial and administrative functioning of the church. But the way you deliver that leadership makes

all the difference. You must excel in service to your people, helping them to live godly and productive lives, and styling every aspect of your work as service to Christ on their behalf.

Manage your time well

The rigors of pastoral ministry are doubled for the organizing pastor. Not only do you have all the responsibilities of a pastor, but you must also care for all the necessary details of the initial structure and operation of a new church. As the organizing pastor of a mission work, the demand on your time will be significant. It will be imperative for you to keep a calendar and operate with a schedule. But being a wise manager of your time also means allowing for interruptions to alter that schedule, since it is not actually your time that you are managing, but the conduct of your ministry. Furthermore, it will be important for you to keep some form of a list of tasks and responsibilities and to incorporate them into the scheduling of your time. And finally, it will be vital for you to learn to distinguish between the things that are urgent and those that are really important as you budget the 168 hours in your ministry week.

Shepherd your family

Of all that is required of an organizing pastor, nothing is as important as utilizing all your shepherding skills in the care of your own family. You should consider your family to be your most treasured possession and their care to be your highest aim, as well as an opportunity to showcase the Reformed concept of covenant theology. If your family life is not sound and stable, your ministry and the mission work you serve

will suffer. Spend time with your wife. Talk to her. Be her friend. Enjoy her company. Spend time with your children as well. Take an interest in their personal lives as well as their spiritual development. Be the spiritual head of your home and set the tone for your family in the love of God and the conduct of life. In order to do and be all these things, it will be necessary for you to take appropriate days off and vacation time. In the work of shepherding your family, you must do anything and everything necessary to care for their spiritual and physical well-being.

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