

# Motivating Lay Pastors

MOTIVATION IS NOT MANIPULATION. JESUS MOTIVATED HIS MEN. WE CAN THINK OF MOTIVATION AS 'INSPIRING A PERSON', 'STIMULATING ONE'S SPIRIT', 'RENEWING COMMITMENT', "MOVING ONE TO ACTION", 'RESTORING VISION' OR, TO USE PAUL'S WORDS TO TIMOTHY, 'FAN INTO FLAME THE GIFT OF GOD. "WITHOUT MOTIVATION, MINISTRY ATROPHIES. ONE OF THE DUTIES OF LEADERS IS TO MOTIVATE THOSE DOING MINISTRY. THIS MONOGRAPH CITES THE NEED FOR MOTIVATION, MOVES THROUGH THE PRINCIPLES AND ON TO HOW TO DO IT.

## I. MOTIVATION IS ESSENTIAL

No one can really motivate another. However, we can stimulate that inner engine we call motivation. We who lead must learn to motivate.

What motivates you? Turns you on? Gets you going? Keeps you at it? Think of an occasion or time you were highly motivated. Then ponder:

1. What brought it on?
2. What did it feel like?
3. What did you do?
4. How long did it last?

Your answers to these pondering should uncover principles you can use in motivating others. My four answers:

1. Jerry Kirk, when he was senior pastor of College Hill Presbyterian Church, asked me about my ministry. He offered to help. He verbally affirmed me, prayed with me and followed up with a phone call a few days later to inquire further.
2. There was an emotional high because I knew that an important person whom I knew to be a man of integrity, a man whom I admired and respected, was genuinely interested in what I was doing.
3. Because of his genuine interest, I determined within myself that I would do the very best I was capable of. Therefore it was no effort to think creatively about my ministry and to spend extra energy on making it work.
4. The motivation continued because what was triggered within me by Jerry's interest

corresponded with my gifts for ministry and call. Besides this, Jerry continued to show interest by inquiring about later developments.

My specific experience can be legitimately generalized. People need to be recognized for what they are doing. They need to be affirmed in doing it. They need to know that what they are doing is important and they need to get some idea of whether what they are doing is okay.

## II. EXTRINSIC AND INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

There are two kinds of motivation: Extrinsic and Intrinsic. The following five examples of extrinsic motivation indicate that the extrinsic kind comes from an external source, that which is outside of the person to be motivated.

1. Verbal affirmation
2. Recognition at worship service, in church publications, and at group meetings.
3. Awards such as dinners, pins, gifts, certificates, a trip.
4. Reports
5. Pastoral supervision. This one–one–one contact begins extrinsically and soon moves to intrinsic because it reaches the conscience, reminds of the call of God to pastor, affirms, corrects, encourages, and results in renewed commitment. ("pastoral supervision" is developed in pages 71–78 of my book, *Can The Pastor Do It Alone?*).

Intrinsic motivation comes from within a person. Again, we can do some things that will stimulate it, but only if what we do "clicks" within that person.

Dr. Frederick Herzberg believes that it is the ministry itself that motivates people. He has identified five intrinsic motivational factors:

1. A sense of achievement,
2. Recognition for work done,
3. A feeling of importance and interest in the work itself,
4. An opportunity to take responsibility, and
5. An experience of growth and development.

Marlene Wilson gives eight reasons why people "volunteer." We can assume that if these reasons are being adequately fulfilled people will be adequately motivated. Our role is to do what we can to fulfill them.

1. They want to be needed.

2. They want to help others and make a difference.
3. They want to learn new skills or use skills they already have.
4. They want to belong to a caring community and feel accepted as members.
5. They want self-esteem and affirmation.
6. They want to grow in their faith and share their God-given gifts.
7. They want to support causes they believe in.
8. They want to keep from being lonely.

Commitment to Jesus Christ is the ultimate motivation. As we help to deepen that commitment we are helping to motivate the person. Again, this is intrinsic.

Offering opportunities to grow in ministry expertise will motivate people. Such offerings say that the ministry is important and the person is important. Growth in caring skills effectively feeds the ego from within in a healthy way.

Since ministry itself is a gift and not a work looking for a reward, the chief intrinsic motivation may be gratitude for being redeemed and given the privilege of ministering. When the only reward sought is the acceptance of the ministry by God as an offering of praise and thanksgiving, true intrinsic motivation is taking place. Ministry to a Christian is like a true lover buying a ring for a loved one. His only concern is the unworthiness of the gift. Acceptance thrills the giver.

Ministering with the knowledge of Christ's imminent return is a strong intrinsic motivation. Jesus' parable in Matthew 25: 14-30 teaches this. All three servants had these four things in common:

1. The charge to care for "his property."
  - They were given the talents with which to work.
  - The talents were given according to their ability.

NOTE: Our charge is found in I Peter 5:2, "Tend the flock of God."
2. They were to determine how they cared.
  - The quality, intensity, and variety was determined by them. They could give it their all or do nothing.

NOTE: Whatever our method, we are to do it willingly, eagerly, and exemplary, (I Peter 5:1-4). we make the decision to either give it all we've got, do just enough to get by, or do nothing.
3. The fact of his return was known
  - He would be gone for an unknown length of time.
  - The day of "settling" was inevitable.

-Diligence in activity was stimulated by keeping his return in mind.

-Giving account provided motivation.

\* "Well done"

\* "You should have"

NOTE: "When the chief shepherd appears....."(I Peter 5:4). We will give account of the ministry He gave us.

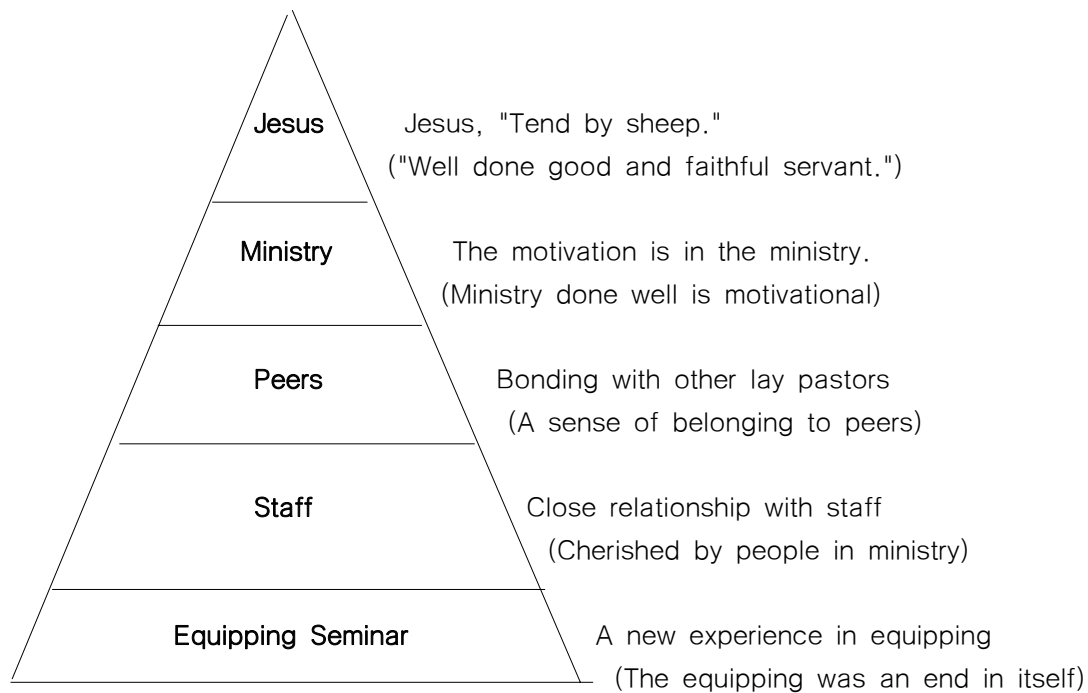
4. They were actively engaged/ Two in "trading." one in "hiding."
  - a. Those "trading,"being faithful in caring for the master's property, had the joy of seeing increase. They traded in anticipation of the Master's return.
  - b. The one "hiding" his talent was afraid. The responsibility was too awesome. By "hiding" rather than "trading" he got busy doing other things of his own choosing, forgetting that the Master would return to "settle accounts" with them.

NOTE: While pastoring, have fun, get together, enjoy the results, remain faithful, the accountable, endure the hardships.

Our conclusion is that the most effective motivation for the mature christian is intrinsic. He or she does it for the joy of doing it, knowing that it is an assignment from the Master. He or she rightfully anticipates the words, "Well done good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of your Master." Anything we can do to generate this consciousness will be motivational.

### III. SOME PRINCIPLES OF MOTIVATION

1. It takes one kind of motivation to bring one into a ministry and another kind for them to continue in the ministry.
2. Motivation is like bodily energy. It must be fueled regularly and renewed frequently.
3. Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" has people moving through four levels of human need to get to the fifth and highest, self actualization. In a similar way Lay Pastors have a "Hierarchy of motivations. " They move through four levels to get to the fifth and highest, Jesus. Each level holds its own motivational magnetism, but once it has motivated, it loses some of its magnetism. The ultimate motivation is Jesus. When a Lay Pastor is motivated by him, he or she is motivated for life, or at least as long as the Lay Pastor keeps close to him. see diagram on the next page.



NOTE; To the extent these needs are fulfilled the person will be strongly or weakly motivated.

4. Nothing can motivate the person who is doing something he or she is not gifted for or not interested in doing.
5. Marlene Wilson identifies three distinct motives that affect people's ministry in her book, *How to Mobilize church Volunteers*.
  - a. The Need for Achievement – More goal oriented than task oriented. Good at organizing new programs and solving interest, unless they establish new goals.
  - b. The Need for Affiliation – These are the nurturing and caring people. They will most enjoy those tasks they can do with other people. They are fulfilled by calling on others, greeting and listening.
  - c. The Need for power – They are the movers and shakers of a group. They are able to influence others. We must, however, distinguish between "personal power people" and "social power people."
    - (1) "Personal power people" – Those who want positions of influence for their own personal gain and status and who often diminish others in the process. There is no place for this kind of power in Christian ministry

- (2) "Social power people" – Those who use their power on behalf of others and in the process build the confidence and self worth of those they lead. This is the good kind of power.

#### IV. PEOPLE TELL THAT WILL MOTIVATE THEM

After teaching this unit on motivation at one of our Lay Pastors Equipping seminars at Hope Presbyterian Church, the teacher had the people write their responses to this question: "What Do I Need to Keep Me In The Ministry?" We discovered eight motivational categories in their answers. You can read some of their choice answers that we classified under these eight headings:

##### **1. RESPONSE**

"I need to get response from people, not necessarily positive."

"I need to experience a bonding of my life with theirs."

"To have a positive experiences with those I pastor, seeing a friendship between me and them growing."

"To be needed by my people."

"Evidence that marginal believers are responding to Jesus through my efforts."

"Seeing acceptance from most of the people I pastor."

"I need at least some of the flock to say or act as if I had made a difference in their lives."

"I need to feel that I am accomplishing something when I meet with the people so that all is not wasted or so that I am not a bother to them."

"Some positive feedback that my calls are important in some way."

"Evidence of meaningful results and sense of accomplishment."

##### **2. SUPPORT**

"I will need support and encouragement from other Lay Pastors."

"Someone with whom I can share how it is going – to share ideas on a monthly basis."

"Someone praying for me on a regular basis as I minister."

"Support and affirmation from others; my family, other lay pastors and Christian friends."

"Finely tuned understanding with Mel, Debbie(our ministry leader) and other leaders about my role, style of pastoring, etc."

"Support of the pastors and staff."

"I would like a superior to make an assessment of the work I do."

### **3. CALL**

"I need to know that I am in God's will, doing His work."

"That I feel called by God."

"Direction from God in selecting this ministry."

"Feeling of God's presence in stepping out in faith to do this ministry."

"Inner peace and power – led by the spirit."

"A feeling of satisfaction instilled in me by the Holy Spirit."

"A feeling that I am where God wants me to be."

"Re-assurance from the Lord that I am doing His will."

"A feeling that the gifts the Lord has given me are being used for Him in this ministry."

### **4. SIGNIFICANCE**

"I need to feel that I am doing something worthwhile – that it is making a difference."

"I would like to share my caring with a few people from the church."

"Affirmation that I'm doing what the Lord wants me to do – that I can make a difference."

"Remember that only what is done in love for Christ and others gives a lasting glow to life."

"The assurance that I can make a difference in someone's life – be it a smile, phone call or visit."

"I may not be able to judge success but I have to feel good about it for myself."

"A feeling of contributing."

### **5. HEALTH AND TIME**

"More time. Prayer that I am capable of doing this."

"Good health so that I have the time to give to it."

"Finding time to effectively lay pastor."

"Health (mine)."

### **6. FURTHER EQUIPPING**

"Further equipping reinforcement is very essential to keep abreast of people's changing needs."

"Continued training as needed."

"Continuing to grow."

## 7. COMMITMENT

"A willing spirit."

"A commitment to the Lord and dependence on the Holy Spirit."

"Continued awareness of my commitment."

## 8. ADMINISTRATION

"No 'busy work' or unnecessary administrative – minimum of written reports."

Hearing what people wrote, telling what it will take to keep them in the ministry, makes it possible for us to program our quarterly Lay Pastors meetings in a way that will freshen their vision, renew their commitment and be authentically re-motivated. Remember, it takes one kind of motivation to get people into the ministry and another to keep them alive to it.

Also, when monthly reports or the "grapevine" indicate that a lay pastor's ministry activity is declining or interest is sagging, reading through these statements and the categories will help us know what action to take or what to say that will trigger something within them that in turn will generate intrinsic motivation.

A good use of these statements would be to give them to your Ministry Leadership Group, or whoever it is that has ownership of the ministry. After familiarizing themselves with them, have a brain-storming session on "What we can do to motivate our lay pastors?" Sort out the usable ones and go to work.

## V. JESUS' MOTIVATION

1. His call. He had a deep sense of fulfilling the call of his Father.  
"I came to do my Father's will." Because of this he was able to stand alone when necessary, when all his men forsook him. (Matt. 26:56).
2. His contact. He spent time with his father in prayer. (Matt.14: 23, Mark 6: 46, 47; Luke 6: 12; John 6: 15).
3. His gift. He had the gift of mercy. His feelings of compassion and love for people compelled him to minister to them. Their needs did something to him that released his love and energy. His compassion for them prompted him to heal them and to feed them.



## VI. HOW JESUS MOTIVATED HIS MEN

1. **He spent time with them**.....on the lake, fishing, traveling, etc. He shared his life with them. He told them they were special.
2. **He led them.** He was a true leader. A leader is in an initiating role.  
Matt. 4: 9, "Follow me and I will make you....."
3. **He loved them.** They knew it. (John 13: 34)
4. **He modeled integrity.** People will be motivated by such a leader giving personal attention to them. He lived what he taught. He loved as he said he did. They knew it.
5. **He partied with them at Cana.** (John 12). His involvement in their lives was not always "religious."
6. **He let them know how they stood with him** and whether their ministries were okay. He affirmed them and corrected them.
  - a. To Peter: "Blessed are you....." (Matt. 16: 17).
  - b. To Peter: "You are not on my side." (Matt. 16: 23).
  - c. He rebuked those who wanted to call fire down heaven. (Luke 9: 54-55).
7. **He modeled commitment and enthusiasm** for what he was doing. (Matt. 9: 35-38).
8. **He gave them authority** (Matt. 10:1ff). This means he "He unleashed them, and sent them out on their own.
9. **He supported them** when they were criticized (Matt. 12: 1-8, 15: 1-3). They transgressed a minor law. Jesus did not, but he defended his disciples. He was loyal to them. He was a true friend.
10. **He let them fail.** He did not control their behavior and faith.  
Examples: Peter walking on the water (Matt. 14: 28-31), and Judas betraying him (Matt 26 : 14, 16, 50).
11. **He took them with him** on great experiences (Matt. 17: 13).