

A Pastor's Management of Time

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As the king passed by, the prophet called out to him, "Your servant went into the thick of the battle, and someone came to me with a captive and said, 'Guard this man. If he is missing, it will be your life for his life, or you must pay a talent of silver.' While your servant was busy here and there, the man disappeared."

"That is your sentence," the king of Israel said. "You have pronounced it yourself."

The prophet in this lesson for King Ahab was using a well-known picture. A servant using his time. It wasn't that the servant wasn't "doing." He said he "was busy here and there." But he wasn't busy about what he was supposed to be doing. He didn't accomplish his goal. He didn't guard the prisoner. In fact, his numerous activities were the cause of his failure.

Will Rogers is quoted as having said, "It's not so much what you do each day - it's what you get done that counts." As workers in our Lord's kingdom, we know that there is always much to do. There is so much that we can't possibly get to it all at once. Scripture directs us to "make the most of every opportunity" (Eph 5:16; Col 4:5). It is important to use time as a precious commodity.

There all of us are alike. We each have been given the same 60 minutes in an hour, 24 hours in a day, 7 days a week, and 52 weeks in a year. Since time can't be stored, nor lengthened (save a special miracle, cf. Joshua and Hezekiah) management is not learning how to save time or get more of it. The secret is how to use it wisely.

There are two reasons for conference papers to be assigned. Either the man is an expert in the particular area or the officers deemed it necessary that the man needed to shape up in a certain area, so the paper was assigned. I assumed that the latter is the case here. Really I was quite surprised to be assigned one on time management because I'm by no means an expert. Sometimes negative examples can be a good learning tool. We also learn when we learn how not to do something.

One of the suggestions the time management books make is to take a one or two week inventory of your present activities. Make a chart for each day with ten slots and write down what you do. You can find by looking over the sheet how you spend your time.

Leslie B. Flynn in the book "How To Save Time In the Ministry" uses an example of Dr. Walter Wilson. He divided the day into quarter hour segments. He wrote down everything he did. After he did this he asked three questions: (1) Did this glorify God? (2) Did this bring a blessing to others? (3) Did this prove profitable to me?

"I scratched off the time if it did not fit these tests. When I finished 55 per cent of my time - over half - did not measure up. At the time I was operating a tent factory with two hundred employees, pastoring Central Bible Church with two hundred members, broadcasting daily at 7:00 a.m., and raising a family of eight children. When I saw this record, I completely changed my way of living and found I could do three men's work and not be a bit more tired. This inventory altered the course of my life."

Pythagoras said, "Let not sleep fall upon thy eyes till thou hast thrice reviewed the transactions of the past day. What have I done? What have I left undone?" Every so often a pastor ought to take account of his schedule. Keeping record of your time can be as interesting as your bowling or golfing score. Knowing how you spend your time can help make you aware of things that need change, or areas where you are doing things about right. As you take your own inventory I would like you to look into three areas. This is also the three parts of the paper, Spiritual Time, Family and/or Personal Time, and Work Time.

Spiritual Time

I have placed this one first because I consider this the most important. We all have our old Adams and busy schedules, so this one can get short-changed. This may seem to be inconsistent with our calling. After all we are in church at least one hour per week. There are also the other times we conduct Bible classes, information classes, instruction classes, and devotions for meetings and shut-ins. So at least officially we do have contact with the Word.

By spiritual time I mean more than just getting ready for the next service or class. It shows itself in two areas. Study time and prayer.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, ...” (Col 3:16a) the Apostle Paul instructs us as Christians. As fellow Christians our continuing in the Word is not to be a haphazard or casual exercise, Paul says it should “dwell” in our hearts, it should take up residence there. And not as a pauper guest, but it is to be there “richly.” Iver Johnson in his “Growing Trees” confirmation course wrote, “A grandmother who wanted her grandson to study and learn the Bible well used to tell him: ‘Beware of the man with one book.’ This was her way of reminding him that it was not very easy to fool or confuse someone who was an expert in some single subject.” This is not only a good proverb for a young Christian, it is good for all of us.

At our last conference Pastor Roland Zimmermann presented an excellent summary of the pastor’s office by looking at I Timothy 3. One of the requirements for being a pastor is “able to teach.” The root word of “διδασκτικόν” had the dual meaning of “to teach” and “to learn.” This root denotes teaching or instructing in the widest sense, whether the point is impacting information, the passing on of knowledge, or the acquiring of skills. So the word not only refers to the knowledge possessed by the instructor, but also to the insight gained by the person instructed. Being able to teach presupposes that the teacher is one who is able to learn himself before he passes his learning on to others.

In 1 Timothy 4:13, Paul encourages Timothy, “Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.” The term translated “public reading” is always used in the New Testament in regard to the use of the Scriptures in the worship service, in Luke 4:16-30, Jesus stood up to read in the synagogue. But he didn’t just read. The theme of his sermon is given: “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” From Jesus’ action we see that an explanation and application accompanied the reading of the Scriptures. When Paul visited Pisidian Antioch he attended the synagogue. After the reading of the Law and the Prophets Paul was invited to give “a message of encouragement for the people.” (Ac 13:15) So Paul is here encouraging Timothy to devote himself to the public reading of Scripture. He is not just asking him to do a good job reading on Sunday. He is also to be an individual who has learned the message of the Gospel from his own study of that Word. Having learned the message himself he is to devote himself “to preaching and to teaching.” He is to share that message with others. This is to be an ongoing, continuing action, for Paul uses the present imperative. As long as we ministers live, we are to live as students of God’s Word.

Remember, like Timothy we have been entrusted with the ministry of the Word. We are to pay particular attention to this word. Paul exhorts. “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth” (2 Tm 2:15).

On this verse Prof. Irwin Habek commented: “Now Paul encourages him to put forth every effort to present himself to God as one who has passed the test of measuring up to his responsibility. The believer’s response to the mercy which the Lord has shown him is to dedicate himself entirely to the Lord (Ro 12:1). The picture in δόκιμον ”approved” is that of coins which have been tested and found not to be counterfeit. So Timothy was to show that there was no shame about his dedication but that it was genuine. Then Paul uses another picture. If a worker does a shoddy job and his superior discovers it, the worker will have to be ashamed. But if he does a good job, he does not have to be ashamed of it. So Timothy is encouraged to do a good job in his ministry. His job was to divide the word of the truth correctly. The root in ὀρθοτομοῦντα is τέμνω, to cut. While some take this to mean to handle correctly in general, a more vivid application results if we stick with the root meaning. So much is contained in the Word that is impossible to use all of it in a given situation. It takes

skill to determine which portion of the Word is to be applied to people in the changing circumstances of life. So to look upon this passage as for calling for the proper distinction between law and gospel is warranted. When we are dealing with a penitent sinner we cut out the gospel from the Word and apply it. If we are dealing with an impenitent sinner, however, we shall pick out some portion of the law and use that. Only he who knows how to make the distinction does not need to be ashamed. We notice that Paul speaks of the Word as a unit. Those who say that it is up to the theological expert to determine what in the Bible is God's Word and what is of purely human origin are wrong. The entire Bible is the word of the truth. We are not to edit the Bible and cull out what in our estimation is not true and call only that which remains the truth. Rather, we are to say with our Lord Jesus: 'Your word is truth' (Jn 17:17)."

We should be careful to keep our study time as "spiritual time." Time that we are spending with our Lord. There in His Word he comes to us. He comes to us with his strength, his forgiveness and love. Applying that Word of Life first to our own hearts and situation we then can proceed with our ministry. Paul again encourages, "Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Tm 3:14,15). Peter stated: "If anyone speaks, he should do so as one speaking the very words of God" (1 Pe 4: 11). That is an awesome responsibility. Year after year, week after week, day after day we are to proclaim and apply that Word.

Luther: "Therefore the call is: Watch, study, *attende lectioni* (attend to reading), In truth, you cannot read too much in Scripture; and what you read you cannot read too carefully, and what you read carefully you cannot understand too well, and what you understand well you cannot teach too well, and what you teach well you cannot live too well. *Experto crede Ruperto* (Believe a man who has found this out). It is the devil, it is the world, it is our flesh that are raging and raving against us. Therefore, dear sirs and brethren, pastors and preachers, pray, read, study, be diligent. Truly, this evil, shameful time is not the season for being lazy, for sleeping and snoring. Use the gift that has been entrusted to you, and reveal the mystery of Christ ("What Luther Says" Plass #3547)

As under-shepherds, we should give our attention to the example set by Jesus, the Good Shepherd, The gospel illustrates that Jesus practiced a strong study of God's Word. He repeatedly chided the scribes and Pharisees for not knowing what the Word said. (Mk 12:24; Mt 12:3,5; 9:12; 5:18 just to list a few.) He chided them for making the legal system they superimposed on the Law making them insensitive to the living Word of God. They honored God with their lips, but their hearts were far from him. Without the proper time spent in studying that Word-of God, our ministry will be weak and anemic at best.

There is another way in which we should follow the Great Shepherd. Jesus set an example of dedication to prayer. Prayer was an integral part of his life. The gospel again shows how Jesus got up early in the morning and went to a solitary place to pray (Mk 1:35). He went apart on the mountain in the evening and prayed (Mk 6:46). Luke says that Jesus did this often (5:10), even spending entire evenings in prayer (6:12). Remember the Garden of Gethsemane. Think of how Jesus prayed for his Church of all time in John 1:7, Jesus did not consider time spent in prayer as a waste of time. This was a vital link to his Father. He taught us to realize the same. In fact Scripture teaches that Jesus still intercedes for us (He 7:25).

Notice in Acts 6:4 that this was also part of the ministry that the apostles didn't want to neglect. The seven men were chosen to help with the administration of the daily distribution of food so that they could give their "attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

Moses, Abraham, Jacob, Samuel, David are good examples of men who prayed. They realized the source from where their help would come. They were not disappointed. The Lord indeed answered their prayers in his way and his time. Paul not only encouraged us to "pray continually" (1 Th 5:17), he also told us: "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for everyone" (1 Tm 2.1).

A very important part of our spiritual time is prayer. This is a must. Prayer is, as Hymn 454 v, 5 states; "the Christian's vital breath, The Christian's native air, ... He enters heaven with prayer." The Holy Spirit perfects our prayers. We come before the throne of God. I wonder how often James' words aren't proven true in

our ministries, “You do not have, because you do not ask God” (Ja 4:2). I don’t believe Jesus’ promises concerning prayer have been changed. The Bible still says, “The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective” (Ja 5:16). Righteous in the blood of Christ let us continue to spend our time wisely in prayer.

Personal and/or Family Time

Enjoying the work of the ministry, much of what I have mentioned in the first part applies here. Since we are ministers of his Word, we need to spend our time with him in prayer and the study of his Word. We should never lose our zeal to be faithful to him who was so faithful to us in giving himself for us on the cross. Paul told Timothy: “For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands” (2 Tm 1:6). We all know the picture of the blacksmith. At times his bed of coals is black and shows no signs of fire. Then he uses his bellows to stir up the smoldering coals until they burn brightly. He also uses his bellows to keep them glowing brightly while in use. Paul encouraged Timothy to keep the fire of zeal glowing. Like Timothy we also have experienced the laying on of hands when we were ordained or installed. We experienced an added sense of dedication and humble determination to serve faithfully and well.

There is no question that the ministry carries with it a certain amount of stress. At times the stress can feel truly oppressive. That is also why it is good stewardship of time to take a vacation. It is important to be able to leave. Here too, we can follow the example of our Lord, who regularly took his disciples away. He also went away to pray. Some personal time should also be spiritual time.

Another good way to handle stress is regular exercise. I used to be a strong advocate of keeping the KJV for a rather selfish reason. The passage in 1 Timothy 4:8 is so comforting in the KJV. “For bodily exercise profiteth little. That was my response to classmates and roommates while in school who invited me to come along to “jog.” I could never see any value in it. I always used to say, “Did you ever see a happy jogger?”

But a few years ago I went to Israel. One thing really impressed me. Jesus and the disciples had to have been in very good physical shape. When he went out with his disciples from village to village, they didn’t jump into their four-wheeled super chariot and speed down the expressway. They WALKED! Israel also has very little level ground. It is always either up hill or down hill. When Paul left on his missionary journeys, he wasn’t accompanied to the airport by his friends. Most of the time he used the two legs that God had provided him. They carried him from town to town, province to province. Now when a man who walked practically everywhere he went says, “Bodily exercise profiteth little” we have to be honest and realize that this is not an excuse to stay out of shape. Besides the KJV is just reflecting its old English here. The Greek doesn’t say that bodily exercise is no good. It says that it has some value. I think if Paul and the Twelve are aware of our situation they would say that we American pastors are pretty soft. Sometimes the hardest physical thing we do is open those twist-off beer bottles. We do have to admit that we do not have a very physical occupation.

Physical exercise is of some value. It vitalizes the body. It helps the circulation and digestion. It helps make you feel better (once you get over the original soreness). While you are exercising there are a lot of things that you can think over. Besides it also takes you away from the phone for a little while. You can come back actually physically and mentally refreshed. So when you set up your time schedule do take time to exercise. The usual suggestion right now is 20-30 minutes of cardiovascular exercise three times a week, with 20-30 minutes of stretching and toning exercises. If you want to lose weight while exercising you have to increase the number of days. Be careful, the doctors warn of trying to do too much in too little time Ease into a regular routine. You will be glad you did. So will our WELS Benefit Plans Office, if you do it correctly. .

It is also important to have someone to whom and with whom you can talk. Your circuit pastor is certainly available. One thing you can be sure of, what you tell your circuit pastor won’t go any farther. It is also helpful to socialize and visit with your brothers in the ministry. Being able to talk to someone who understands is good. But in our area the neighboring WELS churches are often considered part of the “competition.” The Monday morning bowling league is great for just getting together. If you enjoy golf, there are many around who also do.

Another possibility is membership in outside organizations. Remember that these organizations are also volunteer organizations. Membership in them will demand time. In certain areas they can make for good relations, This is a suggestion that is given by the mission board to those men working under the new mode You can decide if it would benefit you or your congregation.

One Monday morning, a pastor was looking through the visitor cards, and noticed that a member of the congregation indicated she was in need of a visit from the minister. That member was his wife. If there is any flaw in much of the time management material, it is that it often teaches how to succeed at the office, but it totally ignores the rest of the family.

If the Lord has blessed you with a wife and also added to the blessing by giving children, you also then have been given a responsibility toward them. Don't ignore them. With gifts come responsibilities. We teach our congregation that with material blessings their offerings should be in accord with the way God has blessed. But it isn't only in offerings that we teach them responsibility. We also are to set an example. If your family suffers because you have ignored them, changes should be made. If you feel family claims are unfounded, then you have to talk to them about it. Don't fail to work it out. Communication is vitally important. If you feel you can't do it alone, seek help.

When you take your inventory of time, see what part of the day you spend with your wife and children. It is a tragic fact of our society, there are many children who never see their parents. Many of them, it seems, know their parents only as a source of quick and easy cash. "Give 'em a twenty and let 'em go where they want," seems to be the philosophy of many parents today. Because you are a sinner who is married to another sinner, with whom you have also begotten sinners, the time you spend with your family won't always be "picture perfect." But don't let the devil succeed in driving a wedge between you and your family. He wants every family to break up. Yours is not immune to that goal of his. Work demands are great, especially in your congregation. But I have seen too many make the excuse of work an easy out. That way they don't have to face up to their own shortcomings (self-perceived or real) in their relations to their family. I don't think pastors are immune to that type of cop-out.

A time inventory can also be useful in pointing out the amount of hours spent in work, and the things that remain to be done to the church council. It makes a good support for getting extra help. Congregations generally tend to get a second pastor way too late. Then there are those congregations which have two pastors, yet still require that both be at all the meetings. That is poor stewardship of time. In scheduling, remember that the two middle letters of the he alphabet are "N - O." Also recall your Hebrew training. The important verses are the middle ones of a book, as in John 19:25,26.

Leslie Flynn tells the story of a noted concert artist who was asked the secret of her success. Her reply was striking, "Planned neglect." She explained that when she just began the study of the violin, so many things demanded her attention that after caring for such matters she would return to her music. But with the violin getting the tail end of her time, she was getting nowhere fast. So one day she made a decision. She determined to reverse the whole procedure. In her words, "I deliberately planned to neglect everything else until my practice period was completed. That program of planned neglect accounts for my success."

If we lose sight of our goal and what we want to accomplish, we often become guilty of focusing our attention on activity. That then becomes our goal. We feel guilty if we aren't spending all our time doing the Lord's work. There is so much to be done. Remember, however, the Lord hasn't made you individually responsible for ALL of it.

Priorities have to be set. Assign some of the things if possible. Our family shouldn't be delegated to another. That is a personal gift from the Lord. But the family shouldn't be an excuse for laziness. Time scheduling makes us aware, so we can strike a "golden balance."

Personal time and family time can occasionally be combined. If your closest friend also happens to be your wife, you are a truly blessed individual. If you don't think she is, try to make her such. There are things of course that you won't be able to tell her. There are other things that you shouldn't lay on her. Cultivate your friendship. Share with her your hopes and goals. Also listen to hers. You listen to anyone else that comes to

you. Don't exclude your wife. Wives can be a real benefit also for the ministry. Prof. Blume always used to advise to marry one with "hair on her teeth." Sometimes that is deflating for the ego. At times that is needed. A friendship that is cultivated with your wife will make your home a place as God has intended it to be: a place where the man and the wife are one flesh.

Don't hesitate to take personal time, if you don't abuse it. It helps to get away and get a fresh start. You will also help your over all performance in the kingdom work if you do it well refreshed, with a positive attitude and renewed zeal. Keep fanning into flame the gift of God.

Work Time

Now that I've already scheduled 26 hours of things into a 24-hour day, let's consider the last section, work time.

Paul advises, "Be very careful, then, how you live - not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity" (Eph 5:15-16). The Christian worker realizes that time is one of his most valuable resources. We must be busy "before the night comes." one way to get more done is to identify your time robbers and work at eliminating them. Some of the most frequently listed culprits are:

- Procrastination
- Poor personal planning and scheduling
- Interruptions by people without appointments
- Poor delegation
- Poor use of the telephone
- Reading junk mail
- Lack of concern for good time management
- Lack of clear priorities

If you do the time inventory, you will find your time robbers. Trying to eliminate time robbers can be frustrating. Wasting time doesn't just happen; it is allowed to occur. This involves changing some well-established habits. It means change. You know us WELS. We don't change. But in some things it is absolutely wrong not to change. Ask yourself "Are you afraid to make a schedule because you are afraid you will not be able to follow it?"

The time management outline that I have attached to this paper by Pastor James Radloff, the South Central District Mission Counselor, has some very helpful hints. Use long-range planning. It saves time. It will help eliminate the "fireman" syndrome. It is called that because most of the time pastors feel like they are like firemen running from this crisis to the next and not ever getting anything accomplished.

One area where planning works well is in setting up the services. You know that each Sunday you are going to have to preach. I found if you follow a planned schedule you won't have to worry from week to week what you will preach on next. Follow a pericope for a time. Then alternate it with some themes. One on the Christian family is always popular. By choosing your texts ahead you also will be able to set up your service plan and pick out your hymns. When I just got to Trinity the organist almost dropped her teeth when I handed her the hymns for the next six months of services, You'd be surprised what good relations that makes with the organist(s) and choir director(s) of the congregation if you let them know in advance what is coming. It saves time for the church secretary. The bulletin can be done a lot sooner. It also takes the pressure off you. If you don't practice this type of scheduling yet, try it. You'll find it really works well.

There are other ways in which we can help eliminate time robbers. Maybe if "time" allows during the discussion of this paper, you can mention some things that work well for you.

A businessman in one of my former congregations had these letters in a frame PITTOT. They stood for Procrastination Is The Thief Of Time. It is easy for us as workers in the kingdom to "put off" the work. We get a questionnaire from synod. There are a number of ways to handle it. Fill it out immediately, or put it on the pile of other unanswered letters. If you do the first it is all taken care of. You handled it the first time. Everything was fresh in your mind, you didn't have to re-read it later. I found that if I put it in the "some day

pile” I usually miss the deadline. Some things that break into the schedule have to or should be handled immediately. When you make up your schedule, allow for mail time. The mailman usually comes at a regular time. Schedule it in when convenient. Some of the mail can also be delegated. There seems to be a compounding of junk mail. Another way to save time is to keep your correspondence short and to the point. It also saves time for the person receiving the mail.

Long-range planning also works well in the congregational work in general. Take time to look at what some needs are. When you have set the goal, make sure you allow plenty of time to get it accomplished. Rome wasn't built in a day. It is not only WELS clergy that resist change. Our laymen often like things “just the way they are.” Here again you should take time to think about it.

When you keep banging your nose up against a stone wall, you can continue doing that and get used to the taste of your own blood or you can run away or you can back off and start observing the situation and ask yourself sensible questions about the stone wall and your relationship to it. I think you will find that God has created you as a marvelous creature. You will usually be able to figure out a more creative way of handling the stone wall. You can with God's help and a little help from your friends. You also will use less energy doing it that way. If you feel more at ease, chances are the pressures just won't get to you.

“Coping With Clergy Burnout” by G. Lloyd Rediger is a useful book filled with some practical advice. He uses what he calls the AIM model. It is a three-word guide for management. The letter A always stands for AWARE. The letter M always stands for MANAGE. The middle letter is the variable word adapted to each specific problem issue. He used the word AIM because it implied movement and action.

He has one chapter entitled “Try Smarter, not Harder.” One point he makes in that section is well worth repeating here. It is applying the well-known passage of Jesus from Matthew 11:28-30, “Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

He writes:

First, “Come unto me....” The answer to our struggle is not “out there” nor in more intense worship of the myth. The answer is in God. That seems nice and theological but what does it mean? We don't know what it means until we interrupt the frenzied pursuit of the myth and turn our focus upon God.

Second, “all ye that labor and are heavy laden.” You got it, God—that's me. But I'm trying so hard for your sake! All this effort is for that noble calling we name ministry. Or is it?

Third, “I will give you rest.” That sounds mighty attractive, God. But what do I do with all my guilt feelings and anxiety about unfinished work if I rest? I guess I really don't dare rest. Sorry about that!

Fourth, “Take my yoke upon you and learn of me.” Now, wait a minute, God. I've already got more than I can do. I can't take on another task. I do sometimes wonder though if you aren't offering me a better option.

Fifth, “I am meek and lowly of heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” But, God, I've tried that meek and lowly route. People walk all over me when I do that. Anyway, this is an age of power—you have to fight for what you want. If I am meek and lowly, the injustices in the world keep piling up. But then, you sure seemed to accomplish some great things through the meek and lowly Jesus. I do remember the rhythm he set up between rest and meditation and dedicated effort.

Sixth, “For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” God, I keep getting the feeling that there is a better way of doing ministry than constantly trying harder. You talk about a yoke and a burden and how these are easier than my way. I'd really like to know. What does this mean?

My little homily in personal prayer style is obviously designed to set up an answer. The answer comes front a combination of the psychology, and management techniques. Here is how it comes out:

1. Hard work and intense effort have value when they are attached to a clear goal and are supported by the rhythm between work, rest, and self-nurture.

2. God is still in charge. I am not responsible for bringing the kingdom of Heaven to earth all by myself. I am only called to be faithful in proclamation and personal living.
3. If I take time to really see what is going on, I can find more creative ways to handle the tasks of ministry.
4. It is out of this taking time to look at the situation and to think about it and to meditate so that God's spirit it may lead me (us) that new possibilities emerge. Then I can try smarter, not harder.

The three goldenrod sheets and three white ones are some time management material that Pastor James Radloff sent out in his February 1986 Newsletter. Pages 1 and 2 are helps in scheduling time Pages 3 to 5 are some suggestions about using time more efficiently. Mark those that might prove helpful to you and put them into practice.

The three white sheets are included to help you take your time inventory. On the back side of Page 5 you see an example of how Pastor Radloff filled in the first of the three sheets. The daily and weekly schedule may be the most useful since you all have the AAL Pastor's Desk Diary for your monthly schedule. The weekly schedule has 21 blocks of time. 6 or 7 of them, he suggests should be used for family and personal time, the others for your work in the ministry. When you work in time slots you may find that you have more time than you thought. The weekly schedule allows you to prioritize what you need done. Schedules, of course, will always need to be adjusted from time to time and sometimes even from day to day, but that is not a reason or excuse for not scheduling, The daily schedule is divided into hour blocks from 7 am. to 10 p.m. It can be easily broken down to half-hour time slots. Start with the daily schedule, scheduling, if possible, a week in advance, and for sure one day in advance. It saves time on the next day if you already know what you are going to be doing, That way a lot of time isn't wasted in just getting started.

The key word in time management is DISCIPLINE. Remember "Try smarter, not harder." For further reading you might check out these books. They are available in the Seminary Library.

How To Save Time In the Ministry, Leslie B. Flynn, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1966.
(BV 652.F55)

Coping With Clergy Burnout, G. Lloyd Rediger, Judson Press, Valley Forge, PA 1982 (BV 4398.R42)

Tools for Time Management, Edward R. Dayton, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978 (BV 652.1.D3)

Stress Management for Ministers, Charles L. Rassieur, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1982
(BV 4398.R37)

Some additional thoughts on time management...

- Time can't be stopped, stored or stretched. It can only be used or lost.
- Only one life to live,
T'will soon be past.
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Ephesians 5:15-16 says: "Be very careful then, how you live - not as unwise, but as wise, making the most of every opportunity" (NIV)...

"redeeming the time"(KJV)...

"making the most of the time" (RSV)...

"making the best possible use of their time" (M.L.)

- Planning ahead is Scriptural: I Corinthians 14:40; Luke 14:28-32; I Corinthians 9:24-26; Psalm 32:8; Psalm 37:23; etc.

Long Range Planning:

Five steps:

1. Pray (Seek God's wisdom ... James 1:5 ... in your planning)
2. Establish objectives (determine WHAT needs to be accomplished)
3. Program (determine HOW the objectives should be accomplished)
4. Schedule (determine WHEN each activity in this plan should be accomplished)
5. Budget (determine HOW MUCH manpower,, money and other recourses will be needed and how they will be supplied)

Scheduling Of Time

Four steps:

1. List activities
2. Assign if possible
3. Prioritize list
4. Schedule
 1. **LIST**....Keep an ongoing list and keep adding to it on *ONE* sheet of paper. List keeping, however, is not enough for it has no connection with priority or time. What will likely happen is that you will do the easy or enjoyable tasks first and leave the rest (Things to do....Calls (personal and telephone) to makeLetters to write). Don't forget long-range tasks, like Conference Paper to write, etc...
 2. **ASSIGN** if possible using time and talents of volunteers
 - a) make assignment clear
 - b) be available to answer questions
 - c) check up and see how things are going
 - d) express thanks
 - e) go over list (above) and write name of person in front of task you are assigning
 3. **PRIORITIZE**....There will always be more things to do than the time available. Thus some order of priority needs to be established.
 - a) Place a "1" "2" "3" etc. to the left of each activity on your list according to priority.
 - b) Two key words in prioritizing are: **IMPORTANCE** and **URGENCY**
 - c) **IMPORTANCE** relates to your objectives; does it help reach a goal
 - d) **URGENCY** relates to time; how soon something must be finished

Examples:

If an activity is important but not urgent, *do some now, some later*

If an activity is urgent but not important, *file it*

If an activity is important and urgent , *get to it now!*

Note: Warning: There is a natural tendency to pay too much attention to urgency and not enough to importance.

- An alternate way to **PRIORITIZE**:
 - T - top priority
 - H - high priority
 - M - medium priority
 - L - low priority

This will allow for more than one top or high priority, etc.

4. **SCHEDULE**....Committing your priorities to time Scheduling is the step in which you really come to grips with the fact that you live in time.
- a) in a day and/or
 - b) in a week at a time (Use AAL Desk Diary for Month and Year)
 - c) block it out
 - d) when scheduling a day (or week) at a time, keep in mind your long range objectives
 - e) know at least the night before what you are going to be doing the next day. Daily scheduling ahead of time will be one of the best habits you will ever start.

Note: To maintain MOTIVATION, schedule a “reward” activity after something heavy or major. What about the difficult tasks that we “hate”? See article on *ATTITUDE or ACTION: WHICH COMES FIRST?* in the last Newsletter. Use the “plunge” method, jump in!

“Multiplying” Your Time

1. Remember to plan See 5 steps above under “Long Range Planning” (P.E.P.S.B.)
2. Stop procrastinating.
3. Don’t assume that the old way of doing things is still the best way.
4. Do “think” work at a stand-up desk. (Professor J.P. Meyer did)
5. Remember the 80/20 rulethat 80% of your objective is accomplished by the first 20% of your time.

The following are some specific ideas on how to multiply your time as gathered from the book *Managing Yourself* by Stephen B. Douglass.

1. Job or ministry

- a) Force yourself to make decisions. Don’t just stare at a blank sheet of paper. Set a deadline for a decision, if more thinking is needed.
- b) Learn to say “no” to others and to yourself. Don’t get involved in activities you don’t have time to do.
- c) Delegate everything you can. Don’t overlook volunteer workers. Be sure to give adequate instructions, or it may take more of your time to redo the task later. Don’t let one bad experience stop you from making use of volunteers (maybe it was your fault). Look for outdated or otherwise unneeded procedures. Maintain a good system for recording and reminding yourself of the things you need to do in the future. Use your AAL Desk Diary often for recording future responsibilities, meetings, etc. Check it regularly when making out daily and weekly schedules.
- f) Maintain a good overall filing system. This means less time looking for misplaced items. One of the best ways to organize your filing system is according to the activities in your plan or to the responsibilities in your job description.
- g) To think of more time-saving ideas, brainstorm with others who have jobs similar to yours or who are in similar situations. This is a good habit to make part of your lifestyle. You don’t have to reinvent the wheel. “Be wise enough to use the best of everybody else’s.”
- h) use your time twice. Listen to tapes while doing mechanical work or while driving. Look for work that can be done if there are dead times in large meetings. Take some reading along with you while waiting in airports, etc. You never know when you’re going to get stranded.

2. Typical time wasters.

- a) Sleeping too much. Try a little less sleep at night and a nap during the day, if that is possible. Sometimes the office floor is pretty comfortable. That sometimes results in fewer hours total sleep, but more alertness during the day.
- b) Watching too much television. Perhaps you’ve heard “The 23rd Channel.”

- c) Not planning evenings.
- d) Talking too long with friends. BUT don't avoid them either. Listen and learn!
- e) Thumbing through magazines.
- f) Chronic visiting in the office.

3. Travel.

- a) Use your travel time to get things done. Listen to tapes, dictate letters, catch up on "must" reading, prepare for upcoming meetings, etc.
- b) When you are flying into a city for a short meeting, consider holding it at the air terminal when possible.
- c) Don't drive during rush hours.
- d) Keep your car in good mechanical condition. Breakdowns may cost you hours (as well as dollars), plus they probably will cause you to miss your scheduled activity.
- e) Plan your errands. Think ahead when "going downtown" to see if there will be other things you will need in a few days. Make a list! As my mother always used to say: "If you don't use your head, you'll have to use your feet."

4. Thinking

- a) Go some place where no one will bother you. Try a local library or the library of some college or university.
- b) Work when the other people in the house are asleep (early morning or late night,- I could do this when I was younger, but not anymore.
- c) Come to the office an hour early and stay an hour late.
- d) Be sure to include think time as a specific item in your schedule rather than waiting for some free time.
- e) Have other people do some research for you when you are drawing up a proposal, writing a talk, etc.

5. Pace

- a) Pace yourself. Use deadlines (for meetings, projects, mail, phone calls, etc.) Remember Parkinson's Law? It states that work expands to fit the time available. By setting deadlines, you help yourself complete the job in a reasonable amount of time.
- b) Work hard and don't be afraid to take breaks if you need them.
- c) Reward yourself (or your wife) in some way for getting a hard job done.
- d) Schedule tough jobs for when you are most likely to be in the right frame of mind and have the energy to do them.
- e) Watch your eating habits. A huge lunch can slow you down. Did you ever hear about the professor who, after a big lunch, dreamed that he was teaching a class and then woke up to find out that he was?

6. Appointments

- a) Schedule an ending time as well as a beginning time for an appointment. One way to do this is to schedule another appointment right after it.
- b) Avoid scheduling 20-30 minutes between appointments. It is difficult to start something major in that period of time.
- c) Always have something with you to do in case someone is late or for other reasons you have a few minutes free.
- d) During your appointment, give the person with you your undivided attention.

- e) Have your secretary step in or buzz you at the scheduled end of a meeting. This will accelerate your bringing it to a close.

7. Meetings

- a) Five minutes of preparation for the meeting may save one hour in the meeting.
- b) Determine the objectives of the meeting: make decisions or recommendations, inform people, impart vision, have fellowship, etc.
- c) In counseling meetings, see if you can get to the issues as soon as possible. You want to have time to apply God's Word to the problem.
- d) Schedule enough time for the meeting to accomplish its objectives but no more.
- e) Start on time.
- f) Work toward the objectives! Be leery of the statement, "Since we are here, we probably ought to discuss

8. Communication tools

- a) once you read a piece of mail, do what is needed in response or file it or throw it away. Your secretary (wife) could be a great help in handling your mail by sorting it, etc.
- c) Consider doing some of your personal correspondence by sending a cassette instead of sending a long letter. You can put more on tape in five to ten minutes than you can write in an hour.
- d) Use a phone call when it would take several letters back and forth to communicate the same thing.

9. Reading

- a) Look over a book before reading it. Determine what you want to out of it.
- b) Read the book as rapidly as possible while still getting what you want out of the book.
- c) Take notes as you go and review them at the end. Underline key thoughts (if it is your book).
- d) Have someone else read a book for you and review it with you if that is appropriate. Perhaps you could band together with a number of other people of similar interests and have each person in the group read a book of common interest and report on it to the group.

Thessalonians 5:21 "...examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good."

The most important thing to remember when talking about Time Management is "DO IT or YOU LOSE IT." Great ideas are only wishful thinking if they are not put into practice. Learning how to push through those time of low motivation is one of the most valuable lessons we can learn