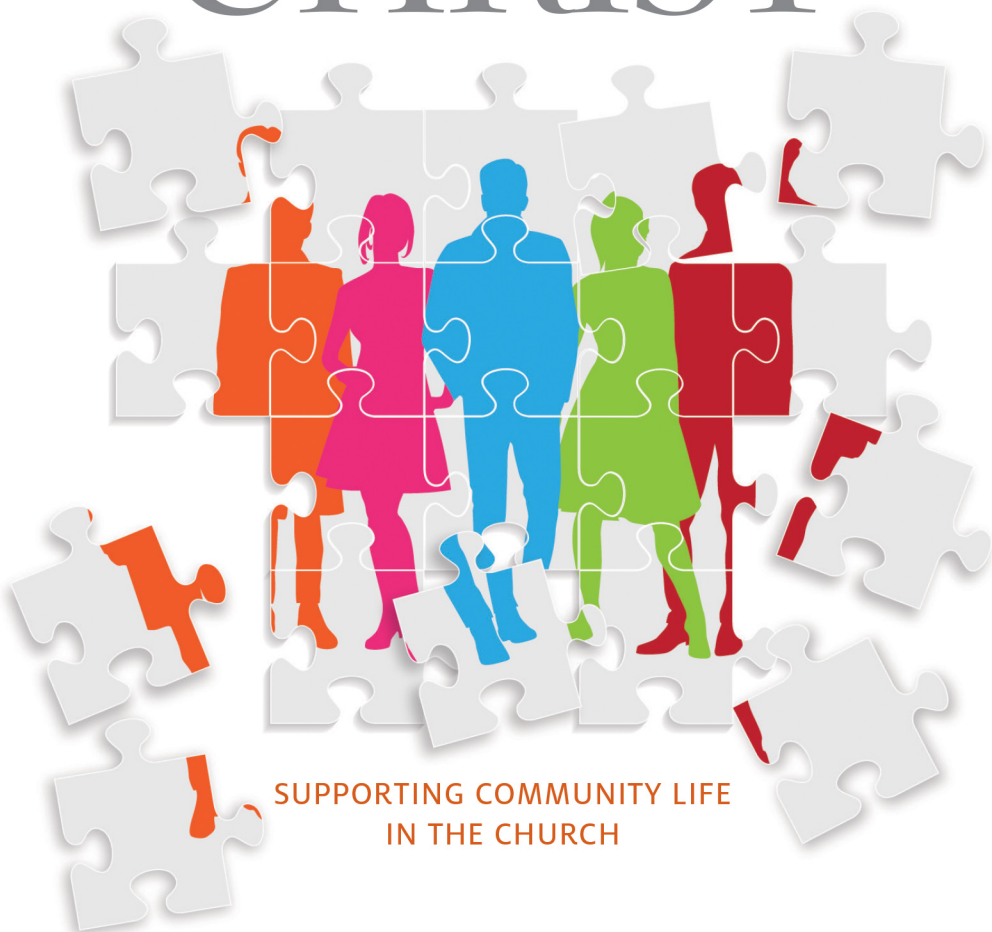


# Building Up THE BODY OF CHRIST



SUPPORTING COMMUNITY LIFE  
IN THE CHURCH

**BRUCE M. HARTUNG**

BUILDING UP  
THE BODY OF  
CHRIST



# BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST



**BRUCE M. HARTUNG**



Published by Concordia Publishing House  
3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, MO 63118–3968  
1-800-325-3040 • www.cph.org

Copyright © 2016 Bruce M. Hartung

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of Concordia Publishing House.

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Hymn texts abbreviated *LSB* are from *Lutheran Service Book*, copyright © 2006 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved.

Catechism quotations are from *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, copyright © 1986, 1991 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved.

Art: illustrations © iStockPhoto.com; © Frank Ramspott/iStockPhoto.com. All other photos and illustrations courtesy Bruce M. Hartung.

Manufactured in the United States of America

---

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Hartung, Bruce M.

Building up the body of Christ: skills for responsible church leadership / Bruce M. Hartung.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-0-7586-4442-8

1. Christian leadership. I. Title.

BV652.1.H273 2016

253--dc23

2015034500

# Table of Contents

As We Begin .....	7
Chapter One: Considerations about Church Leaders and Their Leadership .....	13
Chapter Two: Spiritual Warfare .....	23
Chapter Three: Four Challenges to Church Leaders .....	35
Chapter Four: Trust and Trustworthiness.....	49
Chapter Five: Ways to Respond to Others .....	61
Chapter Six: Listening, the First Service We Owe.....	71
Chapter Seven: Safe Spaces .....	83
Chapter Eight: Disclosure, Feedback, and Discovery.....	95
Chapter Nine: Outside Influences.....	107
Chapter Ten: The Brain.....	117
Chapter Eleven: Different People, Different Ways .....	131
Chapter Twelve: Conflict Intensity.....	141
Chapter Thirteen: Conflict Management .....	153
Chapter Fourteen: Conflict Encouragement .....	165
Chapter Fifteen: Warning Signs.....	177
Chapter Sixteen: Good News.....	187
As We End .....	199
Bibliography .....	203



A decorative header at the top of the page features a pattern of interlocking puzzle pieces. The pieces are white with black outlines, set against a dark grey background. The pattern is partially obscured by a white shape on the right side, which contains the text 'AS WE BEGIN'.

## AS WE BEGIN

In the introduction to *Holding Up the Prophet's Hand: Supporting Church Workers*, I wrote that church workers “are called by God to apply the Gospel to the most daunting of human experiences. Is it any wonder that church workers sometimes succumb to dramatic risks of body, spirit, and self?”<sup>1</sup> I wrote that book hoping that lay leaders in congregations would read it. I still hope that.

Church professionals like pastors, teachers, deacons and deaconesses, directors of Christian education, directors of music, directors of Christian outreach, and lay ministers need intentional support from those they serve. But these church workers are not alone in being susceptible to these risks. The congregation’s volunteer leaders, too, are subject to stress, conflict, interpersonal differences, and sin. Serving in the church opens people to real vulnerabilities, but church leaders can mobilize congregations in support of church workers. In fact, this support is part of what the followers of Christ are called to do for those among them who lead. In turn, church workers support and build up the whole community of Christ, the people of the congregation to which He has called them as servants. This dynamic goes both ways: church leaders need support from the congregation and the congregation needs support from its leaders.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hartung, *Holding Up the Prophet's Hand*, 9.



I wrote *Building Up the Body of Christ: Supporting Community Life in the Church* as the follow-up to my earlier book for church professionals. The book takes its title from Ephesians 4:11–12:

And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up of the body of Christ.

Life together in the local church, life in community, presents real vulnerabilities, and church leaders can mobilize to strengthen that community in tangible ways. Yet today's culture presents roadblocks. The cultural movement toward the individual and away from the community is well documented. Researcher and Harvard professor Robert Putnam was among the first to call attention to this trend in his article "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," published in 1995.<sup>2</sup> Putnam reported on trends in bowling: there are many fewer bowling leagues in the United States today than there were several decades ago. Not only are we bowling alone, but most community service organizations are experiencing a decline in membership. In addition, the average age of those who belong to organizations like the Lions Club, the Elks Lodge, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars has risen markedly.

Putnam further studied this trend and, with Lewis Feldstein, published *Better Together: Restoring the American Community* in 2003. Efforts stimulated by Putnam's research findings continue in Harvard's Saguaro Seminar on Civic Engagement in America ([www.hks.harvard.edu/programs/saguaro](http://www.hks.harvard.edu/programs/saguaro)) to help citizens consider how social networks can be mobilized for civic good.

Congregations are not immune to this trend and are directly affected as participants in it. Church membership has declined. The "nones," people with no church affiliation, are now considered to be the second largest "religious" group in the nation, and congregations generally grow smaller as the average age of their membership rises. It would seem good, right, and salutary that we look more closely at the factors

---

2 Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 6, no. 1 (1995): 65–78.

that would strengthen our faith communities—that is, our congregations. This book provides basic tools to do that. Throughout *Building Up the Body of Christ*, the focus is on the characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors of congregation leadership. I use the term *church leaders* to refer to pastors, teachers, church council presidents, elders, deaconesses, and all other leadership roles. My goal is to help these leaders develop specific skills to build up the community, the Body of Christ, in the local church. More important than skill development is the development of the “person” of the church leader. Far too often, church leaders move too quickly to short-term techniques and quick fixes without assessing and strengthening themselves and others. Therefore, this book places considerable focus on the person of leaders, as well as their skills. For example, church leaders who effectively support congregational community begin with a secure sense of personal identity. They are immersed in the biblical understanding of leadership and church office; they see themselves as engaged in spiritual warfare; and they understand the challenges of burnout, stress, and even secondary traumatic stress. In short, they know who they are, they know what their vulnerabilities are, they know what their context is. Above all, they rely on their identity as baptized daughters and sons of God, made so by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus, they live empowered and blessed by the Holy Spirit.

Even so, church leaders need to develop specific characteristics and skills. They need to be trustworthy and responsive to others. They need to listen well. They need the ability to facilitate safe places, places where people can speak their minds and share the impulses of their hearts. Such leaders share openly, solicit regular feedback, and recognize the multiple influences that affect their capacity to lead. They understand how their own brains and the brains of others function, and they realize that brain function and environmental factors create differences among individuals, different personal styles and ways of doing things. They deal with differences and conflict creatively and welcome both as helpful in the processes of creative thinking and problem solving. This book focuses on these characteristics, attitudes, understandings, and skills.

To clarify these concepts and ideas, I have included many fictional short stories that show, in a practical way, how similar situations can be engaged and handled in any congregation. And where appropriate, I end most chapters with a few words of personal reflection and suggestions for additional reading on the topic of the chapter, a kind of take-the-next-step encouragement. I recommend these books and websites because I personally have found them to be immensely helpful in my own ministry. Like this book itself, all the resources I recommend have their flaws. Nevertheless, I believe they can be of benefit to you.

Of course, this book is not the only way that the life of a community, of a Christian congregation, might be addressed. Where this book is lacking, I hope others will fill the gap. And I hope that church leaders find my basic and focused approach helpful. In order for that to be so, I prayed that the Holy Spirit would bless the writing of this book. I also pray that He will bless its reading.

Over my many years as a pastoral counselor; as a denominational staff person concerned with the health, well-being, and life-long learning of church workers, their spouses, and their families; and as a teacher at a seminary, the people I spoke with taught me very much about life in general and, in particular, about life in the community. If I could list all those people who have influenced me and helped me write this book, I would likely exceed the pages I have available. Nevertheless, to all those folks who opened their lives to me in our conversations: thank you. I am deeply humbled and very grateful. This book would not have been written without you.

I want to thank specifically several people who made this book happen, either directly or indirectly.

More indirectly, Judy, my wife, is supportive and very patient with me. She does not like an overly messy space. We share desk space, and over the course of writing this book, my area became quite messy. Thanks, Judy, for your love, support, and care!

More directly, Pastor Chris Asbury and I have been in conversation over several years about spiritual warfare. He contributed a short essay about that in this book. Pastor Ethan Luhman also contributed a short

essay on that same theme. Rev. Luhman offered invaluable help on the writing front. Debbie Roediger, my longtime administrative assistant, has been both patient and competent in helping me put this book into the format that Concordia Publishing House wants and needs. Thanks so much to all of you!

Finally, I wrote this book and, therefore, I am responsible for it. Any criticism or unhappiness with it should be addressed to me. If some readers will share their agreement and happiness with it, then that would be fine too. Most of all, though, my great desire is that church leaders find it useful and helpful, that the Body of Christ would indeed be built up, that Christ may be all and be in all, in our lives, congregations, and communities.



## Considerations about Church Leaders and Their Leadership

**T**he Bible has much to say about leadership. Whenever we talk about church leadership, we should begin there. God in Christ has a deep love for His Church, His people, and His leaders. So we expect nothing less than for Him to have words for us on how church leaders should lead.

St. Paul offers four major lists concerning the gifts of the Spirit and church leadership. I have included them below, together with some of their surrounding context. As you read them, look for themes and characteristics that emerge to guide us as we form a picture of the qualities necessary in such leadership.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use

them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:3–8)

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says, “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as He wills. (1 Corinthians 12:1–11)

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

And I will show you a still more excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. (1 Corinthians 12:27–13:1)

But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. . . . And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Ephesians 4:7, 11–16)

St. Peter offers an additional look:

The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To Him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:7–11)

From these texts, several conclusions about church leaders, their leadership tasks, and the importance of spiritual gifts seem quite clear. These



conclusions are interrelated, each influencing our understanding of the others. All of these passages have greatly influenced this book. I will draw from these throughout this text.

1. First, all offices in the church and all spiritual gifts are just that—gifts of the Spirit of God. Church leaders must see their personal spiritual gift or gifts in this way. While natural talents and abilities are clearly gifts from God, spiritual gifts and the offices we hold in the church also come to us as the work of the Holy Spirit, rather than as a result of our own efforts and abilities. Thus, instead of saying, “My strengths are . . .,” we more accurately say, “God has given me strengths in . . .”

Scripture reveals that at times even St. Paul needed to be reminded of this. Note his discussion about his experience of weakness brought about by his thorn in the flesh, “a messenger of Satan”:

So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:7–10)

Paul also cautions us directly against the temptation to “think of [ourselves] more highly than [we] ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned” (Romans 12:3).

Spiritual gifts, and leadership in the church based on those gifts, are all “grace given to us” (Romans 12:6). It is God who “apportions to each one individually as He wills” (1 Corinthians 12:11). Spiritual gifts and offices are a “manifestation of the Spirit”

(1 Corinthians 12:7), not manifestations of the leader's own wisdom, insights, or efforts. Gifts are received, not humanly created. They are to be received with thanksgiving as gifts of God and used in the service of others (1 Peter 4:10).

2. The second conclusion we can draw from the writings of both Paul and Peter concerns the diversity of gifts and offices. Just as God gives different gifts, He also gives different leadership offices to different kinds of people. This is because such diversity of people, gifts, and offices is needed in the community of faith (1 Peter 4:9–11). The Holy Spirit distributes this marvelous diversity as He wills. This diversity is to be acknowledged and received by the community in thanksgiving because it is God's doing. There is no room in the Christian community for a hierarchical understanding of gifts that might say, "My gift of insight is greater than your gift of healing." Rather, there is a common "Praise God from whom all gifting comes, all of ours together."
3. The third insight is that one gift stands above all others and bathes them through and through: love. Even as we acknowledge all of God's other gifts and give thanks for them, love is common to all in the Christian community. Love is the gift that surrounds and the virtue that embraces all other gifts and offices. Immediately after Paul lists some of the offices and spiritual gifts God gives, he continues with the connecting phrase: "I will show you a still more excellent way" (1 Corinthians 12:31). Love infuses the other gifts and makes it possible for them to work in useful ways.

There is a challenging reality to this. If a gift or an office is used in a way that is not infused with love, it is but a noisy gong, a clanging cymbal (1 Corinthians 13:1). It creates dissonance. A good and useful thing becomes a problematic thing unless it is used within the context of love. It is possible, therefore, for any of God's gifts—wisdom, knowledge, healing, mighty deeds, and so on—to be used in darker ways. It is also possible for any of the individuals serving in the offices God gives—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers—to behave in darker ways. This becomes a

genuine concern and challenge. Rather than asking, “How good a prophet am I?” we should instead ask, “Am I fulfilling the duties of my office in a context of love?” Rather than asking, “How gifted is this person?” we should ask instead, “Is the leader behaving in a context of love?”

4. Finally, we can conclude from the Scriptures that spiritual gifts and churchly positions are not the end goal. They are not valued by either the gift itself or the office itself. Rather, they have a purpose and a goal beyond themselves, a greater end, which is “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12). God gives these gifts and offices for one purpose: to build up.

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Ephesians 4:15–16)

It is the building up of the community, of its members—Christ’s Body, the Church—that is the point of it all. As that happens, everyone is stronger and more ready to do “the work of ministry” (Ephesians 4:12). Thus, no group of Christian people can ever boast, “Look how strong we have grown as a community, and we will keep getting stronger!” Rather, God’s people focus on this: “By God’s gracious gifts at work among us, we are growing stronger. He is building up our community so that we can do something—the work of ministry.”

This is the central point about spiritual gifts and church offices: they are given for the common good, for the building up of the Body of Christ. (This is, of course, how this book gets its title.) God gives gifts not to glorify the individual or to extol the gifts themselves, but to glorify Christ and to build up the community that is called by His name. Therefore, God gives church leaders an office of leadership and the spiritual gifts

they possess not because of their own inherent capacities and skills, but in grace and for the good of others. The Spirit gives many and diverse gifts, many offices, and many kinds of church leaders. He intends that all these be employed in the context of love. Love must infuse all spiritual gifts and church offices and, therefore, all church leaders.

God gives all spiritual gifts and all church offices for the building up of the community, which is the Body of Christ. Leaders who act in ways contrary to this fail to fulfill Paul's understanding of the faithful use of spiritual gifts and the faithful performance of church offices. On the other hand, leaders who understand themselves and see the gifts and offices of others in the light of these biblical truths will strive in the Spirit to strengthen those around them and be strengthened themselves as the Body of Christ is built up.

*Carl and Katie were both longtime members of their congregation, and had served in many leadership positions. Currently, Carl chaired the board of elders and Katie was president of the board responsible for the congregation's early childhood school.*

*Each day as they prayed together, they always included a prayer of thanksgiving for the talents they had received from God and a petition that He teach them how to use those talents in constructive and helpful ways.*

*Together they regularly took counsel with their pastor. Once a month, they participated with other church leaders who met to discuss books about the Christian life, church leadership, or Bible exposition. Additionally, they belonged to a small group of other couples that met monthly for Bible study. In the groups they led, Carl and Katie both scheduled regular feedback sessions that specifically focused on how their leadership was being received.*

*Life was exceptionally good for Katie and Carl. They were admired and respected by practically everyone in the congregation and were extremely valued as capable church leaders by their ministerial staff.*

Warning! C. F. W. Walther, founder of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, includes the following thesis in his book *The Proper*

*Distinction Between Law and Gospel*: “[T]he Word of God is not rightly divided when a description is given of faith, both as regards its strength and the consciousness and productiveness of it, that does not fit all believers at all times.”<sup>3</sup> As he comments on this thesis, Walther reflects on Paul’s experience: “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out” (Romans 7:18):

The true Christian, he says, always desires what is good, but frequently does not accomplish it. Now, then, if a preacher describes a Christian in such a manner as to deny that, unless he accomplishes all that is good, he does not really will what is good, the description is unbiblical. Frequently he does not progress beyond the good will to do something. Before he is aware of it, he has gone astray; the sin within him has come forth, and he is ashamed of himself. But for that reason he has not by any means fallen from grace.<sup>4</sup>

The picture of Carl and Katie in its close-to-perfect form painted above is impossible. In this fallen and sinful world, all people, including church leaders, truly do miss the mark. We miss it often! In one way or another, church leaders fall short of perfection. Painting a picture of perfect church leaders as though this were reality is always a “preaching of the Law,” to use Walther’s terminology. Such an ideal state is not obtainable in this life.

If, however, the picture is painted as one toward which we imperfectly strive, then it is a different matter. And if in the painting of such a picture, the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the gifting of the Holy Spirit are front and center, then it can help church leaders grow toward a Spirit-driven goal. Even then we must remember that our imperfections will always draw us back to the grace, love, and forgiveness of Jesus as we grow imperfectly. Confessing, forgiven, loved, and Spirit-empowered, we grow, and in our growth, we are better able to lead as God’s people, called to build up the Body of Christ so that the work of

---

3 Walther, *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, 3.

4 Walther, *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, 308–9.

ministry goes on apace.

In 1932, J. H. C. Fritz, academic dean of Concordia Seminary, painted a picture of a church leader, specifically that of a pastor. Yet we can apply his words to all church leaders: “The words of an older writer still hold true, that ‘a holy pastor has but three books to study—the Scriptures, himself, and his flock.’”<sup>5</sup>

For church leaders, our “study” is an ongoing enterprise. Our study is never done; our task is never finished—on this side of heaven. Church leaders continue to study the Bible. We continue to study ourselves to become more self-aware. And we continue to learn to know people (that is, the flock). All three areas of study are essential.

In some places, Fritz’s text reads as if it was greatly influenced by the psychology and sociology of his time. He leads readers into a more holistic view of study; for example, one that takes up the wisdom God has made available in the behavioral sciences. But his use of these sciences is always subservient to theology and always purposeful. Fritz intends to help church leaders better understand both themselves and others so they can be better leaders, so they more ably “equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12).

All of this study of Scripture, of self, and of others is done imperfectly. People who study never know it all—and they know that! Church leaders do not know everything about Scripture, themselves, or others. We make mistakes; we damage relationships; our inadequate knowledge and impure motives bring trouble. But we recognize that everyone who lives in the Body of Christ lives as both a saint and a sinner, adequate and inadequate, knowledgeable and educate-able. In a real sense, church leaders understand, in the very core of their being, that as forgiven and redeemed followers of Christ in a fallen and imperfect world, they are continuous learners. Learning for church leaders becomes, as Peter Vaill says in the title of his book, “learning as a way of being.”

Because of this understanding, church leaders seek the help, support, and wisdom of others. As learners, they see themselves as people who

---

5 Fritz, *Pastoral Theology*, 8.

are growing to be better able to “equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12). This is the essential nature of a learning and growing community, a picture toward which all imperfect, forgiven, and Spirit-driven church leaders strive.

## SPEAKING PERSONALLY

In my own life and spiritual journey, I have wrestled with the experience Walther writes about. I have in mind a picture of who and what I should be like as a child of God. The picture is prefaced by an important preposition: “If I am a Christian, then I will . . .” Each time I fail to live up to my ideal, I’m tempted to question whether I am a “real Christian,” a “strong-enough Christian.” This is the very essence of my vulnerability in spiritual warfare. (Perhaps it is yours as well.) Satan asks, “Bruce, since you obviously do not live up to your own ideal, are you sure you are a worthy leader or even a true Christian? Really?”

This question points me in the wrong direction! I am a child of God totally because of God’s action for me in Christ. I am a Christian because of Christ and what He did for me on the cross. I strive to imitate my Savior. But in this life, as the Holy Spirit empowers me, I will always be on the road, moving toward that ideal. I will arrive at that destination only in eternity.

As you take up this book, it is essential for you to remember that. Nothing I suggest here can be perfectly achieved. Each of us is striving toward the ideal. None of us has yet arrived. Please, therefore, consider the ideals here as beckoning you forward toward learning and growth, not as a goal that will be perfectly attained in this life.

J. H. C. Fritz’s *Pastoral Theology* has been a very important book for me. Given when it was written, parts of it seem quite prescient. I recommend that you read it.

I also recommend that you meditate on Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12–13; Ephesians 4; and 1 Peter 4.

Finally, consider reading Peter Vaill’s book *Learning As a Way of Being: Strategies for Survival in a World of Permanent White Water*.