

# Critical Tensions of a Healthy Church (Part 1)

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## Introduction

### The Text

- A. Though last week we looked at [vv. 1-8](#), we're going to include them in this morning's text once more because they're connected to insights we're going to be drawing out for the next couple of weeks:

<sup>1</sup> And Saul approved of his [Stephen's] execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. <sup>2</sup> Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. <sup>3</sup> But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

<sup>4</sup> Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word. <sup>5</sup> Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ. <sup>6</sup> And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip, when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. <sup>7</sup> For unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. <sup>8</sup> So there was much joy in that city.

<sup>9</sup> But there was a man named Simon, who had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he himself was somebody great. <sup>10</sup> They all paid attention to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great." <sup>11</sup> And they paid attention to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic. <sup>12</sup> But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. <sup>13</sup> Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed.

<sup>14</sup> Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, <sup>15</sup> who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, <sup>16</sup> for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>17</sup> Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. <sup>18</sup> Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, <sup>19</sup> saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." <sup>20</sup> But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! <sup>21</sup> You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. <sup>22</sup> Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. <sup>23</sup> For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." <sup>24</sup> And Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."

<sup>25</sup> Now when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans. (Acts 8:1–25)

### Four Critical Tensions

- A. The book of Acts, as you may well recall, is really about the birth of the NT church and the growth and extension of it from Jerusalem, to Judea, and Samaria, on out to the ends of the earth (cf. [Acts 1:8](#)).

1. What this means, then, is that, along the way, we're given these little windows into what a healthy church really could and should look like.
  - a. I think that's what we have in our text this morning. And so that's what I want to bring out for us.
- B. What we see here is that a healthy church is really going to maintain at least four critical tensions.
  1. It'll keep together: (1) both Word and Deed; (2) both Clergy and Laity; (3) both Grace and Truth; and (4) both Christ's Cross and Our Own.
- C. Now, this morning we're only going to be taking up those first two critical tensions and, Lord willing, we'll come and grab the last two next time.
  1. But for this morning, then, it's (1) Word and Deed; and (2) Clergy and Laity. Let's go!

## (1) Word and Deed

### Word

#### A Sturdy Foundation

- A. The first thing we can't help but notice is there's this emphasis throughout the whole narrative on the word of God.
  1. So in v. 4 we read: "Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word."
  2. Then in v. 14 we read that the people of Samaria "received the word of God . . ."
  3. And down in v. 25, we're told that that the church was testifying to and speaking "the word of the Lord . . ."
  - a. This "word"—above anything else—it's the word of the gospel; it's the good news of Jesus and his victory for our sake at the cross.
    - i. That's why we see in v. 5: "Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them [what?] the Christ."
    - ii. Or down in v. 12, we read that "[H]e preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ . . ."
  - (1) This word is the good news concerning Jesus.
- B. I never get tired of pointing out that, while every other religion (including secular atheism, as a matter of fact) attempts to give you "good advice", only Christianity gives you good news.
  1. Every other religion will tell you: "Here's what's wrong with the world and with you; and here's what you have to do to get things right."
    - a. Follow the five pillars;
    - b. Walk the eightfold path;

- c. Find and live out from your authentic self;
  - d. Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die.
- i. Whatever it may be, it's advice given to you regarding what you have to do if you're going to get right.
- 2. But Christianity—only Christianity—offers you, not good advice about what you should do, but good news about what God has already done in Jesus. That's where it begins. That's the starting point of our faith.
  - a. He lived the life you should have lived.
  - b. He died the death you should have died—on that cross, in your place, condemned he stood.
  - c. And when he rose up from the grave, he threw off the yokes of Satan, sin, and death, and threw open the gates of heaven . . . so you and I can come back to God, freely, without cost.
  - i. It's a "gift" Peter will say down in v. 20—the "gift of God"—from him to you. All you have to "do" is open your hand and your heart and it's yours.
      - (1) He'll be your pillar.
      - (2) He'll be your path.
      - (3) He'll help you find and live out from your authentic self—the self that was made in God's image, marred in your sin, that can now be renewed in Jesus.
      - (4) He'll lead you to true happiness and life.
    - (a) And he does it . . . for you. It's not good advice. It's good news.
- C. Of course—as we well know, and as we'll soon see—there is plenty for you to go on from there and do (we're about to talk about our deeds for goodness sake!). But you do it in and through him, by his grace and Spirit, not in your own strength.
  - 1. The deed must come, but it follows the word. It grows out from the word. It's fueled by the word. It's built upon the word . . .
    - a. That's why Paul writes in Eph. 2:19-20, for example, that the church, as "the household of God," is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, [with] Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone . . ."
    - i. He's talking about how the church of God is built upon the word of God, in particular the gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the cornerstone of the foundation, and what this whole book is about.
- D. So the church has to hold to and build out everything it does upon the Word.

1. And not just from the pulpit, although of course that's important. You need leadership that's committed to the Scriptures.
2. But it's not just leaders, it's everyone.

a. The Word of God is supposed to be our foundation. So is it yours, is it mine?

### A Warning: Living around or Living in?

A. If I could issue a warning at this point: Beware of living around the Word without really living in it.

1. I wonder if you know what I mean?

B. To live around the Word is to know "generally" what it says and what God is like. It is to be "Christian"-ish.

1. We have Christian values and Christian friends and Christian pastors and Christian counselors. And we read Christian books and listen to Christian music and watch Christian programs.

2. But (and here's the big issue) we don't really read the Christian source material for ourselves, the Christian Scriptures. We live around the Word but we don't live in it.

a. We don't drink from the fountainhead of the Bible itself. Instead we're content to drink downstream, and take from what others have already gotten from it.

C. It's a dangerous thing to be what I would call a "spiritual second-hander"—where our relationship with Jesus is always mediated through another.

1. We've got to learn how to read and engage God in the Scriptures ourselves. We need to know why we believe what we believe—not just because so-and-so said it and he's a big-name Christian, or so-and-so wrote it and she's a famous mommy-blogger, or whatever—but because I see it in the Bible. Because I've spent time with God in his Word.

D. Now, don't get me wrong, we need others to pour into us and help us. We should seek counsel from brothers and sisters who are wiser and more mature in the faith than us.

1. But, even still, don't just take what they say and that is that. Take it and test it. Do you see what they're saying in Scripture yourself? Do you see what I'm saying in Scripture? I don't care if I'm your pastor . . .

E. Be the Berean. You remember them, right? When Paul and Silas came to these Berean Jews with the good news about Jesus, what did they do? "[T]hey received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so" (Acts 17:11).

1. And you might think Paul and Silas would rebuke them for this. "Are you really going to question us? Don't you know who we are? Paul's an apostle." No. They don't rebuke them.

2. Instead these guys are affirmed for it. Luke tells us that because of this, these Bereans were considered to be "more noble" (v. 11) than the other Jews around. It's good.

- F. Until we're able to do this, I fear we're vulnerable to being manipulated by these so-called "Christian" friends and counselors and pastors and resources and all this.
  - 1. The drift of the world around us is always moving away from Christ—increasingly so, it would seem, in our day—and I don't want us to go along with it.
- G. So are you getting in God's Word for yourself? Are you merely living around it, or are you living in it? Are you meeting with Jesus there, feasting on his grace there, drinking from the fountain there?
  - 1. That's what makes a healthy Christian.
  - 2. And a bunch of Christians like that is what makes a healthy church.
    - a. They're committed to the Word of God—both in public and in private.

## Deed

### Gospel Show-and-Tell

- A. But there's another side to this critical tension that a healthy church must maintain.
  - 1. We're not just concerned with word, we're also concerned with deed.
  - 2. We don't just talk about Jesus. We start to look like Jesus.
  - 3. We share the gospel with our lips and we show the gospel with our lives.
    - a. I love how Harvie Conn puts it: "[The church] has been placed on the earth to proclaim the kingdom and to exemplify it" (Evangelism, 19).
    - b. Or as he says elsewhere: "Evangelism must become gospel show-and-tell, showing mercy and preaching grace" (Evangelism, 33).
- B. This is what really comes out there in vv. 6-7 of our text. Did you notice?
  - 1. There's not just preaching going on in Samaria.
  - 2. There's spiritual and physical care being shown. Demons are being cast out. Paralytics are being healed.
    - a. And it's because of this—because of the critical tension that's maintained here between word and deed—that the people tune in. They listen to the words because they see the deeds.
- C. Look at it: " <sup>6</sup> And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip, when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. <sup>7</sup> For unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed."
  - 1. You see what's happening here right?
    - a. Philip is not just telling the people about a God who loves them and cares for them and draws near to them in their place of need.

- b. He's loving them, and caring for them, and drawing near to them in their place of need.
    - i. It's gospel show-and-tell.
- D. I recognize that this is the miraculous here, and I do believe that God still can and does do this today. And we should ask God for the miracle for those in need in our lives.
  - 1. But you know, I do think, biblically speaking, especially if I'm reading [1 Cor. 13](#) right, the greatest miracle of all is love—when a person is freed from self-concern to such a degree by Jesus that they're able to truly live (and die) for others.
    - a. That gives testament to the risen Christ, maybe even more than the supernatural. Because nobody's doing that—at least not in their own strength.
- E. So we don't just ask for the miracle in prayer, we also act the miracle in humble service.
  - 1. We pray God heals, or provides, or whatever it may be.
  - 2. But if he should not, we don't just walk away. We get in and we try to help. We nurse the wounds. We serve the food.
    - a. We ask for the miracle and we act the miracle. But, either way, it's word and deed. It's gospel show-and-tell.
- F. And that makes the gospel compelling. It gives our message credibility.

## The Threat of Hypocrisy

- A. And, of course, the opposite brings the opposite effect, doesn't it?
  - 1. If we come in and our lives don't line up with our lips, if what we're telling them about Jesus and his love isn't experienced in and through us in the way we treat them . . . people will, at best, be confused by us, and, at worst, they'll be turned off.
- B. You know, I saw a funny example of this sort of thing on my way home the other day driving down Santa Teresa Blvd.
  - 1. I came up behind this car, a Tesla, nothing surprising there, it seems like every other car around here is one. But what did catch my eye was the license plate. The guy had one of those custom plates and his was composed of letters that spelled out two words: "USE GAS." So, here's this guy, driving an electric vehicle but the plate on his car says "USE GAS."
    - a. His life seems to indicate that he's concerned for the environment and wants to go the route of electric vehicles and slow down our usage of fossil fuels and all this.
    - b. But his words indicate the very opposite.
      - i. It's contradictory. There's a disconnect between word and deed. And you're left scratching your head, well which is it?

C. It's kind of funny when it's with a car, it's not so funny when it's in the church. There's a word for it in the Scriptures. It's called hypocrisy.

1. And few things undermine the cause of the gospel in this world quite like it. It makes all the words of all the churches seem cheap, and unattractive, and untrue.

a. In fact, Spurgeon goes so far as to say: “The man who with pretenses, enters the fold, being nought but a wolf in sheep's clothing, worries the flock more than the lion outside. There is no weapon half so deadly as a Judas-kiss. Inconsistent professors (i.e. those who profess but don't live, those who have word but not deed) injure the gospel more than the sneering critic or the infidel.”

i. He says hypocrites are a bigger threat to the church than any of its most vicious opponents. Because hypocrites threaten to gut the whole thing from the inside-out.

(1) In the end it makes people question, not just the integrity of Christians, but the integrity of the Christ they claim to follow. That's what's so deadly about it.

(2) If they read a different message off of my life than the one they hear from my lips, they don't just conclude I'm a sham, they conclude Jesus is as well.

D. This is one of those things I always have to keep an eye on with my kids.

1. My kids know daddy is a pastor (Levi even calls me “Pastor Nick”—especially when he's trying to get on my nerves, haha).

a. They know that, in some sense, I talk about Jesus for a living. I preach and teach and minister the word. So they hear the stuff I say.

b. But then they get closer to me than any of you do. I can get prettied up and put on a good face for a while when I'm with you guys. But my kids are always around. They don't just hear the stuff I say, they see the way I really live.

i. And that's a real gut-check, you know. Do they see Jesus in me?

(1) I talk about the cross.

(2) Can they see the cross and it's imprint on my life in the way I love and serve and care—and even in the way I repent and confess sin when I don't measure up? I hope so. I pray so.

A. Word and deed. They stay together in a healthy Christian and a healthy church.

## (2) Clergy and Laity

A. Do we all know what these two terms mean?

1. Clergy are those official, even ordained, leaders in the church. You might call them “professional ministers” or something like that.
  2. The laity are just your everyday Christians. They’re not professionals. They’re ordinary members.
- B. And what we see here in our text is that the church actually keeps both in critical tension with each other.
1. There’s this beautiful synergy taking place here between the clergy and laity, between the official leaders and the ordinary members of the early church.
    - a. In particular, I’m thinking of the relationship here between the apostles—these guys appointed and commissioned by Jesus himself to lead the church—and everybody else.

## Laity

- A. The laity show up first in our text, so we’ll begin with that side of the tension . . .
- B. In [v. 4](#), as we saw earlier, Luke tells us that “[those who were scattered went about preaching the word.](#)”
1. But who were these people?
    - a. Was it the apostles, the leaders of this movement?
    - b. No. It was everyday Christians.
      - i. In fact, if you go back up to [v. 1](#) you realize Luke goes out of his way to say it most certainly wasn’t the apostles: “[And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.](#)”
- C. So, interestingly, here you have what seems to be the first real decentralization of ministry.
1. Before it would appear everything just centered around the apostles and their ministry.
  2. But now the everyday disciple is starting to take what they’ve learned and go with the gospel to others. They’re the ones preaching and ministering now.
    - a. They’re not waiting around for the apostles to do it. They recognize, the mission is for them too. They’re God’s missionaries. Or as I’ve put it here many times before, every saint is sent.
- D. It’s fascinating. You realize, don’t you, in [Acts 1:8](#), as we saw last week, Jesus explicitly commissions the apostles and says: “[\[Y\]ou will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.](#)”



1. But here in our text, notice, it's not the apostles who break this first boundary-line and start ministering throughout Judea and Samaria, it's the ordinary members.
  - a. And it will be the same later in [Acts 11](#) when the gospel first advances into Gentile regions. It's not the apostles doing it. It's the everyday Christian.
  
- E. Listen to Tim Keller on this: "There has always been a strong tendency, as John Stott says, for Christians to 'withdraw into a kind of closed, evangelical, monastic community.' This is not, of course, how things were in the early church. The Greek word euangelizo means "to gospelize," to tell people the good news about what Jesus did for us, and in the book of Acts literally everyone in the early church does it. Not only the apostles (5:42) but every Christian (8:4) did evangelism—and they did so endlessly. Passages such as Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 1:6-10; Hebrews 3:13; and 1 John 2:20, 27 indicate that every Christian was expected to evangelize, follow up, nurture, and teach people the Word. This happened relationally—one person bringing the gospel to another within the context of a relationship.
 

In Michael Green's seminal [book] *Evangelism in the Early Church*, he conveys the conclusion of historians that early Christianity's explosive growth 'was in reality accomplished by means of informal missionaries' [that's you and me!]. That is, Christian laypeople—not trained preachers and evangelists—carried on the mission of the church not through formal preaching but informal conversation—in homes and wine shops, on walks, and around market stalls . . . they did it naturally, enthusiastically" (Center Church, 277).

  1. Elsewhere Keller continues to draw on Green's work and writes the following: "Michael Green estimates that 80% or more of evangelism in the early church was done not by ministers or evangelists, but by ordinary Christians explaining themselves to their oikos—their network of relatives and close associates. People paid attention to the gospel because someone they knew well, worked with, and perhaps loved, spoke to them about it" (*How to Reach the West Again*, 18).
  
- F. So one of the main reasons the early church was so effective in spreading the gospel and advancing the kingdom, was they mobilized they laity.
  1. The whole thing had this grassroots flavor to it.
    - a. They didn't just assume the apostles or the leaders would do the work of the ministry while they sat idly by and "prayed" for them or "supported" them financially, or whatever.
    - b. They realized the mission and the ministry was for them just as much as it was for the apostles and leaders.
  
- G. Do you?
  1. Who's in your oikos? Who's in your network of relatives and close associates? Who's in your circle of influence? Who do you rub shoulders with at work and in the neighborhood and the marketplace?
    - a. God is sending you to them! You can reach them for Jesus in a way that an ordained minister like myself simply can't. Because you have relationship.

- i. What if you were willing to take a chance and share Christ with them—in word and in deed?

## Clergy

A. But now here's what's so great and balanced about all this:

1. Just because the laity were engaged, doesn't mean they had no need for the clergy.
2. Just because this was a grassroots movement in many ways doesn't mean they've gone rogue and they're just doing what they want.
3. Just because it's decentralized doesn't mean it's not organized.

- a. It is. And there's still this healthy relationship between laity and clergy. There's submission and accountability and respect for the leaders of the church.

B. I wonder if you see how this plays out in our text?

1. So Philip is in Samaria and he's ministering to them and many believe and are baptized, we're told. But then we come to [vv. 14-17](#) and we read this: "<sup>14</sup> Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John,<sup>15</sup> who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit,<sup>16</sup> for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.<sup>17</sup> Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit."

- a. Now what do you make of this?

C. At first you might be tempted to think that the apostles are coming in with a heavy hand, they're coming to take control of the situation, they're coming to fix some deficiency in Philip's ministry here. "Ah, they were baptized into Jesus but they didn't receive the Spirit. You did something wrong Philip. We've got to come in and correct it."

1. In this sense, it wouldn't be clergy working with laity at all. It would be a clergy takeover. The members try to do some ministry and the leaders say: "That's cute, good try, but now hand it over to the professionals."

- a. Is that what this is? Obviously, I don't think so.

D. But we do have to admit, these verses are a bit confusing. This is a highly unusual chain of events.

1. Peter himself said earlier in [Acts 2](#) that belief in Jesus and baptism in his name comes along with the gift of the Holy Spirit. It's a package deal: "[And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'](#)" (v. 38).
2. But here these Samaritans have repented and been baptized in the name of Jesus, and yet Luke tells they'd not yet received the Holy Spirit. Why?

- a. Well, of course, many denominations and Christian traditions have put forward all sorts of ideas on this, some more dangerous than others.
  - b. But, it seems to me, there is one explanation that is most sensible of all . . .
- E. And that is this: As the gospel was breaking through the first major barrier of [Acts 1:8](#) here, moving now from Jew to Samaritan (a people that, as we'll see more next week were despised by the Jews as half-breeds and religious compromisers), God separated what would normally be joined together and slowed the whole thing down so the apostles could be there to see it and validate it and put their stamp of approval on it: "Yes, it is clear, these Samaritans have received the very same Spirit we have. God has welcomed them in Jesus!"
  - 1. Interestingly, this very same sort of thing will happen yet once more when the gospel breaks through to the Gentiles.
    - a. So Peter says in [Acts 11](#) after Cornelius' conversion: "<sup>15</sup> As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. . . .<sup>17</sup> If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?" (vv. 15, 17). So they all glorify God and conclude: "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life" (v. 18).
- F. So through this God is making it plain to the apostles in particular that the salvation offered in Jesus is for Jew and for Samaritan and for Gentile and for any who would call upon his name!
  - 1. And it's important that the apostles see this because they are the leaders of this early church movement.
    - a. As one commentator notes: The apostles become "the stabilizing, verifying, and unifying element in a mission that moves to new areas and groups without their planning or control" (PNTC).
- G. So the early church is now growing organically and spreading through the ministry of every member, but it's still vitally connected to its root in the apostles, the official leadership of the church.
  - 1. There's still oversight and authority and submission.

## What about for Us?

- A. So what about for us in the church today . . . what does this mean?
  - 1. Well, of course, this means we all ought to be submitted to the apostles' teaching as preserved for us in Scripture. In that sense, we put ourselves under their authority and don't begin to think we can go off on our own without the Word, as we've seen.
  - 2. But, beyond this, it also does mean that leaders and members of any local church should try hard to work well together . . .
- B. On the one hand, there should be some type of submission and respect given to those local elders whom God has appointed to oversee and give an account for your soul.

1. That's what the author of Hebrews calls for, however unpopular the notion may be in our day: "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you" (Heb. 13:17).
  - a. Are you open to spiritual authority in your life? Or are you assuming that you can just go it alone?
    - i. Philip didn't assume that, even though he was seeing great results and power was coming from his prayers. He didn't get flustered when the apostles came in. "This is my ministry. I don't need you."
    - ii. He welcomed them. He knows he did need them.
- C. But, on the other hand, we clearly see that the leaders ought to appreciate and affirm and equip and release their members to do the work of the ministry.
  1. The early church goes nowhere if not for its members.
  2. And the same would be true today.
    - a. If I try to do all the work of the ministry myself—because, after all, I've been to seminary and most of you haven't—very little of the work gets done.
      - i. God can and will and does use you. And not just to minister to people out there, to minister to me and keep me on track . . .
- D. It's amazing, if you look carefully at our text, it seems these apostles, as prominent as they were, they still learned a thing or two from the laity here.
  1. So after coming and witnessing what God was doing through Philip with the Samaritans, as crazy as it might have seemed to them at first, they go on from there and begin to follow suit.
    - a. They weren't preaching to the Samaritans before. They are now. After Philip and these others brought the gospel to them.
    - b. So we read of the apostles in v. 25: "Now when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans."
      - i. Craig Keener comments on this verse, saying: "After the new mission was pioneered by the bicultural witnesses of Acts 6 [i.e. guys like Philip], the apostles finally begin to catch on to their own mission (1:8)" (IVPNTBC).
- E. Isn't that something?! The leaders learn from the members. It's not a one-way street but a thoroughfare.

1. There's a critical tension held in place here. The clergy and the laity stick together. And that makes for a healthy church!