



Motivating the Church

What can a Pastor do?

By John Benton

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Introduction

As Christians we are people with a job to do.

1 Corinthians 15:58 speaks of giving ourselves ‘fully to the work of the Lord,’ and of our ‘labour in the Lord.’ We are saved by grace alone not works, but we are people busy for God.

- As individuals we have work to do for the Lord – fighting sin in our lives, praying for God’s kingdom, witnessing to colleagues at work, or neighbours in the area, and caring for those around us.
- In our families we have a job to do, to serve one another and make the family a good place for our husband or our wife to be, and to bring up our kids to love the Lord and rejoice they are part of a Christian family.
- And as a church together we labour for the Lord. To sum up the work of a church it is useful to remember the acronym I O U. What does that stand for? Inwardly we are to build one another up in faith and love and unity. Outwardly we need to reach out to the lost. Upwardly we are called as a church to worship, to glorify God and enjoy him forever. It is motivation in this three-dimensional work of the church which this booklet particularly addresses.

The work of the church is surely included in Paul’s exhortation following his exposition concerning the nature of the future resurrection of believers in 1 Corinthians 15. It is in the light of our glorious future that he says, ‘Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain’ v58.

But as is implied by the exhortation, it is easy to slack off, and not to give ourselves quite as whole-heartedly as we should to the work of the Lord. This is sadly the case with many churches. The secular slogan which encourages us to have lots of ‘me time’ and relaxation is heeded more than it should be. The diversions and distractions of a world full of entertainments from TV soaps to video games to scrolling through social media, gobble up precious time. And then there are legitimate responsibilities like caring for elderly parents. And then there is straightforward laziness to contend with. As Christians we often need stirring up to give ourselves to ‘the work of the Lord.’

Extrinsic and intrinsic

So, the question is, 'What can we do to help motivate each other?' In particular, 'What can a pastor do to motivate his people?'

Motivation is a subject that all organisations wrestle with. Businesses know that well motivated staff, generally perform better. So, they offer people all kinds of perks and bigger salaries. We can't offer a financial reward as churches. We don't find Paul saying to Titus, 'Just nip over to Crete for me and sort out those churches and I'll give you 1,000 denarii.' And anyway, extrinsic motivation through things like money is nowhere near as good as intrinsic motivation i.e., when we do things just because we love doing them. So, what can we do to impart that kind of motivation to one other in the work of the Lord? And in particular, what can a pastor do?

Chapter 1: Vision – aims and avenues of ministry

Pastor, we have to face the possibility first of all that our people may not be very motivated in church work because they have no clear idea of what the work (or ministry) of the church should be. It is a hazy area for them. They may not understand the purpose of the church or how to pursue it, and so are not sure where they might fit into it – so they sit still. If this is the case, the ball is very much in the pastor's court to teach them.

The church as the body of Christ

In many churches, ordinary Christians have very little idea of what they are required to do much beyond turning up to church (often just once) on a Sunday. All they need to do is sit in church for an hour or so, listen, sing and let the service wash over them.

This might be something of a caricature, but sadly it is not too far from the truth for many churches. Apart from taking up their usual position in the pews / among the chairs, they simply do not see anything else they need to do. That is very different from the picture we have in the NT of what a church ought to be. There we find that every Christian has a job to do just as every part of the human body has work to do for the good of the whole, Romans 12.4,5; 1 Corinthians 12.7. Everyone has a part to play in 'the work of the Lord'.

Local church ministry

An overview might well help people to see what they could do.

If we step back a moment, of course, we see that the great overview of everything tells us that the purpose of all the world, including the local church, is the glory of God, Romans 11.36; 1 Corinthians 10.31. This does not demean or denigrate us as human beings. Our chief end, according to the first question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism is to 'glorify God and enjoy him forever.' We find our true destiny and delight in honouring God. And this is so not just individually but corporately as a local church.

On the next page is a diagram which I think helpfully gives a fuller view of what the ministry of a local church should cover.¹ The 'church' of course, refers to the people / members, and 'ministry' simply means the service or task of a church. The aims or purposes of a church are (Upwardly) to worship, (Inwardly) to encourage one

¹ I think this comes from *The Church*, by Edmund Clowney, IVP, 1995

another / build fellowship, and (Outwardly) to evangelise or reach out with the gospel of Jesus. (See top horizontal bar). All three work to the glory of God.

Ministry Avenues	Worship Ministry to God	Fellowship Ministry to each other	Outreach Ministry to the world
Ministry of the word			
Ministry of prayer			
Ministry of mercy			

The ways in which these three aims may be legitimately pursued, according to Scripture is along three avenues – the ministry of the word (the Bible and its message), the ministry of prayer, and the ministry of mercy (kindness and generosity to the needy etc.). (See the headings in the far-left column of diagram).

It will be seen that there are ways in which all three avenues of ministry can contribute towards all three aims of the church. In other words, there are ways in which the things a church ought to do can legitimately be put into every one of the nine boxes left empty on the grid.

Filling out the boxes

Let us briefly think through the obvious ways in which this happens and then think about some of the less obvious. It must be borne in mind of course that some of the things not explicitly mentioned on the diagram do fit in, and sometimes they fit into more than one of the boxes.

- *Obvious things*

Let's begin with the ministry of the word. When we think of the ministry of the word, our first thought, and rightly so, is Bible preaching. This clearly contributes to the worship of God in that it sets out the truth about God and so enables people to worship God in truth and not in error (which is idolatry). Preaching also sets out the gospel of God's love to sinners and so ministers encouragement to God's people, enabling them to relate to one another as they should, as brothers and sisters in Christ. Furthermore, the ministry of the word is central to evangelism. If we are

speaking to unbelievers, either in or out of a church service, they hear the good news as the word is preached.

The ministry of prayer also clearly adds to all the purposes of the church. We worship the triune God as we address him in prayer bringing both our adoration and our requests. We can pray for one another as people of the church and so express our fellowship. As we pray for preachers, Ephesians 6.19, and for people to be saved, so our prayers assist with outreach.

The ministry of mercy – that is kindness and care for those in need – also contributes to worship, fellowship and outreach. There are a number of Bible verses which tell us that as we care for those in need we glorify God, e.g., Proverbs 19.17; Matthew 25.40. We build fellowship as we help one another out within the church, Galatians 6.10. And we make the gospel of Christ attractive to outsiders as we are seen to be kind and generous in our dealings with others, Matthew 5.16 – perhaps through something like a church food bank.

So, we have ticked all the boxes. But there is more to be said.

- *Less obvious things*

Where do other things which are legitimately part of church life fit in? What about, baptism, the Lord's Supper and our music and singing, for example? What about our monetary giving?

These do actually take their place quite naturally within our grid. Baptism and the Lord's Supper may be seen in a valid way as ministering the word / gospel visually – in picture form. In baptism we picture our union with Christ in his death and resurrection and join others who do so – the church, see Romans 6.3,4 and 1 Corinthians 12.12-13. Similarly, the Lord's Supper underlines visually our ongoing dependence on Christ's death for our forgiveness and our oneness as his people, as taught in numerous passages of the NT. And just as preaching the word glorifies God, builds the fellowship and is a witness to outsiders, so are baptism and the Lord's Supper – we show the Lord's death, until he comes, 1 Corinthians 11.26.

Again, our songs in church are often 'prayers' of worship to God or are ways in which we minister Christian truth (the word) to one another and so encourage one another in the fellowship by reminding each other of what we believe and how we should live – gently admonishing one another, Colossians 3.16.

Our giving to the church is in a sense giving to God (see Malachi 3.8) or God's work (which is worship). It can also be subsumed under the idea of the ministry of mercy. It not only enables the church to pay a pastor's salary and so supports the preaching of the word but gives the church the opportunity to be generous towards both insiders and outsiders – enhancing both fellowship and evangelism.

An overall view

So, what we have considered gives something of an overall view of what a church is meant to be about. It frees the church from becoming too 'preaching centred' in an unhealthy way which tends towards putting all responsibility onto the pastor and restricts church to a purely Sunday activity.

Although both preaching and Sunday are immensely important, we must not see them as encapsulating the total life of the church.

We have used the 4x4 grid, but there may be other ways and perhaps better ways to give congregations an all-round idea of what a local church should be. However, the point is that as a wider vision of church is presented to the people of the church, they are more likely to see where they might be able to fit in and use the gifts God has given them.

So, explaining the aims and avenues of church ministry is often a necessary first step in motivating people and inspiring both a greater togetherness and a greater enthusiasm in a church.

- **Suggested exercise**

How about presenting the diagram used in this chapter to the church – perhaps in a church meeting or mid-week gathering and getting the people to think through what might go where in the grid with regard to what the church does? Try to accompany every suggested activity with a text of Scripture.

Chapter 2: Inclusion – feeling part of things

If we want people to be enthusiastic about the church and its work, we need to convey to them that they matter to the church.

To matter is to feel significant in the eyes of others. When people feel they matter, they feel seen, important and needed. They feel included. They are not unwanted or on the outside. In our contemporary world many people are led to feel that they don't matter – or at least they don't matter very much. 'Our new piece of artificial intelligence can do your job better than you can. We can do without you.' 'We can always find somebody else to take your college place.' 'I can always look for someone else to live with – you are not indispensable you know.' Modern life easily demeans people, and this inevitably undermines their desire to participate in whatever it is they are involved in.

'Mattering' in Scripture

But the Bible has a very different view of people from that of the current secular world.

First, everyone is seen as precious because all of us as human beings are made in the image of God, Genesis 1.26, 27. Every life matters, Genesis 9.6. Everyone is loved by God, John 3.16. We should not try to make people feel as if they matter in order to manipulate them to get involved in the church's work. We should make them feel that they matter because they **do** matter. It is intrinsic to who they are as being human.

Second, Jesus cared about people. He told Peter and the other disciples that he recognised great potential in them, Mark 1.17. John was known as 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' John 13.23. It is very noticeable that even those who were discounted by other people mattered to Jesus. He touched the unclean leper who was required to live hidden away from society, Mark 1.41. He stayed at the house of Zacchaeus, the tax-collector and collaborator with the occupying forces of Rome, despised by the people, Luke 19.1-10. Often, he reached out across the gender gap to women who were seen as second-class citizens, Luke 8.1-3. He treated foreigners with kindness and respect, John 4.1-26. He said that little children were examples for adults to follow, Mark 10.14. Whoever he met, mattered to Jesus and he showed it.

Third, the NT church saw itself as 'the body of Christ' 1 Corinthians 12.27. Every member of the church had a part to play and mattered to the church as a whole just as every part of our human bodies matters to us. The apostle Paul, using the image of

a body, underlines this mattering when he writes: ‘The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”, nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you”, 1 Corinthians 12.21.

‘Mattering’ and joining in

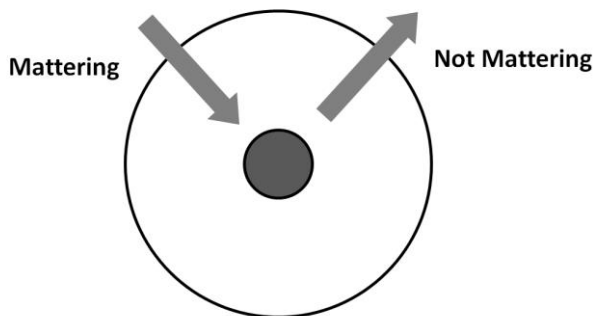
To ‘matter’ is something of a core instinct which shapes and drives human behaviour. This needs to be recognised. It is why, for example, when someone in the workplace doesn’t believe they matter they:

- Won’t speak up and share their insights in a meeting.
- Won’t volunteer their strengths to help.
- Won’t care what happens to the work.

Through neglect and feeling ‘taken for granted’ they feel that their voice won’t be listened to, they have no strengths, they have nothing to contribute. This is very detrimental to the job in hand.

But, of course, the reverse is also true. Generally speaking, if people do feel cared for, they will care. If they feel that their voice counts, they will speak up. If they feel included in the team, they will put their weight behind the project. It is ‘mattering’ which is most likely to draw people from the fringes of a church towards the centre of the church. It is feeling that they don’t matter which will cause people either to move towards the fringes of a church or even cause them to leave a church altogether.

If a church wants to motivate its people in the ‘work of the Lord’ it needs to recognise this core instinct of human beings and not ignore it. It needs to make people feel included, loved and that they are important.



Leaders and others

People feel important and as if they matter through how others treat them. We pick up our cues from the behaviour of other people towards us.

This, again, is an insight that a church needs to take on board if it is going to bring the best out of its people. It goes without saying that everyone in the church has a part to play in this. Scripture tells us to ‘honour one another’, Romans 12.10. It says that ‘in humility (we are to) count others more significant than (ourselves)’ Philipians 2.4. That’s how we make people feel as if they matter – because they do matter.

But having said that there are two groups of people who will naturally have greater power to make people feel significant and included. The people I have in mind are the church leaders and the church’s ‘welcome’ team.

- *Leaders*

The NT encourages all local churches to appoint leaders, called by God, Acts 14.23; Titus 1.5. These leaders are usually called elders or pastors (from the idea of shepherds) of the church.

These men have been given a ‘noble task’, 1 Timothy 3.1. They care for and watch over their people like a father for his family, 1 Timothy 3.4,5. These leaders are people of great significance in the life of a church (though hopefully humble men too). Being people of great significance, they particularly have the power to make others feel significant and that they matter. When a pastor preaches in a fashion that shows he loves his people he generates in his hearers a love of the church. When an elder remembers someone’s name and asks about their lives, that person feels like an insider. When the man who stands at the front of the service each Sunday and preaches God’s word takes an interest in you, you don’t feel forgotten or insignificant. You feel as if you are part and parcel of things. Those who, under God, lead the church, care about you.

It is significant in this context that it is leaders who are most often charged with the duty of offering hospitality and opening their homes to people, 1 Timothy 3.2; Titus 1.8. To invite someone into your home, your most private space, is significant and it makes the person who is invited feel significant.

- *The welcome team*

Most churches have people who stand at the door of the church’s building to shake hands with those coming in. Hopefully they do that with eye contact, a winsome

smile and a desire to make people feel welcome at church. To be truly made to feel welcome is another way of saying 'you matter to us'.

A welcome team can be a key group of people in the life of a church. If they can up their game from a mere handshake and a smile it can make a huge difference. If they can remember the names, especially of newcomers, those new folk will feel they matter. If a member of the welcome team can chat with new people and get to know them and their challenges, he or she can ask at a future time how things are going with that particular situation. It can also help if a member of the welcome team can introduce a new person to someone else in the church who has for example, the same interests or whose children attend the same school – so forming a bond – again it gives the signal 'you are important'.

The period over which this kind of thing is necessary, before a newcomer feels completely 'at home' in the church is often at long as between 3 and 6 months.

But we must not forget those who are already members, or regular attenders at the church. They too need the same kind of welcome in order that they do not feel taken for granted. A good welcome and paying attention to people is good for everyone.

When this kind of welcome happens, those people are more likely to feel as if they are included and that they are among friends. Such people will grow to care about the church and usually get involved with its work. They think to themselves, 'I want to make a contribution to what is going on here,'

Membership

Membership is a NT concept. It is used often in conjunction with the apostles speaking of the church in terms of being the body of Christ. In NT terms it means more than simply being on a paper list of those who are on board with the church, but it certainly does not mean less than that. The NT church kept lists cf. 1 Timothy 5.9 but also looked for service.

Church membership is to be encouraged. It is meant to show that folk are fully committed to the church and what it stands for, and it is the formal sign that the church is saying to someone 'we recognise that you are one of us and one with us.' Membership is hopefully where newcomers or those on the fringe of things should end up. Ideally, it ought to be that every member should be an enthusiastic member, motivated to do whatever possible to help with 'the work of the Lord'

However, it can be that a church has a demotivated or lethargic membership. This is a very unfortunate situation, and it can happen for a number of reasons.

- It may come about through the presence of people who are forever carping in the church – no matter what the church does, it is not good enough for them, so people simply end up discouraged. They down tools feeling ‘What’s the point?’ Titus 3.10.
- It may happen through a church having a staff team which covers most of the bases so people think that as long as they pay the staff, they don’t need to do anything else. Such a church tends to attract a lot of passengers rather than people who desire to serve, Revelation 3.1, 18.
- It can happen in churches which have been blessed in the past by a generation of hard workers, but now has a subsequent generation filling the seats on Sunday morning who have become worldly and more interested in looking after themselves than forwarding God’s work, Revelation 2.4.
- It might have happened through the Covid epidemic of not so long ago, in which people were expected not to gather for church and simply got used to sitting on their backsides.

How can a pastor motivate or re-motivate such a church. It is to this question that we turn in our final chapter.

Suggested exercise

Get the church to break up into groups of 3 or 4 people and ask them to share with one another

A). What kind of welcome they like to receive at church and

B). What has been the most helpful thing that has made them feel that they matter as people to the church.

Chapter 3: Motivation – five ways to stir enthusiasm

How can a pastor stir enthusiasm in his congregation? What does the Bible say about how we can encourage people to give themselves as fully as possible to the work of the Lord?

Five basic elements are involved in any work, including the work of the Lord. These are leadership (management); task; workers; resources and rewards. Let us just think through those five elements with 'the work of the Lord' in mind and see how they should be used to motivate Christians.

Leadership

Leaders are crucial people, who are meant to help and guide in all five areas we have mentioned. But there are things to say about motivation which particularly pertain to church leaders / elders / pastors themselves. There are 3 things for us to take seriously as leaders with respect to motivating others.

- *Teaching*

True motivation is intrinsic, rather than extrinsic – that is it comes not first of all from outward incentives, but from inward desires. Children are rarely motivated to do their music practice by rewards or whatever, if they do not first of all have a real love for music. Just so, we will not get very far in seeking to motivate people to work for Christ unless they love Christ. Therefore, if you want to motivate others, your principle aim as a pastor is to give people every reason to love the Lord Jesus. Pastor, your job is to speak vividly and often of Christ's person, his work and his immense and deep affection for us. Knowing his love for us moves us to love him and act for him. In your preaching pastor, make sure that you regularly and passionately remind you people of the 'breadth and length and the height and depth' of the 'love of Christ that surpasses knowledge', Ephesians 3.18. Naturally our sinful hearts tend to coldness, so that we only love him because he first loved us, 1 John 4.19. Remember Paul's motivation? Knowing Christ's love for him and Christ's love for others drove him along in the work, 2 Corinthians 5:14. It is the leader who is himself, enthralled with Christ, who will inspire others. This sends a pastor back to his Bible and back to his knees in prayer.

- *Example*

Something I read some time ago in the book *Why Men Hate Going to Church*² made me sit up. 'Men don't follow programmes; they follow men...Throughout their lives

² *Why Men Hate Going to Church*, by David Murrow, Thomas Nelson publishing, 2005

men are transformed through encounters with inspiring men. Every successful man will tell you of a father, an uncle, a teacher, a coach...who made all the difference in his life.' Now I think that applies to everyone, male or female, boy or girl. Whether it is from real life or from movies, what often motivates us is an inspirational role model. And Paul knew that as a leader that is what he had to try to be, Philippians 3:17. Peter says the same to leaders, 1 Peter 5.3. Pastors/elders you must pray for God to make you one who inspires others. It means you need to set an example in being enthusiastic about labouring for the Lord.

- *Commitment*

We look for commitment to the church and its work. But if people get the sense, 'Here's a pastor who will only be with us for a couple of years. He's on the look-out to move on to a better job, a bigger church,' or whatever – then they will understandably conclude, 'Well, if he's not committed to the work, why should I be?' But, also the opposite can be true. 'If he thinks this church is worth spending his life for, then perhaps it really is a worthwhile work!' Here is an argument for long pastoral ministries. Sticking with the people through all the ups and downs of their lives over many years is not only good in itself, it breeds an attitude of faithful dedication and devotion to the work of the Lord among the people.

Task

The church task, the 'work of the Lord' itself, can itself be a great motivator for people. It is a work worth being enthusiastic about.

- *Significance*

We need to get the big picture of what we are involved in as the church. We are serving the greatest master on the greatest project imaginable. We are working for God to build the kingdom of God. And God's kingdom is the only entity now on earth which will last for eternity. All other works, businesses or companies that seem important now will be done away with when Christ comes. Even helpful charities, hospitals and conservation projects will not last forever. It will all be forgotten. But not God's kingdom – not souls saved for eternity. That's one of the reasons, having described the resurrection of believers to his Corinthian readers, Paul says, 'Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain' 1 Corinthians 15:58.

Secular human resources managers will tell you that people get de-motivated if they do not see their task as being of any real importance. You may not be old enough to remember the first episode of the old TV situation comedy *The Good Life*. But it

begins with a man resigning from his office. What drives Tom Good to give up his job and try to go self-sufficient in Surbiton? It was the unimportance, the banality of the job he was doing – a draughtsman for plastic models in cereal packets! How is that making a significant contribution to the world? So, he gets out.

We need to remind ourselves how our church work fits into the big picture of salvation. Yes, I may just be serving coffee after the service. But if I serve it in such a friendly way that a visitor feels welcomed and that they matter, and thinks ‘I might just go to church again’ and (even if it is at another church), hears the gospel and gets saved for eternity – then it is arguable that my little job on the coffee rota has more ultimate significance than the whole of the Microsoft Corporation! It’s worth doing! Motivated! And understanding the significance of the Lord’s work, can even tempt people with very busy lives, and pressurized secular jobs, to say to themselves, ‘Well, I know it’s going to stretch me to get involved with the church’s Holiday Bible Club, but it is really worthwhile and I’m going to do it!’ So, pastor, you must remind people of this.

- *Gift*

Pastor you must try to Find the right task for each of your people. Setting out an overall view of church work (see chapter 1) might well help people discover their gifts. If there is a big mismatch between our gifts and the task we do, this can really de-motivate us. We feel we can’t cope. But on the other hand, if people have a job they can do well, it brings its own satisfaction and therefore motivation. The NT principle is for people to utilize their gifts, Romans 12:6-8, to do what they are good at. This does not necessarily mean that people have to already have all the skills before they take on a task. Very often people like a job in which they learn new skills and have an opportunity to do something different. But if people in the church are de-motivated then one of the things a leadership should do is to talk to them about whether they are in the right job, doing something they enjoy or feel is worthwhile.

To some extent this is like a father in a family. He must make sure he doesn’t exasperate his child by giving them a task which is too hard for them. But on the other hand, he must not be so over-protective that he never trusts them with anything, so they never have a chance to develop or shine. Pastors and elders need to take similar lessons on board.

Workers

‘Workers of the world unite!’, said the father of Communism, Karl Marx, ‘You have nothing to lose but your chains’. As we move from the old industrial world to the digital world of high-tech and Artificial Intelligence, the words of Marx now sound

very dated. But they remind us of the fact that people are not just cogs in a machine. They are human beings. We are all flesh and blood with emotions and needs and vulnerabilities. What does that mean for church work?

- *Appreciation*

People need to be thanked for what they do. They need to be encouraged. Now every church member can do that, not just the pastor. The NT often emphasizes the need to encourage one another, Ephesians 4.29; 1 Thessalonians 5.11; Hebrews 10:25.

You can only encourage and thank people if you are at church to see them. You don't need to flatter people. But wherever there is something good, say 'Well done.' People get neglected and overlooked and so become discouraged, 'No one cares about the work I do behind the scenes.' If we don't encourage, then the devil will get people into the 'poor me' syndrome. Perhaps they need not only thanking but reminding that they are not doing the work for human praise, but that the Lord himself sees their work for him. No one else notices, but he does, and so their 'labour in the Lord is not in vain.'

- *Recognition*

People need to feel known. We have mentioned this before. They need to feel that they matter, not just for the task they might perform but for who they are. They are individuals precious to God. Secular 'human resources' manuals encourage managers to know at least three bits of personal information about their staff (their hobby, their holiday, their football team, the name of their wife/husband etc.) Well, pastor, you need to be much further down that road with your people. We need a true team spirit in the church. We need not just to know a few facts about people, but to genuinely love and look out for each other.

- *Prayer*

People need to be prayed for. The real measure of how important we see someone and their work in the church will be how much we pray for them. What kind of profile do we give them at the prayer meeting – not just their work for the church – but them as people.

- *Rest*

People need an opportunity to take time off. A sabbatical for a couple of months can renew people and put a new spring in their step. Elders, pastors, have you ever thought of being willing to take on their load so they can have a rest for a week or two?

Resources

A new set of tools can often stimulate even a couch potato to be up and doing. Cutting the overgrown hedge with rusty sheers? He's not interested. But with the new electric power hedge cutter for Christmas suddenly he is out there!

I understand that a church may need some money in hand for a 'rainy day'. But often churches are so dominated by that kind of thinking that they never spend the money they could. Equipping people with good resources and good tools for the job they do in church will motivate them in the work. A new coffee machine might well work wonders. A new vacuum cleaner might well do the same.

But we need to remind ourselves that we are not left to our own resources. The people of your church can know God's power even when they feel weak, 2 Cor 13:9. And that comes from God. So pastor pray for your people.

Fellowship with others in the church can also mean a lot. People should not be left on their own in a work. Ask someone to come alongside them. Jesus sent out the disciples in pairs – partly to encourage each other.

Rewards

Though the kingdom of heaven is not run like a business with financial incentives, yet the NT unashamedly speaks of rewards for those who serve well. There is the reward of Christ's presence with us now, in the word. There is the reward of the privilege of being used by God. But especially the NT speaks of rewards in the world to come. It speaks of laying up for ourselves treasure in heaven as we serve God and care for those in need, Matthew 6.20. The Master will say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant' and it will mean the world to us Matthew 25:21.

In the light of the resurrection and the world to come we read, 'Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain', 1 Cor 15:58.

Summary

How to motivate a church? Here are three crucial matters to think about.

- Make sure that people are taught an overall view of what a local church is meant to be about. This might help them see that there is a job for them to do.
- Make sure that you do everything possible to make people see that they matter, first of all to God but also to the church. People who don't feel they matter or don't feel included are unlikely to pull their weight.

Think about the things leaders should do – especially in teaching the love of God to his people. Think about how the task itself ought to be presented to people. Remember the 'workers' and treat them appreciatively, like human beings. And think about the resources of your church and the rewards God gives us by his grace.

