The Bilingual Church Leader:

SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE OF MONEY WITHIN A THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

PHILIP JAMIESON, UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
JANET JAMIESON, UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE
The New Context

• The failed model of Christendom
• The need for bilingualism
• The turn to relationality
The Power of Money

• Money is not neutral
• Its tendency is to move people away from love for God and neighbor
• Money’s power can only be thwarted by a more open and informed conversation
Deeply Doctrinal Documents

- Inconsistent church: mission doesn’t match budget
- Consistent church: consider purpose before setting budget
  - First ask: “What work is God doing in our community that God would ask us to join?”
Bilingual Clergy:

- Lead their congregations financially
- Are not dominated by money in their personal lives
- Purposefully create a financially transparent environment
- Talk about money with their congregations when not asking for it
Financial Transparency

- Secrecy provides a place for the power of money to grow
- $16 billion embezzled worldwide
- A culture of openness and transparency
The Accusation

- Clergy only talk about money when they are trying to raise it...
- Permits the believer to compartmentalize his or her life
- Allows the power of money to grow
Unintended Messages

• Little connection between faith and work
• Sacred work is better than secular work
• Work in the church matters, but work in the world does not
Talking About Money When Not Asking For It

Three ways in which clergy can facilitate the integration of faith and work:

1. Praying for parishioner’s work in the world and visiting them in their workplace.
2. Preaching and teaching about faith and work.
3. Providing support groups within the church which focus on work issues
Three Primary Facets

- The renewal of theological language allows Christian leaders to see God’s abundant provision, even in the midst of economic downturns
- Mark 8:14-21
- The missional approach to the Christian faith
Three Primary Facets

• A renewed focus upon motivation

• Four primary reasons that people give to church

  1. Reciprocity with God
  2. Reciprocity with the religious group
  3. Giving to extensions of the self
  4. Altruism and thankfulness
Three Primary Facets

- The ecclesial context
- Do stewardship practices strengthen or weaken Christian communities?
- Women at the Well UMC
Conclusions

- The triumph of grace
- No despair – Matt 6:31-33
- The necessity of bilingualism
- A return to the theological depths of the language of Christian stewardship