



EXPOSITION

Monthly e-Bulletin from Virginia Beach Theological Seminary



From My Window

Dr. Charles E. Welch never considered himself a man of outstanding or unusual ability. In 1875 his father gave him the formula which produced “unfermented grape juice.” Charles spent time perfecting his dad’s idea, but his heart’s desire was to go to Africa as a missionary. However, when he applied to a mission board in 1885, he was rejected due to unfit health. He saw this as God’s hand to redirect him, and he wrote, “I consider myself a missionary compelled to stay at home and do business for the Lord.” God blessed **Welch’s Grape Juice**; and until Charles’ death in 1926, he supported hundreds of missionaries. He loved 2 Cor. 8:12, and was grateful that God’s blessing is not reserved for those who seem worthy, but for all those “who have a willing mind.”



Stacy and Jamie Potts were newly married when they moved to Virginia Beach to attend seminary in 1999. Since moving to the area, Stacy graduated from VBTS with his *Master of Divinity* (2005) and was also blessed with two wonderful children — Nathaniel, 14 and Hannah, 11. Through God’s providence, Stacy was called to pastor a young church plant near the Oceana Naval Base in Virginia Beach: Cornerstone Bible Church. God wonderfully used Pastor Stacy and Jamie to ground the church in the Word, to develop a strong community outreach, and to lead it into its beautiful new facility near the base. After ten years of shepherding CBC, God directed Stacy to resign the church to begin a new ministry of helping pastors and churches be wise with their finances and live as generous people of grace. He has since written several books for pastors, joined a not-for-profit financial organization listed as a FORTUNE 500 company, and continually provides godly counsel on investment matters. His passion is focused on the body of Christ, and God is greatly using him. Thank you Stacy and Jamie for strategically serving Christ’s Body with grace and wisdom!



The Need for Wise, Biblical Counsel in 2019

Guest Author: Stacy Potts

Over my years of pastoring, I learned the benefit of surrounding myself with great professionals who could help me sort through the unique intricacies of pastoral compensation and church administration. These issues are complex but important to understand. As you and your church look forward to 2019, it may be wise to think about establishing a relationship with one or all of the following: an attorney, an accountant, a tax professional and a financial professional.

This isn't just practical wisdom, its Biblical wisdom. The Scriptures are filled with admonitions to pursue counsel. For example, Proverbs 1:5 tells us: "Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance." Similarly, Proverbs 12:15 says: "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice." As a final example, Proverbs 15:22 says: "Without counsel, plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed."

These statements are applicable to every believer, but when it comes to church compensation, finance and administrative issues, these statements are even more applicable! The reality of the situation is that pastors and churches have nuances that differentiate them from other businesses and nonprofits. And while pastors and church leaders are often very good at preaching, teaching, leading, counseling, discipling and a whole host of other ministry-related things, far too many pastors and church leaders are either misinformed or uninformed about some of these more practical and logistical areas of the church's life. This is why I believe that every pastor and every church should explore having a relationship with an attorney, an accountant, a tax professional and a financial professional – especially ones that are committed to God's Word.

Perhaps you have individuals within your church who work in these fields who would be willing to volunteer their time or expertise. If so, wonderful! But if you don't have these individuals in your church, you can hire them, as needed, either for consultation or for services rendered. Try not to regard this as being an inordinate expense but as an investment in the church. I can say that over my ten years of pastoring, we never once paid a single dollar to one of these professionals that wasn't worth ten times more in money or trouble saved. They helped us immeasurably over the years, and I am thankful for these lasting relationships we established. If you do not have these professionals in your church, get some recommendations from other churches or pastors in your area and look toward developing long-term relationships with these specialists. I believe that you will find their counsel and help to be tremendously valuable.

Let me conclude by reflecting on Jesus's words in Luke 14:28: "Which of you desiring to build a tower [a ministry], does not sit down and *count the cost*, whether he has enough to complete it?" Jesus's words should be foundational to the wise, faithful management of our financial plans. The counsel in Luke 14:28, together with the wisdom of the Proverbs, should push us to seek wise and godly counsel as we *count the cost* for our ministry efforts in 2019.