



Confidence & Fortitude: Building Resilience & Vocational Strength

Vocational idolatry & Vocational Holiness

“Why do pastors have such a difficult time being pastors? Because we are awash in idolatry...the idolatry to which pastors are conspicuously liable is not personal but vocational, the idolatry of a religious career that we can take charge of and manage...my impression is that the majority of pastors are truly good, well intentioned, even godly. But their goodness does not inevitably penetrate their vocation...I would like to see as much attention given to the holiness of our vocation as to the piety of our lives.”

Eugene Peterson

Under the Unpredictable Plant, 4-5

Whose Treasure & Where?

⁷ But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. ⁸ We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. ¹¹ For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh. ¹² So death is at work in us, but life in you.

2 Corinthians 4:7-12

Questions for congregations in the covenant for clergy care & wellbeing

- ▶ How do your ministers know that you care and are concerned for them?
- ▶ How can you help your ministers to spot or avoid developing unhealthy patterns of work and ministry?
- ▶ Are you aware that your ministers can be very vulnerable as people mostly in public view? Where might your ministers be particularly vulnerable and can you help them?
- ▶ What are the pressure points for your minister and their family/households? Are there ways you can talk about this with them without it being seen as intrusive or nosey?

Four pieces of spiritual & scientific wisdom

- ▶ **Don't try to do it alone.**
- ▶ **Accept what you have control over,
and what you don't.**
- ▶ **Seek positive meaning in the struggle.**
- ▶ **Trust that God can redeem the pain.**

Questions for reflection

- ▶ 1. Where is the source of your vocational contentment/disenchantment at the moment? What can you do or what help do you need to develop confidence and fortitude in the face of this?
- ▶ 2. What could you do in your local church to encourage your congregations and/or partners in the community to be aware of your need to be well, healthy and resilient? What role could this network play in supporting the wellbeing of ministers on estates?

