

How are you doing?

This is a busy time for us preachers. We are holding lay leadership committee meetings, preparing for the Charge Conference, and likely working on the budget for next year. Don't try to actually set a budget this soon, because September usually has some giving surprises. Some families are back from vacation and their pattern of giving has become more consistent. Other families are paying for vacation, or kids going to college, or school and their giving has become sporadic this month. September giving could roughly parallel January giving in many churches. Don't panic and like a friend of mine says, "Don't forget to breathe."

September is the January of church life. Many of you are leading new Bible studies, beginning new Sunday School classes, or launching into a sermon series. There is a sense of renewal in the church with the attendance numbers up from the summer. There is a positive energy in the church, which can be built on for the rest of the school year.

So as you enter the fall, how is your giving? Did you take your money on vacation with you this summer? Did you have to put kids or grandkids in school? Have you exhausted your credit limit with new clothes or computers? Did you go to one too many LSU football games, or have more planned than you can really pay for? As the spiritual leader in the church, are you leading in terms of your giving?

Very shortly you will be preaching stewardship sermons and leading your congregation through a prayerful process leading to filling out their annual financial commitment cards; so are you spiritually ready for this?

One of my annual checks is that I share with the congregation what I will be pledging for the next year. What would happen if you shared your giving with your congregation? Are you spiritually prepared to do so?