

Tuesday, July 14

Read

Exodus, Chapter 38

Reflect

I took one accounting class in college, figuring that I needed it not only for a well-balanced education, but for some practical knowledge. I guess you could say that it didn't have much influence on me.

Exodus 38 offers some practical knowledge about how the people of God functioned, even in the desert. They did their accounting! Ithamar, supervisor of all the work done by the Levites, meets with Bezalel and Oholiab at the conclusion of the work, not only going through the punch list, but also closing the books on everything given and how it was used.

What do we learn? Remarkably, the capital campaign for the tabernacle included not simply freewill offerings, but a per capita tax: one-half shekel of silver from every man aged 27 and older. The per capita wouldn't have gotten close to the needed funds, but it did mean that everyone had skin in the game.

We also learn something we already had been taught by Paul about the church: all gifts matter. It helps for pastors to know something about accounting, something they pick up in an intro class in college. But some members of the body are vital: those who know accounting. They insure the church's fidelity to GAAP and its fidelity to God's justice in matters of money.

The people of God can give freely, joyfully, and confidently when they trust that their money is being used for the purposes intended. God, then, can be glorified rightly when the money is accounted for.

Today, offer a prayer of thanks for all the members of our body who keep our accounts: folks in the finance office, members of our Budget and Finance Committee, and the Session. Where would the body be without them?