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# The Pastor After the Heart of God\*

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IN the first of his Pastoral Letters (1 Tim. 3:1) Paul calls the office of a bishop (ἐπισκοπή) a good work, καλὸν ἔργον. That is a brief but beautiful and most significant characterization of the Christian ministry.

The overseership of a congregation — for that is what ἐπισκοπή really means — is an ἔργον, a work, a *cura*, not a sinecure. In Bengel's terse phrase ἐπισκοπή *non est otium, sed negotium*. It was hard and very strenuous work for Paul and his collaborators; it was exacting toil during and after the days of the Reformation. "Look ye to it, ye pastors and preachers," Luther writes in his preface to the Small Catechism, "our office is a different thing from what it was under the pope; it has now become earnest and salutary. Hence it involves much trouble and labor, danger and trial."

And who will deny that the Christian ministry as we know it today is *work*? Our pastors are laborers (κοπιῶντες) in the fullest sense of the word. To prepare Scriptural, textual, timely, edifying sermons; to preach once, twice, and even three times on Sundays, and to do so in two different languages (as many of our pastors still do); to conduct services on all special occasions; to instruct children and adults, to lead Bible classes; to make pastoral visits; to plan and attend the meetings of church boards and voters' assemblies; to maintain intimate contact with the educational agencies in the congregation (some pastors teach school themselves); to give purposeful direction to societies in the congregation; to keep in touch with the newly confirmed; to be a friend at large; to approach the unchurched; to do all this and many other things which are not necessarily extraneous, but part and parcel of true shepherding; to brave the rigors of northern winters

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\* NOTE: This article grew out of a paper on the first part of Luther's "Table of Duties." Being limited in scope, it does not set forth comprehensively and exhaustively all that could be said on the qualifications and duties of a pastor. It is merely a restudy of 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

or to carry on in the enervating heat of warmer climates, that is work, hard work, WORK spelled with capital letters.

This work is rendered doubly hard when it is done not with joy, but with grief and sighing; when even members, despite the best efforts of their pastors, are sometimes unreceptive to divine truth, unco-operative, unappreciative, and niggardly; when they regard correction as a personal insult or construe their pastor's loyalty to God's Word as stubborn narrowness and try to undermine his ministry.

And yet, despite all the trying cares and wearing labors, the office of a bishop is, and always will be, a *gloriosissimum ministerium*, a ministry superlatively glorious. "This is a *true* saying: if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a *good* work" (1 Tim. 3:1). It is indeed noble, excellent work; for those engaged in it adequately meet man's deepest need by proclaiming the Evangel of free grace in Christ, the Redeemer. In and through that Gospel they bring to poor, sinful beings all the riches of God's house: food and drink to the hungry, robes of righteousness to those in filthy rags, rest to the weary, joy to the sorrowing, strength to the weak, hope to the despairing, peace and life eternal to the dying. Ministers of the Word are ambassadors of Christ, overseers of the flock which the Good Shepherd, ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός, purchased with His own blood. With the balm of Gilead they heal the brokenhearted; with exceeding great and precious promises they put into the hands of Christian pilgrims the rod and the staff on which they can safely lean in the valley of the shadow of death. To preach the Kingdom of God and teach the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence is their one task. Can there be anything more excellent, more noble? Small wonder that Paul calls such activity a *good* work. A good and noble work it is.

And only men of good character are qualified to perform it. "*Bonum negotium bonis committendum.*" That is impressed upon every aspirant to the sacred office by the inferential "then" (οὖν) and the "must" (δεῖ) in verse 2. "A bishop, *then, must* be blameless," etc. The exalted nature of the pastorate demands moral excellence in the incumbent. In 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 we have the "must" qualifications of a pastor. The "be," too, is

significant. Paul does not say, "A bishop must *become* [γίγνεσθαι] blameless, but be [εἶναι] blameless." Before a man can assume the duties of this office, he must have proved his moral worth and *be* a noble character.

The qualifications enumerated by the Apostle may be grouped under five headings: 1. Moral integrity. 2. Emotional stability. 3. Aptness to teach. 4. Spiritual maturity. 5. Success as a parent. In our study we shall, for the most part, follow the order in the "Table of Duties."

### 1. *Blameless*, ἀνεπίληπτov

'Ανεπίληπτος does not mean sinless, but irreproachable. A pastor cannot be morally perfect; otherwise no one would qualify for this office, but he must be above reproach both among his members and among those that are without "that the ministry be not blamed." Paul chose Timothy as a co-worker because he was well spoken of by the brethren (Acts 16:2). The reason is apparent. A good character is the best introduction to the sermon. *Verba docent, exempla trahunt*. When a pastor exhorts his hearers to walk "as it becometh the Gospel of Christ," he will find more receptive hearts if the hallowing influence of the Gospel is evident in his own life. Therefore Paul, in instructing Titus, how he should teach his congregation to be rich in good works, hastens to add: "In all things *showing thyself* a pattern of good works, in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed having no evil thing to say of you" (Titus 2:7, 8). If a pastor fails to set a good example, the effectiveness of his preaching will be seriously impaired, however sound his theology, however choice his diction and eloquent his delivery.

God has set the standards of the ministry high, very high. In other professions it remains true that men may err in matters of personal conduct; yet if they are experts, they will still be in demand and their professional standing will not be affected or, at least, not very seriously. The work of learned scientists, successful attorneys, skillful surgeons, is not ended if they depart from the accepted standards of morality. But let a *minister* offend in such matters, and his career is frequently ended. What is lightly

condoned in others is neither forgotten nor forgiven him. A pastor is more than a professional man; he is a minister of Jesus Christ, a witness unto the truth, and men expect that truth to possess him and to be reflected in his life and character.

"No doubt, it ought always to be remembered that the preacher is a sinner, needing forgiveness like everybody else, that the sermon is a message to him as well as to those who listen; but it is flying in the face of facts to pretend that the discrepancy between the preacher's message and what he is known personally to be is of no consequence. It is of consequence, and it ought to be of consequence. This is a burdensome and challenging thought, but we must not run away from it."<sup>1</sup> The Lord has put it squarely into the path of every man who reaches out for the ministry. No man is watched like the minister; no profession has its shortcomings tabulated as the ministry. When the ministry is blamed, men's hearts are easily closed to its appeal, and the cause of Christ is likely to suffer. "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine," is Paul's word to Timothy and to all who are entrusted with the care of souls.

## 2. *The Husband of One Wife*, μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα

The meaning is clearly "one wife at a time." But this simple regulation has been variously interpreted by ancient and modern commentators. We may pass by the view "husband of *a* wife, a married man," as ungrammatical. The definite numeral εἷς, μία, ἕν has not lost its force "one" in the New Testament. This is the view of the Greek Church, which *requires* all priests to be married men, but forbids a second marriage. The view of the Mormons, "husband of *one* wife, if not more," deserves mention only as an exegetical *curiosum*. Many Greek and Latin fathers contend that what is here discountenanced is digamy. This opinion is shared by not a few modern commentators and translators. Moffat and Goodspeed translate "married only once."

But there is nothing in the Greek to justify this translation. Moreover, it appears in the highest degree improbable that Paul should have forbidden overseers to remarry. There is nothing in his Letters when he speaks expressly of second marriages (Rom. 7:2, 3; 1 Cor. 7:8, 9, 39) to suggest the notion that there is any-

thing disreputable about a second marriage, and it would obviously cast a great slur upon second marriages if it were laid down as a principle that no one who had married twice could be an *episcopus*. But if we consider the general laxity in regard to marriage which prevailed at this time among Jews and Romans, it must have been a common thing for a man to have more than one woman living who had been his wife. And this, as a distinct breach of the original law, would properly be a bar to anyone being called to the office of a bishop.

As regards the opinion of the early Christian Church on second marriages, it was not at all uniform. Among those who held that this passage absolutely prohibits a second marriage for an *episcopus* it was merely a part of the asceticism of the day. It should be noted, too, that Paul, in setting down the qualifications of an overseer is not teaching a higher morality for a pastor than for those to whom he is to minister. The expression "husband of one wife" is in the midst of others which denote moral qualities to be possessed not only by the *episcopus*, but by every Christian. Weymouth correctly and beautifully brings out the meaning conveyed by Paul's words by translating *μᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα* "true to his own wife."

### 3. *Vigilant*, *νηφάλιον*

"Vigilant" appears to be a good translation of *νηφάλιος*. For while *νηφάλιος* literally means "not intoxicated, not addicted to intoxicants," it is used in our passage to denote spiritual temperateness, sobriety in spirit. The root word *νήφω*, to be sober, to drink no wine, is always used figuratively in the New Testament. Moreover, Paul makes mention of moderation in drinking later on by adding "not given to wine." Chrysostom explains *νηφάλιος* thus: a bishop must be circumspect, having a thousand eyes.

Spiritual soberness is most certainly an indispensable quality in a shepherd of souls. "Watch and pray, be sober, be vigilant," is enjoined upon all believers. Shall that not be required of him who is to take heed unto the flock of God and ward off ravening wolves? Must he not be spiritually alert who, as a watchman on the towers of Zion, is to sound the alert and warn against sneak attacks of the enemy?

#### 4. *Sober, σώφρονα*

Σώφρων means literally "of a sound mind" in contrast to "insane, deranged." Then it also describes a man of emotional stability, who is a master of himself (ἐγκρατής) and can control his appetites.

"The little rubs of life often try the temper more than the greater things, and they find us with our armor off." Untold, if not irreparable, harm can be done when a minister lets his emotions run away with him. One unguarded moment can tear down what has been built up by faithful labor through many years. Therefore the Lord demands self-control of his servants. Paul was very strict with himself both for his own sake and for the sake of those to whom he preached. "I keep under [ὑπωπιάζω, hit and bruise] my body and bring it into subjection lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27). The Apostle became all things to all men with but one aim in mind, that he might by all means save some. Lest he be disqualified for that high purpose, it was imperative that he at all times exercise rigid self-mastery.

#### 5. *Of Good Behavior, κόσμιον*

Κόσμος from κόσμος, order, apt and harmonious arrangement, describes the character of a man whose life reflects heaven-born peace and harmony "in the inward parts," a man who spontaneously does what is "in order." Such a person possesses what the Germans call *Herzensbildung*: he has "his heart in the right place," because his heart is in tune with God. He is the Christian gentleman who says and does the right thing at the right time.

The pastor after the heart of God should be such a man. It should be said of him: "Whatever he does comports with the dignity of his high office; he is able to stand before kings and to make the most lowly in his parish feel at ease in his presence." He has a generous portion of that intangible, yet very real quality which we call tact, which someone has described as follows: "Tact is not a sixth sense, but it is the life of all the five. It seems to know everything without learning anything. It has served an extemporary apprenticeship; it wants no drilling. It puts on no look of wondrous wisdom; it has no air of profundity, but plays

with the details of place as dexterously as a well-taught hand flourishes over the keys of a pianoforte. It has all the air of the commonplace and all the force of genius."

Pastoral decorum rules out the stories that are to give zest and spice to after-dinner speeches but that lack the salt with which a Christian's speech should be seasoned. Witty stories based upon quaint perversions of Bible texts, questionable references and allusions, anecdotes that make light of heaven or hell and related subjects, had better remain unspoken. A pastor's speech may be light and gay (we envy the man whose spontaneous humor can make an audience roar with laughter), but it should never offend against what is proper for a representative of God. If this be pietism, make the most of it. We know that parishioners *have* been offended on occasion and believe it to be true that "by a single semivulgar anecdote or reference a pastor may suffer permanent loss of influence. For the idea lingers that he was capable of saying it."<sup>2</sup>

#### 6. *Given to Hospitality*, φιλόξενον

Kindness to strangers was especially important in those early times. Christians would often come as strangers, be it in pursuit of work, on errands, or to escape persecution. They needed food and lodging. They could not resort to houses of the heathen and did not want to be exposed to the risk of evil companionship in public inns. It was but natural that they turned first of all to the elders or deacons for counsel and aid. These should not fail to help and befriend them. The practice of *uncalculating* hospitality enjoined upon all believers should find its fullest expression in their spiritual leaders.

Moral excellence and Christian virtues in a pastor, although basic and important, must be supplemented by professional competence. A bishop must also be

#### 7. *Apt to Teach*, διδακτικόν

Jesus was pre-eminent as a teacher. The Gospels reveal why He must be pronounced the Foremost of all teachers. When His work as divine Instructor and Mediator was done, He sent forth His disciples to evangelize the nations by baptizing and *teaching* them. The prime qualifications of a teacher are, first, that he understand



thoroughly the *subject* which he is to teach; second, that he understand thoroughly the *people* whom he is to teach. A minister must teach the Word of God, since that alone is able to make men wise unto salvation. Accordingly, he must know his Bible, know it from cover to cover, know its central theme and everything which directly or remotely has a bearing on that theme. The better he knows his Bible, the better he will be able to use it for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness and to illumine his preaching by apt illustrations. As a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, he will bring forth from his treasure things new and old.

Preaching, which is basically teaching, is not composed of pious platitudes wrapped in catchy or pleasing phrases. It is not merely telling audiences what they know already. The sermon is to lead the hearers into ever-enlarging views of divine truth that they may grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Savior. The best teaching sermon is the expository sermon. Such sermons require penetrating study and compel the preacher to dig deep into the Scriptures. The wells from which we draw water are deep. And the longer a pastor is at a congregation, the more he will have to search to give body and freshness and wholesome variety to his messages. *Wer nichts einnimmt, hat auch nichts auszugeben.* Bees produce honey only if they fly busily from flower to flower to gather the sweet nectar; so pastors must wander from flower to flower in the garden of God's Word and gather the nectar of divine wisdom and truth if they are to preach sermons that will be to the hearers sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. In short, a pastor can teach well only what he himself knows and, of course, believes.

Mere intellectual knowledge of the Bible is not enough. It must be a knowledge of the heart as well as of the head. True, the power of the Word to save does not depend upon the personal faith of the preacher or teacher. But it is just as true, a preacher without faith is not a pastor after the heart of God; he is a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. *Gemalte Blumen riechen nicht.* He who would warmly and winsomely teach the Word to others must first himself have been taught by God. He must remain a pupil of the Holy Ghost and have Him open the Scriptures so that his

heart burns within him. Jesus appeared to Paul to make him a minister and a witness. The two are inseparable. The disciples were to be teachers as well as witnesses to the risen Christ. They were to proclaim what they themselves had seen and heard and preach what they firmly believed. We know from Acts that they did. What they taught, they believed with all their heart. This personal faith in the truth of their message made them apt to teach. "I believe, therefore have I spoken."

The second qualification of a teacher is that he understand thoroughly the people whom he is to teach. The best and quickest way to accomplish this is still to visit them in their homes. Pastors are overseers of their flock. Ἐπίσκοπος, translated "overseer," is derived from ἐπισκοπέω and ἐπισκέπτομαι. The verbs are virtually synonymous, meaning "to look upon, look after, examine, care for." Ἐπισκέπτομαι is used repeatedly in the New Testament in the sense of "visit" (Matt. 21:35 and others). By diligently visiting his members a pastor will — apart from the good will, cheer, and encouragement he brings into the homes; and which home does not need strengthening and comfort? — by visiting his people he will learn not merely who they are and where they live, but what they are and how they live, what they think and why they think as they do, what they know of Christian doctrine and the work of the Church, how much they have forgotten or never understood, how they rear their children, what burdens they bear, what problems vex their soul, and a hundred other things which will help him to point his sermons or "gear" them, if you will, to life situations. House visitations will give every preacher a needed post-graduate, practical course in sociology, economics, and enlarge his knowledge of human nature, which is extremely important for a bishop of souls. If an intensive study of the Bible will tell him primarily *what* to preach, an intimate knowledge of his people will tell him *how* to preach so as to reach their hearts with his message, how to prepare his sermons so that they will meet the real needs of real men and women and children. A house-going pastor will come down to the level of his people and speak their language. It has often been remarked that some sermons are over the heads of the people. If they are, it is because they are preached by men who do not know the background, the intellectual and

spiritual capacity of their audience. Luther's dictum about the need of plain preaching to plain people is too well known to require repetition.

In his farewell sermon Theo. W. Cuyler said to his congregation, "I have given sermons to you, *I have got sermons from you*" (italics ours). We can readily understand what he meant. In that same sermon he had this to say: "It has been my rule to know everybody in this congregation, if possible, and very seldom have I allowed a day to pass without a visit to some of your homes. To carry out thoroughly a system of personal oversight, to visit every family, to put one's self into sympathy with aching hearts and bereaved households, is a process that has swallowed up time. Costly as the process has been, it has paid."<sup>3</sup> Paul taught the Ephesians publicly and *from house to house*. Doubtless the latter, a blessing in itself, helped to make the former more purposeful and effective.

A word of caution is in place. One must be extremely careful about using confidential information gained from pastoral visits as illustrative material in sermons. Confidence dare not be betrayed even in a sermon.

#### 8. *Not Given to Wine*, μή πάρουνον

While the Lord does not require of a servant of the Word that he be a teetotaler as some extremists would have us believe, it is necessary that he be very moderate. To have the reputation of being a tippler, who "likes his glass of beer and wine," will hardly add to his stature in the community. Strong drink immoderately indulged in breaks down inhibitions, loosens the tongue, and weakens the power of self-mastery. No pastor can afford that. The words "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit" have special pertinency for spiritual leaders.

#### 9. *No Striker*, μή πλήκτην

These words are to be understood quite literally. A pastor should not be a pugnacious individual who always carries a chip on his shoulder, ready to strike a blow. Should it be necessary to mention that in the case of an overseer? Paul evidently thought so. He knew the temper of men in the East and South. We recall the violence of the priests toward Jesus and toward Paul himself and

the mob violence in some of the early Councils. The Apostolic Constitutions (XXVII) formally warned: "If a bishop, presbyter, or deacon shall strike any of the faithful who have sinned or of the unbelievers who have done wrong, we command that he be deposed." No minister would perhaps be guilty of such violence today, but he needs to guard against its spirit, as the next paragraphs show.

10. *Patient*, ἐπιεικῆ

The idea of patience is contained in ἐπιεικῆς, but it does not exhaust the Greek word. Ἐπιείκεια represents the spirit of equity as opposed to that of stiff justice. In the ethics of Aristotle (Ethic. Nic. V, 10) it stands for the temper which contents itself with less than its due and shrinks from insisting on its strict rights. In 2 Cor. 10:1 the noun ἐπιείκεια is translated "gentleness," where it is attributed to our Lord Himself. Ἐπιείκεια is akin to mercy which seasons justice.

Such forbearance fittingly graces a minister of Christ, who was meek and lowly in heart. To be sure, when God's Word is involved, a pastor dare not yield one iota of the truth, but must stand *contra mundum* "an iron pillar and a brazen wall against kings and princes, against priests, against the whole land"; but in other matters he must not always want to have things his way. Wand aptly renders μὴ αὐθάδη (not self-willed), in Titus 1:6 "conciliatory of others' opinions." To have the reputation of being a self-willed dictator does not commend a pastor to the good will of his congregation. James Russell Lowell once described the qualifications of a President of the United States in words which one by one may be said to describe those of the true parish minister: ". . . by so gently guiding the public sentiment that he seems to follow it; by so yielding doubtful points that he can be firm without seeming to be obstinate in essential ones, and thus gain the advantage of compromise without the weakness of concession; by so instinctively comprehending the tempers and prejudices of people as to make them gradually conscious of . . . his freedom from temper and prejudice; it is by such qualities as these that a magistrate shows himself to be a chief in a commonwealth of free men."

"At the conclusion of a meeting of a church board, when the discussion had disclosed sharp divergence of sentiment and the ideas of the minister had met with open opposition, a member of the board said: 'Pastor, you have shown tonight what a truly Christian character is. You have never retreated or surrendered. You have met other men's ideas with deference, courtesy, and control and have not insisted on having your own way. Therefore in the end you will have it and have at the same time the affection and respect of every one of us.'"<sup>4</sup>

*11. Not a Brawler, ἄμαχον*

These words are added to repeat and underscore the thought contained in ἐπιεικής, μὴ πλήκτης, that an imperious, quarrelsome disposition in a man would be a constant hindrance to a blessed ministry.

*12. Not Greedy of Filthy Lucre, Not Covetous*

Μὴ αἰσχροκερδῆ, ἀφιλόγυρον

The love of money is a root of all evil, and it can be a root of many great evils for the Christian minister. Judas, whom Jesus called to be one of the Twelve, lost his bishopric (ἐπισκοπήν) and even his own soul because he succumbed to grasping greed. There is nothing that more certainly paralyzes a minister's usefulness than an inordinate desire for money. The Lord Himself ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. Fair gains for fair pains are the parson's right. He is entitled to an adequate salary as something due him. He may accept remuneration for special services and take gifts as a token of appreciation. But he must not abuse his spiritual office for material gain. He should do nothing to expose himself to the charge that "he is after the money." He should always place the service above profit, avoiding the suspicion of covetousness, and never measure his work by his salary. If he does, the members will lose faith in his sincerity; and once that faith receives a severe jolt, the effectiveness of his ministry may be lost irretrievably.

The appeal of Peter to the presbyters deserves to be recalled frequently. "The elders which are among you I exhort. . . . Feed the flock of God . . . not by constraint, but willingly; not for

filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. . . . And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." In that selfless spirit Paul performed his arduous labors. When he took leave from the elders of Ephesus, he could say to them: "I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things—how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Souls outweigh silver and gold. Pastors who have a passion for souls will be able to say with Paul: "I seek not yours, but you."

13. *One That Ruleth Well His Own House, Having His Children in Subjection with All Gravity*

Τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου καλῶς προϊστάμενον τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ μετὰ πάσης σεμνότητος

The Apostle now turns from a pastor's personal piety and probity to the part he plays in his own family as a criterion of determining his fitness for the ministry. A pastor with a family should not only be a good provider (1 Tim. 5:8), but also a good *Erzieher*. Like every other father he is the head of a household and in that capacity should exercise his God-given prerogatives and responsibilities. He should train his children to be obedient; rule them *well*, not with an iron hand the clutching authority of which is never relaxed, but with the severity which is softened by affection and sweet reasonableness. The best results are usually achieved when a pastor's conduct wins and holds respect. His whole life and demeanor should command respect and inspire reverence.

The Lord requires no less; "for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" That is a logical inference. If a man proves to be incompetent in the comparatively small sphere of his own family, how can he hope to measure up to the greater responsibility in a congregation, where many families are entrusted to his care? The ministry of a pastor to his people calls for the patience, firmness, and understanding of a successful parent.

14. *Not a Novice, μὴ νεόφυτον*

A recent convert is not to be ordained a pastor. He may be fervent in the spirit and zealous for the Lord in the ardor of his first love, but that does not immediately qualify him for a pastorate. The responsibilities of this office are so great, the problems requiring counsel and guidance so varied and at times so delicate, that only a man of spiritual maturity can render the service rightfully expected of him. "Newly planted" Christians have to be put to the test of time before being given the responsibility of the care of others.

After Paul's conversion it was years before he was sent forth to found and shepherd congregations. Before John the Baptist began his work as the forerunner of Christ, he was in the wilderness to ripen into that maturity which he exhibited afterward by his fearless testimony, his sturdy loyalty, and his genuine humility.

It is precisely this humility which neophytes, if appointed as overseers, would be likely to lack to their own undoing. Paul points that up in 1 Tim. 3:6; where he writes: "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride [τυφωθείς, wrapped up in a cloud of smoke], he fall into the condemnation of the devil." A new convert in the position of pastor may be unduly impressed with his own importance and share the judgment that came upon Satan. Pride goeth before a fall.

Last, but by no means least, a shepherd of souls should be inflexibly loyal to God's Word.

15. *Holding Fast the Faithful Word as He hath been Taught, that He May Be Able by Sound Doctrine Both to Exhort and to Convince the Gainsayers, ἀντεχόμενον τοῦ κατὰ τὴν διδαχὴν πιστοῦ λόγου, ἵνα δυνατὸς ᾖ καὶ παρακαλεῖν ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ καὶ τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας ἐλέγχειν.*

These words are strongly reminiscent of the Lord's parting words to His disciples: "Go ye and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe *all* things whatsoever *I* have commanded you." Here we have our directive. It leaves no room for doctrines or commandments of men. "He that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully." All who would be true shepherds of the *Pastor pastorum* must adhere tenaciously (ἀντέχω is a strong

word) to His Word in Holy Scripture, turning away from it neither to the right nor to the left. Then only will they be able to speak with authority in the Church (πιστοῦ λόγου) and fulfill their divine mission; then only will they be healthy teachers (1 Tim. 6:3, 4), able to give instruction in sound doctrine and produce spiritually healthy people; then only will they be able to come with balm of the Paraclete to comfort them that mourn, to give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

If pastors continue in the Word of God, they will be a match also for those that do not obey the Gospel. "There are" — and always will be — "many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers . . . whose mouths must be stopped." There is only one thing with which we can effectually stop them: with sound Scriptural doctrine. "Is not My Word like a fire, saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" The Word has power to convict men.

In Titus 1:9 Paul significantly uses the word ἐλέγχειν. It is the word employed by the Lord in Matt. 18:15: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, tell him his fault," ἔλεγξον αὐτόν, convict him, and in John 16:8, where it is rendered in the A. V.: "He, the Comforter, will *reprove* the world." Ἐλέγχειν is to rebuke another so effectually as to bring him, if not always to a confession, yet at least to a conviction of his sin (Trench). Accordingly a preacher can do with sinful men what the unbelieving Jews could not do with the sinless Christ.

However, even though conscientious pastors proclaim the Word of God without the admixture of any error, they will not convert the whole world. Many will always contradict, either openly or by silent rejection. But though they gainsay, they must admit in their heart of hearts: "These men speak the words of truth and soberness."

*Es bleibt immer ein Stachel in ihrem Gewissen.* "The Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit . . . and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Felix and Agrippa, though not convinced and persuaded by Paul's impas-



sioned plea to become Christians, were nevertheless convicted in their hearts.

The poet of Olney in "The 'Task'" has given us the following description of a pastor after the heart of God:

Would I describe a preacher such as Paul,  
 Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,  
 Paul should himself direct me. I would trace  
 His master strokes and draw from his design.  
 I would express him simple, grave, sincere;  
 In doctrine incorrupt; in language plain  
 And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,  
 And natural in gesture; much impressed  
 Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,  
 And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds  
 May feel it, too; affectionate in look  
 And tender in address, as well becomes  
 A messenger of grace to guilty men.

As we reread and ponder again what kind of pastors God wants us to be, we tremble as we did before our ordination, and we cry: "Who is sufficient for these things? Who can qualify for the high calling in which so much is demanded?" The answer is close at hand: "Our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament." We have our treasure in earthen vessels. We are painfully conscious of our limitations and imperfections and shall never lose a feeling of utter inadequacy. Humbly but confidently we look to Jesus Christ, our Lord, who counted us faithful and put us into the ministry. He alone can forgive where we have failed and supply what we lack. To Him we turn daily with the prayer: "Lord, make me a pastor *approved unto God*, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth. Give me those gifts and graces which I need for the performance of my sacred task."

Give me a father's tenderness, a shepherd's care,  
 A leader's courage, which the cross can bear;  
 A ruler's awe; a watchman's wakeful eye;  
 A fisher's patience, and a laborer's toil;  
 A guide's dexterity to disembroil;  
 A prophet's inspiration from above,  
 A teacher's knowledge, and a Savior's love.

Live out Thy life within me, O Savior, King of Kings;  
 Be Thou Thyself the answer to all my questionings;  
 Live out Thy life within me, in all things have Thy way,  
 I the transparent medium, Thy glory to display.

In concluding this study we should like to appropriate the sermon which each pastor and every teacher in the Church should preach to himself: <sup>5</sup>

DES PFARRERS PREDIGT AN SICH SELBST

Ein Pfarrer musz sein  
 Ganz grosz und ganz klein;  
 Vornehmen Sinns wie aus Königsgeschlecht,  
 Einfach und schlicht wie ein Bauernknecht;  
 Ein Held, der sich selbst bezwungen,  
 Ein Mensch, der mit Gott gerungen;  
 Ein Quell von heiligem Leben,  
 Ein Sünder, dem Gott vergeben;  
 Ein Herr dem eignen Verlangen,  
 Ein Diener den Schwachen und Bangen;  
 Vor keinem Groszen sich beugend,  
 Zu den Geringsten sich neigend;  
 Ein Schüler vor seinem Meister,  
 Ein Führer im Kampf der Geister;  
 Ein Bettler mit flehenden Händen,  
 Ein Herold mit goldenen Spenden;  
 Ein Mann auf den Kampfesstätten,  
 Ein Weib an den Krankenbetten;  
 Ein Greis im Schauen,  
 Ein Kind im Trauen;  
 Nach Höchstem trachtend,  
 Das Kleinste achtend;  
 Gestimmt zur Freude,  
 Vertraut dem Leide,  
 Weitab vom Neide;  
 Im Denken klar,  
 Im Reden wahr;  
 Des Friedens Freund,  
 Der Trägheit Feind;  
 Feststehend in sich,  
 Ganz anders als ich.

## NOTES

1. Herbert H. Farmer, *The Servant of the Word* (Charles Scribner's Sons), p. 97.
2. Raymond Calkins, *The Romance of the Ministry* (The Pilgrim Press), p. 34.
3. Theo. W. Cuyler, *How to Be a Pastor*, p. 137.
4. Raymond Calkins, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
5. Written by Dietrich Vorwerk, *Kann auch ein Pastor selig werden?* (Verlag von Fr. Bahn, Schwerin), p. 108. Prof. M. H. Franzmann has kindly translated Vorwerk's classic.

## THE PARSON'S SERMON TO HIMSELF

<p>A parson must be, first of all,          Both very great and very small,          A king's son in nobility,          A servant in simplicity;          A victor who has overcome          Himself, and brought his trophies              home;          One who with God has wrestled and          Received a blessing at His hand;          A fount of waters leaping high          In plenitude of sanctity;          A sinner living by the word          Of pardon spoken by his Lord;          His passions mastered, all intent          To serve the weak and diffident;          Not one to truckle to the great,          He stoops to men of low estate;</p>	<p>A learner still, but resolute          To lead and guide where men dispute;          A beggar in his nothingness,          A herald scattering largesse;          A man in battle, womanly          Beside the beds of misery;          In clarity of vision old,          A child to trust and cling and hold;          Aspiring high, he does not rise          To slight the small, or to despise;          To grief no stranger, ever one          To give men's joy his benison,          Aloof from enviousness alone;          Clear in thought and true in word,          Peace is his love, but sloth's abhorred;          Foursquare he stands and solidly, —          And he is not at all like me.</p>
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Milwaukee, Wis.