

excellency of the parties chosen, the ends of the pastorate being purely moral and spiritual; "the perfecting of the saints to the work of service; the edifying of the body of Christ, and the conversion of sinners;" it was to be expected that the most excellent men in the church would be chosen to make others excellent. The name given to the minister as it was before to the Jewish prophet, *Man of God*, would indicate a special consecration to God's service and a more than ordinary holiness. The man of God's choice, the man set apart to God's work and the advocacy of God's interest, the man reflecting in a high degree God's image. The culture of the heart is of the very first importance in the pastor, both as an element of power with the people and as a pre-requisite to the profitable study of God's word. No learning, however profound and extensive, no eloquence however persuasive and attractive can compensate for the want of deep-toned piety on the part of the Christian minister. Only thus, my brother, can we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God; only thus can we prove examples to the flock and lead them on to higher attainments in moral excellence; only thus shall we be able to say "Be ye followers of me, even as also I am of Christ;" only thus when reviewing our ministry can we have comfort, for what we then most deeply deplore is not the lack of talent or genius, but the lack of fidelity and consecration. Only thus shall we be able to address those who have shared in the benefits of our ministry, saying: "For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor of guile, but as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men but God which trieth our hearts, for neither at any time used we flattering words as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, nor of men sought we glory, nor yet of others, but we were gentle among you as a nurse cherishes her children. Ye are witnesses and God also how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." Brother, above everything else strive to be a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, and through your instrumentality many people will be added to the Lord. Consecration is the ground of all great trusts, the secret of all great achievements, the procurer of all great rewards. He

was a consecrated one of whom God said, "My covenant was with him of life and peace, and I gave unto him for the fear wherewith he feared me and was afraid before my name; the law of truth was in his mouth and iniquity was not found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and equity and did turn many away from iniquity." Thou, oh, man of God, flee youthful lusts "and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

Thirdly. Go out before this congregation and lead them out in the exercise of *legitimate* and *judicious* rule. The pastor is set over the congregation, not indeed as the supreme and irresponsible ruler, for *that* Christ alone is but still the ruler. It is significant that all the scripture names by which the minister of Jesus Christ is designated imply rule, as for example: pastor or shepherd of the flock, a name given to kings in ancient times and elders, not simply a synonym for seniors, but an official title involving government. "Let the elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double honour," and bishops or overseers. Capacity to rule is spoken of in the pastoral epistles as essential in the ministry. Presuming that the bishop will be a man of family he is required to be one who "Ruleth his children and his own household well." For if a man know not how to rule his own house how shall he take care of the church of God? It is a matter of common observation by experienced men that more ministers have failed for want of ability to rule than of incapacity to preach. Therefore, my brother, would I urge upon you the cultivation of administrative powers, not as a lord over God's heritage, not as empowered to make laws for Christ's house, but only to expound and enforce laws already given by Christ. Govern his church in the interests of Christian liberty and Christian love and gospel purity. Give due scope to diversity of opinion in things not essential. Carefully distinguish between principles that are invaluable and mere church rules which, having their ground in expediency, may be altered. Wisely discriminate between private offences and public scandals; between errors of judgment and moral delinquencies; between sins and heresies that are disciplinable and such as are to be dealt with in other ways. Be prepared to mediate between extreme parties, the conservatism