

Prayer pulls the rope below, and the great bell rings above in the ears of God. Some scarcely stir the bell, for they pray so languidly; others give but an occasional pluck at the rope; but he who wins with heaven

is the man who grasps the rope boldly and pulls continuously with all his might.—*Spurgeon.*

It is ours in every emergency to do our best and then leave results in God's hand.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST

By *Rev. Professor Ross, D.D., Montreal*

OVERSEERS (Rev. Ver., "bishops")—The same persons who are called bishops in v. 28 are called elders in v. 17. Bishop in Greek speech was a general term, somewhat like "president" or "chairman" among us, and elder was the well-known office-bearer of the Jewish synagogue. The worship and government of each Christian congregation were at first in the hands of the elders as a body, both terms were applied to them, and each individual among them was assigned work according to his gifts. But after the apostles were all dead, and each congregation grew larger and the number of congregations multiplied, their organization became more complex. As there were many

actions of government and worship which required to be performed by one elder acting for the rest, so in time one came to be permanently elevated above the rest of the presbyters, and the title of bishop was applied to him alone. Some suppose that the reason why the title bishop and not presbyter came to be given to the superior officer, was because it seems from some inscriptions to have denoted the financial officers of the social clubs and guilds of the time, and the bishops had charge of all the funds of the church for the support of the widows, orphans, aged and infirm among the brethren. The qualifications for the office are mentioned in 1 Tim. 1-7.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

(This section embraces teaching material for all grades in the school.)

For Bible Class Teachers

AN ANALYSIS

By the late *Principal MacVicar, D.D., LL.D.*

In this farewell address to the elders or bishops at Ephesus Paul urges them to fidelity in the discharge of official duties, especially by four distinct considerations:

1. *His own example.* (a) He unhesitatingly appeals to his record of incessant service day and night for three years, warning them of duty and danger individually with melting tenderness, v. 31. Here was the manifestation of the true ministerial and missionary spirit. (b) He claims to have been thoroughly disinterested, unselfish, in no way seeking to enrich himself, v. 33. As he wrote to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 12: 14), so he acted at Ephesus. He worked with Aquila and Priscilla at tent-making, Acts 18: 3. While he had the right to demand support as the reward of his spiritual labors, yet for the sake of others, he waived the exercise of that power, 1 Cor. 9: 12-15. (c) He showed

them by example that Christians should work to "support the weak," and cited, in support of his doctrine and practice, the words of Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," v. 35. Why? Because it promotes the happiness, the moral and spiritual good, both of the giver and of the receiver.

2. *The call to office by the Holy Spirit.* (a) The office was that of the elder, which, in the New Testament, is the same as that of the bishop. The persons sent for from Miletus were the elders (v. 17), and in v. 28 they are called bishops (Greek, *episcopous*). (b) The call to this office is primarily from the Holy Spirit, Acts 13: 2. He also qualifies men for the discharge of its duties, 1 Cor. 12: 8. The elders are to act as shepherds "in" the flock, not "over" it, but as part of it. This means more than "to feed"; it includes care, protection and government. The flock is the church, the ecclesia or assembly of those purchased by the blood of Christ out of all kindreds and nations. See Isa. 40: 11; Luke 12: 32; Rev. 5: 9. Christ is the Good Shepherd