

ever, to repeat, that it is very seldom these qualities are found, except in persons somewhat advanced in age and in the way of God. * * * *

An Elder must excel in humility, meekness, and patience; not lifted up with pride, but patient. He must be calm and dispassionate: "not self-willed, not soon angry, no brawler, no striker, but sober and just." He must be temperate in the enjoyment of lawful objects, and dead to the pleasures, profits, and honors of this world. "Not given to wine; not greedy of filthy lucre; not covetous, but temperate, and given to hospitality." He must also possess a considerable degree of Spirituality of mind; love to the cause and people of Christ; "vigilant, holy, a lover of good men—holding fast the faithful word;" feeding the flock, watching for souls, and supporting the weak. In a word, his faith and conversation are to be such, that the saints over whom he presides, may with joyful imitation follow them; "whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." * *

IV. To fit a man for the Elder's office, it is necessary that he also possess gifts for teaching and ruling. He must be "apt to teach," "able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers." The gift of teaching necessarily implies an extensive acquaintance with the word of God. "All Scriptures is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Knowledge of the Scriptures is indispensably necessary for an Elder of a Church. If he does not generally excel those over whom he presides, it is by no means likely that he will edify their souls. This is another powerful reason why a Pastor should not be one lately converted. Young Christians certainly do understand the things that belong to their salvation; but the Bible is not learned in many of its parts in a short time. It needs study, much meditation, and prayer. * *

It is not, all the learning that this world can afford, that can make up the want of being taught in the faithful word. It is an extensive knowledge of the Scriptures, which renders a man "apt to teach." By sound doctrine contained in them, he is both to exhort and convince the gainsayers. Mighty in the Scriptures is a quality that can by no means be wanting in the Elder of a Christian Church. * * * *

V. Gifts for ruling must also be possessed. "If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" The endowment for ruling is not that artful cunning whereby men may project and execute plans to manage and cajole those under their care. No. If this be the wisdom of management for which any man is famous, he is unworthy of the Elder's office. Christ rules over an enlightened and willing people. The authority which Elders have over their