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### The Qualifications for the Ministry as Outlined in I Timothy 3:1-7

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#### Recommended Citation

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THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE MINISTRY  
AS OUTLINED IN I TIMOTHY 3:1-7

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A Thesis Presented to  
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary  
Department of Practical Theology

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Bachelor of Divinity

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by  
Donald L. Deffner <sup>1924</sup>

May 1947

Approved by Richard L. Jesse  
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## INTRODUCTION

In his chapter on "The Power of a Qualified Ministry" in Qualifications for Ministerial Power, C.C. Hall speaks of four fixed principles which should determine the spirit of an inquiry into the qualifications for the ministry. First, he states that an inquiry into the qualifications for ministerial power should be undertaken in the New Testament spirit. He emphasizes the fact that even though there are vast modifications of social and religious life since the first century, the present-day minister is the ambassador of Him Who was manifested in the first century, and the interpreter of a Gospel to which nothing has been added since the closing of the Apostolic Canon.

"But if he seeks for himself to be an able minister of the New Testament, and above all things to be a vehicle of spiritual power, then must he regard all intervening times and institutions as of secondary validity, and must set his mind in touch with that Divine and Chief Apostle, whose Life, whose Teachings, whose last loving Charge to His Ministry laid so little stress on ecclesiasticism and so much on consecrated personality."<sup>1</sup>

Secondly, Hall stresses that the inquiry should be undertaken in the Protestant spirit. The use of the word "Protestant" is painful, for it is "stained with the blood of fraternal strife and seared with the fires of theological hatred."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, it is a necessary word, since

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1. Hall, Qualifications for Ministerial Power, p. 30

2. Ibid., p. 31.



history has consecrated it as the symbol of a certain conception of the ministry, its functions and its power.

"It is of the essence of Protestantism that the minister shall look on himself and shall be looked on by others as a simple man among men, living as all men live, with the same joys, the same sorrows, the same cares, the same lights and shadows of circumstance playing across his path. No veil of mysticism shelters his personality from the inspection and the criticism which other men endure. No awful background of authority emphasizes his ordinary words and deeds. No isolation of his life from manhood's natural loves invests his being with strange and melancholy charm. It is with a ministry after this non-mystical type that we are concerned in our present inquiry."<sup>3</sup>

Also our inquiry should be undertaken in the present-day spirit. We naturally must evaluate our ministry in relation to the times with which it is connected. This principle is of universal significance. Our ministry lies parallel with the crowded walks of today's life. It is modern and urgent.

"That Christ's ministers have had power in former centuries and in earlier stages of the evolution of society no reader of history can doubt... But is it today a vehicle of power? Is it claiming and holding its place in modern civilization by reason of intrinsic efficiency and actual influence, or is it a survival of ecclesiasticism, existing like the beauteous ruins of Tintern in the dignity of obsolescence? It is by conducting in the present-day spirit our inquiry into the qualifications for ministerial power that we shall obtain 'the highest conceivable attestation' of this Divine institution of the ministry."<sup>4</sup>

Finally, our inquiry should be undertaken also in the American spirit. Just as certain fundamental qualifications

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3. Ibid., p. 32.

4. Ibid., p. 34.



are indispensable to ministerial power in any sphere of labor, so complete correspondence with any specific environment is a condition of the highest grade of power. For example, probably one of the chief hindrances to efficiency in missionary service among heathen races is that the minister does not fit into his environment. "Imperfect knowledge and erroneous conceptions of the national spirit pervading his intended sphere of ministry, deprive him of ability to meet the needs of those whom he desires to serve."<sup>5</sup> An effective minister cannot be an alien in the land to which he consecrates his powers, and among the people for whom he is spending his life.

"Hence, it appears that an exhaustive study of the qualifications for ministerial power would involve this peculiarly difficult line of research, the mode of developing correspondence between a missionary and a people whose race traditions are diverse and whose respective points of view represent the results of unrelated processes of evolution."<sup>6</sup>

Thus, if we are the outcome and the expression of times and institutions surrounding us, we cannot hope for a ministry intelligently possessing self-knowledge or vitally correspondent with its environment, unless the qualifications for power are investigated relatively to contemporaneous institutions and prevailing conditions

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5. Ibid., p. 35.

6. Ibid.



of thought.<sup>7</sup> And it is in this spirit that we discuss the qualifications for the ministry as outlined in a selected portion of Scripture. For Scripture is the sole rule and norm in spiritual values; and Scripture's application is changeless and timeless.

the two epistles to Timothy and the one to Titus,  
contain a scripture-plan of church-government, or a direction  
 7. Ibid., p. 36. We take it that Timothy was an evangelist left at Ephesus to care for those whom the Holy Spirit had made bishops there, that is, the presbytera. It is in Acts 20, 28 that the care of the church was committed to the presbyters, and they were called bishops. No doubt they were sorry to part with Paul, for theirs was a young church, and they were afraid of undertaking the care of it; and for that reason Paul left Timothy with them to set them in order.<sup>d</sup> Here, then, we have a very complete table of duties for pastors and all public teachers in the Church, very much like that given in the first chapter of the letter to Titus. Lenski says:

"This chapter should not be entitled die Bestimmung der Amtsinhaber, the congregational organization. Paul is not telling Timothy to arrange for these offices and to define their functions and their scope; such offices were already established and in use, and Timothy is merely to see to it that only properly qualified persons fill them. Paul had left Ephesus after founding this congregation, he had elders, when he summoned a year later to meet him at Miletus

<sup>d</sup> Matthew Henry, Commentary, on Timothy.



when he stopped there on the way to Jerusalem  
(Acts 20, 17).<sup>8</sup>

## THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE MINISTRY

Previously, in the second chapter of First Timothy,  
Paul regulated the worship of the congregation and placed

### Timothy: The Book and Its Setting

The two epistles to Timothy, and the one to Titus, contain a scripture-plan of church-government, or a direction to ministers. We take it that Timothy was an evangelist left at Ephesus to care for those whom the Holy Spirit had made bishops there, that is, the presbyters. It is in Acts 20, 28 that the care of the church was committed to the presbyters, and they were called bishops. No doubt they were sorry to part with Paul, for theirs was a young church, and they were afraid of undertaking the care of it; and for that reason Paul left Timothy with them to set them in order.<sup>8</sup> Here, then, we have a very complete table of duties for pastors and all public teachers in the Church, very much like that given in the first chapter of the letter to Titus. Lenski says:

"This chapter should not be entitled die Gemeindeverfassung, the congregational organization. Paul is not telling Timothy to arrange for these offices and to define their functions and their scope; such offices were already established and in use, and Timothy is merely to see to it that only properly qualified persons fill them. When Paul left Ephesus after founding this congregation, it had elders, whom he summoned a year later to meet him at Miletus

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<sup>8</sup>. Matthew Henry, Commentary, on Timothy.



when he stopped there on the way to Jerusalem  
(Acts 20, 17)."<sup>9</sup>

"A GOOD WORK"

Previously, in the second chapter of First Timothy, Paul regulated the worship of the congregation and placed it in the hands of men, in contradistinction to women.

He now proceeds to describe the qualifications of the pastors of congregations, implying that the pastorate does not belong to all men.

"Faithful (is) the statement: If one aspires to overseership, he desires an excellent task."<sup>10</sup> The doctrine the apostle is mentioning here is certain and trustworthy for all times; it is not a strange or new order of things.

"Originally the ministers of the Word and the deacons together seem to have formed the presbytery of the congregations, the former being designated as bishops, or overseers. It was only at the end of the first century that the chairman of the board of presbytery received the definite title of "bishop," which name was later applied only to the highest church officer in a diocese, city, or district."<sup>11</sup>

Paul is describing the simple conditions in his time, when he says that one who aspires to the office of a bishop desires an excellent work. Although today some merely

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9. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon, p. 586.

10. Ibid.

11. Kretzmann, Popular Commentary of the Bible, New Testament, Vol. II, p. 378.

Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 378.

Matthew Henry, op. cit., on Timothy III.

Drockery, The Public Commentary: The Thessalonians

to Philemon, p. 57.



regard it as a "good preferment," it is an office of divine appointment, and requires diligence and application. Ephesians 4, 12 - "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" - shows that this is not on account of the persons engaged in it, but on account of its object.

"Both preachers and hearers, however, should remain conscious of the fact that it is a service, a work, a labor, whose obligation and responsibility, not to speak of the actual activity, both mentally and physically; make it anything but a sinecure if it is properly done."<sup>12</sup>

It is concerned with the life and happiness of immortal souls, and is appointed to open men's eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, etc. (Acts 26, 18) Therefore there should be an earnest desire in those who aspire toward the ministry. For therein lies the prospect "of bringing greater glory to God, and of doing the greatest good to the souls of men by this means."<sup>13</sup>

"It may be laudably desired, not as an office of profit or honour, but with a supreme regard to the glory of God and the welfare of man, and ought not to be undertaken except by those who have a real delight and pleasure in acting upon these great principles."<sup>14</sup>

#### "BLAMELESS"

This second verse lists the positive qualifications of the Christian pastor. First the apostle sets forth

12. Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 378.

13. Matthew Henry, op. cit., on Timothy III.

14. Croskery, The Pulpit Commentary: Thessalonians to Philemon, p. 57.



those qualifications which concern the personal life of the pastor, and later those which affect his family life. "His personal qualifications are those of a spiritual and moral order presented positively."<sup>15</sup> "It is necessary then that an overseer be irreproachable," Lenski translates. This is really stated in the nature of a demand, and anticipates and includes all the attributes that are named by the apostle. The Greek word is ἀνεπίληπτου, meaning without reproach, irreprehensible.

"The episcopus is the persona of the Church. It is not enough for him to be not criminal; he must be one against whom it is impossible to bring any charge of wrong doing such as could stand impartial examination."<sup>16</sup>

Therefore he should give as little occasion for blame as possible, because this would be a prejudice to his ministry, and would naturally reflect reproach upon his office. Croskery says:

"It may be hard for a faithful man to avoid the censure of a critical society, but he must be irreproachable as being guilty of no scandal, and, above all, free from the vices enumerated under the negative aspect of his qualifications. He must be held in high moral repute by the community around him."<sup>17</sup>

Lenski points out that the following qualifications, except the ability to teach and that of not being a novice

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15. Ibid.

16. White, The Expositors Greek Testament: Thessalonians to James, p. 111.

17. Croskery, op. cit., p. 57.



or beginner in Christianity, are requirements applying to all Christians. This is quite true, and shows that there is only one standard, and not two, of morals for clergy and laity in the New Testament. And yet members of the congregation might have certain faults which cannot be tolerated in ministers, since they are the examples of the flock (Phil. 3,17; 2 Thess. 3,9; 1 Pet. 5,3). "A man who aspires to the ministry must be of proved character."<sup>18</sup>

of his effort and "ONE WIFE'S HUSBAND"

*μία γυναίκα ἄνδρα* implies the natural custom of a minister to have a wife. This passage thus condemns the rule of celibacy in the Roman Catholic Church.

"Where the apostle, in the seventh chapter of I Corinthians, seems to favour a celibate condition 'on account of the present distress,' it is not on account of any superior holiness belonging to the unmarried state, but because it sometimes affords a better opportunity for pursuing Christian work under trying conditions."<sup>19</sup>

It does not compel ministers to marry, but clearly gives the preference to a married ministry. Avoiding a second marriage is not meant here, for Paul sanctioned such marriages in I Cor. 7,2, and also because remarrying does not make a pastor more than the husband of one wife. This, then, was aimed at the polygamy so common among the Jews.

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18. Lenski, op. cit., p. 590.

19. Croskery, op. cit., p. 57.



Likewise it is meant for the divorce so common at that time, and so alarmingly prevalent today, and for remaining faithful to the wife of one's choice.

Practically speaking, a minister's wife can make or break him. If she is not with him in his work, she certainly has the power to draw him away from his work. Thus she may be either his good or evil angel, for she is present in times of weakness and depression, and her influence constantly builds up or undermines the strength of his effort and the spirit of his work.

"The sympathy of a true Christian wife to a minister in his work is something more than common friendship; it is the loving support of a heart true to the divine Master in hours of human suffering and trial - in times when the spirit of a strong man bows itself, and when there is no other earthly friend to whom he would reveal his mental weakness and anguish."<sup>20</sup>

Also the ministry of woman is indispensable in religious counsel to those of her own sex. Vinet says that "females are the natural confessors of females." Many pastors' wives have brought numerous members of their own sex to Christ, and thus have been true "deaconesses" in the Scriptural sense of the term.

A pastor's preaching will also be greatly aided by his wife's suggestions and comments. For she has greater

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<sup>20</sup>. Hoppin, Office and Work of the Christian Ministry, p. 461.

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insight into the feminine mind, and "her intuitions of character are often more penetrating and true than his slower judgments."<sup>21</sup> Likewise the suggestive information which she acquires in friendly conversation with others will be very helpful (when ethically procured) in maintaining wholesome rapport between pastor and congregation. Finally the pastor should realize that his wife's first duty is to her own family, and it is his responsibility to see that the parish does not command too much of her time and strength.

"TEMPERATE, SOBERMINDED"

A pastor should be temperate, not only concerning intoxicants or other sensual enjoyments, but also spiritually. He will not be carried away by the "fables and endless genealogies" which Paul mentioned earlier. Paul adds the word *σώφρονα*, soberminded, serious, earnest. This is an essential qualification for the ministry - soundness and balance in judgment, and not being flighty or unstable. This means he will be

"careful, cautious, discreet, able to retain his cool judgment at a time when practically the whole world is swept with a flood of false enthusiasm and of a 'Christianity' which is strongly anti-Biblical."<sup>22</sup>

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21. Ibid., op. cit., p. 592.

22. Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 379.



Certainly a pastor and even a member is a danger and a liability if he lacks these necessary qualities in guarding against the religious fads, fancies, and fictions of today's "Christianity." The effects of science and Bible criticism upon modern thought more sharply emphasized the crying need for leaders of a temperate and sober mind. "We need pastors who will conduct their own persons and then also their congregations with a sane, safe, and steady mind in all matters of life and faith."<sup>23</sup>

Matthew Henry uses the Authorized Version's translation of *νηφάλιον*, vigilant. And the King James also infers physical and spiritual sobriety, or temperance in this usage. A minister should be vigilant and watchful against Satan, watching over himself, and over those committed to his charge. Sobriety and watchfulness are often put together in Scripture, because they mutually befriend one another: "Be sober, be vigilant, etc." (I Pet. 5,8.)

Further discussion of these specific principles will be treated in the exposition of subsequent correlating verses.

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23. Lenski, op. cit., p. 592.

Keplin, op. cit., p. 458.  
Berberding, The Lutheran Pastor, p. 458.



"OF GOOD BEHAVIOR"

κόσμιον, orderly, perhaps dignified in the best sense of the term, has a wide latitude in meaning. It is really a broad quality of character and mind which will display itself in life. The King James "of good behavior" well covers the all-inclusive meaning of this quality. Thus we shall discuss the various concepts of character traits as implied in this passage.

Dignity: Dignity is the opposite of frivolousness, or questionable behavior; but it is not the opposite of real cheerfulness or genial humor. Dignity brings to mind a person of manly self-command, not a joker or buffoon in the presence of others. It is that quality which "prompts one to restrain an act, or a witticism, which compromises good feeling, good taste, or reverence for sacred things."<sup>24</sup> How sad the case when it is said of the pastor: "That minister is the funniest man that was ever in our house."<sup>25</sup> Some pastors sacrifice their character as a man by a lack of true dignity. A true piety carries with it a simple dignity. The world does not respect the pastor who is a clown in company, but neither is a stiff, formal, funereal deportment in place. Surely there is a happy mean.

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24. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 468.

25. Gerberding, The Lutheran Pastor, p. 468.



"Let there be the simple, cheerful dignity of one consecrated to the service of Christ, a teacher of trust and of truth, to whom a serene and divine elevation of purpose is natural."<sup>26</sup>

Actual ruin of a pastor's work and self is the result of foolish talking and jesting, coarse jokes, or irreverent stories. True dignity will leave "an impress of dignified repose on the very face and carriage, as if no low thing, or mean thing, could possibly come from such a man."<sup>27</sup>

A Christian gentleman (or, Gentle Manners): A minister should always show forth "a kindly sympathy, a ready helpfulness, a sunny countenance, and a cheering word." Truly the minister of today may learn from his Bible to be a more thorough gentleman than if he had studied many a book of etiquette. "Manners make the man." A sincere pastor will always have gentle manners. The closer his religious character approaches that of the perfect model - our Lord, the more he is filled with the same mind that was also in Christ Jesus, the more truly will he be a gentleman. A gentleman is always considerate of the wants and needs of the people with whom he comes in contact. He knows how to help them without being either officious or offensive. When helping the poor, he will not hurt their feelings. In dealing with the vicious and depraved, he will be a

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26. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 143.

27. Ibid., p. 469.



model of Christ's divine compassion. When moving about in the social circle, he will be especially attentive to those who are lowly and retiring. And he will never monopolize the conversation or talk of himself, nor be boisterous or rude in his tone or manners. Hoppin says:

"By his profession and education it is demanded of him that he should be a man of refinement. Anything coarse in a minister, even if his manners otherwise are of the plainest and simplest character, is inexpressibly out of place...

"...Manner is not to be despised by him who is seeking to win men. The Gospel is good will to men, and its minister should strive in small as well as in great things to show this good will to all; and while he should not seek to excel in the accomplishments of the dancing-master, he should take pains to perfect himself in the forms of good society, since it is quite certain that one who defiantly commits a breach of etiquette can have little power with well-bred people. A man may be awkward, stiff, and shy, but he must not be totally inattentive to the feelings of others if he means to do them good. The three points of clerical good manners are dignity, gentleness, and affability."<sup>28</sup>

Humility: Above all, a consecrated minister of Christ will possess the grace of humility. Its opposite is spiritual pride, a special and peculiar danger for the young pastor. If the pastor is at all successful, he will be praised and flattered. And this high regard and homage will require watchfulness and prayer, especially on the part of the young minister, and he will need an unceasing supply of grace to resist the temptation so powerfully rooted in the selfishness of the natural heart.

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28. Ibid., p. 467 ff.

regarding, op. cit., p. 141.



"It is only the humble man who has the true per-

"A season of remarkable prosperity will often prove an hour of fearful temptation and danger. Henry Martyn used to say: 'Men frequently admire me, and I am pleased; but I abhor the pleasure that I feel.' How few of us could say the same. How often we seek our own, instead of God's glory. How easy to talk about self and its wonderful experiences and achievements. It is the self-righteous and proud preacher who loves to say 'I' in the pulpit, who magnifies his own goodness and his own success."<sup>29</sup>

Certainly the purging of pride should be the minister's first task, for it is the foundation of all sins, and is especially the source and origin of ministerial sins, shortcomings, and failures. "God resisteth the proud," says Scripture. We might add, and so do men. Human nature can stand a good deal, but pride inevitably arouses hostility in others. This is especially true in a parish, large or small. Many a minister's home would be a much more happy and effective parsonage if it were not for the absence of the strength of humility. When the devil tried to destroy Jesus, he took him "into an exceeding high mountain." And so the minister is taken to a high mountain of conceit, arrogance, and ambition to have his own way. The only safeguard against inevitable destruction then is a truly consecrated humility. And true humility in a pastor will elevate him to the firm heights of honor and respect in the minds of his fellow-men which are so essential to effective parish work.

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29. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 141.



"It is only the humble man who has the true perspective and thus has that attitude which is the clue to power. The one thing which the successful parish minister will avoid is pride of opinion."<sup>30</sup>

One other factor deserves mention in this connection. The sin of magnifying one's own success and goodness is often brought about by "experience" meetings and public testifying. That is why the Lutheran Church discourages such services, since they are so apt to train the Pharisee. And this, finally, infers a great lesson for the young minister. For as he begins his ministerial work, he should take the powerful examples of others to guide him in his pastoral maturation.

"Like the blessed Christ, who sought not His own glory; like Paul, ready to become a fool for Christ's sake; like all the great and good men who have been signally honored and used by God, the true minister is humble. But he never boasts of his humility."<sup>31</sup>

Thus he never boasts of his piety, learning, or success. He rather speaks of the success of others. And above all, he continually examines himself thoroughly in the light of Scripture.

Morality: Morality is also included in the "good behavior" of the minister. It has already been alluded to in the discussion of Paul's injunction that a bishop must be blameless. Here we briefly quote from Calkins' fine chapter "Clean Hands, Righteous Lips, and a Pure Heart"

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30. Calkins, The Romance of the Ministry, p. 47.

31. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 141.



from The Romance of the Ministry.

"The moral standards of the ministry are high and they are inexorable. Maltbie D. Babcock once said that a minister's life must not only be clean, it must be antiseptic. The slightest deviation from the implacable rules which govern a minister's conduct brings down upon him final condemnation...He must avoid in every detail in life the lightest breath of scandal."<sup>32</sup>

Diversions and Amusements: "In what amusements and diversions may the pastor engage? Has he a right to do as other men do? We answer, No... The world rightly looks to him for an example. 'Noblesse oblige' is eminently true of the pastor."<sup>33</sup> We believe, of course, in the principle of Christian liberty, and that the minister has this right as much as any Christian. But there are places of amusement where, although he himself might not be harmed, his presence would be out of place, and would do more harm than good.

Besides God's higher moral purposes, God also created the world for our enjoyment. The world Scripture warns us to avoid is not the physical world - "the green earth which sprang forth at the word of God, nor the world of natural affections, duties, cares, and joys into which we are born, but that moral world in which the spirit of evil reigns."<sup>34</sup> Some amusements are not in themselves wrong,

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32. Calkins, op. cit., p. 35 ff.

33. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 146.

34. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 470.



but have been classed with absolutely wrong things, and called sins. As long as an amusement has such an association, and carries with it the idea or appearance of evil, a minister cannot afford to indulge in it. But there is so much open to the active minister otherwise - the cheerful comradeship of his many friends, "in encounters of wit without malice, in the varied, grand, and beautiful fields of nature, in athletic exercises, in the rich domains of literature, poetry, and art!"<sup>35</sup> The true value of a minister's diversions and amusements should be to renew his mind and body, and prepare him more fitly for his work. His amusements should not be an end in themselves, but a means to enable him to do more and live better. Hoppin adds a final word of advice:

"The mind needs some play - not merely variety of occupation, but, at times, complete relaxation; and temptation does not always lie in the careless mood of the mind, but also in the thoughtful mood; envy, ambition, professional jealousy, and even more malignant vices, lurk in the overstrained and incessantly toiling mind, where the gentler virtues, sympathies, and affections have no place to live."<sup>36</sup>

Truthfulness: The scrupulous truthfulness inherent in effective ministry involves more than merely refraining from deliberate lying. It calls for the most conscientious care in making and carrying out promises. Even being unable to carry out the smallest promise will lead the truthful minister to make immediate explanation and apology.

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35. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 470.  
36. Ibid., p. 471.



"Such a minister will not make promises hastily, or on mere impulse. He makes few and breaks none."<sup>37</sup> A minister who cannot be trusted has not only lost his influence, but has crippled his entire work.

"This saps, little by little, the tallest tower of ministerial reputation. While a minister's official hands are outwardly building up to heaven, his real character among men is secretly undermining his own work. He is the priest of Truth; let him not only light her fires on sacred solemnities, but let him not suffer the sacred flame to go out, for an instant, upon the altar of his own heart."<sup>38</sup>

Honesty: No one can be a true Christian if he is either untruthful or dishonest. This is even more serious in the case of the minister. Some ministers seem to fall unconsciously into the vices of poor management of their finances, late payment of their debts, living beyond their income, buying on credit or borrowing small sums of money, or promising to pay for something without knowing where the money is going to come from. "Better a thousand times live on the plainest fare and wear the cheapest clothes than be in debt."<sup>39</sup> If money must be borrowed, it would be a better policy to borrow from an outsider than from a member in the church, for the latter case might often put the minister into humiliating relations with his member. Certainly a pastor will not be respected who lives

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37. Gerberding, op. cit. p. 136.

38. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 474.

39. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 137.



and dresses beyond his means and then breaks his promises and is delinquent in his debts. And although today it need not often be the case of the pastor who prudently manages his finances, the plain and poor pastor who is scrupulously honest will have the respect of his members and friends.

Sincerity: Certainly sincerity is a distinctive characteristic implied in *Κόσμιον* as Paul uses it as a required qualification for the Christian ministry. It is fundamental in winning the confidence of people, and if a pastor is not known to have sincerity, he will not be respected as a leader. "On occasions there are unscrupulous people who will grant to the preacher their low favors if he will lend them his influence or at least maintain a 'guilty silence.' Their friendship, however, is not to be coveted."<sup>40</sup> Most people can detect a "false front," and they will certainly not give their confidence to one who is not truthful or sincere. As a leader in the Christian life, he cannot maintain the following of his congregation unless his character is stamped with integrity.

Cheerfulness: The representative of the Divine Comforter will naturally show the good cheer and peace in his own heart, since his duty is to sustain and console those in his care. The pastor who constantly desponds, who feels he is unfitted for the ministry, that his preaching does

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40. Adams, Calling Men for the Ministry, p. 138.



no good, or that his presence is distasteful to his people is living in direct contradiction to the words of Scripture which prescribes for him the spirit "of power, of love, of a sound mind." An effective pastor will not seclude himself in an ivory tower, but will bend every effort to make himself readily accessible. Likewise his sociability will be evidenced in his enjoyment of those pleasures which promote kindly wit and cheerfulness. The pastor who never smiles or laughs, or who is characterized by a harried, over-anxious look of pressing affairs will be a spectre in the minds of his people. Pastoral responsibilities cannot be taken lightly, and one should not affect lightheartedness in the midst of great duties and cares; but the conscientious pastor will place all his cares upon God, and maintain a bright, cheerful spirit.<sup>41</sup> And the pastor should seek to establish this same hope and cheer among his people, for "this will contribute to the healthy growth of the church, and will keep out a sickly and sorrowful style of religion, which never flourished in the good soil of the primitive church!"<sup>42</sup>

"Surely it ought to be possible to be happy and cheerful without losing one's dignity. The pastor's disposition and conduct ought always to be bright and cheery. If he is to be a sustainer and comforter of others, he should show that his own heart is full of peace and comfort. How can he promote a hopeful

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41. Cfr. Eccl. 9, 7-11.

42. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 456.



and cheerful type of piety among his people, unless he be an embodiment of these graces in himself?"<sup>43</sup>

And as each of these qualifications we discuss are Scriptural, so will the nurture and blossoming of these Christian qualities be the result of prayerful and diligent study of the Word. Samuel Trexler in describing "The Successful Minister" in his Out of Thirty-Five Years, says, "I have seen young men enter the ministry who would succeed only by a special endowment of grace, so somber was their mien." Years ago a long-faced minister might have been more successful, but today conditions are more exacting on the minister, and he must think in terms of the present era. Thus today's pastor must turn ever more to the Scriptures. His cheerfulness should be a joy born of faith. St. Paul's letters are brimming over with joy, and yet they were written in the face of discouragements and hardships which no minister today experiences.<sup>44</sup> Truly there is a fitting example of dynamic Christian joy and cheerfulness!

Speech: Vinet lays down several rules for "gravity of discourse."

"The first rule is, to speak little; a second rule is, to joke seldom; a third is, to discuss moderately and within reasonable limits; a fourth is, not to use too strong language, and too vehement utterance... (Finally) be careful to speak rather of things than persons."<sup>45</sup>

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43. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 144.

44. Trexler, Out of Thirty-Five Years, p. 49.

45. Vinet, Pastoral Theology: The Theory of a Gospel Ministry, p. 177.



Since the minister's position requires him to use his tongue all the time, he is in greater danger than anyone else of making mistakes at this point. James says:

"Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell... But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison... Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom."<sup>46</sup>

Surely the last words of James apply particularly to the Christian pastor. Perfection is demanded of the minister; for an unwise use of the tongue in others might be pardoned, but in him it will be seriously condemned. Letting one's speech "be seasoned with salt" eliminates all possible vulgarity. It will also lead the pastor to forego any Biblical jokes or anecdotes about his work or office. His speech should be human, because his ministry must be human to be effective. And it will be chaste, although far from stilted, and often light and gay. One vulgar remark or shady story may permanently affect a pastor's influence, for people will remember that he was capable of saying it.

Likewise a minister with a quick temper is more severely judged than others. He must learn composure and

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<sup>46</sup>. James 3,5.6.8.13.



control in the most trying situations. There are many instances when a consecrated will will have to curb an irritable tongue.

Also a critical tongue is a serious ministerial crime. A parishioner should never be criticized in the presence of others, even though he has treated the pastor or others unjustly. Instead the pastor will say only those things to his credit, if he says anything at all. "Magnanimity and a high regard for people's virtues rather than a vivid realization of their shortcomings are the keys that unlock his lips."<sup>47</sup> Gossip should be an entirely foreign element to a minister's life. If others indulge in it in his presence, he is invariably silent. Perhaps his best alternative is quietly to withdraw. Those guilty of uncharitable or ill-chosen words about their fellows will eventually become aware of their un-Christian actions.

"Here then is held out the possibility of high, romantic performance in a difficult sphere of life. Into this wild region Christ's spirit must enter and work the impossible. The tongue no man can tame. But He can tame it who when He was reviled, reviled not again. In no respect perhaps will the deep, rich native culture of the true minister of Jesus Christ more clearly show itself than in the way his speech is purged of every questionable element; his tongue is tamed and held in control in every vicissitude of daily living, and kindness, charitableness, and love become the law of his lips."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>. Calkins, op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>48</sup>. Ibid., p. 35.



"HOSPITABLE"

Christian hospitality is another qualification for the ministry. *φιλόθερον* does not mean to entertain and to feast friends, or even the poor. Paul advocated hospitality in his day for the many Christians who were fleeing persecution, and since all Christians were exposed to the dangers of evil companionship in their normal travel from place to place. Thus Christian hospitality became a great blessing to them. And today's pastor will not encourage tramps or undesirable loafers to frequent his home, but in true hospitality will show his love toward strangers, especially those of the household of faith, as enjoined in Scripture. (Rom. 12,13; I Pet. 4,9.)

"The true minister's house, in every age and clime, has been the home of a warm-hearted hospitality and of an efficient benevolence. It has set the fashion and given the law to the parish in those respects. It has been the palace of the poor. That it should maintain this character, and be still more influential in the promotion of the people's happiness, let it be made the abode of an attractive good taste, and of an inexpensive refinement. Let it admit into it the influence of a chastened culture and art, and above all, of the harmonizing power of music."<sup>49</sup>

"APT TO TEACH"

Those who still need much teaching and are themselves incompetent to impart knowledge are unqualified for the ministry. *βιβακτικόν* "means not only a fair natural aptitude,

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49. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 462.



but the qualification of having been taught."<sup>50</sup> Kretzmann says:

"There must be either a natural or an acquired ability, for which reason this point is of prime importance in the training of future pastors and teachers. A congregation has a right to expect, to demand, this qualification, for unless a minister is really in a position to communicate the Christian doctrine to his hearers, he will be lacking in an essential point of his office."<sup>51</sup>

(And) "the more a faithful teacher teaches, the more will he feel the need of acquiring more and more knowledge of the blessed truth he is to teach."<sup>52</sup>

A minister need not be intellectually brilliant, but he must be intellectually competent. The pews of today's church are filled with people who think in terms of today. If a minister's ideas lag behind the modern way of thinking, he will soon lose his influence over people, no matter how earnest or devout he is. Even if they think highly of him personally and revere his piety, they will not make use of what he has to say. Calkins' words follow as a natural argument:

"Hence the minister needs thorough training in all of the secular disciplines. He must be familiar with the findings of science, philosophy, psychology, sociology. He does not need to be learned in any one of them. But he must be acquainted with the geography of the modern mind."<sup>53</sup>

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50. Lenski, op. cit., p. 594.

51. Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 379.

52. Lenski, op. cit., p. 594.

53. Calkins, op. cit., p. 23.



This brings us to the qualification of the minister's training. Trexler brings out that a pastor must be at ease in cultivated society without losing touch with the uneducated. His general knowledge should be the equal, if not the superior, of the other men he meets in everyday life; for few can afford to be a specialist in fields other than their own. He must be "in the world, but not of the world." (John 17,16.)

This brings up the question of Church or secular school training. Certainly we should remain loyal to the training of our Church's own schools.<sup>54</sup> But his loyalty "should also be met by a like sense of responsibility on the part of the Church."<sup>55</sup> Trexler's words here are so vitally important, we quote them in full:

"To the eager, trusting student she has too often made answer in terms of an institution that limps in equipment and teaching force. Too late in such circumstances does the candidate discover that his training has been inadequate for the demands of his vocation. The Church also suffers from her own blindness by failing of the leadership her ministers should exercise. The candidate for the ministry is justified in asking from his Church an institution that shall give him the most complete training for his work. If she does not furnish such opportunity, is he then not entitled to seek, and will he not frequently seek, a secular institution which provides thorough training in liberal arts? In that case, as a Christian man, he will seek spiritual sustenance through the normal channels. The problem of the Church college is one

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54. II Tim. 2,2: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

55. Trexler, op. cit., p. 32.

The author participated in such a study under Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spring of 1947.



of the most important links in the training for the ministry."<sup>56</sup>

Good intentions but short-sighted planning by those in authority can thus result in harmful coddling and sheltering the candidates for the ministry. Then the only alternative for virile ministerial candidates is to rub shoulders with every variety of men during his training, that he may truly be "apt to teach" those committed into his care upon his ordination. This means he must be trained to meet a world of varied ideas and varied men when he leaves behind the years of his formal education.

Likewise it is vital that the Church choose that period of life which is most impressionable to make its investment in the training of its ministerial candidates. Luther chose the home as the point of finest contact, "and the Church of today is wise in again emphasizing the need of the family altar as the primary requisite in religious education. As she completes one stage in religious education she will be entitled to enter another."<sup>57</sup> Thus our present task of a sound educational policy during the pre-theological candidates' adolescence lies before us. And still more problems of curriculum, of social, physical, spiritual, and emotional guidance lie before us in his Seminary training proper. Unofficial studies,<sup>58</sup> for example, show

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56. Ibid.

57. Ibid., p. 33.

58. The author participated in such a study under Dr. Louis J. Sieck in the Spring of 1947.



that there is much to be desired in coordinating the theoretical classroom training and the practical experience gained in doing ministerial supply work, that more seminars and pastoral problem discussions should be held in late Seminary years, that more detailed "briefing" is necessary immediately previous to entering upon the duties of a charge, etc. In his chapter on "Training for the Ministry" Trexler says:

"From the viewpoint of their obligation to the Church these years at the seminary are beyond estimate in their potentialities. It is a logical conclusion that the life of the Church in the coming generation will be largely that of the students who are sent out from the seminaries. Thus the seminary holds in its hand the future life of the Church. Accordingly, both in its obligation to the young men under its care and in its obligation to the Church the seminary undertakes a contract that is not easily discharged...

"Many earnest young men will acknowledge that in entering the seminary their enthusiasm, instead of being spurred on, was chilled by the intellectual and by the spiritual standards...To counteract this the theological seminary should immediately, at the first contact, convince the novice of the glorious work he is entering, and of the boundless life and opportunity...A full test of the life of theological schools may be made by the question: How much momentum is added to the intellectual and spiritual purpose of our students during their theological training?...Does the seminary take the mental and spiritual life with gentle, patient, yet stimulating care and develop it into something strong and hardy?"<sup>59</sup> <sup>60</sup>

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59. Trexler, op. cit., p. 34 ff.

60. Although detailed mention will not be made here, further elaboration on the educational significance of Paul's injunction "apt to teach" would include a discussion of the importance of the spiritual, academic, and vocational



(specializing in certain fields), guidance of the ministerial candidate, the necessity of Greek, Hebrew, etc. in the curriculum, the specific training of teaching and preaching skills, and various other noteworthy principles peculiar to this topic.

Besides educational training and ability in the strictest sense, we imply various other inherent skills necessary to effective teaching and effective ministry.

Conversation: The high quality of a pastor's speech has already been stressed. But he who will be "apt to teach" will not only avoid vulgarity and shallow conversation, but will be well-versed in those things that interest his fellow-men - business, educational matters, politics, etc. Needless to say, he will never argue these matters, but he will draw out people's minds, and will in turn be able to impart useful knowledge in all of his conversation. Nevertheless, it should never be said of the pastor that he indulges in elaborate conversation on sundry matters at the expense of religious subjects and the discussion of current religious problems and personal spiritual troubles.

Common Sense: "Apt to teach" certainly implies common sense in its accepted usage today. And yet some able and devoted pastors do not know how to yield, to compromise, or to adjust themselves to other people's opinions and prejudices. "Common sense" demands dealing with delicate situations wisely and with due regard for other people's



feelings and the way they look at things. It calls for understanding, consideration, patience, and the ability to adjust one's mind and conduct in harmony with conflicting points of view. Calkins says:

"Such a sense of the fitness of things is a spiritual gift and a spiritual achievement of a high order. 'It involves a sense of proportion, a sense of relevance, judgment as to the time to speak and the time to be silent, what to say and what not to say, knowledge of what to do and what in the process of things to leave undone. In short, what we too superficially call common sense.'\* (\*Georgia Harkness, *The Faith by Which the Church Lives*, p. 49. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, publishers.) And few men have greater opportunity of being trained in this virtue than the parish minister."<sup>61</sup>

Humor: C.S. Horne has said that "the two endowments with which any man can go far (in the ministry) are common sense and the gift of humor."<sup>62</sup> Someone has said that the qualifications for the ministry are: "Greek, Grace, Grit, and Gumption." Humor is essential to wholesome everyday living. Like well-inflated tires on a car, it enables one to go over the inevitable unevennesses of life without a jar or a jolt.<sup>63</sup> Many occasions arise in the busy minister's life which can disturb, distress, and depress him. He might easily lose control of himself, and become nervous and impatient, and not infrequently lose sleep over pressing matters. A prevailing attitude of good humor, on the other hand, can eliminate much of the bitterness, melancholy,

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61. Calkins, op. cit., p. 45.

62. Ibid., p. 41.

63. Ibid.



self-pity, and over-seriousness which creeps into his life. Good humor will not only evidence an effect upon the pastor's own life, but upon the lives of others. And the opposite is surely true:

"The pastor who is too solemn ever to enjoy a hearty laugh, who has no sense of humor in his soul, who cannot appreciate the ludicrous and funny things of life, who frowns on a good story or joke, who says by his whole demeanor: 'Stand aside, for I am holier than thou,' will never have the respect and confidence of the community."<sup>64</sup>

Certainly a pastor whose Christian joy and cheerfulness pervades his entire life will show good humor, and will get his mind off himself and the small annoying matters which "have no effect and fall harmless from the heart that is lifted high above them."<sup>65</sup>

Sympathy: One final qualification bears mention here in regard to the minister's relation to the learner and hearer of God's holy Word. It is that quality which moves a pastor to take special pains to minister to the spiritual and physical needs of his fellowmen. He will rejoice with those that rejoice, and weep with those that weep, which is the direct opposite of what the selfish man would do. Simply, the sympathetic minister forgets himself, for "he enters into the joys and sorrows of others as though they were his own."<sup>66</sup>

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64. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 142 ff.

65. Calkins, op. cit., p. 43.

66. Trexler, op. cit., p. 43.



"NOT GIVEN TO WINE"

Paul continues by stating the negative qualifications of the Christian pastor. *μη πάρονος* means not quarrelsome over wine, no brawler.<sup>67</sup> It refers to the drinker who lingers long beside his wine. It goes without saying that a pastor, of all men, must not be a slave to habitual drinking of any kind. The emphasis here is that it may lead to drunken quarrels and brawling.

Drinking in itself is not condemned in Scripture, and the pastor must not make it a sin. But neither should he call total abstinence a fanaticism. "While he allows that all things are lawful, he remembers that all things are not expedient."<sup>68</sup> Gerberding sets down four sound and safe rules of temperance for the pastor to observe:

1. Never patronize or favor the saloon.
2. If he have a natural or acquired taste for liquor, that he totally abstain. Many a brilliant pastor has been ruined by ignoring this advice.
3. That, because he never knows who, in any group, may have a natural or an acquired taste, he had better for example's sake never drink in a mixed company, as at a wedding, a banquet, etc.
4. That he constantly instruct and warn the young along

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67: White, op. cit., p. 112.

68: Gerberding, op. cit., p. 147.



these lines.<sup>69</sup>

"NOT A STRIKER"

πλήκτων refers to "one who is quick-tempered and ready with his fists."<sup>70</sup> No sincere Christian minister will stalk about with a chip on his shoulder, and indulge in quarrels and heated arguments at the slightest provocation. Of course pastors should always be ready to engage in manly discussion for the truth's sake. But if a minister attempts to oppose every little attack and answer everything that is said to and about him, he will certainly have his hands full. However, Hoppin adds:

"One's peaceableness should not, it is true, descend into acquiescence with actual injustice and wrong; for the time may come when a minister should fight, if not for his own rights, yet for the rights of others."<sup>71</sup>

The minister, in Isaiah's words, is the representative of him who was announced as one who would "not cry, nor lift up, neither cause his voice to be heard in the streets." (Is. 42,2) Instead of lifting his hand in anger or violence, he "stretches forth his hands all day long to a disobedient and gainsaying people." (Rom. 10,21) In a way the minister's work is a constant struggle. And he cannot in every case afford to limit himself, as other believers can, to "answering with meekness and fear, every man that asketh him

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69. Ibid., p. 148.

70. Lenski, op. cit., p. 594.

71. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 473.



a reason." (I Pet. 3,15.) He must carry on his work seriously, energetically, and forcefully. But it must be in the spirit of expounding rather than disputing. As Paul wrote similarly to Titus: "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient." (Tit. 1,7.) *μη̄ ἀίσχροκερδῆ* not greedy of filthy lucre, will be alluded to in Paul's subsequent injunction against covetousness.

"ONE WHO YIELDS, NOT FIGHTS"

The Greek here is *ἀλλὰ ἐπιεικῆ, ἄνωγον*: gentle, not contentious.<sup>72</sup> This is said as a contrast to what has gone before. "On the opposite side we have the *ἐπιεικῆς*, one who is gelinde (Luther), gentle, yielding, - a beautiful word, with no exact equivalent in Latin or in English...An *ἄνωγον* is one who never fights, who is not of the fighting kind."<sup>73</sup> Christ was the perfect example of patience and kindness.

"Christ, the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, is so. Not apt to be angry or quarrelsome; as not a striker with his hands, so not a brawler with his tongue; for how shall men teach others to govern their tongues who do not make conscience of keeping them under good government themselves?"<sup>74</sup>

Elsewhere in writing to Timothy (I Tim. 6,11) Paul makes patience a qualification for the "man of God" - the minister of Christ. This calls for endurance and bearing up under

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72. White, op. cit., p. 112.

73. Lenski, op. cit., p. 595.

74. Matthew Henry, op. cit., Timothy III.



evil. For the active pastor is going to meet with many conditions which will try his patience: the difficulties arising from his own imperfections and mistakes, the desertion of supposed friends, the schemes and plottings of ill-minded men, disparaging and careless remarks, the constant delay of progress in his ministerial work and most carefully-laid plans, and above all, the seemingly insurmountable obstinacy and apathy in certain members of his parish and the unconquerable coldness to the Church of the "dead wood" in his congregation. This calls for a deep union with Christ, a patient strength which will stand the test of a real trial of faith. It is an essential qualification for the ministry, since only the man who has it cannot be conquered by the abovementioned ordeals of patience. It is the "stuff" which ministers of Christ should be made of!

A spirit of kindness is closely allied to patience.

Hoppin describes its power in a pastor's ministry:

"How much power there is even in a kind manner! It is like the sun in spring on the snow and ice of men's hearts. To carry a kind and gentle aspect toward little children, old people, young men, business men, poor people, mothers, servants, high and low, is a constant mild agency promotive of ministerial influence and of the good ends it is aiming at. Paul said to the Thessalonians, 'We were gentle among you: even as a nurse cherisheth her children, so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were

Hoppin, op. cit., p. 127.

Augustine said: "Love first, and then you may

work the things." Ibid., p. 130.

Vincent, op. cit., p. 127.



dear to us."75 76

These words of Paul are also a direct parallel to his words to the Philippians: "Let your moderation (fairness, reasonableness, mildness) be known unto all men." (Phil. 4,5.) We quote from Vinet's chapter on "Relative or Social Life" in his Pastoral Theology:

"Here we have only to regard his mildness, that is to say, the kind, easy, obliging, prepossessing, amiable qualities which he brings into his ordinary relations with society. He is the man of a loving God - the representative of mercy. He must not repel, therefore, but attract. But this must flow from a genuine source, it must not be affectation - he has no part to play, - his goodness is not to be soft and effeminate, but strong and masculine. A little healthy roughness of manners were better than that benign, patronizing, and paternal tone which some have adopted, but which is not natural to them. Love sometimes has a shaggy, bristling exterior... But how shall not a rude, magisterial air - an abrupt and hasty tone - an impatient, testy, choleric address - a haughty disdain for the conventions of politeness - or only an air of languid indifference - how shall not all these things injure the minister and his ministry?"77

"NOT SILVER-LOVING"

*ἀφραδία πρὸς* is especially important since the minister's calling leads him into contact with so much of "another world." He should be completely disinterested in money as regards seeking his own things rather than the things of Jesus Christ. Instead of being mercenary or stingy, he should be generous and kind, "with a heart

75. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 457 ff.

76. Augustine said: "Love first, and then you may do what you choose." Ibid., p. 458.

77. Vinet, op. cit., p. 182.



and a hand ever ready to relieve distress."<sup>78</sup>

Avoiding covetousness and practicing unselfishness really begins with self-denial. Either the body or the soul rules a person's life. The minister must not only gain a spiritual victory, but keep a constant watch to preserve this victory, and resist all the beginnings of evil. A pastor who yields his own will, and enters into God's will finds a boundless source of strength and power. And he will soon become a strong tower for his people when they recognize in their pastor a spirit which can and will give up all things for the sake of the Gospel.

But the pastor who shows greed or covetousness will certainly alienate those who look to him for an example of the Christian life. When he begins to put his own comfort and security above his interest in his people, he clearly shows that he lacks the true instinct of a pastor. And even very loyal people will soon lose some of their esteem and affection for a pastor in whom they detect a spirit of selfishness.

Furthermore, the pastor should devote himself exclusively to his calling. Speculation, engaging in secular business, and following other pursuits to make extra money should be given up when he chooses the ministry as his life's calling. Were he not to do so, he would sacrifice

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78. Croskery, op. cit., p. 58.

79. *ibid.*, p. 140.



his efficiency as a minister, for the ministry has high and exacting demands and duties which must be met. But those who make a business of the ministry are likewise guilty of transgressing Paul's warning, "not greedy of filthy lucre." Setting fixed charges for baptisms, weddings, and funerals; dickering over the number of sermons to be preached; constantly complaining about poor pay; asking for a reduction in price on their purchases; "visiting parishioners in the country...where they expect something, and carry their sack and pail with them": men guilty of these marks of covetousness and selfishness can never command the respect of the community. Instead, Gerberding says:

"Let the true minister, who has in him the same mind that was also in Christ Jesus, and who remembers that Christ's whole life and work was a giving of Himself, be ever glad and ready to give, to serve, and to sacrifice. Let him, in this also, be an ensample to his flock. He ought to be the most liberal giver in the parish. Only then has he a right to expect his people to be liberal. And in all his work among those whom he can reach, let his principle ever be, 'I seek not yours, but you.'" (II Cor. 12,14)<sup>79</sup>

Nevertheless, the minister should have an adequate salary, and be well able to provide for his family. "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." And if a congregation is well-instructed in this duty towards its pastor, and gives him just financial compensation for his services, the minister

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79. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 140.



will be less likely to fall into the temptation of covetousness.

"ONE THAT RULETH WELL"

Lenski translates: "Superintending his own house well, as having children in subjection with all dignity; if now one does not know to superintend his own house, how will he take care of God's church?"

A pastor should not merely be a figurehead, but the management of his own house should be in conformity with the office entrusted to him. There may be cases where his children may go wrong in spite of all his efforts to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, but "in general it holds true that people may rightly draw conclusions as to a pastor's ability to be an overseer of the flock by the success of his management at home."<sup>80</sup>

The minister's home should abound in kindness, love, and peace, and be a model in the community. The children should always be subject to their father, who rules them with kind firmness, with few words, and with perfect cooperation between himself and his wife. Family quarrels and scolding should be unknown in the parsonage, and the harmonious atmosphere and God-fearing training of the children should show itself in obedience, truthfulness, and ready service.

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<sup>80</sup>. Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 379.



This qualification for the ministry also includes other abilities. It involves a warm hospitality (already mentioned) where especially the poor, the troubled, and the tempted "can always find a welcome, with sympathy, help, and counsel."<sup>81</sup> "Ruling well his own house" also implies that the pastor's home be modest in appearance and in furnishings. It should never be extravagantly furnished, but rather take on a character of orderly, neat, and clean attractiveness. Likewise the pastor's home will be a model and example of family worship. "The New Testament speaks much of 'the church in the house,' and there should be a little church in every minister's house, in which the spirit of Christ, the Son of peace, reigns; in which there is an orderly system in the daily life that enthrones God in everything."<sup>82</sup> The family devotion should not be a disconnected act, but rather in harmony with the whole religious life of the household. It should be an expression of the spirit of love and service for the Lord which reigns in the personage.

"Such a pastor's home, where every visitor realizes that Jesus is here a constant guest, that here the Word of God dwells richly, that here there is a church in the house, is a power for good in any community. From it the saving and sanctifying influences of divine grace go out into other homes and other hearts and other lives. Its influence will tell for time and for eternity...

"All of a pastor's efficiency stands or falls with the manner of his own life and that of his household.

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81. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 157.

82. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 462.

Wise, op. cit., p. 113.

Greenery, op. cit., p. 58 ff.



'The Pfarrhaus is the light of the village, to which all look to see whether it burns clear and gives light.'<sup>83</sup>

In verse five Paul backs up this qualification by saying, in effect, "If he cannot take proper care of the small house congregation entrusted to him, how much less will he be able to give proper attention to the needs of every member of his larger flock?"<sup>84</sup> Simply, this added statement brings effective and logical emphasis to his demands in the previous verse. The family is small, but needs much care, affection, and love. If a pastor fails here, he is certainly unfit for the responsibility of the care and administration of an entire congregation's welfare. It is interesting to note here that Paul deliberately interchanged his verbs in making the analogy, thus: "If now one does not know to superintend (προστῆναι, a technical term to express Church government) his own house, how will he take care (ἐπιμελεῖσθαι expresses the personal care and attention of a father for his family) of God's church?"<sup>85</sup> Thus the well-ordered household is the test of fitness for the rule of the house of God. For

"the pastor has a care for the individual members of his flock, to seek the conversion of sinners, to instruct the ignorant, to guide the perplexed, to comfort the doubting, to check the wayward, and to defend the flock against errorists. 'Who is sufficient for these things?'"<sup>86</sup>

83. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 158 ff.

84. Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 379.

85. White, op. cit., p. 113.

86. Croskery, op. cit., p. 58 ff.



always be a determining factor in measuring the extent of his use as a shepherd of souls. The reaction of the flock enlarges and fructifies.

"NOT A NOVICE"

"Not a novice, lest having become conceited he fall into the devil's judgment."<sup>87</sup> The original reads *μη νεόφυτον* a novice, a recent convert. A recent convert is still too weak and too inexperienced in spiritual matters to be given the responsible position of pastor. He would not be able to meet the dangers and temptations of the office successfully. The greatest danger would be his possible conceit because of his elevation to the high office of the ministry. If this would happen, he would fall into the condemnation of the devil, "the judgment which struck Satan on account of his pride, on account of which he was cast out of heaven and met his doom."<sup>88</sup>

This qualification of the apostle does not refer to youth, but to inexperience. No definite age is required of candidates for the ministry; and yet there is a certain level of maturity which must be reached before a candidate is no longer considered a novice.<sup>89</sup> And the congregation has the right to demand this qualification of maturity in its pastor.

"Men want reality in ministers of the Gospel; they demand sincerity, truth, consistency, the practice of the principles they teach, before they listen to the preacher. We have no reason to complain that this is so, for the very nature of his high calling makes it necessary that the minister's daily life should be upon the highest plane. His own spiritual life will

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87. Lenski, op. cit., p. 597.  
88. Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 379.  
89. *νεόφυτος* in the Old Testament is used literally of a young plant, Job 14,9; Ps. 128,3; etc. - White, op. cit. p. 113.



must clearly show that he has thoroughly studied, and is always be a determining factor in measuring the extent of his usefulness as an under shepherd of souls. The reaction of known character enlarges and fructifies the influences of the man in the office. Hence, to every Christian pastor, his own spiritual life only ought to be a matter of deep concern, both for his own good, and in order that he might fulfill his high calling with complete loyalty to his Lord and with helpfulness to his people."<sup>90</sup>

Smith also lays down five well-chosen principles as the foundation of the pastor's spiritual life:

1) The preacher must be a converted man and possessed of fixed religious convictions.

2) Reasonable intellectual qualifications for the ministry, accompanied by conscientious diligence in their culture, are also needful.

3) A third needful element in the spiritual qualification of the pastor, is an irreproachable character, a consistent Christian life from day to day.

4) Looking deeper yet to the very roots of the character and the influence of which we have been speaking, we observe that there must be maintained the inner life of love and sacrificial unselfishness.

5) Again, the true pastor will be stirred by a passion for souls and zeal for service.<sup>91</sup>

In his chapter "Thoroughly Furnished Unto All Good Works" from The Romance of the Ministry Calkins brings out that people today are faced by more heresies in the field of religion and morals than ever before. And the pastor

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<sup>90</sup>. Smith, Preachers and Preaching, p. 125.

<sup>91</sup>. Ibid., p. 126 ff.



must clearly show that he has thoroughly studied, and is well aware of all the current philosophies which are at variance with the true Christian religion. "Then and then only will men listen to him while he declares his own faith and exhibits it in his teaching as well as in his life."<sup>92</sup> No pastor is "thoroughly furnished unto good works" if his conversation both publicly and privately does not betray the fact that "he knows what he's talking about" because he is fully conversant with the modern religious problem.

But knowing only a secular culture well is not enough. The highest qualification for the ministry is a spiritual one, and comes from God alone. It should be readily evidenced in the pastor's life that his spiritual health is constantly enriched by a deep and fervent communion with God. All of his life and work will bear a certain distinction if he has this penetrating spirituality. And all who come in contact with him "will receive the subtle impression that he is a truly consecrated man, delicately sensitive to every breath of God." Calkins concludes:

"In the final analysis, it is the spirituality of the minister which gives him authority and wins for him the respect, the affection, the confidence of others. This immediate consciousness of God through the indwelling spirit of Jesus Christ is the innermost secret of every true ministry. Without it, his work is that of the mechanic but not of the spiritual artist. With it, what may seem to be but broken fragments of power and inspiration will be able to feed

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92. Calkins, op. cit., p. 24.

Calkins, op. cit., p. 24 ff.  
 Laski, op. cit., p. 600.  
 Calkins, op. cit., p. 59.



the spiritual hunger of many souls. Let any man be truly devoted to his calling as a minister of Jesus Christ, let him look for, expect, and cultivate a deepening experience of God, and there are no visible limits to his usefulness and influence."<sup>93</sup>

Paul brings out the word "A GOOD REPORT"

"Moreover, it is necessary also that he have excellent testimony from those without, lest he fall into reproach and the devil's snare." *καταβολή* here means excellent testimony in general, and refers to testimony concerning his life since his conversion.<sup>94</sup> Paul here brings out that the opinion of the world cannot be ignored or denied. The world, too, has principles of natural justice, and "the minister cannot violate these without loss of reputation and influence."<sup>95</sup> The pastor's blameless life should make a blameless impression on the world, and should not only be "acceptable to God, but approved of men." (Rom. 14,18 and Matt. 5,16.) Likewise his life should attract "those that are without," for it should be a living sermon to those still in darkness. These words also involve a condemnation of those who tear down the reputation of Christian ministers, for that undermines their influence and "excellent testimony" and is in contradiction to this passage of Scripture.

Naturally a pastor cannot please everybody, but he should have such a reputation in the community that nothing

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93. Calkins, op. cit., p. 24 ff.

94. Lenski, op. cit., p. 600.

95. Groskery, op. cit., p. 59.



derogatory can be laid to his charge. When a pastor utterly disregards public opinion and openly defies it, the natural result will be antagonism, not only against his person, but against the office of the ministry. Thus Paul brings out the warning concluding this verse, as he did similarly in the previous passage:

"The figure interprets itself: to fall into the devil's snare - into his deadly power, like an animal that is caught and then killed. A novice may lose his soul, if he is made a minister; so, in a different way, may a man who bears no good reputation, although he has long been a member of the congregation."<sup>96</sup>

Likewise, the devil will make use of this "reproaching" not only to drive the erring minister back into his former sins, but also work in others an aversion to the doctrine of Christ preached by those who have not had a good report. Croskery lists the diverse effects upon a pastor who has a doubtful reputation before the world:

1) He might be excited to an angry resentment of such disagreeable attacks.

2) He might fall into despair, and thus become reckless, and ultimately justify the worst imputations of the world.

3) He might cease to reprove transgressors because he had not the courage to condemn faults which were only too observable in himself.<sup>97</sup>

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96. Lenski, op. cit., p. 602.

97. Croskery, op. cit., p. 59.



Thus the devil would set his snares both for the pastor, and for his congregation whose purity the outside world questions.

This passage is similar to Paul's comprehensive injunction in verse two that a bishop must be blameless. For it again stresses the great care which must be exercised in meeting the stringent qualifications for the Christian ministry. Thus a variety of character traits will be reiterated and others added in specifically discussing the relation of the pastor to society.

The great majority of people judge Christianity by the minister's presentation of it. They take him to be the representative of Christian ideas, as "an official Christian," and as an example for living. In fact, they judge him as if he were Christianity himself. But they not only judge, but also impose in their own minds a pattern of conduct for him. And although the pastor's first allegiance is to God, he must also seek the approval of the world, which is quite possible to obtain. Vinet says, "If unflinching consistency is honored even when it is applied to things evil, with how much greater reason will it be honored when on the side of God!"<sup>98</sup>

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98. Vinet, op. cit., p. 170.

99. Vinet, op. cit., p. 170.



So a pastor cannot afford to be exclusive or withdraw from those for whose welfare and salvation he has dedicated his life. Then, simply, he should be "in the world but not of the world." He has duties to both God and man, and he must be careful not to compromise his principles and sacrifice one for the other. For Christ prayed that his disciples should not be taken out of the world, but merely kept from its evil. Moreover, we may add that "while the minister should exhibit a genuine courtesy to all, he should have special attractions for the society and friendship of the true servants of Christ."<sup>99</sup>

In his chapter on "Qualification Social and Pastoral" in Qualifications for Ministerial Power, C.C. Hall analyzes the problems in the terms of negative and positive qualifications:

"On the negative side one observes the lack of social qualification resulting from erroneous conceptions of the relationship between the minister and society. On the positive side one observes a contrast of methods employed to advance ministerial power in society."

**NEGATIVE CONCEPTIONS:**

- 1) Antagonism. In the ministerial self-consciousness, the postulate of personal holiness, a postulate conditioning all worthy ministry, is, under certain circumstances, susceptible of a peculiar and disastrous perversion, revealing itself in an attitude of antagonism toward general society...

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<sup>99</sup>. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 466.



- 2) Abstraction. This is an intellectual perversion: the vice of clerical scholasticism. Under the illusive name of studiousness a destructive self-indulgence is nurtured...
- 3) Transcendentalism. Transcendentalism in the minister is a spiritual perversion productive of singular alienation from individual lives, with corresponding loss of power...

POSITIVE CONCEPTIONS:

- 1) Sacerdotalism. ...The fundamental conception of sacerdotal power is the substitution of ecclesiastical personality for natural personality, thus, by a process of uniformity, immensely elevating the average of power. (By: splendor of lineage, corporate individuality, and the pallium of mystical authority.)
- 2) Conformity. Conformity conceives of ministerial influence as attainable in general society chiefly through fellowship, through doing as others do, through falling in with the common ways of men, and establishing, first, confidence, then power, by friendliness of conduct...
- 3) Comprehensive application of personality. ...The whole man is in touch with his work, and to that work is giving himself with an inspired and ineradicable consciousness to the highest efficiency of the whole...<sup>100</sup>

It is necessary here that we also allude to the minister's relation to the State and politics. The minister is still a citizen, and has a citizen's responsibilities and duties. Even as Christ did, he must render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. He likewise makes use of the protection which is his, but also is obedient to the powers that are in authority. Simply, "whatever is the duty of the Christian minister."<sup>101</sup> This also includes the responsibility

<sup>100.</sup> Hall, op. cit., p. 135 ff.

<sup>101.</sup> Gerberding, op. cit., p. 154.



to vote. But it does not necessarily demand that he bear arms, or hold a political office. A pastor should certainly have political convictions, but should never take politics into the pulpit or into his pastoral work. Nor should he show favoritism, on political grounds, among his people. Should a weighty moral issue arise in the community, he should calmly, deliberately, and prayerfully consider the matter, be sure he is on the side of the right, and take only those steps which do not interfere with his pastoral duties or harm his ministerial influence.

Likewise it is the duty and responsibility of the Christian minister "to set Christ as the heart of the educational as well as the spiritual world."<sup>102</sup> The individual case must be considered, but if it is at all possible the pastor should take advantage of opportunities to "exert some shaping influence upon public education."<sup>103</sup> This also involves a pastor's favorable and fruitful relation with the press, and the benefit of contributing to the field of theological and even (meritorious) secular literature, if his position and ability so permit. Hoppin concludes:

"He should do his share - and it is a large one - to form a society in which all the faculties, activities, and affections of men, may be developed from the central principle of the love of God through the regenerating power of Christ's spirit, so that, in some

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102. Hoppin, op. cit., p. 480.

103. Ibid.



faint degree, the society of earth may resemble the society of heaven."<sup>104</sup>

In summary, the pastor should possess and cultivate all the traits which will characterize him as "blameless," "of good behavior," and having "a good report." He will be a Christian gentleman of simple dignity and sincere humility. His morality will be irreproachable, his truthfulness, sincerity, and honesty unquestioned. He will live his Christianity joyfully, and his speech will betray the piety of his soul. Also numbered among these traits so readily visible to the world must be gentleness, affability, and firm peace and hope. Covetousness will not mar his soul, nor an evil temper his spirit. His simplicity, modesty, and moderation will be known among all men. His dress and cleanliness will be duly fitting that of a consecrated Christian pastor. And he will show a genuine, living interest in his work, which he will carry on with all prudence, uprightness, and candor.

He might have all these virtues, and yet not be a fully developed Christian man. He must be a shepherd, not a sheep.

"Someone has divided the world into men, women, and ministers. Unfortunately there is, judging by some ministers, a grain of truth in the sarcasm. But where 'tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true.' We need a virile ministry; we want a heroic ministry, a ministry that will compel the respect even of the worldly."<sup>105</sup>

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104. Ibid., p. 481.

105. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 136.



Courage is an inescapable demand of successful ministry.

"It is not within the ability of a minister to make every man his friend, but it is within his ability to make every man who knows him respect him for his integrity and his courage."<sup>106</sup> And he will do well to follow Christ as his matchless example.

Finally, the pastor must realize that in his relations with the world and society there are those whose friendship he cannot win or hold. And he can

"comfort himself with resignation to the inevitable hardness of some and alienation of others through the vicissitudes of the passing years. This is one of the prices that a minister must pay."<sup>107</sup>

But he should pray for those whose friendship he cannot gain, and consistently maintain "an excellent testimony from those without" that they may finally come to the knowledge of the truth.

"No person has more intimate dealings with a large number of people than the Christian minister. He spends much of his time with people. He is dependent on the voluntary cooperation of people. He must make friends and hold them. And yet he must face the inevitable fact that he will suffer the loss of friendship as he fulfills the demands of his ministry. No young man should make his decision to study for the ministry until he has taken into account his ability to get along with people."<sup>108</sup>

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106. Adams, op. cit., p. 141.

107. Ibid., p. 142 ff.

108. Ibid., p. 143.



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## CONCLUSION

This treatise has dealt with the qualifications for the ministry as outlined in I Timothy 3, verses 1-7. It has attempted to show the dignity and beauty of the ministry as exemplified in the high qualifications laid down in a selected portion of Scripture. A brief recapitulation of these qualifications is in order as outlined by G.H. Gerberding in The Lutheran Pastor:

### NATURAL QUALIFICATIONS:

1. A sound body.
2. A strong, vigorous mind.
3. Common sense.
4. Moral courage.
5. Earnest activity.
6. A tender and sympathetic spirit.

### SPIRITUAL QUALIFICATIONS:

1. A living, deep, and fervent piety.
2. A clear and heartfelt conviction that it is God's will that he should serve Him in this holy office.<sup>109</sup>

In retrospect, we pause meaningfully and say with Matthew Henry: "What piety, what prudence, what zeal, what courage, what faithfulness, what watchfulness over ourselves, our lusts, our appetites, and passions, and over those under our charge; I say what holy watchfulness is necessary in this work!"<sup>110</sup> Certainly we must say with Paul, "Who is sufficient for these things?" (II Cor. 2,16.) Even the best ministers must admit in true humility that they fall

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109. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 47 ff.

110. Matthew Henry, op. cit., Timothy III.



short of Scripture's exacting qualifications for this high office. Nevertheless they should thankfully give praise and glory to God who has placed them into the ministry and made them able and faithful pastors. Matthew Henry concludes:

"For the encouragement of all faithful ministers, we have Christ's gracious word of promise, 'Lo, I am with you always unto the end of the world.' (Matt. 28, 20.) And, if he be with us, he will fit us for our work in some measure, will carry us through the difficulties of it with comfort, graciously pardon our imperfections, and reward our faithfulness with a crown of glory that fadeth not away."<sup>111</sup>

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

(I Pet. 5, 4.)

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111. Ibid.

111. Ibid. *Trinitarian Publication Society, 1902.*

112. *Charles C. Gilbert, Qualifications for Ministerial Power, Hartford, Conn.: Hartford Seminary Press, 1895.*

113. *James M. Anderson, Sermons: Upon the Revolution, New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., Revised Edition.*

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