

RULING ELDERS' HAND-BOOK,

Specially Prepared for the Ruling Elders of the
Presbyterian Church in the United States
of America,

BY

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REVISED EDITION.

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PREFACE TO REVISED EDITION.

At the earnest and persistent request of the publishers I am giving to the Ruling Elders of the Presbyterian Church a new edition of this little book.

It has been in your hands ten years and deserves more revision than I am able to give it at the present time. However, the sacred duties of your office do not change and the methods of administering your office has not been materially modified by any recent changes in our church laws.

The basic principles of our Church Government remain unchanged, and it is with these we have to do especially.

To the whole body of Elders in our church and especially to that splendid accession to the Eldership through the Reunion I offer this little help in the service you may render to the Master and to his Church.

EUSTIS, FLORIDA,

May, 1908.

AUSTIN H. JOLLY.

INTRODUCTION

Exegetes may dispute as to the teaching of the Scriptures on the orders of the clergy and on the dual eldership; the teaching and ruling. Historians may differ as to the origin and development of the systems of ecclesiastical government, which are now current in the church. But no reasonable man will deny, that when a given system of government has been adopted by an ecclesiastical body, it will be best for that body if its officers are thoroughly fitted by nature, education and grace for the discharge of their duties. Elders, if there be elders, should know what their functions are and how to fulfill them, so as to satisfy themselves, their brethren and the Lord. "Das versteht sich," as the Germans say. And yet, it is a noticeable fact, that up to the present, no text book, no vade-mecum, or book of ready reference, for the use of the eldership of our church has appeared.

Dr. Samuel Miller's book "On Ruling Elders" is antiquated; and besides, it is theoretical and vindictory rather than practical. That excellent and indispensable work, "The Presbyterian Digest," is too expensive and too general in its scope and contents for extended or effective use by the eldership. It contains much which would be of little use at any time and omits much, as outside of its purpose as a digest of law, which would be of great use at all times to a conscientious man, desirous of filling his office, but often ignorant of what may be expected or demanded of him. That comprehensive and unexcelled manual, "What

is Presbyterian Law," was not designed especially for elders, and hence there is found in it much which the vast majority of our elders would never need in their experience as officers of the church; and there are lacking many things, as irrelevant to the intent of the work, which would be of use to all members of the session and materially assist them in ruling, comforting and building up the church.

Now it is the design of this little manual to teach the ruling elder what he ought to be, what he ought to do and how he ought to do it.

It might be called Pastoral Theology for Elders, or to adopt a Greek adjective, Presbyteric Theology. As Pastoral Theology shows ministers of the Gospel what they ought to be as men and as pastors, presbyters and preachers: so this teaches elders what their duties and privileges in these directions are. We think that such a book is a desideratum, and we hope and believe that the following attempt of the Rev. A. H. Jolly will meet this want and supply this need. Therefore we wish it Godspeed.

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PART I.

QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF RULING ELDERS.

CHAPTER I.

THE OFFICE OF RULING ELDER.

Presbyterianism, so far as the government of the church is concerned, rests upon three fundamental principles which are found in the Word of God and were evidently applied in the early church. They are, "the parity of the ministry," "government by elders or presbyters," and "the unity of the church." The central and basal idea of our system is in the government of the church. In this there is an equality of the bishop and the elder, or the "teaching elder" and the "ruling elder," as they are sometimes designated. In all the higher courts of the church this equality in government is recognized and exercised. An equal number of ministers and elders sit together and deliberate on all questions before them, and the influence of the ruling elder is felt in all the business of the church.

The individual congregation of the Presbyterian Church is modeled after the form of the ancient Jewish synagogue. All the essential features of that organization were transferred, as we believe, to the Christian Church. No particular attempt was made to prove divine authority, yet from apostolic use we are justified in assuming that this form of government is at least di-

vinely sanctioned. At first there was no very clear distinction made between the office of bishop and that of the elder, but as there are numerous indirect references to this in the New Testament there seems to be sufficient authority for the wider separation of the two offices as the church became more thoroughly organized. The main distinction between the two offices has for centuries been that the bishop is specially called to teach while the elder is called to rule. Leaving to others the work of defining the relation of "bishop" and "elder," we propose to deal rather with the office and work of the "ruling elder" as we find it in the Presbyterian Church to-day. But in so doing the divine authority for the office is not questioned. We believe that if every elder were to feel the responsibility and dignity of his office, and that his ordination is divinely authorized, it would add efficiency to all his work.

A Presbyterian church is not complete in its organization without ruling elders. It is not prepared to exercise all its functions as a church until they as the representatives of the people are duly ordained and installed. These elders, thus set apart, have authority in all matters pertaining to the spiritual affairs of the congregation. They are duly authorized to receive and dismiss members and to exercise discipline. Being chosen from among the people, they are in a peculiar sense the "representatives of the people," so that in them the right of self-government is guaranteed to each congregation. It is the glory of the Presbyterian Church that its government, like that of our nation, is "of the people, by the people, and for the people." This form of

government conserves the rights of each congregation while it places over these our "Courts of Review and Control," which maintain the purity of the church and its doctrines. What a privilege to be a divinely commissioned officer in such an army! In every congregation the elders stand with authority second to none. In the presbytery and synod, and even in the General Assembly, they hold half the seats, and upon their votes depends every decision. While there are in connection with our church less than seven thousand ministers, there are twenty-seven thousand elders. These, more than equal to our national standing army, not quartered in a few central garrisons, but in seven thousand groups upon the open field of the world, are rallying an army now numbering a million to its conquest. What may they not accomplish with the blessing of the Lord! What unlimited possibilities are before these, who with the enduring word as their guide, "watch for souls as those who must give an account!"

The principal work of the elder is in the church where he has been called to rule. Only occasionally is he appointed to represent the people in the higher courts of the church, and even then his influence may not be perceptible. But among the people who have called him to this sacred office, meeting them in the house of God and in their own homes, in business relations, in times of affliction, is his most important work. There may be with some elders an ambition to be often in the higher courts of the church and to take a part in the administration of its affairs, but faithful service in this apparently narrower sphere will bring greater

honor to the name of the Lord. Elders are not expected to know all about ecclesiastical law nor are they always familiar with the history and doctrines of the church and the manner of their defense. They are often unskilled in Bible learning, as were the fishermen of Galilee ; their attainments in literature may be limited ; they may not be ready with tongue or pen ; but in the faith of the Son of God and in fitness for guiding souls in the way of eternal life there must be no lack. The Word of God must be their companion and guide. This one book must not be neglected.

There should also be those natural qualities of true manhood, prudence, kindness, uprightness, sympathy, wisdom and discretion which are necessary to make them efficient in the leadership of the church and in winning the confidence of those who are without.

Let every elder magnify his office. Let him feel that a divine sanction is upon the office and the divine blessing upon his work. Let none "lord it over God's heritage," but in meekness and faith exercise those gifts which God has given. Seek by earnest effort and a living devotion to glorify God in every plan or effort, and to lead his church to wider fields of usefulness and to richer experiences of his grace.

CHAPTER II.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE OFFICE.

This is a "spiritual office." Its aim is not the care of church property; not to provide for the pastor's salary or the contingent expenses of the church. It is an element of strength in our system that the financial affairs of the church are committed to other hands. Elders are the divinely appointed channels of spiritual blessing upon God's people, and upon those whom he may call into his kingdom. This sacred office has its highest and only function in thoughts for that life which is more than meat. Invested with divine authority, called by his brethren, among whom he moves as a leader and guide, having access to their homes and being cognizant of their temporal and spiritual needs, and knowing their peculiar temptations and trials, he stands in such a position as to be often helpful as counsellor and friend. In this office the principal business is not to rule. It is rather to love and to feed, to cherish and to guard, so that the exercise of the authority of the office by calling offenders to account may not be necessary. The zeal and faith and patience which humbly labors to keep a wayward one within the pale of the church is, to my mind, a better grace than that which is exercised, too hastily sometimes, in the discipline of offending members.

The qualities of head and of heart essential in bearing the responsibilities of this office are by no means trifling. We may briefly mention some of them.

The first essential is AN UNDOUBTED CHRISTIAN CHARACTER. The man who leads souls in the way of life must be a man of God. To teach faith he must have faith; to lead others to love Jesus he must love him first. It is not necessary that he be a man of wealth, of learning, of high social standing, but it is absolutely necessary that he be a man whose life, hid with Christ in God, bears testimony daily to the truth. What God requires of those who preach he requires also of those who rule. A high standard of Christian character, a deep piety, a heart filled with zeal for God are the first requisites of this sacred office.

DOCTRINAL SOUNDNESS is important. By this I mean a strict adherence to the doctrines of the Bible in general, and of the Presbyterian Church in particular. Whether it be a part of this office to teach or not, the people expect it of them. The words of the elder have more weight because of his office. He may not be skilled in all the doctrinal questions of the church, but he is at least to sincerely adopt "The Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church," and this he cannot do in any proper sense until he has acquainted himself with it and with a clear conscience approved its teachings.

DENOMINATIONAL LOYALTY is important. Not mere devotion to one church, but that spirit of loyalty to his denomination which will prompt him to say with pride, "I am an elder of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America." He thus comes to feel the importance of his office, whether he sits with his brethren in the session, or with the chosen leaders of the church in its higher courts. Loyalty to the doctrines and govern-

ment of the church, to her policy, to her boards, to her missions, to her schools, to her history, every page of which is a record of struggles for truth and for liberty, are all essential to the elder's efficiency. With this army of loyal leaders our grand old church, with its historic doctrines and aggressive agencies and efficient government, will not halt in the conquest of the world. With these twenty-seven thousand leaders to fling our blue banner to the breeze, followed by marshaling hosts that will soon number a round million, we will hurl to the earth many an opposing Jericho. We will gather under the standard of King Immanuel multitudes who will be impressed by a strong, heroic, loyal, Christian manhood.

EARNESTNESS, PRUDENCE, SYMPATHY, GENTLENESS, FIRMNESS, CHEERFULNESS are important characteristics of the one who would use this office well. He should be a well rounded, godly man, full of faith and of good works, instant "in season, out of season," in the discharge of duty. He should be alert to the spiritual interest of those about him. He should be awake to the pressing need of the time in which he lives. He should be ready to every good work, prayerfully watching the "bulwarks and towers of Zion," lamenting her low estate or rejoicing in her prosperity. He must be a leader, but must be led himself by one who is able to make all grace abound in his servants, from whom cometh that wisdom which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

CHAPTER III.

THE ELDER A MAN.

If the elder is a representative *of* the people, he is also a representative *to* the people. His work is half in deeds, half in example. An elder must be one that "ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity, for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" It devolves upon the ruling elder to set such an example to all the flock as shall show that the true spirit of religion rules in his own home. "The church in the house" was set up first; it must be maintained. There must be both family government and family religion, both for the good of those who dwell there, and for those who are directly or indirectly influenced by the elder's home.

It is a sad fact, that in these days of rapid transit, and of the mad rush of business, the home life, and especially the home altar, are so neglected. In the morning the hurry to catch the train, and to get to the office, and in the evening the demands of society shut religion out. The home life centers at the hasty breakfast and the evening meal. There seems to be no time left for cultivating the spiritual life of the family itself. There is a grave responsibility resting upon the leaders in Israel to stem this tide of worldliness. Not only for our own sakes and for the sake of our families, but for our influence upon others, we should adopt King David's resolution: "I will behave myself wisely, I will walk within my house with a perfect heart."

The home of the elder should be hospitable. It should be an example of generous, religious cordiality to all who come. It need not be elegant, its appointments may be very plain, its table spread only with a frugal meal; but whatever the condition, it should be a place where the Master is made known in "the breaking of bread." The elder, in dispensing hospitality, should endeavor to make his home a center of religious influence, and with this in view, should open it to the social joys of young people. There is a coldness, a stiffness which repels, a sanctimoniousness which loses influence. And there is a genial manner, a cordial spirit, which, while it frowns upon sin enters heartily into the joys of youth, and adds a charm to the Christian life and profession. There are recreations and youthful sports in which a dignified elder may join, and in so doing exert a good influence. But we must discriminate. The home of the elder should be absolutely free from every amusement that is doubtful. If the elder smiles upon the social glass or the dance, the whole community will accept his endorsement, and plunge into excesses which he would not encourage. Be careful not to encourage a spirit of worldliness, by giving countenance to that which tends to worldliness. It may not be necessary to cry out often against questionable amusements, but your own home cannot be made a place for their encouragement, without weakening your influence as a ruler in the house of God. The sanctity of the home is next to that of the house of God.

The religious life of an elder is also closely identified with his business life. His influence for good and his usefulness in the church depend largely on the character he maintains in business. Our neighbors know more of us than we think, and their judgment of us is often more accurate than we desire it to be. The tenderest appeal made in the sanctuary may be nullified by the doubtful business transaction of the office or the shop. The meanest man knows well what a Christian ought to be, and sets a high standard for others to follow. Even "our enemies being judges," we must stand for truth and righteousness. That was a sublime height to which Job attained when he said, "Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity." I would recommend the careful reading of the book of Job, chapters xxix, xxx and xxxi, as a standard for prayerful effort. Apply the same ten commands, and the same Sermon on the Mount, to your business and political life, and to your household life, that you teach in the house of God. .

CHAPTER IV.

ELDER AND PASTOR.

The whole work of a Presbyterian church centers in and revolves round the session. Here the pastor and the elders plan together for the good of the church. The interests of the whole congregation, both their spiritual needs and their assemblages for worship, are considered. It is most important that there be cordial co-operation and consultation between pastor and elders, in order that the session may be efficient. The elder is to be the pastor's intimate friend and confidential adviser. He is to be his companion in visiting the people, his associate and peer in the meetings of the presbytery. They can only work together while there is a cordial companionship. No suspicious or half-hearted counsel will do. There must be whole-hearted and earnest sympathy.

The pastor comes into the community a stranger. His first acquaintances are of necessity the officers of the church. His first information, good or bad, concerning the members of the church, comes from the elder. Such information should be most prudently given. Do not fill the mind of the new minister with every unsavory tradition of the past. He has to deal with the present. Do not keep from him information that would aid him in his work. Prudent advice just at the right time, given not in the spirit of the tale-bearer, but for the good of those who need help, will add greatly to the usefulness of a pastor.

There should be a feeling of implicit confidence between the elder and the pastor, so that on all occasions there may be the fullest expression of opinion, without fear that confidence will be betrayed or the advice misused or misunderstood. A pastor often needs the advice of elders in matters in which he is likely to err through ignorance, or where some duty may have been overlooked. Do not weary your pastor with telling what he ought to do, and how he ought to treat this or that one, but an occasional hint in special cases will enable him to act wisely and to reach those who are to be reached by some special method. There are many queer people, and we must be queer also to win them. "I became all things to all men, that by all means I might save some."

For a more pleasant purpose than for criticism you may visit your pastor or invite him to your house. Do this in order to devise plans for doing good. Partners in business consult together often ; you are a spiritual partner with your minister. It is your church as much as his. Just as clearly is it your duty to labor for the Master as it is your pastor's duty. Put your heads and hearts together and devise plans of usefulness and the best methods to make them successful. If he sets on foot some plan for quickening the life of the church, aiding the Sabbath school or the Young People's Society, increasing the prayer meeting, or reaching the unconverted, then back him up heartily. You may make his plan succeed or fail. Make the work of the pulpit effective by your aid. Follow up the invitations, appeals and counsels of the pulpit with your own

efforts for the conversion of sinners. The pastor is trying to draw souls to Jesus ; do not draw the other way. Draw with your minister ; follow up his effort with your own. Co-operate with Christ's ambassador in the grandest work that man or angel can covet—the work of saving immortal souls. Who doubts that if all our elders preached Christ as faithfully in practice and personal effort as our average minister does in the pulpit, the spiritual droughts would give place to glorious harvests. “As ye go, *preach*,” is a commission to you as well as to your pastor.

The elder should also bear in mind that his pastor is a man “of like passions with himself.” He sometimes needs sympathy. He has his sorrows, his discouragements, disappointments, losses. He is separated from earthly friends. It may be that he has left loved ones far behind, that he might become your pastor. He goes amongst the people ministering in the name of Christ to those in sorrow. Many a burden is half borne by the faithful one who, in the spirit of the Master, “weeps with those who weep.” When sorrow comes to him where shall he go for sympathy? Whose tears will mingle with his? Must the sympathizer himself weep alone? It is now the elder's turn to minister in the name of Christ. Go to his home when burdens press his heart, and do with him as he would do if the sorrow were yours—kneel with him in prayer, commend him to God and to the word of his grace. Do not allow him to feel that because he is a minister he is to bear his burden alone. But make him feel that those whose burdens he has helped to bear are anxious to bear his burden.

Here is another obligation of the elder to the pastor: Always show due respect for your pastor. "He is the minister of God to thee for good." He may not be a man deserving of much respect. He may not be faithful in duty; he may be offensive in manner, and even tyrannical in his official actions, but for all that he is the minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For that, if for nothing else, he deserves respect. As an officer of the church you must maintain this respect to its ordained teachers. By disrespect to the man you may teach disrespect for the office. An insult to the ambassador is an insult to the king.

Finally, if you cannot respectfully sympathize and co-operate with your minister in the work of the church, either doubt your own qualification for the office of elder, or doubt the propriety of continuing that minister as your pastor.

CHAPTER V.

AMONG THE PEOPLE.

I wish that elders might be impressed with the importance and the enjoyment of family visitation. Let us call it pastoral visitation: for in this particular the elder is also a pastor. There is so much of pleasant personal experience in what I write here that I write with confident enthusiasm. The best elders are busy men, and cannot give much time to visitation. But a little time spent occasionally in this way will do great good.

I would suggest that the congregation be carefully divided into districts, and that one or two elders be assigned to each. This district is then the field for which these elders are responsible. Let a house-to-house visitation be made at a suitable season, when the people can be found at home, either having previously arranged for this or trusting to circumstances of the family you visit. Make frequent visits to the aged and the sick. Do not slight the poor. See that new families coming into the community are visited.

In such visitations read the word of God and pray. In prayer seek for special and needed blessings upon the homes you are in. Make special mention of financial troubles, sickness, absent ones, and especially pray for any who are away from Christ. Pray also for your pastor, your church, the community, and for any special work contemplated by the church.

In conversation talk of the church, and of the spiritual needs of the family. Do not allow the con-

versation to turn upon any church trouble. Do not make your visit the occasion for transacting business. Close your ears to rumors and reports against fellow Christians. Make it a pastoral visit in fact as well as in name.

Attention should be given to the Scripture lessons read. Make that appropriate to the occasion. Read the word believing that "the word of God is quick and powerful." A brief comment on the word read may not be amiss.

Another form of this family visitation which I have found specially beneficial is the cottage prayer meeting. The elder is the most suitable person to conduct such a meeting. Form a little company, and go to a home to spend an hour in prayer and praise. It has a social as well as a spiritual side and both are beneficial. This is specially profitable to those who are hindered from attendance upon the public means of grace. The aged, mothers of small children, those distant from the house of God, and also a large number who are naturally indifferent about church attendance, may be greatly benefited by such meetings.

They also afford a timid elder opportunity to exercise his gifts of speech and also of speaking against growing evils in a community or in favor of spiritual reforms. In a few words he may lay bare the wrong, or present the truth in such manner as to correct error or even to awaken an interest which may spread in gracious outpouring to the whole congregation.

It would be a good thing to hold such meetings in the homes of those who have been bereaved. Go to them

and minister in the name of him who "came to bind up the broken hearted, to comfort all that mourn," and your mission will be richly blessed.

In visiting offenders it is extremely important that the interview be private. It may do harm and make the visit worse than useless to broach the subject in the presence of others, especially of the same family. The same is true in speaking to the unconverted. It is less embarrassing, and the one whom you would lead to Christ will speak more freely if you can converse alone.

In all your visits carry the spirit of the Master with you. Minister in his name by presenting a cheerful, hopeful form of our blessed religion.

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

“The church session is charged with maintaining the spiritual government of the church.” The General Assembly has made frequent deliverances interpreting this declaration of our Form of Government as specially applicable to the Sabbath school. The Assembly of 1886 says: “We emphasize the importance of the supervision of the Sabbath school work, and the selection of officers and teachers and the general conduct of the school by the sessions of the respective churches.”

Each elder stands in official relation to the Sabbath school. It is not so much what the session may do as a body in the control of the school as what they may do as individuals in furthering its interests. Ordinarily elders are elected to that office because of faithfulness in service and fitness for leadership in spiritual things. This implies some qualification for teaching also. Here then is his responsibility. Both to teach and to see that the whole work of the school is properly conducted, and to make the work of the school as profitable as possible to all under its influence. This oversight cannot be maintained by staying away from the school. You must be in it and of it in order to help it.

We are too liable to say “The superintendent is so capable and is doing so well that we need not interfere.” It is not interference that we recommend, but earnest counsel and help. The most efficient officer is

always glad to have that. It is not a lack of confidence in their cashier that leads the directors of a bank to look carefully over its business, but in order—through combined wisdom—there may be no mistakes. Forget the obnoxious side of “oversight and control” and make it rather cordial sympathy and generous encouragement.

In the management of the school bear in mind that it is a part of the church, not an appendage to it. In a large measure the success of the church is bound up in the efficiency of the Sabbath school. The great doctrines of redemption and the distinctive doctrines of our own branch of the church should be inculcated in the young. The Bible and the Catechism should be the text books of every Presbyterian Sabbath school. Even the songs of the children should be guarded. One of the potent methods of introducing error, and truth also, into the early church, was in the hymns the people sang. Do the elders of our churches know that the seeds of many errors are in the “jingle” of the present day which we are pleased or obliged to call Sabbath school music?

Again, here is the place for the growth of the church. It is the recruiting place of the army of the Triune God. This million of children which are cared for by the elders of to-day will be a million church members in twenty years. They will be the elders and teachers and preachers of the next generation. And they will be in a large measure the product and reflection of the leaders of to-day. Are the elders of to-day like the “children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought

to do? ” Here is the place to develop the missionary spirit, personal piety, a love for the house of God, an interest in the work of the church, as well as an acquaintance with the Bible and with the doctrines of the church.

CHAPTER VII.

ALONE WITH GOD.

“Jesus was alone praying.” The people would have come at that very hour to make him their king, but it was better that he be alone with God. Out on the mountain the Saviour gained strength for approaching trial and victory over sin and death. There he was prepared “to finish the work the Father gave him to do.” What a privilege to those who are worried and wearied with the thoughtlessness and the sin of others, to leave the world for awhile to be “alone with God.” “Enter into thy closet and shut thy door, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.” The promises of God’s word become more precious as we use them. Service becomes lighter as we cast our care upon Him whom we serve. Nadab and Abihu had temptations peculiar to their office. So does every one in official position. The official robe does not cover from the tempter. Even the ancient High Priest must offer sacrifice for himself, and then for the sins of the people. When alone with God we can tell our heart wanderings, our weaknesses, our sins; we can ask for and will receive help and strength from the great source of strength. Here we receive that wisdom from above which we especially need in leading souls to the way of life.

But let no ruler of God’s house imagine that there is a peculiar manner of blessing to him because of his office. In our Lord’s whole ministry upon the earth he only used the precepts and promises that were pre-

pared for the use of all mankind. In temptation, in prayer, in teaching he drew from the great storehouse of truth, and exercised only the rights we have in times of need. Let us follow the Lord's example. Plead the promises. Weave into an argument the divine assurances of help and strengthen the plea we make with a faith that takes no denial. The same course of humility, confession, penitence, communion with God, and faith in his power that cheers any soul, will ever be found the right course for the ruler in God's house. And as the face of Moses shone with the glory of the Lord when he came out from his presence, so will the face of the leaders in Israel shine when they mingle with the people whom they serve.

For the sake of others the elder should be often alone with God. He writes the names of all the tribes upon his breast and intercedes for them at a throne of grace. The sorrows of some, the sins of some, the worldliness of some, the carelessness and indifference of some make up the burden he carries to the throne. To pray and to confess because others have sinned is part of his duty as intercessor and friend, may we say as representative of the people. When alone with God tell the whole need of your church, of the people, of the pastor. Tell the trials of the weak, shelter the tempted with the shield of your faith. Tell the sorrows of them that mourn. Tell the wanderings of the worldly, and the needs of the soul sick of sin. Plead for those who are maddened by vice. Intercede for all as Nehemiah did for his people. Let an interest in others be woven into your prayers and new impulses, higher hopes and

nobler purposes will expand your soul as you come out from the secret place of the Most High to mingle with those for whom you have earnestly prayed.

Let us not hurry our private devotion. Too precious are the moments spent in the divine presence to have them crowded with hastily uttered expressions of half formed desires, or to have them filled with the ordinary announcement of our own and others' wants. The place of prayer should be a place for earnest meditation, of careful thought upon the things we desire. The words with which we appear before the King should be set in order. Meditate here on divine things. Contemplate the divine attributes. Consider his gracious promises. Ask only for that which in the heart has taken the form of an earnest desire. It is far better to ask for a few things in hope than to pray around the world without a well defined desire. Here, too, is the place to calm the mind for service. Here, "in the secret of his presence," there is rest. It is a calm and sure retreat, and the richest blessings of a loving Father fall upon his servants while they lie prostrate before his throne.

"There, there on eagle wings we soar,
And time and sense seem all no more;
And heaven comes down our souls to greet,
And glory crowns the mercy seat."

CHAPTER VIII.

PUBLIC PRAYER.

The elder should be eminently a man of prayer. He should have deep convictions as to the efficacy of prayer, that he may lead others to a like belief. He should believe in direct and definite answers to prayer. He must believe that "the prayer of a righteous man availeth much." From much private communion with God he comes to lead and help others in public prayer.

We, as Presbyterians, do not have a ritual, and are not much addicted to either reading or reciting our prayers. It is not the purpose of the writer to give set forms for various occasions, with the idea that they may take the place of the words "set in order" by the one who leads in prayer. Doctor Ashbel Green calls this "social prayer." It is a good name, because it has to do with the company of believers assembled together, with a community of interests, and with the cause of Christ at heart. If those who lead in prayer would bear this in mind it would be a helpful guide in this part of public worship.

The following suggestions are offered in the hope that they may be helpful:

1. *You lead in prayer.* Public prayer is to be of such a character as to represent the interests of others. Ordinarily petitions of a personal nature should be omitted. But it is highly proper that the special needs of any in the community should be mentioned.

The sick, the bereaved, those who in the providence of God are hindered from meeting in the sanctuary, those who have returned after prolonged absence, strangers and others whose personal trials call forth sympathy, should be remembered in prayer. It would perhaps be a good rule to formulate a prayer so that it will touch upon that which the people are naturally thinking about.

2. *Pray to the Father.* God, the Father, is the hearer and the answerer of prayer. We are to ask in the name of the Son, and in this we are guided by the Spirit. The Saviour says: "In that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name he will give it you."

3. *Note the four parts of prayer.* These are adoration, thanksgiving, confession and petition. All these need not be embodied in each prayer, but none should be always neglected. In adoration, praise the grace and love of God. Remember all the attributes of divinity; adore the giver of every good and perfect gift. Be thankful; recount the blessings of the past; praise the author of so great and precious promises; confess the sin of the people. God expects it; sinners need it. Every heart will respond to the penitent publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

Petition is the most definite part of prayer; the part we are not liable to forget. It is asking for the things we desire, telling our complaints, seeking balm for our soul's wounds, and interceding for others.

4. *Use Scripture in prayer.* Familiarity with the word of God is the best preparation for public prayer. Here we have the inspired forms that have been on the lips of believers in every age. They have been sanctified by use as well as by divine authority. They are doubly precious because they have been answered so often. They are proper because they are couched in language suited for public use. Yet the proper meaning of each passage of Scripture used in prayer should be considered.

5. *Forms of prayer.* I do not recommend the reading of prayers from a prayer-book, nor memorizing and reciting prayers; yet I would recommend either of these rather than entire silence on the part of the ruling elder. Moreover, I do believe that any elder would be greatly helped by keeping at hand a book of prayers, carefully read it, memorize portions, and thus learn in general the language of public prayer. A prayer carefully written and recited from memory would be proper. Be assured that the "words set in order before the king" are acceptable.

6. "*Vain repetitions.*" Much has been said upon this. Much more will be said before the evil is corrected. Those who lead in public prayer are liable to drift into a habit of repeating words and phrases which become tiresome to the hearer and sometimes leads to sacrilegious ridicule. Simple words and forms of expression should always be chosen. Peculiar expressions and startling and sensational utterances are never in place in prayer. Every word should be distinctly uttered. The natural voice should be used and modulation so guarded as not to speak so low that you will not

be heard or so high that you will weary yourself and those who hear. The tone and manner of one who leads in prayer have very much to do with the effect upon those who hear. Let your manner be such that the congregation will feel that you are in the very presence of God and that you are talking to him.

7. *Individuality.* However much we may study the needs and desires of others in order to properly present them at a throne of grace, there is still to be an individuality in our prayer. Our own desires and interests, especially as they pertain to the Kingdom of God, should be prominent parts of our prayers. You are interested in some particular cause. It may be a "hobby" with you, but to you it is of great importance. Don't have a hobby that you cannot pray for. Let it be a burden upon your heart and the burden of your prayer, and some will become interested because of your interest, and thus the good cause will be advanced. Your earnestness will help to answer your prayer. Make prominent in your prayers the thing in which you are interested. Others will do the same, and thus many interests will be represented. You may very properly dwell upon missions, temperance, national sins, church unity, Sabbath keeping, worldliness, spiritual declension, the Sabbath school, youth of the church, &c. Make such subjects as these prominent in your public prayers, and you will awaken an interest in others.

8. *Divine help in praying.* We know not what to pray for as we ought. We need instruction in prayer. To learn to pray we must often ask of him who taught

his disciples to pray to teach us the same lessons. is a sad comment on the experiences of some of the early church, "ye have not because ye ask not; ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss." Yet in the same connection we are admonished to "draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to us." Private prayer and communion with God will aid much in this public duty. The prayer of every follower of Christ should be that of the first disciple: "Lord, teach us to pray." What a stimulus to earnest prayer to know that "the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities and maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered."

9. A most helpful book on this subject is: "With Christ in the School of Prayer," by Andrew Murray. I wish every elder might read it.

CHAPTER IX.

PUBLIC WORSHIP.

It is an important thing that each church be opened every Sabbath for public worship. Many churches are without the service of a stated minister, others have only part of a minister's time and they must either not worship at all in the absence of the minister or the elders must conduct the service. It is the duty of every elder of our church to counteract the idea which seems to be growing common, that no religious service can be held without a minister. It is the duty of the elders especially to maintain public worship, even in the absence of an ordained minister. The congregation can scarcely hope to develop numerically or spiritually that has only one or two services in a month, while the church is closed entirely all the rest of the time. In such emergencies, the elders must be "pastors and teachers." They may expound the Scripture, lecture, or give an exhortation, or read a sermon. I believe that a regular, formal service in which the elder goes into the pulpit, conducts the service in the regular form, and delivers a well prepared address, will do great good. "Preach the word." Give dignity to the service and to your office. Make it a rule that the church where you act as elder shall be opened every Sabbath and that the people shall have an opportunity to engage in worship. I firmly believe that there is something sadly wrong with that session whose church is closed Sabbath after Sabbath and no effort made to bring the people together to worship. It is a sure way of disbanding a church.

Well does the writer remember the little country church where his father was a faithful elder. From that boyhood experience I know whereof I speak. The church was poor and generally "vacant." But it was kept alive by the grace of God and by the faithfulness of the elders. There were only thirty members. The elders lived from one to three miles away. Yet that church was open every Sabbath. Through winter snows and summer heat, through pelting storms and muddy roads the people came—not to hear an eloquent sermon by a noted preacher—but to worship in a meeting conducted by "only an elder." I have seen that church crowded to the doors and that crowd subdued almost to revival earnestness in services where an elder with limited gifts conducted the service, speaking not very good English, and it may be not very sound theology, earnest words that touched many hearts. It could scarcely be said that these elders were "apt to teach," but what is better, it could be said that they did their duty.

There are elders in most of our churches capable of doing this work "if there be first a willing mind;" there are wonderful resources in our Presbyterian Church and in the Presbyterian system, which have not yet been developed. There is a latent power here that needs only to be awakened to its opportunity, needs to be called to the front and its response will prove a rich blessing. Elders should remember that by their ordination they are authorized and commissioned to do this very work. If the early church scarcely knew the difference between the "teaching elder" and

“ruling elder” it is certainly possible for our elders now to make this distinction less than it is.

With this broader conception of your office and with these ordination vows upon you and the care of immortal souls pressing, will you not see that the church where you rule is never closed on a Sabbath when you can be there? Will you not make sure that “saint and sinner shall have his portion,” even though it be your own poor mouth that tells the story?

The Sabbath services and the mid-week prayer meeting may all be conducted in this manner to the glory of God and for the good of his people. New workers may be enlisted, latent material developed and new life imparted to many. The people will rally to the support of the elders, they will unite in prayer and effort, and without waiting for a preacher of the word, the church will grow in grace and knowledge, and sinners will be converted unto God.

CHAPTER X.

RECEPTION OF MEMBERS.

“Admission of persons to the sealing ordinances” is a sacred, a solemn duty. It brings joy if carefully performed, it becomes a burden if done carelessly. Wisdom, discretion, prudence and firmness are all necessary in this work of the session. There is sometimes a misguided zeal to have a large accession, and sometimes a feeling that because of special manifestations of the Holy Spirit which awakens many, that there is hope for all who come. It is at these special seasons the session is most liable to err. From my own experience, I assure the elders to whom I write that there are times when it is far better not to receive persons than to admit them, only to grieve the church by their sins. It is highly proper, when the session is not entirely satisfied with the profession of those who apply for church membership, to advise them to delay till their faith is clearer, or till the evidence of a change of heart is more apparent. If any take offense, that is evidence that the advice was proper, but in most cases it will be found that they will return with the very evidence that was lacking at first.

No person should be received simply because he seeks admission to the church. The session, not the individual, is to be the judge of fitness for membership. No one should be allowed to rush heedlessly into so solemn a relationship, without being duly impressed with its sanctity and without feeling the solemn obliga-

tion that is thus imposed upon him. Not an impulse, but a deep seated conviction should impel to church membership. The Lord's parable of the seed that fell on the rock is in point here.

Care should be taken during seasons of special awakening, or when evangelistic work has been in progress, or when for any reason, large numbers are awakened. Do not think that all who are aroused are truly converted. Examine every candidate carefully. Do not be in haste to receive any. Wait a few weeks till convictions are settled. The church will not lose by this. It is a gain not to receive a person who is not truly converted. If elders would feel that they are equally responsible with the pastor in the reception of members, and that it is a sacred duty to admit only those who are worthy, it would be far better. Often an ambitious pastor, desirous of making a big record of accessions, and not familiar with the character of persons applying for membership, leaves a church with a roll which must needs be purged over and over again before the ill advised work is undone. Sessions, being the more permanent factor in the organization of the church, should put a check upon this by guarding more carefully the reception of members.

In examining candidates for admission to the church we should seek to learn if they have a true sense of sin, a conviction of personal sin, and a hope in the cleansing blood of Christ. Find the evidence and ground of a faith that clings to Christ as the only hope of salvation. Does the heart warm with love for the Master, and is it ready to be filled with his grace? - Is there evi-

dence of a spirit of prayer, an interest in the word of life, a determination to forsake sin and to live in the fellowship of God's children? Is there a willingness to make some sacrifice for Jesus, and to bear some trial for his glory? Are evil habits and associations abandoned? Is there a spirit of forgiveness and a heart free from malice and envy? These are some of the well known marks of that change from darkness to light which we expect in those who follow Christ. We ought to keep every unsaved person out of the church, and welcome every saved person to its membership. But if in this we often fail we should still maintain the principle.

As a practical guide in receiving members into the church we make the following suggestions :

First. Permit only a few to appear before the session at a time. Two, three or four may appear and make their profession, and they be followed by others. As preparatory to this it is a good thing for the elders each to consult privately with applicants, so as to be familiar with their thoughts and experiences, and to relieve embarrassment.

Second. I recommend a written examination if possible. Give such a list of questions as you would ask to an applicant to answer in writing at home, to be returned at a future meeting of the session. Having tested this I most heartily recommend it.

Third. Make those who are received feel that they are actually received into the "fellowship of the church." A warm hand shake, a few words of Christian greeting, a kindly word of advice to the young will

be a great help to the one beginning the Christian life. Those who can only be received to doubtful disputations should not be received at all.

Fourth. Let the reception of members be attended by some special attention to it in the church. A social meeting for introduction, or a meeting at the home of one of the elders where religious exercises and social greetings combine to occupy the time, will do good. Sometimes a suitable book, a suggestive tract, or a neatly printed certificate of church membership, will prove a treasure for coming years.

Fifth. The best protection and help we can give to a young church member is a place to work. Of course we should "lay hands suddenly on no man." But there are unofficial positions where the beginner may be tested and his usefulness proved. Do not expect beginners in the Christian life to prove their efficiency by doing nothing. Put them to work at saving souls for their own good as well as for the good of others.

CHAPTER XI.

DISCIPLINE.

“Discipline is the exercise of that authority and the application of that system of laws which the Lord Jesus Christ has appointed in his church.”

“The ends of discipline are the maintenance of the truth, the vindication of the authority and the honor of Christ, the removal of offenses, the promotion of the purity and edification of the church and the spiritual good of offenders.” (Book of Discipline, chap. I.)

If sessions would keep this object of discipline in mind, there would be a more frequent exercise of it and with better results. Generally it is applied only to gross offenders, and then only with the idea of ridding the church of them and not with an effort to reclaim them.

There is a hopeful side to this work of sessions that I wish I might impress. It is the possibility of reclaiming a large number of offenders by the tender application of the divine law. We too often set about to get rid of a gross offender, and allow minor offenses to pass, when prayerful counsel would reclaim the one and restrain the other.

I have in mind three cases in my own experience. The sin was the same. Two of them were tenderly warned of the magnitude of their sin, and urged to repent and confess. Both did so after a little time, and the session being fully satisfied of their sincerity, restored them to the communion of the church, making

public announcement of the action. The other person was not warned or counseled. He was simply let alone. The flagrant sin became a reproach upon the church. Other sins followed, till the person was utterly demoralized, who might have been reclaimed if taken in time.

Ordinarily, there should be no haste in bringing formal charges against offenders. That should be the last resort. It is generally better to patiently wait for a season. Conscience may be quickened and a voluntary confession made, which is far better. But whatever time may elapse before decided action, the offender should know that the session takes notice of the offense, and expects amendment to be made.

No set of rules can be laid down for process against offenders. Each case has its own peculiar surroundings, and these must be considered. Prudence, gentleness, caution, and with it all the thought that the good of the offender is the principal object, will solve many a difficulty. The elder is morally and officially bound to hold confidence in every member of the church. He must apply the principle that "a man is to be treated as innocent until he is proven guilty." Discredit every rumor that you can. Defend the honor of every member of the church. Believe the worst only when you must. Always bear in mind that the mission of the church of Christ is to seek and to save that which was lost, and to heal that which is lame. If the keys of the kingdom have been committed to you, do not misuse your responsibility by closing the door too soon or by casting out any who might be reclaimed. In some measure apply to yourself the divine promise to the

weak and erring, "I will strengthen thee, I will help thee, I will cause thee to stand." Bear in mind that the mission of the church is to take these weak ones and nourish them into strength. There may be a limit to patience, but let us err rather on the side of gospel gentleness than of legal severity. Every member received into a Presbyterian church is expected to retain his connection with the church of Christ to the end of life. Let us throw such influences around the weak and erring as to hold them for the Master, restraining them from sin and aiding them to grow up into the full stature of manhood in Christ.

CHAPTER XII.

THE COMMUNION TABLE.

There is no more solemn assemblage of God's people than where they commemorate the suffering and death of the Saviour. Precious are the blessings which fall upon every church while they thus commune with the Lord. Nothing should be admitted to that solemn hour that will mar the service or divert the attention. Solemn thought and prayerful contemplation of Jesus Christ as he is "evidently set forth crucified," should occupy the time. Extreme care should be taken that the conditions be favorable for this.

Because of some sad experiences I make the following suggestions. To most of my readers they may seem unnecessary, but I know that they are much needed in some churches.

Let the elders agree upon one person, either an elder or a prudent woman of the church, who shall prepare the table. See to it that the table is prepared before the room is occupied. I have seen a service, otherwise solemn, marred by the opening of packages, arranging linen, drawing stoppers from bottles, etc., in the presence of the congregation. Do not, I beg of you, let this occur. Even if the person whose duty it is to prepare the table may live a long distance from the church, he should be sure to reach it in time to perform his duty so as to avoid these distractions. See that everything is exactly right, and then let the table be properly covered until the elements are needed.

Let the elder whose duty it is, remove the cover from the table just before the prayer of consecration. Do nothing while hymns are being sung. Let the elders who have been previously appointed stand to receive the elements from the hand of the minister, and at his signal begin to distribute to the people. The bread should be broken, or cut into small pieces, so that it need not be broken again by the communicant. The cups should be kept properly replenished, so that no one would be obliged to drink the "dregs." Carry the vessels in a dignified manner. Do not swing the urn at your side as you would a pail of water. Avoid undue haste. Be sure that all are served. Serve the officiating minister and others seated with him first. Let the elders be served by the minister after the congregation. Have nothing on the table that is not needed, not even a boquet. As soon as all are served cover the table and let it remain thus until the communicants have left the church.

Do not eat of the bread or sup at the wine after the service. Be orderly, dignified, prompt. You are in a position to add much to the solemnity of the service or to mar it by clumsiness. Give attention to these little things and you will aid very much in the observance of the Lord's Supper. .

CHAPTER XIII.

REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER OF THE SESSION.

The session is to represent the best elements and influences of the congregation. They are to study to make themselves proper leaders. There must be a close bond of union between the congregation and its representatives.

It frequently occurs that the existing session must take steps for the increase of their number. It is proper that they, having carefully considered the interests of the whole congregation, should make plans for election of elders and lay them before the congregation. The session may suggest the number of new elders needed, and may nominate persons whom they consider suitable.

It should always be borne in mind that the elder is a representative of the spiritual interests of the congregation. His own spiritual character is his first qualification for office. Without that, no one should be considered available. And of this the session is the best judge. A "faction" has no right to exist in a Presbyterian church, and as such, has no right to representation in the session. Yet, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that parties are formed, and their leaders recognized in many churches. It would be proper, where such parties exist and where men who are conscientious, and who are loyal to the whole church may be found, to call them to the office of elder. It will often allay ill feelings, and unite those

who would otherwise become estranged. But this should not be done in the spirit of rivalry, or to perpetuate factional strife.

Frequently congregations are made up of various classes in social and business life. "The rich and the poor meet together." Professional and business men sit at the Lord's table with mechanics and artisans. The fashionable belle passes the communion cup to the servant girl. The employer may sit next to the employe. "The Lord is the maker of them all." These various classes will feel a deeper interest in the church, and more comfortable in the worship, if from their own number there be a representative in the session. They may not demand it, but nevertheless will feel the lack of it. There are often godly, faithful men, lacking refinement and education, but supplying that lack by their good sense and piety, who may sit with professional and educated men, and in reality, will be their peers in directing the affairs of the church. Shrewdness, or wealth, or education are not to be regarded as essential qualifications for the office of ruling elder.

The various agencies and societies of the congregation should, in some manner, be represented in the session. The Sabbath school, the Missionary Society, the Young People's Society, should each have a sympathetic representative in the session.

In many churches the question of geographical location should be considered. Part of a congregation in a village, and part in the surrounding community should each be represented. So also, where two villages

or two farming districts are represented. Even in towns and cities the "up town" and "down town" districts should have representation.

There is no rule governing the number of elders necessary to constitute a session. But no church where they can be obtained should have less than three or four. Where there are only two elders both must always be present to "constitute a quorum." And if one of these be feeble, or if the homes of the two be widely separated, it greatly interferes with the work of the congregation and sometimes almost compels proceedings which are not strictly legal.

It is probably according to custom to have four elders for a church of one hundred members or less, six for two hundred and an elder for each additional fifty members.

In some congregations there is an impression that "elder" means "old man," and that no one should be chosen to this office who has not passed the meridian of life. This is a serious mistake. There are efficient young men who should be taken while they are young. Under the leadership of men of maturer years they will be prepared for greater usefulness. Their zeal and courage will inspire the members of the church and be a stimulus to the older men with whom they associate. A session composed entirely of inexperienced young men is, of course, not desirable, nor is a session composed entirely of old men very much more desirable. Why should a young man at twenty-five or thirty be considered worthy to sit as moderator of the session and as leader in all the spiritual work of the church,

and not other young men to be seated with him as helpers in the work?

Let me speak a word confidentially in the ears of the elders concerning their own term of service. There may come a time when you should "cease to act." There may be changes in the congregation, or in yourself, that will make you an improper representative of the people. Of this you may be the best judge. In your closet, alone with God, where you seek blessings upon the church, you may receive light that will lead you to such a course. Do not allow any personal motive or ambition, or a stubborn determination to "rule or ruin," to get possession of your mind. Your own personal inclinations and interests should always be lost in the higher good of the church of Christ. Consider first the honor of Christ and your course will bring honor to yourself. Let the good of the church be your highest interest and you will readily determine when you cease to be a representative of the spiritual interests of the church, or when your service has ceased to be profitable to those who once chose you to be their spiritual leader. The so-called "rotary system" ought not to be made an expedient for "getting rid of" an unacceptable elder. Yet there can be little doubt that the principal reason for its existence is that many elders would not or could not see when the time of their efficiency and acceptance with the people had ended. See to it that no such expedient is necessary to remove you from an office to which you have been called for the glory of God.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN THE HIGHER COURTS.

Our Presbyterian system embodies the grand idea of the unity of the church. The individual churches are bound together locally in the Presbytery. The Presbyteries are bound together in the Synod and in the General Assembly. The elder stands as the peer of the minister in all these higher courts. This is a wide field for usefulness in his office. But only occasionally is the elder in these higher courts, and for that reason his active interest is not continuous. Yet through the agency of our excellent and aggressive church papers, which ought to be in every elder's home, he may be thoroughly informed, and when called upon to attend and vote he may do it intelligently.

The elders being shrewd business men are often capable of making suggestions, and proposing plans in the business of the church which would not be thought of by ministers. Often an elder lawyer will set a whole presbytery or synod right on a point of law. Often a practical business man will detect the flaw in a plausible scheme which would otherwise prove itself impracticable. Too many impossible methods are projected by men unskilled in practical business affairs. The church cannot carry on its great benevolent and educational work without these prudent elders.

They are also needed as the conservators of doctrine. I do not say that they are less aggressive than the ministry, but by reason of their habits and condition

they are more conservative. They are not likely to be "tossed about with every wind of doctrine." They will stick to one thing till they are sure of a better. Besides this they stand nearer to the great mass of the people than the ministry. They stand nearer to the whole church in doctrine and in practice than the ministry. The ministry have become in a large measure a class, and by reason of their training and professional affinities they flock together. Whatever may be said against the elders it must be said in their favor that they are orthodox. While they are admitted as the equals of the ministry in the higher courts, the church will stand where they do. Their stubborn orthodoxy will prevail.

Every church should be represented in the meetings of the presbytery. Elders should take a lively interest in the proceedings when present, and when absent should seek to learn what was done. They should feel that they owe a service to the church at large and that with what wisdom they possess they should further the work of the church. Do not feel that you go to presbytery merely to transact the business pertaining to your own church. You are there responsible for the care of others and to transact business pertaining to the grand old church upon which the sun never sets. . Magnify your office.

PART II.

LAW AND USAGE.

INTRODUCTORY.

This is not a "digest" of Presbyterian law. The writer is by no means qualified to prepare such a work, nor would the limits of this little volume permit its introduction here. However, there are some things needed by every session, in order that its work may go smoothly. These are not the disputed or obscure points of law, but the ordinary laws and customs of sessions. It is desirable that all sessions proceed by methods which are similar in the transaction of business, and by so doing they may save much trouble to themselves.

We have endeavored to collect in the following pages a brief summary of these laws, sometimes giving their exact language and at other times in condensed form. We trust that this may be found helpful to elders in the ordinary discharge of their duties. In more doubtful and difficult questions Moore's Digest of Presbyterian Law, or Hodge's "What is Presbyterian Law," should be consulted. But in all questions of law and usage our Form of Government and Book of Discipline, and Directory for Worship should be carefully studied. We call special attention to Chapters V, IX, XIII, XIX, XXI, of the Form of Government; Chapters I, V, VII, IX, XI, XII, of Book of Discipline, and Chapters IX and X of the Directory for Worship. A careful study of these will aid any elder in the discharge of the duties of his office.

CHAPTER I.

MEETINGS OF THE SESSION.

Meetings of the session are either regular or informal, but the acts of the latter are only legalized by approval of a regular meeting, and must be recorded with its minutes.

The Assembly recommends that all church sessions hold monthly meetings. The session may be convened at any time by the call of the moderator, or he must convene it at the request of two members of session, or upon the order of the presbytery.

The usual place of meeting is the church, but any convenient place may be selected for any meeting without affecting the legality of the proceedings. The pastor is "ex-officio" moderator of the session. The presbytery is "pastor" of a vacant church, and a member of the presbytery is appointed moderator of the session. He stands in the same legal relation to the session and the congregation as a pastor. Every meeting of the session should be held under his direction. Only when it is impracticable by reason of sickness, or distance or other cause, should another be invited to preside, and then "only a minister of the same presbytery" may do so. However, it is proper for one of the elders to preside in the absence of a minister. "It is not lawful to invite a minister of another presbytery to preside at meetings of the session."

The moderator of the session, whether he be the pastor of the church or be appointed by the presby-

tery, is a member of the session, with all the authority that belongs to the office.

“Two elders, if there be as many in the congregation, with the pastor, shall be necessary to constitute a quorum.” But the pastor and one elder is a quorum where there is but one elder, or when all other elders are non-resident and their residence unknown.

Each meeting of the session should be opened and closed with prayer, and record made of the fact.

The names of those present and those absent should be recorded.

The following “order of business” is suggested for the use of sessions :

1. Session opened with prayer.
2. Make roll and note absentees.
3. Reception of members by profession and by certificate.
4. Reports of committees previously appointed.
5. Dismissions by letter to other churches.
6. Conference as to negligent or offending members of the church.
7. Conference as to spiritual needs of the church.
8. Business connected with the Sabbath school.
9. The Boards of the church.
10. The music of the church.
11. The various societies of the church.
12. Arrangement for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
13. Election of representative to presbytery.
14. Prepare statistical report to presbytery “before April meeting of presbytery.”

15. Prepare narrative of the state of religion, "before April meeting of presbytery."

16. Revise church roll. (See Book of Discipline, Chap. VII, 49, 50, 52.)

17. Read and correct minutes.

18. Close meeting with prayer.

In the transaction of business, sessions should note the following, which embodies recent deliverances of the Assembly on various subjects :

"It is not regular to grant a letter of dismissal to a member of the church otherwise than by a vote of the session regularly called." But "there is nothing in the Form of Government to invalidate the custom of authorizing by a vote of session its moderator or stated clerk to issue letters in the interim of meetings of the session to members who are in good-standing and to report such dismissions to the session at its next meeting." -

All reports filled out by the session to be sent to the higher courts of the church are to be signed "by order of the session."

"The General Assembly (1893) takes notice that the exclusive authority of the session over the worship of the church, including not only the time and place of preaching the word, but also the music and the use of church buildings, is not sufficiently appreciated by the church at large, and that there are frequent complaints that trustees of congregations assume powers and authority, especially over music and the use of church buildings, which are not warranted by, bⁱt in conflict with the constitution of the church."

The Assembly enjoins upon the churches loyal adherence to our Form of Government, providing that "the authority of the session over all matters of worship is paramount, and at the same time recommends that all such questions be treated with Christian tact and courtesy, in the spirit of love and forbearance."

"This Assembly (1884) leaves to each session the delicate and important matter of arranging and conducting the music. as to them shall seem most to edification, recommending great caution, prudence and forbearance in regard to it."

"Pastors and sessions are urged (1883) to put forth practical and persistent efforts to enlist their entire congregations in systematic Bible study and teaching in connection with the Sabbath school."

"The General Assembly (1883) emphasizes the duty of church sessions to exercise supervision over their Sabbath schools, especially in the choice of officers and teachers."

"In the judgment of the General Assembly (1883) greater prominence should be given in Sabbath school contributions to the causes represented by our Boards, that the scholars may be educated to give intelligently to each always."

The Assembly (1881) directs church sessions to exercise greater care in preserving accurate rolls of their baptized children who are not communicants.

"The essential elements in the Lord's Supper are bread and wine. The General Assembly (1881) has always recognized the right of sessions to determine what is bread and what is wine."

“It is the sense of this Assembly (1895) that unfermented fruit of the vine fulfills every condition in the celebration of the sacrament.”

The Assembly (1885) says: “Inasmuch as the members of sessions are the judges of the qualifications of those to be admitted to the sealing ordinances, and the reception of such is their act, the examination of candidates ought manifestly to be in their presence, unless in special cases of sickness or other hindrance, when this duty may be performed by a committee, under direction of the session.”

Minutes (1875): “The validity of Roman Catholic baptism is left to the judgment of sessions.” “The General Assembly (1891) reaffirms the deliverances of past Assemblies on the subject of worldly amusements,” and declares “church sessions fully competent to decide when and how far discipline should be exercised.” But (1895) “No new terms of communion are to be created by sessions.”

A certificate of dismissal is valid ordinarily for only one year after its date. A certificate must be addressed to a particular church.

A certificate of dismissal granted to one who has been absent from the community for a length of time should only certify to the Christian conduct of the person up to the date of his leaving the community, unless the session has personal knowledge of his conduct.

“We suggest that this Assembly (1891) most emphatically request the sessions of our various churches to provide for systematic Biblical instruction

in the Sabbath schools under their care in the principles of temperance as interpreted by our church, and that such instruction be given each quarterly Sabbath.”

The session of a vacant church is responsible for the supply of the pulpit, but may call the congregation together at any time to decide upon questions pertaining thereto. After the opinion of the congregation has been thus secured, it should be the basis of action by the session, and especially if any particular course has been ordered by vote of the congregation, such order should be carefully carried out by the session.

As trustees or deacons are generally responsible for raising funds to pay supplies for the pulpit, and as they are frequently embarrassed in their work, it is very important that they be consulted, so that supplies procured by the session may be promptly paid by the trustees.

It is a rule worthy of note, that supplies appointed by presbytery are to have precedence to others, and that in many presbyteries their remuneration is fixed by rule of the presbytery. Submission to presbyterial oversight is the first duty of the session in all such cases.

It ought not to be necessary to warn sessions of vacant churches against the employment as supplies of men who appear in the community without recommendations, with no ecclesiastical connection, submitting to no presbyterial authority, and going about from place to place, often creating dissension in churches, and their work at best productive of little good.

Any minister of the Gospel who deserves credentials can easily procure them, and no one who does not have

some evidence of his being a regular and acceptable minister should be admitted to the pulpit by any session.

The session of vacant churches should make earnest efforts to procure contributions to all the Boards of the church. It often seems as if the pastor were the only one responsible for this work, and when he is gone nothing is done. Let the session be in earnest in this matter, and see that no work of the church is stopped that can be carried on without the pastor.

The session of a vacant church should be very careful to have a representative at each meeting of presbytery. Its interests are considered by the presbytery, and it is difficult to do the best for a church when its needs can only be surmised.

Many a church loses the sympathy of presbytery, and loses its own interest in the work of the church at large by failure to send an elder to presbytery. Go to presbytery prepared to tell what you need, and what your plans may be, and the most careful attention will be paid to your interests, and your church will be strengthened by this attention.

The constant effort of the session of every vacant church should be to procure a pastor, and no effort should be spared to accomplish this end. In order to accomplish this, there should be frequent communication with other churches of the same pastoral charge, and co-operation with them in procuring supplies with a pastoral settlement in view.

The session should also confer with the presbyterial committee on supplies, or of vacant churches and

unemployed ministers, as the case may be, with a view to securing ministers to supply the pulpit who may be acceptable or available as pastors.

The Assembly of 1895 decided that a church with a stated supply is a "vacant church." Such supply, in order to be the legal moderator of session should be appointed by the presbytery.

The stated supply system is an irregularity, and not a part of our system. Sessions should insist on the consummation of the pastoral relation as being the only legal, and the more permanent method, the method by which the relation of congregation and minister is placed under the control of the presbytery that has oversight of both.

CHAPTER II.

MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION.

Meetings of the congregation are of two kinds: those which are called by and are under the control of the session, and those which have to do with the financial affairs of the church, which may be called by the trustees or deacons and may be under their direction. The duties of the latter are determined by the charter or the usage of the church. Their objects are, the election of trustees, the annual business meeting, where reports of finances are heard, and plans for the future are laid, and matters pertaining solely to church property, such as repairs, improvements and new buildings. Even these are subject to the direction of the session and are frequently called by order of the session. It is perhaps a safe rule to follow, that all meetings of the congregation not definitely provided for by the charter of a particular congregation are under the direction of and are called by the session.

At the business or financial meetings of the congregation it is proper that the president of the board of trustees should preside, or that a presiding officer be elected by the congregation, but at all other meetings it is the duty of the moderator of the session to preside and the clerk of the session to act as clerk of the meeting.

“The pastor of a church is, by reason of his office, the moderator of a meeting of the communicants of his church called to elect ruling elders and deacons, and

this also applies to regularly appointed moderators of sessions who are not pastors." (1886).

A meeting of the congregation to elect a pastor or elders or deacons, or to act upon a request for dissolution of a pastoral relation must be called by the session, and the officers of the session are its officers.

In acting upon a request for the dissolution of a pastoral relation it is not customary for the minister to preside. In such cases the session may invite a neighboring minister to do so, or the congregation, being assembled, may elect one of their own number to preside.

In a meeting of the congregation to elect ruling elders, the session must call the meeting and conduct the election. They may also determine the number to be elected, and nominate those whom they think suitable for the office; they may appoint of their own number or of others the tellers in the election, but doubtful ballots should be referred to the session.

A full record of such meeting should be made by the clerk of the session and reported by him to the next meeting of the session, and the facts therein contained should be incorporated with the minutes of that meeting of the session.

In a meeting for the election of elders or deacons the following order may be used :

1. Call to order and open by prayer.
2. Recite to the congregation previous action of the session and object of the meeting.
3. Determine the number to be elected.
4. Nominations.

5. Determine how the vote shall be taken.
6. Determine who are entitled to vote.
7. Appoint tellers.
8. Receive and count the ballots.
9. Announce result of the election.
10. Read minutes of the meeting.
11. Adjourn with prayer.

It is customary and very desirable that in congregational meetings for the purpose of calling a pastor to "invite some neighboring minister to preside," but for the convenience of those who must conduct such meetings without a minister, the following suggestions are made here :

The session must take formal action, calling the congregation to meet for the purpose of calling a pastor.

Announcement for this action must be made "on a Lord's day," the time and place of the meeting being distinctly designated.

The following order should be followed in the meeting of the congregation :

1. Open with prayer.
2. See that meeting has been properly called. (Form of Government, Chap. XV, Sec. I.)
3. Who have the right to vote for pastor. (Form of Government, Chap. XV, Sec. IV.)
4. Is the congregation ready to proceed to election of a pastor? Decide by vote.
5. Election and announcement of result.
6. Fix amount of salary, and manner of payments.
7. Decide who shall sign the call.

8. Appoint commissioners to prosecute the call.
9. Endorsement of the call by presiding officer, certifying that meeting was regularly called, whether the call was unanimous or not, who were to sign the call, etc.

Sessions should by all means avoid congregational meetings on the Sabbath.

The session may authorize the election of the officers of the Sabbath school by the school itself, or by the teachers and adult members of the school, but all such action is subject to review and reversal by the session.

“The Supreme Court of the United States has settled the question that in the use of church property for all religious purposes or ecclesiastical uses, the trustees are under the control of the session. The General Assembly has also declared that in any case of conflict between the session and trustees the first appeal is to be taken to the people of the congregation, and, if necessary, then to the civil tribunals.

In every congregation it is important that a definite arrangement be made as to control of funds. It would seem that the session has the control of the funds of the Sabbath school and also of the contributions for the boards of the church. But an agreement between session and trustees or deacons should be made, so that their time of taking contributions does not conflict, and so that the expense of the Sabbath school be provided for either out of its own contributions or out of the funds controlled by the session. The session is the congregation in its organized capacity, and it may contract debts in providing supplies for the Sabbath school

or books for the congregation, and the trustees are bound to pay them. But a definite agreement is far better, so that it is understood who is to provide for each item purchased and who has control of each contribution taken. All "receipts and expenditures," whether handled by trustees, deacons or elders, or by the societies of the church, should be included in the annual congregational report to presbytery, and also carefully reported to the congregation itself.

CHAPTER III.

OTHER MEETINGS.

1. *Of Church Societies.*—There are in every congregation, societies, duly organized, which prove great helpers in the work of the church. There seems to be no law of the church governing them, and it is a happy condition that at the present time no law seems to be needed. As a matter of fact, such societies are under the supervision of the session, but we have never heard of a session that exercised its right of “review and control.” However, it is known that certain abuses are likely to creep into churches through these societies, and it is proper to make a few suggestions here that may be helpful in the management of this branch of Christian work.

All such societies should be considered as the church in its working capacity, and it will not be an unreasonable application of Rule 71, Book of Discipline, to regard their proceedings as proper subject for review by the session.

These societies should understand that in all their undertakings the session should be consulted, and especially so when entertainments, fairs and suppers of a questionable character are proposed. The session may leave the responsibility with these societies, but it would seem better if in every case they were to take the responsibility directly, either lending their endorsement or withholding it, according to their judgment. In so doing a safeguard would be thrown around the

work of the church, and the session would receive recognition as the spiritual adviser of all.

The Assembly of 1893 calls "fairs and suppers, and similar unbiblical and secularizing expedients, make-shifts for filling the treasury of the Lord." If this be true, sessional oversight is important.

It would be well to require each society to make a report once a year of its proceedings, and to make a record of their work in the minutes of the session.

2. *Of Trustees and Deacons.*—The work of trustees and deacons is so closely identified with that of the session that each should be informed of the work of the other. The session should report its plans to trustees and deacons so far as connected with their work, and on the other hand they should keep the session fully informed as to their plans and work.

While the session has charge of supplying the pulpit, the control of the choir, and of the Sabbath school, the trustees or deacons have control of the funds from which expenses are to be met. Harmonious co-operation will make all go smoothly, and by frequent consultation and definite plans the best results will be obtained.

3. *Of Secular Meetings.*—Occasionally a church is so situated in a community that there is a demand for the edifice for meetings not strictly religious; sometimes educational, sometimes even political.

Ordinarily trustees may decide, but it is better that the session be consulted, as the spiritual interests of a community are often involved in such meetings. It is

a common method in some places for propagating heresy, and I have known serious injury to churches in this way. The session should be the judge, and should exercise extreme care as to the use of church property.

CHAPTER IV.

ROTARY OR TERM ELDERSHIP.

The office of ruling elder is lifelong. But there is a distinction made between the office and the exercise of its functions. By act of the General Assembly of 1876 a section was added to the Form of Government, which declares: "If any particular church, by a vote of members in full communion, shall prefer to elect ruling elders for a limited time, in the exercise of their functions this may be done, provided the full term be not less than three years, and the session be made to consist of three classes, one of which only shall be elected every year."

This somewhat ambiguous declaration has required explanation, the sum of which we give here :

A meeting of the congregation to effect the change from the permanent to the term system must be called by the session or by the presbytery.

Elders in office cease to act when others are elected, but of course they are eligible to re-election. They may also be appointed to represent the church in the higher courts, and may, on invitation of the session, assist at the communion table.

In the rotary system there must be three classes, and the full term must be three years. In introducing the system the classes are to be formed by electing some for one year, some for two years and some for three years. Vacancies in any class may be filled at any time by choosing persons for the unexpired term.

When the number of elders is to be increased this is done by adding persons to each class, those chosen for less than three years being elected for only part of the "full term."

An elder not re-elected at the end of his term is still an elder, but not in official relation to the congregation. He is not to be enrolled with the session or reported to the presbytery.

CHAPTER V.

SESSIONAL RECORDS.

[*The following forms for Sessional Records are given, both for the guidance of the Clerk in preparing his records, and for the guidance of Sessions in transacting business.*]

I. *Ordinary Business.*

E———, January 1, 18—.

Pursuant to the call of the moderator, the session met in the church, and was opened with prayer.

Present, the Rev. M. J., moderator.

Mr. C. P. H.,

“ G. P.,

“ W. S. L.,

“ I. K., elders.

Absent, Dr. L. J. and Mr. M. N.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

Mr. H. gave his reason for being absent from the last meeting of the session ; which was sustained.

L. M. and C. his wife, and N. O. appeared before the session as candidates for admission to the full communion of the church, and O. R. and Mrs. S. (both unbaptized).

They were severally examined respecting their experimental knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ, and the examination being deemed satisfactory, they were admitted into full communion of the church, and it was ordered that on next Sabbath the sacrament of baptism be administered to O. R. and Mrs. S.

A. W. R. presented a certificate of dismissal from the _____ church. It was found in order, and he was received into membership of this church.

J. C. E. was, at his own request, granted a certificate of dismissal to the _____ church of _____.

W. S. L. reported that he had attended the meeting of presbytery at _____, and presented the reports of this church to the presbytery.

The moderator, and A. P. and J. A. W. were appointed a committee to rearrange our scheme for taking collections to the boards of the church, and to devise means of increasing the offerings of the congregation to these objects.

The statistical report of the congregation was prepared and ordered sent to presbytery. It is as follows :

S. H. was appointed to represent the congregation at the next meeting of presbytery at _____, and A. P. was appointed his alternate.

There being no other business, session adjourned and was closed with prayer.

A. P., Clerk.

II. *Minute Respecting the Election of Additional Elders.*

The subject of an increase in the number of elders in this church was taken up, and after due consideration, it was unanimously *resolved* :

1st. That it is the judgment of the session that the welfare of this church, and the interests of religion in our bounds, render it expedient that the number of elders be increased without delay.

2d. That session hereby recommends the congregation to elect _____ additional elders.

3d. The moderator is hereby directed to call a meeting of the congregation, to be held in the church on the _____ day of _____, for the purpose of electing _____ persons to the office of ruling elder.

4th. The session hereby instructs the stated clerk of session to place in nomination at the meeting of the congregation, the following persons as being in our deliberate and cordial judgment specially fitted for the office: A. P. F., J. C. and N. J. It is understood, however, that other nominations may be made by members of the congregation when assembled to hold the election.

5th. That there be no confusion in the election, the session calls attention to the rule "that only communicant members of the church have a right to vote."

6th. The vote shall be by ballot.

7th. The following persons shall act as tellers in the election: A. P., W. S. L and G. B. P.

8th. Doubtful and disputed ballots shall be referred to the session, and they shall decide as to their validity.

9th. A majority of the votes cast shall be necessary to an election.

10th. Those elected by the congregation, if the way be clear, shall be ordained and installed on the _____ Sabbath of _____.

III. *New Elders Introduced.*

At the first meeting of the session after newly elected elders have been ordained and installed, the following minute should be made:

The brethren who were recently elected to the office of ruling elder by this congregation, having been ordained by the laying on of hands, and duly installed as elders in this church, on the _____ day of _____, were welcomed to their seats as members of the session, and their names enrolled, as follows :

N. J., having refused the office, was not ordained.

IV. *Minute Respecting the Temporary Supply of a Vacant Pulpit.*

The pulpit of this church having been made vacant by the _____ of our pastor, it has become the duty of the session to provide for the regular maintenance of the ordinances of public worship until God shall send to us another pastor in whom the hearts of the congregation may unite. It is therefore

Resolved, That W. A. W. and C. P. H. take charge of the mid-week prayer meeting, and that until ministerial supplies may be procured, W. S. S. and J. A. W. conduct the Sabbath service as shall to them seem to the edification of the people.

That the committee on supplies request the presbytery at its next meeting to appoint supplies for our pulpit for the _____ Sabbath of each month.

That if the trustees shall concur, the treasurer of the congregation be directed to pay to the ministers who may occupy the pulpit the sum of _____ dollars for each Sabbath service.

V. *Minute respecting the election of a pastor.* [It is provided in the Form of Government, Chap. XV, Sec. I, that when "the people appear prepared to elect a pastor, the session shall take measures to convene them for the purpose." In pursuance of this direction, the following record should be made :]

The following minute was adopted :

The session, having reason to believe that the people of this congregation are prepared with a good degree of unanimity to elect a pastor, adopted the following resolutions, namely :

Resolved, That a meeting of the congregation, for the election of a pastor, be held in the church on ——, ——; and that the notice of this meeting be given from the pulpit on the next Sabbath, in accordance with the Form of Government, Chap. XV, Sec. III.

Resolved, That the stated clerk be directed to invite the Rev. R. A. to attend the meeting of the congregation, and to preside in the proposed election of a pastor.

NOTE.—The minister appointed by presbytery as moderator of the session should preside if possible, but if not, some other minister of the same presbytery.

NOTE.—When a meeting is to be held for the election of a pastor, the clerk of session should see that a call in blank, written or printed, is procured, so that each blank may be properly filled and signature appended. A very convenient form of call is prepared by our Board of Publication, and can be secured at any of the depositories of the Board.

VI. *Record of an installation.* (When a pastor has been installed in a church, due record should be made of the fact in the minutes of the session. A proper form of such a record would be as follows):

It is with much joy that the session makes record of the fact that on _____ day of _____, the presbytery of _____ installed (or ordained and installed) _____ as pastor of this church, under most encouraging circumstances.

In the service Rev. _____ preached a sermon from _____; Rev. _____ presided and propounded the usual questions; Rev. _____ charged the pastor, and Rev. _____ charged the people.

CHAPTER VI.

FORMS.

I. *Rules for the government of a congregation.* [The following form for the government of a congregation is suggested as a guide in preparing the business of the church. It may also serve as "Articles of Incorporation," where churches apply for a charter. But where such application is made, legal counsel should be taken so that it may be conformed to the law of the State in which the church is situated. The State laws vary so that no specific form can be given.]

Rules for the government of _____ Presbyterian church.

Preliminary declaration. We, the members of _____ Presbyterian church, having been duly organized by the presbytery of _____, for the purpose of providing and maintaining the public worship of God, in conformity with the "Confession of Faith" and "Directory for Worship," and being subject to the "Form of Government" and "Discipline" of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, do adopt the following rules for the government of the affairs of the congregation :

I. *Name.* The corporate name of this organization shall be _____ Presbyterian church of (_____.)

II. *Officers.* The officers of this congregation shall be the session, a board of deacons and a board of (nine) trustees.

III. *Elections.* 1. Ruling elders and deacons shall be elected according to the plan adopted by the congregation, in conformity with the "Form of Government."

2. Trustees shall be elected for a term of (three) years, (three) of the number being elected (each) year.

3. All elections shall be by ballot, and a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary to an election.

4. All supporters may vote for trustees, but only communicants may vote for ruling elders and deacons.

5. Any member of the church shall be eligible to hold the office of trustee.

IV. *Trustees.* 1. The officers of the board of trustees shall be president, secretary and treasurer. They shall be elected annually by the board.

2. The president shall preside at meetings of the board and at meetings of the congregation which pertain to its financial affairs.

3. The secretary shall keep a full record of the proceedings of the board and of the financial meetings of the congregation. He shall receive and keep account of all contributions of the congregation, and shall turn money over to the treasurer and receive a receipt therefor.

4. The treasurer shall have the custody of all money raised for the use of the congregation. He shall pay out money only upon the order of the trustees, and shall report quarterly to the board as to the condition of the treasury.

5. Five members of the board shall constitute a quorum.

6. Vacancies may be filled by appointment of the board until the next (annual) election.

V. *Meetings.* 1. The (annual) meeting for the election of trustees shall be held on the——day of———. At this meeting the trustees shall make a full report of the finances of the congregation, together with any estimates for the coming year that they may deem advisable.

2. Special meetings for the transaction of business pertaining solely to the financial affairs of the church may be called by the trustees.

3. All other meetings of the congregation shall be under the direction of the session.

4. The benevolent funds of the church and all funds belonging to the Sabbath school or any society of the church, shall be under the control of the session.

VI. *Amendments.* These rules may be amended at any regularly called meeting of the congregation by the affirmative votes of at least (two-fifths) of the communicant membership of the church.

2. A MODEL FORM FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

I. *Name.* The name of this Sabbath school shall be _____ Presbyterian Sabbath school.

II. *Officers.* The officers of the school shall be a Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent of Primary Department, Secretary, Treasurer, and Librarian.

III. *Elections.* The officers shall be elected by the (session) at its regular meeting in (June) and shall serve (one year) beginning with the (first Sabbath of July.)

IV. *Duties of Officers.* 1. The Superintendent shall have charge of the opening and closing exercises and the general management of the school.

2. The Assistant Superintendent shall have charge of the teachers, arrangement of classes, division of classes, placing new scholars, and shall take charge of the school in the absence of the Superintendent.

3. The Primary School Superintendent shall have charge of the Primary school, and shall be aided by an Assistant and an Organist appointed by the session.

4. The Secretary shall receive the contributions of the school and keep a full account of the same, turning money over to the Treasurer. He shall also keep a record of attendance of scholars and teachers, and make a written report each (quarter) to the session.

5. The Treasurer shall receive all money of the school and shall pay it out only on the order of the session. He shall report to the session at the end of (each quarter.)

6. The Librarian shall have charge of the library and of such periodicals and supplies as are distributed in the school.

V. *Sabbath School Committee.* The session shall appoint a committee of (three) who shall be known as the "Sabbath School Committee."

The duties of this committee shall be to procure all supplies for the school ; take the oversight of the library ; suggest persons as teachers ; recommend to the session the use of funds, and to appoint organist, singers and all assistants in the school.

VI. *Amendments.* These rules may be amended at any time by a majority vote of the session.

PART III.

HELPS IN THE PASTORAL DUTIES OF THE RULING ELDER.

INTRODUCTORY.

The following Scripture Lessons have been selected for the use of elders in their visits among the people. This book is made in size and form so that it may be carried in the pocket and used on such occasions. By a little study of the Lessons, and a knowledge of the special needs of the families visited, it may be made useful. A number of references are given after each subject, so that variety may be given to readings.

The Form of Service in burying the dead is adapted from others in common use among ministers. It is introduced here in order that elders may have at hand and in convenient form a tangible help in comforting the bereaved and conducting the funeral service.

The Prayer Meeting Topics are introduced to aid elders in the selection of suitable topics for meetings which they may be called upon to conduct. We have given a large number with sufficient variety for all ordinary occasions.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR USE IN FAMILY VISITATION.

I. DUTIES OF PARENTS.

Deuteronomy 6 : 1-9.

Now these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do *them* in the land whither ye go to possess it :

That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life ; and that thy days may be prolonged.

Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do *it* : that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

Hear, O Israel : The Lord our God *is* one Lord :

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart :

And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Ephesians 6 : 1-18.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord : for this is right.

Honour thy father and mother ; which is the first commandment with promise ;

That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

And, ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath : but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ ;

Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers ; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart ;

With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men :

Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.

And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening : knowing that your Master also is in heaven ; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness ;

And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace ;

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God :

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints ;

Also, I Samuel 3 : 1-18. Genesis 48 : 1-22.

II. WHERE THERE ARE SMALL CHILDREN.

Matthew 18 : 1-14.

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven ?

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Woe unto the world because of offences ! for it must needs be that offences come ; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh !

Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee : it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee : it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones ; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

How think ye ? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray ?

And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

Also, Luke 2 : 40-52 ; I John : 1-14.

Proverbs 4 : 1-15.

Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father,
and attend to know understanding,

For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my
law.

For I was my father's son, tender and only *be-
loved* in the sight of my mother.

He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine
heart retain my words : keep my commandments,
and live.

Get wisdom, get understanding : forget *it* not ;
neither decline from the words of my mouth.

Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee ;
love her, and she shall keep thee.

Wisdom *is* the principal thing ; *therefore* get
wisdom : and with all thy getting get under-
standing.

Exalt her, and she shall promote thee : she shall
bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

She shall give to thine head an ornament of
grace : a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings ; and
the years of thy life shall be many.

I have taught thee in the way of wisdom ; I
have led thee in right paths.

When thou goest, thy steps shall not be strait-
ened ; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not
stumble.

Take fast hold of instruction ; let *her* not go :
keep her ; for she *is* thy life.

Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go
not in the way of evil *men*.

Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass
away.

III. FOR THE UNCONVERTED.

Isaiah 55: 1-13.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which is* not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the sure mercies of David.

Behold, I have given him *for* a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not, and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater :

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth : it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace : the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree : and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign *that* shall not be cut off.

John 3 : 1-21.

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews :

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God : for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old ? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born ?

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be ?

Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things ?

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen ; and ye receive not our witness.

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things ?

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.

That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world ; but that the world through him might be saved.

He that believeth on him is not condemned : but he that believeth not is condemned already,

because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Also, Luke 12 : 1-21, Mark 8 : 27-28.

IV. FOR WORLDLY CHRISTIANS.

Luke 13 : 23-30.

Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like ? and whereunto shall I resemble it ?

It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden ; and it grew, and waxed a great tree ; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God ?

It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved ? And he said unto them,

Strive to enter in at the strait gate : for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out.

And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

And, behold, there are last which shall be first; and there are first which shall be last.

Romans 12: 1-21.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of *himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office :

So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith ;

Or ministry, *let us wait on our ministering* : or he that teacheth, on teaching ;

Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation ; he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity ; he that ruleth, with diligence ; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil ; cleave to that which is good.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love ; in honour preferring one another ;

Not slothful in business ; fervent in spirit ; serving the Lord ;

Rejoicing in hope ; patient in tribulation ; continuing instant in prayer :

Distributing to the necessity of saints ; given to hospitality.

Bless them which persecute you ; bless, and curse not.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. *Be* not wise in your own conceits.

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath ; for it is written, *Vengeance is mine ; I will repay*, saith the Lord.

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink ; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Also, Luke 16 : 19-31. Psalm 73.

V. TO CONFIRM BELIEVERS.

Romans 5 : 1-11.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ :

By whom also we have access by faith unto this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also : knowing that tribulation worketh patience ;
And patience, experience ; and experience, hope :
And hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

For scarcely for a righteous man will one die : yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

For if, when we were enemies, we were recon-

ciled to God by the death of his Son ; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

Romans 8 : 28-39.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things ? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us ?

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect ? *It is* God that justifieth.

Who *is* he that condemneth ? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ?

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long ; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I John 2: 1-17.

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous :

And he is the propitiation for our sins : and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*.

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected : hereby know we that we are in him.

He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you ; because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man can love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

Also, Galatians 5: 13-26; I John 2: 1-17; Romans 8: 1-17.

VI. FOR INQUIRERS.

John 10:1-16.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth

up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

To him the porter openeth ; and the sheep hear his voice ; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him : for they know his voice.

And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him : for they know not the voice of strangers.

This parable spake Jesus unto them ; but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers : but the sheep did not hear them.

I am the door ; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy : I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.

I am the good shepherd : the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth ; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine.

As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father : and I lay down my life for the sheep.

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold : them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice ; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

Luke 15 : 11-24.

And he said, A certain man had two sons :

And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me*. And he divided unto them *his* living.

And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land ; and he began to be in want.

And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country ; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat : and no man gave unto him.

And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger !

I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

And am no more worthy to be called thy son : make me as one of thy hired servants.

And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him ; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet :

And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it*; and let us eat, and be merry :

For this my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was lost, and is found.

John 6 : 27-47. Romans 10 : 1-13. Isaiah 58. John 19 : 16-37. Isaiah 55.

VII. TO ENCOURAGE BELIEVERS IN HOLY LIVING.

Colossians 3 : 1-17.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth ; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience :

In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

But now ye also put off all these ; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds ;

And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him :

Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free ; but Christ *is* all, and in all.

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering ;

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any ; even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body ; and be ye thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

I John 3 : 1-18.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God : therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law : for sin is the transgression of the law.

And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins ; and in him is no sin.

Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not : whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

Little children, let no man deceive you : he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

He that committeth sin is of the devil ; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin ; for his seed remaineth in him : and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil : whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death.

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer : and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

Hereby perceive we the love of *God*, because he laid down his life for us : and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of *compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue ; but in deed and in truth.

Also, Hebrews 4. James 3.

VIII. FOR THE SICK ROOM.

Repentance for Sin.

Psalm 51.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness : according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions : and my sin *is* ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight : that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity ; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts : and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean : wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me to hear joy and gladness ; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice.

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God ; and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence ; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation ; and uphold me *with thy* free Spirit.

Then will I teach transgressors thy ways ; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation : *and* my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

O Lord, open thou my lips ; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

For thou desirest not sacrifice ; else would I give *it* : thou delightest not in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit : a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion : build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering : then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

Patience in Affliction.

Hebrews 12 : 13.

Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith ; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him :

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons ; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not ?

But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence : shall we not much rather lie in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live ?

For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure ; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous : nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees ;

And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way ; but let it rather be healed.

Brevity of Life.

Psalm 90.

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.

Thou turnest man to destruction ; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

For a thousand years in thy sight *are but* as yesterday when it is past, and *as* a watch in the night.

Thou carriest them away as with a flood ; they are *as* a sleep ; in the morning *they are* like grass *which* groweth up.

In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up ; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret *sins* in the light of thy countenance.

For all our days are passed away in thy wrath : we spend our years as a tale *that is told*.

The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten ; and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow ; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

Who knoweth the power of thy anger ? even according to thy fear, *so is* thy wrath.

So teach *us* to number our days, that we **may** apply *our* hearts unto wisdom.

Return, O Lord, how long ? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

O satisfy us early with thy mercy ; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Make us glad according to the days *wherein* thou hast afflicted us, *and* the years *wherein* we have seen evil.

Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us : and establish thou the work of our hands upon us ; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

A Psalm of Praise.

Psalm 103.

Bless the Lord, O my soul ; and all that is within me, *ble*ss his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits :

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities ; who healeth all thy diseases ;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies ;

Who satisfieth thy mouth with good *things* ; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

The Lord *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

He will not always chide : neither will he keep *his anger* forever.

He hath not dealt with us after our sins ; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Like as a father pitieth *his* children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

For he knoweth our frame ; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

As for man, his days *are* as grass : as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone ; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

But the mercy of the Lord *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children ;

To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens ; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

Bless ye the Lord, all *ye* his hosts ; *ye* ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion ; bless the Lord, O my soul.

Final Victory.

I Corinthians 15 : 51-58.

Behold, I shew you a mystery ; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump ; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where *is* thy sting ? O grave, where *is* thy victory ?

The sting of death *is* sin ; and the strength of sin *is* the law.

But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Coming Glory.

Revelation 22.

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month ; and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse ; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it ; and his servants shall serve him.

And they shall see his face ; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there ; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light ; and they shall reign for ever and ever.

And he said unto me, These sayings *are* faithful and true ; and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servant the things which must shortly be done.

Behold, I come quickly ; blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

And I John saw these things, and heard *them*. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

Then saith he unto me, See *thou do it* not ; for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book : worship God.

And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.

He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

And behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, *and* the bright and morning star.

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly, Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

IX. FOR THE BEREAVED.

Comfort.

John 14: 1-14.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

Philip said unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the

Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*.

Safety.

Psalm 91.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

I will say of the Lord, *He is* my refuge and my fortress; my God; in him will I trust.

Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, *and* from the noisome pestilence.

He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth *shall be thy* shield and buckler.

Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; *nor* for the arrow *that* flieth by day;

Nor for the pestilence *that* walketh in darkness ;
nor for the destruction *that* wasteth at noonday.

A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand ; *but* it shall not come nigh thee.

Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

Because thou hast made the Lord, *which is* my refuge, *even* the Most High, thy habitation ;

There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder : the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him : I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

He shall call upon me, and I will answer him : I *will be* with him in trouble ; I will deliver him, and honour him.

With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

Consolation.

Isaiah 43 : 2-3.

When thou passest through the waters I *will be* with thee ; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee : when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned ; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

For I *am* the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.

Job 5 : 17-19.

Behold, happy *is* the man whom God correcteth : therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.

For he maketh sore, and bindeth up ; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

He shall deliver thee in six troubles : yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

I Peter 4 : 12-13.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.

But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings ; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

I Peter 1 : 3-9.

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations :

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be

tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ :

Whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory ;

Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

II Corinthians 4 : 17-18.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory ;

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen *are* temporal ; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

X. A FORM OF SERVICE FOR THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD.

NOTE.—Frequently Ruling Elders are called upon to officiate at funerals. For their help we make the following suggestions :

1. Devote most of the time to reading Scripture, singing hymns and prayer. Extended remarks are generally not profitable on such occasions.

2. Try to close the service in half an hour from its beginning.

3. We have found it best generally to begin the service by singing a hymn. Permit mourning friends to select a hymn, if they desire. If not, one of the following may be sung : “ Jesus, lover of my soul.” “ My faith looks up to thee.” “ Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep.” “ How blest the righteous when he dies.” “ Beyond the smiling and the weeping.” “ It is not death to die.”

(When the hymn has been sung, read one of the following selections of Scripture.)

I. GENERAL SERVICE.

I Corinthians 15: 20-57.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept.

For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power.

For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him, that God may be all in all.

Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, . . . that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain. But God giveth

it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh : but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial : but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

[*Or begin here.*]

There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars : for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption : it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory ; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power ; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. . . . And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Behold, I shew you a mystery ; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump ; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy vic-

tory ? The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

[Or, if the deceased be a child, read :]

Matthew 18 : 1-6.

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven ? And Jesus called a little child unto him and set him in the midst of them, and said: Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whoso therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Mark 10 : 14-16.

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them.

[If an aged believer, read :]

Psalm 92: 12-15.

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree ;
he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

Those that be planted in the house of the Lord
shall flourish in the courts of our God.

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age ;
they shall be fat and flourishing ;

To show that the Lord *is* upright ; *he is* my
rock, and *there is* no unrighteousness in him

II Timothy 4 : 6-8.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time
of my departure is at hand.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my*
course, I have kept the faith.

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of
righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous
judge, shall give me at that day ; and not to me
only, but unto all them also that love his
appearing.

[To comfort the afflicted, read :]

II Corinthians 4: 17-18.

For our light affliction, which is but for a
moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and
eternal weight of glory ; while we look not at the
things which are seen, but at the things which
are not seen : for the things which are seen are
temporal ; but the things which are not seen are
eternal.

Lamentations 3 : 31-33 ; 37-41.

For the Lord will not cast off forever ;

But though he cause grief, yet will he have
compassion according to the multitude of his
mercies.

For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.

Who *is* he *that* saith, and it cometh to pass, *when* the Lord commandeth *it* not ?

Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good ?

Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins ?

Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.

Let us lift up our heart with *our* hands unto God in the heavens.

Hebrews 12 : 5-12 ; 22-24.

My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him : for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons ; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not ? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers; then are ye bastards and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence ; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live ? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure ; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous : nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down and the feeble knees. . . Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and

unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

[Follow the reading of Scriptures with brief remarks or a suitable hymn, and with prayer.]

SERVICE AT THE GRAVE.

[Having reached the place of burial, read:]

I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. John 11: 25-26.

[Here a hymn may be sung.]

[Then, while the earth is cast upon the coffin, by some standing by, read:]

Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to take out of this world the soul of our departed brother, we therefore commit *his* body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. And we look for the general resurrection in the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose second coming in glorious majesty to judge the world the earth and the sea shall give up their dead; and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in him shall be changed and made like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

[Then close the service with a brief prayer, invoking the divine blessing upon mourning ones and upon all who have attended upon the burial service.]

XI. TOPICS AND READINGS.

For Various Occasions.

Christ's Treatment of Sinners. 1 Timothy 1 : 15, Matthew 9 : 10-13, Luke 15: 1-2.

The kind of men God uses. Judges 7 : 7.

The Secret of Strength. 2 Corinthians 12 : 10, 1 Corinthians 10 : 12, Proverbs 3 : 5-7.

Temptation to Compromise. Exodus 8 : 25-32, and 10 : 7-11.

The Living Water. John 4 : 1-14, and 7 : 37, Revelation 21 : 6.

Selling the Birthright. Genesis 25 : 31-34, Hebrews 12 : 15-17.

Preaching to One Man. Acts 8 : 25-33, John 3 : 1-21.

"We do not Well." 2 Kings 7 : 9. (Missionary topic.)

The test of true religion. Matthew 7 : 15-20, James 1 : 27.

"Hope thou in God." Psalm 42.

Our heavenly home. John 14: 1-4, Revelation 21 and 22.

Religion in a busy life. Daniel 6 : 4-10, Romans 12 : 11.

Great and precious promises. 2 Peter 1 : 4. (Bible reading.)

David and Mephibosheth. 2 Samuel 9 : 1-13.

The blessings of affliction. 2 Corinthians 4 : 15-18, Hebrews 12 : 11, Psalm 119 : 67.

Helping others. Joshua 1 : 12-18. (Missionary topic.)

Ingratitude. Luke 17 : 17-18.

Lot's choice. Genesis 13 : 10-11.

The tongue. James 3 : 18, Psalm 39 : 1.

The penitent's prayer. Psalm 51.

The prodigal son. Luke 15 : 11-32.

Compromises dangerous. Numbers 33 : 55-56, Judges 2 : 1-5.

Christ's purpose concerning us. Acts 26 : 16-18.

Jacob at Bethel. Genesis 28 : 10-22.

Self-sacrifice rewarded. Matthew 19 : 27-30.

Keeping the heart. Proverbs 4 : 23, Psalm 24 : 3-5, Matthew 5 : 8.

Excuses. Luke 14 : 16-24.

Do right, regardless of consequences. Daniel 3 : 16-18.

God expects fruit. Luke 16 : 6-9, Mark 11 : 12-14, John 15 : 1-8.

Far-reaching consequences of sin. Joshua 7 : 1-26, 2 Samuel 24 : 10-17, Exodus 20 : 3.

Confessing Christ. Romans 10 : 9-10, Matthew 10 : 32-33, Mark 8 : 38.

Obedience required. 1 Samuel 15 : 22-23.

The power of a praying church. Acts 12 : 5-17.

Expecting an answer. 1 Kings 18 : 41-46, Mark 11 : 24.

In debt to all men. Romans 1 : 14, 1 Corinthians 9 : 16-23, (Missionary topic.)

No hiding from God. Genesis 3 : 8-10, Hebrews 4 : 13, Proverbs 15 : 3.

The greatest of the graces. 1 Corinthians 13.

The danger of looking back. Genesis 19 : 17-26, Luke 9 : 57-62.

The two ways. Matthew 7 : 13-14, Deuteronomy 30 : 15-20, Proverbs 14 : 12.

Payment of vows. Psalm 76 : 11, Ecclesiastes 5 : 4-6, Psalm 66 : 13-14, Psalm 116 : 14.

Parable of the talents. Matthew 25 : 14-30.

Walking with God. Genesis 5 : 24, Amos 3 : 3, Hebrews 11 : 5-6.

Servant of all. John 13 : 1-17, Matthew 20 : 20-28.

The supply equal to the need. 1 Kings 17 : 8-16, Deuteronomy 33 : 25.

The more convenient season. Acts 24 : 25, Luke 9 : 57-62.

Pride an obstacle to salvation. 2 Kings 5 : 11-12.

Lukewarmness. Revelation 3 : 14-22.

Promises of help. Exodus 3 : 12, Jeremiah 1 : 8, Matthew 28 : 20.

A lesson on forgiving. Matthew 18 : 21-35.

Envy and its fruits. Genesis 37 : 11. Acts 7 : 9.

The conversion of the jailer. Acts 16 : 27-34.

Tempted like as we are. Hebrews 4.

Running away from duty. Jonah 1 : 1-14.

Bringing others to Jesus. John 1 : 35-51.

Love for the church. Psalm 122.

A prosperous time in Zion. Zechariah 8 : 18-23.

A lesson on Sabbath keeping. Nehemiah 13 : 15-22, Exodus 20 : 8-11.

Temptation, its source and results. James 1 : 13-15.

Christ, the Shepherd. Psalm 23, John 10 : 1-16.

Christian living. Romans 12 : 1-20.

The desire of all nations. Isaiah 60. (Missionary.)

The grace of liberality. 2 Corinthians 8 : 1-24.

Abstinence for the sake of others. 1 Corinthians 8 : 1-13.

Doing what we can. Mark 14 : 3-9.

The woman of Canaan. Matthew 15 : 21-25.

Rich man and Lazarus. Luke 16 : 19-31.

Unbelief hindering the Lord's work. Matthew 13 : 58

Intercessory prayer. Genesis 18 : 24-33.

Hearers and doers. James 1 : 23-25, Matthew 7 : 21-27.

The serpent in the wilderness. Numbers 21 : 4-9, John 3 : 14-15.