

I thoroughly agree with your objection to "spot-checking a candidate for licensure". There is nothing more important in church government than the proper selection of the men who are to be preachers and leaders of our churches. It is precisely at this point that Satan has been able to come in and to wreck so many great denominations. A tolerance which allows unbelief or apostasy to gain a foothold or which unnecessarily lowers the standards of the ministry is bound to result in great harm to the cause of Christ. It is surely wise to insist that a committee always spend a full measure of unhurried time examining candidates very thoroughly in private, and that a full theological examination be conducted on the floor of the presbytery with opportunity for any questions that members may desire to raise on this or other points, so that the presbytery may have no question that it is right in its selection of men for licensure and for ordination.

It has impressed me that even a full day of careful examination sometimes fails to give sufficient knowledge of a candidate for proper decision. In some instances far more can be gained by talking privately to those who have known the candidate over a period of years. Occasionally I have found it a bit irksome to spend a long time examining our own graduates who I had already known for three years, and with whose qualities I was already far better acquainted than I could possibly become in any brief examination. Yet, I am always anxious that others who do not thus know them should take as much time as they feel necessary, in order that they may make their own independent judgment, as far as possible.

After expressing my full agreement with you on these vital matters I must, however, tell you I was very disappointed, for a number of reasons, with the wording of your statement of qualifications for licensure.

Perhaps the most important of these reasons was the fact that it might give a false impression as to what we consider most vital. You state that we should be absolutely sure that a man has been "called, prepared and garnished for the ministry by the Holy Spirit," and then proceed to say that in order to be sure of this we must ascertain five specific matters, all of which are intellectual in nature. Neither among the five qualifications nor in the succeeding paragraphs is there any reference to spiritual qualifications. Surely we must be men of prayer and spiritual power if God is able to use us at all. If a man does not have in his heart