

"An elder ought to be a man of EMINENT PRUDENCE. By prudence here is, of course, not meant, that spurious characteristic, which calls itself by this name, but which ought rather to be called timidity, or a criminal shrinking from duty, on the plea that 'there is a lion in the way.' Yet, while we condemn this as unworthy of a Christian, and especially unworthy of a Christian Counsellor and Ruler; there is a prudence which is genuine, and greatly to be coveted. This is no other than *practical Christian wisdom*, which not only discerns what is right, but also adopts the best mode of doing it; which is not at all inconsistent with firmness, and the highest moral courage; but which happily regulates and directs it. It has been often observed, that there is a right and a wrong way of doing the best things. The thing done, may be excellent in itself; but may be done in a manner, at a time, and attended with circumstances, which will be likely to disgust and repel, and this prevent all benefit. Hence a man who is characteristically eccentric, undignified, rash, precipitate, or indiscreetly talkative, ought by no means to be selected as an ecclesiastical ruler. He will, probably, do more mischief than good; will generally create more divisions than he heals; and will rather generate offences than remove them. Perhaps there is no situation in human society which more imperiously calls for delicacy, caution, reserve, and the most vigilant discretion, than that of an ecclesiastical Ruler. . . . The maxim of the wise man—'be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath'—applies to every human being; especially to every professing Christian; but above all to every one who is appointed to maintain truth, order, purity, peace and love in the Church of God."

—from Samuel Miller, *An Essay on the Warrant, Nature and Duties of the Office of the Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church* (Dallas: Presbyterian Heritage Publications, 1832), p. 251f.

How You Can Be A Better Elder

If you could do one thing to promote and strengthen Biblical Presbyterianism in your church, in your Presbytery, and in the PCA, what would you do?

Many agree that the single most strategic thing you could do would be to equip the elders, both ruling and teaching, to do their jobs more effectively. If you agree, we have something that might help you with that goal.

Session to Session is a bimonthly newsletter that has been published for the past five years by the Session of Wallace Memorial Presbyterian Church, for the express purpose of strengthening and promoting the growth of Biblical Presbyterianism in America. Since we believe one of the most strategic and effective ways to do this is to equip ruling and teaching elders to fulfill their ministries, *Session to Session* seeks to do just that. Its articles cover a wide range of topics, but all are germane to the present state of the Church, and seek to equip her elders to deal with various challenges in a Biblical way.

Past issues have addressed such topics as prophecy, tongues, abortion, and civil disobedience, as well as specific matters that have come before the PCA General Assembly. Articles about other Reformed and Presbyterian denominations have also been included.

Future issues will address such topics as worship, women's roles in the church, church growth, confessional faithfulness, and other important matters facing PCA elders. Also included will be articles on such nuts-and-bolts topics as officer training and

examination, elder oversight, ruling elder participation in presbytery, and others.

Session to Session has been a bimonthly for its entire lifetime, but we hope to make it into a monthly, and would also like to produce a series of pamphlets and other materials which will be useful in training and equipping ruling elders to minister more effectively.

You may already be a subscriber to *Session to Session*, but if you're not, subscribe today, so you won't miss any issues in the coming year. The cost is only \$10 for six issues. For \$100, your church can be a supporting church and all of the elders on your Session will receive six issues.

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