

The Reformed Pastor

By Richard Baxter

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Preface: *William Brown*

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1. *See that the work of grace be thoroughly wrought in your own souls.*
2. *See that you be not only in a state of grace, but that your graces are in vigorous and lively exercise.*
3. *See that your example contradict not your doctrine.*
4. *See that you live not in those sins against which you preach in others.*
5. *See that you want not the qualifications necessary for the work.*

Section 2

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1. *You have a heaven to win or lose as well as other men.*
2. *You have a depraved nature as well as others.*
3. *You are exposed to greater temptations than others.*
4. *You have many eyes upon you, and there will be many to observe your falls.*
5. *Your sins will have more heinous aggravations than other men's.*
6. *Such great works as yours require greater grace than other men's.*
7. *The honour of Christ lieth more on you than on other men.*
8. *The success of your labours materially depends on your taking heed to yourselves.*

Chapter II - The oversight of the flock

Section 1

The nature of this oversight

THIS OVERSIGHT EXTENDS TO ALL THE FLOCK

1. *We must labour for the conversion of the unconverted*
2. *We must give advice to inquirers who are under conviction of sin.*
3. *We must study to build up those who are already partakers of the divine grace.*

4. *We must exercise a careful oversight of families*
5. *We must be diligent in visiting the sick.*
6. *We must be faithful in reproof and admonishing offenders.*
7. *We must be careful in exercising Church discipline.*

Section 2

The manner of this oversight

THE MINISTERIAL WORK MUST BE CARRIED ON

1. *Purely for God, and the salvation of souls*
2. *Diligently and laboriously*
3. *Prudently and orderly*
4. *Insisting chiefly on the greatest and most necessary things*
5. *With plainness and simplicity*
6. *With humility*
7. *With a mixture of severity and mildness*
8. *With seriousness, earnestness and zeal*
9. *With tender love to our people*
10. *With patience*
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Article I

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1. *It will be a most helpful mean of the conversion of sinners*
2. *It will essentially promote the edification of saints*
3. *It will make our public preaching better understood by our people*
4. *It will make us more familiar with them, and assist us in winning their affections*
5. *It will make us better acquainted with their spiritual state, and enable us to better watch over them*
6. *It will assist us in the admission of persons to the sacraments*
7. *It will show men the true nature of the ministerial office*
8. *It will show our people the nature of their duty to their ministers*
9. *It will give the governors of the nation more correct views of the Christian ministry, and so may procure from them further help*
10. *It will exceedingly facilitate the ministerial work in succeeding generations*
11. *It will conduce to the better ordering of families, and the better spending of the Lord's Day*
12. *It will help to preserve many ministers from idleness and mis-spending their time*
13. *It will contribute to subdue our own corruptions, and to exercise our own graces*
14. *It will withdraw both ourselves and our people from vain controversies, and the lesser matters of religion*
15. *It will extend those various benefits to all the people in our several parishes*
16. *It will not even stop here, but is like to be a work that will reach over the whole land*
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Article I

Directions for bringing our people to submit to the exercise

1. *Conduct yourselves in the general course of your life and ministry, so as to convince them of your ability, sincerity, and love to them*
2. *Convince them of the benefit and necessity of this exercise*
3. *Put catacisms into the hands of every family in your congregation, whether rich or poor*
4. *Deal gently with them, and avoid every kind of discouragement*
5. *Expostulate with such as are obstinate and disobedient*

Article II

Directions for prosecuting the exercise with success

1. *Address a few words to them in general to mollify their minds, and to remove all offense*
2. *Take them one by one, and deal with each of them apart*
3. *Take an account of what each of them has learned of the catacism*
4. *Try by further questions how far they understand what they have learned*
5. *When you have tried their knowledge, proceed next to instruct them yourselves*
6. *If they appear to be unconverted, make some prudent inquiry into their state*
7. *Endeavour to impress their heart with a sense of their deplorable condition*
8. *Conclude with an exhortation to them to believe in Christ, and to the diligent use of the external means of grace*
9. *At dismissing them, mollify their minds by a few words deprecating anything like offence, and endeavour to engage the masters of families to carry on the work you have begun*
10. *Keep a list of your people in a book, with notes of their character and necessities*
11. *Through the whole course of the exercise, see that the manner as well as the matter be suited to the end*
12. *If God enable you, extend your charity to those of the poorer sort, before they part from you*

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