

great differences about the nature and manner of the Call of Men unto this *Office*, yet none who understand ought of these things, can deny, but that it is an *Act* and *Duty* of the Church; which the Church alone is impowered by Christ to put forth and exert. But this will more fully appear in the consideration of the nature and manner of this Call of Men unto the *Pastoral Office*, and the actings of the Church therein.

THE *Call of persons* unto the *Pastoral Office* in the Church consists of Two Parts. (1.) *Election*, (2.) *Ordination*, as it is commonly called, or sacred Separation by Fasting and Prayer. As unto the former, Four things must be enquired into. (1.) What is *previous* unto it or preparatory for it. (2.) *Wherein* it doth consist. (3.) Its *necessity*, or the demonstration of its Truth and Institution. (4.) What influence it hath into the *communication* of *Pastoral-Office-Power* unto a Pastor so chosen.

1. THAT which is *previous unto it*, is, the *Meetness* of the Person for his *Office* and *Work*, that is to be chosen. It can never be the Duty of the Church to call or choose an *unmeet*, an unqualified, an unprepared Person unto this *Office*. No pretended necessity, no outward motives can enable or warrant it so to do, nor can it by any *outward act*, whatever the Rule or Solemnity of it be, communicate *Ministerial Authority* unto Persons utterly unqualified for, and incapable of the discharge of the *Pastoral Office* according unto the Rule of the Scripture. And this hath been one great means of debasing the *Ministry*, and almost ruining the Church it self; either by the neglect of those who suppose themselves entrusted with the *whole power of Ordination*, or by Impositions on them by *Secular Power*, and *Patrons of Livings* as they are called, with the stated Regulation of their Proceedings herein, by a defective Law, whence there hath not been a due regard unto the antecedent preparatory Qualifications of those who are called unto the Ministry.

TWO ways is the *Meetness* of any one made known and to be judged of. (1.) By an *evidence* given of the *Qualifications* in him before-mentioned. The Church is not to call or choose any one to *Office* who is not *known* unto them; of whose frame of spirit, and walking, they have not had some experience;

not a *Novice*, or one lately come unto them. He must be one who by his ways and walking hath obtained a *good Report*, even among *them that are without*, so far as he is known; unless they be enemies or scoffers; and one that hath in some good measure evidenced his *Faith, Love and Obedience* unto Jesus Christ in the Church. This is the chief *Trust* that the Lord Christ hath committed unto his Churches; and if they are negligent herein, or if at all-adventures they will impose an Officer in his House upon him without satisfaction of his *Meetness* upon due enquiry, it is a great dishonour unto him, and provocation of him. Herein principally are Churches made the *Overseers* of their own Purity and Edification. To deny them an *Ability* of a right judgment herein, or a *liberty* for the use and exercise of it, is Error and Tyranny. But that Flock which *Christ purchased and purified with his own blood*, is thought by some to be little better than an Herd of brute Beasts. Where there is a defect of this personal knowledge for want of opportunity, it may be supplied by Testimonies of unquestionable Authority. (2.) By a *trial of his Gifts for Edification*. These are those Spiritual Endowments which the Lord Christ grants, and the Holy Spirit Works in the Minds of Men, for this very end that the Church may be profited by them, 1 *Cor. 12. 7*. And we must at present take it for granted, that every true Church of Christ, that is so in the *matter* and form of it, is able to judge in some competent measure what Gifts of Men are suited unto their own Edification. But yet in making a judgment hereof, one *Directive means* is the Advice of other Elders and Churches, which they are obliged to make use off by virtue of the Communion of Churches, and the avoidance of offence in their walk in that Communion.

2. AS to the *nature of this Election*, Call or Choice of a Person known, tried, and judged, meetly qualified for the *Pastoral Office*, it is an Act of the whole Church, that is, of the *Fraternity* with their *Elders*, if they have any. For a *Pastor* may be chosen unto a Church which hath other Teachers, Elders, or *Officers* already instated in it. In this case their concurrence in the choice intended, is necessary by way of common suffrage,

franchise, not of Authority or Office-Power. For *Election* is not an *Act of Authority*, but of Liberty and Power, wherein the whole Church in the Fraternity is equal. If there be no *Officers* stated in the Church before, as it was with the Churches in the Primitive Times, on the first Ordination of Elders among them, this *Election* belongs unto the Fraternity.

3. THAT therefore which we have now to prove, is this; That it is the Mind and Will of Jesus Christ, that *meet* Persons should be called unto the *Pastoral Office* (or any other Office in the Church) by the *Election and Choice* of the Church it self whereunto they are called, antecedently unto a sacred solemn separation unto their respective Offices: For,

1. UNDER the *Old Testament* there were three ways whereby Men were called unto *Office* in the Church. (1.) They were so *extraordinarily* and immediately by the nomination and designation of God himself. So *Aaron* was called unto the Priesthood, and others afterward, as *Samuel*, to be Prophets. (2.) By a *law of Carnal Generation*; so all the Priests of the *Posterity of Aaron* succeeded into the *Office* of the Priesthood, without any other call. (3.) By the *choice of the people*, which was the call of all the ordinary Elders and Rulers of the Church, *Deut. 1. 13.* וְיָבִיאוּ *Give to your selves.* It was required of the people, that they should in the first place, make a judgment on their Qualifications for the *Office* whereunto they were called. Men known unto them for Wise, Understanding, Righteous, walking in the *Fear of God*, they were to look out, and then to present them unto *Moses* for their separation unto *Office*, which is *Election*. It is true, that *Exod. 13. 15.* It is said that *Moses chose the Elders*. But it is frequent in the Scripture, that where any thing is done by many, where *one* is chief, that is ascribed indifferently either to the *many*, or to the chief Director. So is it said, *Israel sent Messengers, Numbers, 21. 21.* *Moses*, speaking of the same things, says, *I sent Messengers, Deut. 2. 26.* So *1 Chron. 19. 19.* *They made peace with David and served him*; which is *2 Sam. 10. 19.* *They made peace with Israel and served them.* See also *2 King. 11. 12.* with *2 Chron. 23. 11.* as also *1 Chron. 16. 1.* with *2 Sam. 6. 17.* and the same may be observed in

in other places. Wherefore the people chose these Elders under the conduct and guidance of Moses, which directs us unto the right interpretation of *Act* 14. 23. whereof we shall speak immediately.

THE First of these ways was repeated in the foundation of the *Evangelical Church*. Christ himself was called unto his Office by the Father, through the unction of the spirit, *Isa.* 60. *Heb.* 5. And he himself called the *Apostles* and *Evangelists*, in whom that call ceased. The second ordinary way by the *privilege of natural Generation* of the stock of the Priests, was utterly abolished. The *third way* only remained, for the ordinary continuation of the Church; namely, by the *Choice and Election* of the Church it self, with solemn Separation and Dedication by *Officers* extraordinary or ordinary.

THE first instance of the Choice of a Church-Officer had a mixture in it of the *first* and *later* way, in the case of *Matthias*. As he was able to be a *Church-Officer* he had the choice and consent of the Church; as he was to be an *Apostle* or an extraordinary *Officer*, there was an immediate divine disposition of him into his *Office*; the latter to give him *Apostolical Authority*, the former to make him a president of the future actings of the Church in the call of their *Officers*.

I say this being the *first example* and pattern of the calling of any Person unto *Office* in the Christian Church-State, wherein there was an interposition of the ordinary actings of Men, is established as a *Rule* and President not to be changed, altered or departed from, in any Age of the Church whatever. It is so, as unto what was of *common Right* and Equity, which belonged unto the whole Church. And I cannot but wonder, how Men durst ever reject and disanul this *divine Example* and *Rule*. It will not avail them to say, that it is only a *matter of Fact*, and not a precept or institution that is recorded. For, (1.) It is a *Fact* left on record in the holy Scripture for our *Instruction* and *Direction*. (2.) It is an *example* of the *Apostles* and the whole Church proposed unto us, which in all things, not otherwise determined, hath the force of an institution. (3.) If there was no more in it but this, that we have a matter of  
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common Right, determined and applied by the Wisdom of the Apostles, and the entire Church of *Believers* at that time in the World, it were an impiety to depart from it, unless in case of the utmost necessity.

WHEREAS, what is here recorded was in the call of an *Apostle*, it strengthens the Argument which hence we plead. For if in the *extraordinary call* of an *Apostle*, it was the mind of Christ, that the Fraternity or *Multitude* should have the liberty of their suffrage, how much more is it certainly his mind, that in the *ordinary call* of their own peculiar Officers, in whom, under him, the concernment is their own only, that this *Right* should be continued unto them?

THE order of the proceeding of the Church herein is distinctly declared. For, (1.) The number of the Church at that time, that is of the *Men*, was about an *Hundred and Twenty*, v. 15. (2.) They were *assembled all together* in one place, so as that *Peter* stood up in the midst of them, v. 15. (3.) *Peter* in the name of the rest of the Apostles, declares unto them the necessity of *choosing one* to be substituted in the room of *Judas*, v. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. (4.) He limits the choice of him unto the especial Qualification of being a *meet witness of the Resurrection of Christ*, unto those who constantly accompanied him with themselves from the *Baptism of John*, that is, his being Baptized by him, whereon he began his publick Ministry. (5.) Among these they were left at their liberty to nominate any *two*, who were to be left unto the *lot* for a determination whether of them God designed unto the *Office*. (6.) Hereon the *whole multitude* ἐστὶν δὺο, appointed *Two*; that is the ἀνδρες ἀδελφοί, the *Men and Brethren*, unto whom *Peter* spake, v. 16. did so. (7.) The same Persons to promote the work, *prayed and gave forth their Lots*, v. 24. 26. (8) Σωμῆ-τελωνίδης, *Matthias* was by the common suffrage of the *whole Church*, reckoned unto the number of the Apostles.

I say not that these things were done by the Disciples in distinction from *Peter* and the rest of the Apostles, but in conjunction with them. *Peter* did nothing without them; nor did they any thing without him.

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THE exception of *Bellarmino* and others, against this Testimony, is, that it was a *grant and a condescension in Peter, and not a declaration of the Right of the Church*; that it was an *extraordinary case*; that the *determination of the whole was by Lot*; are of no validity. The pretended concession of *Peter* is a figment; the case was so extraordinary, as to include in it all ordinary cases, for the substance of them. And although the ultimate determination of the *Individual Person*, which was necessary unto his *Apostleship*, was immediately *Divine by Lot*; yet here is all granted unto the people, in their *choosing and appointing Two*, in their *Praying*, in their *casting Lots*, in their *voluntary approbatory Suffrage*, that is desired.

THIS blessed Example given us by the Wisdom of the Apostles, yea, of the spirit of God in them, being eminently suited unto the nature of the thing it self, as we shall see immediately, compliant with all other directions, and Apostolical examples in the like case, is rather to be followed, than the practice of some *degenerate Churches*, who to cover the turpitude of acting in deserting this Example and Rule, do make use of a mock-shew and pretence of that which really they deny, reject and oppose.

THE Second Example we have of the *practice of the Apostles* in this case, whereby the preceding Rule is confirmed, is given us, *Act. 6.* in the Election of the *Deacons*. Had there ensued after the choice of *Matthias* an instance of a diverse practice, by an *exclusion* of the consent of the people, the former might have been evaded, as that which was absolutely extraordinary, and not obliging unto the Church. But this was the *very next instance* of the call of any *Church-Officer*; and it was the first appointment of any *ordinary Officers* in the Christian Church. For it falling out in the *very year* of Christ's Ascension, there is no mention of any *ordinary Elders* distinct from the Apostles, ordained in that Church. For all the Apostles themselves yet abiding there for the most part of this time, making only some occasional Excursions unto other places, were able to take care of the Rule of the Church, and the Preaching of the Word. They are indeed mentioned as those  
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who were well known in the Church *not long afterwards*, Chap. 11. 30. But the first instance of the Call of Ordinary Teaching-Elders or Pastors is not recorded. That of *Deacons* is so by reason of the occasion of it. And we may observe concerning it unto our purpose,

1. THAT the *institution* of the Office it self was of Apostolical Authority, and that fulness of Church-Power wherewith they were furnished by Jesus Christ.

2. THAT they did not exert that Authority but upon such Reasons of it, as were *satisfactory* to the Church; which they declare, v. 2.

3. THAT the action is ascribed to the *Twelve* in general, without naming any person who spake for the rest; which renders the pretence of the *Romanists* from the former place, where *Peter* is said to have spoken unto the Disciples, whereon they would have the Actings of the Church which ensued thereon, to have been by his *concession and grant*, not of their own right, altogether vain. For the rest of the Apostles were as much interested and concerned in what was then spoken by *Peter*, as they were at this time, when the whole is ascribed unto the *Twelve*.

4. THAT the Church was greatly *multiplied* that time, on the account of the Conversion unto the Faith recorded in the foregoing Chapter. It is probable indeed, that many, yea, the most of them were returned unto their own Habitations; for the *next year* there were Churches in all *Judea, Galilee* and *Samaria*, Chap. 9. 31. And *Peter* went about throughout all Quarters to visit the *Saints* that dwelt in them, ver. 32. of whose Conversion we read nothing but that which fell out at *Jerusalem at Pentecost*; but a great multitude they were, v. 1, 2.

5. THIS whole *multitude* of the Church, that is the Brethren, v. 3. *assembled in one place*, being congregated by the Apostles, v. 2. who would not ordain any thing wherein they were concerned, without their own consent.

6. THEY *judged* on the whole matter proposed unto them, and gave their approbation thereof, before they entred upon

the practice of it, v. 5. *The saying pleased the whole Multitude.*

7. THE Qualifications of the Persons to be chosen unto the Office intended, are declared by the Apostles, v. 3. *of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and Wisdom.*

8. THESE Qualities the multitude were to *judge upon*, and so absolutely of the *meetness* of any for this Office.

9. THE choice is *wholly committed* and left unto them by the Apostles, as that which of Right did belong unto them; *look you out among you*; which they made use off, choosing them unto the Office by their common suffrage, v. 5.

10. HAVING thus *chosen them*, they presented them as their chosen Officers unto the Apostles, to be by them *set apart* unto the exercise of their Office by Prayer and Imposition of hands, v. 6.

IT is impossible, there should be a more evident convincing instance and example of the *free choice* of Ecclesiastical Officers by the multitude or fraternity of the Church, than is given us herein. Nor was there any Ground or Reason why this Order and Process should be observed, why the Apostles would not themselves *nominate and appoint* Persons whom they saw and knew meet for this Office, to receive it, but that it was the *Right and Liberty* of the People, according to the mind of Christ, to choose their own Officers, which they would not abridge, nor infringe.

SO was it then, *ἔτιω καὶ νῦν γινέσθαι εἶδει*, saith Chrysostom on the place, and *so it ought now to be*; but the usage began then to decline. It were well if some would consider how the Apostles at that time treated that *multitude* of the people, which is so much now despised, and utterly excluded from all concern in Church Affairs, but what consist in servile subjection. But they have, in this pattern and precedent for the future ordering of the calling of meet Persons to Office in the Church, their Interest, Power, and Privilege secured unto them, so as that they can never justly be deprived of it. And if there were nothing herein, but only a *Record* of the Wisdom of the Apostles in managing Church Affairs, it is marvellous to me, that any who would be thought to *succeed them* in any part of their Trust and Office, should



should dare to depart from the example set before them by the Holy Ghost in them, preferring their own ways and inventions above it. I shall ever judge, that there is more safety, in a strict adherence unto this Apostolical Practice and Example, than in a compliance with all the *Canons of Councils* or Churches afterwards.

THE only Objection usually insisted on, that is by *Bellarmino* and those that follow him, is, That this being the Election of *Deacons* to manage the *Alms of the Church*, that is somewhat of their Temporals, nothing can thence be concluded unto the right or way of *Calling Bishops, Pastors or Elders*, who are to take care of the Souls of the People. They may indeed be able to judge of the *fitness* of them who are to be entrusted with their *Purses*, or what they are willing to give out of them; but it doth not thence follow, that they are able to judge of the fitness of those who are to be their *Spiritual Pastors*, nor to have the choice of them.

NOTHING can be weaker than this pretence or evasion. For, (1.) The Question is concerning the *Calling of Persons* unto Office in the Church in general, whereof we have here a Rule, whereunto no exception is any way entred. (2.) This cannot be fairly pleaded by them who *appoint Deacons to Preach, Baptize and Officiate* publickly in all holy things, excepting only the Administration of the *Eucharist*. (3.) If the people are meet and able to judge of them who are of *honest report*, and *full of the Holy Ghost and Wisdom*, which is here required of them, they are able to judge who are meet to be their Pastors. (4.) The Argument holds strongly on the other side; namely, that if it be *right and equal*, if it be of divine appointment and Apostolical practice, that the people should choose those who were to Collect and Distribute their Charitable Benevolence because of their concernment therein, much more are they to enjoy the same *Liberty, Right and Privilege* in the choice of their *Pastors*, unto whom they commit the care of their Souls, and submit themselves unto their Authority in the Lord.

3. ACCORDINGLY they did use the same liberty in the choice of their Elders, *Act. 14. 23. Χειροτονήσαντες αὐτοῖς πρεσβυτέρους*

κατ' ἐκκλησίαν, προσεζήτησαν μετὰ νηστειῶν: That is, say *Erasmus, Vatablus, Beza*, all our old *English Translations*, appointing, ordaining, creating Elders by *Election or the suffrage of the Disciples*, having prayed with Fastings. The whole Order of the sacred separation of Persons qualified unto the Office of the Ministry, that is, to be *Bishops, Elders or Pastors*, is here clearly represented. For, (1.) They were *chosen by the people*; the Apostles who were present, namely *Paul and Barnabas* presiding in the Action, directing of it and confirming that by their consent with them. (2.) A *time of Prayer and Fasting* was appointed for the Action, or discharge of the Duty of the Church herein. (3.) When they were *so chosen*, the Apostles present *solemnly prayed*, whereby their *Ordination* was compleat. And *those* who would have the χειροτονία here mentioned to be, χειροθεσία, or an Authoritative imposition of hands, wherein this Ordination did consist, do say there is an ὑπερβολή in the words; that is they feign a *disorder* in them, to serve their own *Hypothesis*. For they suppose that their compleat *Ordination* was effected, before there was any *Prayer with Fasting*; for by *imposition of Hands* in their judgment, Ordination is compleated; so *Bellarmino, A Lapide*, on the place, with those that follow them. But first to pervert the true signification of the Word, and then to give countenance unto that wresting of it by assigning a *disorder* unto the Words of the whole Sentence, and that *such a disorder* as makes in their judgment a *false Representation* of the matter of Fact related, is a way of the Interpretation of Scripture which will serve any turn. (4.) This was done in *every Church*, or in every Congregation, as *Tindal* renders the Word; namely, in all the particular Congregations that were gathered in those parts; for that Collection and Constitution did always precede the Election and Ordination of their Officers, as is plain in this place; as also *Tit. 1. 5*. So far is it from Truth, that the Being of Churches dependeth on the *Successive Ordination* of their Officers, that the Church essentially considered, is always antecedent unto their Being and Call.

BUT because it is some Mens interest to entangle things plain and clear enough in themselves, I shall consider the

Objections

Objections unto this rendition of the Words. The whole of it lies against the signification, use and application of χειροτονήσασθαι. Now although we do not here argue merely from the signification of the Word, but from the *representation of the matter of Fact* made in the context; yet I shall observe some things sufficient for the removal of that Objection: As,

1. THE native signification of χειροτονέω, by virtue of its Composition, is, to *lift up, or stretch forth the hands, or an hand*. And hereunto the LXX have respect, *Isa. 58. 9.* where they render אצבע שרש, *the putting forth of the finger*, which is used in an ill sence, by Χειροτονία. χειροτονεῖν is the same with τὰς χεῖρας ἀίρειν, nor is it ever used in any other signification.

2. THE first constant use of it in things *Political or Civil*, and so consequently *Ecclesiastical*, is to *Choose, Elect, Design or Create any Person an Officer, Magistrate or Ruler, by Suffrage, or common consent of those concerned*. And this was usually done with making bare the hand and arm, with lifting up, as *Aristophanes* witnesseth. Ὅμως ὁ χειροτονητέον, ἐξωμοσάσθαι ἢ ἕτερον βραχίονα. He is a great stranger unto these things, who knoweth not that among the *Greeks*, especially the *Athenians*, from whom the use of this Word is borrowed or taken, χειροτονία was an act ὅλης ἢ ἐκκλησίας of the whole *Assembly* of the people in the choice of their Officers and Magistrates. χειροτονέω is by *common Suffrage* to decree and determine of any Thing, Law, or Order; and when applied unto Persons, it signifies their Choice and Designation to Office. So is it used in the first sence by *Demosthenes*, *Orat. in Timoch.* ὁ δῆμος τὰς ἐμὰς γνώμας παρὰ σωτηρίας ἢ πόλεως ἐχειρότουναι. *The people confirmed my sayings by their Suffrage*: And in the other, *Philip. 1.* Ουτε βουλῆς, ἔτε δῆμος χειροτονήσαντες αὐτὸν; *Neither the Senate, nor the People choosing him to his Office*. So is the *Passive Verb* used to be created by Suffrages. Χειροτονία was the act of choosing, whose effect was ψήφισμα, the *determining Vote or Suffrage*. *Porrexerunt manus, Psephisma notum est*, saith *Cicero*, speaking of the manner of the *Greeks*. And when there was a division in choice, it was determined by the greater

greater Suffrage *Thucid. Lib. 3.* ἐχόντο δ' ἐν τῇ χειροτονίᾳ ἀρχόμενοι, ἐκράτισε δ' ἡ πρὸς διδοῦν. As many instances of this nature may be produced, as there are reports of calling Men unto Magistracy by Election in the *Greek Historians*. And all the farther compositions of the Word do signifie to *choose*, *confirm*, or to *abrogate* by common Suffrages.

3. THE Word is but once more used in the New Testament, *2 Cor. 8. 19.* where it plainly signifies *Election* and Choice of a Person to an Employment, χειροτονηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν συνέκδημ. ἢ πρὸς: *He was chosen of the Churches to travel with us.*

4. IT is acknowledged, that after this was the *common use* of the Word, it was applied to signifie the *thing* it self, and not the manner of doing it. Hence it is used sometimes for the obtaining or collation of Authority, or Dignity or Magistracy, any manner of way, though not by Election. To *appoint*, to *create*. But this was by an *abusive application* of the Word, to expresse the thing it self intended, without regard unto its signification and proper use. Why such a use of it should be here admitted, no Reason can be given. For in all other places on such occasions, the *Apostles* did admit and direct the Churches to use their liberty in their choice. So the *Apostles and Elders, with the whole Church, sent chosen Men of their own Company to Antioch*, such as they chose by common Suffrage for that end; so again *ver. 25. I will send whom you shall approve, 1 Cor. 16. 3. The Church chose them, the Apostle sent him who was chosen by the Church to be our Companion, 2 Cor. 8. 19. Look out from among your selves, Act. 6.* If on all these and the like occasions, the *Apostles* did guide and direct the people in their right and use of their Liberty, as unto the *Election* of Persons unto Offices and Employments, when the Churches themselves are concerned, what reason is there to depart from the proper and usual signification of the Word in this place, denoting nothing but what was the common practice of the *Apostles* on the like occasions?

5. THAT which alone is objected hereunto by *Bellarmino* and others who follow him, and borrow their whole in this case

case from him, namely that *ἡσποτονοίαντες* Grammatically agreeing with and regulated by Paul and Barnabas, denotes their act, and not any act of the people, is of no force. For, (1.) Paul and Barnabas did preside in the whole action, helping, ordering and disposing of the people in the discharge of their Duty, as is meet to be done by some on all the like occasions. And therefore it is truly said of them, that they appointed Elders by the Suffrage of the people. (2.) I have shewed instances before out of the Scripture, that when a thing is done by the whole people, it is usual to ascribe it unto him or them who were chief therein, as elsewhere the same thing is ascribed unto the whole people.

THE same Authors contend that the liberty of choosing their own Officers or Elders, such as it was, was granted unto them or permitted by way of *condescension for a Season*; and not made use of by virtue of any right in them thereunto. But this permission is a meer imagination. It was according to the mind of Christ, that the Churches should choose their own Elders, or it was not. If it were not, the *Apostles* would not have permitted it; and if it were, they ought to ordain it, and practise according to it, as they did. Nor is such a constant Apostolical Practice proposed for the direction of the Church in all Ages, to be ascribed unto such an Original as *Condescension and Permission*. Yea it is evident, that it arose from the most fundamental principles of the constitution and nature of the Gospel Churches, and was only a regular pursuit and practice of them: For,

1. THE Calling of Bishops, Pastors, Elders, is an Act of the power of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. But these Keys are originally and properly given unto the whole Church, unto the Elders of it only Ministerially; and as unto exercise Pastors are eyes to the Church: But God and Nature design in the first place, sight to the whole Body, to the whole Person, thereunto it is granted both subjectively and finally, but actually it is peculiarly seated in the eye. So is it in the grant of Church-Power, it is given to the whole Church, though to be exercised only by its Elders.

THAT

THAT the grant of the *Keys unto Peter* was in the Person and as the representative of the whole confessing Church, is the known judgment of *Austin* and a multitude of Divines that follow him. So he fully expresseth himself, *Tractat. 124. in Johan.* "Peter the Apostle bare in a general figure the person of the Church. For as unto what belonged unto himself, "he was by Nature one Man, by Grace one Christian, and of "special more abounding Grace, one and the chief Apostle. "But when it was said unto him, I will give unto thee the "Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, &c. he signified the whole "Church, &c. Again, the Church which is founded in Christ, "received from him in (the person of) *Peter*, the Keys of "the Kingdom of Heaven, which is the power of binding and "loosing.

UNTO whom these *Keys* are granted, they according to their distinct interests in that grant, have the Right and Power of Calling their *Bishops, Pastors or Elders*; for in the exercise of that Trust and Power, it doth consist. But this is made unto the *whole Church*. And as there are in a Church already constituted several *sorts of persons*, as some are Elders, others are of the people only, this *Right* resideth in them, and is acted by them according to their respective capacities, as limited by the light of nature and divine institution, which is, that the *Election* of them should belong unto the body of the people, and their *Authoritative Designation or Ordination* unto the Elders. And when in any place the supream Magistrate is a Member or Part of the Church, he hath also his peculiar Right herein.

THAT the *power of the Keys* is thus granted originally and fundamentally unto the whole Church, is undeniably confirmed by Two Arguments.

1. THE Church it self is the *Wife*, the *Spouse*, the *Bride*, the *Queen of the Husband* and *King of the Church* Christ Jesus, *Psal. 45. 10. John 3. 29. Revel. 21. 9. Chap. 22. 17. Matth. 25. 1, 5, 6.* Other *Wife* Christ hath none, nor hath the Church any other *Husband*. Now to whom should the *Keys of the House* be committed but unto the *Bride*? There is, I confess, another who claims

claims the *Keys* to be his own, but withal, he makes himself the *Head and Husband* of the Church, proclaiming himself, not only to be an Adulterer with that *Harlot* which he calleth the Church, but a *Tyrant* also, in that pretending to be her Husband he will not trust her with the *Keys of his House*, which Christ hath done with his Spouse. And whereas by the *Canon Law* every *Bishop* is the Husband or Spouse of his Diocesan Church, for the most part they commit an *open Rape* upon the people, taking them without their consent; at least are not chosen by them, which yet is essential unto a lawful Marriage. And the Bride of Christ comes no otherwise so to be, but by the voluntary choice of him to be her Husband.

FOR the Officers or Rulers of the Church, they do belong unto it as hers, 1 Cor. 3. 21. 22. And *Stewards in the House*, 1 Cor. 4. 1. the *Servants of the Church for Jesus sake*, 2 Cor. 4. 5.

IF the Lord Christ have the *Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, that is, of *his own House*, Heb. 3. If the Church it self be the *Spouse of Christ*, the *Mother of the Family*, Psal. 68. 13. the *Bride*, the *Lambs Wife*; and if all the Officers of the Church be but *Stewards and Servants* in the House and unto the Family; if the Lord Christ do make a grant of *these Keys* unto any, whereon the disposal of all things in this House and Family doth depend, the Question is, Whether he hath originally granted them unto his *holy Spouse* to dispose off according unto her judgment and duty, or unto any *Servants* in the House, to dispose of *her* and all *her* concernments, at their pleasure?

2. THE power of the *Keys* as unto *binding and loosing*, and consequently as unto all other acts thence proceeding, is expressly granted unto *the whole Church*, Matth. 18. 17, 18. *If he shall neglect to hear them, tell the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican; verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* What Church it is that is here intended, we have proved before; and that the Church is intrusted with the power of *binding and loosing*. And what is the part of

the Body of the people herein, the Apostle declares; 1 Cor. 5. 4. 2 Cor. 2. 6.

SECONDLY, This Right exemplified in *Apostolical Practice*, is comprehended in the Commands given unto the Church, or Body of the People, with respect unto *Teachers and Rulers* of all sorts; for unto them it is in a multitude of places given in charge that they should *discern and try false Prophets, fly from them; try Spirits*, or such as pretend Spiritual Gifts or Offices; reject them who Preach *false Doctrine*, to give testimony unto them that are to be in Office; with sundry other things of the like nature, which all of them do suppose, or cannot be discharged without a *Right* in them to choose the worthy, and reject the unworthy, as *Cyprian* speaks. See *Matth. 7. 17. Joh. 5. 39. Gal. 11. 9. 1 Thess. 5. 19, 20, 21. 1 Joh. 4. 1. 2 Joh. 10. 11.*

WHAT is objected hereunto from the *unfitness and disability* of the people, to make a right judgment concerning them who are to be their Pastors and Rulers, labours with a three-fold weakness. For, (1.) It reflects dishonour upon the *Wisdom* of Christ in Commanding them the observance and discharge of such Duties, as they are no way meet for. (2.) It proceeds upon a supposition of that *degenerate state of Churches* in their Members, as to Light, Knowledge, Wisdom and Holiness, which they are for the most part fallen into; which must not be allowed to have the force of Argument in it; when it is to be lamented, and ought to be reformed. (3.) It supposeth that there is no *supply of Assistance* provided for the people, in the discharge of their Duty to guide and direct them therein; which is otherwise; seeing the *Elders* of the Church wherein any such Election is made, and those of other Churches in Communion with that Church, are by the common advice and declaration of their judgment, to be Assistant unto them.

THIRDLY, The Church is a *voluntary Society*. Persons otherwise absolutely free, as unto all the Rules, Laws and Ends of such a Society, do of their own Wills and free Choice coalesce into it. This is the Original of all Churches, as hath been declared. *They gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the Will of God.*



God, 2 Cor. 8. 5. Herein neither by Prescription, nor Tradition; nor Succession, hath any one more Power or Authority than another; but they are all *equal*. It is gathered into this *Society* meerly by the Authority of Christ; and where it is so Collected, it hath neither Right, Power, Privilege, Rules nor Bonds *as such*, but what are given, prescribed and limited by the Institution and Laws of Christ. Moreover, it abides and continues on the same Grounds and Principles, as whereon it was Collected, namely, the *Wills of the Members* of it subjected unto the Commands of Christ. This is as necessary unto its present continuance in all its Members, as it was in its first Plantation. It is not like the *Political Societies* of the World, which being first established by force or consent, bring a necessity on all that are born in them and under them, to comply with their Rule and Laws. For Men may, and in many cases ought to submit unto the disposal of temporal things, in a way, it may be, not convenient for them, which they judge not well off, and which in many things is not unto their advantage. And this may be *just and equal*, because the special *good* which every one would aim at, being not absolutely so, may be out-balanced by a *general good*, nor alterable, but by the prejudice of that which is good in particular. But with reference unto things Spiritual and Eternal it is not so. No Man can by any *previous Law* be concluded as unto his interest in such things; nor is there any *General Good* to be attained by the loss of any of them. None therefore can coalesce in such a *Society*, or adhere unto it, or be any way belonging unto it, but by his own *free choice* and consent. And it is enquired, how it is possible that any Rule, Authority, Power or Office, should arise or be erected in *such* a *Society*? We speak of that which is ordinary; for he by whom this Church-State is erected and appointed, may and did *appoint* in it, and over it, *extraordinary Officers* for a season. And we do suppose, that as he hath by his Divine Authority instituted and appointed that *such Societies* shall be, that he hath made grant of Privileges and Powers to them proper and sufficient for this end; as also that he hath given *Laws and Rules*, by the observance whereof, they may

may be made partakers of those Privileges and Powers, with a Right unto their Exercise.

ON these suppositions in a Society absolutely *voluntary*, among those who in their conjunction into it, by their own consent, are every way *equal*, There can but three things be required unto the actual constitution of *Rule* and *Office* among them. And the First is, That there be some among them that are *fitted and qualified* for the Discharge of such an Office in a peculiar manner above others. This is previous unto all Government, beyond that which is purely natural and necessary. *Principio rerum, gentium nationumq; imperium penes Reges erat; quos ad fastigium hujus Majestatis, non popularis Ambitio, sed spectata inter bonos moderatio provehebat. Just.* So it was in the World, so it was in the Church. *Præsident probati quique seniores, honorem istum non pretio sed testimonio adepti. Tertull.* This preparation and furniture of some Persons with Abilities and meet Qualifications for Office and Work in the Church, the Lord Christ hath *taken on himself*, and doth and will effect it in all Generations. Without this there can be neither *Office*, nor *Rule*, nor *Order* in the Church.

2. WHEREAS, there is a *new Relation* to be made or created between a *Pastor, Bishop or Elder, and the Church*, which was not before between them, (a Bishop and a Church, a Pastor and a Flock are *Relata's*) it must be introduced at the same time by the *mutual voluntary* acts of one another, or of each party. For one of the *Relata* can, as such, have no being or existence without the other. Now this can no otherwise be, but by the *consent and voluntary subjection* of the Church unto persons so antecedently qualified for Office, according to the Law and Will of Christ. For it cannot be done by the *Delegation of Power* and Authority from any other Superiour or Equal unto them that do receive it. Neither the nature of this Power, which is uncapable of such a *Delegation*, nor the *Relation* unto Christ of all those who are Pastors of the Church, will admit of an Interposition of Authority by way of *Delegation of Power* from themselves in other Men, which would make them *their Ministers*, and not Christs; nor is it consistent with

with the nature of such a voluntary Society. This therefore can no way be done, but by *free Choice*, Election, Consent or Approbation. It cannot, I say, be so regularly. How far an *Irregularity* herein may vitiate the whole Call of a Minister, we do not now enquire.

NOW this *Choice* or *Election* doth not communicate a Power from them that *choose* unto them that are *chosen*, as though such a Power as that whereunto they are called, should be formally inherent in the *choosers*, antecedent unto such *choice*. For this would make those that are *chosen* to be *their Minister* only; and to act all things in their Name, and by virtue of Authority derived from them. It is only an *Instrumental, Ministerial* means to enstate them in that Power and Authority which is given unto such Officers by the Constitution and Laws of Christ, whose Ministers thereon they are. These *Gifts*, Offices, and Officers, being granted by Christ unto the Churches, *Ephes. 4. 12.* where-ever there is a Church called according to his Mind, they do in and by their Choice of them, *submit themselves unto them in the Lord*, according unto all the Powers and Duties wherewith they are by him intrusted, and whereunto they are called.

3. IT is required that Persons so chosen, so submitted unto, be so solemnly separated, dedicated unto, and confirmed in their Office by Fasting and Prayer. As this is consonant unto the Light of Nature, which directs unto a solemnity in the susception of publick Officers; whence proceeds the *Coronation of Kings*, which gives them not their *Title*, but solemnly proclaims it, which on many accounts is unto the advantage of Government; so it is prescribed unto the Church in this case by *especial Institution*. But hereof I shall speak farther immediately.

THIS Order of calling Men unto the Pastoral Office, namely by their *previous Qualifications* for the Ministry, whereby a general designation of the Persons to be called is made by Christ himself; the *orderly Choice or Election* of him in a voluntary subjection unto him in the Lord, according to the Mind of Christ, by the Church it self; followed with *solemn Ordination*, or setting apart unto the Office and discharge of it by  
Prayer.

*Prayer with Fasting*, all in obedience unto the Commands and Institution of Christ, whereunto the communication of Office-Power and Privilege, is by Law-constitution annexed, is suited unto the light of Reason, in all such cases, the nature of Gospel Societies in Order or Churches; the ends of the Ministry, the Power committed by Christ unto the Church, and confirmed by Apostolical Practice and Example.

HEREIN we rest, without any further dispute or limiting the *Formal Cause* of the Communication of Office-Power unto any one Act or Duty of the Church, or of the Bishops or Elders of it. All the three things mentioned are *essential* thereunto; and when any of them are utterly neglected, where they are neither formally nor virtually, there is no *lawful regular Call* unto the Ministry according to the Mind of Christ.

THIS Order was a long time observed in the *Ancient Church* inviolate; and the foot-steps of it may be traced through all Ages of the Church; although it first gradually decayed, then was perverted and corrupted, until it issued (as in the *Roman Church*) in a *Pageant* and Shew, instead of the Reality of the things themselves: For the *Trial and Approbation* of spiritual Endowments previously necessary unto the Call of any, was left unto the *Pedantick Examination* of the *Bishops Domesticks*, who knew nothing of them in themselves; the *Election and Approbation* of the people was turned into a mock-shew in the sight of God and Men, a *Deacon* calling out, *That if any had Objections against him who was to be Ordained*, they should come forth and speak; Whereunto another *cries out* of a corner by compact, *He is learned and worthy*; and *Ordination* was esteemed to consist only in the outward sign of *Imposition of Hands*, with some other Ceremonies annexed thereunto, whereby, without any other consideration, there ensued a flux of Power from the Ordainers unto the ordained.

BUT from the beginning it was not so. And some few Instances of the *Right of the people*, and the exercise of it in the Choice of their own Pastors, may be touched on in our Passage. *Clem. Epist. ad Corinth.* affirms, That the *Apostles* themselves appointed *approved Persons* unto the Office of the Ministry,

σωεδομοσιαις ἢ ἐκκλησιαστικαῖς, by or with the consent or choice of the whole Church. *σωεδοκεῖν*, is to enact by common consent; which makes it somewhat strange, that a learned Man should think that the Right of the People in Elections is excluded in this very place by *Clemens*, from what is assigned unto the Apostles in Ordination.

*IGNAT. Epist, ad Philadelph.* Ἡρέπων ἐξω ὑμῶν, ὡς ἐκκλησία Θεοῦ, χειροτονῆσαι ἐπίσκοπον, writing to the Fraternity of the Church, It becomes you, as a Church of God, to Choose or Ordain a Bishop.

*TERTULL. APOL. Præsident probati quiq; Seniores, honorem istum non pretio, sed Testimonio adepti.* The Elders came unto their Honour or Office by the Testimony of the people; that is by their suffrage in their Election.

*ORIGEN*, in the close of his last Book against *Celsus*, discoursing expressly of the Calling and Constitution of Churches or Cities of God, speaking of the Elders and Rulers of them, affirms, That they are ἐκλεγόμενοι, Chosen to their Office by the Churches which they do Rule.

THE Testimony given by *Cyprian* in sundry places unto this Right of the People, especially in *Epist. 68.* unto the Elders and People of some Churches in *Spain*, is so known, so frequently urged and excepted against to so little purpose, as that it is no way needful to insist again upon it. Some few things I shall only observe concerning, and out of that Epistle: As,

1. IT was not a single Epistle of his own more ordinary occasions, but a determination upon a weighty Question made by a Synod of Bishops or Elders, in whose Name, as well as that of *Cyprian*, it was written and sent unto the Churches who had craved their advice.

2. HE doth not only assert the Right of the people to choose worthy persons to be their Bishops, and reject those that are unworthy; but also industriously proves it so to be their Right by Divine Institution and Appointment.

3. HE declares it to be the Sin of the People, if they neglect the use and exercise of their Right and Power in rejecting and with-

withdrawing themselves from the Communion of *Unworthy Pastors*, and choosing others in their room.

4. HE affirms that this *was the Practice*, not only of the Churches of *Africk*, but of those in most of the other Provinces of the Empire. Some passages in his Discourse, wherein all these things are asserted, I shall transcribe in the Order wherein they lie in the Epistle.

*NEC sibi plebs blandiatur, quasi immunis esse a contagio delicti possit cum sacerdote peccatore communicans, & ad injustum & illicitum Præpositi sui Episcopatum consensum suum commodans. Propter quod plebs obsequens præceptis Dominicis & Deum metuens, a peccatore præposito separare se debet; nec se ad Sacrilegi Sacerdotis Sacrificia miscere; quando ipsa maxime habeat potestatem vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi; quod & ipsum videmus de Divina Autoritate descendere.*

“FOR this cause the people obedient to the Commands of our Lord, and fearing God, ought to separate themselves from a wicked Bishop, nor mix themselves with the Worship of a Sacrilegious Priest. For they principally have the power of choosing the worthy Priests, and rejecting the unworthy; which comes from Divine Authority or Appointment; as he proves from the Old and New Testament. Nothing can be spoken more fully representing the Truth which we plead for. He assigns unto the people a *Right and Power* of separating from unworthy Pastors, of rejecting or deposing them, and that granted to them by Divine Authority.

AND this Power of *Election* in the people, he proves from the Apostolical Practice before insisted on. *Quod postea secundum Divina Magisteria observatur in Actis Apostolorum, quando in Ordinando in locum Judæ Episcopo, Petrus ad plebem loquitur. Surrexit, inquit, Petrus in medio discentium, fuit autem turba in uno. Nec hoc in Episcoporum tantum & Sacerdotum, sed in Diaconorum Ordinationibus observasse Apostolos, de quo & ipso in Actis eorum Scriptum est. Et convocarunt, inquit, duodecim, totam plebem Discipulorum, & dixerunt eis, &c.*

ACCORDING unto the Divine Commands the same course was observed in the *Acts of the Apostles*, whereof he gives instances in the

the Election of *Matthias*, *Act. 1.* and of the *Deacons*, Chap. 6.

AND afterwards speaking of Ordination, *De Universa Fraternitatis Suffragio*, by the Suffrage of the whole Brotherhood of the Church; he says, *Diligenter de traditione Divina, & Apostolica observatione servandum est & tenendum apud nos quoque, ut fere per universas provincias tenetur: According to which Divine Tradition and Apostolical Practice, this custom is to be preserved and kept amongst us also, as it is almost through all the Provinces.*

THOSE who are not moved with his Authority, yet, I think have reason to believe him in a *matter of Fact*, of what was done *everywhere*, or almost every where, in his own days; and they may take *Time* to answer his *Reasons* when they can, which comprize the substance of all that we plead in this Case.

BUT the Testimonies in *following Ages* given unto this Right and Power of the People in choosing their own Church-Officers, Bishops and others, recorded in the *Decrees of Councils*, the *Writings* of the learned Men in them, the *Rescripts of Popes*, and *Constitutions of Emperours*, are so fully and faithfully Collected by *Blondellus* in the Third Part of his *Apology* for the judgment of *Hierom* about Episcopacy, as that nothing can be added unto his diligence, nor is there any need of farther confirmation of the Truth in this behalf.

THE pretence also of *Bellarmino*, and others who follow him, and borrow their conceits from him, that this *liberty of the people* in choosing their own Bishops and Pastors, was granted unto them at first by way of *Indulgence* or *Connivence*; and that being abused by them, and turned into disorder, was *gradually taken from them*, until it issued in that shameful mocking of God and Man, which is in use in the *Roman Church*, when at the Ordination of a *Bishop* or *Priest* one Deacon makes a demand, Whether the Person to be Ordained be approved by the people, and another answers out of a corner That the *people approve* him, have been so confuted by *Protestant Writers* of all sorts, that it is needless to insist any longer on them.

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INDEED,

INDEED, the Concessions that are made, that this Ancient Practice of the Church, in the peoples choosing their own Officers (which to deny, is all one as to deny that the Sun gives Light at Noon-day) is, as unto its *Right*, by various degrees transferred unto *Popes, Patrons* and *Bishops*, with a Representation in a meer Pageantry, of the peoples liberty to make Objections against them that are to be Ordained, are as fair a concession of the *gradual Apostacy* of Churches from their Original Order and Constitution, as need be desired.

THIS *Power* and *Right* which we assign unto the people, is not to act it self only in a *subsequent consent* unto one that is Ordained, in the acceptance of him to be their Bishop or Pastor. How far that may *salve* the defect and disorder of the omission of previous Elections, and so preserve the Essence of the Ministerial Call, I do not now enquire. But that which we plead for, is, the Power and Right of Election to be exercised *previously* unto the solemn Ordination or setting apart of any unto the Pastoral Office, communicative of Office-Power in its own kind unto the person chosen.

THIS is part of that contest which for fundry Ages filled most Countries of *Europe* with broils and disorders. Neither is there yet an end put unto it. But in this present discourse we are not in the least concerned in these things. For our Enquiry is what State and Order of *Church-Affairs* is declared and represented unto us in the Scripture. And therein there is not the least intimation of any of those things from whence this Controversy did arise, and whereon it doth depend. *Secular* Endowments, Jurisdictions, Investiture, Rights of Presentation, and the like, with respect unto the Evangelical Pastoral Office, or its exercise in any place, which are the subject of these Contests, are foreign unto all things that are directed in the Scriptures concerning them, nor can be reduced unto any thing that belongs unto them. Wherefore, whether this *FUS PATRONATUS* be consistent with Gospel-Institutions; whether it may be continued with respect unto Lands, Tythes and Benefices; or how it may be reconciled unto the Right of the People in the Choice of their own Ecclesiastical Officers, from



from the different *Acts, Objects* and Ends required unto the one and the other, are things not of our present consideration.

AND this we affirm to be agreeable unto *natural Reason* and *Equity*, to the *nature of Churches* in their institution and ends, to all Authority and Office-Power in the Church, necessary unto its Edification, with the security of the Consciences of the *Officers* themselves, the preservation of due respect and obedience unto them, constituted by the Institution of Christ himself in his Apostles, and the practice of the Primitive Church. Wherefore, the utter *despoiling* of the Church, of the Disciples, of those gathered in Church Societies by his Authority and Command, of this Right and Liberty, may be esteemed a *Sacrilege* of an higher nature, than sundry other things which are reproached as criminal under that Name.

AND if any shall yet farther appear to justify this deprivation of the Right laid claim unto, and the *exclusion* of the people from their Ancient Possession with sobriety of Argument and Reason, the whole cause may be yet farther debated from principles of *natural Light* and *Equity*, from *maxims of Law and Polity*, from the necessity of the *Ends* of Church-Order and Power, from the moral impossibility of any other way of the conveyance of *Ecclesiastical Office-Power*, as well as from Evangelical Institution and the practice of the first Churches.

IT will be Objected, I know, that the Restoration of this Liberty unto the people, will overthrow that *jus Patronatus*, or Right of *presenting unto Livings* and Preferments, which is established by Law in this Nation, and so under a pretence of restoring unto the people their Right in common, destroy other Mens undoubted Rights in their own enclosures.

BUT this Election of the Church, doth not actually and immediately instate the persons chosen in the *Office* whereunto he is chosen; nor give actual Right unto its Exercise. It is required moreover, that he be solemnly set apart unto his Office in and by the Church *with Fasting and Prayer*. That there should be some kind of *peculiar Prayer* in the dedication of any unto the *Office* of the Ministry, is a notion that could never be obliterated in the minds of Men concerned in these things,

things, nor cast out of their Practice. Of what sort they have been amongst many we do not now enquire. But there hath been less regard unto the other Duty, namely, that these Prayers should be accompanied with *Fasting*. But this also is necessary by Virtue of Apostolical Example, *Act. 14. 23.*

THE Conduct of this Work belongs unto the *Elders or Officers of the Church*, wherein any one is to be so Ordained. It did belong unto *extraordinary Officers* whilst they were continued in the Church. And upon the Cessation of their Office, it is devolved on the ordinary stated *Officers* of the Church. It is so, I say, in case there be any such *Officer* before fixed in the Church, whereunto any one is to be only Ordained. And in case there be none, the Assistance of Pastors or Elders of other Churches may and ought to be desired, unto the Conduct and *Regulation* of the Duty.

IT is needless to enquire what is the Authoritative influence of this Ordination, into the *Communication of Office* or Office-Power; whilst it is acknowledged to be indispensably necessary and to belong essentially unto the *Call* unto *Office*. For when sundry Duties, as these of *Election* and *Ordination*, are required unto the same End, by Virtue of Divine Institution, it is not for me to determine what is the peculiar efficacy of the one or the other, seeing neither of them without the other, hath any at all.

HEREUNTO is added, as an *External Adjunct*, imposition of hands significant of the persons so called to *Office*, in and unto the Church. For although it will be difficultly proved, that the use of this Ceremony was designed unto continuance, after a Cessation of the *Communication of the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost*, whereof it was the sign and outward means, in *extraordinary Officers*; yet we do freely grant it unto the ordinary *Officers* of the Church; provided that there be no apprehension of its being the sole Authoritative Conveyance of a successive *flux of Office-Power*; which is destructive of the whole nature of the institution.

AND this may at present suffice, as unto the *Call* of meet persons unto the *Pastoral Office*, and consequently any other  
Office

Office in the Church. The things following are *essentially* necessary unto it, so as that *Authority* and *Right* to Feed and Rule in the Church in the Name of Christ, as an Officer of his House, that may be given unto any one thereby by virtue of his Law, and the Charter granted by him unto the Church it self: The *First* is, That antecedently unto any actings of the Church towards such a person, with respect unto Office, he be furnished by the Lord Christ himself with *Graces and Gifts*, and Abilities, for the discharge of the Office whereunto he is to be called. This Divine Designation of the person to be called, rests on the Kingly Office and care of Christ towards his Church. Where this is *wholly* wanting, it is not in the power of any Church under Heaven, by virtue of any outward Order or Act, to communicate *Pastoral* or *Ministerial* Power unto any person whatever. *Secondly*, There is to be an *Exploration* or *Trial* of those Gifts and Abilities as unto their *Accommodation* unto the Edification of that Church, whereunto any person is to be Ordained a *Pastor* or *Minister*. But although the Right of judging herein, belong unto and reside in the Church it self, (for who else is able to judge for them, or is entrusted so to do?) yet is it their Wisdom and Duty to desire the *Assistance* and *Guidance* of those who are approved in the discharge of their Office in other Churches. *Thirdly*, The *first act* of Power committed unto the Church by Jesus Christ for the constitution of Ordinary Officers in it, is, that *Election* of a person qualified and tried, unto his Office, which we have now vindicated. *Fourthly*, There is required hereunto the *Solemn Ordination, Inauguration, Dedication* or setting apart of the persons so chosen by the *Presbytery* of the Church with *Fasting* and Prayer, and the outward sign of the *Imposition* of Hands.

THIS is that Order which the Rule of the Scripture, the Example of the First Churches, and the nature of the things themselves, direct unto. And although I will not say that a defect in any of these, especially if it be from unavoidable hindrances, doth *disanull* the Call of a person to the Pastoral Office; yet I must say, that where they are not all duly attended unto, the Institution of Christ is neglected,

lected, and the Order of the Church infringed: Wherefore, THE Plea of the communication of all Authority for Office, and of Office it self, solely by a *flux of Power from the first Ordainers*, through the hands of their *pretended Successors* in all Ages, under all the innumerable Miscarriages whereunto they are subject, and have actually fallen into, without any respect unto the consent or call of the Churches, by Rule, Laws and Orders, foreign to the Scripture, is contrary to the whole nature of *Evangelical Churches*, and all the ends of their Institution; as shall be manifested, if it be needful.

## C H A P. V.

### *The Especial Duty of Pastors of Churches.*

WE have declared the *way* whereby *Pastors* are given unto, and instated in the Church. That which should ensue, is an account of *their Work and Duty* in the Discharge of their Office. But this hath been the subject of many large Discourses, both among the Ancient Writers of the Church, and of late. I shall therefore only touch on some things that are of most necessary consideration.

1. THE First and Principal Duty of a *Pastor*, is to feed the flock by diligent Preaching of the Word. It is a promise relating to the New Testament; that God would give unto his Church *Pastors according to his own heart, which should feed them with Knowledge and Understanding*, Jer. 3. 15. This is by Teaching or Preaching the Word, and no otherwise. This Feeding is of the *Essence* of the Office of a Pastor, as unto the exercise of it; so that he who *doth not, or cannot, or will not feed the Flock*, is no Pastor, whatever outward call, or work he may have in the Church. The care of *Preaching the Gospel* was committed to *Peter*, and in him unto all true Pastors of the Church under the name of *Feeding*, Joh. 21. 15, 16. According

According to the example of the Apostles they are to free themselves from all encumbrances, that they may give themselves wholly unto the *Word and Prayer*, Act. 6. Their work is to *labour in the Word and Doctrine*, 1 Tim. 5. 17. and thereby to *feed the Flock* over which the *Holy Ghost hath made them Overseers*, Act. 20. And it is that, which is every where given them in charge.

THIS Work and Duty, therefore, as was said, is *essential* unto the *Office* of a Pastor. A Man is a Pastor unto them whom he *feeds* by Pastoral Teaching, and to no more. And he that doth not *so feed*, is no Pastor. Nor is it required only that he *Preach now and then* at his leisure; but that he lay aside all other Employments, though *lawful*, all other Duties in the Church, as unto such a constant attendance on them, as would divert him from this work, that he *give himself unto it*, that he *be in these things labouring* to the utmost of his Ability. Without this, no Man will be able to give a *comfortable account* of the *Pastoral Office* at the last day.

THERE is indeed no more required of any Man than God giveth him Ability for. Weakness, Sicknes, Bodily Infirmities, may *disenable Men* from the actual discharge of this Duty, in that assiduity and frequency which are required in ordinary cases. And some may through *Age* or other incapacitating Distempers, be utterly disabled for it, in which case it is their Duty to lay down and take a dismissal from their *Office*; or, if their disability be but *partial*, provide a suitable supply, that the Edification of the Church be not prejudiced. But for Men to pretend themselves *Pastors of the Church*, and to be unable for, or negligent of this Work and Duty, is to live in open defiance of the Commands of Christ.

WE have lived to see, or hear of reproachful scorn and contempt cast upon *laborious Preaching*, that is *labouring in the Word and Doctrine*; and all manner of discouragements given unto it, with endeavours for its suppression in sundry instances. Yea, some have proceeded so far, as to declare that the work of Preaching is *unnecessary in the Church*, so to reduce all Religion to the Reading and Rule of the *Liturgy*. The next attempt.

attempt, so far as I know, may be to exclude *Christ himself* out of their Religion, which the denial of a necessity of Preaching the Gospel makes an entrance into, yea, a good Progress towards.

SUNDRY things are required unto this Work and Duty of *Pastoral Preaching*: As, (1.) *Spiritual Wisdom* and Understanding in the Mysteries of the Gospel; that they may declare unto the Church the *whole counsel of God*, and the unsearchable Riches of Christ; see *Act. 20. 27. 1 Cor. 2. 4, 5, 6, 7. Ephes. 3. 8, 9, 10, 11.* The generality of the Church, especially those who are grown in knowledge and experience have a spiritual insight into these things. And the Apostle prays that all Believers may have so, *Ephes. 1. 17, 18, 19.* And if those that instruct them, or should so do, have not some degree of *Eminency* herein, they cannot be *useful* to lead them on to perfection. And the little care hereof or concernment herein, is that which in our days hath rendred the *Ministry* of many fruitless and useles. (2.) *Experience of the power of the Truth* which they Preach in and upon their own Souls. Without this, they will themselves be *lifeless* and *heartless* in their own work, and their labour for the most part *unprofitable* towards others. It is to such Men, attended unto, as a *task for their advantage*; or as that which carries some satisfaction in it from ostentation, and supposed Reputation wherewith it is accompanied. But a Man Preacheth that Sermon only well unto others, which Preacheth it self in his own Soul. And he that doth not *feed on*, and thrive in the *Digestion of the Food* which he provides for others, will scarce make it savoury unto them. Yea, he knows not but the *food* he hath provided may be *poysen*, unless he have really tasted of it himself. If the Word doth not dwell with power *in us*, it will not pass with power *from us*. And no Man lives in a more wofull condition than those who really *believe not themselves* what they perswade others to believe continually. The want of this *Experience* of the power of Gospel-Truth on their own Souls, is that which gives us so many *lifeless, sapless Orations*, quaint in Words, and dead as to Power, instead of Preaching the Gospel in  
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the *Demonstration of the Spirit*. And let any say what they please, it is evident, that some *Mens Preaching* as well as others *not Preaching*, hath lost the credit of their Ministry. (3.) *Skill to divide the Word aright*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 15. And this consists in a *practical Wisdom* upon a diligent attendance unto the Word of Truth, to find out what is real, substantial and meet food for the Souls of the Hearers, to give unto all sorts of persons in the Church that which is their proper portion. And this requires, (4.) A prudent and diligent *consideration of the state of the Flock*, over which any Man is set, as unto their strength or weakness, their growth or defect in knowledge (the measure of their attainments requiring either *Milk* or *strong Meat*;) their Temptations and Duties, their Spiritual Decays or Thrivings; and that not only in general, but as near as may be with respect unto all the Individual Members of the Church. Without a due regard unto these things, Men Preach at random, *uncertainly fighting like those that beat the Air*. Preaching Sermons not designed for the advantage of them to whom they are Preached; insisting on general Doctrines not levelled to the condition of the Auditory; speaking what Men *can*, without consideration of what they *ought*, are things that will make Men weary of *Preaching*, when their minds are not influenced with outward advantages; as much as make others weary in *hearing* of them. And, (5.) All these, in the whole discharge of their Duty are to be constantly accompanied with the evidence of *zeal* for the glory of God, and *compassion for the Souls of Men*. Where these are not in vigorous exercise, in the Minds and Souls of them that *Preach the Word*, giving a *Demonstration* of themselves unto the Consciences of them that hear, the *quickenings Form*, the *Life and Soul* of Preaching is lost.

ALL these things seem *common*, obvious and universally acknowledged: But the ruine of the Ministry of the most for the want of them, or from *notable defects* in them, is, or may be no less evidently known. And the very naming of them, which is all at present which I design, is sufficient to evidence how great a necessity there is incumbent on all *Pastors of Churches*, to give themselves unto the *Word and Prayer*, to labour

*in the Word and Doctrine*, to be continually intent on this Work, to engage all the faculties of their Souls, to stir up all their Graces and Gifts unto constant exercise, in the discharge of their Duty. For *who is sufficient for these things*. And as the consideration of them is sufficient to stir up all Ministers unto *fervent Prayer* for supplies of Divine Aids and Assistance, for that Work which in their own strength they can no way answer; so is it enough to warn them of the avoidance of all things that would give them a Diverſion or Avocation from the constant attendance unto the discharge of it.

WHEN Men undertake the *Pastoral Office*, and either judge it *not their Duty* to Preach, or are *not able* so to do, or attempt it only at some solemn Seasons, or attend unto it as a *task* required of them without that *Wisdom, Skill, Diligence, Care, Prudence, Zeal and Compassion*, which are required thereunto, the Glory and Use of the Ministry will be utterly destroyed.

2. THE Second Duty of a Pastor towards his Flock, is, *continual fervent Prayer for them*. Give our selves unto the *Word and Prayer*. Without this, no Man can, or doth Preach to them as he ought, nor perform any other Duty of his *Pastoral Office*. From hence may any Man take the best measure of the discharge of his Duty towards his Flock. He that doth constantly, diligently, fervently *Pray* for them, will have a Testimony in himself of his own sincerity in the discharge of all other Pastoral Duties; nor can he voluntarily omit or neglect any of them. And as for those who are negligent herein, be their Pains, Labour and Travel in other Duties, never so great, they may be influenced from other Reasons, and so give no evidence of sincerity in the discharge of their Office. In this *constant Prayer* for the Church, which is so incumbent on all Pastors, as that whatever is done without it, is of no esteem in the sight of Jesus Christ: Respect is to be had, (1.) Unto the *Success of the Word*, unto all the blessed ends of it among them. These are no less than the improvement and strengthening of all their Graces, the Direction of all their Duties, their Edification in Faith and Love, with the entire conduct of their Souls in the life of God, unto the enjoyment of him. To

1 Sam. 5. 16.

Job. 17.

20.

Exod. 32.

11.

Deut. 9. 18.

Levit. 16.

24.

1 Sam. 12.

23.

2 Cor. 13.

7. 9.

Ephes. 1.

15, 16, 17.

Ch. 3. 14.

Phil. 1. 4.

Col. 1. 3.

2 Thess. 1.

11.

Preach



Preach the Word therefore, and not to follow it with constant and *fervent Prayer* for its success, is to dis-believe its use, neglect its end, and to cast away the Seed of the Gospel at random. (2.) Unto the *Temptations* that the Church is generally exposed unto. These greatly vary, according unto the outward circumstances of things. The *Temptations* in general that accompany a State of outward *Peace and Tranquility*, are of another nature, than those that attend a time of *Trouble, Persecution, Distress and Poverty*. And so it is as unto other Occasions and Circumstances. These the *Pastors of Churches* ought diligently to consider, looking on them as the means and ways whereby Churches have been ruined, and the Souls of many lost for ever. With respect unto them therefore, ought their *Prayers* for the Church to be fervent. (3.) Unto the *especial State* and condition of all the Members; so far as it is known unto them. There may be of them, who are spiritually sick and diseased, tempted, afflicted, bemisted, wandering out of the way, surprized in Sins and Miscarriages, disconsolate and troubled in Spirit in a peculiar manner. The remembrance of them all ought to abide with them, and to be continually called over in their daily *Pastoral Supplications*. (4.) Unto the *presence of Christ* in the Assemblies of the Church, with all the blessed Evidences and Testimonies of it. This is that alone which gives Life and Power unto all Church Assemblies; without which, all outward Order and Forms of Divine Worship in them, are but a *dead Carcass*. Now this *presence of Christ* in the Assemblies of his Church, is *by his Spirit*, accompanying all Ordinances of Worship with a gracious Divine Efficacy, evidencing it self by blessed Operations on the Minds and Hearts of the Congregation. This are Pastors of Churches continually to *Pray for*, and they will do so, who understand that all the success of their labours, and all the acceptance of the Church with God in their Duties, do depend hereon. (5.) To their *preservation* in Faith, Love and Fruitfulness, with all the Duties that belong unto them, &c.

IT were much to be desired, that all those who take upon them this *Pastoral Office*, did well consider and understand how great and necessary a part of their Work and Duty doth

consist in their *continual fervent Prayer* for their Flocks. For besides that it is the only instituted way, whereby, they may by virtue of their Office *bles their Congregations*, so will they find their Hearts and Minds in and by the discharge of it, more and more filled with love, and engaged with diligence, unto all other Duties of their Office, and excited unto the Exercise of all Grace towards the whole Church on all occasions. And where any are negligent herein, there is no Duty which they perform towards the Church, but it is influenced with *false considerations*, and will not hold weight in the balance of the Sanctuary.

3. *THE Administration of the Seals of the Covenant* is committed unto them as the *Stewards of the House of Christ*. For unto them the *Authoritative Dispensation* of the Word is committed, whereunto the *Administration of the Seals* is annexed. For their principal end is, the peculiar Confirmation and Application of the Word Preached. And herein there are three things that they are to attend unto. (1.) The *Times and Seasons* of their Administration unto the Churches Edification, especially that of the *Lords Supper* whose frequency is enjoined. It is the Duty of Pastors to consider all the *necessary Circumstances* of their Administration, as unto Time, Place, Frequency, Order and Decency. (2.) To keep *severely* unto the Institution of Christ, as unto the way and manner of their Administration. The gradual introduction of *uninstituted Rites and Ceremonies* into the Church-Celebration of the Ordinance of the Lords Supper, ended at length in the Idolatry of the *Mass*. Herein then, alone, and not in bowing, cringing, and vestments, lies the Glory and Beauty of these Administrations; namely, that they are *compliant with, and expressive of the Institution of Christ*; nor is any thing done in them, but in express obedience unto his Authority. *I have received of the Lord, that which I delivered unto you*, saith the Apostle in this case, 1 Cor. 11. 23. (3.) To take care that these holy things be administered only unto those who are *meet and worthy*, according unto the Rule of the Gospel. Those who impose on Pastors the promiscuous Administration of these Divine Ordinances,

or the Application of the Seals unto all without difference, do deprive them of one half of their Ministerial Office and Duty.

BUT here it is enquired by some, *Whether in case a Church have no Pastor at present, or a Teaching Elder with Pastoral Power, whether it may not delegate and appoint the Administration of these especial Ordinances, unto some Member of the Church at this or that season, who is meetly qualified for the outward Administration of them; which for the sake of some I shall examine.*

1. NO Church is compleat in Order without Teaching Officers; Ephes. 4. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 27, 28.

A CHURCH not compleat in Order cannot be compleat in Administrations; because the Power of Administrations depends upon the Power of Order proportionably. That is, the Power of the Church depends upon the Being of the Church. Hence the first Duty of a Church without Officers, is to obtain them according to Rule. And to endeavour to compleat Administrations, without an antecedent compleating of Order, is contrary unto the Mind of Christ, Act. 14. 23. Tit. 1. 5. *That thou should'st set in Order the things that are wanting, and Ordain Elders in every Church.* The practice therefore proposed is irregular and contrary to the Mind of Christ.

THE Order of the Church is Two Fold; as Essential, as Organical. The Order of the Church as Essential, and its Power thence arising, is, First for its Preservation. Secondly for its Perfection. (1.) For its Preservation, in Admissiion and Exclusion of Members. (2.) For its Perfection, in the Election of Officers.

NO part of this Power which belongs to the Church as essentially considered, can be delegated, but must be acted by the whole Church. They cannot delegate Power to some to admit Members, so as it should not be an Act of the whole Church. They cannot delegate Power to any to Elect Officers; nor any thing else which belongs to them as a Church essentially. The Reason is; Things that belong unto the essence of any thing, belong unto it formally as such, and so cannot be transferred.

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THE Church therefore cannot *delegate* the Power and Authority inquired after, should it be supposed to belong to the Power of Order, as the Church is *essentially* considered; which yet it doth not.

IF the Church may delegate or substitute others for the discharge of all Ordinances whatsoever, without *Elders* or *Pastors*, then it may *perfect the Saints, and compleat the Work of the Ministry* without them, which is contrary to *Ephes. 4. 11, 12.* and Secondly, it would render the *Ministry* only *convenient*, and not absolutely *necessary* to the Church; which is contrary to the Institution of it.

A PARTICULAR Church, in Order, as *Organical*, is the adequate subject of all Ordinances, and not [as *essential*; because as *essential* it never doth nor can enjoy all Ordinances, namely the *Ministry* in particular, whereby it is constituted *Organical*. Yet on this supposition the Church as *essentially* considered, is the sole adequate *subject* of all Ordinances.

THOUGH the Church be the only *Subject*, it is not the only *Object* of Gospel Ordinances; but that is various. For instance,

1. THE *Preaching of the Word*; its *first Object* is the *World*, for Conversion: Its next, *Professors*, for Edification.

2. *BAPTISM*; Its only *Object* is neither the *World* nor the Members of a Particular Church; but *Professors*, with those that are reckoned to them by Gods Appointment; that is their *Infant Seed*.

3. THE *Supper*; Its *Object* is a *Particular Church* only, which is acknowledged; and may be proved by the Institution, one special end of it, and the necessity of Discipline thereon depending.

ORDINANCES whereof the Church is the *only Subject* and the *only Object*, cannot be administered Authoritatively, but by Officers only. (1.) Because none but *Christs Stewards* have Authority in and towards his House as such, *1 Cor. 4. 1. 1 Tim. 3. 15. Matth. 24. 25.* (2.) Because it is an *Act of Office-Authority* to represent Christ to the whole Church, and to feed the whole Flock thereby, *Act. 20. 28. 1 Pet. 5. 2.*

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THERE are no footsteps of any such practice among the Churches of God, who walked in Order; neither in the Scripture, nor in all Antiquity.

BUT it is Objected by those who allow this Practice, *That if the Church may appoint or send a person forth to Preach, or appoint a Brother to Preach unto themselves; then they may appoint him to Administer the Ordinance of the Supper.*

*Ans.* HERE is a mistake in the Supposition. The Church, that is the Body of it, cannot send out any Brother *Authoritatively* to Preach. Two things are required thereunto; *Collation of Gifts*, and *Communication of Office*; neither of which, the Church under that consideration can do to one that is sent forth. But where God *gives Gifts* by his Spirit, and a Call by his Providence, the Church only complies therewith; not in communicating Authority to the person, but in *praying* for a Blessing upon his Work.

THE same is the case in desiring a Brother to Teach among them. The Duty is moral in its own nature; the Gifts and Call are from God alone, the occasion of his exercise is only administered by the Church.

IT is farther added by the same persons, that, *If a Brother, or one who is a Disciple, only may Baptize, then he may also Administer the Lords Supper, being desired of the Church.*

*Ans.* THE supposition is not granted nor proved, but there is yet a difference between these Ordinances; the Object of one being *Professors* as such at large; the Object of the other being *Professors* as Members of a Particular Church. But to return:

4. IT is incumbent on them to *preserve the Truth or Doctrine of the Gospel*, received and professed in the Church; and to defend it against all opposition. This is *one principal end of the Ministry*, one principal means of the preservation of the Faith once delivered unto the Saints. This is committed in an especial manner unto the Pastors of the Churches, as the Apostle frequently and emphatically repeats the charge of it unto *Timothy*, and in him unto all, to whom the Dispensation of the Word is committed, 1 *Epist.* 1. 1, 3, 4. Chap. 4. 6, 7, 16. Chap.

Chap. 6. 20. 2 *Epist.* 1. 14, 22. Chap. 3. 14, 15, 16. The same he giveth in charge unto the *Elders of the Church of Ephesus*, *Act.* 20. 28, 29, 30. What he says of himself, that the *Glorious Gospel of the blessed God was committed unto his Trust*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 11. is true of all Pastors of Churches according to their measure and call; and they should all aim at the Account, which he gives of his Ministry herein; *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 7. The Church is the *Ground and Pillar of Truth*; and it is so principally in its Ministry. And the sinful neglect of this Duty, is that which was the cause of most of the *pernicious Heresies and Errors* that have infested and ruined the Church. Those whose Duty it was to *preserve the Doctrine of the Gospel* entire in the publick profession of it, have many of them *spoken perverse things to draw away Disciples after them*. *Bishops, Presbyters, publick Teachers*, have been the ring-leaders in Heresies. Wherefore this Duty, especially at this time, when the fundamental Truths of the Gospel are on all sides impugned from all sorts of Adversaries, is in an especial manner to be attended unto.

SUNDRY things are required hereunto. As, (1.) A clear, sound *comprehensive knowledge* of the entire Doctrine of the Gospel, attained by all means useful and commonly prescribed unto that end, especially *diligent study of the Scripture*, with fervent Prayer for Illumination and Understanding. Men cannot preserve that for others, which they are ignorant of themselves. Truth may be lost by *weakness*, as well as by *wickedness*. And the defect herein in many is deplorable. (2.) *Love of the Truth*, which they have so learned and comprehended. Unless we look on Truth as a *Pearl*, as that which is valued at any rate, bought with any price, as that which is better than all the World, we shall not endeavour its preservation with that diligence which is required. Some are ready to part with Truth at an easie rate; or to grow indifferent about it, whereof we have multitudes of examples in the days wherein we live. It were easie to give instances of sundry important *Evangelical Truths*, which our fore-fathers in the Faith contended

contended for with all earnestness, and were ready to seal with their Blood, which are now *utterly disregarded* and opposed by some who pretend to succeed them in their Profession. If Ministers have not a sense of that Power of Truth in their own Souls, and a taste of its Goodness, the discharge of this Duty is not to be expected from them. (3.) A *consciencious care* and fear of giving countenance or encouragement unto *novel Opinions*, especially such as oppose any Truth, of whose Power and Efficacy, Experience hath been had among them that believe. Vain curiosity, boldness in conjectures, and readiness to vent their own conceits, have caused no small trouble and damage unto the Church. (4.) *Learning and ability of Mind* to discern and disprove the oppositions of the Adversaries of the Truth, and thereby to stop their Mouths, and convince gain-sayers. (5.) The *solid confirmation* of the most important Truths of the Gospel, and whereunto all others are resolved in their Teaching and Ministry. Men may, and do oft-times prejudice, yea, betray the Truth, by the weakness of their Pleas for it. (6.) A *diligent watch* over their own Flocks, against the crafts of Seducers from without, or the springing up of any *bitter root of error* among themselves. (7.) A *concurrent Assistance* with the Elders and Messengers of other Churches, with whom they are in Communion, in the declaration of the Faith which they all profess; whereof we must treat afterwards more at large.

IT is evident what Learning, Labour, Study, Pains, Ability and Exercise of the rational Faculties, are ordinarily required unto the right discharge of these Duties. And where Men may be useful to the Church in other things, but are defective in these, it becomes them to walk and act both circumspectly and humbly, frequently desiring and adhering unto the Advices of them whom God hath entrusted with more Talents and greater Abilities.

5. IT belongs unto their Charge and Office, *diligently to labour for the Conversion of Souls unto God*. The ordinary means of Conversion is left unto the Church, and its Duty it is to attend unto it. Yea, one of the *principal ends* of the Institution and

and Preservation of Churches, is the *Conversion of Souls*; and where there are no more to be Converted, there shall be no more Church on the Earth. To enlarge the Kingdom of Christ, to diffuse the Light and Savour of the Gospel, to be subservient unto the Calling of the Elect, or gathering all the Sheep of Christ into his Fold, are things that God designs by his *Churches* in this World. Now the principal instrumental cause of all these, is the *Preaching of the Word*; and this is committed unto the *Pastors of the Churches*. It is true, Men may be, and often are Converted unto God by their occasional dispensation of the Word who are not called unto Office; for it is the *Gospel it self* that is *the Power of God unto Salvation*, by whomsoever it is Administred, and it hath been effectual unto that end, even in the necessary occasional *teaching of Women*. But it is so frequently in the exercise of Spiritual Gifts, by them who are not *stated Officers* of the Church, *1 Cor. 14. 24, 25. Phil. 1. 14, 15, 18. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11.* But yet this hinders not, but that the Administration of the Glorious Gospel of the blessed God, as unto all the ends of it, is committed unto the *Pastors of the Church*. And the *First Object* of the Preaching of the Gospel, is the *World*, or the Men of it for their Conversion. And it is so in the Preaching of all them unto whom that Work is committed by Christ. The Work of the Apostles and *Evangelists* had this Order in it. First, they were to make Disciples of Men, by the Preaching of the Gospel unto Conversion, and this was their principal Work, as *Paul* testifieth, *1 Cor. 1. 17.* And herein were they gloriously instrumental, in laying the foundation of the Kingdom of Christ all the World over. The Second part of their Work, was, *to teach them that were Converted*, or made Disciples, to do, and observe, all that he did command them. In the pursuit of this part of their Commission, they gathered the Disciples of Christ into Churches, under ordinary Officers of their own. And although the Work of these Ordinary Officers, Pastors, and Teachers, be of the same nature with theirs, yet the *Method* of it is changed in them. For their first *ordinary Work* is to conduct and teach all the Disciples of Christ *to do*  
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