

sands, would have afforded them one such, if it had been requisite.

But secondly, its pretended not to have been Necessary, because of the fewness of the people. But I answer, 1. The same persons say that in *Ignatius* his time all Churches had such Presbyters: And its manifest that many Churches in the Scripture times, were more populous or large, then many or most beside them were in *Ignatius* time. 2. Did the numerous Church at *Jerusalem* ordinarily meet on the Lords dayes for holy communion, or not? If they did, then it was but a Church of one Congregation (which is by most denied) If not, then the several Assemblies must have several Presbyters (for several Bishops they will not hear of,) Doubtless they did not celebrate the holy communion of the Church and Ordinances of God, by meer Laymen alone. 3. What man that knows the burden of Pastoral Oversight, can say that such Churches of thousands, as *Jerusalem*, *Rome*, *Alexandria*, &c. had need of no more than one man, to Teach them, and do all the Pastoral work? and so that assisting Ruled Presbyters were then needless? If they were needless to such numerous Churches then; let us even take them for needless still, and set up no new orders which were not seen in Scripture times.

Reason. 8. *The Apostles left it not to the Bishops whom they established to make new Church-offices and orders quoad speciem, but only to ordain mento succeed others in the offices and orders that themselves had (by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost) appointed, or else Christ before them.* A Bishop might make a Bishop or a Deacon perhaps, because these were *quoad speciem* made before, and they were but to put others into the places before appointed. But if there were no such creature in Scripture times as a *subject Presbyter*, that had no power of Ordination and Jurisdiction, then if the Bishops afterward should make such, they must make a new office, as well as a new officer. So that either this new Presbyter is of the institution of Christ by his Apostles, or of Episcopal humane institution. If the former, and yet not instituted in Scripture times, then Scripture is not the sufficient rule and discoverer of Divine Institutions and Church Ordinances: and if we once forsake that Rule, we know not where to fix, but must wander in that Romane uncertainty. If the latter, then we must

must expect some better proof then hitherto we have seen, of the Episcopall (or any humane) power to make new Offices in the Church of Christ, and that of universal and standing necessity. Till then we shall think they ought to have made but such Presbyters as themselves.

Reason 9. *If there be not so much as the name of a Ruled Presbyter without power of Ordination, or Jurisdiction, in all the Scripture, much less then is there any description of his Office, or any Directions for his ordination, or the qualifications prerequisite in him, and the performance of his office when he is in it: And if there be no such Directory concerning Presbyters, then was it not the Apostles intent that ever any such should be ordained.* The reason of the consequence is, 1. Because the Scripture was written not only for that age then in being, but for the Church of all ages to the end of the world: And therefore it must be a sufficient directory for all. The second Epistle to Timothy was written but a little before Pauls death. Surely if the Churches in Ignatius daies were all in need of Presbyters under Bishops, Paul might well have seen some need in his time, or have foreseen the need that was so neer, and so have given directions for that office. 2. And the rather is this consequence firm, because Paul in his Epistles to Timothy and Titus doth give such full and punctual Directions concerning the other Church-officers, not only the Bishops, but also the Deacons, describing their prerequisite qualifications, their office, and directing for their Ordination, and conversation: Yea he condescendeth to give such large Directions concerning Widows themselves, that were serviceable to the Church. Now is it probable that a perfect Directory written for the Church to the worlds End, & largely describing the qualifications and office of Deacons, which is the inferiour, would not give one word of direction concerning subject Presbyters without power of Ordination or Rule, if any such had been then intended for the Church? No nor once so much as name them? I dare not accuse Pauls Epistles written to that very purpose, and the whole Scripture, so much of insufficiency, as to think they wholly omit a necessary office, and so exactly mention the inferiour and commonly less necessary, as they do.

Reason 10. *The new Episcopal Divines do yield that all the Reason 10.*

texts in Timothy, Titus, and the rest of the New Testament, that mentitn Gospel Bishops or Presbyters, do mean only such as have power of Ordination and Jurisdiction, without the concurrence of any superiour Bishop. The common Inerpretation of the Fathers, and the old Episcopal Divines of all ages, of most or many of those texts, is, that they speak of the office of such as now are called Presbyters. Lay both together, and if one of them be not mistaken, they afford us this conclusion, that the Presbyters that now are, have by these texts of Scripture, the power of Ordination and Jurisdiction without the concurrence of others. And if so, then was it never the Apostles intent, to leave it to the Bishops to ordain a sort of Presbyters of another order, that should have no such power of Ordination or Jurisdiction, without the Bishops Negative.

Reason 11.

Reason 11. We find in Church History that it was first in some few great Cities (especially Rome and Alexandria) that a Bishop ruled many settled worshipping Congregations with their Presbyters; when no such thing at that time can be proved by other Churches: therefore we may well conceive that it was no Ordinance of the Apostles, but was occasioned afterwards, by the multiplying of Christians in the same compass of ground where the old Church did inhabite; and the adjacent parts, together with the humane frailty of the Bishops, who gathered as many as they could under their own Government when they should have erected new Churches as free as their own.

Reason 12.

Reason 12. If the Description of the Bishops settled in the New Testament, and the work affixed to them, be such as cannot agree to our Diocesan Bishops: but to the Pastors of a single Church, then was it never the mind of the Holy Ghost that those Bishops should degenerate afterwards into Diocesan Bishops: But the Antecedent is certain: therefore so is the Consequent.

I here still suppose with Learned Dr. H. Annot. in Act. 11. & passim, that the name Presbyter in Scripture signifieth a Bishop, there being no Evidence that in Scripture time any of that Second Order, (viz. subject Presbyters) were then instituted. Though I am far from thinking that there was but one of these Bishops in a Church at least as to many Churches. Now as we are agreed *de facto* that it was but a single Church that then was under a Bishop and not many such Churches (for that follows unde-

undeniably upon the denying of the existence of subject Presbyters; seeing no such Churches can be, nor the worshipping Assemblies held without a Bishop or Presbyter;) so that it was the mind of the Apostles that it should so continue, is proved by the Description and work of those Scripture Bishops.

Argument 1. From *Acts* 20. 28, 29, 31. The Bishops instituted and fixed by the Holy Ghost were and are to take heed to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers, to feed the Church of God, and to watch against Wolves, and to warn every one night and day] But this cannot be done by Diocesan Bishops, nor any that have more than one Church: Therefore Diocesan Bishops are not the Bishops that the Holy Ghost hath so fixed and instituted, such as *Paul* describeth were to continue: and thats such as can do that work.

Argument 2. The Bishops that the Holy-Ghost settled and would have continue, (and had the Power of Ordination given them,) were such as were to be Ordained in every City and every Church, *Acts* 14. 23. *Tit.* 1. 3, 4, 5. See *Dr. Hammonds Annotat.* But it is not Diocesan Bishops that are such (for they are over many Churches and Cities) therefore it is not Diocesan Bishops that were settled by the Holy Ghost, nor meant in those texts.

Ar. 3. The Bishops which were instituted by the Holy Ghost, and are meant in Scripture, were to watch for their peoples souls as those that must give account, Ruling over them, and to be obeyed by all, and speaking to them the word of God, *Heb.* 13. 7, 17, 24. But this cannot be done by a Bishop to a whole Diocess, (nor will they be willing of such an account if they be wise.) therefore it is not Diocesan Bishops that are meant in Scripture.

Argument 4. The Bishops settled for continuance in Scripture were such as all the people were to know as labouring among them, and over them in the Lord, and admonishing them, and to esteem them very highly in love, for their work sake, *1 Thes.* 5. 12, 13. But this cannot be meant of our Diocesan Bishop, (whom the hundredth part of the flock shall never see, hear, nor be admonished by:) therefore it is not such that were settled for continuance in the Church.

Argument 5. The Bishops settled by the Holy Ghost, must by any that are sick be sent for, to pray over them. But this a Diocesan

cesan Bishop cannot do, to the hundredth or thousandth person in some places; therefore it is not Diocesan Bishops (but the Bishops of a single Church that are capable of these works) that are meant by the Holy Ghost, to continue in the Church, and consequently to whom the power of Ordaining was committed. If any question whether the Texts alleadged do speak of subject-Presbyters, or Bishops, I refer them to the foresaid Reverend Doctor, with whom I am agreed, that there were no subject-Presbyters instituted in Scripture times.

Reason. 13.

See Grotius de Imperio. p. 351. Proving that the Christian Church-Government was not fitted to that of the Temple, but that of the Synagogues, and endeavouring to prove Bishops, he doth it thence, that they are such as the ἀρχιεπίσκοποι. Let them then hold to such a Congregational Episcopacy.

Reason 13. *It was not one or two or all Churches for a year or two or more in their meer fieri or infancy before they were well formed, that consisted only of one settled worshipping Assembly and its guides; but it was the formed and stablised state of the particular Churches.*

To prove this I shall briefly do these three things. 1. I shall shew it in respect to the Jewish Synagogues. 2. As to the Churches in the Apostles dayes after many years growth; even of every Church thats mentioned in the New Testament, as a particular Political Church. 3. As to some of the Churches after the Apostles dayes, mentioned by the ancients.

1. It is apparent that the Jews Synagogues were particular Congregational Churches, having each one their several Rulers, and as many Learned men suppose, they had an Ecclesiastical Judicature of Elders, belonging to each of them, where fit men could be found, and this distinct from the Civil Judicature: Or as others think, they had a Sanhedrim which had power to judge in both Causes, and one of these was in every City, that is, in Places of Cohabitation. For in every City of Israel which had one hundred and twenty families (400 free persons say others) they placed the Sanhedrim of twenty three. And in every City which had not one hundred and twenty men in it, they set the smallest Judicature of three Judges, so be it there were but two wise men among them, fit to teach the Law and resolve doubts. See *Ainsworth on Numb. 11. 16. citing Talmud. Bab. & Maimonides*, more at large. And doubtless many of our Country Villages, and almost all our Parishes have more then 120. and every Country Village may come in, in the lesser number below 120. which are to have three Elders: and that say some, was every place where were ten men. And that these were under the great Sanhedrim at *Jerusalem*, is nothing to

the matter; For so we confess that such particular Churches as we mention, have some such General officers over them *de jure*, as the Apostolical men were in the Primitive Church; but not that any of these Synagogues were under other Synagogues, though one were in a great City, and the other but in a small Town. And that these Synagogues were of Divine institution, is plain in divers texts, particularly in *Lev. 23. 1, 2, 3.* where a *convocation of holiness, or a holy Convocation* is commanded to be on every Sabbath in all their dwellings, which most plainly could be neither the meeting at *Jerusalem* at the Temple, nor yet in single families: and therefore it is not to much purpose that many trouble themselves to conjecture when Synagogues began, and some imagine it was about the Captivity: For as their controversy can be but about the form of the meeting place, or the name, so its certain that some place there must be for such meetings; and that the meetings themselves were in the Law commanded by God: and that not to be tumultuary confused ungoverned Assemblies. If the scourging in the Synagogues prove not this power (which is much disputed,) *Mat. 10. 17. and 23. 34. Luke 6. 22. and 12. 11. and 21. 12. Acts 22. 19. and 26. 11.* Yet at least, excluding men their Synagogue Communion, may *John 9. 22, 34. and 12. 42. and 16. 2.* But because this argument leads us into many Controversies about the Jewish customs, lest it obscure the truth by occasion in quarrels, I shall pass it by.

2. I find no particular Political Church in the New Testament, consisting of several Congregations, ordinarily meeting for communion in Gods Worship; (unless as the forementioned accidents might hinder the meeting of one Congregation in one place,) nor having half so many members as some of our Parishes:

When there is mention made of a Country, as *Judea, Galile, Samaria, Galatia*, the word [Churches] in the plural number is used, *Gal. 1. 2. Acts 15. 41. and 9. 31. 2 Cor. 8. 1.* But they'll say, *These were only in Cities*: But further consider, there is express mention of the Church at *Cenchrea*, which was no City; and they that say that this was a Parish subject to *Corinth*, give us but their words for it, without any proof that ever I could see: and so they may as well determine the whole

cause

cause by bare affirmation, and prevent disputes. The Apostle intimateth no such distinction, *Rom. 16. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 18, 20, 22. 16.* [When ye come together in the Church, I hear that there be divisions among you. — When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lords Supper.] — 16. [We have no such Custome, nor the Churches of God] Here the Church of Corinth is said to come together into one place: And for them that say, This is *per partes*, and so that one place is many to the whole; I answer, the Apostle saith not to a part, but to the whole Church, that they come together in one place, and therefore the plain obvious sence must stand, till it be disproved. And withall he calls the *Christian Assemblies* in the plural number [Churches:] for its plain that it is of *Assembly Customes* that he there speaks. So *1 Cor. 14.* there is plainly expressed that it was a particular Assembly that was called the Church, and that this Assembly had it in many Prophets, Interpreters, & others that might speak. *Verse 4.* [He that Prophesieth, Edifieth the Church] that is, Only that Congregation that heard. And *Verse 5.* [Except he interpret that the Church may receive Edifying] And *Verse 12.* [Seek that ye may excell to the Edifying of the Church.] *Verse 19.* [In the Church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also. —] And *Verse 23.* [If therefore the whole Church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues —] One would think this is as plain as can be spoken, to assure us that the whole Churches then were such as might, and usually did come together for holy communion into one place. So *Verse 28.* [If there be no Interpreter, let him keep silence in the Church:] And which is more, lest you think that this was some one small Church that Paul speaks of, he denominateth all other particular Congregations, even Ordered Governed Congregations, [Churches] too. *Verse 33.* For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the Churches of the Saints.] So that all the Congregations for Christian Worship, are called, *All the Churches of the Saints.* And it seems all as well as this, so stored with Prophets and gifted men that they need not take up with one Bishop only for want of matter to have made subject Elders of: And *Verse 34.* [Let your women keep silence in the Church] for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the Church.] So that so many Assemblies, so many Churches.

Obj. But it seems there were among the Corinthians more than one Congregation by the plural [Churches.] Answ. 1. Many particular seasons of Assembling, may be called many Assemblies or Churches, though the people be the same. 2. The Epistle was a Directory to other Churches, though first written to the Corinthians. 3. Those that say, it was to Corinth, and other City-Churches that Paul wrote, need no further answer: It seems then each City had but a Congregation, if that were so. 4. Cenchrea was a Church neer to Corinth, to whom Paul might well know his Epistle would be communicated: and more such there might be as well as that, and yet all be entire free Churches.

So in Col. 4. 16. [And when this Epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the Epistle from Laodicea] This Church was such as an Epistle might be read in, which doubtless was an Assembly. The whole matter seems plain in the case of the famous Church at Antioch, Acts 11. 26. *A whole year they assembled themselves with the Church, and taught much people* Here is mention but of One Assembly, which is called the Church; where the people, it seems, were taught. And its plain that there were many Elders in this one Church; for Acts 13. 1. it said [There were in the Church that was at Antioch certain Prophets and Teachers.] And five of them are named, who are said to Minister there to the Lord. And though I do not conclude that they were all the fixed Elders of that particular Church, yet while they were there they had no less power then if they had been such. In the third Epistle of John, where there is oft mention of that particular Church, it appeareth Verse 6. that it was such a Church as before which the Brethren and strangers could bear witness of Gaius Charity: And its most probable that was one Assembly; but utterly improbable that they travailed from Congregation to Congregation to bear this witness. And Vers. 9, 10. it was such a Church as John wrote an Epistle to, and which Diotrephes cast men out of: which is most likely to be a Congregation, which might at once hear that Epistle, and out of which Diotrephes might easilier reject strangers, and reject the Apostles letters, then out of many such Congregations, Gal. 1. 22. When Paul saith, he was Unknown by face to the Churches of Judea, it is most likely that they were Churches which were

capable

capable of seeing and knowing his face not only by parts, but as Churches. And its likely those Churches that praised *Luke*, and sent him with Paul as their chosen messenger, were such as could meet to choose him, and not such as our Diocesses are, 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. Paul gives order both to the Church of *Corinth*, and the Churches of *Galatia*, that upon the Lords day at the Assembly (as it is ordinarily expounded) they should give in their part for the relief of the Churches of *Judea*. So that it seems most likely that he makes [Churches] and such Assemblies to be all one, *Acts* 14. 23. They ordained them Elders, (Church by Church, or in every Church. Here it is confessed by those we plead against, that Elders signifie not any subject Elders having no power of Ordination or Government: And to say that by Elders in each Church is meant only one Elder in each Church, is to forsake the letter of the text without any proved Necessity: We suppose it therefore safer to believe according to the first sence of the words, that it was Elders in every Church, that is, more then one in every Church that were ordained. And what sort of Churches these were, appears in the following verses, where even of the famous Church of *Antioch* its said, *Verse* 27. when they were come, and had gathered the Church together, they rehearsed all that God had done by them — So that its plain that this Church was a Congregation to whom they might make such rehearsal. And *Chap.* 15. 3. Its said that they were brought on their way by the Church: And if it be not meant of all, but a part of the Church, yet it intimateth what is aforesaid.

To conclude, though many of these texts may be thought to speak doubtfully, yet consider 1. That some do most certainly declare that it was particular stated Assemblies that were then called Churches, even Governed Churches, having their Officers present. 2. That there is no certain proof of any one particular Political Church that consisted of many such stated Assemblies. 3. That therefore the Texts that will bear an exposition either way, must be expounded by the certain, and not by the uncertain texts; so that I may argue thus.

If in all the New Testament, the word [Church] do often signifie stated worshipping single Assemblies, and often is used so as may admit that interpretation; and is never once used certainly so signifie many particular stated worshipping Assemblies ruled by one

onefixed Bishop, then we have any just cause to suppose that the particular Political Churches in Scripture times consisted but of one such stated Congregation. But the Antecedent is true, therefore so is the Consequent.

As for the New Episcopal Divines that say *There were no subject Presbyters in Scripture times*: I suppose according to their principles, they will grant me all this, as is aforesaid. And for others, the Instances that they bring to the contrary should be briefly considered. The great swaying Instance of all (which did sometime prevail with me to be my self of another mind) is the Numerous Church at *Jerusalem*: Of which its said that three thousand were converted at once, and five thousand at another time, and the word mightily grew and prevailed; and daily such were added to the Church as should be saved: to which some add the mention of the Miriades of believing Jews yet zealous of the Law, which the brethren mentioned to *Paul*, *Acts* 21. 20. And the instance of *Ephesus* and *Rome* come next. But I remember how largely this business is debated between the late Assembly at *Westminster* and the Dissenting Brethren, that I think it unmeet to interpose in it any further then to annex these few considerations following.

1. That all that is said on that side, doth not prove certainly that that one Church at *Jerusalem* was the eighth part so big as *Giles Cripple-gate Parish*, or the fifth part so big as *Stepney or Sepulchres*, nor neer so big as *Plimoth* or some other Country Parishes. 2. That it is past doubt that the magnitude of that Body of Believers then at *Jerusalem*, was partly accidental, and the members cannot at all be proved settled cohabitants, nor that Church as in its first unordered Mass be the proved to be the fittest pattern for imitation. 3. That Christ hath not punctually determined how many members shall be in a particular Church. 4. But the ends (being personal holy communion) are the Rule by which humane prudence must determine it. 5. That its fitter one Church instance give way to many in point of our imitation, then of manner to that one, *ceteris paribus*. 6. That its known among us that

Heb. 13. 17.
proveth that Churches should be no bigger then that the Ruler may watch for all; their souls as one that must

give account of all. On which text *Dr. Jer. Taylor* in his late Book of Repentance, Pref. saith [I am sure we cannot give account of souls of which we have no Notice] And so preclude to personal conduct. Let them then be Bishops of no bigger a Diocess then they can take such personal notice and conduct of, lest they judge themselves.

more then are proved to have been members of that Church, may hear one man preach at the same time. I have none of the loudest voices, and yet when I have preached to a Congregation judged by judicious men to be at least ten thousand, those farthest off said they could well hear (as I was certainly informed.)

7. That its certain by many passages historicall in scripture that men did then speak to greater multitudes, and were heard at far greater distance then now they can orderly be : which I conjecture was because their voices were louder, as in most dryer bodies (which dryer Countreys have) is commonly seen, when moister bodies have softer hoarser voices, and other reasons might concur. 8. That it is confessed or yielded that the Church at *Jerusalem* might all hear at once, though not all receive the Lords Supper together. And if so, then they were no more then might at once have personal communion in some holy Ordinances; and that the Teachers might at once make known their minds to. 9. And then the reason of receiving the Supper in several places seems to be but because they had not a room so fit to receive all in, as to hear in. And so we have now in many Parishes Assemblies subordinate to the chief Assembly: For divers families at once may meet at one house, and divers at another, for repetition, prayer or other duties; and some may be at Chapels of ease that cannot come to the full assembly. 10. They that are for Presbyterian Churches of many Congregations, do not say, that *There must be many*, to make the first political Church, but only that, *There may be many*? If then there be no Necessity of it, 1. Should it not be forborn when it appeareth to prudence most inconvenient (as frequently it will no doubt.) 2. And when it is Necessary for a peaceable Accommodation, because others think it a sin, should not a *May* be give place to a *Must not be*, in pacificatory consultations, *ceteris paribus*? 11. It is granted also by them, that the Pastors of one Congregation have not a charge of Governing other neighbour Congregations in Consistory, (one rather then another, which they govern not, though perhaps as neer them) but by consent. And therefore as there is but a *licet*, not an *oportet* of such consent pleaded for: so while no such consent is given, we have no such charge of Governing neighbour Congregations; and none may force us to such consent. 12. And Lastly, that if a single Congregation

gregation with it own Officer, or Officers, be not a true particular Political Church; then our ordinary Parish assemblies are none; and where the Presbyterian Government is not set up (which is up but in few places of *England*) it would then follow that we have no true Political Churches left among us (& perhaps never had:) which I meet yet with few so uncharitable as to affirm, except the Papists and the Separatists and a few of the new sort of Episcopal Divines, who think we have no Churches for want of Bishops, (except where Bishops yet are retained and acknowledged.)

For my part I would not lay too great a stress upon any forms or modes which may be altered or diversified. *Let the Church have but such a Number of souls as may be consistent with the ends and so the essence of a particular Church, that they may hold personal holy communion, and then I will not quarrel about the name of one or two Congregations, nor whether they must needs all meet together for all ordinances, nor the like.* Yea I think a full number (so they be not so full or distant, as to be incapable of that communion) are desirable, for the strength and beauty of the Church; and too small Churches, if it may be, to be avoided. So that all the premises being considered, our difference appears to be but small in these matters between the Congregational and Presbyterian way, among them that are moderate.

I shall not presume more particularly to enter into that debate, which hath been so far proceeded in already by such Reverend men, but shall return to the rest of the task before promised against the Diocesan Churches as the supposed subject of the Bishops Government.

As for Scripture times and the next succeeding together, I shall before I look into other testimonies, propound these two Arguments. 1. From the Bishops office, which was before mentioned. If the office of a Bishop in those times, was to do so much work as could not be done by him for a Church any greater than our Parishes, then were the Churches of those times no greater then our Parishes: But the Antecedent is true; therefore so is the consequent. The works are before mentioned, Preaching, Praying, administering the Lords Supper, visiting the sick, reducing hereticks, reproof, censuring, absolving: to which they quickly added too much more of their

own. The impossibility of a faithful performance of this to more is so undeniable, that I cannot suppose any other answer but this that they might ordain Presbyters to assist them in the work, and so do much of it by others. But 1. I before desired to see it proved by what authority they might do this. 2. Their office and work are so inseparable that they cannot depute others to do their work (their proper work) without deputing them also to their office. For what is an office but the state of one *Obliged and Authorized* to do such or such a work? A Presbyter may not authorize another to preach as the Teacher of a Congregation, and to administer the Sacraments, without making him a Presbyter also: Nor can a Bishop authorize any to do the work of a Bishop in whole or by halves without making him a Presbyter or half a Bishop. And he is not authorized either to make new officers in the Church, or to do his work by deputies or substitutes.

2. I argue also from the Identity of that Church to which the Bishops and Deacons were appointed for ministrations. It was not a Church of many stated Congregations, or any larger than our Parishes for number of souls that the Deacons were made Ministers to: therefore it was no other or bigger which the Bishops were set over. The consequence is good: because where ever Deacons are mentioned in Scripture or any Writer that I remember near to Scripture times, they are still mentioned with the Bishops or Presbyters as Ministers to the same Church with them, as is apparent both in the seven chosen for the Church at *Jerusalem*, and in *Phil. 1. 1, 2.* and in the Direction of *Paul* to *Timothy* for ordaining them. And the Antecedent is proved from the nature of their work: For they being to attend on the tables at the Love feasts and the Lords Supper, and to look to the poor, they could not do this for any greater number of people than we mention; Whether they had those feasts in one house or many at once, I determine not; but for the number of people, it was as much as a Deacon could do at the utmost to attend a thousand people.

I shall proceed a little further towards the times next following; and first I shall take in my way the confession of one or two learned men that are for Prelacy.

Cyprian in his *Annotat. on 1 Tim. 5. 17.* saith [*Scd notandum est.*

est in una Urbe magna sicut plures Synagogas, ita & plures fuisse Ecclesias, id est, conventus Christianorum. Et cuiq; Ecclesia fuisse suum praesidem, qui populum alloqueretur, & Presbyteros ordinaret. Alexandria tantum eum fuisse morem, ut unus esset in tota urbe praeses qui ad docendum Presbyteros per urbem distribueret, docet nos Sozomenus l. 14. & Epiphanius, ubi de Ario agit, dicitq; Alexandria nunquam duos fuisse ἐπισκόπους voce ea sumpta κατ' ἐξοχὴν, ita ut significat jus illud quod habebat ὁ ἀρχὸν τῶν συναγωγῶν.] So that Grotius affirmeth that Bishops had not then so much as all the converted persons of a great City under their care, but the Churches and Assemblies were the same, and each Assembly had a Prelate, and in the great Cities there were many of these Churches and Prelates, and that only the City of Alexandria had the custom of having but one such Bishop in the whole City.

2. Those learned men also must grant this cause who maintain that Peter and Paul were both of them Bishops of Rome at once, there being two Churches, one of the Circumcision under Peter, the other of the uncircumcision under Paul: and that one of them had Linus, and the other Cletus for his Successor, and that this Church was first united under Clemens: and the like they say of two Churches also at Antioch, and elsewhere. If this be so, then there is no Law of God that Bishops should be numbred by Cities, but more Bishops then one may be in one City, and were, even when Christians comparatively were a small part of them.

3. Also Mr. Thorndike and others affirm that it was then the custome for the Bishops and Presbyters to sit in a semicircle, and the Bishop highest in a Chair, and the Deacons to stand behind them: This he gathereth from the Apost. Constitut. Ignatius, Dionysius Arcop. and the Jews Constitutions, (in his Apost. form page 71. and Right of the Church, &c. p. 93. 94. 95.) And if this were so, it seems that Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons were all the Officers of one such stated Congregation, and had not many such Congregations under them: For the Bishop could be but in one place at once, and therefore this could be the custome but of one Church in his Diocess, if he had many, whereas it is made the form of the ordinary Christian Assemblies.

The same learned man (Right of Church p. 65.) saith that

[About

See the same thing proved at large by Grotius de Imperio page 355, 356, 357. Yet I think as Bloudell that he mistook Epiphanius de Alex. Eccl.

[About Saint Cyprians time, and not afeere, he finds mention of se-
led Congregations in the Country] By which it may be well con-
jectured what a small addition the Bishops had out of the Coun-
treys to their City Churches, and how many Congregations they
Governed in the Apostile dayes and after.

He affirmeth also that [the power of the Keyes belongeth to
the Presbyters, and that its convertible with the power of cele-
brating the Eucharist, and thats the Reason why it belongs to them,
page 98. ibid. and that [the Power of the Keys, that is, the whole
power of the Church whereof that power is the root and source, is
commen to Bishops and Presbyters] page 128 and that to this all
sides agree, page 106. and that by their Grant Deacons and others
may preach, but not Rule or administer the Lords Supper: see page
118. 123. And he is far from being of their mind that think in
Scripture times there was but one single Bishop without other
Presbyters in a Diocesan Church: For he supposed many in a
Congregation. Page 126 he saith [You see by St. Paul, 1 Cor. 14.
that one Assembly whereof he speaks there, furnished with a
great number of Prophets, whether Presbyters, or over and
above them. In the Records of the Church, we find divers times
a whole Bench of Presbyters presiding at one Assembly.] And
before he had shewed how they sate about the Bishop, and the
congregation stood before them. And page 127. he saith that
[Clemens the Disciple of the Apostles, in his Epistle to the Corinthi-
ans to compose a difference among the Presbyters of that Church
partly about the celebration of the Eucharist, adviseth them to agree
and take their turns in it.] I confess I know not whence he hath
this (doubtless not in the true approved Epistle of Clement,) but
it shews in his judgement, 1. That there were then many Pres-
byters in the Church of Corinth. 2. And that that Church was but
one Congregation, or not very many: Else what need the Pres-
byters take their turns, when they might have done it at once?
3. That the word *Presbyter* in *Clemens* signifieth not a Prelate.
4. And it seems this intimateth there was then no Bishop in Co-
rinth: else no question but *Clemens* would have charged these
disagreeing Presbyters to obey their Bishop, and used some of
Ignatius language: 5. Nay if Bishops had been then known in the
world, is it not likely that he would have charged them to get a
Bishop if they had not, to Govern such a disagreeing Presbytery?
And

And page 129, 130, 131. he shews that [the condemning of Marcion at Rome, and of Noelus at Ephesus, are expressly said by Epiphanius, *Hares.* 42. num. 1. & 2. *Hares.* 57 num. 1. to have been done and passed by the Act of the Presbyters of those Churches — And which is of later date, the Excommunication of Andronicus in Synesius 57. *Epist.* I find reported to have passed in the same sort, and all this agreeable to the practice recorded in Scripture] alledging, 1. *Tim.* 5. 19. *Acts* 21. 18. citing *Cyprian Ep.* 46. and the *Apost.* *Constit.* and saith, *Blondell* in this might have spared his exact diligence, it being granted, &c. Mr. *Thorndike* also tells us pag. 62. of the words of *Ninius*, that [in Ireland alone, Saint Patrick at the first plantation of Christianity founded three hundred and threescore and five Bishopricks] And can any man believe that all these had Cities or more then one of our Parish Churches, when all Ireland to this day hath not seven Cities? and when all this was done at the first plantation of the Gospel? I think we had this sort of *Episcopacy*. Even since the Reformation there is reckoned in Ireland but four Archbishops, nineteen Bishops. What think you then were 365. Bishops at the first plantation of the Gospel?

To proceed to some further Evidence. 1. Its manifest in *Clemens Rom. Epist.* to the *Corinthians* there is mention of no more but two Orders, the one called sometime Bishops, sometime Presbyters, the other Deacons, page 54, 55, 57. * and this he saith the Apostles did as knowing that contention would arise about the name of *Episcopacy*, and that they so settled the Ministerial Offices that others should succeed in them when some were deceased. For my part I cannot see the least reason to be of their mind that think *Clemens* here doth speak only of Prelates or supereminent Bishops, (of which I refer the Reader to Mr. *Barton*'s notes in his English Translation of *Clemens*) But suppose it were so: If at that time the Churches had none but single Bishops, it is plain then that they were but single Congregations: For no other Congregations having communion in their then ordinary, public worship, could be managed without a Bishop or Presby-

* Pag. 54, he saith [καὶ ἡ πόλις καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησία καὶ ἡ ἐπισκοπή καὶ ἡ πρεσβυτερία καὶ ἡ διακονία, &c.] i. e. [Per regiones igitur & Urbes predicantes, constituerunt primitias eorum, approbantes in Spiritu, Episcopos & Dia-

conos eorum qui Credituri erant.] I know that καὶ ἡ πόλις is supposed by some to respect only the place of their preaching, and not of their settling Bishops: But the words according to the more obvious plain sense do seem to extend it to both, and make no such difference at all.

er to do the work. But for them that sleight Mr. *Burtons* & other mens plain Reasons concerning the judgement of *Clem. Romanus*, and force his words to speak what they mean not, I desire them to observe the judgement of *Grotius* whom they profess so much to value: who in his *Epistol.* 162 ad *Bignon*. gives this as one Reason to prove this Epistle of *Clemens* genuine [*Quod nusquam meminit, exsortis illius Episcoporum auctoritatis, quæ Ecclesia consuetudine post Marci mortem Alexandria, atq; eo exemplo alibi, introduci cepit, sed planè ut Paulus Apostolus ostendit Ecclesias communi Presbyterorum qui iidem omnes & Episcopi ipsi Paulog; dicuntur, consilio fuisse gubernatas. Nam quod ἀρχιεπίσκοπος, ἡγούμενος, & λοιπὰς nomina, omnia ista nomina non ad Ecclesiam sed ad Templum Hieros. pertinent: unde infert omnia recto ordine agenda, si Judæis, tanto magis Christianis] You see that *Grotius* (then,) and *Clemens*, in his judgement, were against Prelacy.*

2. The very same I say of Prelacie, *Epist.* ad *Philip*. which mentioneth only two sorts, Presbyters and Deacons.

3. And though *Ignatius* oft mention three, it seems to me that they were all but the Governours or Ministers of one Congregation, or of no more people then one of our Parishes. In the *Epist.* ad *Smyrn*. he saith [*ὅπου ἂν εἴη ὁ ἐπισκοπος, ἐκείνῳ τῷ πλῑθύνῳ ἱερεῖ, ὡς πρὸς θεοῦ ὁ χριστός, πάντα ἡ ἐκκλησία παραμένει. i. e. Ubi Episcopus presens fuerit, illuc & plebs Congregetur, sicuti & ubi Christus est omnis militia cœlestis adest] as the common interpreter translateth it, [*ut vid. est in Edit. Perionii & Usherii,*] &c. [*Ubi comparuerit Episcopus, ibi & Multitudo sit; quemadmodum ubi Christus, ibi omnis astat exercitus cœlestis] as Hier. Vairlenius & Videlius translate it: Or, [Ubi utiq; apparet Episcopus, illic multitudo sit; quemadmodum utiq; ubi est Christus Iesus, illic Catholica Ecclesia] as *Ushers* old Translation. And by the Context it appeareth that this *plebs*, or *multitudo* is the Church which he ruleth, and not only one Congregation among many that are under him: For this doth without distinction bind all the people one as well as another, to be where the Bishop is or appeareth, viz. in the publick Assembly for Communion in Worship. It is plain therefore there that were not then many such Assemblies under him: otherwise all save one must have necessarily disobeyed this command.**

And

And in the Epistle to the *Philadelphians* he hath [*Mia γάρ ἐστιν ἡ σάξ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ τὸ αἷμα τὸ ὑπέρ ἡμῶν ἐκχυμένον. Εἰς καὶ ἅς τοῖς πᾶσιν ἐθρόσθη, καὶ ἐν πόλιν τοῖς ὅλοις διανεμήθη, ἐν θυραστήριον πᾶσι τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, καὶ εἰς ἐπίσκοπος καὶ αἱ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, καὶ τοῖς διακόνους τοῖς συνδούλοις μου.*]

i. e. [*Una enim est caro Domini nostri Jesu Christi, & unus il-
lius sanguis qui pro nobis effusus est, & unus calix qui pro omnibus
nobis distributus est, unus panis qui omnibus fractus est, unum al-
tare omni Ecclesia, & unus Episcopus cum presbyterorum Colle-
gio & Diaconis consensu meis.*]

Here it is manifest that the particular Church which in those
dayes was governed by a Bishop, Presbytery and Deacons, was
but one Congregation; for every such Church had but one
Altar.

Object. But some Greek Copies leave out πᾶσι τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ.

Ans. 1. The corrupt vulgar translation might occasion the
change of the text, saith Bishop *Usher* (*Annot. in loc. page 40.*)
[*intermedia illa, ex interpretatione hac excidisse videantur.*]

2. The old translation of Bishop *Usher* which leaves it out, yet
hath *Unum Altare & unus Episcopus, &c.* and the sense is the
same if the other words were out. 3. *Ignatius* hath the like in
other places, as we shall see anon; which forbiddeth such quarrels
here.

Object. But saith the Learned and Godly Bishop *Downham*,
(*Def. li. 2. cap. 6. page 109.*) the word *Altar* being expounded
for the Communion table, is not likely, and too much savoureth
of Popery: but by one Altar is meant Christ, who sanctifieth all our
Sacrifices, and Oblations and maketh them acceptable to God; as
Ignatius expoundeth himself in his Epistle to the *Magnesiens*: All
as one run together into the Temple of God, unto one Jesus Christ as it
were unto one Altar.]

To this I answer, that it is some confirmation to me, that
the words are so expresse, that so learned a man hath no more
to say by way of evasion. For doubtless this is too gross and
palpable to satisfie the judicious impartial reader. 1. That the
very text which he citeth of the Epistle to the *Magnesiens*
doth make fully against him, I shall shew anon. 2. That it is not
Christ that is meant here by the ἐν θυραστήριον, is evident, 1. In
that Christ his flesh and blood are before distinctly mentioned:

2. In that the word is put in order among the external Ordinances: 3. In that it is so usual with other ancient writers and Ignatius himself to use the word *θυσιαστήριον* in the sense as we now take it, that it will be plain violence to imagine that it is Christ that was meant by it. And for Popery, there is no such matter of danger, in using a word *Metaphorically*: Otherwise we must make the Ancients commonly to be friends to Popery; for they ordinarily call the Lords Table and the place where it stood *θυσιαστήριον*: I say *The Table and the Sacrament* or place of its standing: for this seems plainly the meaning of Ignatius: so saith Bishop *Usher* Annot. in loc. ubi sup. [*Altare apud Patres mensam Dominicam passim denotat apud Ignatium & Polycarpum; Sacramentum quoque.*] So *H. Stephens* *Altarium Sacramentum*. See what Learned *Mr. Thorndike* himself in his *Right of the Church*, &c. page 116. saith to this purpose more largely; where concerning Ignatius his use of the same word to the Ephesians he saith [*Where it is manifest that the Church is called a Sanctuary or place of sacrificing*: *Mr. Mead* in his *Discourse of the name Altar* page 14. sheweth that Ignatius by *θυσιαστήριον* means the Lords Table, and takes *Videli* his concession, as of a thing that could not be denied. In the Epistle of Ignatius (or whoever else) to Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna he saith, *Crebrius celebratur conventus Synodiq; Nominatim omnes inquire. Servos & ancillas ne fastidias* (as *Vairlenius* translateth) or (as Bishop *Usher* old Translation) *Sæpe Congregationes fiant. Ex nomine omnes quare: Servos & ancillas ne despicias.*] Whether this were Ignatius or not, alls one to me, as long as I use it but historically to prove the matter of fact in those times. But surely no man should marvel if I hence gather that great Polycarp was Bishop but of one Congregation, when he must enquire or take notice of every one of his Congregation by name, even as much as servants and maids. I would every Parish Minister were so exactly acquainted with his flock!

Another passage there is in Ignatius to the same purpose, *Epist. ad Magnes*. [*Πάντες ὁσέστις, εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ κυρίου, ὡς ἐν τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ, ἐν ἑνὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ,*] i. e. *Omnes adunati ad Templum Dei concurrite, sicut ad unum Altare: sicut ad unum Iesum Christum*, as the vulgar translation. Or as *Vairlenius*, [*Omnes velut unus quispiam in templum Dei concurrite, velut*

ad unum Altare; ad
 Usher to the same purpose. ^{um} So the old Latine in
 words beforegoing he
 bids them [Come all to one place for pray.] Here is no room
 for Bishop Downams conceit, that its Christ thats meant by
 Οὐρανισμὸς: For they are plainly put as distinct things: as if
 he should say, come all to one Altar, as to one Christ. i. e. be-
 cause it is but one Christ that is there to be partaked of. All this
 doth so evidently prove that in those dayes a Bishop with his Pres-
 bytery and Deacons, had but one Congregation meeting at one
 Altar for Church Communion in the Eucharist, that it caused
 Mr. Mead (in his Discourse of Churches pag. 48, 49, 50.
 Cent. 2.) to say as followeth, having cited these words of Ig-
 natius [*Loe here a Temple with an Altar in it, whether the Mag-
 nesians are exhorted to gather themselves together to pray: To come
 together in one place, &c. For it is to be observed that in these Pri-
 mitive times they had but one Altar in a Church, as a Symbole,
 both that they worshipped but one God through one Mediator Jesus
 Christ, and also of the Unity the Church ought to have in it self.
 Whence Ignatius not only here, but also in his Epistle to the Phila-
 delphians urgeth the unity of the Altar for a motive to the Con-
 gregation to agree together in one: For unum Altare (saith he)
 omni Ecclesiae, & unus Episcopus cum Presbyterio & Diaconis
 conservis meis. This custome of one Altar is still retained by the
 Greek Church: The contrary use is a transgression of the Latines,
 not only Symbolically implying, but really introducing a ποικιλία,
 — &c. Nay more then this it should seem that in those first
 times, before Diocesses were divided into those lesser and subordi-
 nate Churches, we call now Parishes, and Presbyters assigned to
 them, they had not only one Altar in one Church or Dominicum,
 but one Altar to a Church, taking Church for the company or
 Corporation of the faithfull, united under one Bishop or Pastor,
 and that was in the City or place where the Bishop had his
 See and Residence, like as the Jews had but one Altar and Temp^e
 for the whole Nation united under one high Priest. And yet as the
 Jews had their Synagogues, so perhaps might they have more Ora-
 tors then one, though their Altar were but one; there namely where
 the Bishop was. Die solis saith Justin Martyr, omnium qui vel
 in oppidis vel ruri degunt, in eundem locum conventus fit:
 Namely as he there tells us, to celebrate, and participate the holy
 Eucharist.*

*Eucharist. Why was this, but had not many places to celebrate in? and unless this were the case, it is alleged that a Schismatical Bishop was said constituere or collocare aliud Altare? and that a Bishop and an Altar are made correlatives? See S. Cyprian Epist. 40. 72. 73. de unit. Eccles. And thus perhaps is Ignatius to be understood in that forequoted passage of his *Ev. B. 1. c. 11. Unum Altare omni Ecclesiae, & unus Episcopus cum Presbyterio & Diaconis*] So far Mr. Mead.*

I hope upon the consent of so admirable & Critick and learned man, it will not be so much blame-worthy in me, if I speak somewhat the more confidently this way; and say, that I think that the main confusion and Tyranny that hath overspread the Churches, hath been very much from the changing the Apostolical frame of Churches, and setting up many Altars and Congregations under one Bishop in one (pretended particular) Church.

I had three or four passages ready to cite out of *Ignatius*, but these are so express, that I apprehend the rest the less necessary to be mentioned.

The next therefore that I shall mention shall be the forementioned words of *Justin Martyr Apol. 2.* cited by Mr. Mead, and by others frequently to this purpose: In which I observe all these particulars full to the purpose. 1. That they had but one Assembly each Lords day for Church communion for one Church. 2. That this was for reading and prayer and the Eucharist. 3. That the President (who is commonly by those of the Episcopal judgement said to be here meant the Bishop) did preach and give thanks and administer the supper: so that it was administered but to one Congregation as under that Bishop of that Church, for he could not be in two places at once. 4. That to the Absent the Deacons carried their portion after the consecration: so that they had not another Meeting and Congregation by themselves for that end. This is all so plain that I shall think it needeth no Vindication. So that were there but these two Testimonies, I should not marvel if Bishop Downham had extended his confession a little further, when he acknowledgeth (*Def. li. 2. cap. 6. page 104.* that [At the first and namely in the time of the Apostle Paul, the most of the Churches so soon after their Conversion, did not each of them exceed the proportion of a populous