

shepherds; what is the interest of men in a participation of this office, and what their duty thereon,—are things well worth the consideration of them who are called unto it. “Hirelings,” yea, “wolves” and “dumb dogs,” do in many places take on themselves to be shepherds of the flock, by whom it is devoured and destroyed, Acts xx. 18, 19, etc.; 1 Pet. v. 2–4; Cant. i. 7; Jer. xiii. 17, xxiii. 2; Ezek. xxxiv. 3; Gen. xlix. 24; Ps. xxiii. 1, lxxx. 1; John x. 11, 14–16; Heb. xiii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 25, v. 4.

Whereas, therefore, this name or appellation is taken from and includes in it *love, care, tenderness, watchfulness*, in all the duties of going before, preserving, feeding, defending the flock, the sheep and the lambs, the strong, the weak, and the diseased, with accountability, as servants, unto the chief Shepherd, it was generally disused in the church, and those of bishops or overseers, guides, presidents, elders, which seem to include more of honour and authority, were retained in common use; though one of them at last, namely, that of bishops, with some elating compositions and adjuncts of power, obtained the pre-eminence. Out of the corruption of these compositions and additions, in archbishops, metropolitans, patriarchs, and the like, brake forth the cockatrice of the church,—that is, the pope.

But this name is by the Holy Ghost appropriated unto the principal ministers of Christ in his church, Eph. iv. 11; and under that name they were promised unto the church of old, Jer. iii. 15. And the work of these pastors is to feed the flock committed to their charge, as it is constantly required of them, Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. v. 2.

Of pastoral feeding there are two parts:—1. *Teaching* or instruction; 2. *Rule* or discipline. Unto these two heads may all the acts and duties of a shepherd toward his flock be reduced; and both are intended in the term of “feeding,” 1 Chron. xi. 2, xvii. 6; Jer. xxiii. 2; Mic. v. 4, vii. 14; Zech. xi. 7; Acts xx. 28; John xxi. 15–17; 1 Pet. v. 2, etc. Wherefore he who is the pastor is the bishop, the elder, the teacher of the church.

These works of teaching and ruling may be distinct in several officers, namely, teachers and rulers; but to divide them in the same office of pastors, that some pastors should feed by teaching only, but have no right to rule by virtue of their office, and some should attend in exercise unto rule only, not esteeming themselves obliged to labour continually in feeding the flock, is almost to overthrow this office of Christ’s designation, and to set up two in the room of it, of men’s own projection.

Of the call of men unto this office so many things have been spoken and written by others at large that I shall only insist, and that very briefly, on some things which are either of the most important consideration or have been omitted by others; as,—