

But when these are viewed together with the scope and general design of these Epistles, they seem to me to be nothing more than the appropriate utterances which any Head of a Church possessing in himself ecclesiastical power might offer as words of warning and counsel to his hearers. But if Paul meant that these laymen should choose their own minister, or depose him at will from his sacred office, why did he not instruct them in their proper choice of such; why did he not tell them the kind of men Bishops and deacons should be?

That there is nothing in the structure or design of these letters calculated to govern us in construing any detached portion of them as authoritative in matters of Church government is most important to bear in mind; inasmuch as on every other subject the writer is precise, cogent and persuasive, preserving on this a silence to be accounted for only on the ground that as Church members they had nothing to do with Church authority.

But look at that other class of his Epistles—those three Pastoral letters addressed, not to Churches but to ministers of Churches, Timothy and Titus. No longer does the Apostle indulge in those pungent appeals to the Churches for greater faith, purity and love; here he does not go down into the subtleties of doctrinal argument, nor soar aloft in beatific visions of the future; now the burden of his communications is, how the Churches shall be governed; how their members disciplined;