

Ephesus, "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you *Episkopoi*—bishops. Presbyters are here called bishops, and the injunction which is given to feed the church of God, shews that they are pastors. Again, the same apostle directs Titus to "ordain presbyters in every city;" and adds, as a special reason for this direction, "for a bishop must be blameless."

Archbishop Cranmer acknowledges that it is very difficult to prove that bishops *jure divino*, ever had any lawful authority over presbyters; and, adds, "the bishops and presbyters were not two things, but both one office at the beginning of Christ's religion." Origen, Ignatius, Polycarp, and several of the early fathers held the same views. And many eminent modern divines have decided that a bishop has authority over a presbyter, only in a conventional sense, and that he is merely a *primus inter pares*, a chief among equals.

These claims and assumptions cannot be sustained from the Scriptures; on the contrary, the Scriptural evidence and argument are against them; and the greatest theologians of all ages, have given it as their opinion, that all the ministers of Christ are equal in point of order. There is not, either in the Word of God, or in the history of any church whatever, any proof of a personal succession of valid