

ordain *Elders* in every city," he adds, "For a *Bishop* must be blameless." Titus i. 5. 7. In Acts xx. 7. we are informed he sent to Ephesus, and called the *Elders* of the Church, to whom he addresses himself, verse 28, "Take heed to yourselves and all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you *overseers*," (ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥΣ,) the same word which is translated *Bishops*.

These different names, however, although they signify the same persons and office, are, taken together, exceedingly descriptive of the qualifications which those ought to possess who occupy the Pastoral office. The term *Teacher* gives us the idea of extensive knowledge of God's will, and some ability to communicate that knowledge for the instruction and edification of a Church of Christ. The word *Pastor* is of more extensive signification, and at once exhibits a character, not only able to feed the people of God with the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of tender care to heal, protect, lead, and defend the Church of God, and to go before believers as an example of purity. *Bishop* or *overseer* affords us much the same idea, with this difference, that it rather respects oversight and rule.

I. Elder is a term, when applied to a Pastor of a Church, not only expressive of the qualities just mentioned, but which has particular relation to age, wisdom, prudence, and experience. It is certainly in allusion to the Elders of Israel, that Christian Pastors have obtained that name. Exod. iii. 16.—Num. xi. 16. Every part of the description given us of the qualifications of a Pastor, evidently supposes some advancement in age or in the qualities of age. He must have a good report of them that are without. * * * *

Such a character is not usually acquired in youth; it is the fruit of some standing in society. He must be such a one as rules his own house well, having his children in subjection, with all gravity. To be the father of children capable of admonition, and under proper government, not only supposes some advancement in life, but also the exercise of such qualities, as authority, wisdom, prudence, patience, gentleness, and meekness, without which no man can be fit for the Pastoral office. "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" * * * *

The same evils, or say defects in his character, which allow his children, and others under his immediate care, to do what is right in their own eyes, will, in process of time, bring anarchy into the Church of God, if he is a ruler in it.

It is also said, that a Pastor must not be a *novice*; that is, one newly converted. The reason is obvious—such a one wants that knowledge, growth in graces, and experience, which fit a person for so important an office. One advanced in years may, indeed be a novice; but it is plain that the Apostle, by asserting that a novice ought not to be a Pastor, means to say, that a Pas-