

And it is worth reading. Here is what Jerome says: Jerome in his commentary on Titus 1:5-7, Jerome says, at a time when bishops were firmly established throughout the ~~world~~ world, as a distinction between bishop and presbyter, Jerome says the passage in hand assumes that bishop and presbyter are one in the same. And he said, till the tie that by the suggestion of the double parties arose in the church, and people began to say I am of Paul and I of Apollos, I of Cephas, the churches were governed by the common council of the presbyters. Jerome ~~continues~~ continues. Should anyone suppose that it is my judgment only, not that of the Scriptures, that bishop and presbyter are one. The latter being the title of age and the former of office. Let him read again the words of the apostle to the Philippians, Paul and Timothy, ~~servants~~ servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus, who are of Philippi, with the bishops and deacons, grace ~~be~~ be to you, and so on. Jerome continues, Philippi was a single Macedonian city, and certainly there could not be in one city a plurality of bishops, such as ~~are~~ are now so called. But inasmuch that at that time they called the same persons ~~as~~ as bishops and ~~presbyters~~ presbyters, for this reason he speaks of bishops or of presbyters indifferently. Perhaps someone may think this ambiguous, unless confirmed by another testimony. Well, in the Acts of the Apostles, it is written, and here Jerome ~~anticipates~~ anticipates Mr. Hall, he says, in the Acts of the Apostles, it is written, that when the ~~apostle~~ apostle came to Meliteth he ~~sent~~ sent to Ephesus and called the presbyters of that church and told them, he said this among other things, take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, wherein the Holy Ghost has set you as bishops, to feed the church of the Lord, and so on. Here ~~again~~ again mark carefully how, calling to him the presbyters of the one city of Ephesus, he thereupon speaks of them as bishops.

Now, that is St. Jerome. Of course I am not interested in whether St. Jerome believed it, or who believed it, but what I am interested in is what is the ~~evidence~~ evidence. But the fact that a man who covered as much material as St. Jerome, and who is giving a view here different from that usage of his day, should speak so positively, is one of real interest. It shows that it is