

tatives. Elected by the people, cooperating with the minister, in the control of the church. And there is much to be ~~said~~ said ~~of~~ for this system on the basis of the N.T. Because the N.T. has no explicit warrant anywhere for the pure congregational system, and it has very little for the pure hierarchical system. But ~~it~~ it frequently speaks of the bishops and deacons, or the elders/ and deacons of a church. Showing that the term bishop and elder are used synonymously. And the general control of the individual church, as far as our evidence goes, would seem in the N.T. times to be in the hands of a ~~group~~ group of overseers, rather than in the hands of the congregation as a ~~whole~~ whole, or of one minister, one individual.

Now this system has the great advantage, as against the hierarchical system, where the minister controls, it has a great advantage of avoiding the dangers that come from the imperfections in the one man. You have great advantages in that regard. It has advantages as over against the congregational system. It is not as good as the ~~the~~ hierarchical system, if you have the ideal man ~~as~~ as the minister. But the trouble is ~~that~~ that most ministers think they are the ideal man, and it is pretty hard to find an impartial body to decide and so in view of the fact that there aren't many who are, this system has a great deal to be said for it as avoiding the disadvantages ~~of~~ of both extremes. Now, I think presbyterian is a good name for this system, for these officers are called presbyters in the N.T. But I don't think the name we apply to it really matters. The N.T. also calls them bishops, but we can't call ~~it~~ it an episcopal system, because the word episcopal has come to be used of the hierarchical system. They use utterly contrary to the N.T. usage. Whether you call these men in the church elders, whether you call them bishops, I don't think any church does, but whether you call them elders, whether you call them deacons, whether you call them an official council or something, it doesn't matter what you call them. The pres. system of govt. is the system in which you have the group of elected officers who are deciding all the little matters of the control of the church, rather than expecting the congregation to decide them, or expecting the minister to decide them.