

William Mitchill's "Jachin and Boaz." — 1707.

(Concluded from last issue.)

[21] XXIII of Christian Liberty.

THE Liberty which Christ hath purchased for Believers under the Gospel, consists in their Freedom from the Guilt of Sin, the condemning Wrath of God, the Rigour and Curse of the Law, and in their being delivered from this present evil World, Bondage to Satan, and the Dominion of Sin, from the evil of afflictions, the fear and sting of Death, the Victory of the Grave, and everlasting Damnation; As also, in their free Access to God, and their yielding Obedience to him, not out of slavish Fear, but a Child-like Love and willing Mind; all which were common to Believers also under the Law, for the Substance of them; but under the Gospel the Liberty of Christians is further enlarged, in their Freedom from the Yoke of the Ceremonial Law, the whole legal Administration of the Covenant of Grace, to which the Jewish Church was subjected, and in their greater boldness of Access to the Throne of Grace, and in fuller Communications of the Free Spirit of God, than Believers under the Law did ordinarily partake of. They who under any pretence of Christian Liberty do practise any Sin, or cherish any lust, or live in the neglect of any known Duty, as they do thereby prevent the main Design of the Free Grace and Love of God in the Gospel, to their own Destruction; so they wholly destroy the end of Christian Liberty, which is, that

being delivered out of the hands of our Enemies we might serve the Lord without fear, in Holiness and Righteousness before him all the days of our Life.

[22] XXIV of Liberty of Conscience.

GOD alone is the sole Lord of the Conscience, and hath left it free from the Doctrines and Commandments of Men, which are in anything contrary to his Word, or not contained in it; so that to believe such Doctrines, or to obey such Commands is to betray true Liberty of Conscience; and the requiring of an implicate Faith, and an absolute and blind Obedience, is to destroy Liberty of Conscience, and Reason also.

XXV of Religious Worship, and of the Sabbath Day.

THE Light of Nature and Works of Creation shew, that there is a God who hath Lordship and Sovereignty over all, is just, good, and doth good unto all, and therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all the Heart, and all the Soul, and with all the might: Yet the acceptable way of Worshiping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed Will, that he may not be worshiped according to the Imaginations and Devices of Men, or Suggestions of Men, under any visible Representations, or any other way not prescribed in the Scriptures of Truth. Religious Worship then is to be given to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and to him alone; not to Angels, Saints, or any other Creatures, and since the Fall, not without a Mediator, nor in the Mediation of any other but Christ alone. Prayer with Thanksgiving, being one special part of natural Worship, is by God required of all Men; but that the same may be accepted, it is to be performed [23] in the Name of Christ, in Faith, by the help of the Spirit, according to his Will, with Understanding,

Reverence, Humility, Fervency, Faith, Love and Perseverance, and when with others in a known Tongue: Prayer is to be made for things lawful, and for all sorts of Men living, or that may live hereafter, but not for the dead, nor for those of whom it may be known that they have sinned the Sin unto Death. The Reading of the Scriptures, Preaching and Hearing the Word of God, Singing of Psalms or Hymns, and Praises to God, as also the Administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are all parts of Religious Worship, to be performed in Obedience to God, with Understanding, Faith, Reverence, and godly Fear: Solemn Humiliation, with Fasting and Thanksgiving upon special occasions, are in their several Times and Seasons to be used in a Holy, Religious Way. Neither Prayer nor any other part of Religious Worship is now under the Gospel either tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed, but God is to be worshiped in all places in Spirit and Truth, as in private Families daily, and in secret each one by himself; so more solemnly in the publick Assemblies, which are not to be carelessly nor wilfully neglected or forsaken, when God by his Word or Providence calleth thereunto. God hath appointed and set apart for Holy Use, for his own Worship and Service, by his Word, in a positive, moral, and perpetual Commandment, binding all Men in all Ages, particularly one day in seven, for a Sabbath to be kept holy unto him, which from the beginning of the World to the Resurrection of Christ was the last day of the Week, and from the Resurrection of Christ was changed to the first day of the Week; which is to be kept in re-
[24.]embrance of the Work of Redemption wrought by Christ, to the end of the World, as the Christian Sabbath. This Sabbath is not to be spent idly in thinking our own Thoughts, in speaking our own Words, finding our own Pleasures, indulging our Flesh,

and gratifying its Lusts, in tippling, drinking, clubbing, carding, dicing, sporting, playing; or in worldly Business, as unnecessary Journeys; but this Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when Men after a due preparing of their Hearts, and ordering of their common Affairs before-hand, do not only observe an holy Rest all the day from their own Works, Words and Thoughts about their Worldly Employments and Recreations, but also are spending the whole time in the publick and private Exercise of God's Worship, and in the Duties of Necessity and Mercy.

XXVI of the Civil Magistrate.

GOD, the Supreme Lord and King of all the World, hath ordained Civil Magistrates to be under him, over the People, for his own Glory and the Publick Good; and to this end hath armed them with the power of the Sword for the Defence and Encouragement of them that do well, and for the Punishment of Evil Doers: so that it's the Duty of People to pray for Magistrates, to honour their Persons, to pay them Tribute and other Dues, to obey their lawful Commands, and to be subject to their Authority for Conscience sake; from which Ecclesiastical Persons are not exempted, much less hath the Pope any Power or Jurisdiction over them in their Dominions, or over any of their People, and least of all to deprive them of their Dominions or Lives, if he shall judge them [25] to be Hereticks, or upon any other pretence whatsoever.

XXVII of Marriage.

Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman, neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband at the same time: Marriage is honourable in all, being ordained of God, for the mutual help of

Husband and Wife, and for the increase of Mankind with a legitimate Issue, and of the Church with hopeful Seed, and for the preventing of Uncleaness: It is lawful for all sorts of Persons to marry, who are able with Judgment to give their Consent. It is the duty of Christians to Marry in the Lord, and therefore they that profess the true Reformed Religion, should not marry with Infidels, Papists, or other Idolaters; neither should such as are godly be unequally Yoked by Marrying with such as are wicked in their Lives, or maintain damnable Heresies.

XXVIII of the Catholic Church.

THE Catholic or universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the Elect that have been, are, or shall be gather'd into one under Christ, the Head thereof; and is the Spouse, the Body, the Fulness of him that filleth all in all. The whole Body of Men throughout the World, professing the Faith of the Gospel, and Obedience to God by Christ according to it, not destroying their own Profession by any Errors everting the Foundation, or Unholiness of [26] Conversation, are and may be called the visible Catholick Church of Christ: Although as such, it is not entrusted with the Administration of any Ordinance, or to have any Office to rule or govern in or over the whole Body: There is no Head of the Church, but the Lord Jesus Christ, nor can the Pope of Rome in any Sense be Head thereof, but is that Antichrist, that Man of Sin, that Son of Perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and above all that is called God, whom the Lord shall consume with the Brightness of his coming: So that according to his Promise we expect that in the last days Antichrist being destroyed, the Jews called, and the Adversaries of the Kingdom of Christ broken to pieces as a Potter's Vessel, the Churches of Christ being enlarged and edified through

a free and plentiful Communication of the Spirit, shall enjoy in this world a more quiet, peaceable and glorious Condition than they have enjoyed hitherto.

XXIX of the Communion of Saints.

ALL Saints that are united to Jesus Christ their Head, by his Spirit and Faith, although they are not thereby made one Person with him, have Fellowship in his Graces, Sufferings, Death, Resurrection and Glory: And being united to one another in Love, they have Communion in each others Gifts and Graces, and are obliged to the performance of such Duties, publick and private, as do conduce to their mutual good both in Soul and Body. All Saints are bound to maintain an holy Fellowship and Communion in the Worship of God, and in performing such other Spiritual Service as tends to their mutual Edification; as also in relieving one another in outward things [27] according to their several Abilities and Necessities; which Communion, though especially, to be exercis'd by them in the Relations wherein they stand, whether in Families or Churches; yet as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended to all those who in every place call upon the Lord Jesus.

XXX of the Sacraments.

Sacraments are holy Signs of the Covenant of Grace immediately instituted by Christ, to represent him and his Benefits, and to confirm our Interest in him, and solemnly to engage us to the Service of God in Christ, according to his Word: There is in every Sacrament a spiritual Relation, or a Sacramental Union between the Sign, and the thing signified: Whence it comes to pass that the Names and Effects of the one is ascribed to the other: The Grace which is exhibited in or by the Sacraments rightly used, is not conferred by any

power in them, neither doth the Efficacy of a Sacrament depend upon the Piety or Intention of him that doth administer it, but upon the Work of the Spirit, and the Word of Institution, which contains, together with a Precept authorizing the use thereof, a Promise of benefit to the worthy Receivers. There be only two Sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, neither of which ought to be administered but by a Minister of the Word lawfully called.

[28] XXXI of Baptism.

Baptism is an Ordinance of the New Testament instituted by Christ, to be unto the Party baptized a Sign of his Fellowship with him in his Death, Burial and Resurrection, of his ingrafting into him, of remission of Sins, and of his giving up himself unto God through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in Newness of Life: Which Ordinance is by Christ's own appointment to be continued in his Church until the end of the World. The outward Element to be used in Baptism is Water, wherein the Party is to be baptized, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Baptism is not rightly administered by pouring Water or Sprinkling it upon the Parties Face: But Baptism is rightly administered by immersion or dipping the whole Body of the Party in Water, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, according to Christ's Institution, and the Practice of the Apostles, Mat. 3. 16. Joh 3. 23 Mat 28. 19, 20. Acts 8. 38 and 10. 48. Rom. 6. 3, 4, 5. Col 2. 12.

¶ To whom Baptism is to be administered.

Baptism is to be administered to all those who actually profess Repentance towards God, Faith in and Obedience to our dear Lord Jesus Christ, and to none other, Mat. 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Acts 2. 37, 38 & 8. 36, 37, 38. Mat 28, 19. Mark 16. 16.

It is the Duty of all those who are rightly Baptized, to give up themselves to some particular orderly Church of Jesus Christ, that they may [29] walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless, for the Glory of God, their own and others Edification. Although it be a great Sin to neglect or contemn this Ordinance, yet Grace and Salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it, as that no Person can be regenerated and saved without it, or that all are undoubtedly regenerated and saved who are Baptized.

XXXII of the Lord's Supper.

THE Lord's Supper is an Ordinance of the New Testament instituted by Jesus Christ, wherein by giving and receiving Bread and Wine, according to Christ's Appointment, his Death and Blood is shewed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by the Spirit and Faith, made Partakers of his Body and Blood, with all his Benefits, to their Spiritual Nourishment and Growth in Grace. In this Sacrament Christ is not offered up to the Father, nor any real Sacrifice made at all for Remission of Sins of the Quick or the Dead; but only a Memorial of that one Offering up of himself, by himself, upon the Cross, once for all; and a spiritual Oblation of all possible Praise unto God for the same: So that the Popish Sacrifice of the Mass (as they call it) is most abominably injurious to Christs own Sacrifice, the only Propitiation for all the Sins of the Elect. The outward Elements in this Sacrament, duly set apart to the use ordained by Christ, have such relation to him crucified, as that truly, yet Sacramentally only, they are called sometimes by the Names of the things they represent: to wit, the Body and Blood of Christ; Albeit in Substance and Nature they still remain truly and only Bread and Wine, as they were be[30]fore. All ignorant and ungodly Persons, as they are unfit to enjoy Communion with

Christ, so are they unworthy of the Lord's Table, and cannot without great Sin against him (whilst they remain such) partake of these holy Mysteries, or be admitted thereunto; yea, whosoever shall receive unworthily, are guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, eating and drinking Judgment to themselves.

XXXIII of the State of Man after Death.

THE Bodies of Men after Death, return to Dust, and see Corruption; but their Souls, which never die, having an Immortal Subsistence; immediately return to God who gave them; the Souls of the Righteous being made perfect in Holiness, are received into the highest Heavens, where they behold the Face of God in Light and Glory, waiting for the Redemption of their Bodies: And the Souls of the wicked are cast into Hell, where they remain in Torment and utter Darkness, reserved to the Judgment of the Great Day: Besides these two places for Souls separated from their Bodies, the Scriptures acknowledge none.

¶ of the Resurrection.

AT the Last Day such as are alive, shall not die, but be changed, and all the Dead shall be raised up with the self-same Bodies, and none other, although with different Qualities, which shall be united again to their Souls for ever: The Bodies of the unjust shall by the Power of Christ be raised to Dishonour: But the Bodies of the Just by his [31] Spirit unto Honour, and be made Conformable to his own Glorious Body.

¶ of the last Judgment.

GOD hath appointed a Day wherein he will Judge the World, in Righteousness by Jesus Christ, to whom all Power and Judgment is given of the Father; in which day not only the fallen Angels shall be judged; but likewise all Persons that have lived upon the earth,

shall appear before the Tribunal Seat of Christ, to give an account of all their Thoughts, Words and Deeds, and to receive according to what they have done in the Body, whether Good or Evil. One End why God hath appointed this Day, is, for the manifestation of the Glory of his Mercy in the Eternal Salvation of the Elect; and of his Justice in the Damnation of the Reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient: For then shall the Righteous go into everlasting Life, and receive the Fulness of Joy and Glory in the Presence of the Lord: But the Wicked who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into Eternal Torments, and be punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power. As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a Judgment, both to deter all Men from Sin, and to be for the greater Consolation of the Godly in their Adversity: So will he have that day unknown to Men, that they may shake off all carnal Security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come, and that they may be ever prepared and in readiness to say in Faith and Love and Godly Boldness, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly Amen.

CONCERNING
DISCIPLINE

[32] In that I have been much abused (or rather the Truth) both by Friends and Enemies about what I hold, and have a considerable time maintained concerning visible particular Churches or Christian Societies, to the end the Truth may not be hid, nor Friends nor Enemies imposed on when I am gone; I shall show in the following particulars what my judgment is as to a particular Church of Christ, instituted according to the Rule of the Glorious Gospel of the ever blessed God, to whom be Glory for ever Amen.

And in the first place, we must know, that as our Lord Christ hath (according to the Order and Wisdom of Heaven) the Pre-eminence in all things; so by the Appointment of the Father, all Power, for the Calling, Institution, Order and Government of the Church, is invested in a Supreme and Sovereign Manner in him, as the only Head and Law-giver thereof.

2. In the Execution of this Power, wherewith he is so intrusted, the Lord Christ, by his Word and Spirit, calleth out of the World, to a state of Grace, and to Communion with himself, all those that are given to him by his Father, that they may walk before him in all the ways of Obedience, which he prescribeth to them in his Word.

[33] 3. Those thus called (through the Ministry of the Word by the Spirit) he commandeth to walk together in particular Societies or Churches, for their mutual Edification, and the due performance of that Worship, publick and private, which he requireth of them in this World.

4. This instituted Church of Christ is a Society of Persons, called out of their natural and worldly States, by the Administration of the Word, and Effectual Work of the Spirit, to true Faith in Christ, and willing Obedience through Love, and to the Knowledge and Worship of God in Christ, joined together (as they are in duty bound) by special Agreement, for the exercise of the Communion of Saints, in the due Observation of all the Ordinances of the Gospel, Rom. 1. 5, 6. 1 Cor 1. 12 1 Cor 14. Heb 3. 1. Jam. 1. 18. Rev. 1, 2, 3, Chapters, read them with Understanding; 1 Pet. 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, Eph. 2. 20, 21, 22 2 Cor 6. 16, 17, 18.

5 They are constituted a Gospel-Church, and interested in the Right Power, and Privileges of a Gospel-Church, by the Will, Promise, Authority and Law of Jesus Christ, upon their own Voluntary Consent and Engagement, to walk together in the due Subjection of

their Souls and Consciences, unto his authority as their King, Priest and Prophet, and in an holy Observation of all his Commands, Ordinances and Appointments, Mat. 18. 20. and 28. 18, 19, 20. Acts 2. 40, 41, 42. Exod 24. 3 Deut 5. 27. Psal 110. 3. Isa. 44. 5 & 59, 21 Eph 4. 7, 8, 9, 10. 2 Cor 8, 5.

6. To this and each Church thus gathered according to the Mind of Christ, declared in his Word, he hath given all that Power and Authority, which is any way needful for their carrying on that Order in Worship and Discipline, which he hath instituted for them to Observe, with Commands and Rules for the due and right exerting and executing [34] of that Power according to his mind, not for Destruction but to Edification.

7. These particular Churches thus gathered and appointed by the Authority of Christ, and intrusted with Power from him, for the ends before expressed, are, each of them, as unto those ends, the Seat of that Power which he is pleased to Communicate to his Saints or Subjects in this World; so that as such they receive it immediately from himself.

8. Besides these particular Churches, there is not instituted by Christ any Church more extensive or Catholick, intrusted with Power for the Administration of his Ordinances, or the Execution of any Authority in his Name.

9. The Matter or Members of these Churches are Saints by Calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing (in and by their Profession and Walking) their Faith in Christ unto Justification of Life, and Obedience unto the Call of Christ, who, being further known to each other by their Confession of the Faith, wrought in them by the Power of God, declared by themselves, or other wise made known, do willingly consent and agree to walk together according to the Appointment of Christ, giving themselves to the Lord, and to one another, according to the Will of God, in a professed Subjection

to the Ordinances of the Gospel, Rom 1. 5, 6. 1 Cor. 1. 1, 2. Heb 3. 1. Jam. 1. 18. Rev. 1. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 4, 5, 6. Eph. 2. 20, 21, 22. 2 Cor. 6. 16, 17, 18. and Eph. 1. 1, 2. Phil 1. 1. Col 1. 1. 1 Thess 1. 1. 2 Thess. 1. 1. 2 Cor 8. 5.

10. A particular Church, gathered and compleated according to the Mind of Christ, consists of Officers and Members. The Lord Christ having given to his Called Ones (united according to his appointment in Church-order) liberty and power to choose Persons, fitted by the Holy Ghost for that purpose, to be over them in the Lord, and in his Name to minister to them.

[35] 11. The Officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the Church, so called and gathered for the peculiar Administration of Ordinances, and Execution of Power or Duty which he entrusts them with, or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the World, are Pastors, Teachers, Elders, and Deacons, Acts 14. 23 & 20. 17, 18-28. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11, 12. Phil 1. 1. 1 Tim 3. 1, 2. & 5. 17. Tit. 1. 5, 6. Heb. 13. 7-17. 1 Pet. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

12. It is required unto the due qualifying and constituting of a Teaching Elder, or Pastor of the Church; (1) That he be well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, and the whole Will and Mind of God therein revealed and contained. (2) That he be furnished with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, for the Edification of the Church, and the Evangelical Discharge of the Work of the Ministry, Acts 20. 28 Eph 4. 8, 11, 12, 13. (3) That he be unblameable, holy and exemplary in his Conversation, Tit. 1. 7, 8, 9. 2 Tim 3. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. (4) That he have a willing mind freely to give up himself unto the Lord in the Work of the Ministry, 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. (5) That he be chosen and called thereto by the Suffrage and Consent of the Church that he is to be over in the Lord, Acts 14. 23. Acts 1. 13, 14, 15-23, 24, 25. (6) That he be solemnly set apart or ordained by

the Laying on of the hands of its Eldership, if such there be, (or other wise by holding up of the Hands of the Church) with Fasting and Prayer, wherein the Presence, and (so far as is needful and regular) the Assistance of the Elders or Messengers of other Churches is expedient, Acts 13, 2, 3 1 Tim 5. 22 1 Tim. 4. 14.

But in the 13th place, the Essence of this Call of a Pastor or Elder unto office, consists in the Free Election of the Church, together with his Acceptation of it, and Separation to it, [36] by Fasting and Prayer in the Church: and those who are so chosen, though not Set apart by Imposition of Hands, have the Essence of Ordination, and are Ministers of Jesus Christ, in whose Name and Authority they exercise the Ministry to them so committed.

14. The principal Duties of a Pastor or Teaching-Elder, thus called and set apart by the Church, are, (1) to be Examples unto the Flock in Faith, Love, Knowledge, Meekness, Patience, with readiness for the Cross, upon the Account of Christ, and the Interest of his Glorious Gospel, with Constancy therein, 1 Tim 3. 10, 11, 12, 13. & 4. 12 2 Tim 2, 3 Col 1. 24. Phil 2. 17. & 3. 17. (2) To preach the Gospel of the Grace of God, for the spiritual Nourishment and Growth, and to watch for the Souls, and take care of all the spiritual Concernments, of the whole Flock committed to their Watch-Care, Heb. 13. 17. Acts 20. 24, 25-28. (3) To preach the Word in season and out of Season, with all Care and Diligence, dividing it aright, 2 Tim 2. 15 & 4. 2. Rom 12. 6, 7, 8. (4) To preserve and contend for the Truth of the Gospel, 1 Tim. 6. 20. Acts 20. 28, 31. Jude 3. (5) To administer all the Ordinances of the Gospel duly and orderly, 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2. 1 Tim 3. 15. (6) To stir up and exercise the Gifts they have received in the Discharge of the whole Work and Administration of all Ordinances, 1 Tim 4. 14, 15, 16. (7) To instruct,

admonish, cherish and comfort all the Members of the Church, as their Conditions, Occasions and Necessities do require, Acts 20. 18, 19, 20, 25, 26. 1 Thes. 3. 5. 2 Tim 2. 24, 25. (8) To attend with Diligence, Skill and Wisdom unto the discharge of that Authority which in the Rule of the Church is committed to them, Rom' 12; 8 1 Tim. 5. 17.

15 Although it be incumbent on the Pastors [37] and Teachers of the Churches, to be instant in Preaching the Word, by way of Office; yet the Work of Preaching the Word is not so peculiarly confined to them, but that others also gifted and fitted by the Holy Ghost for it, and approved (being by lawful Ways and Means in the Providence of God called thereunto) may (giving themselves up to the Work) publickly and constantly perform it, to the Glory of God.

16. However they who are engaged in the Work of Publick Preaching, and enjoy the Publick Maintenance upon that Account, are not there by obliged to Administer the Lord's Supper to any other than such as (being Saints by calling, and gathered according to the Order of the Gospel) they stand related to as Pastors or Teachers; yet ought they not to neglect others living within their bounds; but besides their constant Publick Preaching to them, they ought to enquire after their profiting by the Word, instructing them in, and pressing upon them (whether young or old) the great Doctrines and Practices of the Gospel, even personally and particularly, So far as their Strength and Time will admit.

17. Ordination by a Bishop, or by any Eldership (foreign to the Church we treat of) by Virtue of any Authority derived, or pretended to be derived either immediately from Christ, or otherwise, through a long Succession of ordain'd Bishop's or Elderships from the Apostles, and consequently, tho very remotely from Christ still, doth not duly constitute any Person a

Church-Officer, nor communicate Office-Power to that end.

18. The Work of Deacons is to serve Tables i.e. the Lord's Table, the Minister's Table, and the Poor's Table; their number is to be proportionable to the State of the Church. They are first to be tryed, and then chosen and set apart as the Elders.

[38] 19. A Church furnished with Officers (according to the Mind of Christ) hath full Power to administer all his Ordinances, and where there is want of any one or more such officers as are required, that Officer or Officers which remain in the Church, may administer all the Ordinances proper to their particular Place and Offices: But where there are no Teaching-Officers, none may administer the Sacraments, nor can the Church authorize any transiently to do so.

20 In the carrying on of Church-Administrations, no Person ought to be added to the Church, but by the Consent of the Church it self, that so Love, without Dissimulation, may be preserved between all the Members thereof.

21. The Duty of the Church towards their Elders, Pastors and Teachers, is, (1) To have them in Reverence and Honour for their Office and Works sake, 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13, 1 Tim 5. 17. (2) To obey them Conscientiously in all things wherein they speak unto them in the Name of the Lord, Heb. 13. 17. 1 Cor 16. 16. (3) To pray earnestly for them, that they may, and to exhort them (if need require) to fulfil the Work of the Ministry which they have received in the Lord Eph 6. 18, 19, 20. Col 4. 3. 2 Thes 3. 1. 1 Thes 5. 25 Col 4. 17. (4) To communicate unto them of their Temporals for their comfortable Subsistence in the World, and their Usefulness unto others, Gal. 6. 6. 1 Cor. 9. 14. 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18. 2 Cor. 11. 8. and Chap 9. Rom. 16 26, 27. (5) wisely to order things by their Direction, so as that they may be among them with Comfort and

without Fear, 1 Cor. 16. 10. (6) To abide with and stand by them in their Sufferings for the Gospel and Service of Christ among them, 2 Tim. 1. 16, 17, 18. 2 Tim. 4. 16, 17.

22. Whereas the Lord Jesus Christ hath appointed and instituted as a means of Edification, [39] that those who walk not according to the Rules and Laws appointed by him (in respect of Faith and Holiness, so that just Offences do rise thereby to the Church) be censured in his Name and Authority, every Church hath power from Christ committed to it, and residing in it self, to exercise and execute all those Censures appointed by him, in the Way and Order prescribed in the Gospel.

23. The Censures so appointed by Christ are Admonition and Excommunication: And whereas some offences are, or may be known only to some, it is appointed by Christ, that those to whom they are so known, do first admonish the Offender in private: In Publick Offences, where any one Sins before all, or in Case of Non-amendment upon private Admonition, the Offence being related to the Church, and the Offender not manifesting Repentance, he is to be duly admonished in the Name of Christ, by the whole Church, by the Ministry of the Elders of the Church: And if this prevail not for his or her Repentance, then he or she is to be cast out by Excommunication, by the Authority and Consent of the Church. Mat. 18. 15 &c.

24. As all Believers are bound (by the Appointment, Law, and Command of Christ) to join themselves to particular Churches, when and where they have opportunity so to do: so none are to be admitted unto the Privileges of the Churches, who do not submit themselves to the Rule of Christ in the Government of them. Acts 2. 40, 41, 42, 43, 44.

25. This being the way prescribed by Christ and practised by his Primitive Followers, in case of Offences,

no Church-Members upon any Offences taken by them, having performed their Duty required of them in this matter, ought to disturb any Church-Order, or absent themselves from the Publick Assemblies or the Administration [40] of any Ordinance upon that Pretence, but to wait upon Christ in the further Proceeding of the Church. And to the end Peace and Order may be preserved to the Glory of Christ, and Comfort of the Church in all its Administrations, it is required in the 26th place, that they who desired to be joined to the Church, be first free from just Blame and Offence in the World, Phil. 1. 10, 11, 27. & 2. 15. 1 Cor 10. 32. 1 Thes. 2. 11, 12. Tit. 2. 10, 11, 12. 14. (2) That they be instructed in the saving Truths and Mysteries of the Gospel, as to Faith and Holiness. John 6. 35-45 Acts 26. 18. 1 Pet. 2. 9, 10, 11. 2 Cor 4. 3, 4, 6. (3) That they be sound in the Faith, as to the Fundamentals of the Gospel, 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16, 19, 20. 2 Tim. 1. 3, 4, 5, 6. Tit. 1. 13. Jude 3. (4) That the Lord having called them unto Faith, Repentance and Newness of Life, by Jesus Christ, they give up themselves to be saved by, and to obey him in all things, Eph 4. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. And therefore, (5) are willing and ready, through his Grace, to walk in Subjection to all his Commands, and in the Observation of all his Laws and Institutions (according to their Light) notwithstanding any Oppositions, Difficulties or Persecutions, which they may meet withal upon that Account, 2 Cor 8. 5.

Again, 27. The Duty of the Church, and more particularly of its Elders towards them, that offer themselves to Communion, is, (1) In Christian Wisdom and Discretion, as far as possibly they may, to discern and judge by the Rule of Truth applied in Love, between sincere Professors, and hypocritical Pretenders, Acts 8. 20, 21, 22, 23. Tit. 1. 10, 11, 16. Rev. 2. 2. Jer. 15. 19 (2) To instruct, direct, comfort, nourish, cherish,

and encourage in the way, such as they judge to love the Lord Jesus in Sincerity, Acts 18. 26, 27, 28. 1 Thes 2. 6, 7, 8, 11. (3) By the Elder to recommend [41] and propose them unto the whole Church, with Prayers and Supplications to God for them, Acts 9, 26, 27. (4) To admit them, being approved, into the Order and Fellowship of the Gospel in the Church, Rom 14. 1 & 15. 2, 5, 6, 7.

28. The Power of Censures being sealed by Christ in a particular Church, is to be exercised only towards particular Members of each Church respectively as such; And there is no Power given by him unto any Synods or Ecclesiastical Assemblies to Excommunicate, or by their Publick Edicts to threaten Excommunication, or other Church-Censures, against Churches, Magistrates, or their People, upon any account, no Man being obnoxious to Censure, but upon his personal miscarriage, as a Member of a particular Church.

29. For the avoiding of Differences that may otherwise arise, and for the greater Solemnity in the Celebration of the Ordinances of Christ, and the opening a way for the larger Usefulness of the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Ghost, Saints living in one City, or Town, or within such distance as that they may conveniently assemble for Divine Worship, ought rather to join in one Church, for their mutual strengthening and Edification, than to set up many distinct Societies.

30. As all Churches, and all the Members of them, are bound to pray continually for the good or Prosperity of the Churches of Christ in all places, and upon all Occasions to further it, (every one within the Bounds of their Places and Callings, in the Exercise of their Gifts and Graces) so the Churches themselves (when planted by the Providence of God, so as they may have Opportunity and Advantage for it) ought to hold Communion among themselves for their Peace, increase of Love, and mutual Edification.

31. In Cases of Difficulties, or Difference, either in point of Doctrine, or in Administration, where-[42]in either the Churches in general are concerned, or any one Church, in their Peace, Union and Edification, or any Member or Members of any Church are injured, in or by any proceeding in Censures not agreeable to Truth and Order; it is according to the mind of Christ, that many Churches holding communion together, do by their Messengers meet in a Synod or Council, to consider and give their Advice in or about that matter in difference, to be reported to all the Churches concerned: Howbeit, these Synods so assembled are not intrusted with any Church-Power, properly so called, or with any Jurisdiction over the Churches themselves, to exercise any Censures either over any Churches or Persons, or to impose their Determinations on the Churches, or officers.

32 Besides these occasional Synods or Councils, there are not instituted by Christ any stated Synods, in a fixed Combination of Churches, or their Officers in lesser or greater Assemblies, nor are there any Synods appointed by Christ in way of Subordination to one another.

33. To the end that Peace and Holiness (without which no Man shall see the Lord Heb. 12. 14) may be preserved in the Church, it is the Duty of every private Member in their mutual Walk towards, and Watch over one another, to exhort one another unto Holiness and Perseverance, and if they observe any thing in the Ways and Walkings of any of their Fellow-Members, not according to the Rule and the Duty of their Profession, which therefore gives them offence, to admonish them thereof in private with Love, Meekness and Wisdom; and in case they prevail not unto their Amendment, to take the Assistance of some other Brethren in the Work; and if they fail of Success therein also, to report the matter, by the Elders Direc-

tion, unto the whole Church, Mat. 18. 16, 17, 18. 1 Thes. 5. 14.

[43] 34. The general Duty of the whole Church consists in their performing, doing and keeping inviolate all the Commands and Institutions of Jesus Christ, walking unblameably and fruitfully in the World, and holding forth the Word of Truth, and glorifying of the Lord Christ in and by the Profession of his Name, and keeping his Commandments and Testimonies unto the end, Mat. 28. 19, 20. Acts 2. 42. Phil. 2. 15, 16. & 4. 8, 9. 1 Thes. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. 1 Tim. 3. 15. Heb. 10. 23, 24, 25, 26, 38, 39.

35. The Discipline of the Church consists in the due exercise of that Authority and Power which the Lord Christ in and by his Word hath granted unto the Church, for its Continuance, Encrease, and Preservation, in Purity, Order and Holiness, according to his Appointment, Mat. 16. 18, 19. Rom 12. 8. 2 Cor 10. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Rev. 2. 2, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

36. Persons that are joined in Church-Fellowship, ought not lightly or without just cause to withdraw themselves from the Communion of that Church whereunto they are so joined: Nevertheless, where any Person cannot continue in a Church without Sin, either for want of the Administration of any Ordinance instituted by Christ, or by his being deprived of his due Privileges, or compelled to any thing in practice not warranted by the Word, or upon the account of Convenience of Habitation; consulting with the Church, or Officer, or Officers thereof, may peaceably depart from the Communion of the Church wherewith he hath so walked, to join himself with some other Church of Christ, where he may enjoy the Ordinances in the Purity of the same, for his Edification and Consolation.

37. Such reformed Churches as consist of Persons sound in the Faith, and of Conversions becoming the Gospel, ought not to refuse the Com-[44]munion of

each other, so far as may consist with their own Principles respectively, though they walk not in all things according to the same Rules of Church-Order.

38. The Duty of one Church of Christ towards other Churches, is, (1) In walking circumspectly, so as to give them no just Offence, Eph 5. 15, 16. 1 Cor. 10. 32 (2) In Prayer for their Peace and Prosperity in the way of the Gospel, Psal 122. 6, 7, 8, 9. Eph 6. 18 1 Tim. 2. 1. (3) In Communicating Supplies to their Wants and Necessities according to ability, 2 Cor 8. 4, 6, 7. Acts 11. 29, 30. Rom. 16. 26, 27. (4) In receiving with Love and Readiness the Members of them into Fellowship, in the Celebration of the Ordinances of the Gospel, according to Primitive Practice, as occasion shall be, Rom 16. 1, 2,. 3 John 8, 9. (5) In desiring and making use of their Counsel and Advice in such Cases of Doubt and Difficulty as may arise among them, Acts 15. 2. (6) In joining with them to express their Communion with them in the same Doctrine of Faith, 1 Tim. 3. 15.

39. The end of all this Dispensation and Order of things, is the Praise and Glory of God the Father, the Exaltation and Honour of Christ Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, the furtherance of the Gospel, the Encrease and Enlargement of the Kingdom of Christ in the World, that his Name and Fame may be spread abroad, the Edification and Consolation of Believers, herewith the fitting and making them meet for Heaven and Eternal Glory hereafter, by the Work of the Spirit of Grace, Acts 4. 9, 10, 11. & 5. 12, 13. 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13. Col. 1. 12, 13. 1 Pet. 1. 7, 8, 9.

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