

and to discipline their members, though in some cases it may be convenient and profitable to request the advice of the neighboring churches of Christ: Acts i. 21-26; vi. 3-6, xiv. 23, xv. 6-31. 1 Cor. v. 13; 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14, 15; Titus iii. 10.

5. That a Bishop or Elder hath no more power to decide any case or controversy in the Church than any private brother, yet he, having superior gifts for teaching and ruling, ought to exercise and improve the same for the benefit of the church; and the Church ought to be subjected to the gifts bestowed on the Minister from the Lord, while he is rightly administering in his place; whose place it is to lead in the actings of the church, and to administer the ordinances of the gospel, and to devote himself to the work of teaching, warning, rebuking, and exhorting the people publicly, and from house to house: Matt. xx. 25-29; 1 Peter v. 3; Acts xx. 20-28, 31; Heb. xiii. 17; 1 Thes. v. 12, 13.

6. That the Deacon's office or work is to take care of the poor, and to have the oversight of the temporal affairs of the church, and to minister at the Lord's Table: Acts vi. 1-5; 1 Tim. iii. 8-14.

7. That every believer is commanded to be faithful, to improve every gift and talent which is bestowed on him; in order to which, there ought to be such a Gospel freedom that the church may know where every particular gift is, that it may be improved in its proper place, and to its right end, viz., the glory of God and the good of His people: 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11 and v. 5; 1 Tim. iv. 14; 1 Cor. 12th and 14th chapters; Rom. xii. 2-8.

8. That there is a mutual obligation between minister and people—one to administer in things religious and spiritual, according to the gifts God has given. The church to communicate of their temporal or worldly substance for his comfort and support, and that by an equality, as nearly as can be ascertained, that one may not be burdened and another eased. But this is not to be effected by force or compulsion, or by the sword of civil power; but it is to be a free-will offering, agreeably to the Scriptures of truth; and every member deficient in this matter ought to be disciplined by Gospel rule, as for any breach of covenant, or neglect of performing Christian duty Luke x. 7; Rom. xv. 27; 1 Cor. ix.; Gal. vi. 6.

PART III.—COVENANT.

We do now, in the presence of the great all-seeing, and most glorious God, and before angels and men, give up ourselves to the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and own Him this day to be our God, our Father, our Saviour, and our Leader, and receive Him as our Portion forever. We give up ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, and engage to adhere to Him as the head of His people in the covenant of grace, and rely on Him as our Prophet, Priest and King, to bring us to eternal blessedness.

We acknowledge our everlasting and indispensable obligations to glorify God by living a holy, righteous and godly life, in this present world, in all our several places and relations; and we engage by the assistance of the Divine Spirit, to improve our time, strength, talents and advantages to His glory and in the good of our fellow-men; promising, by Divine help, to walk in our houses as becomes those professing godliness, and to maintain the worship of God in our families, and to train up those under our care in the way of religion and virtue.

We also give up ourself to one another in covenant, promising to act towards each other as brethren in Christ, watching over one another in the love of God—reproving, rebuking and admonishing one another for good as occasion may require; and if we at any time know that any members of the church are guilty of immoral conduct, that we will not expose it by telling it to others; and if we have any personal difficulty with our brethren, we will not cherish enmity, or speak of our grievances to others, but will faithfully labor with them, according to the direction of our Lord Matt. xviii. 15, 17—that sin be put away from among us, and that iniquity may not