

*man and a Publican.* No Church should ever receive a complaint from a member who considers himself aggrieved, till he has taken the two preceding steps. Indeed, if he neglects either of these measures, he becomes subject himself to the censure of the Church, for his contempt of the Saviour's authority. As general harmony among all the churches is highly desirable, the same course ought to be pursued in case of a variance between members of different churches. If the first steps do not avail, the complainant must bring the matter before the church to which the brother with whom he is dissatisfied belongs: and the churches are bound to see that their members conduct in a christian manner toward their brethren of other churches as well as toward those of their own.

2. *Immorality must not be suffered in a Church.* In some cases of indiscretion, private admonition may be sufficient. It is not only the duty of Pastors, but also of church-members generally, to admonish one another. See Col. III. 16, Heb. III. 13, and James v. 19, 20. In cases of greater faults, a public rebuke is necessary: *Them that sin rebuke before all, that others may fear.* 1 Tim. v. 20. But notorious transgressors, or such as unchaste persons, railers, drunkards, extortioners, &c. ought to be immediately excluded. *Therefore, says Paul, put away from among yourselves that wicked person.* 1 Cor. v. 11, 13. If they manifest penitence, let them be restored again to fellowship.

3. *Erroneous sentiments are not to be tolerated.* A diversity of opinion on speculative points, or matters merely circumstantial, is perfectly compatible with christian charity, and ought not to be made a matter of censure; as appears plain from Rom. xiv. But when a man broaches, or embraces, errors subversive of any fundamental doctrine of Christianity, let him be admonished once, and if he persist, let him be excluded. *A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.* Titus III. 10. In reference to the judaizing teachers, who subverted the doctrine of a free and full justification by faith in CHRIST, the Apostle says, *I would they were even cut off which trouble you.* Gal. v. 12.

Finally, brethren, *suffer the word of exhortation.* We entreat you to be very careful neither to give nor to take offence. Labour diligently, by maintaining communion with God and with one another, to *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* Be very cautious never to say one word against a brother or sister. Guard especially against the pernicious practice of censuring your Ministers. How painful and disheartening must it be to them, when they are labouring to the utmost of their ability to promote your best interests, to be censured and blamed by you. How destructive to *their usefulness*, and, of course, to *your spiritual welfare!* Behold, says James, *how great a matter a little fire kindleth!* If any one imprudently speaks to you against another, rebuke the reviler, and, by no means, mention the matter again.

Take good heed that you *depart from iniquity.* If you have fallen into sin, confess it (a public transgression should be publicly acknowledged) and forsake it. When others transgress, labour, by mild and yet prompt and decisive measures, to reclaim them. If