

dignity and authority with every other Church of Christ on earth. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

5. Although every such Church is equal with all others in essential rights and powers, and by its very constitution independent of all exterior control, yet a most cordial fraternal fellowship should ever be maintained amongst them—each affectionately caring for the other's soundness in doctrine, purity in communion and general welfare. Hence, when difficulties arise, or especially important matters claim attention and decision, as in the settlement or dismissal of pastors, the formulation of articles of general belief, or contemplated changes in its organic life, it is not only competent but highly desirable that such Churches should, in a fraternal and friendly manner, advise and help each other in all proper ways. But such advice should be tendered only as one friend counsels another, and subject in all cases to the final decision of the party seeking it. If any such Church should seem to its sister Churches wilfully and wrongfully to disregard their advice by adopting erroneous beliefs, or choosing an unsound pastor, or making itself guilty in any flagrant way of unchristian things, sister Churches would be in conscience bound to withdraw themselves from all complicity with and responsibility for such action by the formal revocation of fellowship with the offending Church until it should return to what seems to them the path of duty. Such action, however, can in no wise aspire to the place of authority over the Church to which it refers. It will be simply a labor of moral suasion and self-justification.