

bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." First. The power must be noticed, binding and loosing. This is both declarative, and absolute. It is a power of *declaring* the will of God ; of pronouncing the precepts, and promises and threatenings of the Gospel. A similar mode of expression occurs in Jeremiah, 1 c. 9, 10, v. "Behold I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have set thee this day over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant." Now can we for a moment suppose that this was to be accomplished in a literal sense ? —We know that Jeremiah by the Spirit of God, prophesied of the exaltation and depression of nations ; and by a strong, but far from unusual figure of speech, he is said to do that which he declared should be done. This power is likewise *absolute*, when taken in its reference to ecclesiastical discipline. The inspired apostles had power given them to give directions, both as to the terms of church-membership, and as to the conduct to be pursued to improper members,