

MINUTES

OF THE

THIRTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

**GREEN RIVER
UNITED BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,**

HELD WITH

ROUND HILL CHURCH,

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, N. C.,

SEPTEMBER 30, 1853,

AND DAYS FOLLOWING.

SHELBY:

CAROLINA INTELLIGENCER PRINT.

1853.

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MINUTES.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1853.

THE introductory Sermon was delivered by Elder L. M'Curry, from Acts 20th ch. and 28th verse, "Take heed to thyself," &c. After a short recess the Delegates assembled in the house. Elder J. M. Webb prayed.

1st. Read letters from 28 Churches and minuted the 29 Churches, and enrolled the Delegates' names. Ebenezer Church having been divided, about the Order of the Sons of Temperance, each party sending up letters and Delegates claiming to be the Church. After considerable discussion the following motion was made by bro. T. Davis, and unanimously agreed to, To receive neither of the parties, as the Church, until a committee of thirteen (a majority of whom shall act) go to Ebenezer on Friday the 20th day of October, and labor to reconcile the parties, if possible; if not, to hear all the evidence, so as to determine which party acts nearest in accordance with the Scripture, Baptist Constitution and usage—and if the committee determine in favor of the minority, and the majority refuses to take the counsel of the committee, the committee is directed to letter the minority to other Churches or constitute them into a Church if they think best.

Then upon motion, the Moderator was appointed one of said committee, and he announced the following brethren to act with him. (which announcement was unanimously concurred in by the Association.) viz: L. M'Curry, B. Bruce, J. C. Grayson, H. Colbreath, J. Berge, T. Davis, E. L. Taylor, W. Fortune, M. Koon, Rich'd Whitesides, D. Walker and J. M. Hambleton.

2d. Elected Elders J. M. Webb, Moderator, and B. Bruce, Clerk.

3d. On motion, Elder J. M. Webb had leave of absence for evening, by filling the chair by Elder L. M'Curry who with the Clerk, and brothers T. Davis, W. Fortune and Elder W. Harril, constitute an arranging committee.

4th. Invited Churches of our order to join us. Mt. Pleasant church accepted, and being found orthodox, by an examination, was received and the delegates' names enrolled.

The Association then adjourned till 10 o'clock to-morrow morning. Elder T. Carlton prayed.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1.

MET according to adjournment. Prayer by Elder L. M'Curry.

The arranging committee reported and were discharged.

1st. Called the Roll; read the Rules of Order, and the Minutes of yesterday.

2d. Called for correspondence, and received from the Catawba River, (and Minutes since, of J. C. Grayson,) by Elder T. Carlton, and brothers P. Warlick and J. Benfield. From the Tyger River, by Elders A. Dill and B. Page, a letter and 8 copies of Minutes. From the Salem.—Elder H. W. Patterson, with a letter, (Minutes since received from J. H. Allen.)

3d. Invited visiting ministering brethren to seats.

4th. The following Committees were appointed by the Moderator:

ON FINANCE.—Bro's J. Wilkey, W. Harril and W. Fortune.

ON UNION MEETING.—Brothers B. E. Rollins, A. Paggett and B. Ledbetter.

5th. The following brethren were appointed by the Moderator, to write to corresponding Associations: B. Bruce to write to the Broad River; Elder A. Paggett, and brothers R. Pinner, A. Lancaster and Wm. Cole, Messengers. L. M'Curry to write to the Salem; Elders A. Paggett, B. Bruce and J. Wilkey, and brother W. Foster, Messengers. B. E. Rollins to write to the Tyger River; Elders A. Paggett, J. M. Webb, and brother J. M. Hambleton, Messengers. J. W. Green to write to the Catawba, Elder J. C. Grayson, and brother Benj. Taylor, Messengers. T. Davis to write to the King's Mountain; Elder W. Harrill, and brothers B. R. Doggett and H. Pagget, Messengers.

6th. Elected Elder J. M. Webb to prepare a circular letter for our next meeting, and elected Elder J. C. Grayson to preach the next introductory sermon—Elder J. M. Webb his alternate.

7th. The Circular letter prepared by Elder J. C. Grayson was read and unanimously adopted, and ordered to be published.

8th. On motion, elected Elder L. M'Curry to preach a Missionary sermon and take a collection to-morrow; also elec-

ted Elder B. E. Rollins to preach in the forenoon, and Elder H. W. Patterson in the afternoon.

9th. The committee on Union Meetings reported the following and was discharged: The Union Meeting, for the first District, to be held with Mount Zion Church, to commence on Saturday before the fourth Lord's day in March, 1854,—Elders B. E. Rollins, J. M. Webb, J. C. Grayson and B. Bruce to attend. The Meeting in the second District to be held with the Green River Church, to commence on Saturday before the second Lord's day in May, 1854.—Elders B. Bruce, H. Colbreath and L. M'Curry to attend. The Meeting in the third District to be held with the Bill's Creek Church, to commence on Saturday before the third Lord's day in June, 1854,—Elders A. Pagget, J. M. Webb and B. E. Rollins to attend.

10th. Considered petitions from Churches:

1st. From Rock Spring.—For the next meeting of this body to be held with them, which was granted. Rock Spring is 12 miles west of Rutherfordton. The meeting to commence at 11 o'clock, A. M., Friday before the first Lord's day in Oct. 1854.

2d. Petition from Pisgah, for a letter of dismission to join the Catawba River Association, which was granted.

3d. Petition from Big Spring, for a letter of dismission to join the Kings' Mountain Association, which was granted.

11th. Took up Queries:

1st. From Mount Vernon Church.—How long shall a brother, after calling for a letter of dismission, and obtaining it, hold it under any circumstance, that has not joined some other Church. Answer. As a member receiving a letter is still subject to the discipline of the church granting it, until received by another church, the time is immaterial, so long as the church is satisfied.

2d. Query from Cane Creek Church.—How long shall a brother be under the watch care of a church, before he comes in full fellowship, who moves from one part of the country to another without a letter?

On motion, the Association adjourned till 10 o'clock Monday morning. Elder T. Carlton prayed.

LORD'S DAY, OCTOBER 2.

The brethren appointed preached according to their appointments, to a very large and orderly congregation. A collection was taken, amounting to \$21.37½.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 3.

The Association met. Prayer by the Moderator. Called

the Roll; marked absentees, and read the minutes of the previous days; then proceeded—

1st. To take up the unfinished business of Saturday; and the following answer to the Query from Cane Creek Church was adopted: Ans. We recognise no such custom amongst the Baptists, to receive members under the watch care of the Church without a recommendation from a Church of our order. We advise Churches in our union, however, to use every consistent means to procure letters for such aggrieved persons, at as early time as they conveniently can.

3d. Query from Mount Zion.—Has, or has not the Association a right to withdraw from a Church who will not take her advice? Ans. Yes; the Association has such a right to withdraw from a Church, according to the conditions contained in the following Constitution. (See the Constitution at the last of these Minutes.)

2d. Considered Resolutions.

Resolution 1st. Offered by brother T. Davis, and unanimously adopted:

Whereas, there exists great destitution in our Churches in regard to Sabbath Schools: Therefore

Resolved, That this Association recommend to all the Churches composing this body, to organize Sabbath Schools at their respective Churches, and that they select suitable pious superintendants and teachers to conduct said Schools, and that the Churches report upon the subject at our next meeting.

Resolution 2d. Offered by Elder L. M'Curry, and unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That our thanks are hereby tendered to the brethren and friends of this neighborhood, for their kindness and hospitality toward us during this session.

Resolution 3d. Offered by brother J. W. Morgan, and unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That our Clerk superintend the printing and distribution of the Minutes as usual and retain ten dollars out of the funds for his services.

4th. The Financial Committee reported \$25.98 cts received from Churches, as shown in the table of Churches. The Committee was discharged.

5th. The Book Committee, by their chairman, Elder J. M. Webb, submitted their Report, which was received; and, on motion, the Committee was continued for another year, and directed to pay Elder J. M. Webb, depository agent, 5 per cent. on the books sold, for his services.

6th. Read and adopted Corresponding letters.

7th. Elected Elders J. M. Webb, B. Bruce, L. M'Curry and B. E. Rollins delegates to the Western Baptist Convention; and paid the money collected into the hand of our Clerk, and directed him to pay it over to the Board of Managers at their semi annual Meeting, to be applied to Home Missions.

The Association adjourned to the time and place appointed, after reading and adopting the Minutes of the day. Elder A. Pagget prayed.

J. M. WEBB, Moderator.

BAILEY BRUCE, Clerk.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

THE GREEN RIVER UNITED BAPTIST ASSOCIATION; TO THE CHURCHES IN UNION.

DEAR BRETHREN: Agreeable to the direction of our last Association, we address you on Mat. 12ch. 43-45. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places seeking rest and findeth, none. Then he saith I will return into my house from whence I came out, and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also, unto this wicked generation." By the unclean spirit, is meant satan, the old serpent, the devil; who by the Jews used to be called as here, the unclean spirit. As he is the cause of uncleanness in men, and delights in unclean persons places and things. His going out of a man, is not to be understood of his being dispossessed of the bodies of men, nor of his going by force, through the power of divine grace, out of the souls of men, but of his leaving the Jews for a while, in some sort while Christ and the gospel were among them, and of his going out of the scribes and Pharisees, not really but putting on another form, appearing as an angel of light, and under the guise of holiness and righteousness. And so he may be said to go out of men, when any outward reformation is made in them, and they take up a profession of religion, though destitute of the saving grace of God.

Like Simon Magus, Acts 8, 13-22, who professed to believe and was baptized, who offered the apostles money, that on whomsoever he laid his hands, he might receive the Holy Ghost by which Peter perceived that his heart was not right in the

STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

CHURCHES.	POST OFFICE.	SUPPLY.	Ch. Meetings.	Delegates' Names.	Baptised.	Received by letter.	Restored	Dismissed	Excommunicated	Dead.	Total.	Contributions.
				Ordained Ministers in small caps. Licentiates in Italics. *Denotes absence.								
1 Head 1st Broad	Golden Valley,	B E Rollins,	2	B E ROLLINS, W Fortune, J H Jones, and J G Fortune.	15	1	1	1	3	3	105	140
2 Ebenezer,	Logans Store,		1	Paid by L. Deck.	2	1	0	1	0	0	116	50
3 Concord,	Webb's Ford,			J. Davis,	1	3	0	8	2	0	49	80
4 Big Spring,	Dunkin's Creek,	G W Rolins,	3	J W Murry, J M Chitwood B A Jenkins, J C Latamore	24	0	1	3	5	0	110	175
5 Walls,	Webb's Ford,	B E Rollins,	4	J Berge, J W Green,	0	5	0	6	1	1	86	150
6 Pisgah,	Golden Valley,	J Leatherman,	3	J Tallent,	0	0	6	0	16	0	28	45
7 Mount Vernon	Rutherfordton,	J M Webb,	3	J V Whiteside, D Walker, J M Allen, and H Horton,	19	13	0	3	1	0	116	150
8 Cane Creek,	Pattan's Home,	B E Rollins,	3	D S McCurry, B Taylor.	4	0	0	0	1	0	34	100
9 Mount Zion,	Dunkin's Creek,	L McCurry,	4	L McCURRY, J G Diviney, [H Green.	1	2	1	0	7	2	62	145
10 Shiloah,	Rutherfordton,	W Harril,	3	E Bradley, P C Sparks, H. CULBREATH, J WILKEY and	2	4	1	4	3	0	76	75
11 Green's Creek,	Sandy Plains,	None		H Padgett,	0	3	0	1	0	0	48	75
12 Green River,	Cooper's Gap,	A Padgett	2	J M Hambleton and W Forster,	0	1	0	8	1	1	48	70
13 Silver Creek,	Do.	H W Patterson,	4	Jas. Jackson and John Jackson,	1	0	0	1	0	0	30	80
14 Cooper's Gap,	Do.	B Bruce,	4	Lewis Cowart and E Lynch, E K BLANTON*	0	9	0	0	0	0	52	105
15 Holly Spring,	Arrow Wood,	D Pannell,	2	A PADGETT, A Lancaster, L R Lancaster,	12	3	0	0	0	1	53	70
16 Rock Spring,	Cooper's Gap,	B Bruce	4	B BRUCE, N Whiteside, and R Whiteside,	1	3	0	1	0	0	17	55
17 Packolet,	Horse Creek,	N P Corn,	4	M D Corn,	0	1	1	0	2	0	26	60
18 Pleasant Hill,	Rutherfordton,	J M Webb,	1	E L Taylor, R Baben,	1	2	0	0	0	0	22	75
19 Bethel,	Sugar Hill,	B Bruce,	2	J A Reel and P Morgan,	2	2	3	0	0	0	43	75
20 Round Hill,	Minorsville,	J M Webb,	1	M Koon. H Keter,	6	3	0	3	1	0	62	112
21 Mountain Cr'k,	Rutherfordton,	G W Rollins,	2	J T Lewis and M Harris,	1	0	0	1	0	1	39	70
22 Bill's Creek,	Cedar Creek,		3	B Ledbetter, P Flinn and J Crofford,	4	0	0	5	2	0	149	85
23 harmony grove	Dysartsville,	J C Grayson,	4	J C GRAYSON, B P Simmons,	1	0	2	0	0	0	28	70
24 montsford cove	Sugar Hill,		1	M Hall, J W Morgan,	6	1	0	2	2	0	60	140
25 sulphur springs	Webb's Ford,	A Padgett,	1	B R Doggett, Wm. Role, and J Cole,	0	4	0	3	0	1	30	62½
26 Cool Springs,	Do.	W Harrill,	4	Wm. HARRILL, W Goode, R Pinner,	2	5	1	35	0	0	58	125
27 Rutherfordton,	Rutherfordton,	J M Webb,		J M WEBB, T Davis and S M Wells,	0	0	0	1	0	0	22	50
Bethlehem,	Old Fort.	None,	3	J W ROBERSON* J Ross and N. Souther,	1	0	0	0	0	0	29	75
Mt. Pleasant,	Webb's Ford.	W Harril.	2	Samuel Bostic, W S Hill.	1	0	9	0	0	0	26	50
Total.					105	65	18	87	47	10	1595	2598

MINISTER'S NAMES AND ADDRESS.

J. M. Webb, Rutherfordton,
 J. C. Grayson, Dysartsville,
 Lewis McCurry, Dunkins Creek,
 Bailey Bruce, Coopers's Gap,
 Alanson Padgett, Sandy Plains,
 Wm. Harril, Webbs Ford,
 Henry Colbreath, " "
 Joab Wilkey, Rutherfordton,
 J. W. Robeson, Black Mountain,

LICENTIATES AND ADDRESS.

Benj. Taylor, Pattons Home,
 E. K. Blanton, Coopers Gap.

sight of God, that he was in the gall of bitterness, and bonds of iniquity. And like Hymenius and Alexander, who had put away holding faith and a good conscience, and concerning the faith, made shipwreck, 1 Tim. 1. 19. 20. Which does not imply that they ever had a good conscience or faith, since that may be put away, which was never had; the Jews who blasphemed and contradicted, and never received the word of God, are said to put it from them. See Acts 13 46. where the same word is used as here, and signifies to refuse or reject any thing with detestation and contempt. Concerning the faith have made shipwreck, which designs not the grace, but the doctrines of faith, which men may profess, and fall off from, and entirely drop and lose, as these men did. And like Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve apostles, whom Christ calls a devil, John 6, 70. 71. And the Evangelist calls a thief; six days before the passover, Christ came to Bethany, there they made him a supper, at which Mary anointed the feet of Jesus, with very costly ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair. Judas said why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor. This he said not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein, John 12, 1. 16. Thus we see that he was a devil, that is like the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning, and a liar and the father of it, John, 8 44. And a thief and that he cared not for the poor, which proves to a demonstration, that he was a bad man, before satan is said to enter into him, John 13 27. And there is no proof that he ever was a good man; but satan the evil spirit returned into his house, from whence he came out, when Jesus gave him the sop, and stirred up his lusts, so that he betrayed Christ, and the last state of that man is worse than the first. And the above named Simon Magus, Hymenius and Alexander, are in the same predicament. There has been a difference of opinion, with some, whether it is the unclean spirit, or the man, that walketh through dry places seeking rest and findeth none, and that returneth into his house, &c. The gramatical construction of the passage, shows clearly that it is the unclean spirit, and not the man. Referring to a prevailing notion among the Jews, that unclean spirits walk in, and haunt, desert and desolate places. And may have regard to the gentiles among whom satan might go seeking rest and satisfaction among them, in their idolatries and other wickedness. Till he was there also disturbed by the gospel sent among them. In 1 Peter 5. 8 we are told that the devil as a roaring lion, walketh

about seeking whom he may devour." Or by these dry places may be meant the saints, among whom he takes his walks in order to distress them by temptation, being secure of pharisaical persons. And these may be so called, not for what they are in themselves, for they have a well of living water in them; and are watered by the Lord; but for what they are to the unclean spirit, there being nothing in their grace, and the exercise of it, and in their spiritual performances, grateful to

*See Dr. Gills exposition on Mat. 12; 43 45.

him, nor were there in them the mire and dirt of iniquity to roll in; as in unregenerate persons, therefore he is represented, as seeking rest and findeth none. His view in walking in these places, or among such persons, is rest, not the rest of the saints he seeks their disturbance, but his own rest, which is to do all the mischief he can, by stirring up corruption, tempting to sin, and by discouraging the exercise of grace, but is not able to do as much mischief, as he would: and cannot find the rest he seeks for. See Job. 1, 6, 7 and 2. 2, 3.

Then he saith I will return into my house from whence I came out into the scribes and Pharisees, outward professors of religion, who notwithstanding their outward reformation, and great pretensions to holiness, are Satans house still. And though he says from whence I came out, yet he never really and properly quitted it, only seemingly, and in appearance, he now throws off the guise, re-assumes his former character, as a vicious and unclean spirit.

And when he is come he findeth it empty, of God, of the true knowledge of him, and love to him, of Christ, of faith in him, of the spirit of God, and his graces, and of spiritual internal religion, and powerful godliness. Swept not with the spirit convincing of sin, righteousness and judgment, but with the bosom of an outward reformation. And garnished with secret lusts and corruptions for this unclean spirit, with some show of morality, an observance of some external rites and ceremonies and a few hypocritical performances, of fasting and prayer, which satan can very well bear with, so long as the heart is empty of spiritual grace. Then goeth he and taketh to himself seven other spirits, more wicked than himself, this may denote a large number of devils, seven being a number of perfection, or else the various corruptions of a man's heart, the swarms of internal lusts, which are there stirred up by satan. As these are more pernicious, than the devil himself. And they enter in and dwell there. That is though they were there be-

fore, now they exert and show themselves, and such men appear to be under the power and government of them. When leaving their seeming religion, and holiness, they "return like the dog to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." They become more wicked than they were before they made pretensions to religion. As such apostles generally, are more extravagant in sinning, and are seldom recovered by repentance, and their last end is eternal damnation. "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." Sec. 2 Peter 2. 20. 21. 22.

Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation. From this application, the parable or above relation, seems primarily to refer to the fickle minded jews in general, and the scribes and Pharisees in particular. Who pretend to be very religious outwardly, when the Lord declared that they were like whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outside, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness, Mat. 23. 37. They wanted to see a sign or some miracle from Christ, and because they were not gratified in their own way they finally said crucify him, crucify him; his blood be upon us and our children. And brought wrath on themselves to the utmost. So they were destroyed, soon after from being a nation. And have been a by word and a reproach among the nations; where they are scattered.

It is thought by some that this passage is susceptible of an individual application. And that the wicked disposition of a man, is here represented by an unclean spirit, who could leave and return to the man at pleasure. That is intended to represent a person who under conviction of sin, makes good resolutions, and partially reforms, but like the stony ground hearers, "he heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it. Yet hath he no root in himself, but dureth for a while, for when tribulation or persecution ariseth, because of the word by and by he is offended." Mat. 13, 20. 21. And the last state of that man is worse than the first. For there is a great difference between the devil going out of a person, and being driven out. A person may join a church under deception thinking he has religion when the unclean spirit, is only gone out; but he has no enjoyment there. And he may continue so for a time, when the unclean spirit returns and finds it empty, of all good that is his heart, and garnished with secret lusts, there he goeth and tak-

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eth with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself.

That is the man through the influence of the devil, yields to the secret lusts of the flesh, which are worse to a man than the devil himself. If he has only been addicted to swearing profanely before, perhaps he now takes up lying drunkenness, uncleanness, and every abomination that comes in his way. Perhaps turns Atheist, and denies that there is any God, or hereafter; and it is next to impossible ever to persuade that man to turn his attention to religion. And the last state of that man is worse than the first.

Therefore, let us take the admonition of Paul, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called to day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Hebr. 3. 12, 13, 14. And as there is great danger of being deceived in religion, by the unclean spirit, and our own, wicked hearts. "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." For it matters not what our profession is, unless we have experienced a change of heart. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

BAILEY BRUCE, Clerk.

J. M. WEBB, Moderator.

SYSTEM OF THE GREEN RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

As the communion of saints, so the communion of churches is a desirable blessing; to obtain and promote which ought to be the study and endeavors of all the people of God. Although churches formed on the gospel plan, are independent of each other in regard to power, yet not so strictly speaking with regard to communion. For as saints in general have an indispensable right to share in each other's gifts and graces, so have churches in this joint capacity. It is a general rule "to do good & communicate, forget not," Heb. xiii. 16, which is applicable in a particular manner to churches as such. In order more amply to obtain this blessing of communion, there ought to be a coalizing, or uniting of several churches into one body, so far as their local situation and other circumstances will admit. But as it is impracticable for all the individual members, thus to associate and coalize; the churches should each respectively, choose and delegate some of the most able pious and judicious from among themselves, and particularly their ministers, to convene at such times and places as may be thought most conducive to the great end proposed, to act as their representatives in the general assembly. Their expenses ought to be defrayed by the churches who send them.

These delegates at their first meeting, are in a formal manner, to enter into covenant with each other as the representatives of the churches, for the promoting Christ's cause in general; and the interest of the churches they represent in particular. They should then form their plan of operations, and fix on the most proper place and time for meeting in future.

Although such a conjunction of churches is not expressly commanded in scripture, yet it receives sufficient countenance and authority from the light of nature, and the general laws of society; but more especially from a precedent established by the Apostolic authority; recorded Acts xv. chap.

An association thus formed is a reputable body, as it represents, not a city, country or nation, but the Churches of Jesus Christ. It is by no means to be deemed a superior judicature, vested with coercive power over churches. It presumes not to impose its sentiments on its constituents, under pain of excommunication. Nor doth it anathematize those who do not implicitly submit to its determination; which would be nothing less than spiritual tyranny; and better comport with the arbitrary spirit of Popish councils, than with that meekness which distinguishes the true disciples and humble followers of the lowly, yet adored Jesus. The apostles, elders and brethren who composed the first christian councils, presumed not to impose their conclusions on the church in such a lordly manner, but preferred their determinations with this modest prologue. It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burdens than these necessary things. Acts xv. 28. The Baptist association arrogates no higher title than that of an advisory council; consistent with which epithet, it ought ever to act when it acts at all, without intruding on the rights of independent congregational churches, or usurping authority over them, Mat. xxiii. 10. 12. Nevertheless the association hath a natural and unalienable right to judge for itself, what churches shall be admitted into confederacy with it, and to withdraw from all acts of communion and fellowship with with any church so admitted, provided said church, obstinately persists in holding corrupt principles, or indulging vicious practices, notwithstanding all proper endeavors have been used to reclaim it. Eph. v. 7. Rev. xviii. 4. An association when transacting business should proceed in the following manner.

1st. Always begin and end each session by prayer. (2.) admit none as messengers, but such as come recommended by letters, well authenticated from the church to which they belong, or from whence they came. (3.) When a church petitions by letter for admission if approved of, the moderator is to inform the messengers that their request is granted and desire them to take seats. (4.) All who have anything to offer, are to rise and address the moderator. (5.) While one is speaking the rest are to be silent, yet all have an equal right to speak in turn. (6.) No partiality or respect of persons is

to be shown. (7.) Every matter should be canvassed with gravity, modesty, and a sincere aim after truth. (8.) When all are not agreed, the matter may be put to a vote, and a majority determine.— (9.) All queries regularly sent by the churches, should be answered if possible. (10.) Any matter proposed relative to the general good of the churches, should be seriously attended to. (11.) Every transaction should be conformable to the revealed will of God. (12.) A circular letter should be wrote and sent to all the churches in confederation, containing such instruction, information and advice; as may be thought most suitable and with which should be sent the transactions of the association.

The benefits arising from an association and communion of churches are many; in general it tends to the maintaining of the truth, order and discipline of the gospel. (1.) By it the churches may have such doubts as arise among them cleared, which will prevent disputes, xv, 28, 29. (2.) They will be furnished with salutary council, Prov. xi 14. (3.) The churches will be more-closely united in promoting the cause and interest of Christ. (4.) A member who is agrieved through partiality, or any other wrongs received from the church, may have an opportunity of applying for direction. (5.) A godly and sound ministry will be encouraged, while a ministry that is unsound and ungodly, will be discountenanced. (6.) There will be a reciprocal communication of their gifts, Phil. iv. 15, (7.) Ministers may alternately are sent out to preach the gospel to them who are destitute. Gal. ii 9. (8.) A large party may draw off from the church by means of an intruding minister, or otherwise, and the aggrieved may have no way of obtaining redress, but from the association. (9.) A church may become heretical, with which its godly members can no longer communicate; yet cannot obtain any relief but by the association. (10.) Contentions may arise between sister churches which the association is most likely to remove. (11.) The churches may have candidates for the ministry properly tried by the association. These and other advantages arising from an association, must induce every godly church to desire union with such a body. But should any stand off, it would argue much self-sufficiency, and little or no desire after the unity of the Spirit, or mutual edification.