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~~DUPLICATE~~

MINUTES OF THE

Elkhorn Association,

BEGUN AND HELD AT PROVIDENCE, JESSAMINE COUNTY, Ky. ON SATURDAY, THE 14TH OF AUG. 1824.

The Introductory Sermon was preached by Elder JOHN EDWARDS, from Songs Solomon, 2 c 4 & 5 verses.

Letters received and read, and the Messengers' Names enrolled from the Churches composing this Association, as follows, to wit:

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	Rec'd.					
		By Baptism,	By Letter.	Restored	Excluded	Deceased	
South Elkhorn,	John Parker, Wm. Gist, Wm. Sullivan, and Abram Bowman,	1	2		10	1	140
Clear Creek,	Lewis Sullivan, DAVID WARFORD,* Wm. Rice, Jno. Lancaster and Jno. Graves.	13	4		11	6	4 277
Great Crossings,	JAMES SUGGETT, Wm. Suggett, James Johnson, and Thomas Waggoner.	1	4	2	3	5	363
Townfork,	Brice Steele, & William Hanson.	1			3	1	2 51
Bryan's,	J. C. Richardson, J. Darnaby Asa Thomson and Clifton Thomson.	12	4	2		4	1 173
Mount Moriah,	Fleet Howard, Peter Withers, Jos. Higbee and Thomas Jackman.	1			8	1	1 39
Stampingground,	Rhodes Smith,* MAREEN DUVAL, Toliver Craig, Alex. Bradford, and Daniel K. Campbell	7	5		6	1	11 183
Silas,	Abner Shropshire Nelson Smith, and Achilles Chinn.	4	2		8	1	2 122
North Elkhorn,	EDW. DINGLE, Jno. Graves, C. Tarlton, and D. J. FLOURNOY.	11	2	1	5	1	3 11
Glenn's Creek,	JNO. EDWARDS, Seth Ramsey James Ford, and Buford Twyman.*	2	3		9		166
North Fork,	MORDECAI BOWLEWARE, Jno. Castleman, J. McDonald, and G. S. Gravet	2	1	1	4	1	3 50
Clover Bottom, Hillsborough,	Isaiah Boon, J. W. THOMAS, and Levi Buchanan.	5	7	1	2	1	55
Dauids' Fork,	Wm. Tilloy Jr. Reuben Long,* Wm. Christopher, and Charles L. Barns.	1	2		10	3	8 21
Mount Pleasant,	J. VARDERMAN,* A. Wilson, E. Darnaby, James Welch, and Hezekiah Ellis.	6	3	3	7	7	7 391
Georgetown,	EDMUND WALLER, S. H. Craig, James Hiter, Mason Singleton, & Elijah Neal.	1	4		6	1	209
Long Lick,	B. S. Chambers, JAMES D. BLACK.	3	5		7	2	74
Bethlehem,	Ezekiel Shirley and James Tindor.	2	1		7	1	50
Hartwood,	WM. MORTON, George Harrison, and Wm. Boggs.	2	4			1	57
Big Spring,	JOHN H. PICKLIN, Brice Field,* and George Threlkeld.	2	4				36
Versailles,	George Blackburn and George Holloway.	1	1			1	49
Providence,	JACOB CREATH,* Thomas Bullock, Goodloe Carter, and Thomas Hewett.	12	4		7	2	67
	Peter Higbee, James Marts, Lewis Bryan and Surres Arnet.				4	5	1 117

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	Rec'd.					Totals	
		By Baptism	By Letter	Restored	Dis'm'd. by Letter	Excluded. Deceased.		
<i>First Baptist Church at Lex.</i>	JAMES FISHBACK, Abram S. Drake, John M. Hewett, James Beach and JAMES CHALLEN,	21	6	2	10	5	2	158
<i>Paris,</i>	GUESDON GATES, George Bryan, Elijah Barton, and Robert S. Thomas		1		7	5	4	174
<i>Nicholasville,</i>	Robert H. Prewett, James W. Eastin, and Thomas Francis.		4					19
<i>Lower Bethel,</i>	ENOCH MASON, James, Sims, J. Rash,* and H. Darnal.		4		7			55
<i>Greenup's Fork,</i>	Thomas Pasley and Jesse Threlkeld.*		2					16
<i>Mount Vernon,</i>	Robert Adams, David Harris, Henry Wallace.	4	1				2	34
<i>Mountain Island,</i>	John Guill.							11
<i>First African Church at Lex.</i>	Under the superintendance of the 1st Baptist Church at Lexington, re-organized and constituted upon a written covenant in July 1822.							280
	TOTAL.	111	82	12	147	44	64	3753

*This denotes those that were not present.

Preachers' names in SMALL CAPITALS.

The Association proceeded by ballot to the election of Moderator & Clerk, whereupon Brother THOMAS BULLOCK was chosen Moderator, and Brother B. S. CHAMBERS, Clerk.

Letters from Corresponding Associations received and read, and the Messengers' names enrolled as follows:

From Bracken—James Morris,* Samuel Herndon, George Havens,* Walter Warder and Platt Stout.

North Bend—W. Glasscock,* Christopher Wilson, Robt. Kirtley, Robert Ware, John Arnold.*

Tates Creek—Christy Gentry, Joseph Burrell, Josiah Collins,* John Hockinsmith, Thomas Jerman, Jr. Wm. Chenault.*

North District—John Smith, Jilsoa Payne, Abram Weldon.

Franklin—John Taylor.

Salem—David Thirman.

South District—John Rice, G. Slaughter,* E. Fisher, T. Wade,* Robert Ashherst, John S. Higgins, Thomas Hand,* Isaac Allspaugh, Wm. Marshall,* D. Curd,* H. Jones,* Wm. Sterman and S. Ayres.

Union—G. Riley and Thomas Barlow.*

Concord—Reuben Adams, John Arnold,* B. Kemper & J. Scott.*

Long Run—G. Bridges, T. Dale,* J. Dale, John Curl, J. Hulsey.*

Boons Creek—Richard Morton,* G. G. Boon, B. W. Riley, W. Boon,* Thomas Faulkner,* N. Riley, R. Petty, T. Downton, and G. W. Allen,

Brethren, Jas. Fishback, Jas. Suggett, & Tol Craig appointed to prepare a circular letter to the Churches and report on Monday next.

Brethren, Peter Higbee, James Johnson, M. Duvall, G. Carter, and Asa Thomson appointed to write letters to the corresponding association and report on Monday next.

Brethren, George Blackburn, James Sims, John H. Ficklin together with the Moderator and Clerk appointed to manage the bu-

siness of the Association and report on Monday next.

Elders *Walter Warder*, *John Smith* and *James Suggett* appointed by ballot to preach on tomorrow at the stand. And Elders *William Vaughn*, *David Thurman* and *Jno. Rice* appointed by ballot to preach on tomorrow at the Meeting house.

Business adjourned until Monday morning 9 o'clock.

Sunday August 15th, 1824.—Elder *John Smith* preached from John xvii 3.

Elder *Walter Warder* from Galatians xvi. 14.

Elder *James Suggett* from Romans xiv. latter clause of the 10th verse at the stand.

Elder *David Thurman* preached from 1st Peter ii. first clause of the 7th verse.

Elder *William Vaughn* from Ephesians iv. 17 & 18.

Elder *John Rice* from Psalms xvi. 11. at the Meeting house.

MONDAY, AUGUST 16TH, 1824.

The association met pursuant to adjournment; after singing, and prayer offered by Elder *William Morton*, proceeded to business.

The committee appointed to arrange the business of the association made a report which was read, adopted, and the business taken up pursuant thereto.

1. The churches at Mount Moriah and Lower Bethel have leave at their request to be dismissed from this to unite with the Boons Creek Association and the church at Greenups Fork, has also leave at her request to be dismissed from this to join the Concord Association.

The committee appointed for that purpose reported a circular letter which was read, and adopted by the association.

3. Agreeably to the suggestion of the first Baptist Church of Lexington. Brethren *B. S. Chambers*, *James Suggett*, *John Edwards*, *Edmund Waller* and *Tol. Craig*, appointed a committee to revise the constitution of this association, and if, in their opinion it is necessary, to make amendments thereto, and report to the next association.

4. The next Association to be held at North Elkhorn, Scott Cty. on the 2d Saturday in August 1825.

5. The committee appointed for that purpose reported letters to the corresponding Associations which were approved and messengers appointed to bear them as follows to wit:

To *Bracken*, to meet 1st Saturday in Sept. 1824 at Carlisle, Nicholas Cty. *J. Sims*, *J. Varderman*, *W. Morton*, *Jas. Fishback* & *G. Gates*.

To *North Bend*, at Forks of Gunpowder, Boon Cty. 3d Friday August 1824, *Tol. Craig*, *Jas. Suggett*, *E. Waller* & *Jas. Johnson*.

To *Tates Creek*, At Round-Top Madison County, 4th Saturday in August 1824, *William Morton*, *Edmund Waller*, *Mason Singleton* and *Peter Higbee*.

To *North District*, At Sycamore Meeting-house, Montgomery County, 4th Saturday in July 1825. *James Sims*, *H. Darnall*, *G. Carter*, *B. S. Chambers*, *W. Rice*, *Edmund Waller*.

To *Franklin*, At Buck Run Franklin Cty. 1st Friday in August 1825. *Edmund Waller*, *Tol. Craig*, *John Edwards*, *James Suggett*, *Geo. Blackburn*, *Goodloe Carter*, *B. S. Chambers*, *Jas. Fishback* and *James Johnson*.

To *Salem*, 4th Friday Sept. 1824, Wm. Rice, James Suggett, John Edwards.

To *South District*, At Deep Creek, Mercer County, 3d Saturday in August 1824, Wm. Rice, Robert H. Prewitt, Thomas Bullock, William Sullivan, Peter Higbee.

To *Union*, At New Providence, Harrison County, 4th Friday in August 1824, James Suggett, James Johnson, John H. Ficklin, George Threlkeld and James D. Black.

To *Concord*, At Corn Creek, Gallatin County, 4th Friday in August 1824, William Rice, Thomas Pasley

To *Long Run*, At Brashear's Creek, Snelby County, 1st Friday, Sept. 1824, Lewis Sullivan, James Fishback, John Graves, Henry Wallace, Edmund Waller, D. J. Flournoy, John Edwards, Charles L. Barns, George Blackburn, John H. Ficklin, Mason Singleton, Caleb Tarlton, James Suggett.

To *Boons Creek*, At Boons Creek, 3d Saturday September 1824. Peter Higbee, James Fishback, R. H. Prewitt, Lewis Sullivan, W. Morton, G. Carter, Edmund Waller, W. Gist, W. Boggess and H. Wallace.

Elder *James Suggett* appointed by ballot to preach the next introductory sermon, and in case of failure, Elder *James Fishback*.

The Clerk appointed to superintend the printing of the minutes.

Adjourned until meeting in course.

THOMAS BULLOCK. *Mod.*

Attest B. S. CHAMBERS. *Clerk.*



CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Messengers of the Elkhorn Association, to the Churches of which they are Members.

DEAR BRETHREN:

We have been permitted again, through the kind providence of our Heavenly Father, to meet together and to hear from the churches composing this Association. We address you in our present Circular on the subject of *Free Communion*, which was brought before us by the following paragraphs in the Church Letter from the First Baptist Church of Lexington:

11. The minds of a number of the members of this church, and we believe of other churches, have been exercised on the subject of *Free Communion*, which has been urged upon them by Pædo-Baptist friends. We think it proper to invite the attention of the Association to this subject with a view to her making a public expression of her sentiments upon it, either in her Circular Letter or in any other manner that may be deemed most expedient.

"We propose the subject for the consideration of the Association in the form of the following question: "Can or can there not be terms of free communion so stipulated that Baptists in communing with real Christians of other denominations, when invited, will not violate their duty according to the gospel?" We have never seen the expression of the sentiments of the Elkhorn Association on this subject, and we hope to see it made in such a way, if practicable, as will afford a satisfactory defence of Baptists against the imputation of Sec-

tarian bigotry, ignorance, illiberality and want of Christian charity² in their practice.”

It is true, that this Association has never before, in any of her minutes, expressed her views on the subject of Communion, but have agreed in her practice with the United Baptists, in what is called *close communion*. The request being now made that we give a public expression of our sentiments and views on the subject, we deem it expedient to do so.

Our Pædo-Baptist brethren, in their invitation to us to a free communion, find us in the practice of close communion, which has been the custom of th Baptists and those who have held Baptist sentiments, more or less for upwards of fifteen hundred years. This has arisen from their views of what constitutes a gospel church, or the church of Christ, of the covenant on which that church is built, of the requisites of membership, and of the absolute authority of the gospel in establishing and regulating the ceremonies, ordinances and government of the Kingdom of Christ, in which they have in many instances differed from Pædo-Baptists. In our practice, we have been influenced by a desire to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. And we suppose that it is not the design of our Pædo-Baptist brethren to involve us in a violation of our consciences by accepting of their invitation, as in that case we should forfeit all claim to the character of honest, conscientious Christians, and would cease to deserve their friendship, and above all would lose what we believe to be the approbation of our God. To preserve what they believed to be a good conscience, the Baptists have suffered persecution in various degrees ever since they had a separate communion. Stipulations in their behalf would therefore seem to be necessary to secure them against the violation of what they hold to be the truth, in bringing about free communion; and if they cannot be made it is expected that the Pædo-Baptist brethren will withdraw their invitation to us to commune with them.

We proceed to give a view of some of the leading principles, which, by their connected operation, have established us in close communion, and which may be considered in some good degree as peculiar to Baptists, and which, whether right or wrong, can only be determined by a strict and impartial attention to the word of God, which is professedly our only rule of faith and practice. With respect to the church of Christ in the gospel:—this we say is not *identical* with the Jewish church

1. Because the covenant on which it is built is a different one from that on which the Jewish church was constituted.

2. Because qualifications for membership are entirely different in the Christian church, according to the gospel, from those of the Jewish church, according to Moses.

3. Because the subjects to whom the ordinances of the gospel Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are administered, are altogether different from those to whom the ordinances of the Old Testament were administered in the Jewish church.

The Christian church not being identical, or the same, with the Jewish church, to confound them must of necessity impair or destroy the purity of the church of Christ.

We will briefly attend to the two covenants on which the Jewish and Christian churches were built, to shew their difference:

The term *Covenant*, in the Scriptures, deserves particular attention in our investigation of the Christian œconomy; not only because it frequently occurs in the divine writings, but because there is scarcely any one subject in which more erroneous sentiments prevail, among professors of religion, and that have had more pernicious influence in darkening the minds of men, as to the true understanding of the Scriptures, and in producing divisions among Christians.

The word *Covenant*, in the Scriptures, when it respects God's covenant with sinful men, signifies a constitution, settlement or establishment of things, whercin, by means of a Mediator, he reconciles and takes them into a friendly relation to himself, as his own peculiar people, stipulates blessings and privileges to them, gives them his laws and ordinances or the rule of their obedience, and the means of their correspondence or communion with him; and the whole transaction is ratified by the blood of sacrifice. We are accordingly informed, that the Hebrew word for *making a covenant*, is *Carath*, which signifies *to cut off*, because covenants were made by cutting off or slaying sacrifices. Thus the covenant with Abraham was made, Gen. xv, 9, 19. So also the covenant with the nation of Israel at Sinai, Exod xxiv, 5, 9. This method of making a covenant is also mentioned in Ps. l, 5, and Jer. xxxiv, 18.

The Apostle, communicating to the Romans the peculiar advantages which the Jews had over the Gentiles, among other particulars, says, "to them belong the covenants," Rom ix, 4. From the use of the plural number in this passage, we are led to conclude that more covenants than one were made with them; and a little attention to the Scriptures will teach us that there were several different covenants made with Abraham. The original promise made to that patriarch, recorded in Gen. xii, 3, and which was four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law, is termed by the Apostle "the *covenant* that was confirmed before, of God in Christ," Gal. iii, 17, and this was afterwards renewed and ratified by an oath when Abraham offered his son Isaac in sacrifice, Gen. xxi, 18. The promise in this covenant is "In thee shall all nations be blessed," which the Apostle explains to be "the gospel that was preached before to Abraham" respecting Jehovah's design to justify the heathen through faith, Gal. iii, 8, and which was not fulfilled until the gospel began to be preached unto the Gentiles, after the ascension of Messiah; this was the covenant of grace. About eight years after this original transaction, God made a covenant with Abraham, respecting the inheritance of the land of Canaan. He had before promised it to him and his seed; but now he puts his promise into the form of a covenant, ratified upon sacrifice. Gen. 15, 9, 10, 17, and so it is said, "In that same day the Lord made a *covenant* with Abraham, saying, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates, v. 18, compared with Ps. cv 8.—12. About sixteen years after this, God gave him the covenant of circumcision, as it is termed, Acts vii, 8, and Gen. xvii, 4,—15. All these several covenants were made with the parent stock of the Israelites, and they are what the Apostle refers to when he speaks of "the covenants," Rom. ix, 4, "the covenants of promise," Eph. 2. 12.

But besides these, the Scriptures make particular mention of two other covenants, which are distinguished by the names of the *Old* and the *New*, the former referring, not to any of the covenants which

God made with Abraham, but to the covenant which he made with the children of Israel at Mount Sinai, when he brought them out of Egypt, and promised them a long possession of Canaan, on condition of their external obedience to a variety of laws, precepts, and judgments. Of this covenant we have the history in the nineteenth and following chapters of Exodus, and in the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy. It was not dedicated without blood. Exod. xxiv, Heb. ix, 19; & in establishing it there was a typical Mediator, even Moses, Gal. iii, 19. The condition of it was, obedience, not only to the laws promulgated on that memorable day, when God descended on Mount Sinai in the presence of all the people, but also to a variety of burdensome ritual precepts, afterwards enacted, Heb. viii, 9, Gal. iii, 19, to preserve them from the corrupt religion, and profligate manners of the neighboring nations, and to typify better things to come under the Messiah. In the mean time these laws, though wisely calculated to restrain from idolatry, and other gross sins, could not make perfect as pertaining to the conscience. Obedience to them were never designed to entitle to Heavenly and spiritual blessings, (read Deuteronomy xxviii); these are only to be looked for through another and better covenant, established upon better promises; a covenant which the Lord promised long after those days to make with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, Jer. xxxi, 31, and which is expressly called a *new covenant*.

That the *old covenant*, so called, on which the Jewish church was constituted, was not the covenant of grace, as promised to Abraham, Gen. xii, 3, and ch. xxii, 18, appears from Deut. v, 1, 3. "And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them & keep & do them. *The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our Fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.*" This old covenant was the foundation of the Jewish church; with it circumcision was incorporated, Exod. xii, 44, Levit. xii, 3, John vii, 22.

That the Jewish church was not established upon the new covenant or covenant of grace, appears from Jer. xxxi, 31, compared with Heb. viii. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their Fathers, in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which my covenant they break, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;)- but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people—and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more."

Here the Lord describes the new covenants with an evident reference to the old, and also by way of contrast to it. He was to make it with the *house of Israel*; that is, with the spiritual seed of Abraham by faith, the true Israel of God, of which old Israel was a type, even all those whom the Lord shall call, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles; Gal. iii 26—9. Rom. ix, 8, 24. He was to make it *after*

those days, upwards of six hundred and thirty years after the date of this prophecy, for the Mediator of this better covenant was to come and ratify it with his blood. Heb. viii, 6, ch. ix, 15

The first promise on which this covenant stands, is "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." This shows, that the new covenant has laws, as well as the old had, and these are to be found in the book of the new covenant, or the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists. But the laws of the old covenant though twice written with the finger of God, were only engraven on tables of stone, Exod. xxxi, 18, ch. xxxiv, 1, and not in the hearts of the people; therefore there was not heart in them to keep them. Deut. v, 29; and there fell from this covenant 60,000 of them in the wilderness. But in the new covenant God proceeds to supply what was wanting in the first, and to give his law in a more effectual manner, so as to secure the obedience of his people; they were to be "written not with ink," as in the book of the law, "but with the spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart," 2 Cor. iii, 3.

God promises to be their God, and that they shall be to him a people. This means that he will not only own and treat them as his people, but that they, on their part, will acknowledge, fear, love, and obey, and worship him as their God.

Another promise on which the new covenant is established is in these words, "and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest;" and herein lies the excellency of the new covenant above the first, that all the people who really belong to it know the Lord; and this knowledge is not obtained without divine teaching; for it is promised, "all thy children shall be taught of the Lord," Isa. liv, 13. This teaching, our Lord represents as having a particular respect to himself as its object, and as absolutely necessary to faith in him. "No man can come unto me except the Father who hath sent me draw him;" and he, at the same time, represents it as effectual to that end;" "Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me," John vi, 44, 45. It is the knowledge and belief of the gospel of salvation and of the character of God as therein manifested; or as the Apostle emphatically expresses it, it is "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. iv, 6; and which our Lord in his prayer connects with eternal life, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, John xvii, 3— Now no man can effectually teach his neighbor or his brother this knowledge, any more than he can regenerate him or write God's law on his heart; as all the people of this covenant have the true knowledge of the Lord, that being essential to their being actually within the bond of it; so they have no need that their neighbor or brother should teach them to know him, as if they were yet wholly ignorant of him. There are, indeed, different degrees of this knowledge among them, and they have constant need to be growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ; but they all know the saving truth. The Apostle John writes to them thus, "I have not written unto you, because ye know not the truth; but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth;" and, distinguishing them by their different degrees of knowledge, he distributes them into three classes, viz: little children, young men, and fathers; he says to the least of these "I write unto

you, little children, because ye have known the father," 1 John, ii, 1, 13, 21. These were the kind of little children who belonged to the church in John's day.

Another promise on which the new covenant is established, is this, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." The sacrifices of the first covenant could not take away sin, though they were of divine appointment. The Apostle informs us that it was not possible for them to do so, Heb. x, 4. They indeed, by divine appointment, served to purify the body from ceremonial defilements, ch. ix, 13, and the annual atonement served to free the nation, as a body, from those civil penalties which they had incurred during the year. Levit. xvi, 30, but they could not purify the conscience from guilt, nor procure an everlasting remission of sins. In this respect the new covenant infinitely excels the old, for therein God promises to remember the sins and iniquities of his people no more; this promise is founded on the sacrifice of Christ which at once perfects forever them that are sanctified, Heb. x, 15, for proof of this, he adduces the witness of the Holy Ghost in this promise of the new covenant, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more," Heb. viii, 15, 17.

This covenant is termed a *new covenant*, not in respect of a covenant made with Adam, either before or after his fall, but in distinction from the covenant made with the nation of Israel at Sinai as is afterwards declared in the above quotation: and it is *new* in comparison of that, both in respect of time as being posterior to it, and in respect to its superior excellence and permanency, as it was never, like that, to wax old or become useless. Within this new covenant no mere ceremony or act performed by man can bring any of the human family: no, nothing short of the application of the blood of the New Testament, by the spirit of God, shed by the Lord Jesus Christ, can effect it. In baptism, the Saints are admitted to make a profession of that faith which is of the operation of God, and which they become actually interested in.

But it may be asked, if the new covenant was not made till Christ, by his death, set aside the peculiar covenant with Israel, on which their church was built, and abrogated the distinction between Jews and Gentiles; and if there is no spiritual salvation, but by the new covenant, how could those who lived before the ratification of it by the shedding of Christ's blood, from Adam and downwards, obtain eternal life? To this it is answered, that they obtained eternal life by this covenant as existing in the divine purpose as made known to Adam, Gen. iii, 15, and to Abraham, Gen. xii, 3, & xxii, 18, though not yet actually made, even as they obtained it by the blood of Christ though not yet shed, but which was set forth before them, and even before the law in the promises and types of it, Rom. iii, 25; for Christ died for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, that they who are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance, Heb. ix, 15. In the divine purpose he was as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. When he expired on the cross the great sacrifice was offered up, the efficacy of which reached back to the first transgression of man, and stretched forward to the end of time. From the cross as from an high altar, the blood flowed which washed away the guilt of all the millions who had gone to glory before the blood of the New Testam

tament was actually shed. Their faith in the promised seed of the woman, and Abraham's seed, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blest, was counted to them for righteousness. When he cried on the cross, *It is finished!* he changed the state of the world—yes, of the universe. The Angels who desired to look into these things, then saw how God could be just and the justifier of sinners. The *old covenant*, which was ready to pass away, with its church and carnal ordinances, its priests and sacrifices were abolished and retired from sight; because it was only added till the seed should come. The gospel sealed by the blood of the new covenant comes fully into view, and Christ stands forth as the gracious high priest forever, for the law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. He is the foundation on which the church is built, in reference to which, circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing but a new creature, in which all are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, there being neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, but are all Christ's by regeneration, and are Abraham's seed according to the promise, Gal. 3.

There were, no doubt, some among the Jewish church who believed on Christ to come, and to whom he was their God as giving them eternal life from the dead, Math. xxii, 31—32; but that was not by virtue of the covenant on which the Jewish church was built, in which God declares himself to be the God of the whole nation of Israel, but by virtue of the promise of blessing all nations in the seed, Christ.

The Jewish church was composed of the natural seed of Abraham, but no person was ever admitted into the church of Christ merely on account of his being a natural descendant of Abraham. The great pre-requisite to entering into that church is to be born again; born from above, born of the spirit, to be a new creature in Christ Jesus. Over the door of this Kingdom it is written, by the great King himself, "Verily, verily I say unto you, except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God—Marvel not that I said unto thee ye must be born again." John, iii, 5—7.

The essential difference between the Jewish covenant and church and the Christian, is clearly shown by the allegory in Gal. iv, 30, compared with Gen. xxi, 10. Here we have a positive command to cast out of the Christian church the natural seed of Abraham, those who are born after the flesh, figuratively represented by the son of the bond-woman, because they shall not be heirs with the son of the free woman, Isaac the child of promise.

It was in consequence of this that "God spared not the natural branches," "because of unbelief they were broken off, but if they abide not still in unbelief," if they become the spiritual branches by faith, "they shall be grafted in" Rom. xi, 23.

We think we have said enough to show that the Jewish and Christian churches are not the same—that they are built on different covenants, and that the qualifications for membership are essentially different—that the qualifications for the former are carnal and secular, while those for the latter are spiritual: consequently, the subjects to whom the ordinances of the gospel, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are administered according to the laws of the gospel, are altogether different from those to whom the ordinances of the *Old Testament* were administered in the Jewish church.

Agreeably to these views we find, in every part of the New Testament where the uncorrupted church of Christ is described, it is composed of those who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—who are called of Christ—who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints—who are justified by faith—who are children of light, and Abraham's seed by having Abraham's faith; and who, being the children of God by faith, have put on Christ by Baptism, having been buried with him in Baptism. Rom vi, 2-4; Gal. iii, 26-29; Colos. ii, 11, 12!

According to these views, those who are born after the flesh only, whether they be the immediate descendants of Abraham, or born of believing parents, cannot be admitted to the ordinances of the New Testament—and those only who give a credible evidence of a change of heart by a profession of their faith and outward conduct, ought to be immersed in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Mark, xvi, 15—16, Acts, ii, 38—41, ch. viii 37—38. And that infant sprinkling is not an ordinance of the New Testament, and cannot be administered in faith, because unauthorized by the word of God.

These are some of the peculiar views of Baptists, which they hold as fundamental truths in relation to the gospel. They moreover consider it to be the imperative duty of their preachers to baptize all who believe, upon a credible profession of their faith, notwithstanding they may have been sprinkled in their infancy; and further, that were they to commune with soundly converted Pædo-Baptists, who had been baptized in their infancy, that they would commune with unbaptized Christians. A system then of free communion, that would secure to Baptists consciences void of offence towards God and towards man, must yield to them these points by actual stipulation, as they cannot compromise them away. If the Pædo-Baptist brethren are unwilling to make these concessions, then we suppose they will withdraw their invitation to us to commune with them, for we cannot suppose that they would, willingly, involve us in a violation of what we conscientiously believe to be our allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Whatever may be the measure of solicitude that may be expressed or felt by our Pædo-Baptist brethren, in favor of free communion, it is fully reciprocated by this association and by all the United Baptists, and all they ask is, that it be effected upon what they believe to be gospel terms. We readily agree that whoever is justly chargeable with division or schism in the body of Christ, is guilty of a great sin, and we readily grant that, whatever we may say in relation to our innocence in the matter, no person has a right to believe us right in our faith and practice, only as we appear so by the word of God in the gospel. The Baptists, whatever may be their imperfections and errors, admit no authority in religion but God in his word. In reviewing the history of the church, we perceive that Pædo-Baptists have agreed, generally, in the belief, that the church has a right to change, alter, and abolish the rights and ceremonies. Accordingly, Calvin, in his commentary on the following passage, relative to the baptism of the Eunuch, Acts, viii, 38, "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch; and he baptized him," observes, "We see from this instance what was the baptismal rite amongst the ancients, for they plunged the whole body in the water. Now it is the custom for the minister to sprinkle only the body or head."

He adds "it is certain that we want nothing which maketh the substance of baptism—wherefore the church did grant liberty to herself, since the beginning, to change the rites somewhat, except the substance."

We do not pretend to know the substance of Baptism, but by the signs consisting in the words of institution, and the action performed agreeably thereto.

Du Pin, in his church history, says "the successors of the Apostles changed the ceremonies in the administration of the sacraments. In the first centuries," he observes, "the discipline was plain and simple, and had no other splendor to recommend it but what the holiness of the manners and lives of the Christians gave it. They baptized those who were instructed in the religion of Christ, and had given satisfactory signs of their conversion, by dipping them in water in the name of the Trinity." Baptists would rejoice to see the restoration of this state of things. The historian proceeds, "it was in the fourth century that Bishops met together with liberty, being supported by the authority of princes, and made abundance of rules concerning the government and ordinances of the church"

Mr. Hooker, the ablest defender of the Episcopacy, in his Ecclesiastical polity, says that "the church has a discretionary power to appoint what ceremonies, and establish what order she thinks fit, where the scriptures are silent"—and also, that "all that are born within the confines of an established church and are baptized into it, are bound to submit to its ecclesiastical laws, under such penalties as the church, in her wisdom, shall direct" Under the operation of this principle, Baptists have been persecuted in Europe since Constantine established religion and formed what he called *the Catholic church* in 313

In the twentieth edition of "The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church," we read as follows, "Sec. 2, Articles of Religion, Chap. 22, Of the Rights and Ceremonies of Churches. "It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should, in all places, be the same, or exactly alike: for they have been always different, and may be changed according to diversity of countries, times and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word." In the concluding paragraph of the same chapter, we read that "every particular church may ordain, change & abolish rites & ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification"

It is in opposition to these principles and practice that Baptists are distinguished for what are called their peculiarities, and have often incurred the charge of "sectarian bigotry, ignorance, illiberality and a want of Christian charity," and they believe that it has been by the operation of these principles, that disunion and all the evil consequences which have afflicted the unity, purity and peace of the church of Christ, have resulted.

The rites and ceremonies of the New Testament are positive precepts, ordained by Jesus Christ. His positive precepts admit of no degrees, of no additions or diminutions. In them he will make a trial of our obedience, and be perfectly obeyed, and not disputed with or enquired of, why, or wherefore. They are the greatest and most proper trial of our obedience, because in them the mere authority and will of the legislator is the sole ground of the obligation. The sacraments of the New Testament, Baptism and the Lord's Supper,

are nothing except from their institution. They are divinely appointed ordinances, and must therefore be administered and received according to the word of God; whatever therefore was invented by men in relation to them, by changing, altering or modifying them, does not belong to them. The constitution, laws and ordinances of the gospel, are to be measured only by the words of inspiration and as explained and illustrated by apostolic practice, in which there is no power or privilege for us to carry them any further, no man, church, association, council, general assembly, conference or convention, having a right to add to, or to take from the Statute Book of the Kingdom of Christ given to it by the *one Law giver*. As far as any church is constituted and governed by the laws and precepts of the New Testament, so far is it a church of Christ, and no further.

It is a Baptist principle that there are no *non-essentials* in the New Testament, but that every thing is necessary in its place, and that to change, to modify, or abolish any thing, will, in the same degree, mar the whole.

The unity which all denominations of Christians ought to desire, will never be effected until all agree in one standard of faith and practice.

The Saviour, in his intercessory prayer, John xvii, so called because it is considered as a pattern of the intercession he is now making for his people in Heaven, prayed that all who should believe on him through the word of the Apostles, might be *one* in him and the Father, that the world might believe that the Father had sent him. This prayer extends itself through all ages. Upon this unity the Saviour steadfastly fixed his eyes, in reference to it he entered upon his sufferings, and to promote it he now intercedes. As this unity obtains and must obtain among those who believe on him through the word of the Apostles, or there is impotency in his intercession, which no real Christian will maintain. So division among professing Christians arises from the use of the words of men and their tradition in religion.

The Saviour's prayer was literally fulfilled to the first believers, who believed in him alone, through the word of the Apostles, for we read in the Acts of the Apostles that "they that gladly received the word were baptized"—and they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. "They were all of one heart and of one soul," Acts iv, 32. They kept the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace. There was then, according to the Apostles' doctrine, "one body" or church, "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism" Eph, iv, 5. The Christians served *one Lord*, who is the *one law giver*, had one and the same object of *faith*, and professed that faith by one form of *baptism*, having but one rule of faith and practice given to them, for the constitution and government of the church. This state of things continued until the authority of men superseded the authority of Christ, and, as Du Fin says, "the Bishops met together and made abundance of rules concerning the government and ordinances of the church," by which, as observed by Calvin, the church gave herself liberty, &c.

Dear Brethren, this letter has been protracted beyond the usual limits of our circular, on account of the importance of the subject—many things have been necessarily omitted. Let your conversation

be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Let us cultivate charitable feelings towards our Pædo-Baptist brethren, and in those points of conscientious difference between them and us, let us, in the spirit of the gospel, agree to disagree, making it the only point of emulation between us, who shall receive most perfectly the doctrines and precepts of our Lord in our hearts, and copy his example in our lives. Let us remember that the word of God is the great instrument of sanctification under the intercession of Christ. "sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth," as it is the mean of emancipating the soul from guilt, ignorance and error. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." John viii, 31—32.

So let us exercise ourselves as to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. In that case our conscience will refuse her homage to any other than God in his word, for the man who submits his conscience to the authority of men in religion, arises not in his acts of devotion regulated thereby, to the dignity of religious worship.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.