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UNION—NO UNION,

SHOWN IN A

SUMMARY OF REASONS

FOR TAKING A LETTER OF DISMISSION

TO BE OUT OF

The Elk Horn Baptist Association.

Toler, Henry

Union - no union...



BY HENRY TOLER,

PASTOR OF THE GRER'S CREEK PARTICULAR
BAPTIST CHURCH,

WOODFORD, KENTUCKY.



LEXINGTON,

PRINTED BY JOSEPH FICKLIN,

AT THE OFFICE OF THE KENTUCKY SAZETTE.

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1831.

UNION—NO UNION

AND

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

OF THE AMERICAN LETTER OF DISMISSAL

TO BE OUT OF

THE MILITARY SERVICE ASSOCIATION



BY HENRY TORREY

EDITOR OF THE GREENS GRASS PATRIOT
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

WOODBRIDGE, VERMONT



LEXINGTON

PRINTED BY JOSEPH RICHMOND

AT THE OFFICE OF THE EDITOR

1861

UNION—NO UNION,

SHOWN IN A SUMMARY OF REASONS.

I yield to an opinion, that it is expedient I should publish my reasons for taking a letter of dismission from the Clear Creek Baptist Church, that I might be out of the Elk Horn Baptist Association.

It was painful to me to leave the Church, and those dear brethren in the Association whose fellowship I highly esteem; but for the considerations which impelled me to it. With respect, tender sympathy, and serious reflection, I was brought to the resolution to apply for a letter of dismission; and gave some views of the circumstances leading to it, in church meeting two months before I applied. I should be doubly concerned, if no relief remained for those who are distressed at my leaving them; but it can be had, if they choose it. An exposure of error should be excused at this time, and in this case, at least, when the cause of God and truth require it. The causes of dissatisfaction in a number of churches in the Elk Horn Association should be known, if possible.

By examining the constitution, and the faith and practice of a majority of the association, we shall see the causes of difference.

The constitution of this association is as follows:

“Baptist Association, held at Clear Creek, Friday the 30th of September, 1785, at 3 o'clock; sermon by Brother Wm. Hickman, from the 23d chapt of Exodus, 30th v. Wm. Wood chose Moderator, Richd. Young, Clerk. Letters were read from six churches.

DELEGATES NAMES.

Gilberts Creek—Geo. S. Smith and John Price.

Tates Creek—John Tanner, Wm. James and Wm. Williams.

South Elkhorn—Lewis Craig, Wm. Hickman and Benjamin Craig.

Clear Creek—John Taylor, James Rucker and John Dupuy.

Big Crossing—Wm. Cave, Bartlett Collins and Robert Johnson.

Limestone—Wm. Wood and Edward Dobbins.

Being assembled together, and taking into serious consideration, what might be most advantageous for the glory of God, the advancement of the kingdom of the Dear Redeemer

and the mutual comfort and happiness of the churches of Christ; having unanimously agreed to unite in the strongest bonds of Christian love and fellowship—And in order to support and keep that union, do hereby adopt the Baptist Confession of Faith, first put forth in the name of the seven congregations met together in London in the year 1643, containing a system of the Evangelical Doctrines agreeably to the gospel of Christ, which we do heartily believe in and receive, but something in the 3d and 5th chapters in said book we do except, if construed in that light that makes God the cause or author of sin; but we do acknowledge and believe God to be an Almighty Sovereign, wisely to govern and direct all things so as to promote his own glory. Also in chapt. 31st, concerning laying on of hands on persons baptized as essential in their reception into the church—It is agreed on by us, that the using or not using of that practice shall not affect our fellowship each to the other.

And as there is a number of Christian professors in this country under the Baptist name—in order to distinguish ourselves from these, we are of opinion that no appellation is more suitable to our profession than that of Regular Baptist, which name we profess.

WM. WOOD, Moderator ”

Although this Confession of Faith was first put forth in the name of the seven congregations met together in London in the year 1643; still the understanding in the Elk Horn Association has been, that their confession of faith was *that* put forth by the Ministers and Messengers of upwards of one hundred Baptist churches met in London in 1689, which embraced the substance of the first; which last was adopted by the Baptist Association met at Philadelphia in 1742. With this belief, churches in the Elk Horn Association have been constituted on the Philadelphia Baptist Confession of Faith. This is, what must be, if properly considered, the constitution of the Elk Horn Association, with the exceptions made when she was constituted. And it is well known this Association chiefly remained stedfast in the doctrines of sovereign and special grace, till their union took place with the Baptists south of Kentucky; and probably for some time afterwards. In 1803 the Association had the following Minute:

“At the request of the Town Fork Church, the association *unanimously* voted that the union with the Baptists south of Kentucky does not in the *least* remove them from their constitutional principles..”

It remains then, that this Confession of Faith is the constitution of the Elk Horn Association.

The great body of Baptists in England who put forth the confession of faith, adopted the appellation, *particular*, while other Baptists had the appellation, *general*. Particular Baptists held with particular, personal, and eternal election. General Baptists held with general Provision. These are two, distinct societies of Baptists. Distinction on these principles is found in the Constitution of Elk Horn Association. We now see what this constitution is. The general union notwithstanding. Many regret that this union ever happened, and many more rejoice in it, and make it supercede the constitution. The reason is apparent, it agrees with their faith better than the constitution. I am delighted with *Union*, was in favor of the Union in Virginia, and if it were not worse here than it was then there, I should be more silent on the subject of UNION—NO UNION. But wherever Union is formed, which results in *disunion* and *confusion*, it is improperly formed. The dreadful division which happened in the Elk Horn Association was in a few years after the *Union* took place, and though different circumstances led to this distressing event, I have heard it said, that difference of doctrine had a bearing in the case. No doubt the Union opened a way for the Introduction of doctrine and practice in Elk Horn Association, that at first, had but a shade's difference from what had usually been among them. This different course was extended soon after the separation, and the zeal of *party men* has continued it on, and increased it, to the present day. If those Brethren who separated from Elk Horn Association, were now in it, and no difference existed but about doctrine and discipline, would they not separate for those causes? There can be no doubt of it. Why should they separate, and immediately form a constitution exactly like the Elk Horn Constitution? Because Elk Horn now, preached and practised contrary to their Constitution.

But is it not true that there are some in Elk Horn Association you consider sound in the Faith? Yes; and it is equally true, that they are sorely grieved with the course taken by some in the Association, and that there is no redress. This Body is large and unwieldy, and a majority will overrule as they please, support measures contrary to their confession of faith, & still say they have not departed from their constitution. It is true, the Association has not said in so many words, we have departed from the constitution; but permit me to ask, first, if there is not a departure in doctrine?

And, secondly, if there is not a departure in discipline?

In the Investigation of doctrines, let us recollect that in an Introductory sermon four years ago, we heard the preacher say, "as to *election*, if you are as willing as I am, we will

leave it for eternity to disclose whether it be true or not." A Baptist from Virginia being present, mentioned this to me as a proof that the Baptists here were not sound in the faith. I never heard one member of the Association speak of what the preacher said except that I recited it two years afterwards in an Introductory sermon. Probably such a case never occurred before. A Baptist Association, constituted on the *confession of faith*, appointed a member of their Body to preach an Introductory sermon, who could not in that sermon acknowledge that *election* was a revealed truth. And yet they never noticed how far this was from their constitution. Those who are constituted on the constitution of the Elk Horn Association, must either believe in *election*, or leave the constitution behind. Were there not many of the Association present when this sermon was preached, who believed the preacher was right? Still it is said, this Association has not departed from their constitution! I may be asked, would you "deal damnation" on all who deny the doctrine of election? No; by no means. But if an Association shall say they are constituted on the confession of faith, that they have not departed from it, & still deny what is in it, and support those who preach and practise contrary to it, can it be possible they are on the constitution they claim?—To deny the chosen of God are in Christ in any sense till they are regenerated, is to give up the old constitution at once. It would be more consistent with many to throw away the old Book, and make a new one to suit them.

When it was my lot to preach the Introductory Sermon two years ago, I took this text: Eph. i. 4, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Under this feeble discourse, it was easy to see a great contrast in countenances, particularly among preachers: disgust marked the faces of some, and some were pleased. I presume I went no farther than the text; but what I had said was soon contradicted on the stage; which occasioned a worthy minister to say to me, "You preached nothing but what is in their own Constitution, and if they had been sound in the faith, it would not have been contradicted." Yet it is said, this Association stands firmly on the Constitution!

Has not the doctrine of Justification by the Righteousness of Christ *imputed*, been very sparingly preached by some, and entirely denied by other preachers; and have not such preachers been sustained in churches, and in the Association? And yet it is said there is no departure from the Constitution!

Let me ask, if a person should wish to be baptised, and should at the same time candidly say, my faith is quite different from the Constitution of the Baptists, and I suppose I cannot be baptised by one of them; are there not preachers within the Association who would baptise him, and churches and preachers who would sustain him—not only as a member of a church, but as a minister of the gospel, although he should deny all the doctrines of sovereign grace? I believe this has been, and I believe it could happen again. Let Brethren think for themselves, whether such a course goes with the Constitution.

On the subject of doctrine I beg leave to mention some circumstances, relative to a gentleman's becoming a member in the Elk-Horn Association, to show how far they are from the constitution. This gentleman had published a book, and it was generally believed that *that* book contained serious and fundamental errors in Theology. For one of those errors he was brought to trial among the Presbyterians to whom he then belonged. Yet the Elk Horn Baptists would readily receive, baptise, and ordain this gentleman to the ministry. What examination was there about the case among the Presbyterians? Was there any inquiry whether he still denied that the Spirit operated in Regeneration? Was it required of him that he should publish a recantation of *that* and *all* the errors in his book? Was he examined about all, or any of the essential Articles of Faith when he was ordained? Has the Association ever advised that those theological errors in the book should be recanted in a publication, seeing he is a preacher among them, and the book stands against him and them? Alas! Do let Brethren honestly say, we did not consider what was in the constitution, when we said we had not departed from it. And perhaps a number might say, with truth, we do not care what *is* in it.

Is it not preached in the Association that the Atonement is general? That Election extended only to the Apostles? And that, if it extended any farther, it must extend to the whole world? That the power of Christ is derivative? That the Word of God is the only mean of Salvation? That no part of Scripture on Election or Predestination bears the meaning that the confessions put on it? That the Gospel was for peace, but the confessions were for war? And though many in the Association have heard this clamour against confessions, of which no doubt their *Constitution* is one, they pass it all over softly, and declare they have not departed from the Constitution!

It has been reported, (and it was I believe from good authority) that at a late ordination of a man to the ministry, the preacher who gave the charge, said, "Do not preach doctrinally; do not preach experimentally; preach practical piety." It is further said, the preacher denies he said so.—What church searches after the truth in this case? I should have believed that *Baptists*, governed by the constitution, would have attended to it. The truth is, many of the Association, while they profess to believe in, and to be constituted on, the Confession of Faith, are ignorant of, or opposed to it; and instead of having moved off from the Constitution, they never were really on it. The Constitution is one thing, and their faith is another. Still they would say, they are no more twain, but one—and there is no departure!

A climax in doctrinal errors appeared at the Association last year. The Introductory Sermon was filled with them. I felt awfully distressed, while considering what Baptists had come to. After the Sermon was ended, grievous murmurs against the doctrines it contained, were heard in various parts of the multitude. I believe a similar case never happened. No Association of Baptists, constituted on the *Confession of Faith*, ever had such a contradiction to their Constitution for an Introductory Sermon.

The Committee of Arrangement advised that this Sermon should be a subject of consideration in the Association, that they might signify their approbation or disapprobation of it. After a long debate that item was voted from the Arrangement, as if they had no Constitution among them: What view had the Association then of the Constitution? It was objected to take up the subject, because it would injure the feelings and character of the preacher! Some objected to consider the subject, because by the terms of the general Union, a difference of doctrine was to be no bar to communion. A search was made for those terms, which could not be found. The constitution was found and read. I do not recollect that there was even a proposition to try the subject by the Constitution; the object plainly was to be governed by the *terms of Union*, and not by the *Constitution*. Surely then, if, by the terms of Union, the doctrines preached in that sermon are to be excused, and the preacher of them fellowshiped, the constitution stands for nothing: A number were grieved at this affair, and I came home believing I should leave the Association. This preacher's church has sustained him through it all, nor does the Association advise the church on the subject.

Some churches have had queries on doctrines before them, with propositions that they should be sent to the late Asso-

ciation. But I do not remember that any church so expressed herself in her letter, as plainly to bring to view the nature of complaints of a minority. Contrary to this, a church having queries that might have brought on very necessary decisions at this time, suppressed them; and, it is believed, took pains to employ talents out of the church, to write a long church letter to the Association, on doctrines, which was attempted to be made chiefly the circular letter for the Association, tho' one had been written by a previous appointment. It might have been hoped that this letter would fit all round, and unite all parties—it being neither Calvinism nor Arminianism; but partook of both. If by all this departure from the constitution, the complaining minority can have no redress, is not this *Union—no Union?* But I must ask,

Secondly, if there is not a departure in Discipline?

When persons are received into churches, (though intelligent) are they examined sufficiently about their conviction? Their inability to love and obey God? Their sense of their depravity? The impossibility of their repenting, or believing in Christ of themselves? Their view of justification by the Righteousness of Christ imputed, and received by Faith, &c. agreeably to the Scriptures and the constitution? A number are received, who are not so examined. For how would any examine on principles they did not believe in themselves? And even Brethren, correct in sentiment, may be over ready to receive.

Discipline, as it respects the moral conduct of church members, is too lax.

It is so, as it respects the duties of members to their preachers, and one another. And surely it is so, if it should be found that Baptists commune with other societies, without its being noticed by the churches.

We might speak of an improper course of Discipline, said to be found in the xviii. of Matt. which I think is not there. But this we will pass by now.

The constitution of churches is too often without constitutional principles. This is a serious departure from the Elk Horn constitution.

A very important Branch of Discipline is now to be considered, which is the Ordination of Ministers. Probably men are not ordained, who ought to be; but I am sure some are ordained, who ought not to be. And the greater their talents, the greater curses they are to the community. To ordain to nothing is odd, unscriptural, and far from the constitution. This is the fact, when a man is ordained to the ministry, who is called by no church to officiate, nor sent to tra-

vel as a minister of Jesus Christ. Is any man to be ordained unless he be sound in the faith, although he may be a man of good talents and virtue? No. What is the Faith? It is the Faith of the Gospel. A Gospel preacher (as the Husbandman that laboureth) must be first partaker of the Fruits, 11 Tim. 11. 6. He must be partaker of the fruits of the Spirit; must know experimentally the excellency of the Gospel; and must have the other qualifications therein required, to be a proper subject of ordination. And to ordain men to this office, without necessary examination, which is frequently done, must be contrary to the Gospel rule and the Constitution.

Another practice, which is glaringly contrary to Constitutional principles, is, receiving churches into the Association without proper examination of their Faith.

Is there not a collision to carry unconstitutional points, which, though it may be concealed a while, will come in view when the object is to be answered? This is sure to produce confusion instead of order; and while many long, tiresome, and useless speeches are made, an expression raises irritation on one side, and laughter on the other. Both are disgusting.

It is a manner sometime in preaching, scornfully to allude to those who hold with particular Election, and prefer the appellation, *Particular*; and any who hold with the doctrines of sovereign grace, by saying, "The *Particular*—The *Particulars*—the old *Particular*—*Fatalists*—*Antinomians*." Does this look like the constitution, the Confession of Faith, or like Bible Religion? What connexion is there between God's predestinating persons to holiness and happiness, and Godwin's natural necessity of every thing, without the superintendence of Providence? Or what likeness is there between that sovereign grace that brings us to love and obey God, and that sinfulness which makes us hate and disobey him? Is it not strange that those who preach and practise agreeably to the gospel, and constitutional principles, should be called Fatalists and Antinomians? Does the word of God, or the grace of God, lead to these errors? Does a man become what is not in the Bible, by loving the Bible? Why are old ministers called Antinomians, who, thro' the utmost difficulties, have spent the chief of their lives in preaching the Gospel, baptizing many converts, serving churches; and are still Godly, useful men? It is because they preach the doctrines of sovereign grace, which are in the Bible, and in the constitution. Now, who stand by the constitution—those who preach it, or those who disapprove of the preaching of it? Here is the reason why the odium of Antinomianism is

cast on those who preach Jesus, and not themselves. Mr. Hervey was charged of Antinomianism: the very reason why he was so charged, is the reason why some are called Antinomians now. What may be seen in "Aspasio Vindicated," page 276, is so much to the point, that I insert it.

"As to the charge of *Antinomianism*, unless the particular errors are pointed out, (which may as well be done without the assistance of reproachful names) it is no more than a very vague, uncertain sound, made use of by some leaders in the various classes of religious people as a bug-bear, whereby they disguise and disfigure the party they intend to reproach.

"When these religious politicians have raised the alarm,—
"Beware of the Antinomians," the ignorant multitude are upon the inquiry to know, what this dreadful thing called Antinomianism is; they are told a hundred bug-bear tales of monsters in human shape. When they inquire farther, who are Antinomians, meaning who are the persons so abandoned as to hold such dreadful opinions, they have nothing more to do, than to place the name upon whom they please; and it follows of course, by this artful shift, that the credulous and deceived multitude believe the persons, so pointed out, to be guilty of whatever has been charged under that name. Were it not for this piece of artifice, they might perhaps be obliged, honestly and fairly, to point out the particular errors of those they dislike and accuse; and, in so doing, might manifest that they themselves know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

¶ "Mr. Hervey has very properly exhibited such vain declaimers in the following note:

"This puts me in mind of what Theodorus replied to Philocles; who was often insinuating, that he preached *licentious doctrine*, because he enlarged, with peculiar assiduity, upon Faith in Jesus Christ; and frequently chose such texts as, *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved*."

"I preach salvation by Jesus Christ; and give me leave to ask, whether you know what Salvation by Jesus Christ means? Philocles paused; he began to blush; would have eluded the question, and declined an answer. No, said Theodorus, you must permit me to insist upon a reply—
"Because if it be a *right* one, it will justify me and my conduct; if it be a *wrong* one, it will prove that you blame you know not what; and have more reason to inform yourself than to censure others."

"This disconcerted him still more; upon which Theodorus proceeded: "Salvation by Christ means, not only a deliverance from the *guilt*, but also from the *power* of sin.—

“He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity—redeem us from our *vain conversation*, as well as deliver us from the wrath to come... Go now, Philccles, and tell the world that I, by teaching these doctrines, promote the cause of licentiousness; and you will be just as rational, just as candid, just as true, as if you should affirm that the firemen, by playing the engine, and pouring in water, burnt your house to the ground, and laid your furniture in ashes.” Note, vol. ii. Dial. x. pages 364-5.”

Will any person suppose that such as charged Mr. Hervey with Antinomianism, would be constituted on the Elk Horn constitution? No. Can it be possible, then, that those in the Elk Horn Association, who for the same reason, charged us with Antinomianism, should be on that same constitution? No. If they were ever on it, they have departed from it. Do let the churches and the Association search the Confession of Faith through, and the scriptures, which are referred to in it, and see if they have not departed. I might enlarge on other abuses of Gospel Doctrines, Gospel Preachers, and Gospel Discipline, in opposition to the constitution; but I must now take my leave.

And, suffer me tenderly to remark, that in the present state of the Baptists, there is danger of an influx of error, which would greatly distress these dear people, and mar the beauty of the Lord's House. By making the way into the church so wide and easy, as to increase the number of improper members; by incautiously ordaining Preachers; all these Preachers, inexperienced and unsound in the faith; and by even creating Preachers; all these Preachers will slide from the standard of Truth to be popular; who will go on to baptise, and increase Churches and Preachers, who will enlarge in the same way; all governed by their own reason and policy, rather than the word of God, & constitutional principles; mixing in with the world and unconverted religionists; departing more and more from Gospel Doctrine and Discipline; opening their doors for mixed communion; and what would be the state of the church then? Where could a gospel church be found at all? Alas! alas! for Zion, *The city of our God!* These reflections have affected me more than any other consideration for some time. Whatever I must bear, let me never support the error of adding to, or taking from, the Word of the Lord. If evils of so serious a nature are in society, it is supporting them to say nothing about them, and it is supporting them, though I should complain and remain in the society. For none would then suppose that the evil gave much concern. When I am in society where errors exist, and those errors cannot be removed, it is right to escape from

them who live in error. II Pet. 11. 18. If some should say, how shall we do it? I would very impartially advise, that letters of dismission on application, should be given without debate. If they should be denied, the Association, in 1805, made provision as follows :

“Query from Boon’s Creek.—What is a member to do, who, when in good standing, applies for a Letter of Dismission, and is denied?”

Answer—“Withdraw.”

This is the doctrine in Philadelphia.*

“The right of a minority to protest against whatever it may conceive to be improper, in the conduct of the majority, has rarely been questioned.

Whenever minorities are obliged to submit, in silence, to majorities, however large, there is an end to liberty.

While freedom exists, constitutions, defined agreeably to the established rules of language, govern all societies; and their feeblest members have nothing to fear from the most arbitrary and despotic majorities.”

I am asked, what do you intend to do? I answer, I mean to go back to the constitution of Elk Horn Association, before there was a Union formed between them and the Baptists south of Kentucky, to be distinct from all Baptists, except those who are, or may be, constituted distinctly on the scriptural doctrines of sovereign grace, agreeably to that constitution. I prefer the appellation *particular*, to *regular*, as being more expressive of the distinction. For this reason Baptists in England and America have adopted it. I have for some time said, that this would be the best course for Baptists here, being fully convinced that what was termed the *Union*, had terminated in great *disunion*, and *confusion*. If the Baptists were thus distinct, it would produce more harmony in churches, and Associations, and there would be more peace and good order, and less disputation generally. I am acting conscientiously, with a view to peace and usefulness; and not strife and mischief. I am peaceable, have long lived in *Union*, Union that *was Union*: But *UNION-NO UNION* is not agreeable. It is from no frivolous cause, but from mature reflection, I take this course. I am not for setting up a new Baptist Society; I am going back to old Baptist Society; constituted on original principles of gospel truth, set forth in the constitution. I am no Innovator. The change is with those who have left the constitution out of sight. I have not done so. I am not a disorganizer. Disorganization is with those who have departed from the constitution. The Apostles

* Whole Truth, page 19th.

words may be well used here, ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own Bowels. II. Cor. VI 12.

The excellence and truth of doctrines which charm me still, I learned in substance in a five years Education in the School of Christ, while I was a lad, by my own Experience, and by reading his word—Since that time I have laboured much in my feeble manner, in the cause of Christ & the Baptists; having used my weak lungs, probably ten thousand hours publicly; having baptised, perhaps, upwards of fourteen hundred; with other services, and an abundance of riding; all through great conflicts; & have I turned a schismatic at last? No. I am not turning to any thing, but the order of the Lord's House, which I have long pursued. It is not because I hate the Baptist Cause, as a cause of Righteousness, that I leave this Association, my love to that cause is a strong reason why I leave this Body. It would have given me great pleasure if all the church I left, could have gone with me in my distinction. I would then most cheerfully have continued with them. I may be persecuted, and misrepresented, as (I suppose) I was, by an allusion in one of the speeches of the day, at the late Association respecting my treatment of a church; but none of these things move me. Acts xx. 24. I wish to have my mind and time better employed, than to be turned aside unto vain jangling I. Tim. 1. 6. I wish not to dwell in a house that is continually oscilating, but one which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Acts xi. 10. The doctrines of sovereign grace contained in the scriptures, (and embraced in the constitution) exhibit that system of eternal truth, which was the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. Eph. 11. 20. Here let me abide! All who depart from this foundation, will move to and fro.

To say the Association has not winked at, and supported a departure from the gospel, and the constitution, in doctrine and discipline, and that there is a corrective now in the Association, is to contradict plain truth and common sense. Let me then, not have to ask in the language of an Apostle, Am I, therefore, become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? Gal. iv. 16. Probably, I have not told all the truth about these matters yet; for I have been modest in what I have said, & I think none will be offended with me, for my *Union*—no *Union*, but the guilty.

I have performed both a task, and a duty, from necessity; for all will agree, I am not contentions. But I would earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Jud. 3. And if there should be contention against

the gospel, especially if it should be by the Baptists, I would be bold in our God to speak unto them the gospel of God with much contention. 1. The 11. 2. What a pleasure it would be to me, if there was no necessity for my present course!

May God bless the church I left! May he give to every member in the Elk Horn Association, that wisdom that is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without Hypocrisy! James iii. 17. And may he bless this exhibition to all the churches of Christ Jesus!

Amen.