him no good else you would not thus have boasted that you had shut his mouth. This boasting betrays a pride of intellect, which is utterly inconsistent with usefulness to this class of people—I never knew any infidel benefitted by a conversation which was afterwards told." Thus spake a *wise* man. Read it, ye who are set for the defence of the gospel, and be *wise* yourselves. The reason why men who relate conversations of this kind are not useful to infidels, is that they have a proud and selfish, or vain and worldly spirit, the evidence of whose existence is found in the fact of their relating such things. This spirit will hinder their usefulness.

If any one's head or tongue should grow apace, and all the rest stand at a stay, it would certainly make him a monster; and they are no other, who are knowing and discoursing Christians, and grow daily in that respect, but not at all in holiness of heart and life, which is the proper growth of the children of God.—*Leighton.*

Several communications are on hand, which shall be attended to hereafter. C. Sne's shall appear in our next. It is hoped that my agents and patrons will not neglect to aid me in pecuniary matters. To many my warmest thanks are tendered for their promptitude in remitting to me in due time. My agents and post masters would confer on me a favor by advising me in time of such as have discontinued to take the Messenger. For neglect of this my loss is serious. Some, of whom we hoped better things, move off without settling with my agent; to them the Nos. are still sent by us, not knowing of their removal. We hope this evil will be corrected in future. EDITOR.

OBITUARY.

Died lately in Lewis county, Ky. the consort of Stephen Halbert. She was patient under her severe illness, having an unwavering confidence in her God, and a blissful hope of immortality. She had been a member of the Church of Christ nine years.

Also, JOSEPH PATTERSON, at a very advanced age, in Fayette county, Ky. He lived and died a christian beloved by all who knew him.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BY BARTON W. STONE,

AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

"Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."—PAUL.

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From the Christian Register.

REV. MR. MONTGOMEY'S SPEECH.

(CONTINUED.)

But a still greater evil has arisen from your past proceedings, and must be increased by your present measures.—I mean, that the preaching of the gospel has, very generally, been diverted from its legitimate channel. Controversy, controversy, interminable controversy, is the order of the day! Ministers, to remove suspicions from the minds of their people, and to gratify the prevailing taste, are constantly dwelling upon "debatable land," whilst probationers have no hope of success, unless they shew themselves powerful in "the strife of words." Even in our own assembly, what has been spoken of since we met—but *opinions*. Not a word about practice; not a syllable about correcting each others *vices* and *follies*, or reforming the *morals* of our flocks.—This is very different from the conduct of "the Great Preacher of Righteousness; very different from the course prescribed by the orthodox Apostle Paul to his son *Titus*, when he sent him forth as a Messenger of Grace. He did not exhort him to decry morality, nor merely preach it occasionally as a sort of decent adjunct to abstruse doctrinal harangues. No; he enjoined him to make virtue the sum and substance of his preaching:—"These things I will that you affirm *constantly*, that they which believe in God might be careful to maintain *good works;* for these things are good and profitable unto men." No doubt he preached as every minister ought to do, "Jesus Christ and him crucified," as the foundation of the sinner's hope, and the ground work of the Christian's holiness; but he never forgot the end of all preaching,—the restoring of the sinner "from dead works." How different is the prevailing system of public instruction in these latter days! And how awful is the responsibility of those who turn the attention of the multitude from the duties of life to the controversies of men!

In answer to all these arguments, for a milder, a more rational, and a more Christian course of procedure, we are told; "that a great ferment exists amongst the people, and that something must be done to allay it." Very true; a great ferment does exist.—The prophetic words of our Saviour, who foresaw that the evil

passions of men would pervert the benevolent object of his mission, are fully verified—"I come not to send peace upon earth, but a sword." Were that ancient philosopher alive, who, in the commencement of the gospel dispensation, exclaimed. "Behold how these Christians love one another!" he might now with equal propriety, ejaculate, "Behold how these Christians hate one another!" But whatever ferment exists, we are nor to blame. You kindled the conflagration, and you are bound to extinguish it, without molestation or injury to us. We have broken no compact; we have never interfered with your opinions; we have raised no unjust clamor against you. The existing evils are of your own creation, and you have no right to make us the victim to appease the wrath which you yourselves have excited. The condition of our hapless country is deplorable; the state of our own church is distressing; but my friends and myself are guiltless of these calamities. Let those answer for them who produced them; "we have neither lot nor part in the matter."

How strange it is, that the favored work of God upon earth is that being in all nature which seems least to answer the design of its creation! I was never more forcibly impressed with this melancholy fact, than upon the evening of Monday last, when travelling over the beautiful district of country between Dungiven and this place. The glorious sun cast his golden mantle over the mountains, and the valleys reposed in shade; the song of cheerfulness ascended from the peasants at their toil, whilst the children were joyfully collecting fuel for the bonfires and festivities of Mid-summer's-eve. As far as the eye could reach, innumerable flocks and herds were browsing in peace upon the green pastures, and the very air was impregnated with myriads of animated beings. Throughout the wide extent around and above me, all was life, and tranquillity and happiness! Not a single sound of sorrow smote upon the ear, nor a single object of misery passed before the eye. In the midst of that glorious temple of Nature, my soul instinctively ascended in devout aspirations of adoration and gratitude to the benignant Author of such extended and diversified enjoyment. I felt happier in my own existence, and in that of all animated creatures; and I did not believe there was a being upon earth whom such a scene would not have soothed into tranquillity and benevolence. In this, however, I fear I was mistaken; for on journeying on through an ever-varying scene of beauty and happiness, I think I did discover one object uncongenial with the time, and the circumstances, and the place. It was a Christian minister, travelling to this scene of our meeting. His eye dwelt upon me, but not in friendly recognition; his face was towards me, but no smile played upon his features. My heart sunk within me, to think that men, and Christian men, should have been the only beings who, on that glorious evening, were deficient in kindly affections. Oh! surely such things are not congenial with our country, nor with our religion. Nature has given us a fair and fertile abode,—Providence has blessed us

with generous hearts and liberal hands,—and the gospel of peace has long been the inmate of our dwellings. Why, then, is our country a universal theatre of contention? Why are Christians of the same communion arrayed against each other? Why? Because men presumptuously interfere with the conscientious belief of their brethren, and spend that time in forming plans of annoyance, which ought to be dedicated to officers of peace!

I do appeal to my brethren whether these be times in which any church; and especially any Presbyterian church, should occupy itself in devising schemes for the curtailment of Christian liberty? Is it in the nineteenth century, when even Catholicity is evidently relaxing her grasp, when the Established clergy and the Legislature have given a signal proof of the progress of liberal opinions in the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts—is it at such a time, that we should retrograde, and surrender the fundamental principles of our church? If we do, a death-wound will be inflicted upon Presbyterianism; division will follow usurpation; weakness will succeed division: and though individuals may chiefly suffer in the beginning, the church must suffer in the end.

From the excited state of public feeling, and from the observations of many ministers and elders, I think it is evident that we are not, at present, in a proper condition to come to a sound and impartial conclusion upon the important subject before us, which involves the very constitution of our church. I therefore do entreat my brethren to pause, and to allow these weighty matters to lie over for consideration, as enjoined by the salutary regulations of our code of discipline, for at least one year.

In the mean time the popular ferment will have time to subside; and I now beg leave, in great seriousness and sincerity, to propose a plan to our opponents, which, I firmly believe, would ultimately lead to the triumph of truth. I know that my opinions have been grossly caricatured and misrepresented; and it is possible, that in our hands, yours may have suffered in the same way. Now, whilst we continue without any regular channel for the mutual interchange and explanation of our opinions, these misconceptions must be perpetuated. From the very nature of man, the pulpit will increase, instead of diminishing misapprehensions. Confident in his own views, every minister will necessarily bring them forward with the greatest possible force; whilst, without any impeachment of his honesty, he may not introduce the strongest arguments of his opponents. If this be the case, under the most favorable supposition, how much less chance is there of truth being ascertained where ignorance, prejudice, or dishonesty is concerned! The press, in its present state, will not be more effectual. The multitude of trashy, virulent, and unprincipled pamphlets that are put forth, and which are read only by partisans, have no tendency but to inflame the passions and mislead the mind. That calmness, seriousness, and deliberation which are necessary for the investigation of truth, can never be attained under such a system. The contending parties

must have the means of deliberately comparing their opinions with each other, and with the Word of God, and also of correcting any mistakes or misrepresentations that may occur, before justice can be done to both sides. Such an investigation might shew us that we do not differ so much as we now imagine, and thereby bring us nearer to each other; and, at all events, it would make our respective systems better understood. In order to accomplish this most desirable end, I propose, seriously and affectionately, *That a Monthly publication shall be issued, at the mutual expense, and under the mutual management, of Calvinists and Unitarians, in which each party shall occupy the same number of pages (say 30 or 50) with articles in support of their peculiar opinions, either original or selected, as they may deem expedient.* Such a work would be eagerly read by all parties; the sparks of truth would be elicited by collision; and the ancient piles of error would be consumed. *Falsehood* is only dangerous when she walks forth alone; having a bold air and confident demeanor, she awes the timid and imposes upon the weak: but she cannot long appear in the presence of her lovely rival, *Truth*, before the counterfeit is detected.

To my Calvinist brethren such a proposal must be peculiarly acceptable, as it will afford them free admission into what they call the dominions of error: for I here pledge myself, that we will place the publication within reach of all our hearers, provided they will do the same with regard to *theirs*. We will most sincerely thank them: if they can convince us, by sound argument and the Word of God, that we are wrong. In the triumph of truth, we shall most heartily rejoice: it is all our aim: and if they prove her to be on their side, we shall instantly desert the ranks of her enemies, and join the cohorts of her friends. *We* can have no motive for clinging to error: the applause of the world, the fashion of the world, the interests of the world, are all upon the opposite side. And I can assure you, that we are not so destitute of the ordinary feelings of men as to prefer, without good cause, an angry sky and barren rocks to bright and fertile regions. On the voyage of life, we would much prefer sailing before the gentle breeze of popular favor to being "tost by the tempest of evil tongues," but we know that "favor is deceitful," and whatever may befal us, we shall not, at least; "make shipwreck of our integrity."

I am confident my proposal will not be declined by our opponents, upon the futile pretext of not desiring to circulate what they are pleased to call "*poison:*" for they know that their powerful *antidote* will go along with it. We might with just as much reason call their opinions "*poison*," but we are so confident of the efficacy of our *remedies*, that we have no fear of its effects. If, in bringing our separate systems to the standard of the Word of God, the comparison should be in our favor, no doubt we shall be gratified; but should the result be against us, we shall still be pleased; we shall cheerfully confess our error, and heartily embrace the truth.

I do, therefore, most earnestly entreat this Synod to pause, and to adhere to its own established and salutary laws. Delay, in so important a case, cannot be dangerous; but precipitancy may involve the most deplorable consequences. Whatever may be the result of my appeal, however, I shall never cease to be sincerely grateful for the patience, the kindness, and the attention with which I have been heard, through so tedious and desultory an address.

THE GOSPEL PLAN OF SAVING SINNERS.

NO. I.

From the title of the subject proposed for consideration, the writer hopes a sufficient degree of interest will be excited to cause an attentive perusal of this and his future numbers. Something has already been said in the Christian Messenger on this subject; and had that attention been bestowed on it, which, I think, its importance demands, my humble pen would not have been engaged in writing for the public at present. It is hoped that the following remarks will awaken a spirit of enquiry, and that abler pens will take up the subject, and do it that justice which it merits.

The human mind seems much disposed to shun the simplicity of gospel truth. Schemes have been set afloat on the wide ocean of conjecture, but few, it is thought, have completely entered the gospel channel. Many of these schemes are thought to be admirably formed, and to question their correctness is almost esteemed as an act of impiety. But as the plans of men are often opposed to each other, it is evident that they cannot all be right. Human wisdom is a very incompetent guide to immortality. It therefore behoves every man to have a divine instructor, to whose demonstrations he should attend; and not according to his own views of fitness or propriety.

We need only compare the instructions of teachers of the present day, with those of the Apostolic age, to discover that we have greatly departed from the gospel plan. One tells the desponding mourner, that he must hear *Sinai's thunders roar;* that the *law must kill him*, in order that the gospel may make him *alive;* that he must *get* religion and *then* be baptized, &c. Another tells him to *pray—agonize*—you will *fall into hell if you do not pray*—strive on, and the *Lord will come presently, &c.* Thus the affrighted creature strives to work up his feelings in vain. He expects to hear a voice; see a light; or feel some miraculous operation; and he is not disposed to have religion, without working hard for it.

How different were the instructions of Christ and his Apostles. The enquring penitent was instructed to "*believe on the Lord Jesus Christ;*" to "*repent and be baptized* for the remission of sins." They did not say, *pray for faith—agonize—and wait for God's good time—bring an "experience of grace," and then we will baptize you.* No. These simple men appeared to know nothing of the

circumlocution of modern theologians. They "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." They spoke the simple language of Canaan; and the happy consequence was, thousands were added to the Church in a day.

In the kingdom of nature, there are established laws, which the husbandman must observe, in order that the prolific earth may reward his labors. Should he plant his crop in December, he might, by art, raise a few blasted ears; but it would bear no comparison with an autumnal harvest. So, in the kingdom of grace, God has established a plan for the salvation of man, simple, plain, and definite. If we strive to advance the kingdom of Christ, out of the plan of Heaven, we may reasonably expect to have about such success as the man who plants his crop in the winter: on the contrary, if we act upon the gospel plan, we may look for the glories of the Apostolic age to return.

Perhaps the reader is ready to say, enough of your *gospel plan*. I fear you are one of those latitudinarians—one of those disorganizers who have of late been distracting the Christian world, with their visionary notions. Before you pass sentence, suffer me to "beseech thee to hear me patiently;" then you will be the better able to judge. It is my design to prove, that the *ordinary* practice of the Apostles was to baptize a repenting sinner, in order to the remission of his sins, and to the receiving of the Holy Ghost; and as they were under the guidance of the Spirit, they doubtless acted correctly. The plan on which they acted, must therefore be the plan of Heaven; and their *example* is certainly a sufficient warrant for our *practice*.

We will first attend to the preaching of Peter on the day of Pentecost. See Acts, chap. II. Peter's first object was to convince the people that Jesus was the Messiah. Some were disposed to mock, others declared that the Apostles were "full of new wine." Peter convinced many of the incorrectness of this declaration. He assured them, that what they saw was the fulfilment of ancient prophecy; and that "Jesus being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, had shed forth what they then saw and heard."—"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." The truth of Peter's preaching was irresistible; and conviction was the immediate result. In the language of true penitence, the multitude cried, "what shall we do!" Did Peter, or the *Holy Ghost* by Peter, tell them, *to pray on—get religion*, and then be baptized? No: He said "Repent (or reform) and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for (or in order to) the *remission of sins, and ye shall receive* the gift of the Holy Ghost;" and lest doubts should exist in their minds, he adds, "For the *promise* is unto you; and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call." In this case, there could not have been an experience related, like those told at the present day, for

three thousand souls were added unto the Apostles the same day; therefore they had not time. But we are told that they *gladly* received his word," and some suppose that this circumstonce is evidence that they were regenerated before they were baptized: This could not be; for they were told to be baptized *for* the remission of sins, and that they *should receive* the gift of the Holy Ghost." Hence baptism was a *means* through which they were to receive the remission of sins, &c.; of course, they were not regenerated until they were baptized. It is probable that the *prospect* of salvation, which Peter had brought to their view, was the cause of the gladness which they experienced.

Let us now attend to the conversion of the Samaritans. Acts VIII. 12. "But when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Verses 14, 15, 16, 17. "Now when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that *they might receive* the Holy Ghost. For, *as yet*, he was fallen on none of them; only they *were baptized* in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." This passage is so plain, that it needs no comment.

The baptism of the eunuch will next be considered. Acts VIII. 36–29. "And as they came on their way, they came to a certain water: And the eunuch said, see, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said: I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 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. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing." It is evident that the eunuch was not converted before Philip joined the chariot; for he was not only destitute of a knowledge of Christ, but consummately ignorant of the scriptures. For notwithstanding the passage which he was reading, plainly alluded to a third person; he did not know whether the prophet was speaking of himself, or of some other person. If he was converted before Philip required a test, in order to his baptism, Philip acted very differently from modern ministers; for when a person gives a satisfactory relation of his experience—an evidence that he is born again; do our ministers, or churches ask him if he believes with all his heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? No. They take it for granted, that if he is a new creature, he necessarily believes this, or some other doctrine, which they probably think is a little better. It will be recollected, that Philip only required of the eunuch to believe with all his heart; and that this test was made immediately antecedent to his baptism; but if the eunuch was regener-

ated previous to this—if he had, by a relation of an experience, satisfied the mind of Philip, he (Philip) would certainly not have required a declaration of his faith, as this would already have been embraced in the relation of his experience. Therefore, I think it plain, that no experience was told—no regeneration was experienced—no rejoicing took place, on the part of the eunuch, until he was baptized: Then "he went on his way rejoicing."

It may not be improper here, to remove a mistake which many have made with respect to the meaning of the words *believe*, believeth, &c. They have confounded these with regeneration, or made them to mean one and the same thing. Hence, to the following passage, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," they attach this idea. He that is *regenerated*, and baptized, shall be saved. But this is certainly an unwarrantable conclusion. Faith is not regeneration, but a *means* through which it is effected. We are justified, saved, regenerated, &c. through faith; but if faith and regeneration be the same thing, then we are regenerated through regeneration! This is so inconsistent, that certainly none will admit it. I therefore conclude, that the eunuch's declaring that he believed "that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" is no evidence that he had obtained the remission of his sins, before he was baptized.

The conversion of Paul is important evidence in favor of the above doctrine. Acts ch. IX. Every bible reader is well acquainted with the circumstances attending his conviction; but some have thought that Paul was a renewed man from the time that he saw the light, and heard the voice, on the road to Damascus. Others, that he was converted at the time the scales fell from his eyes. A little attention to the scriptures will show that both these ideas are incorrect. Paul was commanded to go into Damascus, and it should be told him what he should do. Ananias being instructed by the Lord, came to Paul, "and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus that appeared to thee in the way as thou comest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized." Now let us hear Paul relate the same circumstance. He represents Ananias as saying, (Acts XXII. 14–16. "Brother Saul, receive thy sight.—The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be a witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou! Arise, and be baptized, *and wash away thy sins*, calling on the name of the Lord." If Paul's sins were washed away in baptism, it is evident that they were not remitted before: It is also evident that he had not received the Holy Ghost. For regeneration is a work of the Spirit upon the heart, "renewing us in the spirit of our minds." A person thus renewed, is "made free from sin;" but as Paul's sins were washed away

in baptism, it is plain that he was not born again before he was baptized.

Some, to avoid this conclusion, say that the *sin* which Paul was to wash away, was the *sin of omission*. This cannot be true, for Paul did not yet know what he was to do; how then could he be blamed for the omission of his duty? But Ananias did not say *wash away thy sin*, but "*wash away thy sins*." It is therefore plain that the sins to which Ananias alluded, were those of *commission;* and that the argument for the sin of *omission*, is a mere quibble, designed to prop up one of our traditions, and not to support the truth.

Here I shall leave this subject for the present. In my next number, the reader may expect additional evidence in favor of the *Gospel plan*.

JAMES E. MATTHEWS.

HUMAN DEPRAVITY.

It is a common opinion that Adam was created a holy being; and on this opinion are founded many doctrines of the modern systems of religion. Let us inquire calmly into this point.

I cannot receive the opinion, as true, that Adam was created a holy being, for the reasons following:

1. Because, holiness is to love God with all the heart, and to act in perfect accordance with this principle. Now it is certain that Adam did not love God before he knew him, for such love is irrational and unnatural, and infinitely foreign from virtue—nor could he know God before he existed; a non-entity cannot be the subject of knowledge—can know nothing. Therefore Adam was created before he knew God, and he knew him before he loved him or become holy.

2. Because, holiness is a moral quality, or it is that which is produced by the exercise of our moral powers on proper objects. It will follow that those powers must have existed prior to the exercise of them, and therefore existed before holiness.

3. Sin, the opposite of holiness, is also a moral quality, or that which is produced by the exercise of our moral powers. But neither sin nor holiness is a con-created part of human nature; for human nature existed originally and entire without sin, and will eternally exist without it in the saints of glory. So human nature existed originally and entire without holiness, and will eternally exist without it in the finally impenitent. If sin and holiness were physical parts of human nature, then it follows that if sin or holiness were taken away or lost, human nature would not be entire; some of its parts would be wanting.

4. By human nature I understand the body and soul of man. When it came from the hand of God the Creator, it was like all his works, good, it was undefiled with any pollution, physical or moral, it was complete. As soon as man opened his eyes on creation, God was presented as his creator, and his God; Adam then knew and loved his God, and chose him as his portion—then he became holy.

5. God after creating all things, ordained that *kind* should beget its kind. So human kind begat human kind, and nothing more. Adam did not begat a holy child, nor a sinful child; because, neither sin nor holiness were physical parts of human nature. They are as before said, moral qualities of human nature, and are incapable of being transferred from one to another. Adam begat a son in his own likeness, entire human nature, but mortal. This mortality or death passed upon all men because of the one transgression. Rom. v.

6. This mortality is manifested in the new born infants. They cry. This indicates pain, or death in the members. As the child grows up, its appetites, passions, and propensities for carnal things strengthen. By the time it arrives at the age of knowing right and wrong, the habits of fleshy gratifications are so strong, that the child is strongly impelled to choose the evil. Thus he pursues and *walks after the flesh*, into all excess of wickedness. The law is proposed as a barrier to prevent him from sin, but he transgresses the law and pursues the way to ruin. He hears and trembles at the curses denounced by the law, "The end of your way is death." He resolves to cease from evil and do good; but his resolutions and vows are broken again and again. He finds his inability; and discovers where it lies. "I find, says he, a law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death? That depraved principle, called the law of sin, existed in the members, in the body—against which, the will, the resolution, the energies of the moral powers struggled in vain. When sinking in despair, a Savior is presented as mighty and willing to save. In him he believes, and receives the spirit of power by which he gains the victory over sin, and henceforth walks not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

In Rom. viii. 2. Paul explains more fully the whole matter: "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the law of sin and death." *The law of the spirit of life*—the gospel—*has made me free from the law of sin and death*—that law in the members, which was too potent for the moral powers of man to subdue.—*For what the law could not do*—the law of Moses; its motives were too weak to subdue the law of sin in the members—*God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to be a sin offering, condemned sin in the flesh.* God condemned sin by sending his Son in the flesh, to be a sin offering. In this his hatred to sin is manifested, that rather than it should live in poor sinners, the objects of his love, his own beloved Son must die to destroy sin and death, and bring rebels to heaven—*that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us*—that we mignt love God with all our hearts, and our neighbor as ourselves.

Obj: It is said, God made man after his own image, his own likeness; now as God is holy, man must have been made holy or he could not bear the image of God.

Ans: The image or similitude of God may be considered in a natural or moral point of view. The image of God in which man was created, was the natural image, as is plain from Gen. i. 26. This natural image was not only that man had an intelligent spirit, but also, that he had dominion over all this lower creation. He was Lord of the world. That Adam received the moral image of God, or became holy through the exercise of his moral faculties, is not doubted, but fully believed by us all.

Obj: Man was made upright, but he has sought out many inventions. Eccle. vii. 29.

Ans: The word *upright* is frequently used when nothing moral is intended. Its literal meaning is *straight*. Man was made straight, proper, good, in a natural sense.

These things are suggested to elicit inquiry. It will be evidently seen that they will have a bearing on the important doctrine of regeneration, and with others closely connected with it. They will lead to views, different from those received as orthodox, on the subject of human depravity—They will have a tendency to strip off much mysticism attached to the faith of Christ by the wisdom, or rather the folly of man. I have not attempted to produce all the authority of scripture on this subject. Should I engage the wise and good to a calm dispassionate consideration of the subject, I shall have gained my purpose. EDITOR.

A COMPETENT MINISTRY.

A competent ministry—an efficient ministry, are almost as common expressions in these days, as *an orthodox ministry*. They are assumed by one party of religionists who would exclusively appropriate them to themselves. My attention has been drawn to this subject, to inquire who they are, who assume these epithets? What constitutes an efficient ministry—and why they call themselves such?

1. Who are they? They are the *self-styled* orthodox preachers. You hear them in their missionary reports, *mournfully declaiming* that such a part of the country is *a moral waste*, destitute of an efficient or competent ministry.—They lament the sad want of such a ministry—that the people are starving for the bread of life, &c. The picture is drawn in vivid colors, and the sympathies of many, ignorant of the real case, are excited—so excited that money flows to make more efficient ministers, and to send them to these moral wastes. We have inquired, and found these moral wastes well supplied with Baptist, Methodist, and Christian preachers, by whose labors hundreds have professed religion, and adorn their profession equally as well as the people under this *efficient ministry*. We understand that every place is considered a *moral waste*, where there is not a Presbyterian preacher or missionary.

2dly. What constitutes an efficient ministry? They must

understand, or profess to know, Latin and Greek, and the whole routine of science—they must then study divinity several years in a theological school; and thus polished and equipped, are sent forth to preach to these *moral wastes*. None but these are considered *competent*, *efficient*, or *orthodox* by the party. These imposing epithets have induced many men of intelligence to hear them. They have retired from the place of worship disappointed. They heard nothing uncommon from them, which indicated more talent or learning than among others, who boasted not of such superiority. The inquiry naturally rises in the mind, Why do they assume these imposing titles? 1st. From a proud opinion of their superiority; and 2d. To impress the public mind that they are superior to all others, and should therefore receive more attention and respect than others.

Should not shame forbid them this presumption? Certainly the meek and self-denying principles of the gospel frown indignantly on such a spirit. How often was it rebuked by the humble Savior in the proud Doctors and Lawyers of that day? We have no doubt that this aspiring spirit will ultimately sink those, who foster it, in the estimation of the pious and intelligent every where. May the Lord grant its speedy destruction! May he preserve us from its power!

This spirit can never bear any ministry, which is not *competent*, *efficient*, and *orthodox*, and will be restless until it is put down.—To effect this, a plan is now in agitation, and considerably matured. But the eyes of the nation are open to see, and the spirit of liberty stands in opposition to its progress.

We are very far from thinking that all of this name are possessed of this spirit. No: We believe there are many pious, humble, holy people of this order, who are opposed to this exclusive, proud, aspiring spirit; and are offended at the appearance of it wherever it is seen.

My dear brethren, called Christians, fear not the machinations of men; God who sitteth in the Heavens will laugh them to scorn.—"Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord." We have vainly hoped that sectarians would cease from hostilities towards us, or become more moderate; but this hope is fled. Never need we look for such events, while human creeds are made tests of orthodoxy, and terms of fellowship; and the spirit of building up and establishing parties, exists among the professors of religion.—Look not for peace in this state of schism from the body of Christ. My brethren in the ministry; we have waded through many difficulties—we have endured great privations—we are still suffering as much as opposition dare inflict; but what are these compared with our Lord and his Apostles? Those who seek after fame, honor and wealth, enter not with us into the ministry of the gospel. We cannot hold out these inducements, nor would we, were we able. If one among us preaches for these, may his mouth be stopped, and himself disgraced! We wish none such amongst us. Yet we believe that the churches should support or

supply the wants of their preachers. But if they neglect their duty, the preacher should not neglect his. Our ministrations would be more blessed to the people, were we enabled to live without such incessant care and labor on our farms, to support our families. We have heard so much noise and begging for money to supply and support the ministry, and similar institutions, that we are ashamed to beg, and prefer digging. Our avocations from our wordly business are greater than those pertaining to any other. Besides frequent preaching, we must visit the sick and distressed—we must attend funerals—we must entertain much company—our farms are necessarily neglected, and our substance consumed. Hardly pressed, we labor to disadvantage. To make bread, I know one who has labored by night in his field, with his hoe, while others were reposing in sleep. But, brethren, let us not be discouraged. Truth will prevail. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Soon our toils will end, and if faithful, we shall be welcomed to the joys of our Lord. We labor, not for wealth, honor, ease or fame, but to promote the kingdom of our Lord. Our reward is sure. An eternal inheritance awaits the faithful. Be, therefore, stedfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

EDITOR.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

TIMBER RIDGE, Va. Nov. 20, 1828.

Bro: Stone—Having heard, not long since, that a preacher of high toned orthodoxy was to preach on Timber Ridge, on the subject of the Trinity, and being anxious to hear from whence he would draw his arguments in support of this tottering system, I resolved to attend, which I did, and got to meeting as our preacher was reading his text—which was 1 Cor. III. 11. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," &c. He undertook to describe, 1st. The foundation. 2d. How to build, and 3rdly. What to build, &c.

Under the first head, instead of describing Jesus Christ the only foundation, he said it was, "the Trinity, which consisted of three distinct, eternal persons, each of whom was truly, and properly God, and yet the three together compose but one God." Now, I ask, in the name of common sense, if all this is included in the term Jesus Christ? If not, our preacher was surely laying another foundation, and not building on the only one recommended by the Apostle in the text. Notwithstanding the absurdity of the above system, I would have suffered it to pass by unnoticed, had our preacher been willing to allow others to think for themselves. But instead of this, he condemned to everlasting destruction all who would dare to differ from him on this important subject.

The following is his remarkable language—remarkable, I say; for if he had professed to be a Pope, or to be infallible, I would not have looked for any thing else; but when I consider it com-

ing from a disciple of the great Wesley, I am constrained to say it is remarkable. But we will let the language speak for itself—"Except you believe the doctrine of the Trinity you will be damned at last!" Again, "Except you believe that Jesus Christ is the Eternal God, you will be damned at last!!" Again, "Except you believe as I do, you will go to hell!!!" Again, "Except you believe the doctrine which I have preached, you cannot be saved!!!!" &c. Thus I (with my brethren of like faith) was tried, proved guilty, (by sophistry) and condemned to everlasting despair, without any possibility of escape. But thank God! the sentence was not put into execution, and I have appealed to the high court of heaven; a new trial is granted, and court will sit on the last day; when I shall be tried by the Lord of Glory, and not by an aspiring priest. But as our preacher has brought forward his iron bedstead, and it not being an inch longer than the one belonging to his Holiness, the Pope of Rome, it becomes our duty to examine his arguments in support of his favorite hypothesis.

His first argument was drawn from Col. i. 16. "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him." From this passage he inferred that Jesus Christ was the supreme and eternal God, "for" said he "no power short of the eternal power of God can create something from nothing," &c. Now if our preacher had taken Heb. i. 2. in connexion with the verse above quoted, he would surely have seen how Jesus Christ is Creator—and therefore would not have had the trouble of proving what every christian believes, viz: That it requires Almighty power to create something from nothing. It is there said that God "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his SON, whom he hath appointed heir of all things; by whom also HE made the worlds." Here we learn that God, the Father, made the worlds, and that he made them by Jesus Christ his Son. Now if the being, by whom God made the worlds, is the supreme and eternal God, it follows that there are more Gods than one; but the reverse is shewn in the verse preceding the one quoted by our preacher. Col. i. 15. "Who is the IMAGE of the invisible God, the first born of every creature. For by him were all things created," &c. It is plain from this text, that the being by whom all things were created, was not the invisible God, for the following very good reason: Because the image of any thing cannot be the thing represented. It therefore follows, that the being, by whom all things were created, was not the eternal God, but the Son of God, by whom the Father made the worlds.

Another argument of our preacher was, Rev. xxii. 13. "I am the Alpha and Omega, the begining and the end, the first and the last." "This," said he, "applies to Christ with respect to his being: he is the first being, and the last being." Now let this text apply to Christ as it may—it surely cannot apply to him

in this sense; because it would prove too much even for the Trinitarians; for they allow the Father and Son to be distinct persons, and consequently distinct beings; and surely, according to the above conclusion, the being, or person of the Son, must be older than the being, or person of the Father. It would also prove an annihilation-system, too broad for me—for there must be an end to all other beings, righteous and wicked, God the Father not excepted, before Jesus Christ can be the last being. It must, therefore, apply to Christ in some other way, and consequently, does not prove that Jesus Christ is the eternal God.

Another argument of our preacher was Isa. ix. 6. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the prince of peace." From this text our preacher undertook to prove that Jesus Christ was the supreme and Eternal God. But surely, the Eternal God was never a child born, nor a son given! If he was a son given, Who was the giver? A gift implies 1st, the giver. 2d, the receiver, and 3rd, the gift. Now if the son given is God supreme, he must be active in giving, and passive in being given, at the same time; or there must be at least one more God beside him; for Jesus says, John iii. 16. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," &c.—It follows then that the son given was not the very and eternal God.—"But," says our preacher, "his name shall be called—the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father," &c. True, and this name he has received by inheritance—Heb. i. 4. "Being made so much better than the angels, as he has by *inheritance* a more excellent NAME than they—For to which of the angels said he at any time thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?" &c. But verse 8, unto the Son he saith, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Verse 9. "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

The next scripture quoted by our preacher to prove the Trinity, was 1 John, v. 7. "For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." On this text, I would observe, that the great Adam Clarke, whose commentaries pass for gospel itself, by some of our neighbors, has doubted this text being genuine. His words are, "It is wanting in every MS. of this Epistle, written before the invention of printing, one excepted, The Codex Montfortii, in Trinity College, Dublin.—The others which omit it are one hundred and twelve." "It is wanting in both the Syriac, all the Arabic, Ethiopic, the Coptic, Sahidic, Armenian, Slavonian, and, in a word, in all the ancient versions, but the Vulgate, and even of this version, many of the most ancient and correct MSS. have it not. It is wanting, also, in all the ancient Greek Fathers, and in most even of the Latin." (Clarke's Com-

mentary on John v. 7. Royal Octavo Edition.) But why quote this passage in support of a disputed doctrine, when so strong a probability exists of its being spurious? Were I asked the question, I would answer in the language of the sailor, "A drowning man will catch at a straw, when he has nothing else to lay hold of.' But admitting this text to be genuine, it does not prove the doctrine of the Trinity, for there is not one word in it of personality; neither does it say these three are one God; but simply, "these three are one;" so Jesus prays that his disciples "may be one, as he and the Father are one"—so "Paul and Apollos are one"—so the husband and wife are one—not one being, but one in a different sense.

The above are all the scriptures, it is believed, which were advanced by our preacher to prove the Trinity; not one of which says a word about it. But why condemn to everlasting despair all who will not receive the doctrine of the Trinity, when the scripture says not one word about it? According to the sentence of our preacher, some of the most worthy of the earth, whose lives have been worn out in the cause of their Master, and whose characters have been unblemished, are now consigned to the dark domains of eternal damnation, for the rejection of a doctrine which has not, for its support, one shadow of bible proof.—Yea, whole churches of happy christians must be banished from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, for not believing a doctrine about which the bible says not one word. According to Ecclesiastical History, the word Trinity was not mentioned till about the second century. But men have become so wise in these last days, that they have improved on the plan of heaven; and have not only invented rules for the government of Christ's kingdom, but they have set up their invented doctrines as standards of orthodoxy, and are saying (to those who will not receive them,) "stand by thyself, come not near me, for I am holier than thou." But I look forward to the day when the Lord shall shake terribly the things that are made; when nothing but truth, eternal truth, will remain. CHRISTY SINE.

FAIRFIELD, Ky. March 14th, 1829.

BROTHER STONE,—I received your favor of February, in reply to mine of January. You conclude that my difficulties grow out of the testimony of Moses and the Prophets, when compared with that of the New Testament writings; (which is the case.)—Moses says, Gen. i. 1: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."—21. "And God created great whales and every living creature."—27. "God created man in his own image." The prophet Isaiah, XLIV. 24. "Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb. I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the Heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself."—XLV. 12. "I have made the earth and created man upon it. I, even my hands have stretched out the heavens, and all their host, have I commanded."—18. "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it, he that established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited. I am the Lord, and there is none else."

The above are a few out of the many passages, which are recorded as the testimony of Moses and the prophets, as to the creation of the material world, which was completed by God alone in the beginning, spoken of by Moses. The term *beginning*, you state, does not always denote the commencement of creation, but by the New Testament writers it is used [frequently] to signify the commencement of the gospel. You quote Luke i. 2. 2 Thes. ii. 13. in support of that view—in which I perfectly agree with you. But you state this latter sense you cannot apply to John i. 1. because it is said, "The same was in the beginning with God, and by him were all things made," and among the things made was the world; 10, the material world. I cannot conceive by what rule of construction you introduce John as a witness as to the creation of the material world, when it conflicts with the testimony of Moses and the prophets, and is not supported by the New Testament writers. Agreeably to the general rule of evidence, you have to take the full statement of a witness, and I have not been able to find any other statement of John, which can be construed to apply to the beginning of creation, and as every witness has the privilege of explaining, John has done so in his 1st Epistle; "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life." This I presume you will apply to the beginning of the gospel age, so as to agree with the New Testament writers, agreeably to the references in your letter.

You lay great stress on the 10 verse. I have a translation before me which translates it thus—He was in the world, and the world was enlightened by him, and yet the world knew him not. This reading agrees with the testimony of John the Baptist, which states that Christ was the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; and he was sent to bear witness of the light, (not that he, Christ, created the material world) but enlighteneth the inhabitants thereof. You observe that yot can as easily conceive how God created the world by Jesus Christ, as how he performed signs, wonders and miracles by him. I presume you wrote this sentence without much reflection on it; for if you can as easily conceive, that God could as easily create the material world by Christ, as to work miracles by him; then I presume you can as easily conceive how God could create a material world by the apostles; for they wrought similar miracles to those wrought by Christ. You state that the word *by*, where God created *by* Christ, signifies instrumentality. This will do when applied to the new creation, for there was something for the instrument to act upon. Such as the following passages prove—Eph. ii. 10. For we are his workmanship, created

in Christ Jesus unto good works. Psa. LI. 10. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Isa. XLVIII. 7. They are created now and not from the beginning. Eph. III. 9. —hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. IV. 24. The new man after God, created in righteousness. Col. I. 16. For by him were all things created. 17th v. shows that no material substance was created; but the 18th v. shows they were things relating to the church, as the passages above. III. 10. The new man after the image of him that created him. Eph. I. 10. He might gather together in one all things in Christ, which are in heaven, and which are in earth. Col. III. 10. 2 Thes. v. 17. Those passages all speak clearly of the new creation; and where things are mentioned in heaven and earth, must allude to men in the Jewish and Gentile world; for Christ is represented as breaking down the middle wall of partition, and making of twain one new man, so making peace between Jews and Gentiles. Those passages I consider as relating to the new creation, for in all, there was something to act upon, and it is no difficulty for me to conceive how God could create by Christ, as an instrument, when there were materials to work on. It would be difficult to show that things existed by which the material world was created. When you state that God created all things *by* Christ—made the worlds by his Son, &c., I presume you will not apply the term *worlds* to the material world, but that he made or constituted the ages by his Son. If this is your view of this passage, we agree in it. You state that my mind must be ready to conclude the Word is God supreme. It was once my view, as stated in John I. 1. but it is not at present. I think it alludes to Christ, and that he was with God in the beginning that John speaks of, both in his gospel and his 1st Epistle, and which is the beginning spoken of by the other New Testament writers, as stated in your letter.

Having replied to your letter, which I was glad to receive, and having given you my views more clearly than in my first letter, as it respects the testimony of Moses and the prophets, as to the beginning, or creation of the material world, and the testimony of the New Testament writers, as to the beginning, or new creation, or gospel dispensation; for I think John I. 1. is a key by which to explain the beginning, or new creation, as spoken of by all the New Testament writers. If I am in error I hope you will give me all the light you can; and should be glad you would publish this in the Messenger, that some of the brethren, who write for the Messenger, may throw some light on the subject. We have nothing to lose, but every thing to gain, by receiving light on revelation. I remain your friend and brother in search of truth.

JAMES GARRARD.

REPLY.

BROTHER GARRARD: At your request I have published your letter, and with your approbation will make a few remarks on it,

1. You admit that the Father and the Son are two distinct beings.

2, You quote a number of texts from Moses and the Prophets to prove that God the Father ALONE, without the instrumentality of his Son, created all the material worlds and things.

3. Therefore, when the New Testament writers state that God created all things by Jesus Christ—that he made the worlds by his Son—that all things, even the world, were made by the Word—that by him are all things—that principalities, powers, thrones and dominions, things in heaven and things in earth, visible, and invisible, all were made by him and for him. When the New Testament writers make these statements, you think they cannot mean the material worlds and material things, else they would contradict Moses and the Prophets, who assert that God ALONE created all these. You think that they mean by these expressions, the new creation or gospel dispensation, or age.

4. You understand the term *In the Beginning* in the Old Testament to denote the time when the material world was created—and that the same term in the New Testament denotes the commencement of the new creation by Jesus Christ, or the gospel dispensation, or gospel age.

These, your views, have been urged as a rebut against the argument for the pre-existence of the Son of God, drawn from the fact, that God created all material worlds and things by his Son; and therefore he existed prior to creation. Let us candidly examine the subject, and inquire 1st. Did God ALONE, without his Son, or without the Word, create all material things? I ask, Did not the Psalmist declare, CXXXVI. 4. that God ALONE doeth great wonders, among which is reference made to those done in Egypt by Moses? Surely God did the works, but he did them by the instrumentality of Moses, and others. Is it not said, Isa. XLIII. 11. that besides God there is no Savior? Yet do we not read that God raised up many Saviors for his people? Though he is the Savior ALONE, yet he saved his people of old, by the instrumentality of others, from their enemies; and from their sins by Jesus Christ. It is not said, that "God ONLY hath immortality"—He is called "the ONLY wise God." In Deut. XXXII. 12. God ALONE is said to have led Israel, yet he led them by the hand of Moses. As well may we conclude that God, without the hand of Moses, led and conducted Israel, and wrought wonders in Egypt—saved Israel from the hand of Pharoah, as that he created the material world, without the instrumentality of his Son,—as well may we conclude, that there is not an immortal or a wise Being in the universe besides God himself! These expressions only prove that God is the fountain and prime cause of these things. These *apparent* difficulties are easily solved, by adverting to 2 Cor. VIII. 6. "With us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." The natural idea suggested by this text is, that God is the prime cause of all things, and Christ the instrumental cause of all things. You surely cannot limit this to the new creation or gospel age. It is

too stubborn to be bent to this signification alone. In the beginning, when God was about to create man, he said, "Let us make man after our own image." We should forever have been ignorant of the person, whom God addressed, had not the New Testament writers informed us. They say, "God created all things by Jesus Christ." "By whom are all things and we by him."

This same doctrine is taught by John, in Chap. 1, 1—10. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God—all things were made *by* him, and without him was not *any thing* made that was made. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not."

You think, *In the beginning*, means the beginning of the gospel age, and that in this sense John uniformly used the term. In this you are mistaken, for John freqently uses the term to signify the material creation, as, "The Devil was a murderer from the *Beginning*"—that "he sinneth from the *Beginning*." John III, 44, and I John III, 8. This cannot be applied to the beginning of the gospel age; for it is added in the last text, "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. If the Devil and his works had not existed before the gospel age, why should the Son of God have been sent to destroy what had no existence. In this sense, undoubtedly, the first of John is used; for it is said, "All things were made *by* him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." You acknowledge that the words *by him*, mean *by him* as the instrumental cause; and I have wondered that men of learning should think otherwise. This sense is given by all the Greek fathers of the first centuries, whose works I have seen, and they surely understood their own language better than we. Indeed the following sentence of the text confirms it: "And without him was not any thing made that was made." God made the material world; but not without the Word or Son. If you admit not this sense, you must think Christ ALONE made all things. Can you believe that a being that never existed till born of Mary, (for such you believe him to be) that such a being ALONE, without the help of God, made the gospel—made the new creation—made the destruction of sin, with all the blessings of the gospel age?—I know you cannot—you do not. You believe that God made all things by Jesus Christ—But these *all things* you understand not to be material things, but such as pertain to the new creation; and all these things he made in the beginning, that is, in the beginning of the gospel age. Now, my dear brother, do you not perceive that John speaks in the past tense—"All things *were made* by him?" Do you think that the new creatures or creation in the 19th century were all made in the beginning of the gospel age? The old creation ended the 6th day; but the new creation still progresses.

The tenth verse to me is decisive on the point. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." The word *world* is used three times in this verse.—The learned know that the original word *kosmos*, translated *the world*, simply signifies the material world, with all its appurtenances. This you have acknowledged by your quotations from the new translation of John 1, 10. "He was in the world, and the world was enlightened by him, and yet the world knew him not. —By this you must mean the material world, and material things. But this translation is not correct, nor can it be received in truth. In no text in the scripture that I have seen, does this word certainly signify an age, or the gospel age. In John's testimony and epistles it never does. You understand by the *world* the new creation. Read the text with this sense and it will involve absurdities which my friend can never receive.—Thus: He was in the new creation, and the new creation was made by him. and the new creation knew him not! Again: Jesus came into the world, that is, into the new creation. Who made this new creation, or gospel age, before he came into it? Could the new creation be ignorant of him? "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," &c.; that is, God so loved the new creation that he sent his Son to save them. Who made this new creation? And if new, where was the necessity of the mission of the Son to save them? The world hateth me, said Jesus. Was this the new creation? The word *aion* signifies an age, and frequently the gospel age; it also signifies the material world, as Heb. 1. 2. "By whom God made the worlds" (*aiones*); and Heb. XI. 3. "By faith we understand the worlds (*aiones*) were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear." If my exposition of John 1. 1–10. be received, then Col. 1. 16, 17. is plain. To apply this text, as you do, to the new creation, involves too many difficulties to be received. If *the things in earth*, had been omitted in the text, your theory would appear more plausible. *Earth* and *heaven*, in this passage, you think, mean Gentiles and Jews. The things in earth include all classes of civil and military officers, as principalities, powers, thrones and dominions. Can you think for a moment that all the Emperors, Kings, Generals, Centurions, &c. among the Gentiles were created, new created by Jesus? Were those human butchers, and tyrants, Nero, Domitian, and the whole race of persecutors, created, or new created by him? Should you say, these things must apply to the church; I ask, Did Christ create, or new create, the Popes, Cardinals, and the whole hierachies of the Churches of Rome, England, &c.? If not, who are the principalities, powers, thrones and dominions in heaven, either among the Jews, or in the Christian churches? Your views of the simplicity of Christ's kingdom, make you hesitate to give an answer satisfactory to yourself.

I submit these thoughts to your consideration. May God lead us into all truth. EDITOR.

In the Baptist Recorder, Vol. IV. No. 2. are contained the articles of faith of a Baptist Church in Owenton, Ky. The first

article is, "We believe there is but one true and living God, the maker and preserver of all created beings, visible and invisible; that in the adorable *Godhead*, which *he constitutes*, there are three personal relations, viz: the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and these three are *one*, coequal in dignity, glory, dominion, majesty and power."

We are pleased to see so large and respectable a body, as the Baptist church is, beginning to think for themselves on this long disputed subject. The more they think on the subject of Trinity, and compare it with the bible, the more disposed will they be to relinquish it. It appears that the Church at Newenton wish to be considered Trinitarians, yet it is evident to the unprejudiced, that they have rejected the very features of the doctrine, calling the three, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, *personal relations*.—Personal relations! Is this the language of Canaan, or Ashdod?—Personal relations!—possessed of power, dominion, &c.! These brethren, disliking the phraseology of Andover, (*three distinctions*,) and that of the Creed makers, (*three persons*,) have at length adopted the one long used by *heretics*, so called, and as long rejected by the orthodox, i. e. *personal relations*. This is, in our view, a relinquishment of the doctrine of Trinity.

EDITOR.

Extract of a letter to the Editor, dated,

"LAUDERDALE COUNTY, Ala. Nov. 30, 1828.

"The cause of religion prospers with us; our church numbers near 130, and the prospect of its increase is flattering. Brother Moore and myself attended a meeting to day, at which 5 were baptized, and one more professed faith in Christ. I do not know how many have joined the Church since I wrote to you last, but I think they may be set down at 10 or 12. This makes an increase to the Church of near 50 members in about seven weeks. A number more may be numbered as the seals of our ministry. Some of them have joined the Methodist brethren, and some have not joined any church.

I have been informed that at a Camp Meeting, near Athens, in Limestone County, about 20 professed faith in Christ, 15 of whom were baptized. In September last, I attended a four days meeting in Salem, Franklin county, Tennessee, where we constituted a church of 7 members. In this place and its vicinity, I was informed that we suffered great opposition, yet the meeting was well attended, and many appeared surprised, that we had been so greatly misrepresented. The prospect of doing good in this place is flattering. Brother J. McDonald is riding in that quarter, and I am informed that he has planted several churches in the neighborhood of Winchester, and the adjoining settlements.

JAMES E. MATTHEWS.

"I AM."

BY BISHOP BE ERIDGE.

"When the Lord speaks of himself with regard to his creatures,

and especially his people, he saith, I AM. He doth not say, I AM their light, their life, their guide, their strength, or their tower; but only, I AM. He sets his hand, as it were to a blank, that his people may write under it what they please, that is for their good. As if he had said, Are they weak? I AM strength. Are they in trouble? I AM comfort. Are they poor? I AM rich. Are they sick? I AM health. Are they dying? I AM life. Have they nothing? I AM all things: I AM justice and mercy: I AM grace and goodness. I AM glory, beauty, holiness, eminency, supereminency, perfection, all sufficiency, eternally, JEHOVAH! I AM whatsoever is suitable to their nature, or convenient for them in their several conditions. I AM whatsoever is amiable in itself, or desirable to their souls. Whatsoever is pure and holy; whatsoever is great and pleasant; whatsoever is good and needful to make them happy, that I AM. So that in short, God here represents himself unto us as one universal God, and leaves us to make the application to ourselves, according to our several wants, capacities, and desires; by saying only in general, I AM."

Selected.

A QUESTION ANSWERED.

"Why have not the faithful more abundanee of the good things of this life than worldly men?"

"I answer, first, 'a little that the righteous hath, is better than great possessions of the ungodly.'—For first, they have the main substance of these things as well as the other; they live, and eat, and are clothed as well as they. And, secondly, they have the comforts more, less anguish of heart, vexation and contention of mind, than the others have. And to them it is all one, whether they go into heaven through the gate, or through the wicket. As a bird with a little eye, and the advantage of a wing to soar up withal, may see far wider than an ox with a greater; so the righteous with a little estate, joined with faith, tranquillity, and devotion, may have more pleasure, feel more comfort, see more of God's bounty and mercy, than a man of vast possessions, whose heart cannot lift itself above the earth.

"Secondly, as nature, when she intendeth a farther and more noble perfection, is less curious and elaborate in inferior faculties, (as men is exceeded by the eagle for sight, and the hound for scent, and the hare for swiftness; because nature, intended in him a more spiritual and divine soul, choose to be less delicate and exact in the senses;) so God, intending to bestow upon the faithful a far more exceeding and abundant weight of heavenly glory, doth not always so fully enlarge his hand towards them in these earthly things, as to those who have no other portion but in this life. We see, then, how much it concerns us to look unto the ground of our tenure, to observe in what service we hold our estate; whether as appurtenances to God's kingdom, or as merely the pastures of a beast, which do only fatten against the day of slaughter."—*Selected.*

HUMILITY.

Humility has been justly called the daughter of faith and the mother of contentment: it is a radical grace, out of which grows the sweet fruits of meekness, patience, love, charity, forbearance and contentment: it is the only favorable soil for the culture of every Christian grace. Humility empties a man of self conceit, and produces that charity which empties of self love: it is the veil with which the rich attire of a Christian ought to be covered. Humility enables a man to receive as truth all that is contained in the sacred volume: it promotes prayer and thankfulness, and enables all who are in affliction to say, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." The benefits to be derived from this inestimable grace are numerous; it supports in affliction, it produces patience, it is well pleasing to God, who hates and resists its opponent, pride, against which sin all the perfections of God are in battle array. Humility preserves from the snares of Satan—keeps us low in our own estimation: it reminds us from whom we have received our every talent, and makes us anxious to devote ourselves to Him from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. The means to obtain this desirable grace, is to reflect on and endeavor to realize the majesty and purity of Jehovah, and contrast with it our own meanness and guilt, and also to compare ourselves with holy men of old, the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles; and surely we must then acknowledge ourselves to be but dwarfs in comparison of them, for they were as giants in every desirable grace and attainment. Think also often of your danger, from the strength of your various and powerful foes; and, above all, meditate on the method God has used for your salvation. "He so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, who, though rich, for our sakes became poor;" he humbled himself, that we might be exalted; he died, that we might live forever. Here learn humility.—*Selected.*

EXTRAORDINARY MOVEMENTS.

The present day possesses some remarkable features and indications. The Jews are agitated. The spirit of inquiry and expectation pervades their nation to an unusual extent. They begin to explore causes, to examine testimonies, and to feel the galling yoke of moral bondage. The tide of the great eastern defection is beginning to be rolled back, and its refluent wave is tinged with blood.—*Selected.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE CHRISTIAN HYMN BOOK will very shortly be finished. It will be printed in Georgetown, Ky. This book is carefully selected by Barton W. Stone and Thomas Adams, by appointment of Miami Christian Conference. It will be printed on superior paper, and well bound.

April 1, 1829.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BY BARTON W. STONE,

AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

"Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."—Paul.

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NO. III.

STRICTURES ON MR. N. H. HALL'S SERMON,

CONCLUDED.

Mr. Hall says, "The divinity of Christ is clearly proven by the following considerations, viz: the scriptures speak of him as the Mighty God and Father of eternity. Isa. ix. 6. "For unto us, a child is born; unto us, a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."" Mr. H. adds, "This child born, this Son given, is Counsellor in the eternal counsel of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. He is the Mighty God; he is the everlasting Father, or Father of eternity."

By Mr. H's. comment on this passage, he has certainly destroyed its sense; for whoever thought of any one being the Father of eternity? If Christ was, he must have existed before eternity, which was impossible. To be Father of any thing, necessarily implies prior existence to that thing. Thus Mr. H. not only makes Christ to have existed from eternity, but before it; for he says, "he was the Father of eternity."

Mr. H. asserts, that this child born, is Counsellor in the eternal counsel of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The difference between the Prophet and Mr. H. is this: the Prophet speaks of future time, by saying, his name *shall be called* Wonderful Counsellor; whereas, Mr. H. looks back to eternity to find his Counsellor, for he says, "the child was in the eternal counsel, &c." So long as Mr. H. continues to look through spectacles, colored by the Westminster Confession of Faith, and his party, I shall not be surprised, that he should differ from the sacred writers. The eternal counsel, of which Mr. H. speaks, is not in the Bible.

We should bear in mind, that God is the author of the above passage, that the Son of God is the subject; and that the Prophet Isaiah is the describer of this child, or of this Son given; to which add the idea conveyed in verse 7, that the zeal of the Lord will perform this, and the whole subject is easily understood. Taken in its connection, the passage proves, that Jesus Christ is not the eternal, or Almighty God. The eternal God never was