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MINUTES  
OF THE  
THIRTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING  
OF THE  
SOUTH DISTRICT  
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD WITH THE  
TROY CHURCH,

Madison County, Illinois,

COMMENCING OCTOBER 4th, AND CONTINUING UNTIL OCTOBER 7th, 1855.

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# SOUTH DISTRICT BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

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## THIRTY-FIFTH MEETING.

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TROY, Thursday, October 4, 1855.

1. The Illinois Baptist Southern District Association met at the Baptist Church, in Troy, Madison County, at 2 o'clock, P. M. The Introductory Sermon was preached by Elder D. Mason Howell, from 2 Peter, 3: 14—"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless."

2. After the Sermon, Elder J. Peters, the Moderator of last year, called the Association to order for business, when it was thought best to defer the organization until next morning. After appointing Brethren Elder Dodson, James Whiteside and Charles B. Street to act as the Committee on "Religious Exercises," the meeting adjourned to meet to-morrow morning, for prayer at half-past 8 o'clock, and for organization at 9 o'clock. Prayer by Elder T. A. Morton.

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FRIDAY, October 5th.

3. Met at the hour fixed by the vote of adjournment, when a season of devotion was enjoyed until 9 o'clock, when Elder J. Peters took the chair, and after prayer by Elder Dawson, Brethren D. Mason Howell was appointed Clerk and N. Smith Assistant Clerk to the Association. Letters from the churches being called for, were then read, and the names of the Ministers and Messengers enrolled. From the letters, the following tabular Statistics of the Churches is made out :

### TABULAR STATISTICS OF THE CHURCHES.

NOTE.—Ordained Ministers' names in SMALL CAPITALS ; Licensed Preachers' names in *Italics* ;  
Those not present marked thus \*.

CHURCHES AND POST OFFICES.	NAMES OF MINISTERS AND MESSENGERS.	Baptized.	Received by Letter.	Restored.	Dismissed by Letter.	Excluded.	Dead.	Present Number.
Bethel, .....	D. MASON HOWELL, Pastor; JOSEPH LEMEN, JAMES LEMEN,* L. W. Scanland, W. Beadle, J. B. Cox, W. P. Bowler, R. Lemen, Peter Bowler, S. Baird....	59	3	4	6	1		194
Collinsville P. O..								
Belleville, .....	T. A. MORTON, Pastor; D. M. HOWELL, N. Smith, Wm. Rittenhouse,.....	45	8	1	6	5	1	176
“ P. O.....								
Troy, .....	E. DODSON, Pastor; J. PADON, T. W. B. DAWSON, L. Barber, J. Mizzi, J. A. Cooke, Jas. Whitesides, J. P. Andersen, M. Banks,.....	34	1	3	13	8	2	143
“ P. O.....								
Fountain Creek, ..	JOSIAH LEMEN,* Pastor; C. BOSTWICK,* J. L. Garretson, J. W. Hilton, W. H. Allen, S. Harlow,.....		1		14	1	3	138
Waterloo P. O....								
Pleasant Ridge,...	M. ELY, Pastor; Wm. M. Lindley, O. Ely, J. P. Hays, St. Jacob's P. O. W. D. Williams, Jas. Lemen, Jr., J. Virgin,.....	30	4		3	6	2	112
St. Jacob's P. O. .								
Silver Creek, .....	No Pastor; B. FENIX, S. Teter,.....	1	1	1	1		5	109
Mascoutah P. O. .								
Waterloo, .....	J. PETERS, Pastor; Jesse Wiswell, Jas. Wiswell,.....	1			11	11		58
“ P. O.....								
Nine Mile Creek, ..	H. S. DEPPE,* Pastor,.....							
Ellis Grove P. O....								
Salem, .....	JOSIAH LEMEN,* Pastor. R. Tate,.....			1	1	4	2	45
Renault P. O.....								
Richland, .....	JAS. F. STILWELL,* Pastor, .....							
Smithton P. O....								
Mascoutah, .....	JAS. F. STILWELL,* Pastor; Joseph Gaskill,* E. M. Brown,*.....	3			1			22
“ P. O.....								
Lebanon, .....	J. H. HIGH,* Pastor; H. McCoy,.....							13
“ P. O.....								
Eagle Prairie, .....	J. PETERS,.....							10
Eagle Cliff P. O. .								
Harmont, .....	S. ROACH,*.....						1	29
Millstadt P. O....								

4. Elder T. W. Dawson was chosen Moderator, Elder D. Mason Howell being Clerk, and Brother A. Smith his Assistant.

5. Visiting brethren present were invited to sit with us, and to take part in the exercises.

6. Correspondence from sister Associations being called for, Elder E. Dodson reported himself present from Edwardsville Association.

7. The following Committee were then appointed, TO DIGEST AND PREPARE THE BUSINESS OF THE ASSOCIATION: J. Peters, T. A. Morton, Wm. M. Lindley, J. A. Cooke and J. Padon.

ON FINANCE: D. M. Howell, J. P. Hays, J. Hilton.

A Committee was then called for of a member from each church, to examine the letters received from the churches, with power, if found by them necessary, to make inquiries of the several Messengers, and report to the Association the condition of the churches represented in this body. Elders J. Peters, E. Dodson, T. A. Morton, M. Ely, D. M. Howell,

Pastors; and Brethren S. Teters, R. Tate and J. Garretson, Messengers from churches that have no pastor present, were appointed such Committee. Adjourned until 2 o'clock. Prayer by Bro. Howell.

8. Met at 2 o'clock. Prayer by Bro. Ely. The following resolution was then offered by Bro. T. A. Morton, and, after discussion, was adopted:

**WHEREAS**, we have been in the habit, for some years back, of appointing *Messengers* from this body to the various sister Associations who do not go, and from the changed condition of travel of the country, cannot be expected, unless there be some special business requiring their attendance, to go, **IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that we discontinue the habit which has become a mere form, and in its place make it the duty of our Standing Secretary to correspond, through the public post, for us, by exchange of minutes and letter; and in future, when we appoint any special Messenger or Messengers from this Association to any sister Association, we agree to pay their traveling expenses, and expect them to do the work for which they are sent; it being understood, as heretofore, that when any brother from this body shall be present at the meeting of any Association or Society with which we correspond, that his name being on our minutes shall be a sufficient voucher for his being a Messenger from us to such Association or Society.

9. The Committee to prepare the business of the Association reported, that they recommend a committee to be appointed to report upon the Spiritual Destitution within the bounds of this Association. Agreed to, and Elder J. Padon, T. A. Morton, M. Ely and D. M. Howell were appointed accordingly.

10. They further reported, that instead of hearing speeches upon the various Christian enterprises and benevolent societies that enlist our sympathies, it be recorded on our minutes: that, as an Association, our opinion of the **TEMPERANCE QUESTION**, and of the importance of **MINISTERIAL EDUCATION**, and of the various **BIBLE CIRCULATING** and **MIS- SIONARY SOCIETIES**, remain unchanged — all these Causes and Societies continue to have our most cordial sympathy, and we urge upon our brethren to give them all the support in their power. This recommendation led to a very interesting discussion, in which the duty of the denomination to support Shurtleff College was very clearly brought out; and the necessity was strongly urged upon all the members of our churches to become members of the Educational Society, by the payment of two dollars a year, by which a vote for **BAPTISTS** to be recommended as Directors of the College may be secured, and the Institution be prevented from passing out of the management of the denomination. The money so paid going to the support of poor students, itself a most worthy and truly benevolent object.

Adjourned until to-morrow morning, for prayer at half-past 8 o'clock, and for business at 9 o'clock. Prayer by Bro. Padon.

SATURDAY, October 6th.

11. Met at the appointed hour for prayers. At 9 o'clock, called to order for business, and reports of committees called for. A letter from a new church, called the "Eagle Prairie," was produced and read; its reception into the Association was recommended by Elder J. Peters; and, on motion, was received.

### COMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC MISSIONS—REPORT

That your Committee, during the session of the last Association, met and appointed Bro. James Mason Chairman, and Thompson Williams Secretary and Treasurer, and after consulting with Bro. D. M. Howell, made arrangements with him to act as the Traveling Missionary, for which we agreed to pay him four hundred dollars for a year's labor, on behalf of the Association. Bro. Howell, after the expiration of the labors of the previous year, entered immediately on the labor assigned him, and was faithfully engaged in the work for six months, at which time he resigned, with the understanding that another was to take his place; but circumstances over which we had no control prevented our getting his place filled during the remainder of the year.

A collection was taken up at the last meeting of the Association, amounting to.....\$43 63

Since then by the Churches:

Bethel Church, .....	50	50
Harmony Church,.....	41	25
Fountain Creek Church,.....	25	00
Salem Church,.....	11	60
Belleville Church,.....	14	25
Silver Creek " .....	5	00
Troy,.... " .....	4	00
Mascoutah " .....	3	50
Nine Mile " .....	2	00
		<hr/>
		\$205 23

We have, therefore, been enabled to collect and pay over to  
Brother Howell, the sum of.....\$200 00

Which leaves a balance of.....\$5 25

Respectfully submitted.

### MISSIONARY REPORT.

12. *Report of Missionary Labors performed by me for the South District Association, from October 29th, 1854, to April 29th, 1855.*

1st. Sermons preached,.....	79
2nd. Exhortations, .....	100
3rd. Addresses,.....	5
4th. Prayer Meetings,.....	19
5th. Family Visits,.....	55
6th. Converts Baptized,.....	27
9th. Sacramental occasions,.....	5
8th. Miles traveled,.....	1077

In performing the above labor I have visited, once a month, Salem and Harmony churches, having assisted in holding a protracted effort with Bethel and Belleville churches; also, at Turner's, Merrill's, Anderson's and Ogle's school houses, all of which have been, in some degree, successful. Besides those persons whom I have baptized, I have conversed with over two hundred anxious persons, eighty-three of whom have given themselves to Jesus by baptism. I have aided in the ordination of one brother to the work of the ministry, and I can say, in conclusion, that my labors have been heavy, but, in some measure, successful.

D. MASON HOWELL.

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### COMMITTEE OF DESTITUTION--REPORT,

13. That the South District Association embraces an area of some two thousand five hundred square miles, and in all this vast district of country there are but three Baptist churches that sustain regular sabbath preaching, and there are some three or four that have preaching twice a month, and there are some old churches on the decline, that do not have preaching more than once a month, and often they have none, while there are several small and feeble churches that have very little preaching, and some none that they can depend on, while all the rest of this vast district of country is one moral waste. To supply this great destitution we have on our minutes the names of some ten or twelve ministers, one-half of whom, from age and infirmity, are able to perform but little or no ministerial labor. Thus many of our churches are famishing for the Bread of Life, and all the Eastern, Southern and Western parts of this vast territory is entirely destitute of preaching by Baptist ministers, and have very little from any other denomination.

JOHN PADON.

14. *Resolved*, That this Association make an effort to raise at least five hundred dollars, to meet the vast destitution in our field. Carried after a short but very interesting exchange of views.

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### THE COMMITTEE UPON CHURCH LETTERS

15. Beg leave to report, that they have carefully examined the correspondence from the various churches, and, when necessary, have solicited fresh information from the brethren sent to sit in council with us, and the result of our labor is very painful. Only four of our churches report any additions during the past year, and several of them report a decrease of membership. But from the Statistical Table alone the true condition of all our churches cannot be learnt. Some of them are in a very cold and dangerous position; in others the discipline is alarmingly lax; others again have been making exertions to purge themselves from all disorderly persons, and are in a much better condition, although decreased in number, than they were last year. Your Committee would most earnestly implore all the churches to wake up to their duty on this vitally important matter, and to get rid of all members who will not live up to their covenant obligations, so that our churches may become, in deed and in truth, LIGHTS UNTO THE WORLD. Your Committee would also recommend, that in each church a bible class be held weekly, and that the weekly attendance be reported to the next Association, and that the churches be more particular in their information concerning the Sab-

bath Schools, so as to enable the Association to publish the average number of teachers and scholars who attend.

J. PETERS, *Chairman*.

16. On motion, it was resolved to appoint three of our number to meet with the General Association, and to confer with the Board of Domestic Missions belonging to that body, to see if any mutually advantageous arrangement can be entered into, that will enable us more successfully to do our Master's will, in spreading among the destitute of this portion of the State a knowledge of the Gospel of Salvation. Brethren Thomas A. Morton, J. Peters and D. Mason Howell were appointed; their traveling expenses to be paid out of any funds in the Treasurer's hands.

17. A Committee to recommend the place of next Associational Meeting was appointed. J. Lemen, Jr., J. Peters and J. Baird.

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### THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONARY LABOR—REPORT,

18. That they recommend the appointment, as last year, of one from each church, to form a Board of Directors of Missionary Labor within the bounds of this Association, whose duty it shall also be to raise funds in their several churches for the payment of Missionaries; and that an Executive Committee of three be appointed, who shall have their membership in the Belleville Church, whose duty it shall be to carry out the instructions of the Board of Directors, the Committee of one from each church to meet with the Executive Committee at Belleville, on the third Saturday of this present month, on the third Saturday of January, 1856, and on the third Saturday of April, and on the third Saturday of July, and at such other times as the Executive may call them together. It is further recommended, that Elder Elijah Dodson be applied to, and if possible, be induced to act as our Missionary for next year.

J. L. GARRETSON, *Chairman*.

The first portion of this Report was adopted, and the following brethren appointed to act in the several churches: Bethel Church, Robt. Lemen; Belleville Church, J. H. Wilderman; Troy Church, J. B. Street; Fountain Creek Church, J. L. Garretson; Waterloo Church, J. Peters; Pleasant Ridge Church, Wm. M. Lindley; Silver Creek Church, S. Teter; Nine Mile Creek Church, S. Hughes; Salem Church, J. Singleton; Richland Church, H. Holcomb; Mascoutah Church, E. M. Brown; Harmony Church, S. Roach; Lebanon Church, J. Wise; Eagle Prairie Church, S. Miles. Elder Thomas A. Morton, N. Smith and Thompson Williams were appointed the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, with instructions to get, if possible, Bro. Elder Dodson to act for the present year as itinerant Missionary for the Association.

19. At 11 o'clock, a recess, to hear a sermon from Elder R. C. Keele, after which the Association adjourned to meet at 2 o'clock. Prayer by Bro. Robt. Lemen.

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2 o'clock.

20. The Committee recommended that the Association meet next year with the Bethel Church, and that in accordance with a request made in the Troy Church letter, the time of meeting be changed from the month of October to the month of September, the weather being then generally much more favorable for an Associational gathering than it is at this season of the year. The recommendation of the Committee was taken up and discussed, and agreed to.

21. Upon motion, it was carried, that when we adjourn, it shall be to meet with the Bethel Church, on the Thursday before the first sabbath in September, 1856, (Sept. 4th.) Bro. Elder T. W. B. Dawson to preach the Introductory Sermon—in his absence, Bro. Josiah Lemen.

22. On motion, it was ordered that a collection be taken up to-night, to pay the expenses of our delegates to the General Association, and that to-morrow a collection be taken up for the Domestic Mission.

23. A new church, planted at Lebanon, presented a letter, and asked for admission among our churches. On motion, the letter was received, and the hand of fellowship given to Bro. H. McCoy, the Messenger of the Church.

24. The Circular Letter ordered to be prepared by last Association was then called for, but as Bro. Morton was then too ill to leave his bed, it was agreed to adjourn till to-morrow morning, at half-past 8 o'clock. Prayer by Bro. Peters.

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SABBATH MORNING, October 7th.

Met as by appointment, and, after a season of prayer—Bro. Padon in the chair—the Circular Letter, printed at the end of these Minutes, was read, and after an address from Bro. Elder Dodson, strongly recommending its contents to the prayerful consideration of all the members of our churches, it was unanimously accepted, and ordered to be printed with the minutes, eight hundred copies of which were ordered. After a solemn season of prayer, the Association adjourned to meet next year with the Bethel Church.



## LETTER OF CORRESPONDENCE.

TO SISTER ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIETIES :

*Christian Brethren*—We have enjoyed a more than ordinary interesting season, and the matters brought before us will be found worthy of your consideration. We beg, therefore, to refer you to the reports of the various committees. The Lord has consigned to us a large and most important field, requiring much labor, and we have few laborers—indeed many of our churches are, for want of preachers, going down, for the enemies of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ are in this field, very active. We need help—we need qualified preachers—we need your prayers. May the Lord put into your hearts to pray for us, and to send qualified laborers into this district.

Your brethren in “The blessed hope of the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

T. W. DAWSON, *Moderator*.

D. MASON HOWELL, *Clerk*.

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REPORT OF FINANCE COMMITTEE.

DR.		CR.
Oct., 1854—In Treasurer's hands,.....	\$8 50	Paid for Prepar'g & Printing Minutes, \$26 00
Received for Printing Minutes,.....	32 20	Paid to D. M. Howell, for Missionary
Collected for Domestic Missions,.....	205 23	Labor, .....
Received at the Meeting for Minutes,....	30 25	On hand,.....
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	\$276 18	\$276 18

WM. M. LINDLEY, *Chairman*.

JAMES H. LEMEN, *Standing Secretary*, Collinsville P. O.

D. MASON HOWELL, *Treasurer*, Belleville P. O.

## CIRCULAR LETTER.

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IN compliance with the request of the last Association, I humbly submit the following thoughts, upon the want of *Exhorters*, said to be felt in the churches. As the gift of exhortation is only one among a group of gifts, for the purposes of mercy, graciously bestowed upon the Church of Jesus Christ; to do justice to the request of the Association, and to the important subject, it will be necessary to glance at its relative connection with some of the others, and subordinate place in the Divine plan of ~~wonder~~ and mercy, to those others. In the wisdom of God, it is designed that different members should fill various offices in his house; and, in accordance with this design, gifts differing in kind, but all equally necessary for the comfort and growth of the body, are given: "for, as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another, having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us." Thus as we learn from Paul's letter to the Christians at Rome, to some of the members of the first Christian Church was given the gift of *Prophecy*: to others, the gift of *Ministering*: to others, the gift of *Teaching*: and, to others, the gift of *Exhorting*.

The gift of *Prophecy*, by which I understand the gift of predicting future events, it will, I suppose, be conceded, was withdrawn from the Church at the close of the apostolic age, using here that term in its most restricted sense, and thus confining it to the life-time of the inspired apostles — the record of whose labors is now the Church's guide in all matters of doctrine and practice. This great gift was not, however, confined to them in the first Churches, but when given to others, it must have been generally for local and temporary purposes, although, doubtless, then of great moment for the guidance and safety of the Churches. But, ceasing to be necessary, this gift was withdrawn; and whether it will ever be restored again, need give us no concern, at least at present, for when given, if it ever shall, in the wisdom of God, be found necessary, it will be accompanied with its own credentials, and come with demonstration of the Spirit, so as to leave the Church no room to question that it is the power of God sent to direct and guide.

The gift of understanding the prophecies already given, excepting such as were fulfilled at the first coming of our Lord, by the setting up of his kingdom upon the earth, evidently has not yet been fully given to the Church, and the reason, doubtless is, that this gift has not yet been needed for the good of the Church; but as we near the time of the end, this gift will be needed, and then the gift of understanding the prophecies may be confidently expected; for that it shall then be given, we have the sure word of prophecy: — the Lord, by the prophet Daniel, saith: "*the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end; many shall be purified and made white and tried, but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand, and they that understand among the people shall instruct many.*" This great gift ought, therefore, now that the din of wars, and rumors

of wars are heard on every side, to be the subject of earnest prayer on the part of all who are "LOOKING FOR THE BLESSED HOPE AND THE GLORIOUS APPEARING OF THE GREAT GOD AND OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST." And as this gift, when given, may not come to the pastors, but to others, specially qualified by grace to receive it, every member of the Church of Christ ought to be making the Scriptures their daily study, that they may be familiar with the letter of the precious word, and zealously ought we all to be purifying ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh, and to be ever pondering the words of the great God and our Lord and Saviour in our hearts.

The gift of *Ministering*, that is, of serving and waiting upon others, which is the true meaning of the word *minister*, is a gift without which the Church of Jesus Christ cannot exist; this, however, is a gift sadly neglected by the churches in the present day, and, in consequence of this neglect, the Lord's body is not discerned by many who profess to be Christians, and, not discerning the Lord's body, many are eating and drinking condemnation to themselves; that is, they are indulging in false hopes, and thinking themselves secure in Christ, whilst they are still members of the kingdom of the god of this world, and are living to the flesh. The neglect of this gift is, perhaps, the true cause, not only of the want of exhorters complained of, but also of the want of faithful and properly qualified teachers, and of many of our other wants besides. For the neglect of this gift is the cause of our want of brotherly love, and therefore of unity of aim and action—as members one of another, and all stewards of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has committed unto us the "gospel of the grace of God" for the redemption of the lost children of men. Wanting ministers in our Churches—faithful men and women, who, from love to God, feel themselves constrained to devote themselves to the work of visiting and relieving the wants, and supplying spiritual consolation to the needy, and personal sympathy to the weak, in their trials and afflictions, whether of a temporal or spiritual kind, we are not true Churches of Jesus Christ, but disjointed bodies, without either moral symmetry or strength: and therefore, in no proper sense are we able to perform the functions of the body of Christ, nor present to the world the beautiful features of a body governed and actuated by the holy spirit of love, which, as a Church of Jesus Christ, we ought to be able to do, for only by so doing can we keep his commandments, and become the true lights of the world. In consequence of the neglect of this gift of ministering, we are not "compact together with that which every joint supplies," nor are we "built up in one, an habitation for the Spirit," for were we so compacted and built up, every member of the Church—the body of Christ, would have, and would therefore exhibit, an interest in all the other members, and thus would love one another, and would live as members of one body, even of the body of Christ, whose love is pure and holy, without any mingling of selfishness: thus living, the members all would be made, indeed, to drink of one spirit, and would all be made to eat indeed, of the one bread, even of Christ; and in us would be fulfilled the great and precious promise, for we would, thus living, be made partakers of the Divine nature.

Neglecting the beautiful arrangement of a diversity of gifts, which the great Head of the Church has designed should be manifested in different members of the one body—in these latter days an individual member is called to fill the office of pastor, and no sooner is he set apart for the gospel ministry, than it is expected of him, by the disjointed

members, calling itself a church, that he shall be fully able to fill all the diversified offices of minister, teacher and exhorter — offices requiring different gifts, and although all necessary to make up “*one perfect man,*” seldom, if ever, all given, at least in any superlative degree to any one individual, and indeed the combination is seldom, if ever, sought for or thought about, when a church calls, or sets apart one of their members to the work—a work in all its relationships of visitor, teacher and exhorter far beyond the power of *any one man* properly to perform : and the result soon manifests itself, either on the part of the minister, who breaks down in the vain attempt to do the work of several men, or on the part of the disjointed body, called the church, among whom soon commences the satanic work of grumbling and fermenting discontent—the pastor does not come up to their expectation as a minister—he does not go enough from home to house, to hear the trials and give consolation to the afflicted and tempted— or, he is not so good a teacher as they expected—his sermons are not as interesting, as they would like—they do not care much about hearing him, and an example is thus given by many who profess to be Christians, to poor perishing sinners, to stay away from the house of God in direct transgression of the commandments of Christ—or, he is not so good at exhortation, and does not touch the feelings enough — and, being dissatisfied with the brother they have called, they feel no interest in supporting him ; and, in addition to all his other difficulties, the poor pastor is left to struggle on with poverty, and without any needed help, until, in too many cases, the heart of the man becomes chilled, and a new field is sought, or the work is altogether left. Hundreds of ordained ministers may be found in this country, whose hearts once burned with zeal for the cause of Christ, that are now permitting the world and its affairs to engross (if not all,) at least the greater part of their time, to the dishonor of Christ, and the ruin of many souls. Neglecting the diversity of gifts designed by our Lord, no sooner does one of our members manifest that he can publicly pray and exhort a little, than he must be licensed and then ordained, without all the qualifications required even being taken into consideration. Men are thus called by churches to become teachers in word and doctrine, and to discharge all the other diversified duties now expected of a pastor, who would, in their proper place, make very good ministers or most useful exhorters, and thus most useful servants in the Church of Christ, if permitted to work in their proper places, but being called to do a work which Christ never designed them for, the Church is not only deprived of useful members in a sphere where they are much needed, but the teacher’s desk is filled with unqualified brethren, by members whose love and zeal may be very commendable, but whose services, in consequence of their having been called to do a work for which they never were designed, are any thing but profitable ; and the result is just what might have been expected — churches are to be found with an ill-instructed, disjointed body of members, who have been induced to profess a religion they do not clearly understand, and who, therefore, are but poorly qualified to obey the injunction, “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.”

It is to be feared that the gift of Exhortation, or the power of appealing to the feelings, so as to produce an immediate result, has come to be prized by many churches *above the gift of teaching* : and, as a natural consequence, by many professed followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, *emotional feeling* is more regarded than *obedience to the truth*, and therefore the reading of the Word of God is sadly neglected ; yet, surely, it ought

to be known to all who have "put on Christ," that the Word of God is the soul's proper food, and that without this heavenly bread it must languish and die : and, that as our quickened spirits can only be fed with the body and blood of Christ, when we are living in obedience and keeping his commandments, it is needful not only that we read and study his precious Word, but also that we understand all that he has been pleased to reveal. For we can only keep his commandments and live in obedience to the truth as our eyes are opened to understand the doctrines of the kingdom ; it is therefore not only necessary that all the members of Christ read and study the word of God, but that there should be qualified teachers in the Church of Christ to open and expound the Word; and without qualified teachers of the doctrine of Christ, *exhorters* can do but little good. Indeed, I would go further and say, that without a qualified teacher, mere exhorters in a church are but a questionable blessing, for unless an exhorter be sound as to his principles, unless his sentiments be derived from the oracles of Divine Truth, and the appeals to the feelings of others come from a heart impressed with the beauty, harmony and utility of the doctrines taught by Him who "is the way, the truth and the life" sympathetic appeals to the affections of others, to rouse them to emotional sympathy, will seldom, if ever, prove the means of saving a soul, and often, very often, may prove a delusion and a snare, by leading men to believe they have met with a change of heart, the fallow ground of whose hearts have not at all been broken up, and whose all of religion will therefore be merely the remembrance of some emotional workings of fear and hope, and of some comfortable consolations in hope, felt only in the outer man, under the influence of the new emotions of hope, engendered by the exhorter's appeals, a profession of religion is made ; and although a change even of the life may seem to manifest itself, and give promise of a new man for a few days, no real change is there : and, as a natural consequence, the new convert scarcely remains faithful long enough to allow the *mighty work* to be decently chronicled in some paper, that the fame of the preacher may be trumpeted over the world. Brethren, it is not thus that the kingdom of Jesus Christ will ever be built up. Men must be taught before they can seek faith to believe, and it is the duty of a teacher commissioned by the church of Jesus Christ, faithfully to explain all the doctrines of the gospel, and to make known unto men the terms of discipleship—to teach that the way to life eternal is one of self-denial, and honestly to set forth the difficulties of the cross, and to enlighten and convince, if possible, the understanding of men, that none be entrapped to make a profession of religion who have not counted the cost, and who, in the full possession of all the facts, are not willing to give up the world that they may gain Christ ; after the teacher's work is honestly done and the truth made plain to men's understandings, a good warm EXHORTATION from an honest heart, may be blessed of God to the inclining and turning of perishing men to himself. Every minister in word and doctrine must therefore, to some extent, be an exhorter, but it is the revealed design of our Lord, that in his church, others specially adapted by grace, and qualified for this work, should take it up where the teacher leaves it, and in the simple language of their own feeling hearts, carry the truths taught from the desk home to the feeling and consciences and hearts of their neighbors :—many members of our churches who are utterly unqualified to be teachers, could do this great and important work with an effect altogether beyond the power of the most gifted teacher. The truth of this remark is seen in our covenant and protracted meetings : in these

meetings, the feelings of the members of our churches sometimes get enlisted in the work, and they then are constrained from love, to speak the language of their feelings. And what is the effect? We have all seen it; *their* simple earnestness melts its way into hearts that are steeled against all the moving appeals that the preacher, however eloquent and earnest, could utter; and words that, if spoken from the desk, would only raise a smile, when, in the sincerity of feeling, spoken from the body of the meeting, by members who make no pretensions to learning, or to be teachers, but who have established a reputation for honesty in their daily walk among men, in the ordinary business of life, have a power that subdues; the most stubborn hearts are seen yielding before *this* influence; by it, hearts of stone are broken; few, indeed, can resist the simple sincerity and earnestness of love-constrained neighbors, who, forgetting all self, seek to win men's souls to Christ. And when men's hearts, who have heard the doctrine of Christ faithfully preached, yield, the doctrines, received before by their understandings, but resisted by their hearts, find an entrance into their souls, and they are made to cry for mercy—not from merely emotional feeling, but from an enlightened understanding of their position, and of their danger; and the door of their hearts being opened for the entrance of the Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, who alone can give faith and repentance unto life, and who alone can cleanse and save; the spirit of love enters, and they are enabled to believe with the heart unto righteousness, and to make confession with the tongue unto salvation. It may, therefore, have been noticed by all the members of this Association, that the principal aim and work of what is called a *revivalist* preacher, is to stir up the members of the church, so as to get *them* to feel for men's souls, and to get some of *them*, constrained from love, to speak and work; and no great results from any revival meetings are ever seen, until the members of the church are first moved upon, and, from the constraining impulse of their feelings, begin to pray and exhort, without the necessity of any external promptings—of the truth of this, you are all witnesses. Ought we not, as churches, to learn the lesson it teaches? And does it not teach us that our own church members ought to be our revivalist preachers?—that we ought always to have in our own body warm-hearted exhorters, ready and anxious to carry home to the hearts of their neighbors the truths taught from the desk. Our present mode of working for the Lord and for the souls of men by fits and by starts, is not to the honor of Christ, nor is it the appointed way to glorify his name and prepare the world for his second coming. Would it not be well for us all to understand that, just so long as our churches shall depend upon revivalist preaching, or that kind of preaching which consists chiefly in appeals to the feelings of men, rather than upon the teachings of the doctrines of Christ, which appeals to men's understanding and instructs their judgment, to build them up, just so long shall we be disjoined and therefore feeble bodies. We may, indeed, by such a hot-bed process, add many names to the list in our church books, and by this means make a figure in the papers of the day; but we never, by *that means*, can become a compacted body—members one of another—a true church—the body of Christ—an habitation for the Spirit of God, and therefore the light of the world—NEVER. Let the churches change their pastors as often as they may; at the end of every protracted meeting if they please. This, indeed, bids fair to become the practice, judging from the progress of late made in that direction.

By what has been said, I do not wish to be understood to mean that it

is not the duty of all of our churches to make special efforts for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ, and for the salvation of men's souls; on the contrary, it is the duty of every church to hold protracted efforts just as often as they think they can get people to attend them. But we ought to call perishing men together to hear the Gospel of Christ explained, and the doctrines of His Kingdom taught, not merely or chiefly to appeal to their feelings and work upon their affections, and move them to make a profession of religion without giving them fully to understand the terms of crucifixion to the flesh and the world, upon which, alone, the grace of salvation through Christ can be given or received. The gift of *Exhortation* is intended by our Lord to be secondary, I will not say in importance, but certainly in place, and subordinate in object to that of *teaching*. When the order is reversed, the end for which it is given cannot be as well, if it can at all be accomplished; for a heart moved to action through the feelings, before the judgment is enlightened and the understanding convinced, is, to say the least, ever afterwards likely to be amongst that class who are for ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. And in a true Church of Jesus Christ there never ought to be any need of special efforts to stir up the members to the love of God, and to feel for the souls of men; but all the members ought to be continually upon the watch to win souls to Christ—it is the Master's command, and, therefore, "He that winneth souls is wise."

But the practical question is: What ought we, as churches, now to do? The answer I would give, is: Let us, at once, get rid of the leaven of **POPERY**, that has, since the Protestant Reformation, infused itself into the Church of Jesus Christ. Let us, at once, cease to expect one man to do a whole church's work; and let us all know, and ask God to *make us feel*, that we have in the Church of Christ something more to do than only to raise a few dollars a year for a minister's support, and then to attend when altogether convenient, or *we feel like it*, our places in the house erected for God's worship, and for the preaching of the Word of Life to the perishing. Let us know, and ask God to *make us feel*, that we are called upon to be co-workers with the minister we have called to be our teacher, and with Christ our Head, in the great work of seeking the salvation of our fellow-men. And let us get our churches at once organized upon the scriptural basis of a diversity of gifts and callings, and choose from amongst ourselves the best qualified we have got for *Ministers*, to go amongst the members and from house to house. These Ministers, as I understand it, are also called in the Scriptures Deacons and Deaconesses—an office that has most important duties attached to it, duties now almost entirely neglected in our churches. Let us see to it that these duties are performed, that all our members are frequently visited, and that the doctrines preached from the desk are carried home to the hearts and into the lives of our members.

If it is objected that this is too much like work—that it is a labor our members will not be found willing to perform, then, let all who object be turned out of the body; clearly, they have no business in it, for none but those who are willing to work for Christ can be saved by him; lukewarm members he has declared he will spew out of his mouth—and spiritually dead members are of no use to the Church or to Christ. Let them, therefore, go into his kingdom to whom they belong; we have no right to have in the Church of Christ any but such as have been made free from the god of this world, and have become the servants of God—for such only have fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life. It

is the duty of all baptized believers to yield themselves unto God, as those who are alive from the dead—for what else are they buried by baptism into the death of Christ? and how otherwise can they put on Christ? Being made free from sin they become the servants of righteousness, and are not their own, but Christ's, who loved them, and gave Himself for them, and the ransom price of their redemption from everlasting death was His own precious blood. Any member, therefore, who objects to do the will of Christ, as explained to us in His Word, has no lot or part in Him; for all who are His love him, and all who love Him seek to keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous—indeed, in keeping them there is an exceeding great reward; for it is a law in the Kingdom of God, that the more we do good to others or try to do good, the more we ourselves are blessed.

Now, in conclusion, let me say—the work is all of God. A prophet is not, therefore, above a teacher, nor a teacher above a deacon, nor a deacon above the feeblest member brought into Christ's kingdom. We are all brethren; it is God that worketh in all. "There are," saith the Apostle Paul, "diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all, and the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man for the profit of all. Unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of Christ."

THOMAS A. MORTON.