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LIBERTY BAPTIST
CHURCH
BROWNVILLE, KY.

MINUTES

OF THE FOURTH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE LIBERTY ASSOCIATION OF UNITED BAPTISTS, HELD AT BROWNVILLE, KY., ON THE 19th, 20th and 21st OF AUGUST, 1843.

An introductory Sermon was delivered by Elder **MOSES AKIN**, from Mark, ch. 16, verse 15: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

The Association met—Prayer by brother Lock—Letters from the following churches were read and their Messengers' names enrolled.

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS' NAMES.		Baptized.	R'd. by Let.	Restored.	Dismissed.	Excluded.	Dead.	Total.
<i>Mount Tabor</i> — JAMES LOCK , * James Brooks, T. Cockrell.	12	7	7	11	6				252
<i>Salem</i> —Wm. I. Garnett, Isaac Newland,	5	3	2	4					89
<i>Glasgow</i> — MOSES AKIN , Wm. R. McFerran, R. Garnett,	47	1	1	8	5	1			168
<i>Bowling Green</i> —J. M. PENDLETON, J. Burnam, J. L. Shower,	21	3	5	10	6				209
<i>Mount Olive</i> —Chas. Jackson, Neely Hall, Sam'l Sheets,	16	3	3						44
<i>Liberty Hill</i> —R. W. THOMAS, Peyton Cooke, J M Anderson		1							31
<i>Three Springs</i> —THOMAS EDWARDS, E. W. Lewis,			1	2	1				73
<i>Union Chapel</i> —D. T. Busby, John Crawford, B. D. Burch,	12			2					70
<i>Holly Spring</i> —David Gawyer, Jas. S. Jones, Jas. M. Webb,	21		1	1	3				74
<i>Brownville</i> —John Rountree, Jesse Jones, Jno. S. Davis,	2			1					52
<i>Scottville</i> —Isham Thomas,	3	2		2	1				31
<i>Sinking Creek</i> —Isaac Greer, Edley Neagle, T. H. Camp,	28	6		2	2				88
<i>Friendship</i> —Asa B. Gardner, Warren Moore, J. C Rountree,	4	5		2					64
<i>Rock Spring</i> —Geo. Bohannon, J. N. Edwards, Jas. G. Hardy,	1	5		1					32
<i>Little Hope</i> — RICH'D G. DOYLE , <i>Isaac Brown</i> , Martin Jones,	20	9		3	2				83
<i>New Hope</i> — AZARIAH HATCHER , Thomas R. White,	16			23					97
<i>Little Bethel</i> — Wm. Adams , <i>Jesse Smith</i> ,		9		3	1				37
<i>Green River</i> —Joshua W. Brooks, Dennis Logsdan,			1	5	2	3			115
<i>Munfordville</i> —B. F. Buster,									17
<i>Little Reedy</i> —J. V. Logsdan, J. C. Jones, Isaac Jones,									13
	192	55	10	71	34	19			1639

The two churches last named petitioned for admittance into the Association and were received.

* Ordained ministers' names are in CAPITALS—licensed in italics. There are in the Association 9 ordained and 3 licensed preachers.

Letters from corresponding Associations were called for and read, viz:—*Goshen*—Letter but no delegate. Brethren Rogers and Wortham of that body being present were invited to seats.

Russell's Creek—Letter but no Messenger.
Bethel—Elder Robert Williams and brother D. Hail.
Barren River—Elders Z. and H. Emerson, Spillman and Clayton.

Gasper River—Elder Taylor, though not a Messenger, was invited to a seat. On motion, appointed a committee of brethren, consisting of Messrs. McFerran, Burnam, Cooke, Rountree, and Hardy, to take into consideration the propriety of appointing a Missionary to labor in the bounds of the Association the next year—and also the best plan of raising funds to sustain said missionary.

Appointed brethren Locke, Akin, and Newland with the Moderator and Clerk, a Committee of Arrangement.

Brethren Hardy, McFerran, I. Thomas, Anderson, and Shower, appointed to prepare the necessary letters of correspondence.

Appointed Elders Taylor, Williams, and Pendleton, to preach to-morrow. Adjourned till Monday 9 o'clock—Prayer by brother Thomas.

On **Lord's Day** the ministers appointed preached in the following order.
 Elder Taylor, from John i. 29: "Behold the lamb of God," &c.
 Elder Williams, from Jeremiah viii. 20: "The harvest is past," &c.
 Elder Pendleton, from Hebrews ii. 3: "How shall we escape," &c.

MONDAY.—Met according to adjournment. Prayer by brother Brown. Called for the report of the Committee of Arrangement—adopted.

The Committee of Correspondence reported letters to the following Associations, and Messengers were appointed to bear them, viz:

Russell's Creek—Elders Edwards and Akin, and brother Lewis.

Barren River—Elders Locke, Akin, Doyle, Brown, and brother Adams.

Goshen—Brethren Logsdon, Brown, and Rountree.

Gasper River—Unable to obtain a Messenger.

Bethel—Elders Pendleton and Thomas, and brethren Garnett and Wilkins.

Appointed Elders Taylor, Williams and H. Emerson to preach to-day.

The Circular Letter was called for—read, and ordered to be printed.

In answer to those churches that request the appointment of Union meetings, it was decided that the Association has no jurisdiction over the matter—but that it is with the churches.

Appointed J. M. Pendleton to preach the next introductory Sermon; R. W. ~~Thomas to be appointed; A. M. Barret to write the~~ Circular Letter. The Association to be held next year at Bowling-Green, commencing on Saturday before the 3d Lord's day in August, 1844. Appointed E. W. Lewis and Isham Thomas a Committee of Finance, who reported from the churches for printing Minutes, &c. \$18 6½ cents. Agreed that 600 copies of the Minutes be published, and that the Clerk superintend the printing and distribution thereof. Appointed brethren McFerran and Garnett to settle with the Treasurer and report to the next Association.

The Missionary Committee made the following report which was unanimously adopted:—

The committee appointed to take into consideration the propriety of appointing a Missionary to labor in the bounds of the Association the next year, beg leave to report:—That in view of the great destitution of gospel preaching in our bounds—and in view of the fact that the Head of the Church gave to his disciples the command, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature'—and that it is our duty to obey him in all things—as no objects are so dear to the Christian's heart as the glory of God and the salvation ~~of sinners~~ ~~and the glory of the Father~~ ~~as God prospere to provide the means of having the gospel preached to every creature.~~

Therefore, *Resolved*, That a Missionary be appointed to labor in the bounds of the Association the ensuing year—and that he be elected by private ballot.

Resolved, That we pay said missionary \$300 for his services—payments to be made quarterly; which sum is to be raised by the voluntary contributions of churches and individuals, and paid to the chairman of the Executive Committee, whose duty it shall be to pay it to the missionary as above directed.

Resolved, That the Delegates from the churches (so far as they feel themselves at liberty) be requested to state what portion of the above named sum their respective churches will contribute; and that those delegates who cannot now say what their churches will do, be solicited to bring the subject before them as soon as convenient, ascertain what can be done, and report to the Executive Committee.

Resolved, That the missionary be directed to visit each church in the association and hold protracted meetings when it is advisable—and that any voluntary contributions that may be made him shall form no part of his salary of \$300 hereby agreed to be paid him.

Resolved, That an Executive Committee be appointed consisting of twenty members, one member from each church; that the chairman of said committee be elected by private ballot, and that he with any five members shall constitute a quorum—but it shall be the duty of the chairman to give as general notice as he can to the members of the committee of the time and place of meeting.

Resolved, That the Executive Committee meet at Mount Tabor, the 3d Saturday in November next—at Friendship, the 1st Saturday in February—at New Hope, the 1st Saturday in May—and that their fourth meeting be at the next Association.

In pursuance of the above resolutions Elder Moses Akin was appointed Missionary, and the following brethren the Executive Committee: Peyton Cooke, Chairman, John Lock, Isaac Newland, Richard Garnett, John Burnam, Charles

Jackson, E. W. Lewis, David T. Busby, James S. Jones, A. M. Barret, Isham Thomas, T. H. Camp, J. C. Rountree, James G. Hardy, Martin Jones, Isaac Bush, William Adams, Joshua W. Brooks, J. C. Rush, and J. B. Logsden.

The following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That in view of the goodness of God and of our unfaithfulness since the formation of our association, we recommend to the churches to observe the first Saturday in January and July, as days of Fasting and Prayer to God, that he would continue his blessings with us, and pour out his Spirit more copiously on our churches, and that the time may speedily come when we will have no longer to say to our neighbors "Know ye the Lord, but all shall know him from the least to the greatest."

Resolved, That the attention of the churches be especially directed to the command of Christ, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he would send laborers into his harvest."

Resolved, That we recommend to the churches the propriety of establishing a permanent Missionary Fund to be appropriated to sending the gospel to the destitute in our bounds, and that said fund be raised by the voluntary contributions of churches and individuals—and that they report to the next association the amount collected—also the amount subscribed but uncollected.

Ordered, That the chairman of the Executive Committee settle with former missionaries—receive the balance due on former subscriptions, and hold it subject to the operations of the present year.

Resolved, That our thanks be tendered to the citizens of Brownville and vicinity for their hospitality during our session.

On motion, adjourned. Prayer by brother Hatcher.

JAMES M. PENDLETON, *Moderator*.

RICHARD GARNETT, *Clerk*.

C I R C U L A R L E T T E R .

DEAR BRETHREN :—

The subject to which we invite your attention in our Circular Letter for the present year, is BACKSLIDING. And as our limits forbid diffusiveness, we will with all practicable brevity, arrange our thoughts under the following divisions:—

1. The Nature of backsliding.
2. The causes from which it originates.
3. The guilt contracted in backsliding.
4. The means of rescue from a backslidden state.

I. The nature of backsliding. What is it to backslide? It signifies a departure from God. Hence it is said in the prophecy of Jeremiah, "Return, ye backsliding children," language which evidently implies that the Israelites had departed from Jehovah. There is a backsliding in *heart*—and in *life*. Solomon speaks of the "backslider in heart." Although backsliding in life does not invariably result from heart-backsliding, yet it follows with lamentable frequency. Backsliding begins with the heart. The affections lose in a measure their devoutness—they are withdrawn from divine things—and there is a consequent decrease of interest in religious duties. The closet is unfrequented—or if visited at all there is little enjoyment in secret devotion. Public worship becomes comparatively uninteresting. The heart does not leap for joy when it is said "let us go to the house of the Lord." Love of the world takes possession of the soul (for the backslider has left his first love) and unless God graciously interpose, conformity to the customs and practices of the world will follow. There will be an open commission of sin. Ah! how often does internal lead to external departure from God! Dear brethren, may Almighty power and grace preserve you from backsliding.

II. The causes whence backsliding originates. These are numerous. We can name only a few.

1. *Inattention to the duty of self-examination.* How can we know our spiritual condition unless we examine ourselves? "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith" is an apostolic injunction. Owing to the depravity of the heart and the deceitfulness of sin men are disposed to flatter themselves. Self-examination is the best cure for self-flattery.

2. *Neglect of the Bible, or a superficial perusal of it.* Divine truth is the food of the soul, and paradoxical as it may appear it is also the medicine of the soul. But this truth is not brought into miraculous contact with the human mind. We must *read and study* the Holy Scriptures; for they are prominent among the means by which our sanctification is accomplished. If this be true, neglect of the Bible may be numbered among the causes of backsliding.

3. *Neglect of Prayer.* It is the praying Christian who grows in grace. Prayer is indispensable to progress in the divine life. No professor of religion who does not hold daily communion with God in prayer need expect to be adorned with the graces of the Divine spirit. Indeed, the command of Christ "watch and pray," teaches by implication that the Christian who neglects prayer will necessarily become a backslider. It may be said in truth that while backsliding promotes prayerlessness, a neglect of prayer promotes backsliding.

4. *Improper worldly associations.* It would not be right to avoid altogether the company of the wicked. It is proper to associate with them for the sake of doing them good. For this reason the Saviour mingled in the society of "publicans and sinners." But it is at our soul's peril if we make the ungodly our intimate companions and suffer them to exert over us a contaminating moral influence. "What concord has Christ with Belial!" "One sinner destroyeth much good" Dear brethren, as you value your spiritual prosperity, form no associations with the wicked which will be pernicious to your religious interests.

III. THE GUILT CONTRACTED IN BACKSLIDING.

1. *We dishonor God our Heavenly Father.* All sin dishonors God; but there is peculiar criminality in the sin of backsliding. The backslider has professed to know God and enjoy his favor. After tasting that the Lord is gracious, he forsakes him, and in so doing "sets to his seal" that the enjoyments of religion are unsatisfying to the soul. Does not this dishonor God? Is there not guilt in it?

2. *We most unkindly requite the Saviour.* He loved us and gave himself for us. He died to save us from sin; but in backsliding we virtually say the object of his death shall not be accomplished in us. Is there not guilt in this?

3. *We grieve the Holy Ghost.* Christians are born of the Spirit. His agency is indispensable in the regeneration of the heart. He is called the *Holy Spirit* because it is his province to *make holy*. It is said "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." We are under infinite obligations to the Spirit. In backsliding we violate those obligations and consequently grieve him. Surely there is guilt in such a course.

4. *We act unworthily of our profession and disqualify ourselves for usefulness in the cause of God.* The Christian profession is a holy profession. We profess to be saints. How incompatible is backsliding with such a profession! But we disqualify ourselves for usefulness. The backslider is unprepared to labor in the vineyard of the Lord—he is useless in the church and can exert no salutary influence over the world. In acting unworthily of our profession and disqualifying ourselves for usefulness we of necessity contract guilt.

IV. THE MEANS OF RESCUE FROM A BACKSLIDDEN STATE.

1. *Repentance.* "Know thou therefore that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast departed from the Lord." Repentance involves an experimental sense of the bitterness of departing from God. The backslider must "repent and do the first works." Without true penitence the joy of God's salvation will not be restored.

2. *Confession.* There must be an acknowledgement of the sin of backsliding. "He that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy." David in his backslidden state said, "I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me." Repentance leads to confession.

3. *An abandonment of sin.* True penitence and humble confession always lead to a forsaking of sin. We act hypocritically if we ask God to forgive sins which we do not abandon. There must be fruits meet for repentance.

4. *Prayer.* "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation—take away all iniquity and receive us graciously," must be the burden of our petitions. To penitent praying, returning backsliders, God says, "I will heal your backslidings." But we have filled our assigned limits, and though the subject is by no means exhausted we must close. Grace, mercy and peace be with you.