

Chapter VIII.

1835 - 1837

The Missionary Controversy.

Character of those who composed the opposition to the Convention; ground of opposition; defence of the Convention in letters to Dr. Watson.

The opposition to the Convention, and to missions of every character, was now fully organized and its forces were in the field. At its head were a few men who ought to have known, and probably did know better. Their mental character, and personal ambition, and jealousies, have before been mentioned. They would occupy no second place, and this temper, and bel-
ligerent habits, disqualified them for the first place any where, except among the Anti-missionaries. There as a matter of course, they took their position. The rank and file of the opposition, were made up of the ignorant, and prejudiced, and the parsimonious, which classes them unhappily bounded in our churches. With these fraternized on this subject, all the factions which had formerly been Baptists; the Campbellites, the Separates, the Free Wills, and the rest.

(Anti-
missionary
doctrine)

Each had of course, some influence, and all united to swell the popular clamor against the Convention, and its friends. These were a small band, but they stood every man in his place, unmoved and invincible.

The grounds upon which the enemies of missions rested their opposition were characteristic, the most prominent of which may here be stated. They maintained that missionary action, and especially under the direction of Boards, authorized to collect funds, and send out preachers, such as the Convention, and other like organizations proposed, was until very recently, unheard of in Baptist history; that it was an unauthorized, and mischievous innovation; that it was in opposition to the teachings of the word of God, condemned by the principles of religion, and not to be endured; that God will unquestionably save all his elect people, whether in Christian or heathen lands, and that he will do so without the presumptuous interference, or pretended aid of Conventions, and Missionary societies; that all missionary organizations are moneyed institutions by which the chief managers, and many of the missionaries enrich themselves, and that therefore the raising of funds for missionary purposes ^{is} but another form of obtaining money under false pretences; that the offer of pecuniary ^{compensation} ~~compensation~~ for preaching is an invitation to impostors, and that those who receive it preach for money, without which they would not preach at all; and that as impostors, or at least ^{il} ~~il~~ incendiary hirelings, they ought to be debarred from our pulpits, and disfellowshipped by all other good men; that those who join the Convention, or any other society, necessarily go out of the churches to do so, that they thereby forfeit their membership, and ought to be expelled from the churches; and that these missionary combinations are dangerous to religious, and political freedom, and ought to be suppressed. These, and other like

propositions, in the hands of their leaders, were, it must be confessed, defended, and sustained, with great plausibility, and effect. By others they were sustained by course, and vulgar abuse, mingled with denunciations, and stale witticisms. But by all they were advocated with untiring pertinacity, and with constant appeals to the lower passions of the people, who thus drilled, were soon ready for any excesses which they ^{were} invited to perpetrate against the friends of missions.

These attacks were combated by the friends of missions, with all practicable care and prudence, as ^{best} but they could from the could, from the pulpit, and the press. Sermons were preached ~~as~~ often as ~~thought necessary~~, and able defences were published by various brethren. ~~One of these will serve as a~~ ^{specimen} ~~remainder~~ of all the remainder. It was a series of Letters, addressed by Dr. Howell to Dr. John M. Watson, and published in large numbers, in pamphlet form. They were as follows:

Letter No. 1

Dear brethren:

The brethren who act with you in opposition to the Convention, have come to the conclusion, to sever the churches on that subject; and to form new churches and associations, the fundamental articles in the constitution of which shall forbid fellowship with any brother favorable to missions; and with any church that shall tolerate in its memberships any such brother. Am I right in this statement? If not, ~~correct me.~~ How is the question to be settled? Of course on Bible principles. I am sure that neither you nor I desire union at the expense of truth. The doctrines on the subject of

missions, held by the Baptist churches from time immemorial, will show what they have ever believed to be truth.

I assert that from the days of the Apostles to the present time, the true legitimate churches have ever been missionary bodies:

The facts recorded in the history of the churches by impartial hands, to you as accessible as to me, will show whether my assertion is sustained. I ask now not^{ly} whether to disseminate the Gospel by the instrumentality of missionaries, be scriptural and right; I may demonstrate that fact in another letter; but I will prove that the Baptist churches have always believed and acted upon that principle. This may appear to some of our brethren in this quarter a wild statement; but to the proof.

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The Gospel was preached in France, Spain, Italy, and most other countries in continental Europe, certainly, and probably in England, by Paul, when he was, as he himself says a missionary "to the heathen field." Gal. 2:9. In those countries, the Gospel, more or less pure, has prevailed from that time to the present. In Great Britain particularly, the land of our fathers, and especially in Wales, into which most of our brethren were driven, in the sixth century, by the persecution raised by Austin the monk, "God has never left himself without a witness." Churches, essentially Baptist, have existed there, among whom many missionaries whose names are bright on the page of history, labored after Paul had gone to his rest.

Davis in his history of his Welsh Baptists, par 85, says that for many years the Baptists of that country had been greatly persecuted by the tyrannical government of Charles I. and prevented from meeting in large numbers, or doing anything publicly for the spread of the Gospel. But under the administration of Cromwell, God gave them a respite and they were allowed to meet together, and devise plans for the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom. In the year 1683, one hundred and eighty four years ago, the brethren were emboldened to meet in an association in Abergavenny, and at that meeting, the historian says; "Collections were made and funds raised to send out missionaries." What think you of this, my brother? Look at the book, and see if I am right. But this is not all they did at that meeting. It is added; "At this Association they passed a unanimous vote that by sending out and supporting missionaries, as they had done before the days of their persecution they would revive the ancient order of things."

Take another instance from Rippon's Register, afterward Cross and Journal, vol. 4, No. 27. He says; "Soon after the accession of William and Mary to the throne, the Baptists emerged from long and bitter persecutions, during the continuance of which many of their ministers had ended their days in prison, and many others to escape a similar fate, hid themselves in different parts of England, and on the continent, especially in Germany. In 1689 - mark, if you please, my brother, the lapse of years from that time to the present and determine whether they were "Old Baptists"

In 1689, our brethren assumed courage to meet in a great Association, which was held in London. This Association was attended, as Rippon declares, by ministers and messengers from one hundred and seven churches, eight of which were in Wales, and the rest in England. Some of the items of business were as follows:

The first day "was spent in humbling themselves before the Lord." On the second day, they disclaimed all right to interfere with the liberty of the churches. On the third day they resolved to raise a fund for their specific, but kindred objects. The first two were, in their own language these:

1st. "To assist those churches that are not able to maintain their own ministry."

2nd. "To send ministers to preach in the city and among the destitute, and to visit the churches."

3rd. "As to the means by which this fund should be originated and sustained, it was resolved, that it should be "a free will offering" - that it was the duty of every member of every Baptist church in Great Britain to aid in this work as his ability should enable him - and that "ministers should show a good example."

It was also resolved that an annual meeting should be held at which a report should be made of the affairs and progress of the good cause.

Now, my brother, were these Baptists missionaries? You call yourselves "Old Baptists", but Old Baptists were missionary Baptists. But let me hasten a little nearer home, Virginia,

you know is the oldest state in the Union. Take, if you please, Benedict's History of the Baptists, turn to Volume II, Article Virginia, and you will find several facts recorded to prove that the true Baptist churches have ever been missionary bodies.

Benedict says that in 1717, that is, 120 years ago, the Baptist churches in and about London, united and sent two missionaries to the colony in Virginia. The population was then, comparatively sparse, and extended to no great distance from Jamestown. The names of these two missionaries were Robert Nordin, and Thomas White. Brother White died soon after his arrival, but brother Nordin continued to preach many years with considerable success, the effects of which are still seen in that region in the prevalence of our denomination above any other. Brother Nordin was instrumental in planting several churches, and among the number we mention particularly, Burleigh across the river from Jamestown in Isle of Wight County. This same union of our Fathers in England, sent, subsequently, several other missionaries to Virginia, with the names of some of whom as Mintz, Jones, and others, I have no doubt you are familiar. Thus you see that the very first churches planted in this Western world were by missionary Baptists. Is this missionary business, my dear brethren, a new thing? Is to believe in its earnestness and efficiency and to engage in its self denying work such an offence that you cannot fellowship us who do so? Are you, or are we, of this class of Old Baptists?

But let us go on and see what Virginia Baptists churches did, which will show what they believed on the subject. In 1750, that is 87 years ago, the historian says (as above). These churches formed

themselves into a body which assumed the name of The General Association of Virginia. This association was ultimately merged into a Union, which took the name of The General Committee of Correspondence, all of which were formed of delegates from the district association, and, substantially employed missionaries; among the names of whom we find those of Marshall, Stearnes, Miller, and numerous others. The General Meeting of Correspondence ultimately merged itself into The Baptist State Convention of Virginia, for missionary purposes. But our brethren in the Old Dominion, like many others, although favorable to the object, could not get a name that pleased them all; and to many individuals, and even churches this last was a greater bug bear than any of the former. Matters proceeded thus until about fifteen years ago, when the Convention took the name which was least objectionable, viz; The General Association of Virginia. Although residing several hundred miles south, and but a mere boy at the time, I was present at an annual meeting held in the First Baptist Church in Richmond, when by the advice of the venerable and lamented Dr. Semple, and other old and experienced members, the name we have mentioned was reassumed.

Such is the present appellation of that vigorous and flourishing body now regarded with the strongest affection by fifty thousand communicants in that state. From those, most of our churches in the South and West had their origin. Our churches in Tennessee are their offspring. Those were the mothers, these are the daughters, but also, how faint is the family likeness. They were originally planted by missionaries, and have as we have

proved been missionary ever since. But, my brother, you exclude missionaries from your churches; you will not have any fellowship with them. In this act, do you not, in effect cast out, and exclude your mother churches? And you will not allow these who follow their footsteps even the smallest place in your assemblies! I leave it to your own candor to say, if you, and not we, have not departed from Baptist principles and usages.

Time and space admonish me that I must for this time lay down my pen. If Providence permit, you will hear from me again in continuance of the same subject, in the next Baptist. In the meantime, I subscribe myself as ever, sincerely and affectionately in Christ.

Letter No. 2

Dear brother:

I proceed with the proof of the proposition in my last communication. I again remind you that the question is not how whether the churches have been right in their opinions and practice on this subject, I shall discuss that question hereafter. The inquiry is as to a matter of fact. You charge missionary Baptists with having departed from Baptist principles and usages. If I prove my proposition, it will be sure that you and not we have departed from original principles. If the Baptist churches have always been missionary, they of course believed they were right. Your anti-missionary Baptists are therefore a new fangled set of Baptists, never heard of until within the present century. It is confidently believed by many brethren though I do not accept it as undoubtedly true, that the first opposition waged against missions

in Tennessee was by the noted and eccentric Daniel Parker, of "Two Seed" memory. The Minutes of the Associations, a file of which is now in my possession, prove that until prevented by his influence they corresponded with Baptist Board of Foreign Missions.

The Philadelphia is the oldest association, conducted on the common plan in the United States. It was constituted in 1787, that is, 136 years ago. Its district, at first, embraced a part of the States of New York, the whole of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina; and, if I mistake not, afterwards South Carolina and Georgia; at a time, too, when most of these states extended back to the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, and therefore embraced the southwestern state of Tennessee among the rest. This body on account of the great difficulty and expense of such work, did not, for nearly forty years, print the minutes of its Annual Meetings. A full account of these sessions I have not therefore seen. I know, however, that the Association had in the meantime educated several young ministers, always a favorite work among orthodox Baptists, one of whom David Thomas, a man of great piety, highly cultivated mind, and extensive usefulness, first had them printed at his own expense. Since that time, the association has always published its journals and I know, and you might have known on their authority what they have done. "Being the oldest association of the kind in America, says Benedict's History of the Baptists, Vol. 1, p. 595) "it was looked upon (by all those subsequently organized) as a pattern for imitation. It gave rules and even doctrines to most

of the associations in the South and West. "Notice, now my brother, very particularly these historical facts, Benedict continues; "This Association projected the design of Rhode Island College (now Brown University). But it is particularly to the fact that the Philadelphia Association from our earliest account of it was a missionary body, that I wish to call your attention. To place this beyond dispute, I shall quote a few items from the official records of that body. But first, if you please, turn to Benedict's History of the Baptists, Vol. 2, p. 99, and you will see that in 1753, that is 84 years ago, the Philadelphia Association sent Elder John Gans^o as a missionary to the churches in North Carolina, which were soon after formed into the Kelekee Association. The next year, 1754, the association sent two other missionaries to assist him, Elders Benjamin Miller and Peter P. Vaughan, by the instrumentality of whose united labors, these churches, formerly deranged, and nearly what Campbellites now are, were reclaimed and set in order and many sinners were converted. Yes, my brother, even the Kelekee Association, now distinguished for its bitterness and proscription of missionaries, was ~~recovered~~^{collected} by missionary labor. The book will show whether I am correct - I appeal to the record.

Now, for a short view of the official documents of the Philadelphia Association: "Elders David Thomas and David Sutton having intimated their wish to travel, in part as missionaries, through the southern provinces (via Phil World) it was deemed expedient that they should go out under the sanction of the Association." The ministers and messengers of the General Baptist congregation in Pennsylvania and adjacent provinces" say the minutes, under date of 12th October 1762, met in annual association at the city of Philadelphia, and gave them the required sanction; which

was accompanied by a recommendation of their character as men and citizens, by the clerk of the Court, bearing the official seal. These documents are too long to quote in this letter. I refer you to the authenticated record. Brethren Thomas and Sutton soon after appeared in Virginia as missionaries, bold, zealous, and successful. Morgan, ~~Steele~~ and many others, were missionaries, also of the same body.

The circular letter appended to the Minutes of the Association for this same year (1762) has this passage: "Strengthen the hands of your ministers, and be liberal of your ministerial gifts to vacant places. In 1766 - I quote from the records - "The association recommended that the churches make quarterly collections and (that) the proceeds thereof be sent to the association, and deposited in the hands of Trustees. The interest of the aforesaid money to be appropriated in support of such ministers as are sent out to distant places! The same year, "Isaac Steele, John Davis, and John Blackwell were appointed to go down to Virginia."

In "1792 these missionaries were sent out by the Association; viz; brethren Vaughan, Patten and Clingham; their fields of action to be in the region of Jurnatta and Susquennah." It is added; "Dr. William Rogers communicated information to the association (at this same session) concerning the situation and moral condition of the Hindoos." The Association recommended that "any donations" the churches or brethren might feel willing to make "to aid in evangelizing that degraded people be sent to Brother Rogers." In "1795, it was recommended to the churches to make collections for the missionaries

in Hindustan," Carey, Marshman and others. In "1802, it was recommended to the churches belonging to the association to appoint a day on which a discourse should be delivered in each of them, upon the subject of missions, and a collection taken up for propagating the Gospel in destitute places." Such notices as these abound in the Minutes of the Philadelphia Association from the time it began to print them until the present moment, and might be indefinitely extended, but I deem it unnecessary and I wish to be brief. This is the Association which the accredited Baptist Historian refers to. He says: "It was looked upon by all others, especially South and West as a pattern, which gave them rules and even doctrines. From its original wide extent you will readily see that with it nearly all our churches - yes, those very churches of which our anti-missionaries are the offspring - were once united and happy in the work of missions. Who then has changed? You, my brethren, and those who act with you are the men who have forsaken original Baptist ground. We are what our fathers have ever been, missionaries in principle, and some of us in action.

Indulge me in one more historical reference to Primitive Baptist principles. The Charleston Association, honored for its antiquity, piety, intelligence, and orthodoxy, was formed the 21st day of October 1751. In 1755, four years after its constitution, and 82 years ago, there is this record. (Furman's History of the Charleston Association, edition 1871, pp 10, 11, etc.).

* The Association taking into consideration the destitute con-

dition of many places in the interior settlements of this and neighboring States (then provinces) recommended to the churches to make contributions for the support of a missionary to itinerate in those parts. Jim Hart was authorized and requested, provided a sufficient sum should be raised, to insure if possible suitable persons for the purpose. With this view he visited Pennsylvania and New Jersey in the following year, and prevailed with Rev. John Gang^o to undertake the service, who attended the annual meeting and was cordially received. The Association requested Mr. Gang^o to visit the Yadkin first and afterwards to bestow his labors where Providence should appear to direct. He devoted himself to the work, it afforded ample scope for his distinguished, piety, eloquence, and fortitude; and his ministrations were crowned with remarkable success. Many embraced and professed the Gospel. The following year he received from the Association a letter of thanks for faithfulness and industry in the mission. Other proofs might be adduced, but these are enough. In this and my former letter, I have proved that beginning as far back as the English Baptists can be traced in history, and coming on to the present time, the Baptist churches in Great Britain have been thoroughly missionary, that the unadulterated and Primitive Baptist churches in America are all missionary; and I now appeal to you, my brother, and to every other intelligent man in Tennessee and ask why we should be opposed, pre^oscribed and persecuted for following in the footsteps and the faith of our own beloved churches in all ages. I know you do not profess to go as far in these matters as some others, but by your presence and connection with them, and taking

part in their doings you are identified with all they do, and equally responsible with any other man among them; indeed you are much more, because your opportunities of information have been better than those of any of your associates.

In my next letter, I propose to go into an examination of the Scriptures to determine whether the Baptist churches in their missionary principles and work have been strictly conformed to the Word of God. Believe me, as ever, etc.

Letter No. 3

Dear brother:

I proposed in this letter to examine the scriptures, in order to decide the question, whether in their missionary principles and work, the Baptist churches have been strictly conformed to the Word of God.

I affirm that the true churches of Jesus Christ in the aggregate, including ministers, and people, are missionary organizations, formed by divine wisdom, the principal object of which is to spread the Gospel all over the world.

This statement I hold myself bound to prove by the Word of God. If I succeed in this, it will be seen that, in the fact of their missionary character which I have proved beyond controversy the unadulterated Baptist churches have ever maintained, they have been entirely conformed to the principles of divine truth. Whom did Jesus Christ command to do the work of preaching the Gospel to every creature, with the promise of his presence and blessing upon their labors? Did he command the churches to do it, or the min-

Either separately? Or both, conjointly? You will remember, my dear brother, that although the Lord always had a church that the church was not visible until the coming of Christ. Now what constituted this visibility of a church? Evidently neither piety, as some suppose, nor orthodoxy, as is the opinion of others, nor both ^e those together, notwithstanding they are essential to the very existence of a true church; just as warmth is essential to the continuance of a man's life; yet his warmth does ^{not} constitute the life. There were many men, both pious and orthodox before the coming of Christ, and if these characteristics could have made a church visible it would certainly have been so many hundred years before it was. To decide what it is which constitutes the visibility of a church you have only to inquire what is necessary for a pious and orthodox man to do to become a member of the church. He must receive the Sacraments - Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. In the truth of this statement all denominations agree.

Our Pede-baptist friends consider even the babes they sprinkle as, in some sense, members of their churches, and if afterwards they receive the Lord's Supper, they are considered full members. But he who does not submit to these ordinances is not considered a member of any church, and never can be until he does so.

The sacraments do not, it is true, always draw the line of distinction between the church and the world exactly, because they are administered by fallible men. Many, we have reason to apprehend, are in the churches, who will not finally be found on the right hand of the Judge; and many are in the world, who will perhaps have a place in the church triumphant. These circumstances, however, as you

readily perceive do not affect the general correctness of our conclusions. We speak of visible churches; and the doctrine is evidently true, that the Sacraments mark the visible boundary between them and the world.

John the Baptist who was sent as the precursor of Jesus Christ, began to draw the lines, by the administration, under divine direction of baptism to the repenting Israelites; thus making ready a people prepared for the Lord. Now the visibility began divinely to appear, as the faint outline of a towering association on the distant horizon. Christ finished ^{it} when in an upper room, the same night in which he was betrayed, he instituted and administered the sacred Supper. On that night the distinction was completely drawn, and the church shone forth bright and visible, like the morning star without a cloud. The next day he ascended the hill of Calvary, bearing the cross, and, to use the language of Dr. Young,

"Followed by his weeping church."

There he died for his people. A few days after, or the day of Pentecost, it is said "the Lord added to the church such as should be saved." It is evident from the manner in which this fact is stated by the historian that the church had become visible before.

If this view of the subject be correct, and I think no well instructed Baptist will question it, the point of time at which the church became visible was on the night of the betrayal of Christ, and at the moment when he gave to his disciples, as a memorial to be observed forever, the broken bread and flowing

cup, as symbols of his body broken and his blood shed for their own salvation. Who then formed the whole church when it first became visible? I answer, the eleven apostles only; for they only were present at the solemn moment to which we have referred. Numerous others beside these had been baptized by John and his disciples. This however, though it commenced, did not complete their separation; which was not fully consummated until by the hands of the apostles on the day of Pentecost, they received the bread and cup. The Apostles were assembled with Christ on the evening of the Passover, and to them alone he administered the last supper. From that evening, until the day of Pentecost - fifty days - during which they received the commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," the eleven were the whole visible church on earth. To them, therefore, as the church of Jesus Christ particularly, and not alone as Apostles, or ministers, the commission was given and the work of enlightening the world became theirs as a church as well as apostles.

That the gospel commission was given to the eleven as the church and not alone as Apostles, is proved by four additional arguments.

The first argument is this. If the commission was given to the Apostles as such and not as the church, as the Apostles had no successors in the Apostleship, then the commission expired with the Apostles, and it follows that since their death there is no commission to preach the Gospel! This is the inevitable conclusion from the premises. But, my dear brother, I know you do not believe this doctrine. It is Campbellism and anti-scriptural. You hold that men are now called of God to preach

the Gospel; and so do I; but if this be the fact, and the authority for preaching under Christ, as we both believe, is in the churches; which doctrine is established in practice by requiring every one who preaches to be licensed by the church of which he is a member, the conclusion cannot be avoided that the commission was given to them as a church and not alone as the Apostles of Christ.

My second argument I will now lay before you. If the commission was given to the apostles as ministers simply, and not as a church and they had the power of transmitting by ordination, or any other means, this authority to their successors in office, they, as ministers had, and their successors as such have that authority independent of the churches. Those who are responsible, and do Christ's work on earth, are alone his representatives on earth; as much and as properly so as those who do your work in the councils of the State or nation, or your representatives in the Legislature or Congress. This, you must admit, is the fair logical conclusion. But, my brother, you do not surely believe this doctrine? It is popery in all its extent! This doctrine denies that the church is Christ's representative on earth, and give this honor exclusively to the ministry, while it at the same time makes the ministry independent of the churches. an impossible, and a self-perpetuated body! Yes, my brother, this is the very doctrine that placed the "triple crown" upon the head of his Holiness," at Rome, made him "the vicegerent of God," built his throne in the Eternal city," and has filled the church and all the world with bloodshed, lamentations, mourning,

and woe.

Now, I am sure, Brother Watson, you do not believe this doctrine. You believe that Christ has carried our nature to heaven, and represent~~s~~ his churches there; so the churches retain his nature on earth, and represent him here, and that under Christ, all ministerial authority resides in the churches. But you must remember that this doctrine can be maintained only upon the ground that the commission is spread the Gospel was given to the Apostles, and alone as Apostles, but particularly as a church, the first and representative church of Jesus Christ.

My third argument is this in the Scriptures declare almost in so many words, that the duty of preaching the Gospel, to every creature is a work which belongs to the churches individually and collectively.

But I am making my present letter too long. I have scarcely entered upon this part of my subject. I will, Providence permitting, continue it in my next, which you shall receive soon. Believe me as ever, yours, etc.

Letter No. 4

Dear brother:

When I closed my last letter I was presenting to you my third argument to prove that the Apostolic commission was given to the churches. The Scriptures declare, as plainly as if the statement had been made in so many words, that the duty of preaching the Gospel to every creature is a work which belongs to the churches individually and collectively. "Go ye," said Christ, to

the Apostles, "and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." By this means they are brought in and formed into churches of Christ. What further is now to be done? "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Observe the churches are to do all things which Christ commanded his Apostles to do. And what is the principal thing he commanded his Apostles to do? It was to "go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." If the churches are to observe all things they ^{are} surely to observe this; which I have just said is the principal thing. It is therefore proved beyond all question, that the work of preaching the Gospel devolves upon all the churches, collectively, and each one individually; and what is the duty of a whole church collectively is the duty, in the measure of his ability of each member individually.

My fourth argument is this: - The Baptist Churches have always acted, and do now act in every state of the United States and in every country of the world, upon the presumption that the preaching of the Gospel is a work which they are bound to do. The proof of this statement is easy.

If Christ be the advocate of his church in heaven, it is equally true, that his church is his advocate on earth. The kingdom of grace is a kingdom of means. The world is to be converted by the blessing of God upon human instrumentality. That instrumentality is in the churches to whom Christ has said, "occupy till I come." This doctrine is carried out by all our churches in their ecclesiastical government. No man is permitted to preach without a license from

his church, and such license as all the sister churches will admit is sufficient. No presbytery of Baptist ministers will think of stretching forth their hands in the Episcopal office, to admit any man to the rank and privileges of the ministry, without such sanction. Indeed they dare not do it. But, my dear brother, what does all this prove? By adopting this polity our churches unquestionably assume it as^a fixed principle, that both the duty and responsibility of preaching the Gospel to the world, rests upon the churches of Christ.

This view of the case is, I know, liable to ~~two~~ one or two objections, which I take occasion now to notice.

It is objected, inasmuch as the churches cannot go to preach the Gospel to every creature, that there is a manifest unfitness in imposing such a command upon them.

In reply, I would beg you, my brother, to remember that although Christ has made ~~his~~ work theirs, he has not left them without the proper arrangement by which it is to be done. He has given to them a certain class of servants, called by himself and qualified to preach, which also, he has placed under their direction for this special purpose. Their very name - ministers - which signifies servants, is expressive of this relation. The churches obey the commission of Christ by calling forth, ordaining, sending out, and sustaining in the field of labor, these servants so called of God, and by him qualified and sent forth "to be a light of the Gentiles, and for salvation to the ends of the earth." So far therefore from this being an arrangement unsuited to the end it had in view, it is in fact the most efficient that can be con@

ceived, and indeed the only one at all likely to succeed in accomplishing the benevolent designs of the Gospel of our salvation.

If it be again objected that because the ministry does the work of preaching, that therefore the churches are not responsible; I will ask whether to make a particular work mine and to render me responsible for its accomplishment, it is essential that I do it with my own hand? I may be physically or mentally incapable of it; and because it is done under my direction, by my servant, who is qualified for the task, is it not therefore my work? A planter cultivates his crop, and reaps the reward of his care and industry, but he does not perhaps with his own hands, though a plough or hoe, or any other implement of husbandry during the season; he does his work by his servants; is it therefore not his farm and crop; and was he not therefore responsible for everything in relation to it? Such are the relations under Christ of the churches, the ministry, and the field of labor, and such their obligations and responsibilities in relation to preaching the Gospel to every creature.

Paul confirms the correctness of these views of the subject under consideration when he says to the Corinthian churches, speaking of the Apostolic ministers, 2 Cor. 4:5. "We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Ministers the servants of the church! To do what? The passage itself tells us what, to preach, as the servants of the churches Christ Jesus the Lord," and of course to preach him as commanded in all the world, to every creature. This therefore is the work of the churches, and as the churches cannot go as a body, the

ministers are their servants, under their direction and superintendence to do her work, and while so employed, look (as do all other servants to their employers) to them, as the representatives of Christ on earth, for countenance and support of a temporal character, and to Christ himself, the great Master, for spiritual sustenance and success. The ministry are responsible both to Christ and his churches for the faithful performance of the work committed to their hands. So far as the churches are concerned, it is on this ground alone that they have authority to silence a heterodox or disorderly minister and deprive him of the sacred office. Were he not its servant engaged in doing its work and for the faithful execution of which it is responsible to Christ, the church would have no right either to license a minister, try him for his heterodoxy, or on any account to depose him from his office.

For these reasons, ministers of the Gospel are prohibited from secular pursuits. Do you, my brother, want any proof of this statement? What was the duty of ministers in apostolic times, you will, I presume, admit, is their duty now; and what is the duty of one is the duty of all. Paul gave to Timothy - 1 Tim. 4:15 - this charge; "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them." A soldier, that he may fight the battles of his country, successfully, does not divide his thoughts with other cares and employments, "that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." How much more should a minister avoid distracting his thoughts with the world's anxieties, that he may labor with an eye single to the great work of salvation, give himself wholly,

to it, that he may truly please God, and fulfil the great end to which he is called.

You may, I know, object that Paul labored with his own hands at a sēcular calling, to supply his own temporal wants.

In reply, I admit that he did this only during short periods, and under peculiar circumstances. It was forced upon him, in default of a timely arrival from the churches of the necessary means of support, and which deficiency was soon removed. Did any of the other Apostles pursue a worldly calling after they abandoned their nets on the shores of the sea of Galilee? ~~The~~ the history of the churches of Tennessee what if it should be recorded that a certain eminent man, Dr. John M. Watson, if you please, did absolutely during the year 1837, for a period of three months, labor with his own hands for his support. Would not this be a strange record? It would be replied at once, what does this statement mean? Do not all our ministers, or nearly all, so labor? This record therefore proves that Paul was not in the habit of laboring with his own hands, at a secular calling for his support. It illustrates the old maxim; "The exception proves the rule."

The Jewish priests had no inheritance in the land of Canaan. This was doubtless a wise provision of Almighty God, to divert them from temporal pursuits, and secure their attention wholly to their sacred office. Ministers, under the Gospel are not prohibited the possession of property, but are admonished by apostōlic example and precept, to be content with food and raiment. And because they are

the servants of the churches, for the accomplishment of a great and glorious purpose, they are prohibited from pursuits other than those necessarily or incidentally connected with the ministry. The whole church is as much bound to support the whole ministry, as the planter is to feed and clothe, and in other respects, render comfortable the servants who cultivate his farm.

I regret exceedingly on account of the salutary effects, thereby lost, that these truths are so faintly impressed on the minds both of our ministers and churches. Were they felt and acted upon, none could go out to the work, but those who were scripturally qualified; such, having their undivided mind fixed on the work of preaching the Gospel, would be workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly, dividing the word of truth; and the churches instructed in the doctrines and duties of religion, would arise from the dust; "the wilderness and the solitary places would be glad for them, and the desert would rejoice and blossom as the rose."

These, my dear brother, are not new doctrines. They have been, as I have before proved, the doctrines of churches, time immemorable. It has been held that the churches are a missionary compact, to preach the Gospel to the whole world. In an obscure settlement, in the deep forests of the sunny south, where I was born and reared, I have, in my early youth, heard old ministers, having taken a text from the Song of Solomon, about the bridegroom and bride, preach this doctrine. They told us that Christ was the bridegroom or husband and that the church was the bride, or wife of Christ. That when the husband went from home, the care of his affairs devolved, in his absence upon the wife, and that her solicitude and attention to his interest would be proportioned

to ^{her} ~~his~~ affection for him. Now Christ the husband has gone, as to his personal presence in heaven, but he has promised that he will return again; until which time he has left his church, his bride, whose business it is to superintend his affairs and carry out his great designs. I believed this doctrine then, and I believe it now. Let us however inquire, what are his designs? "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." The business of the church therefore is to use the means he has appointed to save sinners. For the present, adieu. I remain, as ever, sincerely and affectionately in Christ Jesus, yours, etc.

Letter No. 5

Dear brother:

In my former letters to you, I have shown that the true orthodox Baptist churches, have ever been from the days of the Apostles until now, missionary bodies; that the churches were formed upon this principle by her great Head, Jesus Christ; and that their whole government is based upon their character with relation to this object. The truth of the facts and conclusions I have adduced is placed beyond the power of successful controversy. I will now inquire more particularly into the apostolic practice on this subject, and determine whether we are strictly conformed to it in our efforts to preach the Gospel to every creature.

The best method by which to decide this inquiry is to examine the New Testament, and compare ours with apostolic usages. If our organizations and proceedings are found to be the same with

theirs, I hope you, and all the intelligent and candid who act with you will acknowledge that you are all bound by your allegiance to God, to engage with us in this holy work. Yes sir; I intend to prove to you, incontrovertibly that no Christian in Tennessee can decline to engage in this work and be guiltless of the blood of souls. The call upon every one to "come up to the help of the Lord" sounds to us from heaven, and commands us to labor with an earnestness and zeal commensurate with the magnitude and importance of the holy enterprise.

You will find by an examination of the Acts of the Apostles, that about ten years after the ascension of Christ, some of the disciples, especially of Cyprus and Cyrene, went down into Syria and preached Christ in Antioch, the capitol city of that country. The hand of the Lord was with them. He poured out his Holy Spirit upon them, and many became anxious enquirers after the truth. The church in Jerusalem was not an uninterested spectacle of these events. It is said - Acts 11:22 - "Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was at Jerusalem, and they sent forth Barnabas that he should go as far as Antioch." In this statement are two very striking particulars to which you will permit me to call your especial attention, both of which are in perfect consonance with the missionary action of the present day, and against which you and your associates have set yourselves in strong opposition.

The first is, that the church in Jerusalem recognized the doctrine as true, and acted upon the principle of missionary organization; it sent forth Barnabas as its missionary. Barnabas was not necessarily oc-

cupied in his high calling with the church or in any of its objects in Jerusalem. But he was an eminent minister, a distinguished gift of Christ Jesus to that church, to do the work of preaching the Gospel. If it did not require his services in Jerusalem, it did for another place, and therefore sent him to preach in Antioch, a city of another nation, but when there were delightful indications that God waited to be gracious.

This, you will observe, by the way, was ^a foreign mission!

But I imagine, brother Watson exclaims, What! What do you say!

The church sent out a minister to preach! God sends ministers to preach; not the church.

I regret exceedingly, my brother, that it seems impossible for any of our opposing brethren to comprehend how God carries on his designs in the world. He accomplishes all his purposes, as well that of sending ministers as everything else, by instrumentalities. The church, if she is what she ought to be, which is true, I fear, of but few of us in Tennessee has the mind of Christ. When he calls a minister it is for the church. It has his direction, as we have before proved. The sending a minister by the church, as that in Jerusalem did Barnabas, does not by any means conflict, but is on the contrary, in entire accordance with the fact that he is sent by Jesus Christ. Allow me to illustrate this statement by a familiar scriptural example.

The church in Antioch, which had been collected as we have seen by missionary labor, sent out a few years after the events of which I have been speaking two missionaries, "to the heathens." Their own pastor Barnabas, and his distinguished friend, Saul

of Tarsus, whom he had induced to come to Antioch and aid him in his arduous labors in the Syrian metropolis. Of these proceedings we have the following record - Acts 13:3,4 - "When they (the church) had fasted and prayed and (they, the presbytery of ministers in the church, Lucius, Simeon, Manaur) had laid their hands on them they (the church in Antioch) sent them away." The church sent them away. "So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost departed." But if Barnabas and Saul were sent by the church, as stated in the third verse, how is it that they were sent by the Holy Ghost, as stated in the fourth verse; and if sent by the Holy Ghost, how by the church? The thing, my brother, is plain, if you will only remember that since the days of miracles have passed away God does nothing of this kind on earth but by the use of means. The church acted by direction of the word of inspiration - the New Testament - of the Holy Ghost. We, you know, have the same word of inspiration and the very same Providence to indicate the field of labor; why then when we so act, conscientiously and prayerfully, may we not consider our doings so directed, especially as we have the best evidence that they are sanctioned, by the Holy Ghost. You will not surely object to a conclusion so rational. I cannot forbear here to direct your attention to the fact that when Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch after having visited and preached with great success in Cyprus, Perga, Antioch in Persidia, Iconium, Derba, Lystra, and many other places. They called the church together and in the same missionary style constantly witnessed at our modern anniversaries made their report - yes, sir, their report -

7/3 the body that sent them out. I refer you for the proof to the

close of the fourteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

"And when they were come (verse 27) and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles."

To the Book, my brother; that will show ~~whether~~ I am right.

The second particular in the proceedings of the church in Jerusalem, in the case under consideration, and which I desire you to notice, is equally instructive. The church in Jerusalem, when they sent out Barnabas as a missionary, appointed him his field of labor! They sent him to Antioch. So did the church in Antioch in effect, subsequently choose the field of labor of Barnabas and Saul. They were sent to the Greeks of Asia Minor. This also was another foreign mission. And why should not the church, when she send^r out missionaries, appoint them their field of labor? We have proved that the work is hers, and that all ministers are her ministers, and may she not send her servants where she thinks proper? You, I presume, have no objection to a minister following his own impressions of duty, as to the place where he will preach. For this I know you all contend, nor do I design in any respect to oppose your opinions. But I will ask whether the church is blind? Has she no discrimination, no judgment? Surely you will not pretend to teach that the church now, as that at Jerusalem did, cannot perceive the indications of Providence and decide where the minister shall labor, as well as he himself! The minister is her servant to do her work. May he not be directed by her? May not the farmer decide in what particular field or part of a field, it is most desirable and

proper his hands shall labor." Or are his servants without any attention to him to decide and labor only according to their own discretion and allow him no authority in his own affairs? This is your doctrine. You advocate the old and long ago exploded maxim of popery, which makes the servants or ministers of the churches their masters, and leads them to refuse any regard to those whose right it is under Christ to rule on earth. But, I trust when you are better informed, you will as ministers have more respect for the word of God, and for his representatives on earth; which he has placed over you in the Lord. He has said to you, "Hear the church," and when rightly instructed you will, I trust have sufficient humility to abandon your high seats and take the modest position which Christ himself has assigned you.

Will you, my brother, or any of those who act with you in the opposition, dare to say that the church in Jerusalem, or that in Antioch, erred in acting as we have seen they did? Surely no man in his senses will presume to intimate that they did wrong. But if it was not wrong for them to do the work of missions singly, it was not wrong for them to unite to do it. Union is strength. The church itself is built upon the principle of uniting naturally separate energies to do good. If it was not wrong for them, it certainly cannot be wrong for us. On the contrary we have the apostolic churches for example, and the word of God commanding action; we dare not disregard them all, remain even inactive; to say nothing of hostility and not incur the condemnation of Christ, as "slothful and wicked servants."

In my next, I will present for your consideration a few more

instances of missionary work in apostolic times. Meantime, believe me as ever affectionately, etc.

Letter No. 6

Dear Brother:

Take if you please some instances in apostolic times of the union of the churches and individual church views to spread the Gospel as commanded by Jesus Christ.

"Thanks be to God" says Paul, addressing the Corinthians - 2 Cor. 16:16-20 - "who put the same earnest care in the heart of Titus for you" - "He went unto you - and we have sent (does not God send ministers? we have sent) with him the brother whose praise is in the Gospel, throughout all the churches; and not that only but who was chosen of the the churches to travel with us."

That brother who was sent by the Apostles, as the companion of Titus in his visit to the Corinthians, you will please particularly to observe, "who was chosen of the churches to travel!" Chosen of the churches! Does not God choose ministers. You will please remember what I said to you on this subject, in a former letter, explaining the means by which God carries on his designs in the world. I must not repeat now what I then said. He was chosen of the church to travel. But could the churches, mark particularly ^{may} ~~any~~ brother, the churches; there were several, we know ^{not} ~~not~~ how many; could the churches have united in their choice, upon a specified minister to travel without consent or design? I ask you as an intelligent man, if there must not have been consultation

and agreement to have secured united action? Evidently, this consent, this consultation, this agreement by the churches in a specific appointment, could not have been had without either a miracle which we have no reason to suppose was wrought in the case, or a Convention of what is the same thing, a coming together of some kind for the purpose. Can you deny it? I appeal to your own decision. Am I not right? If "things equal to the same thing, are equal to each other," then our Conventions have in Apostolic practice unquestionable authority.

One more example of the Union of Apostolic churches to send and support missionaries in destitute places shall for the present suffice.

Having occasion to write to the Corinthians, Paul referred to the circumstances respecting his support, under which he at first preached to them the Gospel, and says; (2 Cor. 11:8,); "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service." The Apostles, you doubtless remember, "went forth taking nothing of the Gentiles," for their subsistence. They, precisely, as our missionaries do, labored among Gentiles in the Gospel, and looked to the churches, under Christ for the means of life. From his own statement, just now quoted, we have that several churches - neither do we know in this instance how many - in some other part of the country, united in the support of Paul, while he preached the Gospel in Corinth; and they continued their efforts in that direction, until the church there was planted and established. This fact is indisputable. Now, an inquiry or two, if you please. Did this union of the churches in so laudable an object as that of supporting this distinguished

missionary in the great city of Corinth and which descended to the particulars of fixing his wages, (for Paul was one of those renegade hirelings who preached for money, who took a salary; wages; all of which in our day, among your associates, is so highly sinful) did this union, which descended even to the particulars of fixing Paul's wages, take place among the churches without intention or design? Who will believe it? No man certainly who has intelligence enough to know that two and two make four. How then could this union and agreement have been secured without a convention of the churches, such as we have seen did assemble, on several other occasions, with special reference to the spread of the Gospel?

I have now proved, indisputably, I could hope, if I had reason to believe that your mind was free from the mists of prejudice, that in the days of the Apostles, the first, and perhaps only perfectly pure age of Christianity, Unions, Combinations; in other words, Conventions of the churches for missionary purposes were held. Not as some of the sects around us imagine and upon which they practice, Conventions of the churches assembled to sit as ecclesiastical courts and ecclesiastical legislatures, as indeed from our own associations, for example, the Mero District; the Cumberland, the Concord, and others, have assumed the right to do, to enact laws for the government of the churches and to enforce decisions in church polity. No, sir, they offered no instance of this kind. The Apostolic churches and ours at the present day, were and are voluntary bodies. This is true of each particular church, which is in the nature of the case, in

in relation to all others, an independent body in every particular. Love is the bond of union, which connects them, and to render this as strong as possible, all power of coercion is removed. The assemblage of the apostolic churches was to spread the Gospel. This was ancient usage. This so far as it can be effected is the usage of the true, legitimate orthodox Baptist churches at the present time in Tennessee and elsewhere.

You will perhaps meet me here with an argument. You distinctly remember having stated to me in a private conversation some time since, as I remarked in my speech, and as you acknowledged, before the last session of the Concord Association that you were in favor of the General Association of the churches for missionary purposes. You may have changed your opinions now, but this was your declared sentiment some months ago. You object however that the churches in Tennessee, as such, do not all, nor even a majority of them, unite in the Convention, and until they do you are not disposed to act! The melancholy fact of disunion among the churches on this subject is granted. But remember, it is their sin, not ours. They have been under the influence of men, who, as to the duty of spreading the Gospel, have led them away from the truth. I rejoice however to see that everywhere throughout the state, brethren and churches are rallying and retracing their steps; and I trust and confidently believe, that the day is not far distant, when they will return and, marshalled side by side in the great conflict, will go forward and conquer the world.

I ask you seriously, my brother, and as a reasonable man and a Christian, if you really believe that no brethren or churches are

justified in obeying the commandment of Christ to spread the Gospel, until all the churches act? If none act until all do it requires no great discrimination to perceive that we shall all be as still as the dead until the end of time. Shall we fold our hands, sit down, and see millions of heathens perish in their sins, and our own beloved country either the dupe of _____ or over run with pollution, sink down under the curse of God, into the grave of nations and not make a single effort to prevent it, nor to rescue a poor perishing soul who happens to live in a destitute neighborhood until we can influence every straggling sick and cowardly soldier in or about the camp to fight. This is your doctrine, and surely I need not say a word beyond its mere statement, to convince all, and even yourself of its absurdity.

Let me lay before you a few plain facts on this point: A leading maxim of the Gospel is that "every man must account for himself to God." The axe is laid at the root of the tree, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire?" We learn from this teaching, and it is confirmed by the principle of common sense, and is directly the opposite of your doctrine, that all the duties of religion are binding upon us individually. The aggregate is made up of individuals. What is the duty, in this behalf of one, is the duty of all; and what is the duty of all, is the duty, in his sphere, and in the measure of his ability, of every one.

These remarks are applicable to churches. If some churches, from whatever motive, will not act, it is not less obligatory upon all who will to act than if all did. To them it shall be said; "Well done, good and faithful servants; ye have been faithful over a few things."

Doubtless in the Apostolic times, some churches did not act; not however from a spirit of opposition; but because they were crippled and disabled by persecution and oppression. Did the other churches therefore cease to do their duty? According to your doctrine they ought, but we have already seen they did not. Those who could, did act nobly. Shall we follow their bright example? And if we do, will you denounce, and excommunicate and persecute us? Or, tell it not in Gath! O, that all which has been done in this way against the servants of Christ, by their professed brethren in Tennessee, for daring to obey Christ, could be buried in perpetual forgetfulness!

These remarks are also applicable to individual Christians. If some Christians do not obey, it is none the less my duty than if all did. Does my brother's disobedience cancel my obligations? Surely not. It is an unhappy lot in Tennessee to see our churches by fifties, and our brethren by hundreds, and (O, how I regret it), brother Watson, among them armed and in the field fighting against God, on the subject of spreading the Gospel among the poor and destitute, forbidding individuals and churches who will, ^{to} do to that which they acknowledge to be the duty of all, and which they prevent, as far as they can, all from uniting to accomplish!

I rejoice that although you may not, many will agree with me in the firm conviction that we should earnestly seek the action of churches as a body, to sustain their own settled pastors, and assist in the support of others who go abroad over the face of the earth to preach the Gospel to every creature; but in default of success and until this measure can be effected, we have

Scripture warrant and example for united individual action. The word of God approves it. Religion approves it. Common sense approves it. A word or two, more fully to prove this last assertion.

Paul upbraids the Corinthians in a letter addressed to that church because they as a church neglected to supply him while he preached at Phillipi; with the means of support. Individuals however united for that purpose, and of them, for that very reason, he speaks in the very highest terms. He praises them for doing as individuals what he blames the church for not doing as a church. His words are these, (1 Cor. 16:17) "I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus; for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied." The same Apostle says, in another place; (2 Cor. 11:9) "When I was present with you and wanted, I was chargeable to no man, (that is, to no man of you) for that which was lacking to me, the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. "In another place he speaks of women who by contributing to his support, "labored with him in the Gospel." He also mentions in this connection, Clement, Gaius, and numerous others, upon whose labors I fain would indulge in some observations, but I am reminded that this letter is already sufficiently extended. Can any one who considers all these facts doubt a moment longer, that to facilitate the dissemination of the Gospel united individual action is scriptural and right? Surely not. But let it be remembered that this united individual action, is an Association, is a Convention.

The proof that it was the doctrine and practice of the Apostles and Apostolic churches to unite the churches as far as possible, and

and where this could not be done to unite individuals, to spread the light of divine truth, I have now placed beyond the power of successful controversy. This is precisely the mode adopted ^{by} our State Convention. It is therefore scriptural and right. If you condemn us, you must for the same reason, condemn the Apostles, and reject "the Word of God as the only rule of faith and practice." In the hope of eternal life, I remain yours, etc, etc.

Letter No. 7

Dear brother:

The facts and doctrines I have laid before you in these letters, have been, in some form or other always accessible to the Baptists of Tennessee. The brethren all have the Bible, and read it. Most of them, I believe, are pious and sincere. Yet many of them and even some of their accredited teachers, are not afraid to declare all our missionary operations, foreign and domestic; unheard of until recently in Baptist practice ^{are} ~~and~~ a departure from Baptist principle. And even those among whom you number yourself, who are professedly principally opposed ^{to} the means we adopt, and not inimical to preaching the Gospel to sinners, at home or abroad, oppose every method of spreading the knowledge of Christ which has ever been or ever can be devised. The stereotyped exclamation is, "It is a departure from Baptist principles! Unheard of in Baptist practice!" After the truths I have developed in these letters, shall I ever again bear this denunciation? I could hope not; or, if I do, I shall know that those who make it, have resolved that they

will not see, and acknowledge the plainest truths of Scripture and history.

"A departure from Baptist principles! Unheard of in Baptist practice!" Why, my dear brother, are not the principles and practices announced in the Scriptures Baptist principles and practices? Your Baptist doctrines and usages unknown to the Bible, elicit not my confidence or respect. I do not profess to believe the one, nor to be governed by the other. The Bible alone is my textbook of faith and practice. Whatever is there revealed, I am ready to receive in the love of it, and practice in the spirit of submission and reverence therein inculcated and required. If these are not Baptist principles and practice, I, for one, have never professed them, but if they are they fully sustain the "Convention brethren," of Tennessee in all their works of faith and labors of love.

Some of you in the pulpit and in private, use language like this: - Why trouble yourself so much about the heathen? Is not God able to save his people without your interference? If he has a people among the heathen, he will save them in his own way and time. I have ^{no} idea that all the heathen will be lost.

In regard to all this, I observe that we believe as firmly, perhaps, in the doctrine of His sovereignty as any of you do. No, I know I have been charged with holding the contrary; but I must believe that those who so charge us, are themselves aware that the imputation is a slander. The Apostles advocated the doctrine of divine sovereignty, and yet, as we have fully proved, they sent missionaries "to the heathen," Gal. 2:9. Why should they

have troubled themselves about this matter? Was not God equally able then as now, to save his people without means, out of all nations? If he did not choose that religion should spread without instrumentality, nor to save men without the knowledge of Jesus Christ, in those days will he do so now? Has God in relation to his manner of saving sinners changed? Of their doings, Paul said; "When James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the heathens." Were not the Syrians heathens? The church in Jerusalem sent Baranbas as we have seen, to preach in their capitol city, which he did for about half a dozen years, with great success. Is not what was then the duty of churches and ministers, still the duty of churches and ministers? Or, ought we not now to imitate the example of those, whose faith and patience have inhibited the promises? Do you call such imitation of apostolic example, "a departure from Baptist principles and practice?" Who would have believed that any Baptist would have made so rash an assertion? If obeying Christ and in the mode of doing, so walking in the footsteps of Peter and Paul and John and Barnabas and others, be a departure from Baptist principles and practice, I hereby declare that I never was and never will be a Baptist; but if all this be Baptist, then I am yet and intend ever to remain a Baptist. Who will do what they did? What say you, brother Watson, will you? If so, let us walk together; but if not, we part company in all our earthly journey.

But God is sovereign and will save his own people in his own way. True, my brother most times. But because God is sovereign, will

save whom he pleases and have all the glory of the salvation of the heathen and all others who ever reach the mansions of bliss, must we rebel and refuse to preach to them. May we cease to care for the souls of men, because without the blessing of God, all our labor will be in vain? The Bible teaches us no such doctrine. It is equally repugnant to the letter of the Gospel and the spirit of the religion of Christ.

The man who so bitterly opposes sending them the Gospel, has no idea that for want of it, all the heathen will be lost.

The thought it is true is full of horror. The heathen make up more than half the teeming population of our globe. That they are all lost - lost forever - is an appalling reflection; and the sensitive heart, in its contemplation, shrinks back amazed! But why will not all the heathen be lost? I want this question answered.

The heathen will not all be lost, says the opposer of missions, because they are utterly ignorant on the whole subject of the Gospel. The name of Christ they never heard. Not a ray of light from the throne of God has ever penetrated their mind. And shall they be condemned, it is asked, for not believing or obeying the Gospel, the very existence of which they never had the slightest intimation! No sir; I will not believe it. Very well, the argument is specious. Let us look at it, and reason upon it for a moment. The argument of the opposers of foreign missions assumes that all those who are perfectly ignorant of Christ, and the whole subject of religion, will, because of their perfect ignorance be saved. Am I right? Certainly. But, if at any time these per-

fectly ignorant persons should have the gospel and then do not repent and believe before they die, they will certainly be lost. Is not this also true? It follows of course that if the whole world had been left in this state of perfect ignorance, the whole world for the same reason would certainly have been saved. All who are lost therefore are damned because after hearing the Gospel they do not repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. If all this be true, and if the promises be admitted it cannot be questioned, the conclusion is irresistible that the Gospel has been the occasion, not to say, the positive cause, of the damnation of hundreds of millions of souls, who, could they only have been kept in perfect ignorance of it, would certainly have been saved. The Gospel therefore is the greatest curse (I speak it with reverence) with which the world was ever visited! It is a greater curse than even sin itself; for if this newly discovered anti-missionary doctrine be true, sin would not condemn the soul, if it could only be kept in perfect ignorance of the Gospel.

I have a question in curiosity to propose to these good brethren, and I will do so through you, if you please, Dr. Watson. Christ commands us to preach the Gospel to every creature in the whole world. If we fail to obey this command it will not - will it? - prevent our salvation? Every man we enlighten would, if he did not then repent and believe before he dies, be damned. If we let them remain in perfect ignorance they will all be saved. Now had we not better disobey Christ, who seems not to have known anything of this new and better plan so lately discovered, and thus while we do not endanger our own salvation, save not a part of the

heathen world, but the whole of it, not by enlighteneing them but by keeping them in perfect ignorance. This is certianly the most benevolent plan. Let us then not give them the Gospel. This curses the nations. The most benevolent thing we can do is to burn our Bibles immediately; stop all ministers forthwith; extinguish the light of the Gospel; and banish as soon as possible every vestige of the knowledge of Jesus Christ from the face of the earth! This seductis ad abenadum, is the legitimate conclusion from the premises; and you will forgive me, if I express my full conviction that this is the result to which anti-missionary doctrine, were it heeded, always inevitably conduct~~s~~ us.

This however is a small absurdity compared with some others involved in the doctrine I am now controverting. Take, if you please, another.

Some are saved by the knowledge of God. This we all believe. And some are saved by the ignorance of God. This anti-missionaries pretend to believe. Well then, ignorance and knowledge in their results, are equally desirable and beneficial, because they both alike secure the salvation of the soul!! Could you this day draw aside the veil that hides from your view the throne of God, and inquire of the glorified spirits there, how they obtained their victory, one would reply: - ^DBy the righteousness and atonement of Jesus Christ. But another would tell you that he gained it by perfect ignorance! Perfect ignorance is therefore equal in its cleansing efficacy, and saving power to the righteousness and merits of Jesus Christ.

A most loathsome absurdity this; but please do take yet another. Peter, when filled with the Holy Ghost, said to the Jewish Council (Acts 14:11-13) "The stone (Christ) which was set at naught by your builders, is become the head of the corner; neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." But if the doctrine of our "Old School" brethren, as you are pleased sometimes to call yourselves, be correct, this declaration of Peter is not true! There is another way of salvation besides Christ. Perfect ignorance is an equally safe way with the blood of Jesus Christ! Paul, too, was grievously mistaken when he said, (Rom. 2:11-12) "There is no respect of persons with God; for as many as have sinned without law shall perish without law." But no. All such sinners are to be saved by their ignorance!

No, brother Watson, every soul, Jew and Gentile, not regenerated by the blood of Christ, is damned. The whole heathen world, appalling as is the idea, who die out of Christ, is lost - lost forever! We are called upon by the thrilling eloquence of the millions and millions of our race who sit in the darkness of the valley and shadow of death, expressed in their living pollutions, and dying groans, to make known to them the Gospel of Christ. Christ commands us to do it, but our brethren forbid us on pain of capital ecclesiastical punishment! Upon their heads be the guilt and condemnation. We are clean from the blood of souls.

I shall now only add that the quarrel of our "Old Baptist" brethren is not so much with us, as with reason and common sense, Peter and Paul,

the whole word of God and the salvation of men! Yet strange to say, you claim to be the only orthodox Baptists in the whole country! If your doctrine alone be orthodox, from orthodox Baptist doctrines, "good Lord, deliver us!"

As ever, in Christ, yours truly, etc.

Letter No. 8

Dear brother:

I resume the argument I was prosecuting in my last letter.

I heard some times since one of your most intelligent associates preach; and as is common with you all, nearly the whole of his sermon was devoted to a phillippic against the friends of benevolent effort. One of his objections against missionary preaching was in substance this: - In apostolic times, solicitude and exaction to preach the gospel to every creature was right enough. It was theirs to fulfil the commission. The commission, he insisted, was fulfilled in the lifetime of the Apostles. While they yet lived the Gospel was preached in all the world. That work was finished, and now ministers have no business to exhort sinners; they are called to feed the flock. In proof of this doctrine, Paul was quoted: (Rom. 10:18) "Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." And (Col. 1:23) "The hope of the Gospel which ye have heard and which was preached to every creature under heaven." This ministry gave the "cue" to a whole host of imitators, on the north and west of this city; and I therefore conclude that this objection is common with you all, perhaps, throughout the State.

And is it true that the extensive spread of the Gospel, in

apostolic times, described in the passages quoted, did really fulfil the command contained in the apostolic commission to preach the Gospel to every creature? If you sustain yourself in this assertion, you will soon find that you have proved vastly too much. By your success in the proof of this doctrine you will destroy a fundamental principle held by us all, in common with all other evangelical Christians - the ~~divine~~ call to the ministry. I say nothing in reply to the inquiry whether the commission does not require that the Gospel be preached in all the world, to every creature, in every successive period, and is not therefore incapable of fulfilment while consecutive ages of men continue to live. I briefly call your attention to the fact, that if the apostolic commission has been long since fulfilled, its claims are satisfied, and like a cancelled bond, is of course no longer obligatory! There is not now therefore any such thing as a call to the ministry, because there is no commission under which for ministers, if such a class of men could by possibility exist; to act! Still, however, all of you preach and profess to be called of God to the work. How is this? Your doctrine on missions is in conflict with your doctrine in relation to the ministry. By taking the ground that the commission is fulfilled, you proved, as I said, vastly too much, and consequently nothing at all. Now, I wish you to remember that when an intelligent congregation hears a man preach, who, to avoid obedience, finds it necessary to represent the most prominent commands of the New Testament, as old abrogated obligations, they set him down, and with good reason, either for an infidel or a heretic. Do you admit that ministers are called of God to the work, and act legitimately under the com-

mission? If so you are obliged to reject the doctrine of your party in relation to missions, and admit that the objection I have now considered is of no force whatever.

"Whosoever shall call on the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10, etc.)

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?" If, my dear brother, it be true, as here stated by ~~one~~ Apostle, and which I presume you will not dispute, that no man can be saved but by Jesus Christ, of whom millions, yes sir, hundreds of millions have not heard, and therefore have no knowledge; and that to hear and believe, a preacher must be sent to show, I appeal to your intelligence as a Christian, and a minister, and ask you, are we not all called upon, you and every other Christian as well as we, by your allegiance to the Father of spirits; by the streaming Word of the Son of God; and by the incalculable value of all these millions of souls, the meanest of which is worth more than ten thousand worlds, to imitate the example of ~~the~~ apostolic times, and with all possible dispatch, to send preachers such as God has called to the work, and placed under the guidance of his churches as their servants, to ~~every~~ nation and kindred, and tongue, and people under heaven? Then shall we be, for so hath the Lord commanded us, a light to the Gentiles, and for salvation unto the ends of the earth."

But, it is asked why are you so solicitous about the Burmans, the Koreans, the Hindoos, the Siamese, the Chinese, and a hundred other heathen nations ~~on~~ the other side of the globe, when there

are so many heathen at home? Ah why? The inquiry is very natural, and will suggest itself to every pious mind. The truth is, the Gospel is "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." In accordance with this fact ^{so} joyfully sung in chorus, by the very angels of heaven, it is found by experience, that the spirit of foreign missions will always lead to domestic efforts; and the spirit of domestic efforts will expand itself into foreign mission. Our commission is to "all the world," in which heathen at home, as well as heathen abroad are included.

After all this shall I ever again hear the stale objection that our doings are unauthorized in scripture? This has been repeated a thousand times and bitter denunciations sent forth from the pulpit and the press, in innumerable circulars, and resolutions of associations and churches, and acrimonious pamphlets and little newspaper sheets north and south. In all this, brother Watson, I am sorry to know, that you have been ^{and} personally active. Sometime you write them, generally you circulate them, and always wehn called upon in Associations and churches, you vote for them! These missiles have for the most part recoiled upon the heads of those by whom they were sent forth, and produced that distress among the churches," which you have so often set down to our account, as a most grievous offence. Yes, my brother, your party have produced the whole of the "distress," yourselves. We can truly say: - "We have wronged no man." I am willing that the whole question shall be tried by the spirit which animated the two parties. Is not the spirit of your party wormwood? ~~Is it~~ the spirit of Christ? We read of

a star, which is called wormwood, but it shall fall. No, Brother Watson, the churches never were disturbed by us. Who are going about continually persuading the churches to divide; urging them to exclude their members, adopting proscriptive resolutions; calling upon Associations as you all did lately upon the Concord, to break up and form new constitutions, such as you dictate, to bind the souls of men, and which are not Baptists? Who are doing all this and much more? Are the friends of the Convention so engaged? No sir, we are conservatives. You are the men who are thus cutting up and dividing the body of Christ. Every one knows this to be true. Who then are disturbing the churches? Nathan said unto David; - "Thou art the man." This I am obliged to say to you, Thou art the man. Not alone as David was, but associated with many others. A word from you would silence them all. You choose not to utter it. You on the contrary assume a position by their side. You are all "par nobile fratrum."

But say you these missionary operations lead to Arminianism. Indeed, some of you assert, that all missionaries are Arminians. This, I am told, is your own constant declaration, and which you never fail to urge where opportunity permits.

Of this objective, I can very readily dispose. To the Philadelphia Confession of Faith (I suppose you are familiar with it) Arminian? On the contrary, many of your own party do not receive it, because they say it is hyper-Calvinistic. But the Philadelphian Association, as I have proved in a former letter, and you cannot dispute the fact, is now and has been from the beginning both a Calvinistic and a missionary body. How does this fact accord with

with your allegation? Does it not crush it at once?

That confession was first drawn up - it was at all events adopted - during the seventeenth century, (I do not remember the exact date) by the "Baptist churches in and about London." I have before proved that those churches were at that time actively engaged in missionary labors. "Facts are stubborn things." We could recite many more to our purpose, but time and room forbid, and besides it is unnecessary. Will any one ever again presume to assert missionary operations lead to Arminianism? Facts from the contrary prove to be true. With the same propriety you might plead that missionary operations lead to Mohammedianism or Mormonism! The idea is absurd. Missionary operations are obedience to the commands of God. Can it be that the doctrines of the Bible stand opposed to obedience to its commandments? Is the word of revelation inconsistent with itself? It certainly is if your doctrines of anti-missionism be true. But no, my brother, the error is in your construction of it, not in God's holy word. For the present, adieu. I am as ever your, etc.

Letter No. 9

Dear brother:

An objection against the Baptist State Convention very commonly urged, and in many instances with much success by you, and your associates, is that it is a "monied institution." In this particular, it seems you consult the weakness of human nature, and bring to your aid, not the Bible, but the ~~avar~~icious disposition, to which our race, even in its best estate, is so prone. Men are very apt to love money. ~~Such~~ are more susceptible of feeling in the pocket than in the heart.

"Covetousness," says Paul (Col. 3:5), "is idolatry." You seem to forget this when you so often appeal to its dictates. But it serves your purpose most effectively. The class of men, which among us is but too numerous, subject to this strong impulse, are all attention when you declaim against the Convention as "A money machine," and believe in you, when you tell them that money corrupts and destroys everything in religion and that it is not to be named in connection with the spread of the Gospel. It is, I presume, hardly worth my while to say anything upon this subject since those who love their money more than they do the souls of men can never by any possible means, be made Missionary Baptists. I do not feel anxious that they should be among us unless their principles are changed. But I wish to make you sensible of your inconsistency in this respect, and therefore claim a moment's indulgence.

That the Convention is a monied institution "in some sense I readily admit. By the bye, it is pretty bare of the article just now. I also grant you that the money is extremely corrupting." "The love of money is the root of all evil." And forget not, I entreat you, that this passion is as likely to be indulged by our opponents as it is by us. They are as liable to manifest it in withholding the means necessary for the accomplishment of good, as we are in spending it to prove the sincerity of our love for the souls of men. You will please ~~do~~ remember, that your own churches and associations are, in the same sense, "monied institutions," and some of them to a greater extent, because they use more of it, than the Convention. This truth you are obliged to acknowledge. Every one, I presume, of your churches, and of your Associations, has its own treasure,

and its funds. If on this account you condemn the Convention, you are obliged in common consistency for the same reasons to condemn your own churches and associations. Who among you ever think of denouncing a church or an association, or refusing to join, or co-operate with either, because it employs money to accomplish some of its purposes? None, sir. But the principle is precisely the same in each case. Thus, out of your own mouth do I condemn you.

The point of your sarcasm, however, is mainly directed against our alleged hiring of preachers! Yes, say you, the Convention hires preachers and makes them rich, and your preachers preach for money, without which they would be dumb. Here you become warm with indignation, and in your exuberant declarations find matter ^{to} sound many a glowing period, and shapen many a cutting rebuke.

Very well. We shrink not. If we have offended, we bare our bosoms to the weapon. Let not the guilty be shielded. But let us consider this imputation briefly. The charge contains three specifications, in relation to each of which I beg leave to say a few words.

1. It is alleged that we hire preachers.

To this specification we plead guilty. Yes, sir, we do hire preachers to preach. Is this, however, an offense? I answer no. We are justified in doing so, by the authority of divine revelation. Does not the word of God, say of his true ministers, "The laborer is worthy of his hire," (Luke 10:17) When Paul preached for the Corinthians he took wages, - 2 Cor. 11:8 - and ~~we~~, as he had equal necessity, did the same at other places. Christ condemns no hirelings

but the false Messiahs. On the contrary he protects and defends them, declaring the withholding of their wages one among the most revolting crimes. Might I hope that your associates would remember this? Yes, my brother, Christ speaks - Luke 10:7 - of his true ministers as "hirelings." Call us all hirelings, then, if you please. We glory in it. What you intend as a reproach points us out, in the very language of the New Testament, as the true ministers of Christ. In this we see illustrated the truth of the inspired maxim; - "The wrath of man shall praise him."

2. The second specification is that we make "ministers rich in this way.

The reply to this is brief. I have yet to learn that ministers have not a right, by honest means, to acquire the good things of life, and to as great an extent as any other class of Christians. As to making this a motive for preaching, I shall have a word to say presently. But I should like to be pointed to some instance in which our Convention or any other association for benevolent purposes has made its missionaries rich. Show me a case, my brother. Sir, you cannot do it, nor can any other man do it, and for the best of reasons in the world, the thing never was done, and never will be done. No, our plans, unfortunately, never so result.

There is a way however to make preachers rich. Let them go to work on their farms, their stores, their shops, like some eminent clergyman, Dr. Watson, for example, let them practice medicine, and

and preach only on Lord's days, and at other convenient opportunities when their business concerns will not suffer detriment by their absence, and even then, as they have no inclination to study, and indeed, no time to devote to it, and besides as study is not orthodox; let them preach by inspiration and they will thrive in the world. Many in Tennessee, and other parts of the Mississippi Valley, take this course and become rich. This is the way to make ministers rich. Those conscientious men who give themselves as Christ has commanded wholly to the work of preaching, will find the paltry sum they receive from whatever source, scarcely enough to purchase daily bread for their wives and children and to shelter them from the snows of winter, and the summer's burning heats. They may indeed lay up treasures in heaven, but they never will lay up treasures upon earth. No, sir; no minister of our churches who did his duty, ever became rich, unless he obtained his wealth by some other means than preaching. The history of the churches affords no instance of the kind.

3. The third specification is, that missionaries preach for money, and but for the pay, you assert, they would be dumb.

Now, my dear brother, admit the worst; consent that they preach for money; it is no part of my business or design to defend their motives. If they are influenced by such motives, which you well know they all positively deny, the fact is known only to God, and to him they must account. I said above that I should have a word more to say on this head. It is due to the friends of missions, to assure you, and the world, that they feel as much abhorrence for such motives, as the purest and most disinterested of their opposers. Point

out the guilty minister to us - the man who preaches for money and who, but for the pay, would not open his mouth - and prove to us that he is governed by such motives, and I pledge myself confidently in behalf of all concerned, that that man never will be employed. I do not pretend to say that we cannot be deceived in this matter. We set up no such claims to infallibility. The heart of those in whom we confide may be different from anything that appears, but if a man profess to be honest, in his motives and views and acts as such, are we not bound to receive and treat him as an honest man, and to continue to do so until he gives us reason to suspect him? Are you not governed by this rule? If not I should like to know by what rule you are governed. You will, if you please, enlighten us on this point.

We may, I again remark, be deceived as to the character of those in whom we confide, but we are, I presume, not more exposed to such an evil than are you, and the brethren who join you, in the opposition. Occasionally passes through our neighborhood a preacher, such as the notorious Biddle, who "flourished while in" Teays's Valley Virginia, who was lately in Kentucky, and who, I learn, is now figuring in Mississippi, for whose apprehensions, by the way, I perceive, several hundred dollars reward has been lately offered by some one on the other side of the mountains; occasionally, I say, such a preacher, passes through our neighborhoods, and finds himself a special favorite of anti-missionaries. You know, my brother, without my suggesting it that nearly all that is required to gain confidence, and indeed, as to many individuals of your party, to secure unbounded

popularity, if he is half way decent in other respects, is for a minister to denounce as immeasurably wicked, all benevolent institutions, and to ~~assail~~ and decry their advocates. Let him do this, and your churches and pastors embrace him, at once; and that too with a warmth proportioned to his violence against us. He capers in your pulpits, sacred places, to which our wicked feet may not ascend, denouncing us all as corrupt, selfish, money-hunters, and anathematizes all such men, living and dead, as Carey, Boardman, Judson and others, pronouncing them all hypocrites, and unworthy of respect or sympathy! For his pains the good brethren pour out their purses into his pockets. What, Brother Watson, pray tell me, did that man preach for? In regard to motives we are no more liable to be imposed upon than you are. Indeed our liability, as I can easily prove, is not so great as yours. ~~Where~~ is the devilish imposter who pretends to pass himself off in Tennessee as a missionary? Such, notwithstanding all you say about the Conventions being calculated to encourage hypocritessor imposters, by holding out to them the prospect of gain, are always its bitterest enemies. They are so because they all know that pretensions of connection with us would be almost immediately detected, their shame exposed, and their craft destroyed. But among your anti-missionary associates they can conceal themselves, villify and slander us in security, and are well paid for the service. Do you not confess now that you may be, as you certainly are, the facts prove it, much more easily deceived than the friends of missions?

The only remaining objection of any consequence, that I have heard against the Convention, and similar bodies, is, that they will ultimate-

ly become large and strong, and overthrow our ecclesiastical and civil liberty.

In reply, as to ecclesiastical liberty, I remark, that if those associations have corrupt designs, they have acted very strangely, for they have precluded the possibility of their accomplishment by embodying as changelessly in all their constitution and rules of government, perpetual prohibitions from any power whatever in ecclesiastical polity. In proof of this please notice the following article in the Constitution of the Baptist State Convention of Tennessee, which, by the by, is reciprocally a copy and a model of the constitution of other similar bodies:

"Oct. 4 - This Convention shall have no ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the churches or associations, nor act even as an advisory council in cases of difficulty between churches, nor shall it interfere with the constitution of any church or association, nor with the article of general union.

Oct. 8. - This constitution may be amended at any annual meeting of the convention, two thirds of the members present concerning therein, except the fourth article, which shall ever remain untouched.

Do not these documents prove the friends of the Convention, to be as strenuous advocates, to say the least, for church rights, as the opposers of missions? There is no telling what wicked and unscrupulous men may do, if they obtain control. They may disregard every law and every compact. But you well know, my Brother Watson, the facts prove it to every body, that they are

in principle and practice, much more strict in these respects than is your party. Yes, sir, we hold that each church possesses within itself all the powers necessary to its own government. A church is a voluntary association, and guided by the Bible, and its decisions in relation to its own members - and over others it has no control - are final. From them there is no appeal. Love is the bond of union, between the people and the churches of Christ, and it is a wise provision of grace that all "ecclesiastical courts" are removed that the motives of love and good works may be as strong as possible. These doctrines you also perhaps hold, but you certainly do not act upon them. On this part of the subject I am sure I need not say another word. As respects the overthrow from national liberties, I remark that our brethren of the Presbyterian Church have their General Assembly; our Methodist brethren have their General Conference; and our Episcopal brethren have their General Convention, each of which includes the whole of the United States of North America. These are all governing bodies, accustomed and authorized by their systems of polity, to rule; all large, strong, and of tremendous influence; yet none of them patriotic. Baptists who unhesitatingly charge us with a foul conspiracy against the liberties of our country, have the slightest apprehensions that from any of these organized assemblies our national freedom is in danger! But the moment that Baptists begin to unite their energies, not to govern even a single church, but solely to promote the further preaching of the Gospel, by ministers of our denomination, we hear the cry of alarm; our

there is not. If there is, it must be because Baptist principles are radically opposed to political freedom. The Papist did long ago assert this to be a fact. The old English Bishops in the days of Gothic ignorance, took up the charge, and by their fiat, many a Baptist expiated the service of holding our doctrines, in dungeon, on the rack and gibbet and in flames. Who now believes this imputation to be true? No man on earth, but anti-missionary Baptists! Do you believe it, brother Watson? No, I think not. If Baptist principles be thus dangerous to human liberty, away with them. Down with the churches at once. Let even their memory be sunk in perpetual oblivion. But sir, who that has one spark of intelligence, does not see - I know you do - that the objective is ~~a~~ ^{mere} ~~man~~ [^] device to serve party purposes, concealed beneath the imposing garb of religion, and political patriotism. The whole is a "coup de main" to excite the prejudices to the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I have done for the present, with the regular discussions of this subject. I shall, however, Providence permitting address to you one more letter, in which I will ask your attention to a summary of my arguments and conclusions, and thus close our public correspondence. As ever, yours truly, etc.

Letter No. 10

Dear brother:

In the course of these letters, I have proved that the true orthodox Baptist churches, as shown by their history, have, from the days of the Apostles until the present time ever been mis-

sionary bodies. I have demonstrated by the word of God that this is the true scriptural organization of the churches of Christ - a church not thus formed is not "Old Baptist" nor "according to the pattern shown in the mount." I have proved that the method adopted by the Convention Baptists in Tennessee, by which to facilitate the preaching of the Gospel to every creature, by the union of individuals and churches, is scriptural, right and substantially, the immemorable Baptist usage. And I have refuted all the objections of any force which I have heard or seen advanced against the churches on the score of their missionary character and labors. With all these facts before us, I hope the cry will be hushed which has, from all quarters of our State, for three or four years past, been borne on the wings of every breeze, for claiming missions, an unheard of thing among the Baptists, and to favor such operations, a departure from Baptist principles! The high qualifications of the great mass of our opponents, to decide what are and what are not Baptist principles, and practice, may readily be perceived by what we have seen lately, and shown in these letters, respecting their knowledge of Baptist history, and their information of the character and designs of the churches of Christ. Oh that some little knowledge of Baptist doctrine and history could be diffused among them! Surely it would unchain their minds from the gross deception and prejudice under which they have so long labored.

Ours is identical with the doctrine of our fathers, in every age; our practice is the same; and respecting even the minor

matter of organization, in what do we differ from those who have gone before us? In this only; that instead of attempting the occupancy, by a body located in ^{our} ~~our~~ place, of a field so large, as that for example, of the original district of the Philadelphia Association which embraced what is now about ten states of our Union, each State has concentrated its own strength to supply its own wants; hence our State Conventions. Patrons of our common country, less destitute, as those in the East, and a few sections in the West, have combined to assist those that are more so as ⁱⁿ ~~is~~ most of the great vally of the Mississippi. Such are the American Baptist Home Mission Society; and the Convention of Western Baptists. In the work of Foreign Missions, and the distribution of the pure word of God, the whole of our churches and people in our entire country are united in the American and Foreign Bible Society, and the Triennial Convention of the Baptist denomination of the United States. And I may be permitted to say to you, that our labors in these "works of faith" have added another to the many proofs already existing, that just in proportion as the churches have acted out their missionary character, in the same degree ² have they been united, prosperous and happy.

We have nothing on the score of missions, as respects either principle, organization or action, to retract. No, my brother, be assured, our course is onward. Our only regret is that we have done so little; that so much remains to be accomplished; and that so many souls must yet go ignorant of Christ, to their last account before we can, as we are commanded, "preach the Gospel to every

creature." The Gospel has now been in the world eighteen hundred years, and how small a portion of its inhabitants have yet been subdued to its peaceful reign! Our country has been wonderfully blessed of the Lord. Religion has flourished here without a parallel in the history of the world. Still, even within our own borders, how great is the existing amount of destitution! The Macedonian cry is heard sounding from every hill, and valley and plain, - "come over and help us!"

Extend your view, my brother, beyond the United States - embrace in the prospect the whole of North America and the scene darkens. Half our land lies on the great Pacific, stretching from the Gulf of California to Behring's Strait, and is inhabited exclusively or nearly so, by wandering and fierce tribes of savages. The whole of Central and South America from the Rio Grande to Cape Horn, although portions of it may be more civilized, is in no better condition religiously than the hordes of our own Western Coast.

Cast your eyes over Europe. Upon England you gaze with some sensations of pleasure. On the Continent is here and there a green spot, an oasis in the desert - bright and beautiful, but all the remainder is an arid waste. The land of Tacitus, and Tully, dedicated to the fame of buried ages, is yet overshadowed by rosy skies; and the fields are still blooming with verdant beauty; but there despotism has built her throne, and its inhabitants sit in despair, bound in the chains of superstition and death. The land of Homer is a land of darkness. For the most part, it is true, Europe professes the religion of Christ, but it is a

somber and crude conception of that religion, more heartless and grinding, and holds its votaries in more galling bondage than paganism itself.

Look upon Africa, that land where in her infancy, science was cradled, and whence she went forth to enlighten and elevate the nations of the West. A few faint stars twinkle here and there upon its Western coast, but all the rest, from, Egypt, to the Cape of Good Hope, is one black night of ages; black as her own sable sons who prowl on the banks of the Niger and Senegal, or traverse the burning waste of her Sahara.

And what is now the condition of Asia with her teeming millions? A few flickering lights have been kindled among her northern nations, and on her southern shores - in Hindoostan, Burmah, Siam, and some others, which are yet struggling with darkness. Most of her islands are wrapt in the black pall of pollution, and the west is sunk in the strongest delusion of Mohamedanism. The hosts of the Saracen, have long since trodden down the temples of Christ, which once studded her cities and her plains; Jerusalem is fallen; the glory of Palestine is departed, and the Turk now mutters his orisons to the Prophets, in the place where once the Holy Ghost descended in majesty, upon the followers of the Redeemer and thousands anxiously heard and joyfully believed and obeyed the Gospel.

Such, my brother, is the present degraded condition of the nations of the earth. Can we look upon all this while the command is sounding in our ears: - "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to

every creature," and with the spirit of religion in our hearts, close our eyes, and lie down and sleep on? God forbid! O for more of the spirit of our Master - the knowledge of Jesus Christ!

What, my brother, will the Gospel do for the nations? It will by the blessing of Almighty God produce a radical change in the condition of this whole world. It will remove the ignorance of the multitude and expel their heathenism. It will enlighten the mind, chasten and convict the understanding, convert the soul, sanctify the affections, and passions - in a word, it will lead the millions of our race to the Lord Jesus Christ, the great fountain of life and salvation. Against this holy work, I know the powers of darkness will oppose every possible force, assuming often, the more readily to succeed, even the sacred forms and habilaments of religion itself. I will not - I cannot-believe, that you, my brother, will longer lend yourself to the enemies of salvation, that you will still employ yourself in efforts to roll back the receding darkness upon the world, and aid to engulf the nations in eternal death. I implore, I beseech you, come out on the Lord's side. Let the worst however, be what it may, we are not discouraged. Omnipotence is pledged for our final success. The earth shall, and soon, too, be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Finally, my brother, adieu. I say not more, but am as ever, etc, etc.