

faith of God's elect. But the church of God is in the scriptures represented by various figures; she is spoken of as a city: "except the Lord keep the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain." Psal. 127:1. She is also spoken of as a house, "ye also are built up a spiritual house," &c. 1 Peter 2:5; as a bride adorned for her husband. Rev. 21:2; as a body and Christ the head, see Col. 1:18. Now we know that a body is composed of members, and in order to a complete or perfect body, every member is essentially necessary. And now brother Hardy, we readily perceive that the saints under the old dispensation, would not be perfect without the New Testament saints, that is, I mean, and I think Paul meant, they would not be a perfect body, since every saint, both under the old and new dispensation, are members of the body of Christ, which is a complete and compact body, but which it could not be without every member; from which we may justly infer the effectual calling and preservation of every chosen member of the body of Christ. "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, whereas yet there was none of them." Psal. 129:16. If it be said that this has reference to the literal body of David, I answer that it is equally as true of the spiritual body of Christ, the members of which are called chosen and faithful, and shall be preserved from every hurtful snare until the last day, when the great trumpet shall sound, and then the sea shall give up its dead, and they that are in their graves shall come forth, and then brother Hardy we shall be complete in Him, and our present doleful state of warfare, the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, shall not spoil our future bliss. If indeed we are the ransomed of the Lord, there will be no perils there, neither by land nor by sea, nor among false brethren, no more dark clouds of sin to obscure the reconciled countenance of our heavenly Father, but we shall see Him face to face, and know our blessed Redeemer even as He knows us. May such be your happy lot and mine, is the sincere desire of your unworthy brother.

If my views of the text, to which you called my attention, is correct, I am aware, that they have been very imperfectly expressed; however, I have done the best I could in a brief

way. What I have written, is submitted to you, brother Hardy, and to others who may read, provided it should be published.

Your unworthy brother,  
JOHN ROWE.

ANTIOCH, GEORGIA, )  
February 4th, 1869. }

Dear Brother Bodenhamer:—I hope you will not think me presumptuous to claim the sacred relation as above, if so, pardon the offence, I am sure I mean no harm. I sometimes feel just like I do love christians, unworthy as I am, for I am forced to acknowledge, if I am a christian I am the least of all, and am not worthy to bear the appellation of a Baptist; but I will if the Lord will enable me, try to give you a short account of my past experience.

If I ever was made to consider my condition, it was when I was very young, perhaps in my eighth year, when I had some very serious reflections about my future destiny. I concluded there were two deposits for all men according to their character; the righteous were to receive eternal happiness and be forever in the presence of God; the unrighteous, were to receive the anathemas of a sin-avenging God. With these reflections, I thought it my duty and highest interest, to become a christian, verily believing that I could ingratiate myself into the favor of God, by good works and good dos, and become a very good creature. I went on in this way, trying sometimes to pray, promising the Lord if he would permit me to accomplish some future design, I would be a better boy; these promises were soon forgotten, and never kept by me. Seeing I fell so far short of my vows, something would suggest to my mind, you are a sinner. I lived this life of do, &c., until I was in my seventeenth year, at which age I was called to enlist in the service of my country. This brought to mind more serious thoughts; seeing and hearing of the horrors of a dreadful war, I thought that my time would soon come and was not prepared to meet the consequences of a dying sinner, for I was without God and hope in the world, and a stranger to the covenant of promise. This was my condition from time to time until 1865, when I received a letter from my father; he said to me in his letter, to remember my Creator in the days of my youth.

This had a tendency to augment my troubles. At this time I would have given anything I possessed to have been a christian, so that I could have returned home and become united to the church, but poor me, I had no hope. The war closed; I returned home and to the love and practice of sin. In 1866 my father died; previous to his death he called me to his bed-side, and said he wanted me to make a good man; he also said he had viewed his life from the time he became a Baptist to his death; in retrospect he had said he had not lived as near his God as he should have done; he farther stated he felt that he had declared the whole counsel of God, except that of the church's duties to the ministry; claiming that he had fought a good fight and had kept the faith, and was now ready to be delivered. Here I could see the good of being a christian, for the righteous shall have hope in his death; but poor me, I had no hope; I was a poor sinner, and at times I felt that I was exposed to the wrath of a sin-avenging God. From time to time, I now had much trouble. At this time I had a dream; I dreamed that from my body issued forth much corruption. I communicated my dream to my mother, who said to me that I was nothing but a body of sin and corruption. I think if I am not deceived, I felt then that I was a poor lost sinner, and that there was no one as corrupt as I felt myself to be; I tried to pray, but it did not seem to me that my prayers reached so far as the top of my head; I felt that it would be just in God to cut me off, if his will; Amen, would have been my response, but I did not want to be lost; I felt that the poet expressed my case at that time:

"For if I perish, I will pray,  
And perish only there;  
For if I stay away, I know,  
I must forever die."

At length, at a time unexpected to me, I was made to burst forth into an animated strain of singing. The cross of Christ inspired my heart to sing redeeming grace.

"Awake my soul and bear a part,  
In thy Redeemer's praise;  
O, who can be compared to Him,  
Who died upon the tree;  
This is my dear delightful theme,  
That Jesus died for me."

Here this burden of guilt was removed, and I think if I am not deceived, I was made to rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory; but this glorious feeling did not last long, I

soon felt that I was deceived; however, the burden did not return, neither have I felt it since. The next trouble was that of omission of duty or what I felt to be duty—to follow my Lord and Master into the liquid grave, there leaving my burden, rising, as I humbly hope, to a newness of life in Christ Jesus.

Now, my brother, I have given in a very imperfect manner, my travels from nature's night into the marvelous light of the gospel, as I do humbly hope and trust. You can give it publicity in your "Landmarks" if you choose; a withholding will not produce any offence. May God bless you, my dear brother, and sanctify your efforts in the "Landmarks," to the comfort and consolation of His dear children, for Christ's sake.

A. B. WHATLEY.

P. S. Please give me your views on the first paragraph of the 25th chapter of Matthew, in reference to the ten virgins, and oblige,

A. B. W.

I believe with unshaken faith that God hath purposed in Christ Jesus, and that according to the law of his own mind, to build a house, which is the church, the pillar and ground of the truth; which was elected or chosen in Christ before all worlds, preserved in Christ through all ages of the world, called in Christ by the effectual working of the Spirit, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away—justified in Christ by a true and living faith, which is exclusively the gift of God; kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last times, and will ultimately be saved in Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation, world without end. When we look on the church she is one body, her endowment is one hope, her life is one faith, her head is one Lord, her door is one Baptism, her Father is one God and Father of all, over all, near all, in all, and through all.—Gray Haggard, 1836.

Lay not wait, O wicked man,  
against the dwelling of the righteous;  
spoil not his resting place:

For a just man falleth seven times,  
and riseth up again: but the wicked  
shall fall into mischief.

Confidence in an unfaithful man in  
time of trouble, is like a broken tooth  
and a foot out of joint.