

the unpardonable sin; I would try to find out what it was, but could not; I wanted to be convicted, as I did not take that for conviction, but thought it was the foreboding of what I must suffer after death; and, O! the thought of being banished from God's peaceful presence, and from the glory of His power forever, it seemed to me that it was more than I could bear; I thought I was like Cain, my portion was more than I could bear. Sometimes I could not work, but would run to the woods, cry and pray, roll and tumble on the ground, wringing my hands, and wishing I had never been born. Sometimes I would see the little birds in the trees and wish I was one of them; I thought I was one of the most miserable beings on God's earth; I felt like I did not have a friend in heaven nor on the earth; I saw I was a sinner by nature as well as by practice, that my depraved nature constituted me a child of wrath; I thought that I was a vessel of wrath, fitted for destruction. Sometimes I was afraid that God would open the earth and swallow me up, as he did Korah and his company; I saw that every imagination of my heart was evil. O, how I hated and abhorred my poor deceitful heart; sometimes it would seem to be as hard as a rock, and again, I could shed tears freely; I cried to the Lord to have mercy on me a poor lost, condemned sinner. I saw that the Ethiopian could as easily change his skin, and the leopard his spots, as I could change my condition before God; I saw that unless the Lord Jesus saved me, I should be forever gone; I saw there was salvation in none other, that there was no other name given under heaven whereby I must be saved, and I would cry and pray to Him to have mercy on me, but it seemed to me that He would not hear me. One day while praying to Him to have mercy on me, I thought I heard Him say to me, "depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." I thought I heard the saints say, "Amen," to my damnation. My tongue can never tell my feelings at that time; while laying prostrated on the earth, I thought that my damnation was sealed; I expected in a few minutes to be in hell, to mingle my groans with the damned forever; but there was a resolution in my heart, to pray as long as I had breath, and thus I went on in despair and distraction; some people who

saw me said that I was going deranged, and no doubt I appeared so to them, for I was so much distressed that I did not know where to go or what to do. Sometimes I was tempted to destroy myself, but I knew if I did, that hell would be my portion; and, O! how afraid I was of that place; I was afraid that God would suffer the devil to take me off the earth alive, for I *did* believe that I was the greatest sinner upon the earth; I saw the justice of God in my damnation, shine as bright as a star; I saw no way by which I could escape the punishment due my sins. One day while I was laying on the earth weeping and mourning over my condition, these words of Scripture came to my mind: "therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." My burden of sin was all gone; I arose from the ground, I felt calm and serene; it seemed like I viewed Christ on the cross, and through His mediation and intercession, had peace with God. I felt like I was justified from all things, which the law of Moses could not do. Yet I did not take this for religion at that time; I did not feel happy enough to shout, I only felt calm and easy, only having a hope for a hope, believing the Lord would bless me. This took place on Wednesday before the third Sunday in July, 1840. About twelve o'clock that night I went to sleep; the next morning when I arose every thing seemed to have a different aspect to what it did before I lost my burden of guilt. Then I went on for several days, not knowing where I was nor what I was. I could not think I was a christian, because I had foolish and vain thoughts; I believed that a christian was perfect, soul and body, but I saw that I was not perfect in the flesh; I wanted my burden back again, but could not get it, and one day being in much trouble on account of myself, I went to the woods to try to pray for my burden again, but while prostrated on the ground, the Lord revealed his love to me; again I saw that it was the soul that was born, and not the flesh. I then believed it was religion.

Brother Bodenhamer I will come to a close. You can dispose of this as you think best, and perhaps I will write concerning my call to the work of the ministry at some future time.

A. N. HALL.

A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.

MACON, GA., }
March 28th, 1869. }

Dear Brother Bodenhamer:—

When we look around us and see so much wickedness and idolatry among the people; so many errors and abominations propagated by the false prophets of the day, we are ready to ask, where is Zion? Is she united and diligent? Is she warring against these things? Where are the watchmen of the city? Are they upon the walls? Are they blowing the trumpet in Zion? Are they sounding the alarm in the mount? Are they warning the people?

Surely the church should be united in peace and love, in doctrine and practice, in faith and ordinances.— Surely she ought to be diligent in duties, in good works, in knowing and keeping the truth. Surely she ought to war against these things, lest they break down or get over her walls, and disturb the peace of her inhabitants. Surely the ministers of the gospel should be upon the walls of Zion, proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation; warning the church as well as all the people, against these things. Surely they ought to "cry aloud and spare not" in proclaiming and defending the truth, and in pointing out and fighting against error.

It does seem, my dear brother, that when we consider that God is the author of truth, we cannot be too diligent in contending for it; and, on the other hand, when we consider that Satan is the author of error, we cannot be too diligent in opposing it. We should not let our respect for the feelings of any individuals or sects deter us from a faithful discharge of our duties in this respect. If we should fail to discharge our solemn duties in this respect, we would not be faithful witnesses, nor obedient ambassadors. Paul, in his charge to the elders of Ephesus, said, "wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you not sparing the flock." (Acts 20: 26, 27, 28, 29.) He also warned them against some of their own number, who would speak perverse things, to draw away

disciples after them. If the elders of Ephesus should have observed this charge, surely the elders of the present day should observe it. Then as the elders love the truth, let them contend for it; and as they hate error, let them oppose it. They have the truth as it is in Jesus, to proclaim and defend, and they have the religious errors of the day to oppose.— They are to preach that Christ is the way, the truth and the life, and deny that the sinner has life of himself, and can go half way without Christ. They are to preach that God is a sovereign, and works all things after the counsel of His own will, and deny that He can be influenced by the action of men, and turned from His purpose. They are to preach that God has made choice of a people, whom He will save by His own appointed means, though men and devils may oppose; and they are to declare false, that doctrine, which claims that the sinner must make the choice himself, and get to heaven by his own means. They are to preach that God can and will, independent of man and his means, save His people with an everlasting salvation, and deny that He must be helped by man and his means—such as Sunday schools, Missionary, Bible and Tract Societies, Protracted Meetings, &c. In short they are to preach Christ as all in all to the poor sinner, and every thing else as false and anti-christian. The church should guard well her portals, and keep out such imposters as the apostle said would rise and speak perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. The peace of the church was, for some time, disturbed by these imposters, about forty years ago. They spoke "perverse things," and said that it was necessary, for the well-being of the church, to let the institutions of the day in, and being opposed, went out from under the Divine government; made plans of their own, and drew many disciples after them. No doubt many of God's people were then carried off in captivity, and no doubt, many have since been carried away into Babylon. The church then, should keep out all errors as well as imposters, as she regards her own peace, and try to keep all her children from being captivated by any of the false reports or flattering sermons of the lying prophets. Let the church, which is declared to be the salt of the earth, a city set upon a hill, the light of the world, see that