

ministers of the gospel generally depart from their duty, being distrustful of the providence and promises of God, the churches will also forsake their duty; or when the churches forget, and neglect their duty to their minister, he will necessarily leave his post, and in either case the church will soon present the picture of a planted, but untended garden; or a people who do not like to retain God in their knowledge. And whenever ministers appear conscientiously, and contentedly, to spend only two days in the week, and sometimes not that in attending to the duties of their office, the churches will imitate their bad examples, and immediately discharge, an equally small proportion of their duty.

In this state of things, it is needless for ministers to exhort churches, it is vain for Associations to write circulars, the conduct of both ministers and churches, declare, that it is only for the name of the thing, that they write, and we would give it as our opinion, that the relative and reciprocal duties between churches and ministers, ought never to be named again, until the one or the other returns from that far gone wandering, where they now are, to the place where they ought to be found. The breath, the paper, the labor, are all lost. Therefore, return, O watchmen, to your posts, or complain no more of the churches. Return, O churches, to your duties, or complain no more of your ministers. O Lord help thy ministers to rely on thy promises, and return to their duties; give thy church grace, to enable them to feel their duties, and a willingness to comply therewith. Amen.

[From the Primitive Baptist, 1845.]

ALABAMA, CHAMBERS CO.,
June 20th, 1845.

BELOVED BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD: I was received among the Primitive Baptists at Providence church, Russell Co., and baptised on the first Sunday in August, 1842, then in the 22nd year of my age. Since that time I have passed through many dark scenes of mind, and been filled with many doubts and fears; but sometimes I have been quite confident that I engaged the presence of the Lord, and been able to say with good old Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."—At other times, I have felt like that I could from my very heart adopt the language of David and

say that, "I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, or to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

I know that I am young, and but a very poor ignorant creature at best; but still I hope the reader will take the admonition of Paul when he said relative to Timothy, "Let no man despise thy youth"; and as young Elru said, "I also will show mine opinion." Job. 32, 10. I also would be glad to give earnest heed to the words of Solomon, because they are acceptable words and words of truth.—(Eccl. 12, 10.) And his admonition was, as you may find in the same chapter, first and second verses, to "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; while the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain."

He who has once had the true light of gospel truth to shine upon him, and been illuminated by the glorious sun of righteousness rising upon him "with healing in his wings," though he is dead to sin, will often find that if he cannot live in sin, yet sin lives in him as one of the prominent laws in his members, warring and fighting with many a struggle against the law of his renewed mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members. Rom 7:23. Though under the powerful influence of the spirit of God, in the days of his youth, he may remember and praise his Creator, and with his mind for a time keep his body under, and be enabled to offer it as a living sacrifice; and he may perhaps begin to think the battle is over and he will spend his days in rejoicing and praising God, for his wonderful works to the children of men; but let him take heed and remember that he will often find occasion to praise God for other deliverance besides that he has already had; for Christ has said, in the world you shall have tribulation; and if you have not had any yet, you may be assured that it will come. Then you will find the promise of Christ to be profitable to you, "I will not leave you comfortless and be of good cheer, for I

have overcome the world." Another reason why he should remember now his Creator is, that the evil days are sure to come if he is suffered to live in this sinful world; for Solomon again says: "If a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many. Eccl. xi. 8.

If I am a child of grace and been born of the Spirit, I say to the young brother and sister, by my own experience, that you will sometimes be ready to conclude that you are entirely deceived, and the effulgent beams of the son that once shone so brilliantly around you refuse to give you any light to your darkened soul, until you will be made to cry out like Jeremiah that you are in dark places as those that be dead of old; (Lam. 2:6.) Or like Paul and those who sailed with him to Rome, (Acts 27:20:23.)—When neither sun nor stars appear for many days, and perhaps, (as is sometimes with me) more than fourteen days pass and you cannot feed upon the promises of the gospel, and are at your wit's end, and in this awful situation of darkness, satan like a roaring lion is going about seeking whom he may devour, and this is also the time when all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. Psa. 104:20. The old man with all his beastly nature will begin to "creep forth" in a sly sneaking manner to fright your soul, by telling you that you are deceived, and that you are a stranger to grace, until the day begins to dawn and the sun or the true light shineth upon you,

then these "beasts of the forest" no longer continue to creep and prowl around you, but they "gather themselves together, they lay them down in their dens." 22d verse.

I think that the young Christian has many important lessons to learn in the school of experience, if he stays in this world of sin and iniquity, where sin abounds in his flesh and in the hearts of the children of disobedience; but still he will occasionally find that where sin abounds, grace sometimes much more abounds.

But says one, why is it that I must suffer thus in this world? I answer that your faith must be tried, being more precious than gold that perisheth, that it may be

found to the praise of him who called you to glory and virtue, and also the Lord is determined that the righteous shall be tried. Psa. 11:5.

The most important lesson for you to learn is to live out of self and live entirely on another, this sometimes you think you have learned; but when the wind becomes boisterous, fear springs up, and no other alternative is left but to cry, like Peter, "Lord, save me." Mat. 14:30. David at one time could say, that by his God he could run through a troop and leap over a wall; at another time he was afraid he should fall by the hand of Saul. At one time, he could say, my soul shall make her boast in God; and at another, he looked upon himself as a worm and no man. The wicked know nothing of such changes and trials as these; and for this reason they fear not God. Psa. 55:19. Be not discouraged because of you troubles and afflictions that you meet with in the way, for you may be well assured that, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."—Psa. 34:19. Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. 34:3. May the Lord have mercy upon the poor of his flock, and rid them from the hand of strange children, that our oxen (the preachers) may be strong to labor, that there be no complaining in our streets. Psa. 9:4.

WM. M. MITCHELL.

The disciples of Christ, under the affliction which they meet with in this world, are apt to be troubled in their hearts, to be disquieted in their minds, to be dejected and discouraged. It was so with David. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me?" He was sensible of his afflictions, and that disquieted him, and cast him down. God's people are subject to such disquietments, because they are flesh and blood, subject to the same passions, made of the same mould, subject to the same impressions without as other men, and their natures are upheld with the same supports and refreshments as others, the withdrawing and want of which affects them as well as others. And besides those troubles they suffer in common with others, by reason of their being called out of the world; the world hates them, and they are therefore more exposed to tribulation than others, and so are apt to be cast down and discouraged.—Bunyan.