

James Osbourn to the South Carolina Primitive Baptist Association, 1845.

CONCLUDED.

The real beauty of the religion of Christ lies mostly in that which we find but little of, either among writers or preachers, to wit, divine savour. This savour upon the soul is as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore, Psa. 133. 3. This divine savour invigorates and causes all within us to rejoice. Also, this savor acts upon us as a check against indulgence, and cold indifference; and when we are under its benign influence, we can but say, Praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens. I wish the Lord God of Israel may be with you when convened together as an Association; and by him may your souls be greatly cheered. Do try to live together in love and harmony, and in true and real gospel fellowship. Strive not for mere mastery, or who shall shine the brightest, and cut the best figure as a writer or a public speaker; for all this is mere trash and far beneath the genius of the pure gospel of the Son of God. Men may preach and write, and may be very smart and clever in so doing; and yet in their sayings and writings, all may be as dry as a chip, and as light as froth:—a vocabulary of sound words, but no divine savour;—considerable talent, but no life;—much head knowledge, but no fine touches of grace, and lines of mercy appear in view; but all is flat, frigid, and empty.—These things your servant knows to be true in most preachers and writers, and to him it is a matter of sad lamentations: but so it is and he cannot alter it. But do ye, beloved, endeavor to live near the Lord; and as the poet says of good old Enoch, so do ye:

HE WALKED AND TALKED WITH GOD.

Religion without more or less of this is of no great account at best; and hence I wish you to live under the smiles of the God of Jacob, and then will ye see and know what I am confident cannot be seen or known without living there. I could say much more on the subject of living near to God and of the advantages arising from so living; and I am even anxious to write more on this pleasing subject, but my letter is already too long.

I am yours respectfully, JAMES OSBOURN.

RED HILL, ALA., Feb. 22, 1870.

BROTHER L. I. BODENHAMER—

Dear Brother:—Notwithstanding I have never seen your face, I hope we are children of the same parent, and heirs of the same inheritance. I feel to thank the Lord that he put it in the heart of sister Sue Crutcher to visit this neighborhood and bring a copy of your paper with her, and that I got an opportunity of getting your paper, where I can see the writings and communications of God's people from the North, South, East and West.

Brother, I do not purpose writing for publication, but I desire you to give your views in your paper, in relation to Baptists of the Primitive order uniting with the so-called benevolent societies, from the Masons down. By so doing, you will confer a favor on one of your unworthy subscribers. I send you enclosed a minute of our Association. So you can see in part what we subscribe to in this country. May the Lord bless you, and enable you to continue to feed his sheep and lambs.

Your unworthy brother, C. F.

Alas! how hardly are we brought to accept salvation as a gift of pure favor. We are for bringing a price in our hand, and coming with money in our sack's mouth, notwithstanding the celestial direction is, "Buy wine and milk, without money and without price;" that is, take absolute possession of pardon, holiness and eternal life, as if they were by your own purchase; but remember that you nevertheless have them gratis, without any desert, nay, contrary to all desert of yours. We did not bribe God to create us; and how is it possible that we should pay him anything for saving us?—Toplady.

So long as we live in the flesh, we know not that we are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; but when the commandment comes, sin revives, which before lay torpid, and discovered not its enmity against God, our soul's peace and eternal happiness, nor was known its exceeding sinfulness, filth and deceit; and then we die to our hopes in self, the law, and any human help; and, wet with the showers of the mountains, are constrained to embrace the rock for want of a shelter, and cleave as we are enabled, with all our misery and want, poverty, guilt and shame, to Him who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them who are out of the way.—Isbell.

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JAS. S. DAMERON, PRINCIPAL. Ruffin Station, N. C., Nov. 20th, 1869. dec 19 45-11

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