

## EDITORIAL

L. I. BODENHAMER, EDITOR.

WILSON, N. C., APRIL 15, 1870.

## God's Love.

The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Jeremiah 31:8.

God is declared to have appeared unto the Prophet of old, that is—He reveals His love to the Prophet, and to the Church, as being everlasting, and if it be everlasting, it must of necessity be perpetual.—Hence God's love to the Church, was as great before time, as it is in time, and will be no greater in eternity, or after time, than it now is, and ever has been. Hence the succession of evidences. First the promise to our mother Eve, in the garden. Second, the types, and figures, and the Prophets. The types and figures all answer, and point to Christ as the love of the Eternal Father. The Prophets all describe Him as the Gift of God to, and for the Church. The actual coming and death of Christ, is evidence of the truth of God's everlasting love, and His abhorrence to sin, and His regard for His justice and glory. Hence the entire testimony of Scripture, together with the coming, condescension, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, are all for the Church, His elect, and is the strongest evidence of what He saith to us, "I" (the eternal God,) "have loved thee," (the individual Christian, when applied to personal experience, and the whole Church, when applied in a collective and general sense) "with an everlasting love" (either personal or general, or rather both.) And to the believer, all these precious truths are fully believed and received by faith, as having been everlastingly tried or experienced by him; and unto the believer, He is much endeared: "unto you therefore, that believe, He is precious." God's goodness, immutability in love, almighty in power, everlasting in mercy, perpetual in faithfulness, to know them that are His, to call them into life, to give repentance, to draw them to Himself, to forgive their sins, and lest any should do them harm, or touch them with the finger of destruction, He neither slumbers nor sleeps, but watches over them every moment. Such love exceeds all na-

tural love. The mother may forget her sucking child, yet He will never forget thee, nor forsake thee. Christ calls our attention to natural love, as a contrast. And as natural love is a passion of the mind, causing us to delight in the object loved, so divine love is a principle of the great Deity, causing Him to delight in poor sinners, in their peace, happiness, and eternal salvation, and to give us assurance of His perpetual love to us, He tells us "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Now if natural love is only ended by death, Divine love can never end, for the Deity has never, nor never can die.

And as we, in the natural, never would be disappointed nor separated from our love, if we had the power to have it otherwise, is it not a denial of God's word, and a distrust of his love, to suppose that He, possessing all power in heaven above and in the earth beneath, yea, and over hell its self, would ever fail to move and remove all opposition out of His way, so that His loved ones, should ever be seated in His divine presence to behold His glory, to enjoy His smiles, and He to enjoy his beloved. But how faint a figure is natural love, to compare the love of God with, for in the natural, the object or lover has no power to cause the object to love in return, consequently may fail on that account, to be happy. But not so with God, for he has the power to subdue sin in us, and to cause us to love Him. "I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." Hosea 2:14. But in the natural, distance may intervene. But not so with God, for He saith "Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

Then poor sinner, if you view yourself standing a great way off in sin, and feel the drawings of God, and you fear to come to Him, believing that your sins are so great that He will thrust you down to hell; hear what He speaks to thee "with loving kindness." Though you have been a great sinner, still He has for you "loving kindness;" not a kindness forced or merited nor bought, nor hired, nor disappointed, but everlasting love, and everlasting kindness. Oh, wondrous love! Oh, wondrous kindness, can it be for me. In the natural, when your acts toward your love have been indifferent, you fear to see them again; you expect to be spurned from their presence; you

feel that you deserve it, but if you believe they love you, and your love is true, you venture upon that love, not upon your acts; and, if when you venture, to your surprise, you receive both love and kindness, instead of bitter frowns, do you not exclaim: "Thou art more righteous than I, for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil." 1 Sam. 24:17. The kindness God shows to poor sinners, is the very best kindness, for it is "loving kindness;" no other consideration but love; nothing seen nor foreseen in you to produce it. Then can you not venture upon it, though you, like Saul, have persecuted the church; though you, like Manasseh, have caused the streets of Jerusalem to flow with blood; though you, like the thief upon the cross, are justly condemned to death, yet if you are now a penitent, and are trying to and desiring to come to Jesus, it is the Father drawing you with "loving-kindness." And remember Jesus says, of such as are drawn by the Father to Him, by this "loving-kindness," "I will in no wise cast out." Then are you objecting to such a sinner as you are being saved? If so, upon what ground? Perhaps you may say you were born in sin, and cannot do anything to atone for original sin. To which, we answer: Christ was born to you and for you, without sin; "unto you a child is born, unto you a son is given," and His birth is to be your birth. But you may say, that your life has been a life of sin. So it has, but Jesus came to save sinners, and He lived a life of holiness, and His life is to be your life. Can you risk your soul upon His life? But you may say, that you have been a mighty sinner. To which we answer: Christ is an Almighty Saviour. But you may say that you cannot repent. To which we answer: His "loving kindness" has "exalted Christ to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins." But you may say that you are so vile that you cannot pray. To which we answer: But Christ through "loving kindness" has prayed for you. "I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me out of the world."

Then if we are far off, His loving kindness draws us; if we are dead, His loving-kindness makes us alive; if we are His enemies, His loving-kindness makes us His friends; if

we are strangers and aliens, it makes us citizens; if we are without hope and without God in the world, His loving-kindness gives us a good hope through faith in His name. Then His loving-kindness has engaged by oath and covenant for us to be our surety, our Prophet, to foretell for us, our Priest to offer Himself once in the end of the world for our sins, our King to reign in Zion to the conquering of all our enemies without, and to subdue sin in us, to fit us to be kings and priests unto God; to swallow up death in victory for us, and to wipe all tears off all faces. And one evidence of His loving kindness to our souls, is enough to sweeten solitude, make afflictions light, cause us to count all things loss, dispel our gloom, remove our doubts, becalm our fears, ease our troubled minds, heal an afflicted conscience, and lift our souls out of the dust, and off the dung hill, and set them among princes in the fiery chariots of His everlasting love, drawn by His loving kindness, away from time and sense, out of reach of burning mountains, the wreck of nature, and the crash of worlds. Ed.

For and in behalf of the Primitive Baptists of North Carolina, we invite Elder I. N. Vanmeter, of Illinois, to visit our State, at any convenient time to him, between Spring and Fall.

Brother Vanmeter, you may rest assured that this invitation is the wish of every Baptist in this State; we therefore hope the Lord may impress it upon your mind to comply, "nothing doubting." If you should conclude to come, inform us when you will be at Greensboro, N. C., and how long you can spend with us, and appointments will be made according. It will take you about five days to come. Give us an answer.—Ed.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

GERMANTOWN, STOKES Co., N. C.,  
September 26th, 1869.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I promised to attend Graham's Church yesterday and to-day, but heavy rains have kept me at home, and this Sabbath morning, the rain continues. I will devote a portion of this holy day, writing to brethren, many thousands of which I have not seen nor never shall in time.

Some few years ago, I wrote my