

of sinners, is evidently in love with the world, and not with the church. And of such the apostle says, "The love of the Father is not in them."—I am of the opinion that a minister must be taught in a school before he can be qualified to preach the gospel, but Christ must be the teacher.—When men teach men how to preach, they will always make preachers for the world, and the world will bless them. Some say that a man, when called to preach, can preach better to the learned by being sent to school, and taught. But "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" teaches the same language to all its subjects. But say some, Send your children to Sunday school, and teach them early to love God. A man may be taught in all the learning of Egypt, and be as ignorant of God's love as was Pharaoh. But the Sunday School is called the nursery for the church. Well then, Christ is relieved of cherishing his bride.—These teachers have often made me heart sick. But I hope that I bless and adore the name of God, that his counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Not by preaching, but in a way they know not, and in paths they have not known. God alone can lead them, and he alone can make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. And his promise is that these things he will do unto them, and not forsake them. When it pleases him to call a wise man, he leads him in this way; and when he calls a fool, he leads him in no other way; and they both walk the same strait and narrow way; but Christ must be the Leader. This class of sinners are saved by grace, and are denominated the flock of God which Christ has purchased with his own blood. And the Elders are commanded to feed them. They are to be fed by the gospel. Hence life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel. But where God has not quickened the sinner, there is no life nor immortality, and it is impossible for the gospel to bring anything to light that does not exist. This life is given by the voice of Christ. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." This is not done on account of preaching, but it is done because he quickeneth whom he will. So I understand that the gospel contains all the precious promises of

Christ to his people, and that every gift of the church is for the edification of the body of Christ, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and not one promise is there of evangelizing the world.—How, say some, is the work to be carried on? Just as God has always carried it on. I have to confess that if I do love the world, I don't want to love it, for I have suffered much persecution from it, though I have sometimes been enabled to rejoice in the midst of these persecutions. I desire to have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And I would, if I could, comfort the Lord's dear children, and if I am led by the Spirit and power of God, and enabled to preach the gospel, I am sure that I shall live of it, and not by the dollars and cents I may receive from it. But if it will save, comfort and support the Lord's people, it hath been ordained that if I preach it, I shall also live of it. Some say that the preaching of the gospel is what quickens the dead sinner. I understand that sinners are brought to a knowledge of the truth now, in the same manner that they have always been. God adds to the church daily such as shall be saved. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. This is that Word of the Lord that endureth for ever, and is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you. When this Word gives hearing, and this hearing brings faith, then the individual is in a condition to hear the gospel.—Hence it is to him a source of comfort; it is glad tidings indeed. Some claim great honor in the matter, but we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of man.—God is the Husbandman; the man is the vessel, and at best is only a vessel of mercy, upon whom the riches of grace has been made known.—Then the Husbandman prepares the soil. He knows when the seed falls by the wayside, or on stony ground, or among thorns, or in good soil. I say, God knows where the seed falls; but the vessel knows nothing of the soil. The Lord has made the good and honest heart, and it will bring forth its full quantity. But what honor hath the vessel? I answer, None. God prepares the soil, sows the seed, and gives the increase.—The Lord's ministers would never preach if they could have ease with-

out. Then what honor is due to the vessel? It would always hold the treasure if the Husbandman did not force it to let it go. Yea, it becomes as fire in the bones. But this work of God goes on, by his grace, and will go on as long as time shall last, until the last member of the mystical body of Christ is born of the Spirit. God's ministers will do well if they will feed the flock of God. God has chosen his people out of the world, and hence the world will stand until the last heir of promise is manifested in the Spirit. Then the world will be found just as it is now, still worshipping and wondering after the beast. God said he would take his people from among the heathen, whithersoever they be gone; but no promise to take the heathen. He calls them by his voice, independent of all human agencies. Not only so, but he will bring them contrary to their wishes, just as he brought Israel out of Egypt. But when they are delivered, then they can, as did Israel of old, sing a song unto the Lord.

Brother Gold, have I said too much? I don't know when to stop writing upon this glorious plan of God, so independent, yea, it is indeed absolute; it works its own work, it writes its own law, it keeps its own history, there are no conditionals in it. The Lord says, "I will write my law in their minds, and print them in their hearts. I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Then indeed is all boasting excluded by the law of faith. Missionaries may boast of the much good they have done, but I suppose that to-day no nation on the earth can boast of more false gods than can the United States. Her people have with one accord, with the exception of a chosen few, knelt at the shrine of idolatry, of these false gods, and the result to-day shows that her land is covered in mourning, from Maine to California, and it is, in my judgment, only a union in name, and the Sunday School seems to have been the place to nourish and fan this hateful spirit. But God will be glorified, for he will save his people. The Missionaries may, and doubtless will carry the world, but God's promise, and the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

My brother, I hope you will pardon my trespassing so long on your patience. I would be pleased to

hear from you again. If I have said anything in error, I pray the Lord to pardon it; and if I have said anything that wounds one of the Lord's dear children, I pray God to heal the wound. Finally, I pray God to bring all his people to his own dear Zion, and give them pastors to feed them, and may they be permitted to sit down in safety. And may he be as a wall of fire round about them, and the glory in the midst, and may they be enabled to read his inspired word, believe the truth, and stand approved at last, I hope is my sincere desire for Christ's sake. Amen.

Yours in Christ, I trust,

ISAAC S. COON.

SPARTA, N. C., July 5th, 1870.

DEAR BROTHER BODENHAMER—I have concluded to trouble you and your readers once more, if the Lord will be my helper, for I know I cannot do anything within myself, so far as spiritual Israel is concerned, for I have no worth or merit of my own—it is all of God, and not from frail worms of the dust. You will see Ephesians 5th chapter and 1st verse: Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children. Dear brethren, we have to pass through great tribulation to enter the kingdom of heaven. Inasmuch as we have it to bear, let us bear it with patience and look unto Jesus Christ for our reward, which will be in the end or in the world to come. There will be no sorrowing, no pain, nor nothing to molest our peace there. It will be joy, joy to you. Then my brethren, let us wait with patience, and not run lest you be weary in so doing. If it is God's will for you to push forward, then you can go and it will not be wearisome to you. Children are apt to fret when there is no use of it, in the flesh, but in a spiritual sense they are cast down and do not wish to fret, for fear they will be cast off as evil doers. Wherever you see one he seems to look meek and humble, fearful to speak lest he will hurt some one's feelings. This is the way the children of God are. So, my Father's children, let me beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness. This, my brethren, is the way for children to do, to obey their parents in all things. So, my dear brethren, let us wait with patience. Do not grieve for the long stay we have to journey here. It is but a short time after all, though we may think it is long. Though it may be ever so bitter while we sojourn here, let us walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us. Here the question might be asked by some one, What use is this, and does it not mean the whole human family? I say no. My answer is, it is the church of Christ. When Paul wrote to the Ephesian church he wrote to the brethren or members of that church. He did not write to the whole community around that church; if he had he would not have directed the letter simply to the church. And in the same like manner our Saviour came down in this sin-