

the command found in 1 Pet. 5: 2 which is—to feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of ready mind. For I am persuaded that no preacher who would contract for a stipulated amount, would willingly, and of a ready mind, take charge of, and preach to a Church which would not give him something near what he demands—he might do it if necessary, but hardly otherwise. And I am persuaded further, that no preacher who would stipulate for a stated price, has been found on the side of the less monied; *i. e.* he would not say—so much is too much—which shows a liability to be influenced by money or filthy lucre, to a greater or less extent. From what we see above the following facts are clearly set forth: 1st. That the Saviour authorizes his disciples to expect and to receive a sufficiency of worldly goods to meet their needs while going at his demand.—2nd. The same is reaffirmed and enlarged to a wife.—3rd. This duty, laid upon the Church by Divine authority, is a holy and righteous work. And which, I suppose, may not be neglected with impunity. Doubtless it is one of the good works which God before ordained that the Church should walk in, and which shone forth so conspicuously after Pentecost, among the disciples in the early days of the Church—truly a work of love. But Paul says to the Colossians: “The day of Christ shall not come except there come a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed.” This falling away commenced in the Apostles days. Paul tells the Corinthian Church that he had “robbed other Churches, taking wages of them, to do you service,” 2 Cor. 11: 8. In the next chapter he says: “For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other Churches, except it be that I myself was burdensome to you?” says he, “forgive me this wrong.” He says to the Phillipians: “Epaphroditus was nigh unto death, not regarding life, to supply your lack of service toward me;” while he points out their neglects, their duty is still impressed upon the Churches. What then is the right and duty of the Minister in this case? It is his duty to point out to the Church her obligation in this matter fully, as the apostles did, and to reprove and rebuke for a neglect of it, and to suffer all things rather than to hinder the gospel of Christ. As the apostle gave an example in suffering hunger, nakedness, &c., &c. For, notwithstanding the duty of the Church to supply the temporal needs of her preacher, yet we nowhere find that a right is given to the preacher, or an example to that end, to demand of a Church any amount whatever for his services, claiming it as a legal demand. Let us suppose that such a right had been given unlimited, and how far do we think a corrupt ministry would go? Such as the apostle speaks of, such as those going out speaking per-

verse things to draw away disciples after them, and such as suppose gain is godliness &c. We may faintly imagine perhaps, by observing what has been done, and is now doing, by many without any command, or example whatever, except such as is strained and perverted; I say perverted because it is said “every word of God is pure and nothing is to be added to his words,” (Prov. 30). It might be asked, if the preacher has not the right to demand of the Church a performance of this duty, and to call her to account for a neglect of it, who has? To his Lord and Master a servant must give an account; and before him, he must stand or fall. The preacher is not the Master of the Church, neither is he to Lord it over God’s heritage.—God alone calls the Church to an account for a neglect of this duty, but says one—perhaps he will do it—and how will he do it? I would refer such a one to God’s dealings with National Israel, as a type to which Paul calls our attention in the 10th chap. 1 Cor. In National Israel we notice God’s dealings towards her, in his constant care, in blessings, in deliverances, with his chastening hand alternately applied, for perhaps, two thousand years. But from the days of David down, there was a general tendency more and more to depart from God’s command, and though she was suffered to fall away, yet his protecting hand was not withdrawn until Shiloh came: God’s words must be fulfilled as with National Israel, so may the Church expect chastisement in time for disobedience; but as the sceptre could not depart from Judah until Shiloh came, so God will not suffer the Church to go so far but what all his purpose will be fulfilled in her. Perhaps an error has crept into some Churches or members of Churches by confounding this duty with that of alms-giving, and which may have operated in some instances as a cause why it is said “we owe our preacher.” The duty of alms-giving is general and not specific; alms-giving is relief to the poor, (which Christ says “ye always have with you, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good,”) and this is guided by the bountifulness of the hand, and bounded by the mercifulness of the heart, and the pitying eye, and is not to be boasted of, while the duty of the Church in this instance is specific and extends to the real needs of the preacher according as God has ordained, and if the Church is neglecting this duty which is imposed on it by her Saviour, may it not be said, that she has left her first love as manifest after Pentecost? her love to God and to her preacher? and to continue thus to do, will it be unreasonable to expect a falling away, until that man of sin be revealed? And will he be fully revealed before the two witnesses are overcome and killed? Otherwise, what power will overcome them?

Your Brother in love,
JAMES J. DAVIS.

ESTILL’S FORK, ALABAMA, }
February 15th, 1873. }
Elder P. D. Gold:—

DEAR BROTHER,—I have noticed your request in the LANDMARKS from time to time for Brethren to write for the paper. Under a feeling sense of my unworthiness I will try (this morning while the rain is falling from the clouds, trusting that simultaneously I may feel a reign of grace in my poor unworthy heart, to guide me and direct my thoughts in that way which will be profitable to the sheep and lambs of our Father’s fold.) to comply with your request.

Brethren and Sisters, many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers them out of them all. Amid all our trials, afflictions persecutions, sorrows, and tribulations, Jesus is a sure deliverer from every foe and conflict. Though Satan with all his host may rage against the children of God, and he may post his emissaries at every entering about the borders of Zion, yet the strong arm of Jesus secures the sheep and lambs of his Father’s fold from the devices, assaults, and deceptions of the enemies of his people. “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arms and carry them in his bosom, and he will gently lead those that are with young,” (Isaiah); again, “I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people, their sins and iniquities I will remember no more,” (Paul); and again, “My kingdom is not of this world, if my kingdom were of this world then would my subjects fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews, but my kingdom is not of hence,” (Jesus). The kingdom of Jesus is purely Spiritual and nothing unclean or that defiles shall enter therein. But those whom God calls by his grace, sanctifies and draws by the Holy Spirit, and justifies by his own righteousness, are enabled to enter this kingdom—having a good hope through grace of a glorious and blessed immortality beyond this vale of tears. Then, friends, while we sojourn in this strange land we must fight with the weapons given us against the inventions of men and devils that are brought to bear, in order (so said) for the advancement of the kingdom of our Redeemer. Satan sometimes appears to be very religious, transforming himself to an angel of light, leading his willing captives to establish “good” institutions, money machines, and various other things to accomplish what (they say by their actions and speech) Christ did not accomplish for the fallen race of Adam. But their working is after Satan who is an enemy to truth, and they are ever trying to destroy the Church of God, the ground and pillar of the truth. But, O saint, fear not! the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against God. With these weapons we shall conquer

every foe, and Jesus our Captain will safely and victoriously lead us through all the fiery darts of the wicked, through the many trials and sorrows of the present life, and finally bring us into the mansions of Eternal Glory where no foe will invade our peaceful habitation. But we shall be made kings and priests unto God for ever and ever. Then fear not little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. For ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people—chosen of God and precious—that you should be heirs of Eternal Glory, and dwell with him in the full fruition of that never ending kingdom which he has prepared for them that love him. Now, in conclusion, Brethren, live in peace, fight the good fight of faith, let brotherly love continue, resist the Devil and he will flee from you; and to the ministry hold fast the form of sound words. Contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, neglect not the gift which is in thee, that which is in faith, so do. Take heed to thyself and to the doctrine, continue in them, for by doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee, and the God of peace shall be with you all—Amen!

Brother Gold, I submit this scribble to your discretion. May God enable us all to live at Jesus’ feet—is the prayer of

Your unworthy Brother,
J. S. COLLINS.

BELLEVILLE, NEW JERSEY, }
Sunday, January 5th, 1873. }

Dear Brother Gold:—

I read this morning in ZION’S LANDMARKS Brother Mitchell’s paper on the text 1st Sam. 18: 10, and feel so much delighted and edified that I cannot refrain from writing to him and the household of faith:

Dear Brother M., on reading your “attempt as the Lord has enabled you to explain the text,” whereby I have been much edified and delighted (bless the Lord, Oh my soul!) a stranger in the flesh, yet as David and Jonathan, Christ and his Church or bride were united in life and in death, so I feel that the Holy Spirit has made us one in Jesus Christ our Lord (according to the good pleasure of his will), see 17th chap. John, I in them and they in me, that they may be one in us even as thou Father art in me and I in thee. How blessed is it to see the indissoluble union (according to the decretive everlasting love covenant of Jehovah!) of the bride the Lamb’s wife and her covenant-head the Lord Jesus Christ, the Church which he has purchased with his own blood; and as we feel this holy union, so we have Spiritual communion, and truly our fellowship is with the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. Well may we ask, is not this the communion of the Lord’s body? and is it not like the visit made by Mary to Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist?