

Holy Ghost that the Scriptures were opened to them and they did quickly preach Jesus! not Peter, John nor anything else but Jesus and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life. We see that Peter kept this up until it so enraged the self-righteous Pharisaical law religion that was going on in that day that he soon found himself in prison, bound with two chains, and keepers to keep him secure. But alas! did they keep him. What do we see here? We see a spirit lusting on dust and clay. Here the true religion of our Lord Jesus Christ and his own gospel truth were despised and mocked and spit upon and put to shame by a rebellious and disobedient and gainsaying people that were wandering away from the path of righteousness; as it was here made or had been made manifest in Peter; for their guards were placed around him, and everything that could be done it seems was done to keep him secure. But God had seen enough of this wickedness and cruelty, and it pleased him to send his angel down and relieve his servant from these bonds.

And now, Mr. Self-righteous, did he keep him? Was this work too hard for him? I say not! and I also saw the prison house could not hold him any longer. The world and all its combined powers could not have kept Peter one hour longer. Why, you might say, because the power of God was there and the great boasted power of men and Devils had to give way because there was no power sufficient to put him to it. And hold on, what do you wonder: What is that?—that those keepers have become as dead men.

Brethren, and sisters, this must have been an hour of joy and rejoicing; but, it was terror to the keepers of this prison when they awoke and found Peter was gone. Of course they wondered what had become of him. Here they found that their own strength and power had failed them, and we see that they became as dead men.

Brethren have you not been in this condition yourselves. I think I can say that I have. They had lost all self dependence and felt that death was their portion. They had brought it all on by letting Peter get away. How did he get away without their seeing him. Why the power of God had led him out and left them in a dying condition. When the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ shone around about us, then in this condition we were killed to self and made alive to the power and justice, mercy and truth of God, for we saw that it was by grace that we were to be saved if saved at all.

Brethren and sisters, remember me in your prayers. May the God of heaven guide and keep us in the bond of peace, is my prayer.

W. E. GREEN.

THE COALHEAVER.

I am thankful to my dear friend for his goodness, but was sorry for the expense, knowing that old age and infirmities are expensive times and things. But faith in Christ brings all things in, and surmounts

all difficulties, removes mountains of sin, and other obstacles; it exalts the valley of the shadow of death, it makes darkness light, crooked things straight, and rough places plain. It overcomes the world, the flesh, and the Devil, and brings eternal life to souls twice dead.

Faith bakes bread, 1 Kings, xix. 6; boils the great pot in famine, 2 Kings, iv. 38; and pays debts, 2 Kings, iv. 2, 3; and secures natural spiritual, and everlasting life and makes the kingdom of heaven sure. It gives all the glory of our salvation to God, and brings in every branch of salvation to us. Many, many years have I proved, and experienced what I here write and never was my most indulgent parent so kind and bountiful, as now in my old age, when many infirmities are pressing on me. His providence is wonderful, and he keeps my soul in full possession of all the truth, the mercy, and the grace, that he made known unto my distressed and miserable soul at first; nothing is taken from it, nor anything human added to it, and God has done it that I might fear before him.

I long imagined, feared, and dreaded, that the time would come when my gift would get stale, and a sameness would appear in my preaching, and the people would wither; that I should get dry and barren, and people wearied with the one tale so often told; and this I knew had been the case with many, yea, with almost all that I have known who were the most popular, noted, and the most eminent. But now I see the difference between head knowledge and heart-felt experience, between memory and unction, between empty words and the power of God, and between speculative notions and a springing well. God still keeps my soul alive, nor does he suffer the flock to wither, die, or decrease; this, this I think would be death to me, against this I labor with all my might, and attend very much to this one thing, and make use of every scripture that I can find against this, of having a name to live; and blessed be God, he turns not a deaf ear to my prayer.

We have lost several lately by death, and not one but enjoyed good hope. Trust in the Son of God, my dear friends, and let nothing move you from this. I have for some time intended to collect a few first-fruits, Easter-offerings, tithes, &c. and come and pay my old friend a visit, if the roads by frost or drought become tolerable. Poor old James and Peg are worn quite out, and are coming home to me, for nothing but death must part us. God bless thee and thine.

HUNTINGTON.

OPELIKA, ALA., Oct. 25th, 1875.

WE are commanded as christians to "try the Spirits whether they are of God, for many false prophets are gone out into the world."

It has occurred to me that all we can possibly know of any spirit is as it manifests itself in the conduct and character of men who are subject to like passions with ourselves. There are, it is true, several kinds or different descriptions of spirits given in the

Scriptures, as the "unclean spirits," "deaf and dumb" spirits, evil spirits, "spirits of devils working miracles." There is also the spirit of fear—the spirit of bondage—the spirit of error—the spirit of the world—the spirit of Anti-Christ—the spirit of falsehood, of deceit, treachery and of fraud, but who ever saw a spirit? It "hath not flesh and bones"—it cannot be seen with natural eye as a visible tangible substance. The only way, therefore, that we can see these evil spirits or know anything about them is as they are manifested in the conduct of our fellow-beings. Whatever spirit a man is governed by that is what forms his character, whether good or bad, and the spirit is seen and known by the general character and conduct of the man. Hence we read "Try the spirits whether they are of God, for many false prophets are gone out into the world." False prophets and false teachers are under the controlling influence of a lying spirit and as that spirit governs them in their conduct and teaching they have very properly the character of false teachers and false prophets.

"Beware of false prophets," saith Christ, "which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves," Mat. 7: 15.

Now it would seem to be a silly question to ask, or to puzzle our minds about, to know what part of a man is under the control of a false spirit, a deceitful spirit, or an unclean spirit. The spirit that has the dominion, that rules and governs the man, entitles him as a good man or a bad man, according as the spirit that governs him manifests itself in his character.

We read of the "spirit of truth" "whom the world cannot receive," John 14: 17. If this spirit of truth is in a man, as the ruling governing principle, it forms his general character as a man of truth in a gospel sense—the truth "as it is in Jesus."

We should not be curious to know "what part of the man is a man of truth," for we know that if Christ, who is Truth, be in the man, the body is dead because of sin, and the character of the man is not counted from his sinful dead body, but from the ever-living active spirit of life in Christ which governs the man and forms his character as a christian. He is therefore a new man in both principle and character, a new man in desires and in conduct, and we very readily conclude that he has a new heart and that God has given him a right spirit.

How shall we know or see the spirit of God, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, the spirit of adoption, the Holy Spirit, and know that any man is a partaker thereof or led thereby unless his general character and conduct shall manifest these heavenly traits and holy principles? Christ came into the world "in the flesh" to bear witness unto the truth and he saith before Pilate, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice," John 18: 37.

Yours in love,

W. M. MITCHELL.

MAYSFIELD, Milam Co., Texas, Oct. 12th, 1875.

Elder P. D. Gold—Dear Brother in Christ:—

BROTHER Phillips informs me of your visit to Georgia, and to her house, and of the wonderful manner in which the Lord seemed to bless your ministry there; I hope I am properly appreciative of the same, for I feel an interest in the Old Baptist cause everywhere.

I have just returned from an appointment in Robertson County where I baptized a man by the name of J. M. Pittman, who is from your state: he says he saw you join the Primitive Baptist Church, saw you baptized and heard you preach the same day. He says he then cared but little about religious matters, but since he came to Texas he has obtained a well grounded hope (I never heard a more satisfactory experience in my life than he tells) and joined the Missionaries. But by chance (?) Elder McDonald and myself passed that way in our missionary work of last summer and sowed some "seed"—"the word," which seems to have fallen in good ground and is bringing forth fruit, not only in brother Pittman, but others who have taken the yoke of Jesus upon them and are "walking in him."

I know not what sort of a man brother Pittman was in North Carolina: but he says he "reckons he was the worst man in the world;" but he is now "sitting at the feet of Jesus clothed and living." He is a fair sample of Old Baptists, honest, industrious and unassuming.

J. C. DENTON.

THE devil has but two main springs in all his usurped empire, which are corrupt affections and carnal enmity; or, in plain English a love to sin, and a hatred to God. I do get clearer and clearer, deeper and deeper, into these things; and every seal that is open to me, I am like the Bonanerges in the Revelation, I cry, "Come and see?" but I am obliged to cry two or three times, before they can be made to see as I do. I am thankful to God for this; formerly he inclined my heart much to reading, but now, my eyes waxing dim, he leads my mind wonderfully by thinking; and my texts and subjects come flying into my mind generally this way.

It is a strange passage in Habakuk; "Thou woudest the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck," Hab. 3. 13. The cursed head in the whole house of the wicked is Satan, as Christ is the head of the church; Christ bruised and wounded this head, that is, marred all his plans. The foundation of Satan's empire is love to sin and hatred to God; and corrupt affections is the bond of iniquity, or the neck that holds that head and the house of the wicked together: this, this the Lord discovers, and this light wounds the head, bruises the heel, chafes the infernal mind, and translates us from darkness to light; and this translation mars the schemes and plots, contrived by the wise head of the serpent.

HUNTINGTON.