

Matrimony, N. C., Nov. 1, 1876.

Elder P. D. Gold,—Dear Brother:—

Varied have been the reasons for my long delay to answer your very kind, christian letter. When I received it I was just ready to start to the mountains for my health, and since that I would often think of writing, and the thought would occur that you were much engaged, and more profitably so too, than you would be reading my scribbling. And now, when I do write, I have nothing in and of myself to present but vileness and corruption. But many times lately I have thought of an expression used by my dear father in family prayer, while returning thanks to his heavenly Benefactor for the many blessings he and his family were the recipients of. He would mention, with so much fervency of soul, his gratitude to the Lord of hosts for the gift of his darling Son to suffer and die the bitter death of the cross that sinners, vile sinners, might live. And oh, how wonderfully precious it is to me, that it is through this blessed channel that I do receive all blessings, both common and special. Yes, and what a mercy to see and feel myself to be a sinner, and to feel privileged and favored to plead the life, death, and righteousness of a sinless Christ, when we come before a throne of grace feeling so vile, and void of anything that is good. Oh, brother Gold, what a different kind of life I ought to lead from the one I do, for I, who am not worthy of the least of God's mercies, have been so highly favored for twelve months that I could say, "The Lord is my strong habitation wherunto I continually resort" I have felt it so much so, and at the same time know myself to be so great a sinner and so unworthy of such continued favors, that I would be astonished and alarmed, thinking perhaps it was of the flesh and a spirit of disobedience. And, sometimes I think, perhaps I am deceived, for I am more afraid to live than to die, for I think that I am the same self, and that is the greatest enemy that I have, and unless the Lord holds me up I shall not be safe. I think David said, "Blessed are the *undefiled* in the way who walk in the law of the Lord." But alas! I am so prone to get out of the way and become defiled.

I thought while Elder Respass was praying, and in his introductory remarks at the Association, that one of his household foes was the same as mine. Shall I ever forget that prayer? how he struggled against it. As Mr. Hart has it, Accursed pride that spirit abhorred.

*Tis lustful when perceived,
When not perceived 'tis worse,
Unseen or seen, it dwells within,
And works by pride or force.

Against its influence pray,
It mingles with the prayer;
My breath it draws to seek applause,
Be silent, still 'tis there.

This moment while I sing,
I feel its power within;
My breath it draws to seek applause,
And mixes all with sin.

Exalted Son of God,
Destroy this haughty foe;
Remove our pride what e'er betide,
And lay and keep us low."

May the Lord bless you. Pray for and write to me.

SUE E. F. McNEELY.

CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The Mount Enon Primitive Baptist Association, of Florida, to the Associations with which she corresponds, sendeth greeting:

Dear and much Esteemed Brethren in the Lord:—Through the continued goodness and mercy of God, which we must acknowledge has been bestowed on us without merit on our part, we are blessed with the privilege of holding another Annual Session of our Association, and to transact the business assigned to us, in love and union. Our Churches were nearly all represented, and report in peace. Your Correspondence never reached us from the Union Association, though we would praise the goodness of our God for sending his servants—Elder W. O. Shiering, from the Primitive Union, and Elder R. Bennett, from Upper Alapaha Associations—to visit us, laden with messages of love. May the goodness of God follow them all the days of their pilgrimage on earth, and crown them above.

The theme of preaching, from day to day, was salvation by grace alone, to an attentive congregation; and may the Lord multiply his blessings upon the word preached. Dear brethren, we desire a continuance of your correspondence and friendly visits to us. Our next Association will be held with Mount Enon Church, Hill-boro' County, Fla., commencing Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1877, twenty-five miles North-East of Tampa Bay, in the vicinity of Cork, where we hope to meet a goodly number of you.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Elders and Messengers composing the Mount Enon Primitive Baptist Association, of Florida, to the Churches whose members we are, and all others of like precious faith in the Lord, send greeting:

Dear Brethren and Sisters in the Lord,—Time with its steady motion has brought around one more year, and, through the tender mercies of an all-wise God, the most of our improvable lives have been spared to meet together again in an associate capacity; and as we have hitherto, on each anniversary, presented you with a Circular Address, we also continue the custom. But of the times and seasons, Brethren, ye have no need that we write unto you, for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, for when they shall say, "Peace and safety," then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But, ye Brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of the light and the children of the day: we are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober, for they that sleep sleep in the night, and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation, for God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with him.—Wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify one another, even as also ye do; and we beseech you, Brethren, to know them which labor among you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and be at peace among yourselves. Now, we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.—See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good both among yourselves and to all men. Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesyings, prove all things, hold fast that which is good, abstain from all appearance of evil, and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And we pray God that your whole spirit, and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Therefore, beloved Brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

J. W. SWAIN, MODERATOR.

J. H. KNIGHT, Clerk.

Rutledge Station, Morgan County, Ga.,
July 25th, 1876.

Araminta Pittman,—Very Dear Sister in the Lord:—

I have received your very kind favor of the 10th inst., and thank you from my heart for such a good and christian-like letter. I was so much interested in the perusal of it that I did not look at your signature until I finished reading it. I could have given you the right-hand of fellowship before I had read four lines—it speaks the pure language of Canaan. You can pronounce the word "Shibboleth" plain and distinct, which is one of the very best evidences that you have tasted that Jesus has been very precious to your soul. I feel thankful to have the assurance from your letter that you have often been comforted in reading my very weak writings. I feel to thank God that he has blessed my little effort even to the comfort of one poor soul. This makes me think that I am in the way, and the way in me. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." Let us notice for a little who uttered these words: they were penned by Isaiah in the 54th chapter and 13th verse. This chapter is full of comfort, and none but New Covenant or Sarah's children can find it. This is addressed to a peculiar and

specified people, and just as many as the Lord our God has called or will call, will be sure to enter into that same rest, for it is in store for none others, and the least babe in Christ can sing the song of redeeming grace, as an adult of an hundred years old. This plan of salvation is a lovely plan; it takes kings and nobles and brings them down on a level with the beggar, in the very dregs of poverty; and, it also teaches the Ethiopian the way and plan. Then, when such a lesson is taught, and by such a teacher as Jesus is, how much better is the lesson so taught, than the lesson taught by man, poor, frail, mortal, dying man, whose breath is in his nostrils.

Man, in his natural and fallen state is corrupted. Yes, my dear sister, he is the fountain of corruption.

Let me cite you to one passage of holy writ, found in the 51st Psalm, and 5th verse "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me; behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom."—This verse proves very conclusively that we are sinners of the deepest dye, and we will remain so, by nature, as long as we live in this world; but when it is the pleasure of God to show us what we are, and what we

must be if we are saved by grace, when we are taught to know that we are sinners, we must be taken, as it were, out of self and rely upon Jesus the one altogether able to save us: then, this knowledge being given, a desire goes out with this knowledge like the poor Publican had, Lord, have mercy upon me, a poor sinner, utterly helpless and undone, without hope and God in the world.

You need not tell nor ask the poor souls, thus sensible of the condition they are in, to pray. Go to the anxious bench or anywhere else, and the very breathings of the soul is, "Lord, help me or I am gone!"

The proud Pharisee had no knowledge of his true condition as it was, from the fact of his having a sufficiency of his own. He could address God as his inferior; he could use the word God as well as the poor Publican, so far as the mere word was concerned; but when we contrast the manner in which he (the Pharisee,) used the word, we see that he could pray thus with himself and thank God that he fasted twice a week, paid tithes of all he possessed, and a great many other things he did in the sight of men—he finally says that he was not as this Publican. We read that one went down to his house justified rather than the other, and I am quite sure that it was not that proud, boasting Pharisee.

This last character is in the world yet, for, if I am not mistaken, we see those same zealous Pharisees in our day, that they have a considerable zeal, but that is not well regulated by knowledge. All the alluring and pretty toys to decoy souls are found in their movements; all the forms of mock religion are used to win souls to Christ.

I lately heard that there was a Church (so called,) in our neighborhood that had nearly gone down, and, through much love to the cause of truth, they hired a very zealous worker (preacher,) to build them up, but when he found out what they wanted with him he told them that he would preach for so much; he told them he was down on missions. In this Church (so called,) was an old sister, quite old and nearly blind; he (the parson,) told this old pious saint that she could knit suspenders for the Lord. "Well," said she, "but I have no thread." "Oh," replied the parson, "you shall have that." So, the thread was furnished, and the first week this poor old sister came forward with the suspenders. Pretty well for that! But the next week you must double that. The cry was No thread! But you shall have the thread. And, that poor old saint, weak and nearly blind, had to knit three pairs of suspenders for the Lord before this "greedy dog" was satisfied. This can be shown from a leading organ—the *Southern Christian Index*, and the paper goes on to state what a great revival they had.

Every man's works shall be tried as by fire. And if God was like man, not only would their works be consumed, but they would be themselves also.

We hope we do worship the God that is as a consuming fire, that burns all our works of self-righteousness