

# THE BIBLICAL RECORDER AND SOUTHERN WATCHMAN.

DEVOTED TO RELIGION, MORALITY, LITERATURE, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.....T. Meredith, Editor.

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## TERMS.

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## REPORT.

On measures necessary to secure preaching every Lord's Day.

The following is an extract from a report on the means of sustaining regular worship in our churches—by Dr. Jonathan Goring of the Greenville Institute, Ohio—read before the Convention of Western Baptists, at their last regular meeting. It deserves an attentive and careful perusal.

5. In order to increase the amount of Sabbath preaching, the churches should adopt efficient measures for the payment of preachers when they do labor with them, and for the support of permanent pastors. God has ordained that ministers should be rewarded for their time in preaching the gospel, as other men are in other employments. 1 Cor. 9: 14. The amount of this reward should be just what the same amount of talent, and education and industry would be entitled to, in any other employment for which they would fit them. While this sentiment is so fully taught in the Bible, and is so entirely consonant with common justice and with the dictates of common sense, it is astonishing that it should ever have been called in question. It has, however, been questioned—nay, denied, and that probably not a few honest minds, and some Christian ministers have taught the people to err in relation to it.

The worst features in our character as a denomination, and some of the greatest evils among us, are connected with this sad error. And among these, is to be reckoned the paucity of preaching in the churches. This error must be corrected, if the churches are ever to enjoy a healthy state. The work of reform has, indeed, long since commenced, and is making a rapid progress—though much, very much remains to be done, and especially in the West.

In this work every member of the church, not a pauper, is under obligation to bear a part. It is an obligation as sacred as that which binds him to pay his honest debts, or to provide for his family. It is, however, not an individual, but a social duty, and the church in its collective capacity has it in solemn charge.

The poorer and more destitute churches are deeply interested in this matter. They usually have less preaching in proportion to their pecuniary ability, than many others of a medium class, and are, therefore, more able to pay for it; and they ought to remember that it should be liberally paid for, as it costs the preacher more in proportion, by reason of greater fatigue and expense of travelling.

Such churches should take care to be in a state of readiness to pay for occasional preaching, and to have it known that they are so. In this case, they would offend no man; and having performed their own duty, they would have enjoyed more; and God would be more likely to bless them with prosperity, than if the "hire of the laborers had been kept back by them by fraud," so that they could not have an enlightened "conscience void of offence towards God and man."

Especially should each church make provision for supporting a pastor exclusively devoted to its spiritual interests. Every church needs a pastor, and according to the economy of God's spiritual kingdom, it should have one. No number of Christians have a right to embody as a church who do not intend and expect to support the gospel among them; nor unless they are able to do it, are they under obligation to become a church. The terms church and pastor are correlative terms; and though in certain circumstances a church may exist without a pastor, it cannot be prosperous for any length of time.—The formation of a church is a serious and important matter, and should be well considered. It is the lifting up of a new standard in the holy war; and if that standard be not supported, religion suffers a partial defeat, and is dishonored.

Councils, or presbyteries, called to constitute a church, have no right to give fellowship to any number of brethren, until they have ascertained that they possess the ability, disposition, and purpose to support the gospel, and also that from the location and attendant circumstances, there is a reasonable probability that a congregation will be gathered and the institutions of religion sustained. Great responsibility rests on constituting councils, and they should meet it manfully. They are acting for God, and the honor of his cause is deeply involved in their procedure.

No church has a right to continue year after year without the labors of a stated pastor. If a partial supply be unavoidable in its infancy, or from the providence of God, for a season afterwards, these circumstances cannot ordinarily be a justification for years in succession. It were far better, in many cases, that churches should dissolve, than that they drag out a wretched existence, midway between life and death, without holding forth the word of life in a preached gospel for the benefit of others, and without promoting the cause of religion for the honor of God.

But it is admitted that our churches are in a very unorganized state, we are already in great disorder, which renders it far more difficult to get right than it would have been to start right in the commencement.

We suppose there are many churches which ought not to have been organized. The movers in the matter were influenced, perhaps, by erroneous sentiments, or vindictive feelings, or by a mistaken opinion of duty. Such churches have not prospered, and they never will prosper.—Some other churches may have commenced under fair promise, but unforeseen and uncontrollable events have blighted them; they may or may not again revive. Others, again, may be in their infancy, and in new places, and they may promise eventual prosperity and usefulness, though for the present too feeble to fully sustain a pastor. If such are in the country, two or more of them should unite in fully sustaining a faithful pastor for a time, and they may hope in a short period to so increase in strength as to be able to have each a pastor. If in towns, where the undivided and unremitting labors of a pastor are indispensable to success, they should certainly receive assistance from the more favored churches; and that assistance can be given, on any principle approaching equality, only through the medium of some Convention or Missionary Society.

After some abatement for cases of this sort, we maintain that nearly every church is able to support a pastor devoted to his proper work.

It is admitted that in many cases, it would require great exertions, and it may be, real self-denial. The importance of the object, however, fully warrants such efforts and sacrifices; and an engagement to make them is involved in a Christian profession, which includes an entire consecration of all we have and are to the promotion of the divine glory; and the declarative glory of God chiefly consists in the support and propagation of religion as the great means of the salvation of men.

It is further admitted that, in the present unorganized state of the churches, these efforts must be the more oppressive, because many will refuse to co-operate, and from the same cause, time will be required for the full accomplishment of this work of most necessary reform.

Still we maintain that it should be viewed as a thing not only practicable, but necessary, and to be ultimately accomplished.

Our position is, that with few exceptions, each church in the West, can better afford to sustain a suitable pastor than it can afford to do without his labors. Better, in regard to their spiritual interest clearly; and we believe better also in regard to their temporal interest. As important as religious knowledge, growth in grace, and the consolations of religion, so important are the institutions of religion by which they are prompted; and to the efficacy of these, a standing ministry is ordinarily necessary. And if the pecuniary sacrifice for the support of the gospel were far greater than it is, spiritual benefits to be secured by the prayers, the preaching, and the pastoral labors of a faithful minister, would be a rich and most ample reward. We religiously believe, and we much wish the churches generally could be made to believe, that the temporal circumstances of the component members of every church would be promoted rather than injured by the pecuniary sacrifice necessary for the support of a constant pastor.—And the reason is, that it is their duty, and it is always cheaper as well as better to do our duty at any cost, than to neglect it;—it is their duty, and when they do their duty, they may lawfully expect the blessing of God, and "the blessing of the Lord maketh rich." Whatever may be the case with the enemies of God, "who have their portion in this world," it is questionable whether the children of God ever added a cent to their property by neglecting any contribution which they owed to his cause; and the Scriptures teach us that his professing people have been cursed with poverty, or a failure of their expected gains, for neglecting pecuniary contributions for religious purposes, and have been blessed in temporal things in their reformation in this respect. Hag. 1: 2—11. Compared with Hag. 2: 19. And this is in accordance with one of the established principles of the Divine administration, found, Prov. 3: 9, 10. It should be remembered that God gives health and heals sickness, grants rain and sunshine and withholds them, has fire and waves and wind under his control, and turns the hearts of men whithersoever he will; and, of course, he cannot be at a loss to accomplish the purposes of his pleasure. And if we were wise to observe his dispensations, we should see daily illustrations of this principle of God's government; but there is, even in the Christian community, a species of practical infidelity which denies that the God of grace is also the God of nature, and overlooks the providence of Heaven in the affairs of this world.

In consequence of former wrong teaching, and present neglect to teach the doctrine of revelation on the subject of ministerial support, there exists much error and more ignorance respecting this important matter, so that light must be diffused through the community, and the subject must be better understood.

In the mean time, those churches which fully admit the principle, and are abundantly able to sustain a minister, should immediately do it, and thus in their improved condition evince the practicability of the thing, and its great importance,—thus presenting an example and a stimulus to others to do likewise.

Whatever mode may be adopted for this purpose, let it be the rule of equality;—a rule recognized in the Bible, 2 Cor. 8: 14, and according with common sense and common justice. Settle the principle, that every member of the church, not a pauper, must do something for the support of the gospel; and let all pay according to their ability.—Stated contributions are attended with too much uncertainty; a new tax will probably be found the easiest method, though like the former, it is apt to be unequal; voluntary average on the basis of taxable poles and estates is more simple—though it would be better if it were arranged according to a more perfect rule ascertained by an accurate comparison of each one's receipts and expenditures.

There is no reasonable doubt that if such provision were made for the support of the gospel, as a majority of the churches might make, and ought to make, the amount and efficiency of ministerial labor, doubled. A large proportion of the ministers in the West are principally engaged in secular business for a livelihood, most of whom, it is believed, would promptly and most thankfully abandon such pursuits, and exclusively devote themselves to their proper official work, if the churches would afford them the means of supporting their families. And besides, a large increase in the amount of ministerial labor, which such an arrangement would secure, there would also be a material improvement in its quality and consequent usefulness. The mind, from its sympathy with the body, cannot exhibit the vigor and elasticity which the services of the pulpit require, when the man is worn down with the fatigues and distracted with the cares of business. If relieved from temporal business, the preacher might enrich his mind with the stores of knowledge acquired by study, and a careful arrangement of his thoughts, be enabled to bring beaten oil into the sanctuary. The preacher, too, would, from constant employment in holy services, have his heart more richly imbued with the spirit of preaching. We may add, that such evidence that his people appreciated his services, and were disposed to reward them as well as profit by them, would give him an interest in their welfare, which it is impossible for him to feel, when they were living in violation of an express command of God, and disregard of their solemn obligation to him. Thus the churches would have more and better preaching. And besides, in having a stated pastor, who would "naturally care for their state," relieved from secular cares, they would enjoy immense advantages from his frequent visits, and personal conversations with themselves and their families—while such intimate intercourse with them, would better fit him to rightly divide the word of truth, and give them appropriate public and private instruction.

## CLAIMS OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

Much of the preaching of Jesus was occupied in adjusting the claims between heaven and earth; so frequently did he return to this theme, and so conspicuous a place did he assign to it in his discourses, that it may be said to be one of their distinguishing features. A prevailing characteristic of man, as portrayed in the Scriptures, is an inordinate attachment to the world. Sin having expelled from his heart the love of God, the love of the world has rushed into the vacuum and made it impossible for any but Omnipotence to dislodge it. Having lost that organ of spiritual vision, which, by keeping another world in view, preserved the balance of his affections, even the present is left to tyrannize over him with all the advantage of a power which is ever visible, ever at hand, soliciting him, and making itself necessary to him in a thousand different ways, while the only rival which it has to dread is not only invisible, but incalculably remote; and having thus sustained the loss of a world, having thus become deficient in spiritual wealth by the loss of a whole order of ennobling objects, he not only pours out his affections on the unworthy things that offer, but he has literally idolized the most contemptible. Most graphically is he represented in the word of God as bearing the image of the earth; his very mind has become materialized; instead of being pictured over with celestial imagery, it only contains the portraiture of the world.

The mind, which, with one sweep of its pinions, should have reached the stars, settles down in the dust; its affections which were meant to rise, and be diffused over an infinite circumference, of which God is the centre, let themselves down, and labor to accommodate themselves to an invisible point, a fugitive atom. As if an anchor were fixed in the centre, his bosom is enchained to the earth. The material articles of which the globe consists, do not more constantly obey the law by which they cohere, than man endeavors to accommodate himself to the world, as his centre of moral gravity.

Now, the Saviour addressed himself to the task of correcting this evil. Entering the mart of the busy world, where nothing is heard but the monotonous hum of the traders in vanity, he lifts up his voice like the trump of God, and seeks to burst the spell which infatuates them, while he exclaims, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Were all sublimity laid at your feet, let a few years expire and death would force you away from your world, and all that is in it would be burnt up; but your immortal soul—what can compensate for the loss of that? He calls for that nobler world which they had lost from their hemisphere, and brings it again within the range of their vision. He takes them to the threshold of the Infinite, and shows it flushed in one part with living glories, and in another burning with the fiercest flames of wrath, while he assures them that in one or the other of these states they shall shortly be fixed forever.—"Watch, therefore," said he, "for ye know not when the time is."

Having thrown open to view that interminable duration, and compelled them to see that they are actually approaching it, he proceeds to adjust its momentous claims in harmony with the duties of the life that now is. It might have been apprehended that the vision of eternity, if once beheld, would utterly incapacitate us for the things of time; that the infinite grandeur of the future having suffered so total an obscuration from the littleness of the present, would have taken revenge on that littleness by henceforth engrossing our every thought. But the Saviour did not come as the avenging champion of eternity, to annihilate time and its appropriate interests. Having deposed it from its usurped supremacy, he takes it by the hand and assigns its place and its duties as a subject. He aims to impregnate every moment of life with endless results. Having weeded life of its vanities, he commands us to cultivate it with all that is useful and precious, as fruit for the heavenly garner. He would have every moment of life to be so passed as to fructify into an age of pleasant recollections.

That eternity might not be an object of mere barren contemplation, he has so revealed it that its hallowing light falls upon every field of activity and usefulness which before were involved in darkness; every thing conducive to our real interest, in every relation of life, receives its countenance and rejoices in its sanction. If he finds us lost in indolent musing on the future, he breaks up our vacant eye reverie by the startling monition, "Why stand ye here all the day idle? Work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work."

That eternity might not overwhelm us by its solemnities, he has not only softened its aspect, and made it welcome as the face of a friend, he also engages our attention to daily studies, which hold us in a state of healthful activity. Our life, in his hands, is converted into a lamp, which, like the virgins of the parable, or the priests of the temple, we are to keep bright and burning. Our various endowments are so many talents, which the Lord of all expects us to multiply by constant use. He calls us to be the almoners and agents of providence to the poor who are always with us, models of correctness in all the relations of life, and centres of life and usefulness wherever we move. It is necessary that celestial observations should be taken in order to construct a terrestrial chart; and having a chart to consult, thus accurately formed, the skilful mariner is prepared to navigate the wastes of ocean with tranquil confidence. If the view we entertain of eternity disqualifies us for the duties of life, it is not to be traced to the Gospel of Christ; he meant not that it should haunt us as a terror, but accompany us as a guide; nor will he accept the convulsive service which we may occasionally extort from us by alarming us into a spasm of fear. He calmly enquires are there not twelve hours in the day? Does not the day of life, short as it is, contrasted with eternity, contain time sufficient, if properly employed, for every thing truly valuable? And having engaged us in his service, and pointed out our duty, he gives us a glimpse of eternity, to quicken the pulse of activity, and expects us to distribute our energy as equally as possible over the remaining hours of time. But, the liability of eternity to paralyze the active duties of time is not to be named, as a danger, compared with the fatal and universal propensity of men to subordinate the claims of the future to the affairs of the present. While their enlightened judgment compels them to concede the point of superiority to heaven, their depraved heart is for giving the practical precedence to earth; and the result of this variance is an attempted compromise between the two claimants. But, against such an accommodation, the Redeemer enters his protest; appealing to the tribunal of common sense, he exclaims: "No man can serve two masters whose interests clash." The experiment has been made and repeated in every form, and in every age, and he solemnly avers with the confidence of one who knows that it has failed as often as it has been made, and will prove entirely impracticable. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Passing into the sanctuary, and marking the worldliness of the assembled hearers, he shows how necessarily in such a soil, the seed of the kingdom must prove unfruitful. Visiting the place of gain, and contrasting the burden of thick clay which the worshipper of Mammon carries, with the narrowness of the entrance to the way of life, he exclaims in accents of the deepest commiseration: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven." Penetrating into the inmost circle of domestic life, and arresting the inmates in the midst of their household cares, he calls them to his side, and turns on them a look of pity as he reminds them, that while they are careful and cumbered about many things, "one thing is needful." He even lifts the curtain of eternity, and bids us approach and listen, while the voice of Dives from the depths of hell, and the replies of Abraham from the realms of light, pronounce the moral of the tale of life. And taking his stand on the highway of the world, and surveying the busy crowds as they pass and repass, each one as eager as if he had just discovered the secret of happiness, after a thousand failures, and was about to give it an instant trial, he points them upwards, and reminds them that the good they seek is there; that there is one thing to which every thing else desirable is appended, and that he exhorts them to "seek first."—Harris' Great Teacher.

From the New York Observer.

## A LOSS COMPUTED.

"We take no note of time,  
But from its loss."—YOUNG.

Time is precious; and the importance of improving it as it passes, is acknowledged by all. When once gone it can never be recalled. This consideration caused a heathen Emperor to weep in view of the loss of a single day. Punctuality has been justly considered the life of business, and consequently, the only way to prevent the loss of time. The wise man feels that promptitude and decision are all important as it respects his own interest and usefulness, as well as the good of others. The person who is always tardy in his movements, and behind the time in regard to the appointed duties of life, not only exerts a prejudicial influence on the community, but also sustains a great loss himself.

I have been led into this train of reflection by a circumstance which I will now relate. Having occasion to pass a few weeks in a retired country village in one of the New England States, according to a long established custom, and as every good citizen will do, I went to the house of God upon the Sabbath. I found myself seated in a neat and commodious house, containing from one to three hundred serious and attentive worshippers. When the bell ceased tolling, a grave and venerable person arose in the desk, and after invoking the Divine blessing, he read a chapter in the Bible, and then an appropriate psalm. As soon as this was sung, another prayer commenced. In a very few minutes, some person gently opened the door, and came, with light and easy step, and took a stand in a slip near the centre of the house. He had a downcast look, and seemed to be very meek and humble. I thought, at the time, that he appeared rather chagrined at the thought of being out of season. This circumstance soon passed out of mind, and I enjoyed a very pleasant and profitable Sabbath.

The same scene was acted over again on the next Sabbath—and the next—and the next even; during the whole time of my continuance in the place. Sometime or twelve minutes after the public worship of God commenced, the same grave and sedate pilgrim would open the door, advance to the same place, and take his stand in the church. What to make of it I could not tell. All the people, except this one person, were prompt in their

attendance in the house of God, at the appointed time. Methought there was something peculiar in the situation or calling of this man; but on inquiry, found there was not. I was credibly informed that it was the result of a long confirmed habit, which he had not fortitude and resolution enough to overcome. It occurred to me at once, that notwithstanding his example might not be extensively injurious, for none in the place seemed to follow it, yet the man himself must sustain a severe loss. This reflection has led me to the following computation, which is presented for the special benefit of all who are habitually late at meeting.

In this case, it is all loss and no gain. In the course of one year, he loses the benefit of the reading of 52 chapters in the Bible, of the same number of prayers, and an equal number of the songs of Zion. Here we have, for a single year, 156 public religious exercises, lost to that man forever. Now let this be continued for 20 years, it will amount to 3,120. Surely, then we may take some note of time from its loss.

VIATIC.

We believe the first sentence in the extract below contains sober truth, and that facts would prove it. We ask the attention of ministers and private Christians, to the whole extract. There are some Christians that are always late at meeting on the Sabbath and in the vestry. Such are generally slack about their worldly engagements, and they greatly injure the cause of religion.—Zion's Advocate.

PUNCTUALITY IN ATTENDANCE ON RELIGIOUS MEETINGS has a marked influence on our punctuality in other things. We recently fell in with an essay that sustained this sentiment; how true it is we leave our readers to seriously to examine and decide upon. We are not prepared at this time to controvert it. Among the remarks made was one to this amount: that habitual delinquencies of a preacher in fulfilling his appointments have a great influence on his congregation, and superinduce lax habits in them, which are gradually carried out in their worldly engagements. It is high time that ministers and people both thought of this. The former, certainly, that they may not impair the morality of their flocks, and the latter that they watch against the pernicious influence of men who enter the pulpit or conference room a quarter of an hour after the set time. We hope there are few such ministers; but we are not entirely without fears that there are some.—When there are those who do conduct thus, they certainly should not be very forward in making complaints of a want of promptitude in performing stipulations with them for support. Our poor ministers suffer grievously in this last respect, when they are always faithful to the moment, and we in treat that their distresses may not be increased by the disastrous influence of any of their brethren in the ministry. Punctuality is a topic that ought to be noticed much more frequently in the pulpit than it is. Half hours and quarters are often fled from five, or six, or more, punctual persons, who have engaged to meet at a particular hour, by the indolence or negligence of some other persons pledged to the same engagement, whose selfishness never permits them to think that any person's time is of more value than their own. Such cases are too common among professing Christians, and ministers ought to occupy such unfavorable locations in this particular that their admonitions and rebukes would be sensibly and profitably felt.

Cheerfulness in Wives.—Boz well remarks that a cheerful woman may be of great assistance to her husband in business by wearing a cheerful smile continually upon her countenance. A man's perplexities and gloominess are increased a hundred fold when his better half moves about with a continual scowl upon her brow. A pleasant, cheerful wife is a rainbow set in the sky when her husband's mind is tossed with storms and tempests; but a dissatisfied and fretful wife in the hour of trouble is like one of those fiends who delight to torture lost spirits.

Home. There is something inexpressibly touching in the story of Ishmael; the youth was sent into the wilderness of life with his bow and his arrow, "his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him." Even in our crowded, busy, and social world, on how many is this doom pronounced? What love makes allowances like household love? God forgive those who turn the household altar into a place of strife? Domestic dissension is the sacrilege of the heart.—Pearl.

## THE ADMINISTRATION AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.

We have recently learned that the United States Consul at the Sandwich Islands has been removed from office under the following circumstances.—For years, he has been violently opposed to Missionaries, and has used every means in his power to thwart their benevolent effort among the natives. During the recent visit to this country of Mr. Richards, one of the missionaries, he represented the case to the President, who promptly removed the offender from office and appointed a Sabbath school teacher in his place.—Worcester Palladium.

## DISCOVERY OF MUMMIES AT DURANGO MEXICO.

A million of Mummies it is stated have lately been discovered in the environs of Durango in Mexico. They are in a sitting posture but have the same wrappings, bands and ornaments of the Egyptians; among them was found a poniard of flint, with a sculptured handle, chankles, necklaces &c. of alternately colored beads, fragments of bones polished like ivory, fine worked elastic tissues (probably our modern India Rubber cloth), moccasins worked like those of our Indians to-day, bones of vipers, &c. It is unknown of the mummies above mentioned what kind of embalment was used or whether it was arotic depositions in caves where they were found. A fact of importance is stated that the shells of the necklaces are of a marine shell found at Zacatecas, on the Pacific, where the Columbus of their forefathers probably landed from the Malay, Hindostan or Chinese coast, or from their islands in the Indian ocean.