BIIICAI BROORDER

THE ORGAN OF THE NORTH CAROLINA BAPTISTS-DEVOTED TO BIBLE RELIGION, EDUCATION, LITERATURE AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

Volume 59.

RALEIGH, N. C., WEDNESDAY, JULY 8, 1893.

Number 1

The Biblical Recorder.

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY.

OFFICE:

118 (up stairs) Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, N. C.

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Outlines of a Sermon.

PREACHED AT THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW BAPTIST CHURCH HOUSE AT MT. ZION, FLAT RIVER ASSOCIATION, JUNE 4, 1893, BY REV. J. A. STRADLEY, AND PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE CHURCH.

Text-"And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her." Psalm 87: 5.

The church is God's own institution. 1. May it not be said that it is God's only institution? God seems to have given directions for the framing of the Jewish na-tional government, Before and since then, governments have been formed according to the wishes or wisdom of men. God has left men to form republics and monarchies (absolute or limited), while he has bestowed his wisdom, care and love on his own institution, the church. Human organizations may flourish and the world be helped but little—they may fail, and not much evil follows; but by the church the world is to be helped, blest and be saved.

ad intends the church to meet all the cial, intellectual and spiritual needs

lity that cannot be and is not fos-Christian church degenerates into y. Each church should be a teachern of morality in the community located. None but Christians are rch-members. There can be no ristianity without pure morality.

A true church, on account of her own purity, is the best teacher of morality. Ancient philosophers taught systems of morality that contained much that was good and beautiful, but they also contained much that was false and corrupting. God intends the church to meet the moral needs of mankind.

They can be fully met from no other source. God has invested the church with power to meet the social needs of mankind. We are made to be social -to enjoy each other's society. The purest social circles are those that are pervaded by a genuine Christianity. Christianity is not intended to be a stern, repulsive, selfish thing; but genial, pleasant, attractive. It is to be social, so as to draw, please, purify and elevate others. All needed sociability can be enjoyed under the care and control of churches.

God intends the church to meet the intellectual needs of mankind. God has endowed man with the highest intellectual powers; capable of almost unlimited development. From this it may be argued, that he intended these powers to be cultivated under the best influences. He has not left a transcendently important work to be done by incompetent workmen. Pure, true intellectual culture, can only be given by Christian teachers. Everything in the universe that the human mind can comprehend is the work of God. No one is fit to teach who does not recognize this fact. God intends to be glorified, not only by Christianity, but by all that is in the physical and mental world. All teaching should be given under christian influences. Nearly all schools in Christian lands are conducted under this influence. No thoughtful parent would be willing to educate a child under ungodly, especially infi-del teachers. It is apparent then, that the church can only fully meet man's intellectual needs.

God intends the church to meet man's spiritual needs. Man is pre-eminently a spiritual being. It is his spiritual nature that lifts him above all other created things. It makes him immortal, and capable of the noblest destiny. Man cannot teach what he does not know. An ungodly man cannot teach godliness. The church is the only truly spiritual organization, therefore it alone can meet man's spiritual needs. The command to preach the gospel to all the world is given to the *church*, not to societies. God has made the church to do the work of universal evangelization.

3. To do this great work the church has withstood all the *changes* of time. For six thousand years various organizations have arisen, flourished and failed, but the church has stood and strengthened. Wicked men have combined to overthrow the church. Voltaire said he was tired of hearing that twelve men could establish Christianity in the world; and he would show that one man could overthrow it. But he soon found he needed help, and associated other infidels with him. Their watch word was, "Crush the wretch," meaning Jesus. But the scheme of these infidels has failed, and Christianity lives with ever growing power. The church has withstood all the assaults of the Devil; and it shall stand. Dan. 2: 44. Matt. 16: 18. 4. All civilization, elevation, refinement

and salvation comes through the church. Civilization, in its best sense, can only be reached under gospel influences. To realize this, compare a christianized with the best of unchristianized nations.

Nothing but Christianity can take a man corrupted, degraded and fallen by sin, and elevate him to purity and nobility of character here, and give him citizenship in heaven, and make him an "heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ,"

The whole tendency of sin is to make men worldly, sensual, devilish, rough, uncouth. But Christianity changes the vilest and roughest into pure, gentle, refined beings. Christianity is the highest type of etiquette.

All men are born sinners. As such they are lost, ruined, helpless, hopeless. God has made it the mission of the church to bring salvation to these ruined ones. He has commissioned no other organization to do this work. It is by the agency of the church that the "kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

So God has invested the church with powers to meet all the higher and most im-portant demands of mankind. It, therefore, towers in grand importance above all other organizations. "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." Ps. 87: 3. See also

Isaiah, chapter 60.

II. God has designed Zion as the birthplace of his people: "This and that man was born in her.'

1. It is a remarkable fact that nearly all Christians have been brought to the "new birth" in direct connection with church work. I once asked all in a congregation, who were satisfied they were Christians and who had been led to conversion by churchwork, to stand and be counted: 101 stood. Then all who had been converted separate from church work were asked to stand: two arose. One of these told me afterwards that she was convicted under a sermon preached at church; so 102 were born in Zion, and one

2. Persons can only be born into the church by the spiritual birth. " Except a man be born again, he cannot see the king-dom of God." "That which is born of the

flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." John, third chapter.

But right in the face of these plain Bible teachings, there are those who teach that children are born in the covenant—are born holy, and therefore are fit for baptism and church membership. There are some who and conduct.

will receive into their churches those who are avowedly unregenerate. Some claim that persons are made Christians by baptism. Campbellites teach that immersion is the finishing act of salvation. In catechisms people are taught that infant baptism made them Christians. Proof: "What is your name? Answer. My name is N. or M. Who gave you this name? Answer. My sponsors in baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Some believe that confirmation makes them church members. Many teach, and thousands believe, that Christianity consists in simply resolving to live better lives and joining the church. But all who are in the church except by the spiritual birth are resting upon a deceptive and false foundation. It will fail them when the test comes.

2. Let preachers remember that the grandest work on earth is to lead souls to be born in Zion. Let them not leave this highest work, and condescend to the low work of drawing crowds-pleasing the people-being popular.

Let your church in all her work-in pray er meeting, Sunday-school, preaching, &c., keep your God-given work constantly in view, namely, the work of leading souls to be born in Zion. And may God grant that within this house, built for his worship, thousands of souls may experience the new birth and rise to the Mt. Zion above.

III. God will make an individual examination of church members:

"This and that man was born in her"-"When he writeth up the people"—When he comes to see what each has done, or left undone. Each Christian will be examined as though there was no other Christian, or worker. God has assigned to each of you work to do. He will come to see if you have done it, left it undone, or turned it over to others to do. But we notice,

1. That many professed Christians do not realize their individual responsibility to God. They claim to be glad that religious work is going on, but they take but little or no part in it. Ask one, "Does your church keep up a prayer-meeting?" "Yes we have a prayer-meeting; and they say it is a very good one. I do not strend it often. It is good one. I do not attend it often. It is held at a time that does not suit me very well. I have business, or society meetings claiming my attention at that time. I am sorry I cannot attend. But the brethren keep up a good prayer meeting. I hope it is doing much good."

Ask another, "Does your church have a Sunday school?" "O, yes, of course we do. They say it is one of the best." "Do you attend it, and help to keep it up?" "Well -no-I-don't-go-often. I have to work all the week and when Sunday comes I am tired, and want to sleep some. I am so busy all the week, that I am obliged to attend to some little business matters on Sunday. Then, too, that is the only day I can spare to visit my relatives and neighbors, and talk with them about our worldly affairs. But if nothing else was in my way, I live two or three miles away from church, and you know that is too far to go." "Does your church have regular preaching?" "Yes, certainly. We would not think of doing without a preacher." "Do you attend his ministry and help pay him?" "I go some times, when I am not too busy, or tired, or have no company, or am not obliged to attend some society meeting. I sometimes pay the preacher something when I have a little money I can spare. Times are hard, taxes are high and I can't pay much, but our church pays our preacher well." Ask about all kinds of church work, and there are some ready to say: "Yes, our church is working along all these lines," while they, themselves are doing nothing, or according to their opportunities the same as nothing. When God comes to "write up the people," such persons will not get credit for what others have done. Each one will have to give an account of himself to God. Your reward will be according to your work, not

the work of others. 2. God will examine individuals as connected with Zion, and not as connected with human societies. All the Christian work they do, ought to be done by the church, God's institution. He has instituted the church as the agency by which all Christian work ought to be done. Let the church be made what it can be, what it ought to be, what God intended it to be, and we need no other societies to do Christian work. If the work given to societies, were given to the church, God would be better pleased, and more good would be done. God will ex-

amine church, not society work.

8. In God's individual examination he will love each person he finds to have been born in Zion. He will love them because they have believed, loved, and obeyed him, and are in his institution to carry on its blessed work of saving the world.

4. God will notice the individual agency by which his people were brought to the new birth. Have you, has your church, your Sunday-school been instrumental in bringing souls to Christ? In all your Christian work, as individuals and as a church, let your one great aim be to bring souls to be born in Zion. This is the church's Godgiven work. The church alone can do it. It is the grandest of all work.

In this house, which to-day we dedicate to the service of Almighty God, may it be found, when he "writeth up the people," that "this and that man was born in her."

Three things to govern-temper, tongue,

Predestination.

Is predestination taught in the Bible? Did God actually choose some of his creatures to salvation before the foundation of the world, and leave others to perish in their sins? Election is defined to be God's choice in the exercise of his sovereign grace of some men, or a part of the human race, to salvation by Jesus Christ. "Chosen in Christ" and "cho-Jesus Christ. "Chosen in Christ" and "chosen to salvation" are expressions often met with in the New Testament Scriptures. They are designated as vessels of mercy prepared unto glory. The three views called supralapsarian, the sublapsarian, and the Armenian theory cannot all be correct. Both the supralapsarians and the sublapsarians agree as to God's purpose in his unconditionally choosing some to eternal life and dooming others according to their ill deserts in everlasting misery, which is opposed to the Armenian theory, which claims that whatever God has decreed respecting his inwhatever God has decreed respecting his in-telligent creatures, is founded on foreseen goodness in his chosen.

The question with us is, whether or not God's holy and inscrutible sovereignty, which he has made known in his works of creation, providence and redemption, forms the basis of his action? It is agreed that love reigned in the heart of the Saviour and actuated him in the arduous work committed to him in bringing men in contact with the insulted Deity in which he should "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." Love to our fallen race, love the ruling passion, in antici-pation of his coming sorrows could say, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished," and to silence anything of a boasting spirit in his disciples, reminds them, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit." So far from being chosen on the ground of any moral qualification or foreseen goodness, he assured them that his love was antecedent to theirs. Instead of their first loving him, he first loved them; for, says the inspired Apostle, "we love him, because he first loved us," "he having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasby Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will"—not predestinated on account of good in us, but "according to the good pleasure of his will." True, the death of Christ opens the door of hope to Adam's race. Many will not avail themselves of the benefits of his atonement, however the serious declaration, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life"; then again, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." All men will not be saved, but the redeemed will be will not be saved, but the redeemed will be numerous enough to give the Son of man the most exulting triumph over his malignant enemies and satisfy him for all his humiliation, shame and agonies of his incarnation and death; all that the Father hath given him he will bring with him. The actual purpose of the cross is to save that part of the human race embraced in the covenant. They are saved by "grace." Faith, around which other Christian graces cluster and begets love, is the gift of God. The office of the Holy Spirit is to carry on the work. Christ came to do for the elect. It is he who applies the benefits of Christ's purchase by teaching and guiding them (John 14: 26), by convincing and reproving them of sin (John 16: 7,) by renewing and sanctifying their souls (Tit. 3: 5, and 1 Pet. 1: 2), and by mortifying sin in them (Rom. 8: 13). He leads them, mortifies sin in them, gives

faith, inspires hope. Why some born of the same parents give evidence of sincere piety, while others are incorrigibly wicked, why some live to advanced life while others die in infancy, are as inscrutable as his other decrees.

MONTGOMERY.

Who is Servant?

I have been very much mortified by a number of unpleasant communications which have appeared in our denominational papers recently. I am none the less ashamed that I am a Baptist, but I am pained, grieved and bored that Baptists are pleased to lay aside their legitimate occupation in order that selfish ends may be materialized.

I would not be misunderstood. I would not add one particle of mist to the already thickening fog. I have never yet taken my pen in hand to enter the varied contests of my brethren through the "public prints." I have never felt an appetite for such food, but it seems to me that I would not be true to myself and my churches if I fail to make this inquiry now. Therefore, I ask "Who

I notice that one of our leading Southern lights at the Southern Baptist Convention claimed as the reason for failure along Centennial lines, "the want of organization among Baptists." I admit the claim in one sense, but I do not admit it in its entirety. There is no need of denying facts of any kind. Those who do so only "kick against the pricks," and weaken their own cause.

We have organization, if I understand the definition of the term, but is it the duty of the organization to compel confidence on the part of all our people? Whenever there has been an effort made to organize some new machinery for advancing denominational work, invariably should a cautious brother venture to oppose centralization of, or federal, power, he has been silenced by the same utterance, "The Boards and their Secretaries are the servants of the churches, or brethren, and therefore you have a right at | ing after his glory, and for the indicany time to ask, or demand, an insight into | and public welfare.—Presbyterian Obs

their works." On many occasions, cautious, consecrated, God fearing men have withdrawn their opposition and quieted their fears by believing that such would be the

Now, candidly, to all parties concerned, has such a course always been pursued by the organized powers after the power was conferred? Have they always shown a disposition to serve the wishes of the brethren? Have they, on the other band, ever manifested a spirit to compel the brethren to serve their wishes?

How many men-composing the different Boards with their officers-in our Convention work, are superior to mistakes? Leaving these questions to be answered in the consciences of those concerned, we again re-

peat the question, "Who is servant?"

A soldier, who having the battles to fight, (already bearing scars, reminds of former skirmishes), when there are no big guns to frighten by their thunders at his back, but a foe in every bush and behind every hedge to encounter him and bushwhackers following in his year to demolish the little every and in his rear to demolish the little success and enterprise accomplished, has a right, an undeniable right, to ask whose orders he shall obey.

shall obey.

Every unselfish member of the churches composing the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina would appreciate organization of such a nature as to double, yes, quadruple, the work of the Board of Missions and Sunday schools. Still they are manly or foolish enough to believe that there are rights belonging to the churches and associations. And as they created the Boards, the Boards should show them some respect.

I have had some hard fights in my own, as well as other, associations, to keep the relationship existing between the Boards and themselves as of former years. "There is dissatisfaction," and lots of it, "existing all over the State among the churches." We cannot deny it. We cannot persuade ourselves to the contrary. Then let us turn our attention to channels in which we may remove this unpleasantness instead of creating more of it. more of it.

more of it.

I believe that if the brethren would pray more that the Holy Spirit would guide the Boards and their officers aright in all departments of the work, that there would be less friction and need of criticism. I ampersuaded, on the other hand, that should the Secretary, with others, realize more clearly that they are the occupants of places of confidence and trust conferred upon them by the brethren as a proof of confidence and trust, and therefore that every reasonable request should receive a courteous and faithrequest should receive a courteous and faithful reply either by letter, verbally, or through the BIBLICAL RECORDER, which is "the organ of North Carolina Baptists," that their skirts would be clear from much cause of complaint.

We claim as our motto, "North Carolina for Jesus." I feel, sometimes, that we forget it, and therefore drop the name of Jesus, get it, and therefore drop the name of Jesus, and in its stead place the name of some poor, frail, feeble, selfish man. Certainly, it would be a position to be envied for even the greatest and best among us—the great hosts of our people gathering every word and gesture, obeying every mandate, gratifying every desire, following without question one man; but we have ever preached and striven against such things in others, and we cannot consistently go back on our teachings how. consistently go back on our teachings, how-ever much we might desire so to do. Just at this point, the mail comes, and

with it a number of tracts from Brother C. Durham. Perhaps they will answer the question. Let us see. Well, I have only time to glance at the title, "Our Board and its Work, 1830—1898." If the contents settles the question, I am done, if not, I shall probably come again for information as to : 'Who is servant?"

Sincerely, Penelope, N. C. C. M. MURCHISON.

Amen to Bro. Broughton's Call for Peace.

Dear Recorder:—I regard myself as in the "Amen corner." I have not, nor do I propose to make a speech through the Recor-DER. But to so much of Bro. L. G. Broughton's article in RECORDER of June 21, as begs for peace, I want to say, amen and amen

"Master, the tempest is raging, * * *

O waken and save, I pray."
"Behold, how good and how pleasant it for brethren to dwell together in unity." How sweet it will be to sing, "Master, the terror is over."

C. S. CASHWELL Mocksville, June 24, 1893.

The Pulpit Scold.

The scold in the pulpit is out of place. People tire of him. He loses caste and influence. He forgets his mission, though he fancies that he is doing God service. It is his to instruct, not to indulge in tirade. He is to win and to persuade, not to berate and asperse. He is to warn and entreat, not to threaten and abuse. Evils he must exposs, but not in a curt, rasping, cutting manner. Wrongs he must denounce, but in a kindly and loving spirit. While faithful in admonition, regard must be had to time and occasion, and it must be seen that the minister is not a paparticular description. is not a sensational denunciator or pe scold, but a faithful, judicious, broad mi ed, level headed herald of his Lord