

## 1872 Circular of the Delaware River Ass'n.

[ This session of the Delaware River was before the Down-grade of the Contest (1886-1889), and some of the elders attended it were during the Contest on either side of the unification movement of Old School Baptists. The elders present included: Elder J. H. Wallingford (later anti-unification), Elder Philander Hartwell, Elder G. W. Staton, Elder Gilbert Beebe, Elder J.N. Badger, Elder J.A. Badger, Elder William J. Purington, Elder F.A. Chick (the ring leader in the downgrade) Elder J.P. Smith, Elder A. B. Francis, Elder W. Housel, Elder P.D. Gold (a compromiser) and Elder J. R. Respass (also a down-grader later. He is owned today by the Means, or Old Line Primitives). One amazing statements in this session is the following: "14. The committee appointed to examine the minutes of corresponding associations report that they find nothing claiming the special action of this association, **except the following item**, which they recommend to be copied into our minutes, viz:

Whereas certain ministers, **who have hitherto enjoyed our confidence and fellowship, have been extending tokens of recognition to disorderly factions, who are not recognized by us as orderly Old School Baptists, therefore,**

*Resolve*, That henceforth no one be invited to seats with us in this association, except corresponding messengers from associations or churches of our faith and order, and such others as may be upon invitation and vote of the association." (With hindsight, one such Elder was F. A. Chick, present when that letter read. See "Autobiography of Lemuel Potter, page 127. This was just prior to 1871, and Potter's later visit in 1888. He was invited to Alabama by Elder Purifoy in 1880. Potter was closely associated with the Kettocton, Elder Clark and G. M. Thompson).

The whole discussion on the resurrection is pregnant with clarity totally consistent with eternal vital union, the two man doctrine of regeneration, and the spiritual adoption of the earthen vessels and their ultimate change in the resurrection event. I highly recommend the reader give close perusal, especially toward the end of the Circular. You may be delightfully surprised. Stan Phillips.

*The Elders, and messengers composing the Delaware River O.S. Baptist Association, in Session with the Kingwood church, Hunterdon Co., N. J., May 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup>., 1872, to the churches whose messengers we are, greetings:*

*Beloved Brethren:-* According to the custom of our association, we send you this our annual letter, as a token of our interest in your welfare. What God has revealed in the Scriptures, is interesting and profitable to the people of God, "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for correction, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto good works.*"

It is usual to select some subject, contained in the Scriptures, to contemplate in our annual circular, on some point or points of doctrine, practice, or order, and we are not disposed to depart from that order in this letter.

We have selected as a subject to present, for your meditation, instruction, and comfort, **The Death and Resurrection of the Saints**. A saint is a holy being or person called to holiness,

and the term *Saints*, is used both in the Old and New Testaments, to present the people of God, obedient children, and servants of the living God.

In the New Testament, the term is used in speaking of, or in setting forth the disciples, or followers of Christ, such as the saints at Ephesus, Eph. 1:1, Romans 1:7, and many other portions of Scripture.

The saints presented under the Gospel dispensation, were born of God, made partakers of the **divine nature**, yet retaining the Adamic or **earthly nature**, the nature derived from Adam, and under sentence of death.

Death came by man, I Cor. 1:22, also by Man came the resurrection of the dead. But it was not the *same man* that death came by, that the resurrection came by. Death came by the earthly man, but the resurrection by the last Adam, the Lord from heaven. The first man, Adam, was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening Spirit. I Cor. 15:45. There was no seed of death even in the earthly man when he came from the hand of his Maker, he was only animated earth. We are not informed that there was any death in him, and in fact, that death came *by him*, proves that death was not in his original constitution, and as there was no intimation given only in connection with transgression, we conclude that death was the penalty of Adam's eating the forbidden fruit. But we have direct testimony in relation to this subject. Wherefore, "as by one man, sin, entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men; for that all have sinned," Romans 5:12. The life of all the earthly family, was in Adam, the head of that corrupted family; when he forfeited his life, theirs were forfeited and the sentence passed upon Adam was passed upon all his descendants. "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 2:19. Adam received knowledge, by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but no additional life or faculty of mind. He was earth before, and only earth after he had eaten. He was pure earth before he ate of that tree, but was polluted earth after partaking of it. He was a living soul before he transgressed, there was no germ of death in his organization, though the life he possessed in his best estate was **natural**, or earthly, yet it was pure, and there was no seed of death in him. But by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he, and all his posterity were, impregnated with death. Death became an intrinsic part of his nature: he was mortal. The seed was sown, that must ripen in death, the germ was planted, that in due time would spring up in death. For since by man came death, by man came the resurrection of the dead; the man, Christ Jesus. The dead can only be raised by the power of God. For there was in man no life but natural or creature life, and that life was forfeited, there was in him no eternal, or immortal life to raise it up again. And had there been in the earthly man a vital principle capable of reproducing the man as the life of the tree may remain in the root after the tree is cut down, yet it would still be the same life reproduced, natural, and not eternal, and would be equally incapable of seeing the Kingdom of God, or of entering therein.

But we propose to contemplate the death and resurrection of the saints, and have endeavored to show that in their first birth, they received only natural life, and that forfeited by sin; and under the sentence of death, and that without power to reproduce even itself again.

But the Scriptures present another life, and Head, in whom the saints only were chosen and blessed before the foundation of the world, before they had an existence in the earth, and He was given to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth, all in all. He is God and man, the Creator and upholder of all things. Spiritual or Eternal Life was given to the people of God in seed substance in Him, and was not forfeited when man sinned. There was no life forfeited by sin but the life given to them in their earthly head, Adam. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us **eternal** life, and this life **is in His Son**."- 1 John

5:11. This life has never been separated from Him. It is eternal. He gives eternal life to His sheep, the saints; yet He still keeps this life for them in Himself. He (Christ) is the life of His people, and when He shall appear then shall they also appear with Him in glory.

Jesus declared Himself the resurrection and the life. He had power to lay down His life, and power to take it again. The life that He laid down was the life of His people in union with Himself, which the law had a claim upon; and when found in the Son of God, justice could not relent, but demanded payment in full. Jesus was the Head and life of the spiritual family at the time of the transgression, even as Adam was the head and life of the natural family. And as the sin was committed in the earthly head, that consigned God's chosen people in their natural existence to death; so that which was condemned to die in His people had to be taken into union with Him also, that He might satisfy justice and honor the law by suffering the penalty, and then rising from the dead could present them to His Father, saying, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given Me." "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." – Hebrews 2:13-15. When the sentence of death was fully executed upon the children, in their Head, He took His life again; for he could not be holden of death; justice had no further claim upon Him or them. The bands of death were loosed, and He triumphed over the last enemy that shall be destroyed. Death was swallowed up in victory. It was that immortality or **eternal** life which dwelt in Jesus, that raised Him from the dead; for that could not die. It was that **seed** that was planted in the flesh of Christ; that germ which sprang up. "That which thou soweth is not quickened except it die; and that which thou soweth, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain; it may chance of wheat, or some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him," – 1 Cor. 15: 36,38. The body of Jesus was flesh and blood, like His children; but in Him was immortality; so that when the kernel died the germ of divine eternal life sprang up; the body that came forth was no long flesh and blood, but was like the seed or germ that survived death, *i.e.*, immortal. It was the *same body* that arose that died, but not like the body that died, but **like the seed immortal**. The body of Christ that came forth out of the tomb was not earth, but spirit. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body: but that was not first that was spiritual, but that which was natural, and afterwards that which was spiritual. Christ's soul was not left in hell, neither did He see corruption. He was the first fruits of them that slept; and as the first fruits, so is the harvest. The life of the saints was raised **with** Christ; they were quickened together **with** Him, raised up together **with** Him, and made to sit together in heavenly places **in** Christ Jesus. The entire harvest is secured by the resurrection of the Head of the body, for the Head and body cannot be severed and survive; neither could live unless they were **one**; they must live or die together, "*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are His at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power; for He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*" The victory will then be complete.

We will now examine the record in relation to the resurrection of the adopted saints. Paul put great stress upon the resurrection of the dead. "*But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is not Christ risen.*" We have seen that Christ is risen; so the question is forever settled, *there is to be a resurrection of the dead*. As Christ is the resurrection and the life, all that are **in** Him shall be made alive, or raised from the dead.

The saints are “begotten again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ.” They are born again, not of corruptible seed as in their natural birth, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever,” The first birth was of the earth, and was corrupted by sin. The second birth is spiritual; for natural life is developed by natural birth; it has descended by ordinary generation from their earthly head. Adam was but a creature of God, not a son. Christ is the Son of God, and the only begotten of the Father. The sonship of the saints is in the Sonship of Christ, who is “The Might God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.” In the new birth, immortality is planted in the earthly vessel of honor, or a new life is developed in the man; it is Christ in them the hope of glory, the seed that is incorruptible. This, like the leaven in the parable, is hidden, until the whole is leavened. The immortality is put in the man, and the whole man must be leaven, or Christ; for they (the saints) shall be changed into the same image, which will be accomplished in the resurrection of the body. The seed planted or sown in the mortal, is immortality; so that when the mortal is put off, the remaining immortal is put on. But how is this to be accomplished? By the immortal spirit **already planted**. That which will survive the execution of the sentence of the law, the death of the body, as the divine nature of Christ lived when the man was dead; dwelt there to raise up the body of Christ; so the divine spirit dwells in the saints, and that is the same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead. This is the germ of life, or the resurrection. “*But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal body by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.*” – Romans 8:9-11.

We are led to the conclusion, from the above, and many other portions of Scripture, that the *immortality implanted* in the new birth is the vital spark that outlives the body, and will raise up **the body**, and present it without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, before the Father, in the resurrection. The kernel sown may be covered with earth, but the earth will not sprout, but **the life** of the grain will spring up and produce a body just like its own. It is sown a natural and corrupt body; it is raised from a spiritual seed, or germ, a spiritual body. So also in the resurrection of the saints, the spirit already dwelling in them must spring up, and the whole man will be immortalized; they will awake in the likeness of Jesus, to dwell in His presence for evermore.

As sure as the Head has risen so all the members of His body **must arise**. And as the whole body of Christ arose, so all the saints must arise; there will be no part left in the grave; but it will be said of the saint after his resurrection, as of Jesus after He left the tomb, “*He is not here, but is risen.*”

When shall the resurrection take place with the saints? It will be when they awake with the likeness of Jesus; for then they will be satisfied. The line dividing time from eternity is exceeding narrow. On this side there are days and years; but on the other side it is always now; no past; no future. One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. There is no counting of time, thousands of years past, as we count time, or millions of years in the future, are all open to the view of our God, and with Him all time and eternity are present; it is now with Him, and ever was now, and ever will be now with Him. And when the saints pass that line, and enter upon eternity, they will see as they are seen, and know as they are known. There will be no waiting on their part, but they will enter at once upon that glory that shall be revealed in the saints.

We are prone to connect our *time views* with those *eternal things* which present the past, present and future, as now. But we should remember that we see but in part, and know but in part,

while on *this* side of the line, and that our vision is dimmed by the veil of flesh, so that now we see through a glass darkly; but when we cross that line, all our dimness will have passed, for we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "*Death is swallowed up in victory.*" And the triumphant song will be sung by all the saints, "*O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless.- 2 Peter 3:14.

Dear brethren, may God grant that we may attain unto the resurrection of the saints, that we may be near and like our God, to whom be glory henceforth for evermore. May grace, mercy and peace be with your spirits.

Philander Hartwell, *Moderator.*

William J. Purington, *Clerk.*

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