

## 1811 Circular Licking Association Of Particular Baptists of Ky.

Written by  
Ambrose Dudley

[Elder Ambrose Dudley served as the first moderator of the Licking to his death, followed by his son, Thomas P. Dudley, who served it unto 1886. In this Circular, there is an expression of an expectation of severe judgment arising on its horizon. The date is 1811; three years later the entire frontier burst into chaos upon the invention of the Baptist Board of Foreign and Domestic Mission and a horde of novel auxiliaries, each promoted by wild humanistic enthusiasts, without any regard to either truth or Biblical order. The Second Frontier Revival followed, with men and women screaming, jerking, rolling on the ground, barking up trees, fainting, etc. in terrifying scenes of religious fanaticism. In this part of Kentucky, the church that received the greatest number of these “converts,” was Bryan Station – the home church of Ambrose and Thomas P. Dudley. In hindsight, we can say he had real reason to fear an impending gloom. Bryan Station divided into two parties, one Missionary and the other Particular Old School, and the two shared the same Meeting House until the demise of the Old School Party after the Licking was destroyed by Elder Eubanks, Durand, and Francis after 1890. The Modern Missionary Movement helped to purge out some that were not predestinarians; and then again, in the 1840’s, the Means Baptists, led by Elder William Conrad of Dry Ridge (Williamstown) further purged it of duty faith believers. The Licking thereafter experience a “Golden Age” under the able leadership of Thomas P. Dudley. Today, Bryan Station is a Southern Baptist Church in the Kentucky Baptist Convention. –SCP].

*To the Churches Composing The Licking Association.*

*Beloved Brethren in the Lord,*

From the information we have received from your letters, as well as by observation since we have been organized as a body, we are strongly impressed with the opinion, that judgment has begun at the House of God. What the event will be, the Lord only knows; but that in itself is a good work, it will be carried on, until the purpose of God is accomplished; for the Lord hath said, “*My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.*” And again, “*I will bring the third part through the fires.*” It appears that God will have a tried people. If so, the means will be used for the purpose; therefore, we ought not to think it strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try us, as though some strange thing had happened. For there is no temptation taken place but what is common among Christians. The spirit striving against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit; these are contrary the one to the other, so that Christians, according to the Scriptures, cannot do the things they would.

Dear Brethren, our state is a state of warfare, our enemies are the world, flesh and devil. As these are our enemies, and we know it, ought we not to guard against them, with all that skill we are in possession of. Being sensible of our weakness and ignorance, ought we not to lean on the arm of the Lord, and cry daily unto Him for wisdom to encounter such deadly foes? Those enemies which are never weary, will continue to plan against the Church of Christ. If they were always in one shape or of one colour, and if

we had learned shape and colour, it would seem that we should encounter them with more courage . But inasmuch as these enemies, Chameleon-like, change their colour when they please, in order to carry out their purpose, we are at a loss. This makes it so necessary the Christians should search the Scriptures with fervent prayer to God, that they may know the enemy, let him come in what shade he may. If the child of God should, for want of knowledge, engage his brother instead of an enemy, which we believe sometimes is the case, it cannot fail to give grief when it is discovered. Let the Christian in all cases treat with his brother or sister as a Christian, while he has faith in him as a Christian; for faith and love stand or fall together. The text says, - "*Let brotherly love continue.*" It is our duty to walk circumspectly before our brethren and the world, knowing that we are in the presence of God; each brother and sister walking in the fear of the Lord, brotherly love will continue.

Dear Brethren, to know the truth, and receive it in the love of it, is so glorious a thing that we ought to dig for it as for hid treasure. But the old question is agitated in these modern times: "*What is Truth?*" And as this was the inquiry of a heathen, so it yet is. And as it respects the Scriptures, it is no more the concern of the great number of the people now than it was then. Truth, simply speaking, is that which exists firmly and unalterably – It cannot change, for if it could, it would lose its nature. Error is only mutable and various – And although it passes in innumerable forms, it cannot become truth.- The truth is perfect unity and simplicity. Therefore, is not only the foundation and reality of all existence, but it is infinite existence; for it must be commensurate with all being, as without it, being is idle, or rather no truth of being at all. It is truth, that we are poor sinners, and as such, deserve to be thrown from the presence of God, and certainly will be, if not found in the Covenant of Grace, and our names written in the Lamb's Book of Life. The church having grace given her in Christ before the foundation of the world, and in the fullness of time, that grace is made known to His people experimentally, they are caused to exalt Him in their hearts as their Prophet, Priest and King; and thus bow before Him as their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May the grace of God be with you all.

Ambrose Dudley, *Moderator.*

John Price, *Clerk.*