

## 1838 Circular Alleghany Baptist Association

[The Allegheny Association of Pennsylvania's mountainous region was a small association, and for a time corresponded with the so-called "Beebe Baptists". In this year, it corresponded with the Chemung Baptist Association. It mentions adjourning next year to seat with the "association meeting at Darien at the First Baptist Church, Genesee Co., N.Y. in September 1838, which I think is a misprint, because this session is dated September, 1838, and it met with the church at Roulet, Potter Co., Pa.,

Elders mentioned in this session were: Samuel Palmer, Joseph Beman, John Sawyer (moderator), John Lyman (Licentiate), Elder Z. D. Pasco and Consider Ellis, (visiting ministers); Hezekiah West, and Eli Gitchel. There is this small note sent to Elder Beebe printed in this Minute which reads: "Brother Beebe:- You will notice in the following Minutes, the resolution of our Association to have them published in your truly interesting paper. You will discover by our numbers, that our means must be small: we are not only few in number, but very poor, which accounts in few words, for the course we have taken.

Your brother in the Lord, Samuel Palmer.

-I smiled when I read the last sentence: It seems to imply they ceased their affiliation with the Mission movement because *they couldn't afford it.*" My mother always said the "Hardshells were too stingy to support missions!" She also frequently said, "Hardshells don't care if men go to hell!" - SCP.]

### THE CIRCULAR LETTER

By

Elders Hezekiah West, Joseph Beman, and Eli Gitchel

*The Messengers of the Churches composing the Alleghany Baptist Association, assembled in Roulet, Potter Co., Pa., September 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 1838, to the churches of which they are members, send Christian Salutation.*

*Beloved in the Lord:-*

Since custom has taught you to expect an epistle from us, and we rejoice in the privilege of addressing you, as those who are bound with us in the same bleeding cause, under the government of the same King, led by the same Captain, to fight under the same *banner of love*:

We wish you, brethren, to be particular careful not to use any carnal weapons, for such are not the "*weapons of our warfare for we do not war after the flesh.*" We entreat you to be skilful, (not negligent,) and may the Lord teach your hands to war a good fight of faith, and your fingers to fight with such as are mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought, to the obedience of Christ; that thou by them mightest war a good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith, have made shipwreck,

of whom, of old time, was Hymenius and Alexander, whom Paul delivered to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme; and doubtless there be many such now a-days, since the time has come that men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts, are heaping to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and have already turned away their ears from the Truth, and are turned unto man-made fables.

Surely brethren we find the present to be perilous times, and the description given by the Apostle, very correct; *“For men are lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy; Without natural affections, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of them that are good; Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.”* What other than the characters above described, can we make of such as make a great parade and noise about what they have done, and would do, to evangelize the ungodly world and save souls, if they could only engage suitable men, and sufficient money plenty for the work; while they deny the sufficiency of the Spirit’s teaching, to qualify men to preach the Gospel of Christ; and believe that the inhabitants of Heaven may be **increased** in proportion to the amount of money spent in their cause; who proclaim that the Lord is calling for our money, that He may have it to expand as He did His heart’s blood, for the salvation of perishing souls? We would caution you brethren, against fostering such characters in your bosoms, and nursing them at your sides; *“But remembering their deeds which they do, prating against us with malicious words,”* and not content therewith, neither do they receive the brethren, and forbid them that would, and cast them out of their church; though they pretend to so much love, and as much religion, and use as much flattery, as the strange woman spoken of by Solomon (see Prov. Vii), Or carry as glittering a golden cup, as the *“Mother of Harlots.”* (Rev. xvii.5.)

We would say unto you, *“beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you, &c.”* *“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”* *“Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees, which is their doctrine, which is hypocrisy.”* *“Beware of covetousness, for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”* *“Beware of dogs, beware of evil-workers, beware of the concision.”* *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ;”* *“for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist; but be ye followers of God, as dear children;”* Arm yourselves with the same mind that was in Christ. Wherefore brethren, put on the whole armor of light; take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with Truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, - above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and take the helmet of salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit,

which is the Word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit; pray and never faint; pray that God may be your strength, your high tower, your strong tower, your strong Rock, your strong refuge, your strong confidence, your strong city, where God appoints salvation for walls and bulwarks: and may the arms of your hands be made strong by the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob. A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength. Be ye therefore strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might; and may it be your happy lot, in answer to your prayer, to rejoice and say, "*O Lord I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortest me. Behold God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation.*" May your souls greatly rejoice in the Lord, and be joyful in your God, because He hath clothed you with the garments of salvation, and covered you with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

Rejoice in that system of unchanging love, and distinguishing grace, which by the Gospel is revealed unto you. Rejoice that it hath pleased God to distinguish you from others, by the revelation of His Son in your hearts, by the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Rejoice that without any regard to either faith or good works foreseen in you, as a condition thereof, God hath from the beginning, chosen you to salvation, through both the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth. Though many revile and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely, for His name's sake, rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. Rejoice that God hath taught you, by His Word and Spirit, not to despise His name, as those do that follow after a strange god; nor to offer polluted bread upon the altar of the Lord, like those that offer the works of their own hands, or the fruit of their ground, like Cain; for the best of our performance, or even our money, is too polluted for our souls to feed upon before the Lord, or to offer upon His table.

Our poor, lame, impotent, imperfect works, even when we are endeavoring wholly to follow the rule which God hath given as the order of His house, without embracing any of the modern idolatrous inventions of men, are too polluted to present before our thrice holy God, as any part of the ground of our acceptance with Him. Nothing short of the God-Man, Christ Jesus, will answer as an offering for such feeble degraded miscreants as we are. In nothing short of the *Lord our Righteousness*, can we be accepted in the presence of the Most High: nothing short of His flesh and blood, can give or sustain a spiritual life answerable to His holy law, or our absolute necessities.

Finally brethren, rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and praise the name of the Lord, that He hath shewed you the difference which exists between such as would regard the name and authority of Christ, in all that they do, and with such as despise His name and government by disregarding His authority, saying by their conduct in following the devices of men, and marrying the daughter of a strange god, that the table of the Lord is contemptible, while they offer polluted bread upon his altar; that will not shut the doors

of the temple for naught, nor kindle a fire on the altar, without having the Lord's promise endorsed by some society of men.

## CORRESPONDING LETTER

*The Alleghany Association, to her sister Associations with which she Corresponds,- Greetings:-*

*Beloved in the Lord:-* Through the tender mercies of our Covenant God, we are yet alive, and have been indulged with another anniversary, and so far as we have been favored with your correspondence, we rejoice to learn that God has reserved a few who have not as yet bowed the knee to the image of Baal, or have not gone a whoring after the strange god modernly called "*Benevolence.*" And we are glad to learn from you, that you are not worshipping the Image of the Beast, that so many that we once called *brethren*, are now paying their homage before. Surely at present the daughter of Zion appears to be left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.-

Well may it be said again, "*Except the Lord of Hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.*" In relation to those that have left us in the flood, and have married the daughters of that strange god, professed *Benevolence*, we think the following language appropriate, "*To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? Saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, (jewelry and trinkets,) and the fat of fed beasts, (scholastic preachers.) I delight not in the blood of bullocks, of lambs, or of he goats, (silver, gold and paperbacks.) When ye come to appear before Me, who hath required this at your hand to tread My courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me; the new moons, and the Sabbaths (pagan holy days,) the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with it: it is **iniquity**, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons, and your appointed feasts My soul hateth; they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood.*"

In reference to the body of people called *Baptists* we lament and say, "*How is the faithful city become an harlot! It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murders. Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water. Thy princes (ministers) are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards (Balaamites.)* But in the midst of our sorrow, we rejoice that God hath promised to purge away all the dross, and take away all the tin; and restore the judges as at the first; and her counselors as at the beginning; and that Zion shall be

redeemed; (though it be) with judgments, and her converts with righteousness. That she again shall be called "*the city of righteousness; the faithful city.*" Yea, brethren we rejoice that Jesus lives, and has said, "*Because I live, ye shall live also.*" We rejoice to learn that Zion's King is mustering the Host to the battle; and is gathering His people from those corrupt masses called "churches," and reclaiming them from their false practices into which they had been incautiously decoyed by the cunning craftiness, and slight of men that lie in wait to deceive.

Our present Session has been peculiarly harmonious, having been refreshed by your letters. We hope that such Correspondence will be continued during our trials.

Our next session will be held, *d.v.*, with the First Church of Darien, in Genesee County New York.

Burrel Lyman, Postmaster, Roulet, Potter Co.,  
Pa., is our Corresponding Secretary.