

1889 Circular of Licking Particular Baptists Of Kentucky.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Written by

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(The Biographer of Thomas P. Dudley and
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[This Circular was submitted by Elder Robert Webb of the Primitive Baptist Library in Carthage, Il, and from the same issue of The Sectarian. These Circulars were written the year before The Sectarian began publication. At that time, there was no longer a publication in the US contending for the doctrines of the Particular and Old School Baptists as articulated by Elder Gilbert Beebe and the Eastern Associations. The result of the Eubank splitting of the Western associations was the creation of four different "Licking Associations," and in this year, Elder Eubanks took one rump Licking into the correspondence with the Warwick, Delaware, Delaware River, etc. Both the rump Licking and the rump Mount Pleasant were constituted on a totally different format than the previous "Beebe Baptists," in that their structure was like the organization of the Regular "Means" and the Modern Missionary Baptists associations. At this date, the below "Licking" is the only one of the four yet contending for the doctrines (in 1889), and in fellowship with the faithful elders and churches of the former correspondence. Again, all **bold characters are added by – SCP**].

The Licking Association of Particular Baptists, convened with the Church at Bryan's Station, Fayette County, ky., on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of September, 1889, sendeth fraternal greetings:

Dear Beloved Brethren:- Assembled once again in associate capacity, as **one church**, as one people, united by ties of kindred faith and of brotherly love, we realize afresh the preciousness of the fellowship of the Saints. Our Association has been a delightful season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. From the Gospel heaven the doctrine of our Heavenly Father has dropped as the rain, His speech has distilled as the dew, cheering our careworn and pained hearts, and reviving our hopes that in another and more glorious state, we shall yet be like our precious Jesus, and see Him as He is now in glory- Jon 17:5. The letter which we send you, we devote mainly to a subject which we feel most nearly concerns us all –

The Salvation of Sinners

The Bible furnishes proof that all the posterity of the earthy Adam are sinners – Rom.3:23. Hence death reigns over all his generations. Rom. 5:14. For the wages of sin is death. Rom. 6:22. Now death, in man's case, means not only his subjection to the decree, "dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return," but a condition the

opposite of holiness. Holiness is life, immortality; unholiness is death, mortality. As to extricating himself from his condition, he is said to be "without strength." Rom. 5:6. His mind, enmity against God. Rom. 8:7. He receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them.- 1 Cor. 2:14. Jews are no better than Gentiles; there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Rom. 3. Hence it is a momentous question, *How* are sinners saved? The systems of men hold that the Lord Jesus Christ, touched with pity for man in his wretched condition, volunteered to substitute Himself to suffer and die in their room and stead; but in this they do not agree. Some say that He died for all mankind, and now offers salvation to all who may choose to accept it; while far the greater majority of mankind never hear of the supposed offer. Others say that man, dead in trespasses and sins, is too depraved of himself to accept salvation; so God, before the world began, elected *in purpose* some of the sinful posterity of the earthy Adam, and to secure obedience, makes part of the man holy, the son of God, here in time; the other part of the same man remains the son of man. Part of the man is resurrected here in time to spiritual, holy life; the other part of the same man is not resurrected till the last day. This they call "regeneration," or the new birth. We fail to see anything in this supposed *change* which can be truly called a "birth" as taught in John 3: 6.

Others say that before the foundation of the world, God *in purpose*, elected in Christ a number of sinners, of the **posterity of earthy Adam**, and at the appointed time so operates on them by eternal life as to cause them to be holy and to love God, to believe in Christ, and to obey His holy precepts (bear good fruit). And then these sinners become sons of God, a chosen generation, a holy nation; yet admitting these sinners are not changed either in soul or body, therefore fitly symbolized by "a corrupt tree." We are reminded of the language of Ezekiel: "And one built up a wall, and lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar." This supposed operation, if true, could not truly be called a "birth" according to John 3:6. The popular belief that the innocent Savior was merely substituted to die for all, or as some say, an elect part of the posterity of the earthy Adam, has no foundation in truth – it originated in man's vain imagination. A substitute can never satisfy the demand of law and justice against one condemned. All hope in that direction is vain. "He that justifieth the wicked and he that condemneth the just, even they both are alike, abomination to the Lord." Prov. 17:15. These are solemn words, fatal to all the theories of men to which we have alluded. Evidently the possibility of the salvation of sinners rests upon some deep fundamental truth, which escapes the observation of a great majority of professed believers. A path which the natural powers cannot find, though penetrating as the eagle's, though strong as the lion's. Job 18:7. David evidently spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. 2:14, that way when he exclaimed, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed." – Psa. 85: 10. And "a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein." Is. 3:8. That way is shown in the Bible doctrine of relationship; that doctrine which shows the subjects of redemption to be duplex in being; to have seminally existed in Christ previous to birth of the spirit, as actually as in Adam previous to the birth of the flesh.

Hence the Scriptures recognize **two men in the composition of each Christian** – the one flesh, corrupt; the other spirit, holy. Eph. 4:22,23,24. A man born of the flesh, the earthy Adam man, who cannot see the kingdom of God, till changed in the resurrection of the last day; and the second man born in the development of each subject of redemption called the "man born again," or (as the margin reads= born from above.) Perhaps the seed of Christ, His generation (Matt. 1:1) (always in the singular number,) is more often mentioned in Scripture than the seed, generations (plural) of Adam Genesis 5:1). The seed of Christ is called "a holy seed." Isa. 6:13, a "godly seed." – Mal 2:15. "Seed of the righteous." Prov. 11:21. "A seed that shall serve God." Psa. 22:30. "An incorruptible seed." 1 Peter 1:23; 2:9; "The generation of Jesus Christ," (singular) – Matt. 1:1, is called "the generation of the righteous," – Psa. 145. "A chosen generation, a holy nation," – 1 Peter 2:9. This shows the seminal existence, the origin of those who are called "sons of God," In Christ; "in" the church," here in time. – Rom. 8:19; Gal. 4:7; Rev. 21:7; and "children of God," – Matt 5:9; Rom. 9:8; Rom. 9:26; Heb. 2:11, 12, 13, 14; show the seminal existence, the origin of those who are referred to by the word, "us" in Eph. 1:4; the "ye" in 1 Peter 2:9; and the "ye" in John 15:5. The proof is overwhelming that a chosen (an elect generation of men; a holy nation of subjects; existing seminally IN Christ, the spiritual Isaac, are manifested **by birth** here in time.

The great and wonderful mystery is that **two men should compose the dual existence of each one of the redeemed**. One of these two men, having existed seminally in the earthy Adam, is manifested **by birth** of the flesh; the other having existed seminally in Christ, the heavenly Adam, is manifested **by birth** of the Spirit, John 3:3-6. We are told "*They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God.* (How much clearly must it be stated?) *but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.*" "*In Isaac shall Thy seed be called.*" – Rom. 9: 7,8. So, the chosen, the elect, the "free born" nation, which existed seminally in our spiritual Isaac, are a shadow of a chosen **generation**, the holy nation which existed seminally in Christ, the spiritual Isaac "before the world began." It will be observed that the subjects of redemption are often represented, or symbolized, by a pair of figures, as – "I am black, but comely." Song 1:5; "thorn- fig tree"; "brier-

myrtle tree." Isa 55:13. "evil tree – good tree". Matt 7:17; "a strong man – a stronger man." Luke 11:21; "a field – the treasure in it." So, in the "shadow," the "we brethren" mentioned in Gal. 4:28, and in verse 31, who are sons of God through the spiritual Isaac, are symbolized by the "elect nation," entire in Isaac; "while sinners, vessels of mercy;" "that which is born of the flesh," men and women of the posterity of the earthy Adam, are symbolized by the bond-men and bond-maids, which the "free born seed of Abraham," Rom. 9:7; were commanded to buy of the heathen round about them, and of the strangers which did sojourn among them. Leviticus 25: 44.45; the buying, symbolizing the blood of Christ, which bought the sinner from the death grasp of the law. Hence the sinner, the child of the flesh, the earthy Adam, the son of man, comes into the Church here in time, comes under the law of Christ, only as an unwilling bond-man, or bond-maid, in subjection to the "free-born", holy son of the spiritual Isaac, the Son of God. The only service the earthy Adam man performs in the Gospel kingdom of God, the Church here in time, is as a bond-servant to his Master; as an Apostle says, "I keep under my body (that which is born of the flesh) and bring it into subjection." 1 Cor. 9:27. These sons of God (son of the spiritual Isaac) cannot be seen by the world, cannot be seen by the sons of men. John 6:42. Hence, "except a man be born again (be the second man in the order of the two births, which manifest each subject of redemption, or born from above) he cannot **see** the Kingdom of God. John 3:3. Hence the Gospel address is to the Master, not to *his* bond-man, or bond-maid. These sons of the spiritual Isaac, whose King is God, who are subjects in the gospel kingdom of heaven, compose the holy city, new Jerusalem, which John saw coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Rev. 21:2. That Husband is the holy Son of God, the (mother nativity) of that bride is heaven. Gal. 4:26.

Before the coming of Christ we have this sublime doctrine of relationship, eternal, vital union, the duplex existence set forth in shadow; after He came and finished the great work of redemption, we have it often set forth by direct assertion, as "the children partakers of flesh and blood."- Hebrew 2:14; "flesh against spirit."-Gal. 5:17; "old man – new man," Eph. 4:22-24; "body of death – the man born of the flesh – joined with the man that delights in the law of God;" Rom. 7:22,24, and "outward man – inward man."

The symbols we have been referring to being only pointers, shadows; by them we only see the substance, the glorious, holy city, and her exalted King "through a glass darkly;" not looking through these, but looking in another direction, we shall fail to comprehend, even darkly, the sublimely glorious object shadowed forth. For on this doctrine of eternal, vital union, oneness of Christ and the Church, absolute eternal personal election in Christ, rests the possibility of the salvation of sinners. Our Bible knows no Savior except in living oneness with His body, the Church. The Church met the claims of the law ***IN*** and ***WITH*** OUR Lord Jesus Christ, and in no other. So, when one "died for all," then "were all dead."- 2 Cor. 5:14. There is deep meaning in the words, "For as the body is ***one*** and has many members, and all the members of that ***one body***, being many, ***are one body, so also is Christ.***"- 1 Cor. 12:12. "Ye are the ***body of Christ***, and members in ***particular.***" 1 Cor. 12. (see marginal reading of Zech. 9:9.) In the light of truth the saints can, in spirit, sing the old hymn, which contains the verse-

"One in the Lamb, one when He rose,
One where He triumphed o'er His foes,
One when in heaven He took His seat,
While seraphs sang all hell's defeat."

The figure of Head and Body is a shadow by which we see through a glass darkly: that our Lord Jesus Christ, having laid down His life, a life, (like the head and body) common to both Christ and the Church – that regeneration signifies this revivifying, quickening to life again of Christ, the Head, and the Church, His body. God has quickened us ***together WITH*** Christ. Eph. 2. The prophet says: "Shall a nation be born ***at once***? For as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth ***her children.***" Is. 66: 8. By the figure of *vine and branches* "We see through a glass darkly," that in the Gospel church, composed of a company of two armies.- Cant. 6:13: implying war between the flesh and spirit, between the child of God in the vessel of flesh, and the child quickened by the Spirit – the quickening is not in the flesh, but in the spirit, so held by our dear lamented pastor, the late Elder Thomas P. Dudley and those associated with him, in the much opposed circular on the "Christian Warfare," published in 1849, and formally adopted by the Licking association in 1876.

So great a mystery is this heavenly Truth, that even the people of God, whose vision is beclouded by the veil of the flesh, sometimes fail to discern and own their holy, their divine lineage; and this result is enhanced when the Church has among them those regarded as *teachers*, but are seducing spirits.- 1 Timothy 4:1; who

trouble them, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.- Gal. 1:17. The faithful ministering servants dwell on this doctrine in their preaching, because they see its vast importance. Their love for the brethren cause them to desire to see them firmly established on principles, which alone can stand the fiery test of God's awful law and stern justice. Their hands are clean from the blood of those who reject Truth, and thereby destroy themselves from a place in the Church of Christ. -Ex. 3: 17-21. In the freedom and light of the Truth, vain see the objections and questions of the gainsayers, such as - "If the doctrine of eternal vital union is true, not sinners, but the children of God, are saved." And - "If the subjects of redemption are actually two men, how do they become one hereafter?"

Our Lord Jesus Christ, now sitting in majesty on His Mediatorial throne is the Son of God and the glorified son of man. - John 17:5. So will His brethren be *like Him*, sons of God and sons of men in a *glorified* state.- Heb. 2:14; Psa. 17:15. Under the dark veil of the flesh, how shall we presume to try God's holy word by our experience? It is an error universally prevalent with the professed religious systems of men, to confound the *spiritual birth* with the *resurrection*. To ascribe to the spiritual birth that *change* in the *earthy* man, which is not to be till the resurrection, when the Lord Jesus Christ "**shall change our vile body** (that which is born of the **flesh**,) that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Phil. 3:21). This dangerous error, from time to time, creeps into the Church. We call it a dangerous error because it results in Christians "letting slip" most vital Truth - Truth, without which the religion of Christ would be without foundation. The doctrine of God our Savior cannot be held and contended for without dividing the word of truth. 1 Tim. 2:15.

It will be a happy day for the Church of Christ when all shall rightly apply the terms used relative to a subject of redemption. Some of which terms are : "a holy seed," "a seed of evil doers," the "generation of Jesus Christ," "the generations of Adam," "birth of the flesh," "birth of the spirit," "a child of the flesh," "a child of God," "generation," and "regeneration;" Shall discriminate between a free born son of the spiritual Isaac, the son of God, and a bond-man, vessel of mercy - body of death, son of man; Discriminate between a *spiritual* birth and the resurrection, recognize in the first-born from the dead, the first fruit of that assured crop, of which the Lord Jesus Christ being that first fruit, the remainder of the crop *just like Him* is sure to follow.

Those who have lately departed from the faith that had so long professed to believe, and have gone out from us, are now denouncing this their previous faith as two seed doctrine and now opposing it. It is the same which was held and contended for by the late elders Thomas P. Dudley, Gilbert Beebe, Samuel Trott, Robert C. Leachman, John H. Johnson, Philander Hartman, and others of the late fathers in the ministry, and by our brethren in the ministry who are now with us. We do believe the Bible testimony to two order of seed, to two order of generation, to two order of birth, to two order of children, to a first and last Adam, to a natural and spiritual bride, and to a natural and spiritual Bridegroom. Eph. 5:22-23. And like a grain of corn falling into the earth brings up more than went down, so *too* the child of God which partake of flesh and blood, Heb. 2:14., leaves the "corruption" behind and raises the child of man to a "glorified" state.

All who hold this distinguishing doctrine, will dwell in *safety alone*, and shall not "be reckoned among the nations" of the Anti-Christ. Num. 23:9. Modern magicians can *imitate* the Church of Christ in some things, but in *this* they must confess, "*This is the finger of God.*" Exo. 8:19. Professed Particular Baptists, who believe in the operation of eternal life on the sinner to make him over in the spiritual birth *the child of God*, are not far from ready to put their finger in the operation and become Means Baptists.

In conclusion, dear brethren, suffer a word of exhortation. In you, flesh and spirit so mutually partake of each other, are so united together in one, that one is as equally you as the other. Hence to the stronger, to the holy element of your being, these words, like all Gospel, is addressed, "*I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your **bodies** (that which is born of flesh) a *living* (continual) *sacrifice, holy, acceptable* (blameless) *unto God, your reasonable service,*" Rom. 12:1. Yes, this is your reasonable service, for to the holy sons of God, what life, or peace, or joy to you in any of the works of the flesh, which are unlawful in the Kingdom of God (the Church)? Not in our church assemblies alone, but in our daily life, it is our *reasonable service* to keep under our bodies (that which is born of the flesh) for they that are (manifestly) Christ's, having crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts. To him that overcometh (the unlawful works of and delusions of the flesh) our God will give to eat of the Tree of Life which is in the midst of the paradise (the Gospel church) of God.*

The words we place in parentheses are not to add to the word of God, but to give our understanding of their meaning. Dear brethren, prove all things, hold fast to that which is good. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

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