

**1891 Western Corresponding Association  
Of the Old School Predestinarian  
Baptists of Missouri**

[The Licking Particular, Mount Pleasant of Ky; and the western associations still maintaining the doctrines of the early Baptists associated with the SIGNS under Gilbert Beebe, having now been cut off for refusal to united with the Clark, or Means party, are found yet in correspondence with the associations in Kansas and Missouri. The elders present at this session were: Elder R. M. Thomas, Elder R. M. Simmons, Elder Levi Bavis, and Elder A.D. Jones.

The associations in correspondence this session were: The original Licking Particular Baptist of Ky; the original Mount Pleasant of Ky and Ohio; the Indian Creek Association of Ohio, and the Columbia River Association of Oregon. In this session, the Pilgrim's Rest Association was dropped from their correspondence.

It is note-worthy, that these associations still met together, and while as baptized members of the church, acted together more in line with the definition of "a church," than as we today commonly consider an "association." That is, ALL PRESENT were equal participates, and considered "members in good standing" authorized to be their messengers to any of the associations they may attend. A good illustration of this is the call for Elder R. M. Thomas to write their circular letter and be their messenger to the Licking, Mt. Pleasant and Indian Creek. In fact, Elder R.M. Thomas, from the Licking in Ky., is elected their moderator!

**CIRCULAR LETTER**

By

Elder R. M. Thomas

*The elders and messengers of the churches composing the Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri, on the 2, 3, 4, days of October, 1891. To the several churches whose messengers we are, send Christian love and salutation.*

*Beloved in the Lord:*

The time of our annual meeting has once more rolled around, and it becomes our duty to address you with another epistle of love; and may Almighty God of heaven and earth, who controls all things in accordance with His own will and good pleasure, so direct our mind that we may write to the comfort and edification of God's dear children; to the building of them up in that most holy faith that was once delivered unto the saints, and may we be enabled to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance. Yes, of these

things they have both seen and heard.

O, brethren! How often in our meditations do our minds run back to our early experience, when we were made to see ourselves as poor, lost, helpless and guilty sinners in the sight of a just and holy God: when we thought that we must sink down to irretrievable woe and condemnation, yes, without hope; no, not one ray of hope; and Oh! How our sins rose up before us as mountains, and we, poor, guilty and helpless sinners felt that we were justly condemned in the sight of a just and holy God. When the law, in thunder tones, poured its curse upon our guilty heads, and we were made to cry in agony of soul; “God be merciful to me a poor, lost and helpless sinner.” “Lord, save, or I perish;” and when mercy was unexpected, and all hope was gone, and every refuge had fled; yes, in an unexpected time, Jesus, our great Mediator, and sin-bearer, revealed Himself to us, as our Savior; as the one that bore our sins in His own body on the tree of the cross. Then our languishing souls were made as the “chariots of Amminadib;” we mounted up, as on wings of eagles. Yes, we well remember how our mouth was filled with praises, and on our tongues sounded forth the praises of the Lamb for sinners slain; and with what desire we longed to meet with that little company of God’s despised children, and join them in songs and thanksgiving to Him that “came to seek and to save that which was lost.” Then we could feelings sing with the poet:

“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,  
That saved a *wretch like me*;  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.”

And how we desired to walk blameless in the house of our God, but soon we found that when we “would do good, evil was with us.” So here the warfare begun, “*For we delight in the law of God after the inward man.*” “*But we see another law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin and which is in our members.*”

Yes, and how often we are made to cry, “O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Paul says, “So then with the mind, I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” Jesus says, “That which is born of the Spirit *is* spirit.” So we see that which is born of the flesh, still remains flesh, with all its corrupt and sinful nature. But that which is born of God is born, “not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God.”

Hence we find the warfare, the “flesh against the Spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary, the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” Oh, how often we are made to weep, and mourn, and pray to God that we may be kept in that straight and narrow way; and that our walk and conversation be such as

becometh the children of God. But how often, Oh, how often, our feet are going in by forbidden paths; and our tongues (that unruly member which no man can tame,) are uttering things that should not be uttered. Brethren we cannot be too careful about offending our brethren, both in our walk and conversation, and throwing a stumbling-block in their way.

Then, brethren, when we come to consider what great things the Lord has done for us; and has had compassion on us; and His mercy and loving-kindness towards us in bringing up to see our lost, ruined and helpless situation; and the glorious manifestation of His loving-kindness; then what manner of persons ought we to be in all our conversation and walk, while we sojourn here in this world of sin, temptation and sorrow” Remembering that we are poor, imperfect and erring creatures. Often, yes, Oh, how often, deserving the chastening rod of our good Lord and Master; and how often do we find ourselves going astray, doing and saying things we ought not, and leaving undone the things that we ought to do. Oh, that the good Lord would enable us to order our walk and conversation more as becomes the children of our blessed Lord and master, adorning the doctrine of God our Savior, by an orderly walk, and a godly conversation; ever remembering that the children of disobedience receive the chastening rod. Paul says, “Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but rather let it be healed.”

Therefore, brethren, if we are exercised by the righteousness of our God in our chastisements, it yieldeth peaceable fruits, and we can joy and rejoice to think that we are counted worthy to receive chastisement at the hands of our heavenly Father, who careth for us; and may we be enabled by divine grace to run our race with patience, “looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.” And may we ever “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,” and not be led or enticed away from the simplicity of the Truth. *“For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Brethren be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, “Shun every appearance of evil.”

*“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.*

R. M. Thomas, *Moderator.*

Mark Whitaker, *Clerk*.

Thomas Shearer, *Assistant Clerk*.