

1881 Circular Yellow River Primitive Baptist Association

Prepared by
Elder J. A. Jordan

[Associations in correspondence this session were: Ocmulgee, Oconee, Western Primitive, Euharlee, New Hope, Marietta, Warwick, Delaware River, - Received Elder M. F. Hurst, a visitor from the Beulah Association of Alabama.

Ministers seated were Elders J. G. Eubanks, F. M. McLeroy, W. D. Chandler, U. M. Almand, S. W. Chandler, A. B. Whatley, L. N. Moon, B. M. Camp, J. P. McPherson, M. F. Hurst, I. Hamby, W. D. Almand, B. F. Morton, E. Webb, W. H. Morgan, J. H. Cook, Wm. Adams, N. B. Hardy, J. M. Ginter, J. A. Jordan, and J. T. Jordan.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Yellow River Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the church at Bald Rock, Rockdale co., Georgia, September 24th, 25th, and 26th, 1881, to the churches composing the same.

Dear Brethren:- The time has come when, according to our custom, you will expect to hear from us through a Circular Letter, and for our consideration we call your attention to the admonition of the apostle to the Hebrews, xiii. 1, which reads as follows, "***Let brotherly love continue.***"

The first point we desire to notice is the relationship that exist with those addressed; and as the word *brotherly* is used, it is evident that they are a family of brethren. God is their Father, and Jerusalem, which is above, and is free, is their mother. When we are born again, we are born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which lived and abideth forever; and when thus born, we are born of love, for God is love. This being the fact, we are brethren in deed and in truth; and he that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him, which we, dear brethren, realize in our first experience, when we were delivered from that burden of guilt and condemnation. We are commanded to let that love continue, and the expression shows that there is danger of its not continuing; for when we read the Holy Scriptures we see that troubles got in among the children of God in the apostles' day, and overthrew the faith of some, as in the case of Hymeneus and Philetus, saying that the resurrection is past already. And also the doctrine of circumcision which was of the law, together with many other errors, which caused trouble among them; which things were left on record for our benefit, and show that we should be very careful, and watch and pray lest we enter into temptation. We

have the same spirit of error to contend with as was in the apostles' day, and are as subject to err; and when we follow the spirit of error, or sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption. For our benefit we will mention some of the works of the flesh, which are these: idolatry, hatred, witchcraft, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, &c., which is iniquity; and when that abounds, the love of many waxes cold. Brethren, when we see coldness among us, and wars and disputings, it is the work of the flesh, and this brotherly love will cease to continue among us, *"for if ye bite and devour one another, ye will be consumed one of another."* But we are commanded of God to lay aside all malice, and all hypocrisy, and evil speaking one of another, as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grown thereby. Again, he saith, *"Be children in malice, but men in understanding."*

Dear brethren, God has not required more of His children in the way of duty than they are able to perform, and has given us an example; and if we let brotherly love continue, we must obey His commandments and follow His examples, and His commandments are not grievous. We desire to notice some of His commandments relative to the text under consideration. First, *"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor."* Again, *"This is the message that ye heard from the beginning; that we should love one another."* Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, but to the contrary, for the apostle John say, *"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."* How many of us are willing to do so? *"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."* If any brother or brethren walk disorderly, we have the same commandment of love to deal with them, and also those that are persecuted and bound in feelings, as said by the apostle, *"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body,"* in which we are to consider the matter as though we were in the same like trouble. Now, brethren, if we carry out that spirit of love according to the discipline of the Gospel, we shall be enabled to mark them that cause division, and the command is, *"He that is an heretic, reject after the first and second admonitions."*

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might; put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, and having done all, to stand." *"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;"* *"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"* that ye may be blameless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. *"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good cheer, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."* Amen.

Isaac Hamby, Moderator.

J. T. Jordan, *Clerk.*