

Baptists Florida

MINUTES
OF THE
FOURTH ANNUAL SESSION
OF THE
FLORIDA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,
HELD AT MONTICELLO,

Commencing on Saturday, 10th October, 1846.

1. The Introductory Sermon was preached by Brother James McDonald, from Rev., 6 c., 2 v.: "And I saw, and behold, a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow: and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer."

2. After an intermission of thirty minutes, the Delegates repaired to the Presbyterian Church and the Association was opened by singing, and prayer by Br. Mercer.

3. Letters from Churches were then presented, and their statistics noted.

4. Petitionary letters were then called for and received. The following, to wit: "New Zion," Alachua county, Fla.; "Mt. Pleasant," Alachua county, Fla.; and "Bethesda," Wakulla county, Fla. And after being read and found orthodox, the right hand of fellowship was extended to the Delegates by the Moderator.

5. Proceeded to elect officers: Br. R. J. MAYS was re-elected Moderator; and Sam. C. Craft, Clerk.

6. The Moderator then appointed the following Committees, to wit: Brethren Beard, Prevatt, Johnson, Marvin and W. H. Scruggs, to arrange Preaching; McDonald, Mercer and Fuller on Queries; Fuller, Cooper, Linton, Mercer and Houston, to arrange business; Cason, Page and Barbour, on Finance; Lang, Houston, Lamb, McCall and J. Scruggs, on Correspondence; and McDonald, Havens and E. G. Mays, on Deceased Ministers.

7. By request, Br. Butler then read a sketch of the life and labors of the late Rev. Jesse Goodman; prepared by him, in accordance with a resolution of a previous meeting of this body.

8. Letters of dismission were granted to all the Churches east of the Suwannee river—for the purpose of forming a new Association; and at the request of those Churches, a presbytery consisting of Brethren Elders Mays, Cooper, Frier, Fuller and Craft, were appointed by this body to aid in their constitution. Letters of dismission were also granted to all the Churches west of the Chattahoochee, for the same purpose; and the brethren, Elders Havens, Lang, Linton and McCall, were appointed a presbytery to aid in their organization.

9. The Committee to arrange Preaching reported that Brethren were appointed to preach, as follows: Bro. Cooper to-night at the Baptist Church; Br. Linton to-morrow at 11 o'clock; Br. Lacy at 3 o'clock, p. m. to the blacks; and Br. Fuller at night. At the Presbyterian Church: Br. McDonald at 11 o'clock to-morrow morning; and Br. Blewitt in the evening. At the Methodist E. Church: Bro. McCall at 11 o'clock to-morrow morning to the blacks; and Br. Mercer in the evening to the whites.

10. On motion, adjourned till 9 o'clock Monday morning. Prayer by Br. Houston.

MONDAY, 13th October,

11. Met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Br. Moderator.

12. The Committee on deceased Ministers reported. Marked "A."

13. Resolved, That the Churches composing this Association be requested to state, in their next corresponding letters to this body, the amount paid to their respective Pastors. Also, Resolved, That we hereafter publish in our minutes, the amounts paid by each church for Missionary purposes.

14. The report of the Committee to arrange business was read and adopted.

15. The Committee on Correspondence reported. Marked "B."

16. The Committee on Queries reported. Marked "C."

17. Resolved, That the Churches be requested in their next letters, to distinguish between their white and black members.

18. Br. Havens was appointed to preach the next Introductory Sermon; Br. Cooper Alt.; Br. Ardis the next Missionary Sermon; Br. Linton Alt.; Br. Havens to write the next Circular; Br. McCants Alt.; Br. Cooper to write the Corresponding letter.

19. Brethren Linton, Fuller and Barber were appointed a Committee to prepare a report upon our future missionary operations.

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20. Brethren, Elders Linton, Havens and Craft were appointed Messengers to the Bethel Association, to meet at Albany, Baker co., Ga., Saturday, 31st inst. And Elders Mays, Lang and Craft and Br. Baker were appointed Messengers to the Salem Association, to be held at Summerhill Church, Stewart co., Ga., Saturday, 24th inst.

21. The Committee on Publications reported. Marked "D."

22. *Ordered*, That the appointment of messengers to the Georgia Baptist State Convention, be indefinitely postponed.

23. *Resolved*, That this Association regard with peculiar interest the object of those Churches dismissed, in full fellowship, from this body, viz: the organization of two Associations, East and West. May the God of Israel crown their efforts with His everlasting Grace!

24. *Ordered*, That the Clerk be requested to correspond with Br. Lang, in reference to the funds arising from the sale of Br. McDonald's Sermons, and report the result to the Ex. Com.

25. The Financial Committee reported \$40 25 received for minutes.

26. *Resolved*, That this Association recommend the promotion of Sabbath Schools as much as practicable in our bounds.

27. *Ordered*, That 500 copies of minutes be printed, and that the Clerk receive \$25 for his services.

28. The report of the *Special Missionary Committee* was read. Marked "E."

29. The report of the Executive Committee was received. Marked "F."

30. The Circular was called for and read.

31. That in view of the separation of the East and West, for separate organization, it is expedient that the scale of representation, as fixed by our Constitution, be changed from two to four delegates to each Church.

32. *Ordered*, That this Association be divided into two districts of corresponding meetings, to wit: First, Lowndes, Thomas, Hamilton and Madison. Second, Jefferson, Wakulla, Leon and Gadsden. The meeting in the first district to commence at Trouppville, Friday before the 5th Sabbath in November next; and in the second district, with Bethesda Church, Shell Point, at the same time.

33. The Treasurer's report was received. Marked "G."

34. The Brethren Butler, Mays and Fuller were appointed an Ex. Com. for the next year.

35. *Ordered*, A vote of thanks to the citizens of this place, for their kind hospitality during our present session. Also, our thanks and Christian regard are cordially presented to our Presbyterian and Methodist Episcopal Brethren for the use of their Churches.

36. *Ordered*, To adjourn till Saturday before the 2d Sabbath in October, 1847, to meet with Indian Spring Church, Leon co., Fla. Prayer by Br. McDonald.

SAM. C. CRAFT, Clerk.

R. J. MAYS, Mod.

N. B. Should the Churches not receive as many Minutes as they expected, they will please observe the small number printed—which is distributed according to the amounts sent up by each Church.

THE CLERK.

STATE OF FLORIDA.

The following is a brief declaration of the sentiments and faith of the Florida Baptist Association; and is believed to express, with little variation, the general sentiments of the body in the United States:

1st. We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author...salvation for its end...truth, without mixture of error, for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us, and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true centre of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

2d. *Of the true God*: That there is one, and only one, true and living God, whose name is Jehovah, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth...inexpressibly glorious in holiness, worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love...revealed under the personal and relative distinctions of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost...equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

3d. *Of the fall of Man*: That man was created in a state of holiness under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are sinners—not by constraint, but choice...being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, wholly given to the gratification of the world, of Satan, and of their own sinful passions, and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defence or excuse.

4th. *Of the way of Salvation*: That the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace through the mediatorial office of the Son of God; who took upon himself our nature, yet without sin, honored the law by his personal obedience, and made atonement for our sins by his death; being

risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in Heaven, and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.

5th. *Of Justification*: That the great Gospel blessing, which Christ of his fulness bestows on such as believe in him, is justification; that justification consists in the pardon of sin and the promise of eternal life, on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through his own redemption and righteousness; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

6th. *Of the freeness of Salvation*: That the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, except his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ; which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.

7th. *Of Grace in Regeneration*: That in order to be saved, we must be regenerated, or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind, and is effected in a manner above our comprehension or calculation, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; and that its evidence is found in the holy fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.

8th. *Of God's purpose in Grace*: That election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connexion with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness—being infinitely wise, holy and unchangeable—but it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy, and it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it is ascertained by its effects in all who believe the Gospel—is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves, demands and deserves our utmost diligence.

9th. *Of the Perseverance of the Saints*: That such only are true believers as endure to the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

10th. *Harmony of the Law and Gospel*: That the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just and good; and that the inability the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfil its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible Church.

11th. *Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper*: That Christian Baptism is the Immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit—to shew forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior; that it is pre-requisite to the privileges of a Church relation, and to the Lord's Supper; in which the members of the Church, by the use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ, preceded always by a solemn self-examination.

12th. *Of a Gospel Church*: That a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptised believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by his laws, and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by his Word; that its only proper officers are Elders, or Pastors, and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

13th. *The Christian Sabbath*: The first day of the week is the Lord's day, or the Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes.

14th. *Of the World to come*: That the end of this world is approaching; that at the last day, Christ will descend from Heaven and raise the dead from their graves to final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

SAM. C. CRAFT, Clerk.

R. J. MAYS, MODERATOR.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON DECEASED MINISTERS.—A.

The Committee to whom was referred the subject of deceased Ministers, report: That this Association consider the death of our beloved and esteemed Br., Elder ALEXANDER MOSELEY, as a source of great affliction to the Church of Christ, and a public calamity. *Resolved, therefore*, That in view of his excellencies as a husband and father—as a master, a neighbor and a citizen—a Christian and a Minister of Jesus Christ, we condole with the family for their loss, and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

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Resolved, That a copy of the foregoing be presented to his family, with our kindest wishes for their happiness.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON CORRESPONDENCE...B.

The Committee to whom was referred the subject of Correspondence, report: That we receive the correspondence and Messengers of the Salem Association; and also, the Minutes and correspondence of the Bethel Association.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON QUERIES...C.

The Committee on Queries, report: 1st. The query from the church in Gadsden, "Whether a church can be dissolved by one Preacher?" Answer: It cannot be dissolved by one preacher. The church can be dissolved on their own mutual request, and consent, and action; and not otherwise. If they can obtain one or more ministers to assist them in its dissolution, it is so much the better; if they cannot, they themselves are scripturally authorized to dissolve themselves, by giving each one a letter of dismission in full fellowship.

The query from Liberty Hill, Washington co., "Whether one Minister may ordain a Deacon?" is thus answered: A Deacon may be ordained by one Minister when he can obtain no ministerial help. If he can acquire help, he ought to be thus assisted by one or more Ministers for the sake of harmony and peace.

We have diligently considered the request of the Providence Church. The case is one of extremely critical character. In consideration of it, we can only say: That if the sister alluded to believed her first husband to be dead, she should not be excluded because of her second marriage; but if she was privy to the assumed letter concerning his death, she ought to be speedily excommunicated.

In answer to the query from Harmony Church, "Whether non-professor's evidence should be received against a disorderly member?" we answer: That honest and true evidence, from honest and true worldly men, should be received; whereof the church themselves should be the judges.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS...D.

The Committee on Publications, report: That in their opinion, the Essay of Elder J. S. Law on the religious oral instruction of the negroes: The History of Georgia Baptists, by Elder J. H. Campbell; The Life of Mercer, by Elder C. D. Mallary; The Georgia Pulpit, by Elder Robert Flemming; The Christian Index; and the Southern Missionary Journal, deserve the approbation and patronage of Florida Baptists.

REPORT OF SPECIAL MISSIONARY COMMITTEE...E.

The Committee to whom was referred the consideration of our Missionary enterprise, report: That they have taken this matter into consideration, and in looking over the field to be occupied in East, West and Middle Florida, they would recommend that two missionaries, viz: Brethren McDonald and Frier be continued in the east; and that some one be employed in the Middle District; and also one in the West. We would recommend that the churches send up to the Ex. Com. semi-annually, their contributions for this purpose: and they would most earnestly solicit and recommend to the Pastors of the various churches, to bring this subject before their respective charges; and present all the matter of fact which may come to their knowledge, in regard to the nature and operation of our domestic missions. We would recommend to the consideration of this body the propriety of sending out some suitable man for the purpose of collecting funds for this enterprise.

We have taken into consideration the subject of raising the pay of our missionaries, but from the present prospects of our crops, and many other things which might be considered, we think it inexpedient. Not that we feel that they are fully paid for their labors, but we are obliged to cut our garments according to our cloth. We would recommend to this Association that our whole missionary operations be submitted to an Executive Committee of three individuals chosen by this body.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE...F.

The Executive Committee, who have had under charge the missionary department of this Association, beg leave to report: That in pursuance of the liberal provision tendered by the churches at the last annual session, the committee employed and sent into different sections of the State, five Brethren to preach the Gospel: Br. Bowen was sent to West Florida; Brethren Wheeler and Craft to the Middle District; and Frier and McDonald to the East. The committee deem it unnecessary to add one word in commendation of the system of missions, or of the faithfulness of the Brethren employed in this interesting work; their labors speak for them better and higher praise than we could give them. They have received souls for their hire;

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and amid all their toilsome pilgrimage God has cheered them by His presence. We hazard nothing in saying our Father in Heaven has blessed our efforts far beyond our hope; and with his approval we are content, and are still encouraged to lend our means in sending the Gospel to every part of our country, until every hill and valley shall be filled with the praise of Him who sitteth upon the throne. Your Committee have omitted the usual enumeration of miles travelled, sermons preached, &c., because we are fully satisfied that all the Brethren employed have most faithfully and diligently given themselves to the work. We know, however, it will rejoice your hearts, and of all our Brethren, to hear of their success in winning souls to God. Br. Bowen reports to have received into the church 32 persons; Br. Wheeler 25; Br. McDonald 74; Br. Craft was present when 37 were received, and Br. Frier reports 38--making in all a total of 206 persons baptised, received by letter, and restored.

Respectfully, &c., S. H. BUTLER, Chairman.

REPORT OF TREASURER...G.

Treasurer of the Association in Account, Dr. Cr.
To funds rec. for Miss. purposes, \$499 50 | Paid to order of Chairm'n Ex. Com. \$499 50

By this statement it will appear that the Treasurer has disbursed the whole amount received--And there is yet a balance due your Missionaries of \$287 50.

R. J. MAYS, Treasurer.

C I R C U L A R L E T T E R .

To the Churches composing the Florida Baptist Association:

DEAR BRETHREN—In accordance with a long established custom, we present for your consideration a brief epistle as an exponent of our sentiments and wishes: pertaining more particularly to the present demand of the people of God, to whom the Gospel is preached by your Ministers.

We design to shew the necessity of indoctrinating our Brethren in the leading truths of the Bible, by declaring unto them the whole counsel of God: It is unfortunate for the people of God that when they disagree on certain points of doctrine, whether it be political, social, or religious, they become perfect antipodes to each other; or to use a plainer word, each leaves the common track of moderation and becomes a combatant for his party: whether he is right or wrong, he has adopted certain principles and he must adhere to them. This is not true of all our brethren, but it is really the case with all who do not examine truth for themselves, and who, in a measure, confide their honor and happiness to those who lead them. Those that are opposed to the work of benevolence, that is, to missions, &c., thinking that Missionaries are Arminians or Free-will Baptists, have betaken themselves almost entirely to preaching about the fundamental truths of the Bible...neglecting practical religion. They seem to think we are unconverted, or that we are great backsliders from the Gospel. This is one extreme. Missionary Baptists, ever anxious for the conversion of sinners to God, have become almost entirely practical in their preaching, and frequently neglect the inculcation of primary truth on the hearts of their brethren. The Churches of our Association are not Arminians; that is, they do not believe that sinners have any merit of their own before the Almighty. Our accusers may think it strange that we believe in the doctrines of the Bible as strongly as other Christians. It is even so. They may say that "A. B. does not preach these doctrines, but that they have heard him preach contrary sentiments." We argue, that if one or two do preach as say our opponents, it does not follow that we are all Arminians. Nor is this all: Our preachers may mean to affirm certain truths which are not always satisfactorily explained; this is most undoubtedly true. Our ministers, intending to induce the unconverted to come to Christ, do extend their invitations in words that sometimes need great qualification. To inculcate on our beloved brethren doctrines which tend to their edification, we must not transform the Scriptures; in no case ought this to be done, but especially ought the people of God to drink "of the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby." "The fountain of the water of life" needs no purification to make it acceptable to the covenant people of Jesus Christ. They love truth unadorned and unqualified. Present it to them, beloved brethren in the ministry, as a "pearl of great price," sanctified in the active and passive obedience of the Blessed and adorable Redeemer. They will cherish and promote it agreeably to its inherent value, and not according to its outward aspect or human decoration.

As to those who are unbelievers, their objections to the doctrines of the Bible are not to dismay us from the solemn duties of the Ministry of the Gospel. The human heart has ever been and always will be, averse to the Book of God: "The wicked are estranged from the womb,

they go astray as soon as they be born, telling lies." Neither is it truth in its modification that saves the sinner. It is truth, which is the "sword of the Spirit," made bare, conspicuous, and two-edged. Its edge and energy need no extraneous power to make it effectual. It "is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." Let it wound the sinner's soul; let it rattle in his very nature; let it condemn his false theology; let it induce him to cry for mercy; it will subdue his objections: "The crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

The distinguishing doctrines of Divine grace ought to be diligently studied, and clearly understood, by the Minister of Jesus Christ. The Bible, through the special influences of the blessed Spirit, is its own Interpreter. Other religious books ought to be studied and had in remembrance. We do not condemn orthodox writings; we approve and recommend them. The Preacher's library, if possible, should be voluminous. "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds." The Savior knew well the science of this world, its learning and refinement: "He grew in wisdom and in stature, and in favor both with God and men." The Minister of Jesus ought to be a man of universal knowledge. The creation, providence, and character of God, together with the plan of redemption, should expand his intellect and affect his heart, so that he may instruct, convince, and melt the souls of his hearers, to the entire and final sanctification of those committed to his charge.

Brethren in the Ministry, yours is truly a great work. Angels are mighty, but they cannot preach. The task is yours. "Who is sufficient for these things?" You preach terrifically to the ungodly—preach comfortably to the righteous. "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Show God's elect, the foundation of the temple. "No other foundation can any man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? Altho' my house be not so with God, He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." Tell the loved ones of the blessed Saviour, "that all who do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God," who "believe with the heart unto righteousness, and confess with the mouth unto salvation," are "called, and chosen, and faithful;" and well may they claim the consoling, sanctifying, and triumphing doctrines of electing and everlasting love, of ordination unto eternal life, predestination to holiness, salvation by grace, the final perseverance of all God's elect, in the ways of "righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Preach to the sinner the terrors of Sinai, through the law of God; point the backslider to his errors, and direct him to the lamb of God; and let the obedient in Christ Jesus have a look within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a High Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."

The Minister of Christ is to grow in the very truth that he preaches. If he would be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," he must "study to show himself approved unto God." This he cannot do, unless he administers to his people the most essential comfort that can be brought from the Scriptures, as well as the most cutting reproofs for their disobedience. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." You see, brethren, that doctrine has the first place in the scripture just quoted, in order to give it peculiar prominence and pre-eminence, in the exercises of the ministry of the gospel. It is worthy of observation, that no Minister of Christ can discharge his duty to God and the Church, that does not, at least on conference days, preach the first principles of the Bible.

If you wish to know whether a building is safe and permanent, first examine its foundation. If you want to know whether a vessel is sea-worthy, examine her timbers, then the outside work. If you desire to employ a physician, you must know that he understands the beginning of medical science. If you covet a well-trained body of Christians—if you earnestly desire to see them, "like a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots," show them "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord," abstractly, as well as practically. What admiration and delight were created by the beauty and glory of the tabernacle in the wilderness! How did the people of God rejoice when the temple was built, and afterwards re-built! Costly sacrifices were made, and loud psalms, accompanied the offerings, made to the Lord Jehovah! The tabernacle and temple were according to the patterns given by the all-wise Creator. This was their perfection. It was this which gratified the children of the Most High, and obliged them to render thanksgiving and praise to their Heavenly Father.

What but the everlasting love of God, will suffice for a Gospel Minister? "I have loved thee with an everlasting love—therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee." "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." "We love Him, because He first loved us." Here, brethren, is the answer to the question, "Why does God save a sinner?" He has loved him

with an everlasting love. Preachers ought to love, and preach this doctrine. It is full of "grace, mercy, and peace." Its end is "glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men." "The love of Christ constraineth us," says Paul. "Love never faileth," says the living, dying martyr, the matchless "preacher of the Gentiles, in faith and verity." This is the principle that sustained, consoled, and gave him energy, to fight the battles of the Lord. It gave him patience in unparalleled sufferings, threw light on the valley of death, and at last, crowned him with unspeakable glory in Heaven.

Our churches, brethren, are weak in the faith. Sometimes they may appear strong as giants, notwithstanding. Let ministers, as instruments, make them "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." This done, and soon we shall see our Zion looking forth as in the morning, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."—There is no better motive to Christian obedience than the love of God. This is abstract religion. God cannot injure whom He loves. They that love Him sincerely, will not neglect his cause, unless their love languishes and declines. If we love Him as we ought, we shall feel that "He first loved us." As a proof of our weakness, look at the absence of religious revival; see the altars of God, whose fires were burning and shining, now nearly extinguished; Christians have become secular; their worship is cold, and their hearts are chilled almost to death. "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." They need an impulse that is Almighty. First give them additional strength, by the renewal of the promise which God made to Abraham; "get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly."

Zacharias, in his old age appealed forcibly to the evidence of substantial comfort and consolation, found in the covenant of redemption; "to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us; that we being delivered from our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life."

We, as Baptists, need the distinctness and explicitness of doctrine, due to our denomination. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." Owing to our church discipline, we stand on different ground from that of others. Therefore, it becomes us to be unequivocal in our pulpit efforts. Truth is our motto. Let it be like the sun in the firmament, dissipating every mist of error, and ascending far above the vanities of this world. The Bible—the Bible is the text book and church history of Baptists. Its treasures are exhaustless, its glory is everlasting.—Make large drafts upon it, lay upon it extensive requisitions. Throw its light over the darkness that shrouds this guilty world. Let no unfaithful hand pretend to make steady the ark of God. Let no one look into the pages of divine inspiration, but with an eye observant of, and conversant with, its unchangeable veracity. Christian Baptists consult the oracles of God, for instruction, edification, and comfort. The decrees of the Almighty, and the Omniscient, are our "mountains of brass, our sure foundation." The promises of scripture endear us to the Lord, and to one another. The Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, is our covenant Redeemer; "the Lord of Hosts is his name." In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." We go to Jordan, for our immersion; to the Saviour and Apostles, for our communion; and to the Almighty, for all the blessings of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

"Be ye followers of God as dear children. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen, and Amen!"

R. J. MAYS, Moderator.

S. C. CRAFT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The Florida Baptist Association to her sister Associations with whom she corresponds:

Beloved Brethren: It affords us great pleasure to inform you, that our present meeting has been one of much quiet and unanimity, and our business has been despatched with promptness and brotherly kindness. But in consequence of sickness having prevailed so extensively throughout this section, our churches have only been partially represented the present year.

There have been but small acquisitions to our churches; and few meetings of deep interest in our bounds. This general want of activity and spirituality demands the close examination of all our hearts, upon a subject of so much moment. We have had four missionaries during the year engaged in distributing the Bread of Life to our lost and guilty race, and one partially employed. Although the number added to the churches has not been very great, yet we have reason to believe, through their instrumentality, much good has been done, by the grace of our common Lord. May a kind and gracious Father direct all your deliberations, and finally, through grace, may we all enter into the kingdom of our Heavenly Father, is our sincere wish, in the love of Christ.

R. J. MAYS, Moderator.

SAM. C. CRAFT, Clerk.

STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

CHURCHES.	Co. and State.	Baptised.	Rec. by L.	Restored.	Dismiss'd.	Excom'd	Dead.	Total.	PASTORS.	Regular Meetings	DELEGATES' NAMES.
1 Concord,	Madison Fla.	3	1	0	3	0	0	47	J. W. P. McCall,	2 & 4	R. J. MAYS, J. W. P. McCALL.
2 Abon,	Leon, "	18	7	0	2	1	0	64	T. LANG,	3	T. LANG, Not represented.
3 Sharon,	Madison, "							57	H. S. Linton,	2	R. D. Johnson, W. Standley. Not represented.
4 Elizabeth,	Jefferson, "	4	4	0	9	2	0	140	N. M. Havens,	1 & 4	N. M. HAVENS, Hardy Moore. Not represented.
5 Shilo,	Leon, "							59	B. S. Fuller,	4	J. Cason, J. F. Beard.
6 Monticello,	Jefferson, "	0	3	0	2	2	1	44	H. Z. Ardis,	3	I. T. HOUSTON, E. G. Mays.
7 Indian Springs,	Leon, "	6	3	0	2	0	1	37	N. M. Havens,	4	B. H. Russell, W. West.
8 Hebron,	Gadsden, "	0	0	0	2	0	1	30	H. S. Linton,	4	H. S. LINTON, Luke G. Lamb.
9 Hickstown,	Madison, "	1	10	0	3	1	1	40	B. S. Fuller,	1 & 3	B. S. FULLER, R. T. Stantland.
10 Ebenezer,	Jefferson, "	0	1	2	0	4	2	82	T. Lang,	4	T. L. Hansford, R. Harrell.
11 Ocella,	Madison, "	0	0	0	1	0	0	250	M. Strickland,		J. B. Page, Geo. S. Annear. Elijah Shepherd. Not represented.
12 Liberty,	Thomas, Geo.	5	6	1	0	1	0	35	W. B. Cooper,		W. B. COOPER, Jno. B. Scruggs. Not represented.
13 Sardis,	Jefferson, Fla.	0	2	0	1	2	1	40	R. Friet,	2	Moses Barber, J. M. Burnside.
14 Bethpage,	Gadsden, "	54	9	1	5	5	0	10	Z. G. Wheeler,	2	Isaac Townsend, Jno. Townsend. Not represented.
15 Providence,	Jefferson, "							30	R. Friet,	2	J. McDONALD.
16 Hopewell,	Jefferson, "	5	11	0	3	0	1	34	W. B. Cooper,	2	John Jones.
17 Troyville,	Lowndes, Geo.							23	J. Mercer,	2	H. D. Hadley.
18 Columbia,	Columbia, Fla.	4	0	0	0	0	2	33	J. Mercer,	2	MERCER, W. Sorey. Not represented.
19 Bethlehem,	Jackson, "	5	1	0	11	0	0	19	R. Friet,	1	Not represented.
20 South Prong,	Columbia, "	6	3	1	0	2	0	124	J. Mercer,	3	Silas Weeks.
21 Union,	Hamilton, "							13	R. Friet,	2	J. M. Prevatt.
22 Beulah,	Duval, "	66	4	2	0	2	0	16	Z. G. Wheeler,	3	Benj. Hale.
23 Bethel,	Nassau, "	4	3	1	4	1	0	39	R. Friet,	1	SAM. C. CRAFT.
24 Sharon,	Thomas, Geo.	0	1	0	0	0	0	39	R. Friet,	2	E. C. WALKER.
25 Oakloone,	Gadsden, Fla.	0						46	Z. G. Wheeler,	2	Not represented.
26 Un. Academy,	Gadsden, "							39	R. Friet,	2	Not represented.
27 Gadsden Liberty,	Hamilton, "							39	R. Friet,	2	Not represented.
28 Concord,	Hamilton, "							39	R. Friet,	2	Not represented.
29 New River,	Columbia, "	2	5	1	4	1	0	18	Z. G. Wheeler,	2	Not represented.
30 Providence,	Columbia, "	8	1	1	1	2	1	64	R. Friet,	3	Not represented.
31 Antioch,	Leon, "	46	11	0	0	0	0	14	Z. G. Wheeler,	1	Not represented.
NEW CHURCHES.	Wakulla, "	1	1	0	0	0	0	6	Z. G. Wheeler,	1	Not represented.
NEW CHURCHES.	Wakulla, "	1	1	0	0	0	0	6	Z. G. Wheeler,	1	Not represented.

Churches marked thus * are dismissed in full fellowship to form new ass.

Ordained Ministers in CAPS; Licentiates in Italics. Rec'd of Clerk \$20 for printing Minutes, Smith & Bartlett.