

A. D. 1824.

MINUTES

OF THE

Hudson River Baptist Association,

HELD BY APPOINTMENT

IN THE MEETING-HOUSE OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH, TROY,

1824.

1. At 10 o'clock, A. M., according to appointment, Elder Archibald Maclay preached the introductory sermon, from Acts, vi. 4. *But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*

At the close of the service, a collection was taken for the benefit of destitute widows of ministers dying while members of the Association, amounting to \$15 69.

2. On motion, brother Lewis Leonard was chosen Moderator, and brother Spencer H. Cone, Clerk.

3. The Moderator opened the Session by prayer.

Resolved, That the letters from the constituent churches be read, and the messengers' names enrolled.

N. B. The names of ordained ministers are in SMALL CAPITALS—of licentiates in *italic*—those of the brethren not present are marked thus*.

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	It. stored.	Baptized.	It. by Let.	It. by Lic.	Excluded.	Deceased.	Total.
Poughkeepsie,	{ RUFUS BABCOCK, Jr. Dea. J. Forbus.	1	13	4	5	—	—	92
Oliver-st. N. Y.	{ JOHN WILLIAMS, SPENCER H. CONE, *JOHN STANFORD, *Henry Curtis, Dea. Thos. Purser, Wm. Williams, A. W. Whelden.	1	25	27	10	6	12	549
Mulberry-st. N. Y.	{ ARCHIBALD MACLAY, Thomas Powell, Dea. Thos. Stokes, William D. Murphy, D. T. Valentine.	2	2	1	37	1	3	378
Mount Pleasant,	JACOB H. BROUNER.	—	3	—	1	2	—	77
Hudson,	{ HOWARD MALCOM, Dea. Wm. Whiting.	1	7	5	12	2	2	128

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	1822-1823						
		Restored.	Baptized.	Rec. by Let.	Dis. by Let.	Excluded.	Deceased.	Total.
Troy,	LELAND HOWARD, Joshua Harpham, Platt Titus, J. V. Powelson, Jos. Hastings, Ebenezer Niles, Thos. Shrimpton, Asa Shelden.	2	17	10	20	9	2	256
	ALBANY, LEWIS LEONARD, Dea. S. Dutcher, :: Joshua A. Burk, :: Friend Humphrey, B. W. Vandusen, John W. Dutcher, F. P. Browning.	16	7	2	3	3		233
Catskill,	RICHMOND TAGGART, Philip Barnum, Thos. Gregory.	6	1	3			87	
King-street, Newburgh,	No information. Dea. Thos. Herbert.	1		2	3	2	80 19	
Albany African,	NATHANIEL PAUL, Dea. Asher Foot. *C. G. SOMMERS, *D. H. Barnes,	1	1		2	1	32	
South Ch. N. Y.	Thos. Skelding.	31	7	1			79	
Coxackie,	No information.						14	
Brooklyn,	WM. C. HAWLEY, Nathaniel Jacobs.	19	8	2		1	35	
Union, N. Y.	Wm. C. Duzenberg, John Haslet.						25	
Total,		81	40	73	96	37	24	2084

4. Letters from Brooklyn, and Union, N. Y. Baptist Churches, requesting to be admitted as members of the Association, were read and referred to a committee consisting of Elders Williams, Maclay, Howard, Babcock, and Malcom.

5. Ministering brethren present, in good standing in their respective churches and Associations, were affectionately invited to assist in our deliberations. The invitation was accepted by brethren Wayland, Colvier, Finch, Olmstead, Wetherill, Whiting, Culver, Tucker of Massachusetts, and James Parsons of Leyden, who took seats accordingly.

Adjourned to 3 P. M. Brother Williams prayed.

Three o'clock. Met agreeably to adjournment.

Brother Herrick prayed.

6. The committee having reported favourably, it was unanimously Resolved, That the *Brooklyn* and *Union*, N. Y. Churches, be received into our body;—Whereupon, the Moderator, in behalf of the Association, gave the right-hand of fellowship to their respective Messengers.

7. Communications and Messengers from sister Associations were received.

ASSOCIATIONS.	Minutes of	1822-1823						
		Baptized.	Rec. by Let.	Dis. by Let.	Excluded.	Restored.	Deceased.	Total.
Warren,	1822.	116						4881
Boston,	1823.	142	58	52	35	7	39	3845
Hartford,	Keach,							
New-London,	1822.	75	8	42	26			325
Shaftsbury,	1824.	202	37	43	48			747
Lake George,	Matteson & Beall, Hodges, M'Bulloch,							
Saratoga,	1822.	60						3793
Rensselaerville,	1823.	148	49	44	39	7	12	2129
	Herrick, Hart, Carpenter, & Marshall.							
Cayuga,	1824.	98	67	92	33			112378
Franklin,	1824.	40	20	53	22			151550
Warwick,	Burt.							
Madison,	1822.	107						4365
Union,	1823.	414		6	28			293260
New-Jersey,	1823.	51	25	31	89	2	53	2201
Philadelphia,	1823.	211	11	84	82	6	68	2945
Charleston,	1823.	213	49	60	22	9	50	3895
Columbia,	1823.	62	27	29	17	11	19	1673
Abington,	1823.	66	20	8	2	2	8	564
Westfield,	1822.	48						1107

8. Brethren Babcock, Humphrey, and Stokes, were appointed a committee to examine the Minutes of Corresponding Associations.

9. Brethren Malcom, Maclay, Howard, and Browning, were directed to draw up a summary of the state of religion within the bounds of the Association.

10. The Circular Letter written by Brother Cone, was read and referred to the revision of Brethren Maclay, Brouner, and Hubball.

11. Brother Howard read the Corresponding Letter he had prepared, which was referred to the same committee.

Adjourned till 8 o'clock, to-morrow morning.

Brother McCulloch prayed.

At 8 P. M. Brother Cone, according to appointment, preached from 1 Cor. iii. 14. *If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.* After sermon a collection was taken amounting to eighteen dollars, in aid of the funds of the New-York Education Society.

THURSDAY, AUG. 5TH, 1824.

Met pursuant to adjournment. Brother Finch prayed.

12. The committee for the examination of the Minutes of sister Associations, report, that they find the churches cautioned not to receive the following persons, who have claimed the character of Baptist Ministers, but are not in our fellowship, viz. *John W. Carey, Paris Davis, Amasa Chandler, Jordan Dodge, and Michael Smith*, author of Daniel's History. And further, we advise the churches to be careful how they receive strangers, in the Ministerial character; that, generally speaking, private letters from well known individuals, as well as licences and other credentials, should be produced, to justify or secure their respectful reception.

13. The Circular and Corresponding Letters were reported without amendment. On motion

Resolved, That the report of the committee be accepted and the letters adopted.

14. The committee on the state of religion in the Association, *Report*,

That no remarkable effusion of the Spirit has occurred in any of our churches; most of them, however, seem to enjoy peace. We have accounts from several churches of very prosperous Sabbath Schools, but most deeply regret, that all our churches do not maintain these invaluable institutions, which we esteem nurseries to a church and auxiliary to the general cause of Christ. Their effect in various places has been amazing, in suppressing vice and inducing an attendance on the means of grace. Some of our churches have been engaged with activity in sustaining benevolent associations. More than \$2500 have been collected for Missionary and Education purposes; and 1200 children are regularly taught in our Sabbath Schools. The amount of exertion, however, has been very far short of our ability.

The organization of two new churches in our bounds is a pleasing fact. The church in Brooklyn having been gathered principally from the world, and enjoying already the ministrations of a pastor promises much good.

We are happy to learn that one church has founded a Church Library of some hundred volumes, for the use of the pastor and congregation, and several have libraries for their Sabbath Schools.— We hope every church will soon adopt so enlightened a method of doing good.

15. An interesting circular from the board of managers of the Baptist General Convention, was received and read. The objects which

occupy the attention of the board, possess a high place in our esteem; our confidence in the wisdom and integrity of the managers remains unimpaired, and we affectionately commend them to the energetic co-operation of the churches and the favour of Heaven.

16. The following brethren were appointed Messengers to corresponding Associations, viz. To Warren, Leonard, Cone, Wayland, and Ellmore; Boston, Cone; Hartford, Babcock, Ellmore, and Malcom; New-London, Cone; Shaftsbury, Leonard, Howard, and Paul; Lake George, Wetherill and Paul; Saratoga, Leonard, Howard, and Vandusen; Rensselaerville, Tucker, Vandusen, Howard, Paul and Hart; Franklin, Carpenter; Cayuga, Finch, Carpenter and Johnson; Warwick, Brouner and Purser; Madison, Finch and Johnson; Union, Brouner, Babcock, Malcom and Forbus; New-Jersey, Maclay, Cone, Malcom and Jacobs; Philadelphia, Cone, Sommers and Malcom; Charleston, Cone; Ontario, Finch and Johnston; Columbia, Cone; Westfield, Ellmore and Keach; Abington, Cone; Essex, Howard; Otsego, Bernard, Johnson and Carpenter; Black River, Howard; St. Lawrence, Howard.

17. Being desirous of enjoying an affectionate interchange of messengers and minutes with the New-York Baptist Association, we have appointed brethren Cone, Sommers, Stokes and Purser, our messengers to that body.

18. *Resolved*, That the clerk make out, at the commencement of every session, the time and place of meeting of the different Associations with whom we correspond.

19. *Resolved*, That the Corresponding Secretary procure and keep a file of our Minutes for the use of the Association.

20. The church at King-street, not having furnished any information of their state, brethren Williams, Maclay, Cone, Brouner, Stokes and Purser, were requested to visit them and make report at the next Association.

21. *Report of the Treasurer of the Widows' Fund.*

Hudson River Baptist Assoc. in account with W. Colgate, Cr.	
Aug. 4th, 1824. By balance from last year, . . .	\$87 76
:: collection at Assoc.	15 69
:: Oliver-street church,	22 55
:: Mulberry-st. do.	10 00
:: Mount Pleasant do.	10 00
:: Hudson do.	4 00
	<hr/>
	\$150 00

22. The following brethren were appointed to solicit donations and subscriptions for the widows' fund, viz.

Poughkeepsie, *Alfred Raymond*; Oliver-st. *Theodore Clark*;— Mulberry-st. *Wm. Winterton*; Mount Pleasant, *Caleb Willis*;—

Hudson, *A. H. Gifford*; Troy, *C. Warner*; Albany, *J. G. Was-son*; Catskill, *Nathaniel Jurobs*; Newburgh, *John Howard*; African, *Asher Foot*; South Church, N. Y. *Leonard Bleecker*; Coxackie, *Peter Turck*; Brooklyn, *David Doremus*; Union, N. Y. *Wm. C. Duzenberry*. As we are deeply impressed with the importance of increasing the fund for supporting the widows' and children of deceased ministers in this Association, therefore

Resolved, That the brethren appointed to collect moneys in the different churches, be earnestly requested to exert themselves to secure the object of their appointment.

23. *Resolved*, That the widows' fund be invested, in such way as shall be best calculated to accomplish the object for which it is designed, at the discretion of brethren Wm. Colgate and Thomas Stokes.

24. Brother Leonard gave a pleasing and satisfactory report of the meeting of the State Convention, and brethren Cone and Malcom were appointed delegates to that body.

25. *Resolved*, That the Association hold their next session in the meeting house of the Baptist Church at Mount Pleasant.

26. Brother Malcom is selected to preach the introductory sermon next year, and in case of failure brother Cone.

27. Brother Rufus Babcock, Jr. is appointed to preach in the evening, and brother Howard in case of failure. After Sermon a collection to be taken for the New-York Education Society.

28. *Resolved*, That brother Maclay write our next Circular Letter, and should he fail, this service is to be performed by brother Sommers.

29. Collected for printing the Minutes, from Poughkeepsie Church, \$2; Oliver-st. \$10; Mulberry-st. \$2; Mount Pleasant, \$1 25; Hudson, \$1 55; Troy, \$3; Albany, \$3; Catskill, \$1; King-st. 50 cts.; Newburgh, \$1; African, \$1; South ch. \$2; Coxackie, 25 cts.; Brooklyn, \$1; Union, N. Y. \$1; Am't. \$31.

30. Brethren Williams, Maclay and Cone, were appointed to superintend the printing and distribution of the Minutes.

Adjourned till after public worship.

At 11 A. M. Brother Whiting delivered a discourse founded on Mark 6. 12. *And they went out and preached, that men should repent.*

Met Pursuant to adjournment.

31. *Resolved*, That at the commencement of each session, the Moderator of the last Association shall preside until the letters from the churches are read and the messengers' names enrolled, immediately after which, a Moderator shall be chosen by ballot.

32. A communication was received from brother Wm. Collier of Boston, informing the Association that he is publishing a uniform

edition of the complete works of Andrew Fuller, in eight volumes 8vo. and soliciting our patronage; Whereupon

Resolved, That from a conviction of the high value of the work, and a sincere desire to see the worthy Editor amply remunerated for the trouble and expense necessarily encountered in its publication, the Association is induced to recommend it to the favourable notice of the Churches.

33. *Resolved*, That our warmest thanks be tendered to the brethren and friends in Troy, for their kind and hospitable attentions during the present session.

34. The Minutes were read and approved.

35. Minutes of sister Associations were distributed.

36. The Moderator closed the session with an affectionate address and fervent prayer.

In the evening, according to appointment, brother Malcom preached from John, 3, 19. *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

Societies or individuals, who may feel disposed to aid the cause of missions or education, will be pleased to direct their donations for the Foreign Mission, to Joshua Gilbert, Treasurer, corner of Clinton and Bancker-streets.

For the New-York Domestic Mission, to Garrit N. Bleecker, Treasurer, No. 25, North Moore-street.

And for education purposes, to Thomas Skelding, Treasurer, No. 120, Greenwich-st. New-York.

Corresponding Letter.

The Hudson River Baptist Association, to the Associations with which we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN,

As we are all engaged in the cause of our common Lord; it much encourages us to learn from your minutes and messengers, that we are united in one heart and one combination of efforts for the extension of the kingdom of Christ, and for the salvation of souls. All the purposes and perfections of Immanuel join to strengthen our faith and invigorate our energies. The angel is now "flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation, tongue and people." The work goes on and *will* go on till the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ.

Let not then our prayers or efforts be few or faint. "The word of God is not bound." "Of the increase of his government and power there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to *order* it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth *even* for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts *will perform this.*"

Let, then, each disciple of Jesus, with his whole heart, enter the field; take unto him the whole armour of God; arise in the greatness of the Redeemer's strength and march boldly on to conquest and a crown.

Brethren, let the cords of love that bind us together, always grow stronger and stronger. Your correspondence is, to us, like cold water to a thirsty soul. We earnestly solicit its continuance, and shall, in this, endeavour to do as we wish you to do to us.

You will learn from our minutes, that our churches are generally supplied with regular preaching, and that, altho' there has been no extensive revivals within our limits, some mercy drops have fallen upon many of our churches.

There is nothing peculiarly unpleasant among us. Harmony and unity of feelings and sentiment are happily enjoyed by us.

LEWIS LEONARD. *Moderator.*

SPENCER H. CONE. *Clerk.*

CIRCULAR LETTER. 1824.

THE HUDSON RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, to the several Independent Churches of which she is constituted, sendeth Christian salutation.

Dearly Beloved Brethren,—In accordance with a resolution passed at our last annual meeting, "THE TERMS OF COMMUNION," will claim your attention, as the subject of our present circular address. It is to be regretted that the signs of the times should ever indicate the expediency of presenting *this subject* to your consideration, *in a controversial shape*; but since necessity is laid upon us, we desire to enter upon its investigation with all that alacrity which the love of revealed truth, and supreme regard for Zion's King, and unyielding attachment to the order of his house, are calculated to inspire.

The phrase "communion," or "fellowship," is used in different senses in the sacred writings. It frequently denotes that holy enjoyment of the divine presence, and that soul-comforting participation of the Redeemer's fulness, which it is the privilege of believers to realize. The saints are joined to the Lord *by one Spirit*; they *draw water out of the wells of salvation*; *God is their dwelling-place in all generations*; and it is therefore said, *truly their fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* This fellowship does not necessarily stand connected with church government or relationship; it is neither confined to time nor place, nor does it bend to the control of earthly circumstances. It is felt by Jacob with a stone for his pillow; it drives away the fears and pains of the thief upon the cross; it cheers the hearts of Paul and Silas, though beaten with many stripes and thrust into the inner prison; and it converts the desolate Isle of Patmos into a paradise of heavenly rapture! The *terms of this communion*, all centre in the rich, free, sovereign, and distinguishing grace of God.

The expression is sometimes used in a large and comprehensive sense, to describe that fraternal affection and spiritual intercourse, which all those who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth, may righteously maintain with each other. Individuals attached to the different denominations of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Quakers, &c., may have good reason to entertain a favourable opinion of each other's Christian exercises; they may unite their efforts to multiply and distribute copies of the Bible, and send the gospel of salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth: they may take sweet counsel together, and be mutual helpers of each others' joy; and their communion will be proportioned to the evidence which the parties furnish, of maintaining a close walk with

God. *If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.* But as *this fellowship in the Gospel* is enjoyed by individual believers who never unite with a particular church; as it exists in different degrees of perfection, according to the strength of their confidence that God has begun a good work in the heart, without any reference to the ordinances or regulations of his house; even so, it is demonstrably an entirely different thing from *church fellowship*, and is by no means to be confounded therewith.

In modern phraseology the word "*Communion*," is employed, by common consent, as expressive of that fellowship which experimental Christians have with the Saviour of sinners, and with one another, in the ordinance of the Lord's supper; and this use of the phrase seems to be justified by the Apostle's language, 1 Cor. x. 16. *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* The single point, therefore, which we have now before us is, to answer the inquiry, *What are the indispensable terms of this communion?* or, in other words, what prerequisites of admission to the Lord's supper are marked out, in the New Testament, for the observance of the churches of Christ to the end of the world? To this inquiry we reply, *regeneration, baptism, and a conversation such as becometh the Gospel of Christ*; and in proof of the correctness of this reply, we appeal to the law and to the testimony.

The children of God are bound to give thanks always to their Heavenly Father, because he hath from the beginning chosen them to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, *whereunto they are called by the Gospel*; and THEN, *as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*; and to manifest their attachment to the *laws, doctrines, and ordinances*, once delivered to the saints. The primitive churches, constituted under the immediate direction of the inspired apostles, were composed of self-condemned sinners, who were by nature children of wrath even as others; but being pricked in their hearts and quickened by the Spirit of God, fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel. They believed the testimony given of God's dear Son, and having gladly received the truth, *were baptized both men and women.* To the first Gospel church in Jerusalem it is said, *the Lord added daily such as should be saved, and they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* The church at Corinth consisted of those who were sanctified in *Christ Jesus, called to be saints, and who called upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.* The members of the church at Colosse, had put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: and the brethren at Rome, were the called of *Jesus Christ, beloved of God, called to be saints.* Now if these apostolic churches were erected upon correct principles, (and who so contumacious or schismatic as to deny it?) they are certainly to

us infallible guides, and present us with a perfect pattern. *If they received only such as professed to be born of God, and gave evidence that they were begotten again to a lively hope; by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, we should imitate their example; and if there come any unto us and bring not this doctrine, we are commanded not to receive him into our house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed; that is, he that welcometh to the privileges of the church, him that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, is partaker of his evil deeds.* It is therefore an established principle in Baptist churches to require of all candidates for admission, a declaration of what God hath done for their souls; and when satisfactory evidence of a *change of heart* is exhibited, the *first scriptural term of communion*, is elicited by the church. Should this fundamental principle ever be abandoned, we hesitate not to say, the fine gold will become dim, the glory will depart from us, and the vengeance of Him who walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks may be justly apprehended.

That *Baptism* is a "*Term of Communion*," is manifest from the *design and order* of that ordinance, as well as from the uniform practice of the apostles.

It is the *design of Baptism*, among other important particulars, to exhibit the existence of a new relationship, and to declare to all around the interesting fact, that the individual baptized has come out from the world, and enlisted under the banners of King Jesus. In this view of the subject, it is not merely the answer of a good conscience towards God, but it is also a grateful and public recognition of that grand line of distinction which the Redeemer has established between the *kingdom of darkness*, and that *kingdom which is not of this world.* For as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Gal. iii. 27. *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.* Rom. vi. 4. As it is evident that a man must enter into the kingdom, before he can be entitled to the immunities of a subject; that he must be received into the fellowship of a particular church, before he can enjoy the privileges of that church; even so, it is equally plain, that *Baptism*, upon profession of faith in the Messiah, must remain an *indispensable term of communion*, until it can be proved that *unbaptized persons* were added to the churches planted by the apostles in different parts of the world. And this will appear yet more abundantly if we consider,—

The *order* which is uniformly observed in the New Testament, with reference to Baptism and the Lord's supper. When the Great Head of the Church sent forth his ministering servants to build up his kingdom in our ruined world, he gave them a commission in the following words:—*Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,—teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* This language is lucid and definite. It directed them first to teach, or, as it is elsewhere expressed, *to preach the*

Gospel to every creature. When the word preached was accompanied by an unction from the Holy One, men were made wise unto salvation; they were effectually taught; *they were made disciples*; and then, *and not till then*, were the apostles commanded to baptize them. *After this*, they were to instruct them to observe all things enjoined upon them by the Saviour; and among *the all things*, who dare deny to the Lord's supper a place? Since the Redeemer has sufficient wisdom to devise the most suitable ordinances, either for the comfort of his people, or as a test of their obedience; and since all power is given him to make laws in Zion, and fix the order of their observance; to his authority, abstractedly considered, all Christians should certainly submit. But it is plain that *baptism must precede the communion*, not only because the Lord Christ hath so decreed, but because *this order* is necessary in the very nature of things, if there be a reciprocal adaptation between the sign, and the thing signified by it. We must first be made alive, before we need bread to sustain life; and in like manner, *the ordinance* which shadows forth *the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost*, must of necessity, go before that which holds out to us in a figure *the bread which came down from heaven*, whereof if a man eat, he shall live for ever. That this statement is correct, we most assuredly gather from the unvarying practice of the Apostles themselves.

The preaching of Peter, upon a certain notable occasion, produced such an astonishing effect that thousands cried out, *men and brethren what shall we do to be saved?* The preacher promptly replies, *repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.* What follows? *They that gladly received the word WERE BAPTIZED.* After baptism they were added to the church in Jerusalem, and then, participated in the communion, or *the breaking of bread.*

The conduct of Paul was precisely similar to that of his brother Peter. He came to Corinth, and taught the word of God among its inhabitants. *Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized.* These baptized believers were then constituted into a gospel church, and kept the ordinance of the Lord's Supper *as delivered to them by the Apostle.* Acts xviii. 1 Cor. ii. 2. If therefore, the *uniform practice* of the Apostles justly challenges our imitation, we must inviolably adhere to the *order* which they have established.

The last term of church communion we have named, is a *godly walk and conversation*; and this position is easily maintained, both upon the principles of reason and revelation. The children of God are *holy brethren; a royal priesthood—a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* This description of them is given by one who cannot err; and it would certainly be incongruous and unnatural for such persons to be *unequally yoked together with unbelievers.* How can two walk together except they be agreed? *What communion hath light with darkness, and what fellowship hath Christ with Belial?* are questions which need no comment:—they answer themselves.

In extending the right-hand of fellowship, therefore, a church must be satisfied that the individual soliciting admission has scriptural views of himself, and of God, and of the way of salvation by Christ alone, and of the work of the Spirit, and of the holy tendency of divine truth; and hence we are directed to *mark and avoid those* whose erroneous sentiments cause divisions and offences contrary to the *doctrine which we have learned.* Rom. xvi. Moreover the candidate for church communion must not only *converse* about the things of God in a proper manner, but his *deportment* must correspond with his holy profession. *If any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, we must not keep company with such an one, no not to eat.* 1 Cor. v. 11. and that *course of conduct* which cuts off from the church one who is already a member, must be, by parity of reasoning, an insurmountable obstacle against admission to its privileges.

Our sentiments with reference to the terms of communion, have, in different ages and countries, occasioned the opprobrious epithets of “bigoted, uncharitable, self-righteous,” &c. to be heaped upon us with an unsparing hand; but these are weak and powerless weapons when employed against those who are armed with the word of the Spirit, *in defence of a divine institution.* We shall close this epistle by replying briefly to some of the most plausible objections which are constantly urged against the sentiments we have advanced.

First objection. “*You lay too much stress upon baptism by making it an indispensable term of communion.*”

To this we reply;—We pay no greater regard to it, nor do we give it a higher place in our system, than the Lord Christ hath enjoined, or the Apostles and primitive Christians, by *their example*, have warranted. And here we may ask, *why should more stress be laid upon the Lord's supper than upon baptism*; and why should many professing Christians so earnestly advocate the observance of the former, while they pervert, or entirely neglect the latter? Were not both ordinances instituted by the same Lord, and do they not, therefore, come to us clothed with the same authority? We know that Pædobaptists are in the habit of calling baptism a *nonessential; an external rite; a mere ceremony*; &c. If this be true, we would inquire, what more is the supper? *Is it a Saviour?* But if these sacred institutions, be indeed, *as we believe*, signs of important and essential truths, baptism is unquestionably as significant as the breaking of bread, and exhibits, *emblematically*, a large proportion of the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel. Upon an investigation of the New Testament, we find that baptism, of the two, is much the more frequently mentioned, and baptized believers are affectionately and repeatedly exhorted, *so to walk* in Christ Jesus their Lord, as in *that ordinance they have put him on.* Taking then the Holy Book as our only and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, we have the highest authority for saying, We give to baptism, which Christ appointed as the first gospel institute, as a test of his chil-

children's obedience, and a lively emblem of their renewal by the Holy Ghost, *exactly the situation* which the master of the house has designated; and with a *thus saith the Lord* sounding in our ears and penetrating our hearts, it is not possible that we should listen to the doctrines or commandments of men.

A second objection, charges us with causing a *separation between the children of the same Heavenly Father*.

Suppose we grant that baptism is an insuperable barrier in the way of our communing, *in church capacity*, with unbaptized persons; does it necessarily result from this concession, *that the blame* righteously attaches itself to the skirts of our garments? Shall those who understand and keep the ordinances, in their nature, order, and design, as they were originally delivered to the churches, *be condemned?* and those who depart from them, and embrace "a figment of their own imagination," *be justified?* *God forbid!* We hesitate not to say, most explicitly, that baptism is *a separating line*, but it is one of the Lord's own making, and we endeavour constantly, both by preaching and example, to enlighten the minds of our Pædobaptist friends on the subject. We warn them of their error; we hold up to them the truth; we point them definitely to chapter and verse; and we exhort every believer among them, quite as often as they wish to hear us, *to arise and be baptized and wash away their sins*, (in a figure,) *calling upon the name of the Lord*.—We are honest and sincere in these declarations, and in making them thus plainly, it must be evident to the candid and judicious, that we cannot have any *by-ends*, or *measures of mere expediency* to promote. We wish the truth, and the truth alone as it is in Jesus, every where to prevail; and we are grieved in heart, that those whom we respect and love on so many other accounts, should, in this particular, persist in treading the pathway of disobedience, *boldly rejecting the counsel of God* in not being baptized according to his commandment. If our veracity and Christian affection, touching this whole matter, be unjustly called in question, we are permitted to adopt the language of a baptist, and say: *our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.* 2 Cor. i. 12.

A third objection states, that it is *the Lord's table*, and therefore we have no right to hinder those who wish to approach it.

That it is *the Lord's table*, is the appropriate and sufficient answer to this objection. Were it *ours*, we might cheerfully admit to it the objector and his friends; but since it is confessedly *the Lord's table*, we dare welcome to it only such as *HE* invites. The disciples were baptized before Christ instituted and administered to them the supper. John the Baptist was sent to prepare a people for the Lord, and the disciples were evidently among the number of those who *justified God*; and if so, they must have been necessarily *baptized with the baptism of John*; otherwise they could not have been obedient hearers and doers of the word, and imitators of the exam-

ple of their Lord and master. Luke vii. 29. Mat. iii. 23, 17. 1 Peter, ii. 21. In perfect conformity with this view of the subject, are the words of Peter: *Wherefore of these men which have accompanied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from THE BAPTISM OF JOHN, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.* Acts, i. 21, 22. Here we learn that Peter and his brethren began their *Christian profession at the baptism of John*, and hence the inference is irresistible, that there were none but Baptists with our Lord when he gave them the bread and cup, and said, *Do this in remembrance of me*. As the sacred oracles, therefore, uniformly teach that Christians, in the Apostles' days, *were baptized before they came together into one place for the breaking of bread*, we are confirmed in the sentiment, that the only guests invited to partake of this feast are such as have been, upon profession of their faith, buried with Christ in baptism; *nor can we approach the table with the unbaptized*, without acting in direct opposition to the precept and example of Him, *in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*.

A fourth objection is presented in this shape: *We conscientiously believe ourselves to be baptized; you are not the judge; to our own master we stand or fall*.

This objection brings us at once to the question, *What is Christian baptism?* Is it sprinkling, or is it pouring? With the New Testament in our hands, we most confidently and unhesitatingly answer, *neither*. *It is immersion* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. And here we cannot but say to our cavilling friend, *when were you baptized?* "In infancy." Are unconscious babes, or the unbelieving, unprofessing seed of pious parents, proper subjects of baptism? Whether men will hear or whether they will forbear, upon the testimony of God we are obliged to answer, *no*.—These things were not so in the beginning; for it is written, *Then they that gladly received the word were baptized*; Acts 2. And the Jailor was baptized, *he and all his, straightway, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house*. Acts xvi. Consequently those who believe and rejoice in Christ Jesus are, *according to the Scriptures*, the only persons to whom we are authorised to administer the ordinance of baptism. But we are told that whether Pædobaptists have perverted christian baptism, both in its design and subjects, or not, *we have no right to judge*. This is equivalent to saying that an individual ought to be admitted to church fellowship *because he thinks himself entitled to that privilege*, without reference to the opinion which the church may entertain upon the subject. It requires no argument to prove the absurdity of this position. To adopt it would speedily ultimate in the dissolution of any society.—That there must be an agreement in sentiment between a church and a candidate for admission to its privileges; and that the church *must necessarily judge* of the candidate's qualifications, are both self-evident and scriptural truths. Since Christ then has commanded us *to hold fast till he come, and to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints*, we are under the most sacred obligations to