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Baptists. South Carolina. Bethel Association, 1800.
Minutes ... at Bethlehem Meetinghouse, August 9, 1800.
n. p., [1800]. 8 pp.
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MINUTES

OF THE

BETHEL ASSOCIATION,

OF BAPTIST CHURCHES,

Met at BETHLEHEM MEETING-HOUSE, August 9, 1800, in Spartanburgh District, SOUTH-CAROLINA.

I. **B**ROTHER DAVIES COLLINS, who was appointed, positively. Brother David Lilly, provisionally, to preach the introductory sermon for this year, both failing to attend; a sermon was delivered by brother Elnathan Davies, from II. COR. iv. 5. "*For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants, for Jesus sake.*"

II. Lettets from fifty churches were read, and the names of the delegates enrolled.

III. Brother Richard Shackelford was chosen Moderator, and brother William Lancaster, Clerk.

IV. Brethren Richard Shackelford, William Lancaster, John Rooker, Abr. Hargrefs and Joseph Camp, were appointed, to arrange the business that may come before the association, from the respective churches, by their letters, &c. and make report on Monday morning ensuing.

V. Agreed, that on to-morrow, being Lord's day, brethren Benjamin Mosley, and Francis Ross, messengers from Georgia; and Joseph Baker and Joseph Buson, from the Hephzebah associations, will please to preach to the congregation.

VI. The Sabbath was employed in the public exercise of devotion; six sermons were delivered in two seperate congregations, at a convenient distance; by computation nearly 3,500 persons.

VII. Monday the reverend James Templeton, of the Presbyterian church, and other ministers, present, (not delegates) were invited to a seat with us. A letter and minutes were handed by the messengers of Georgia, and Hephzebah associations. A letter and a packet of minutes for the respective churches, of this association were forwarded by brother Fowler, from the Charleston association for last year, their messengers not attending. A letter and minutes from Neuse, and a letter from Holstein associations; and also minutes from the Philadelphia, for the years 1798 and 1799; minutes from the Baltimore, Kentucky, Shaftelberry, New-Hampshire, Warren, Woodstock, and Flat River associations, being also forwarded by brother Fowler; were severally read, and gave general satisfaction.

VIII. Three churches applied by letters, and delegates for admission into our union; and were accordingly admitted, upon satisfaction being obtained respecting their faith, and order.

IX. A non-fellow-ship having existed, between the church at **Dervin's creek,**

creek, of which Mr. Jacob Roberts is pastor, and this association, from the year 1791; at this meeting satisfaction was given, and fellowship declared between this church and this association.

X. Appointed brother M. Dougal, to write to the Nephzebah Association, and Messrs. Spencer Bobo and William Goram be our messengers. Brother Shackelford to write to the Charleston association, and Messrs. James Fowler and John Rooker, to be our messengers. Brother Bayli Earle, to write to the Georgia association, and Messrs. Jesse Owen and Austin Clayton to be our messengers. Brother Johnson to write to the Holstein, and brother Rooker, to the Neuse associations.

TUESDAY.

XI. Query from Catabaw church. Are the books that compose the old and new testaments, all of Divine revelation? Answered in the affirmative.

XII. Query from Mountain Creek church, N. C. Does the Gospel in its divine precepts, enjoin on its professors, the same care and faithfulness, in ruling their children and servants, by the principles of moral virtue, as were required under the Mosaic dispensation? Answered, beyond all doubt, and masters and mistresses, of families, as professors of the Gospel, are under peculiar obligation to bring up their children, and govern their servants, in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

XIII. The letters to the corresponding associations, and circular letter for this year, were presented, read and approved.

XIV. Fourteen churches, viz. those at Tyger River, Boiling Spring, Green's Creek, Goshen, Sandy Run, Green River, Cedar Spring, French Broad River, Mountain Creek, N. C. Bill's Creek, State Line, Buck Creek, Long Creek and Buffalo; requested a dismission from this body, that they may be formed into an other association, which was agreed to. Ebenezer, and Shockley Ferry churches, desired a dismission from this association, to join another, more convenient to them; which was agreed to.

XV. On motion, agreed; that the second Saturday in November next, be kept in prayer and fasting, that God may please to bless the preachers of his gospel, and that we may enjoy a revival of religion in our churches.

XVI. The committee appointed to examine brother Cantrel's credentials of ordination, report, they find them valid.

XVII. Concord, and the church at Long-creek, as vacant churches, requesting supplies; agreed, that brethren Thomas Burgess, Austin Clayton, John Blackwell and William King, attend the former; and brethren John Rooker, Davies Collins, and Joseph Camp, the latter, discretionally.

XVIII. Lower Duncan's creek church, requests a committee to attend them, to assist in settling some matters of difference, now existing in the church. Agreed, that brethren Richard Shackelford, Jesse Owens, Joshua Palmer, John Rowland, and Joseph Camp, attend, and make report at our next association.

XIX. On motion, by the Bethlehem church, the subject for the next years Circular letter, be "what is the proper connection between civil government, and the government of the church, as established by the authority and laws of Christ?" Which was agreed to; and brother James Fowler is requested to prepare it.

XX. The money was collected for printing the minutes, and brother Fowler appointed to superintend their printing, and distribute them as usual.

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On motion, agreed, that our next association be held in Newberry district, on Bush River, Cole's meeting-house; to begin the second Saturday in August, 1801. Brother Davies Collins to preach the introductory sermon; and in case of failure, brother David Lilly. Concluded with exhortation and prayer, by brother Benjamin Moseley.

STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

The minister's names are in capitals; Licensed preachers in Italics; Churches distinguished with an asterisk (*) we had no account from, their numbers stand as they did the last year; Pastors and Messengers to whose names an obelisk (†) is affixed, were absent; a dash (—) denotes a vacancy.

CHURCHES.	NAMES OF THE DELIGATES.	Baptized.	Rec. by L.	Dismissed.	Restored.	Excommun.	Dead.	Numbers.
Buffalo,	JOSEPH CAMP, J. Cham- pain,			1				56
Tyger-River,	JOHN WILLIAMS, Tobias Bright,	2		36		1		65
Green-River,	—, Jaconias Waldrope,	9	9			2		44
Bill's Creek,	—, John Dalton, Stamper Owenby,	8	1					43
Buck Creek,	JOHN CANTREL, John Bankston,	2		1		5	1	121
Head of Enoree,	ABRAHAM HARGESS, WILLIAM KING, John Tubb, John Spark,	6	12	18		11	1	241
Sandy Run,	—, Howfall Harrel, Charles Bottic, William Wilson,		3	1		2		60
Fair Forest,	ALEXAGDER M'DOU- GAL, Christopher Johnston,	4	2					51
Padget's Creek,	JOHN PUTMAN,† SPEN- CER BORO, Nathan Lang- ston,	16	11	1	4			85
Mountain Creek, N. C.	Permenter Morgan,† Matthew M'Can.	10	11					68
Bigg Creek,	Moses Holland, Hezekia Rice,	3	5	2		4	1	108
Fork Shoal,	—, Jonathan Duwers, Jesse Ford, Drury Hodge,	1	1	5		3		47
Cedar Spring,	—, Wm. Lancheffer, Jor. Barnett,		1	1				49
Upper Duncan's Creek,	JOSHUA PALMER, Joseph Hartway,	2	6	8		1	1	76
Pacolet,	—, William Gaston, Wm. Smith,	2	3	1			1	38
Lower Duncan's Creek,	Jesse Owens,							39
Bethel,	RICH. SHACKLEFORD, JOHN ROWLAND, Jo- seph Woodruff.	2	5	2		1	2	169
Sandy River,	JAMES FOWLER,† Enoch Edwards,	1		4		1		69
Bush River,	JOHN COLE,† D. Mason,	9	2			4		106
	Carried over.	70	76	81	4	10	4	1000

CHURCHES.	NAMES OF THE DELEGATES.	Baptized.	Res. by L.	Dismissed.	Restored.	Excommunicated.	Dead.	Numbers.
		70	76	81	4	35	8	1530
Sirona,	{ WILLIAM MURPHY, EL-NATHAN DAVIS, Nathaniel Newman,	- 1	16	4				74
Middle Fork Saluda,	{ ISAAC LEMONS, John Harden, Archibald Elliott,	4	6			1	1	44
Little River,	{ George Tilman, Cader Ghant,	2	2			1		47
Enoree,	{ JESSE OWENS, JACOB KING, John Clarke,	1				1		36
Rocky Creek B. River,								20
Turkey Creek,	{ Daniel Putman,	1	2			1		41
Cloud's Creek,	{ —, Thomas Deloach, Catlet Corley,	4	1			2	1	32
Ebenezer,	{ James Crowther,	3	7	4		1	1	29
Concord,	{ —, Balis Earle, Wm. Bird,							30
Catawba,	{ DAVIS COLLINS, † Matrix Dixon,	2	2			2		40
Sugar Creek,	{ JOHN ROOKER, Bennett Wood,	1	1	2			1	35
Poplar Spring,	{ —, David Green, Benjamin Neighbour,			1				14
Goshua,	{ —, Mat. Spark, S. Sparks,	2					1	26
Cambridge	{ David Lilly, †							21
Shockly Ferry,	{ Cooper Bennett, James Emery,	2	5	5	1	6	1	109
Mill Creek,	{ JOHN BULGER, CHESLEY DAVIS,	2	2	2				52
Little Stephen's Creek,	{ HENRY KING, J. Bridges,	2	1			6		47
Coronaco,	{ Arthur Williams, Jonat. Ufley,	5				1		28
Brush Creek,	{ ROBERT CAR, H. M'Can,	8	6	9		1	1	54
Mill Creek, S. C.	{ EXTINCT.							17
Hailing Spring,	{ THOMAS BURGESS, Wm. Cockrill,	3						46
Bethabara,	{ —, Nealy Packet, John Pinfon,	2	2	3				48
Red Bank,	{ —, William Little, Damsley Weaver,		1	1	1	1		36
Hope-Well,	{ —, Ralph M'Fadden,			1				17
Long Creek,	{ —, Samuel Swearingham, John Weathers,	3	8	4	3	3		72
Brushy Creek,	{ LEWIS RECTOR, John Wolbanks,		2	5			1	26
State Line,	{ Zachariah Blackwell, William Turner,	1	2			1		34
Green's Creek,	{ John Blackwell, Jas. Riding,			8				35
Cross Roads,	{ JOHN WALLER, † Charles Fouthee, David Gains,		4	6		2		27
Wcolynoy,	{ JOHN CHASTAIN, WILLIAM EDDINGS,			2				58
Shoal Creek,	{ —, James Courtney, George Tubb,							29
Bethlehem,	{ AUSTIN CLAYTON, John Golithely,							34
Keowee,	{ Charles Dodson,							17
Increased this year 178— Total		119	147	128	10	54	16	2803

Sixteen Churches dismissed, amounting in the whole to
Reduceth the number in the Association to

83a
1928

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The BETHEL ASSOCIATION of BAPTIST CHURCHES,
met at Bethlehem Meeting-House, in Spartanburgh District,
South-Carolina, August 9, and continued to the 12th, 1800.

To the CHURCHES in Union with this Association, sendeth
GREETING :

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,

ACCORDING to your request, at our last meeting, we now address you on the subject of family devotion ; which we do, principally, in the words of a late learned and pious author* :

To form a just idea of the sublime pleasures, and real advantages of devotion, we must have been accustomed to its sacred duties. So transcendent are the joys of piety ; and so important the moral influence of its public and private offices, that experience will far surpass the most animated description. It is, however, possible to give some account of the nature, the pleasures, and effects of true devotion ; and to show how much they lose, who neglect private and family prayer ; and " have not God in all their thoughts." That there are too many, who never approach the altar of God ; too many who practically say, " what profit shall we have, if we pray unto him," is a most discouraging truth. The public offices of devotion are reluctantly observed : and those of a private and domestic nature are still more neglected.

The separation of one day from seven, and its consecration to God and religion, have received the approbation of the wisest and best of men. Unbelievers have pronounced it an excellent political regulation ; and upon this principle, they have appeared as advocates for a suspension of labour on the Lord's day. They have even contributed to the support of public worship, from a conviction that society derived many advantages from the joint and religious intercourse of its members. Christians have acted from superior motives : they have turned aside from their labours and pleasures, and have cheerfully submitted to religious duties, because they conceived such an intermission of worldly concerns to be the will of God ; and because humanity to the lower creation requires such a portion of time for the reanimation of their spirits. Influenced by these considerations they have visited the house of God, and encompassed his altar, in that sacred season, which has taken place of the Jewish sabbath.

But the Lord's day is not the only day for the offices of piety, nor the church the only place in which they are to be performed. Our places of retirement, and our families, should be witnesses of our devotion ; and it should be our constant practice, to shew forth the loving-kindness of God in the morning ; and his faithfulness every night. *Psalms xcii, and 2d verse.*
The example of the psalmist inculcates this lesson :

“ The loving kindness of God, every morning; and his faithfulness, every night,” are matters of experience. As often as we rise from our pillows, we must, if we properly reflect, view ourselves objects of his preserving care, and monuments of his goodness. It is God who hath made us lie down in safety. During the defenceless hours of the night his fatherly arm was under our heads, and his providence our protection. It was he, who gave sleep to our eyes, and caused our slumbers to be grateful and refreshing. It was God who preserved our habitation from destruction, and our souls from death. His ever watchful eye was upon us; and his Almighty arm defended us from every accident, to which our persons, and our substance were exposed. These are truths, against which no reasonable objection can be urged. The doctrine of a particular Providence, includes all the facts, which we have here stated. They are a just inference from those words of the apostle, “ in him we live, move, and have our being.”

Hence the confidence expressed by good men, in the presence of God, during the night season, and the special protection afforded to his creatures, in the hours of repose. The Psalmist says, “ I will lay me down in peace, and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety.” Again, “ I laid me down, and slept; I awaked, for the Lord sustained me.” And addressing himself to Job, Zophar assures him, “ thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid.” Mercies, with which we are familiar, seldom lead our thoughts to their glorious Author. The constant stream of Divine goodness flows on unobserved. Hence the necessity of reminding us, that the salvation of every successive night is the work of our heavenly Father. The providence of God is as certainly exercised over us, when reclining on our pillow, and composed to rest, as in the most perilous situation. And that our sleep has not terminated in death, is to be ascribed, no less in one case, than the other, to his infinite benevolence. The loving kindness of God is therefore new upon us every morning; and the first beam of light, that meet our eyes, should remind us of him, who is the Farther of lights; and from whom cometh every temporal and spiritual blessing.

But the approaching shades of night are not less instructive than the splendor of a new day. If the morning suggests to us the loving kindness of the Lord; we are reminded of his faithfulness every night. As often as we retire to rest, we may view ourselves as monuments of his guardian care and protection. His wisdom has guided us amid innumerable dangers; his arm has rescued us from destruction; his bounty has supplied our wants. Under the guardianship of our Heavenly Father, we have pursued our lawful business; and his goodness has blessed the labor of our hands. In our going out, and coming in, we have experienced his faithfulness.

He has continued to us our reason; and upheld us in its exercise. Our table has been spread with his store; our cup has been replenished by his munificence; and his invisible, but unremitting energy, has caused our garments to be a grateful covering, and our food to be effectual to our subsistence. That we are alive, when the day is gone; that we have our friends about us; that we are encompassed by our children and servants; that we have a prospect of resting from our labours, and gaining new spirits against the return of our accustomed duties, are blessings, which must be referred to the God of Heaven. Because we do not discern the hand which bestows them; we are to suppose they flow from an inferior source?

We proceed, therefore, to consider our indispensable obligations to render

to God our devoted homage, at these particular seasons. The psalmist shows it is a good thing to celebrate the Divine praises, when so many circumstances concur to remind us of his goodness. In the morning we should approach the God of Heaven with reverence and gratitude, acknowledging his loving kindness, and professing our earnest desire to retain a sense of his mercy through the course of the day. Unfeignedly should we thank him for preserving our lives from the evil which walketh in darkness, and for the renovation of our strength and spirits in the morning. The acknowledgment of our obligations to God, should be accompanied with the confession of our unworthiness of his favors: And our devotions should include the most fervent prayer, that we may live answerable to the benefits which we have received; and our obligations to that infinitely benevolent Being, who has conferred them upon us. Our preservation from every false way; success in our lawful undertakings, the supply of wants, and a blessing on those with whom we are particularly connected, are proper subjects of prayer.

When we ask these mercies, and make our acknowledgments for those already conferred, we act in character, as dependent beings. Religion teaches us to begin the day with these expressions of unfeigned gratitude; and with these humble supplications. Social acts of devotion, and particularly those in which a family can engage, are inculcated in the words before us. In every house, where the Divine authority of the Christian religion is admitted, morning and evening prayer, and praises, should be offered.— This was the constant practice of the primitive Christians, and it must approve itself to the judgment of all, who consider how much stress is laid on devotion by our blessed Saviour. As man is a social being, social worship is accommodated to the principles of the human mind; and it is moreover subservient to his pleasure and improvement.

Family worship has, therefore, unanswerable arguments in its favor. But as this duty has fallen into too general a neglect, or coldness, in the performance thereof, it may be our duty to attempt a few arguments to *impress* your minds on the subject. It is incumbent on every man to promote the best interest of those, whom God has committed to his care. His obligation to feed, cloth, and protect them is never called in question. But equally unquestionably must be his obligations to cultivate their morals, and attempt to form them to wisdom and virtue.

Now the offices of devotion, regularly performed, in any family, are highly subservient to these purposes. They tend to confirm those sentiments of piety, and to revive those impressions of the Deity, which otherwise would be effaced by the business and pleasures of life. But prayer at stated seasons will not suffer the mind to be absolutely inattentive to its glorious Author. It will bring his character daily into view. It will force those who unite in it, to recollect that there is a God. And as far as the recollection will operate as a moral restraint, it will show the importance of this religious duty.

If, then, domestic order be a blessing; if a person presiding over a family would have his children dutiful, and the inferior members of his household obedient; if he would have the small community of which he has the charge, a credit to him; he will not fail to conduct his dependents to the throne of God. It is true the influence of the world may over-rule and defeat the influence of devotion. But it is not less true, that the tendency of such a practice as we are recommending, is the religious improvement,

and

and family happiness of all who engage in it. Further it is not unreasonable to suppose, that the united prayers of a christian family may be attended with a special blessing. The efficacy of prayer, to procure the favors desired is a doctrine of the Gospel. "Ask and ye shall receive," is the language of our Saviour. And it is the observation of an inspired apostle, "ye have not, because ye ask not." The immediate efficacy concurs, therefore, with its moral tendency, to enforce this particular office of piety.

Lastly, brethren, you will observe, many professors of the Gospel, whose counsels are good, and whose example is generally favorable to virtue, are deficient in that watchfulness which becomes the character and station of a parent. They prescribe good rules, but do not see them carried into execution. They set an amiable example, but do not examine into its moral effects. In plain language, they do not enquire what manner of persons they are, on whom their instructions have been bestowed; do not concern themselves to know what virtues they have acquired, or what habits they have contracted; do not ascertain the important point, whether commendation is to be given, or restraints imposed. Negligent in an article of such moment, they are partners in the guilt, and will be partakers of the disgrace of those who become vicious through their neglect. In confirmation of this we may appeal to the declaration of God himself, respecting an ancient priest. It was his unhappiness to have children who disgraced themselves, their parents and religion, by the most immoral practices. Considering the enormity of their conduct, it might have been expected that they would have been removed from an office, which they had disgraced; and the zeal of a religious minister would have overcome the affection of the parent. But so far from it, he only said, "Why do ye such things?" For I hear of your evil doing by all this people. "Nay, my sons, for it is not a good report that I hear; ye make the Lord's people to transgress." A reproof so inadequate to the occasion excited the displeasure of God. Accordingly Samuel was commissioned to the too indulgent parent, in the following strain; "I will perform against Eli, all the things that I have spoken concerning his house; when I begin I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not."

These sentiments, derived from the word of God, and founded in principles of the highest truth and reason, we recommend to your serious consideration. O! Let them have a governing influence on the temper of your hearts, and on the conduct of your lives. That your souls may be rising to God, in the sublime exercises of devotion; and that your families may be formed into regular worshipping assemblies, in which the sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, may be offered up every morning and every evening, in spirit and in truth, to the God of your salvation, in the name and through the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus may you support the principles and spirit of the religion of Christ on earth, and be prepared at last to join the worshipping assembly in heaven, in those unceasing Hallelujahs with which they surround the throne of God and of the Lamb.

We remain,

Beloved Brethren,

Yours affectionately, in Gospel bonds,

RICHARD SHACKLEFORD, MODERATOR.
WILLIAM LANCASTER, CLERK.