

The South Western Baptist,
A RELIGIOUS FAMILY NEWSPAPER,
PUBLISHED WEEKLY.
HENDERSON & BATTLE,
PROPRIETORS.

The S. W. Baptist.

TUSKEGEE, ALA.:
Thursday, Feb. 18, 1864.

AGENTS:
B. B. Davis, of the "Book Emporium," Montgomery, Ala., is our authorized agent, to receive subscriptions and dues for our paper.

Rags! Rags!!

We will pay the highest market price for rags at this office. It is now our only chance to get paper. Will our patrons and friends who desire the continuance of our paper, save their rags, and send them in at their earliest convenience?

Notice the Red (X) Mark.

Those whose terms of subscription are about to expire, will find on the margin of the paper a red cross mark. We adopt this plan to save the expense of writing and forwarding accounts. We will give some two or three weeks notice in this way, so that subscriptions can be renewed. Look out for the Red Cross Mark.

To our Patrons.

From and after the first of January, 1864, the subscription price of the South Western Baptist will be five dollars per annum. The price of material and labor leaves us no other alternative, unless we suspend altogether.

Characteristics of Prayer.

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to thee." James 4:8.

"Nearer, my God, to Thee,—
"Nearer to Thee;
"Even though it be a cross
"That passes me;
"Still all my song shall be,
"Nearer, my God, to Thee,
"Nearer to Thee."

Such are the breathings of desire in every truly pious heart. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and adore in his temple." And yet with all these desires of constant communion with God, none are more sensible of their failures than such Christians. It seems to be a kind of "Law of the Spirit," that the nearer a man approaches the divine presence, the more sensible he becomes of his sins and infirmities. When the prophet Isaiah "saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filling the temple," surrounded by the seraphims, who bowed one to another saying "holy, holy, holy, the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory," he could but exclaim in the deepest humility, "woe is me! for I am undone!" Confronted by so magnificent a display of the grandeur and holiness of God, he could but contrast his own weakness and vileness amid the august presence.

And yet, strange as it may seem, such sublime views of the divine holiness, instead of repulsing the humble and subdued spirit from the presence of the holy God, only serve to stimulate the desires of such a soul to still nearer approaches to Him. His language is still,

"Nearer, my God, to Thee
"Nearer to Thee."

Let the Christian fix it in his mind first of all that prayer is a great, living reality—a substantial transaction between his soul and God—such as any transaction between himself and his earthly friend. The mercy seat is the last place in the universe to act the pantomime. Chalmers once recorded in his diary this petition: "Make me sensible of real answers to actual requests, as evidences of an interchange between myself on earth and my Saviour in heaven." There can be no question that many prayers are unanswered because there is lacking that specificity of object and intensity of desire which ways the mind of a sincere worshipper. In all the prayers recorded in the word of God, there is an individualizing of the parties and the petitions, and the objects of prayer. When Peter was thrust into prison, expecting to share the fate of James the brother of John, whom Herod had killed with the sword, it is said that prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him; or as the margin reads, "constant and earnest prayer was made." We must bring to the discharge of this duty if possible a more realizing sense of its stern reality and transcendent importance than we do in our business affairs of this life. Prayer is not a poetical fascination, adapted only to romantic moods, in which the soul is to indulge in delicious reveries; but a holy breathing of soul, an unwrought consciousness of God, that not unfrequently reveals itself in words which cannot be uttered. It is as the eminent Christian writer expresses it, the great act of the soul—it is "to accost such a being, directly, pointedly, and, so to speak, personally." O think of the solemnity of such an approach! of asking Him to hear what we have to say! of His admitting us to spread the secrets of our guilty souls before Him! How marvellous the condescension, how transcendent the privilege!

Another characteristic of prayer is, that it is offered in the name of our glorified Mediator. Whenever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." It is this divine arrangement which converts the throne of God and justice into a "throne of grace." Hence we are invited to "come boldly" to that throne. Coleridge, in his Table Talk, is reported to have said to his friend, who was sitting at the bedside two years before his death—"Come, to pray with all your heart and strength with the reason and the will, to believe that God will listen to your voice." "Christ, and verily do the thing he hath therewith—this is the last, the greatest achievement of the Christian's warfare upon earth. Teach us to pray, O Lord! And then enter into a flood of tears, and begged me

to pray for him. O what a sight was there." But great as is the achievement, it can be made "through Christ." He has a name which is alone every name in heaven and on earth. Whatever is offered sincerely in that name will be heard. This is to "lay hold of his strength and be at peace with him."

Another characteristic of prayer is, that it is indited by the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit, also, helpeth our infirmities." "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost." Such passages as these, and we could quote many of them, express a truth, the depth of which may never be fully fathomed by the most spiritually minded in this world. It is enough for us to know that the Spirit of God really dwells in believers—that the passages which express this doctrine cannot be frittered away by surface interpreters—and that the fact is verified by every Christian for himself. "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." That is, this cry in the heart of the Christian is the voice of the Spirit. The very reason Paul gives for his "helping our infirmities" is, that "we know not what to pray for as we ought." Thus He becomes the intercessor within us, as Christ is our intercessor in heaven. And will not the Father hear the prayers indited by His Spirit, mingled as they are with the blood and intercession of His Son? "Will He not avenge His own elect that cry unto Him daily," when these cries are the utterances of the Spirit, and presented by the Savior? Prayer in this highest sense, is the breathings of the Spirit thro' the bedimmed and beclouded carnality of earthly frames—it is the Divine Mind within us, communing with the Divine Mind in heaven, through earthly organs. As the poet defines it,

"Prayer is the breath of God in man,
Retaining whence it came."

It is in this aspect of prayer that the Apostle refers, in the admonitions, "Quench not the Spirit; Praying in the Holy Spirit," &c.—It is to this that David refers when he prays, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

To all this there must be joined perseverance in prayer. This is the point in the parable uttered by our Lord to show that "men ought always to pray." If God delays to answer our prayers, let it be considered that this very delay may be intended to impress us with the importance and necessity of a more humbling conviction of our helplessness, and thus to stimulate still more and more our desires. The faith that staggers and becomes despondent under these delays—that betrays a murmuring impatience—is not the faith that prevails with God. Shall a sinful worm prescribe to Omnipotence? Shall our pride set an undue value upon our petitions? What an impious impudence does this murmuring impatience attach to what we suffer through delay! "Though it tarry, wait for it; for it will come, and will not tarry," and come, too, in such measure and kind as to cause our hearts to exclaim, "Thank God that I did not sooner obtain it!"

Revival in Tuskegee.

Meetings of deep interest have been progressing in the Methodist and Baptist congregations in our town for the last ten days. Many conversions have occurred in each of the congregations, and the work seems to be increasing in interest every day. Large numbers crowd the anxious seats, enquiring what they must do to be saved. The meetings will likely be continued for some time yet.

Ordination.

At the call of the Concord Church, Macon County Ala. Geo. W. Gunn was set apart to the full work of the Christian Ministry by elders W. B. Jones, A. J. Battle, S. Henderson, C. A. Stanton, W. H. Stanton, W. E. Lloyd and H. E. Tallaferrro, on Sabbath 31st of January 1864. H. E. T.

Re-Enlistments.

The re-enlistment of almost the entire Confederate army "for the war," be it long or short, is certainly one of the most hopeful signs of the times. Surely croakers and fault finders can afford to be dumb, when those who stand between them and danger, betray such an unconquerable spirit. We do not expect impossibilities; but we do expect that before three months our affairs will assume a more hopeful aspect than at any period during the war. With a just cause, the blessing of God, and the best army that were ever marshalled, led by the ablest Generals of the age, why should we distrust the result. Let us commit that cause afresh to the protection of the Lord of hosts, and do our duty at home, as our veteran army is doing theirs in the field, and we have nothing to fear.

Liberal.

Mr. R. A. Johnston, of our town, has presented to the Judge of Probate for Macon county, the sum of one thousand dollars for the benefit of soldiers' families. Who will follow this noble example?

Rev. Wm. Barrow returns his thanks to the patriotic ladies of Warrior Stand, Creek Stand, Union, Tuskegee and vicinity, for 230 pair socks for the brave defenders of the rights of the South, under Gen. Longstreet, which were contributed on very short notice.

For the South Western Baptist

MESSRS EDITORS: With the advice and consent of the St. Francis St. Baptist Church at Mobile Alabama, a Presbytery was convened, to consider the propriety of ordaining to the gospel ministry, bro. Chas. H. Otken, a member of the Baptist church at Baker Creek, Miss. which church is now partially disorganized in consequence of the war.

After examination in regard to his Christian experience, call to ministry, and views of doctrine, it was decided to proceed to ordination. Therefore he was ordained, Feb. 7, 1864, by the following presbytery: Wm. Spence, S. H. Ford, H. Nabring, F. Jones, G. F. Williams. Exercises of the ordination were as follow: ordaining prayer by F. Jones, charge to the

candidate by S. H. Ford, presentation of the Bible, by G. F. Williams.

Bro. Otken has for some time past been a licentiate, and for about two years has been chaplain of the 45th Miss. Reg't Lowery's Brigade.

WILLIAM SPENCE, Ch'n.
G. F. WILLIAMS, Sec'y.

For the South Western Baptist

Our Richmond Correspondence.

RICHMOND, VA., Jan. 15, 1864.

Our Bro. Henderson:

On last Sabbath, Alexander H. Sands Esq. of this city was ordained as a Baptist, or rather, Christian minister. An ordination is not such an unusual occurrence as to excite special remark, but in this instance there was something peculiar and worthy of imitation. Mr. S. is a lawyer of high repute and lucrative practice; a scholar of ripe attainments and varied information; was prior to this war, the accomplished editor of the "Law Review;" is the author of a volume of essays and Reviews, published under the title of "Recreations of a Southern Barrister," and is a large contributor to the periodical press of the Confederacy. He writes those very readable "half-hours with my Hymn-book," now appearing in the Religious Herald, and has lately commenced a series of letters, addressed to Dr. Reynolds, exposing the dangers lurking in Dr. Tornewell's attempt to amend our constitution by the addition of his famous religious article. To bring learning, industry, reputation and lay them at the feet of Jesus, is not the peculiarity of this ordination. For a year or two, Mr. S. has been a *con amore* preacher for the blacks. It is a work in which his heart delights. Refusing to preach, except at rare intervals for the whites, he has sought opportunities of simplifying and enforcing gospel-truth in African churches. Kingman Nott once said, "I pity ministers who do not enjoy preaching." The same feeling actuates Mr. S. in his labors of love.

Recently he has been invited to take charge of an African church in Manchester, a thriving suburban town of Richmond, and hence the ordination.

The Christians of the South seem to be awaking to a sense of their increased obligations in reference to our slaves. Regular and appropriate preaching is indispensable, but lay effort must be called into requisition. Our Southern women can here find full scope for their active charities and their superior aptitude for teaching. To provoke to good works. I take the liberty of extracting from the letter of a good Baptist lady, in this State, who has, for several years, devoted herself to the religious training of her slaves, with remarkable success. I suppress her name to free her from surprise and annoyance.—She says, "I have had no plan for teaching the servants, but seizing such time as I could from my family duties, I have made it my custom to gather all the children, and grown ones too, who would come, each Sabbath, and after reading a chapter, singing, a familiar hymn and a prayer, (frequently by one of the older servants,) I make them repeat the Lord's Prayer and the commandments. I have used Jones catechism principally, adding any questions from others I thought important. Making prominent always the birth, death and the resurrection of Christ, and trying to impress on them the need of a Saviour. I would rejoice to see every family alive to the duty of instructing their servants, and the churches calling on their members and arousing them to their duty. I have always felt it would be an awful thing to die, without once having lifted up our voices to those in our own families and urging them to flee from the wrath to come. Yet I would not have others pursue the work as I have done so feebly, so imperfectly, but gaining faith in their strength make it their life work, as those have done who have gone to the heathen, with the glad tidings of salvation. As poorly as I have discharged my duties to the servants. I have seen the good effects of the little that has been done—an earnest to those who enter the field that they shall not labor in vain. I trust the time is not far distant, when in every family at the South, there will be a Sabbath School for servants, taught by their owners or the younger members of the family, and arrangements made to have regular preaching for them at home—so many being unable to leave to go to church."

The labors of this lady have been greatly blessed in the conversion of her servants and in a well-ordered household. Among the many objects of interest in Richmond is the office of Capt. Morfett, who has charge of the effects of deceased soldiers.—To the kindness of the officer in charge, I was indebted for an explanation of his plan of operations and a sight of many of his precious treasures—when any thing is left by a deceased soldier in the Virginia army, if not taken by some immediate friends, it is forwarded to Capt. M. numbered, labelled and placed away, so that it is easily referred to and identified. I found a great number of articles which will be prized by the families of the deceased soldiers as invaluable heirlooms. There were pocket-books, memorandum-books, Testaments, money, rings, sleeve-buttons, swords, pistols, locks of hair, daguerreotypes, letters, and a thousand nameless keep-sakes, and remembrancers of the loved ones far away. If arranged in show-cases, a most interesting museum would be established—among other things was a case of most costly, dental instruments, which had been captured from a Yankee tooth-doctor. I saw the epaulettes of the Yankee spy—Webster—who was shot last year. They were retained for his wife. A friend told me, that at the execution of a spy, when his eyes were bandaged, and the time had nearly expired, a hat was left in his hands, with which he was to give the signal of readiness for the execution. It was gently thrust forward and withdrawn several times with manifest reluctance, until, at last by a convulsive struggle, it was thrown from the unfortunate man, so unwilling to pass away from earth.

Critical Seasons.

There are seasons in one's life relatively important above the other portions of ones experience. Some great evil is shunned, or some immense good secured. One hour is fraught with more of weal or woe, at these critical seasons, than perhaps a twelve month of the ordinary life.

Every individual meets such eventful occasions. If these be of a sad tendency, how important, that they should be resisted; and that the soul attacked withstand in the evil day. How many, alas! have succumbed; and as Eve, in an evil hour, reached forth the hand to eat of the forbidden tree, and when it has been too late, their eyes have opened to behold the sad results of one rash act. Life has been not long enough to correct the error of a single hour.

All of us come upon such critical seasons. Happy are they who, when thus tried, shall come forth from the flames unscathed, and the better strengthened for the right way. There are, no less, special seasons of good; set seasons when the "tide is to be taken at the flood;" An hour at just that time, will secure a success, which months of toil with this critical hour, lost can never accomplish. The coming of such a season may be as unlooked for and as grateful as the summer rains out of the clouds. Grace, that would save the soul, meets the sinner at a few critical seasons of life; if accepted, our life here is virtuous, happy, useful; if rejected, the season may pass forever, and one's eternal interests be gone by forever. Each mortal has his day. Happy they that at the critical moment attend to the things which belong to their peace.

MAN LIKENED TO A BOOK.—Man is, as it were, a book; his birth is the title page; his groans and crying, the epistle to the reader; his infancy and childhood, the argument or contents of the whole of the ensuing treatise; his life and actions, the subject; his crimes and errors, the faults escaped; his repentance, the correction. Now there are some large volumes in folio, some little in sixteens; some are fairer bound, some plainer; some in strong vellum, some in thin paper, some whose subject is piety and godliness, some (and too many such) pamphlets of wantonness and folly; but in the last page of every one, there stands a word which is *finis*, and this is the last word in every book. Such is the life of man; some weaker, some fairer, some coarser, some holy, some profane;—but death comes in like *finis* at the last, to close up the whole; for that is the end of men.

CHARITY.—Proportion thy charity to the strength of thy estate, lest God proportion thy estate to the weakness of thy charity. Let the lips of the poor be the trumpet of thy gift, lest in seeking applause thou lose thy reward. Nothing is more pleasing to God than an open hand and a clean mouth.

Jesus Left Behind.

Jesus, when twelve years of age, went up with his parents to Jerusalem "after the custom of the feast." While at Jerusalem, they neglected to keep him constantly in view. In a thoughtless and careless manner, it would seem they lost sight of him; and when the time came for them to return home, they, supposing that he had gone along and was in company with some of their kinsfolk and acquaintances, made perhaps but little inquiry about him. And thus they traveled for a whole day, feeling perhaps more or less anxiety about the missing Jesus. And when they came to pitch their tents for the night, they at once instituted search for him.

They passed from one company of their acquaintances to another, and from one tent to another, inquiring for the child Jesus. And as they met one and another of their acquaintances, they anxiously inquired, "Is not Jesus along with you? Haven't you seen anything of him? We lost him in the throng and bustle of the company." "We have not seen him since he left the city," says another.

This news only increases the solicitude of his parents. His mother's heart throbs only the more at each failure to learn anything of her lost "child." They had traveled one day without Jesus. To go forward another days journey they could not think of. But now they must spend the night, without him. Was not that a sleepless night to the mother of Jesus? What mother would have slept under the circumstances? At one time they reproach themselves with having lost sight of him. At another time they are ready to reflect on their son for having treated them so. Why did he not come with our kinsfolk and acquaintances?

Morning comes. Joseph and Mary address themselves for their journey—not, however, with their friends, but back to Jerusalem, seeking for Jesus.

As they retrace their steps, they are careful to examine every company they meet. Occasionally, as they meet an acquaintance, they inquire, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" Perplexing thoughts and disquieting fears now obtrude themselves upon the minds of the anxious parents.—For their neglect to keep Jesus with them, they had to travel the road thrice over which they might have trod but once. Then they knew not how long they might have to seek for him in the city. Another day and night passed without Jesus. With the morn came the search. They first sought for him perhaps among their acquaintances in the city. And where else, before going to the temple, we do not know. But thus they found him. "And when they (his parents) saw him they were amazed, and his mother said, 'Son, why has thou thus dealt with us? Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.'"

1. Don't begin the journey of the day without Jesus. Begin the day with his company, and don't lose sight of him.

2. If you should lose him by being attracted by something else, don't seek him among your friends and kinsmen. You may be seeking the living among the dead. They can never fill his place in your mind. Besides, he may not be journeying with your friends. Turn about at once and retrace your steps. Do your first works over again. And don't give up the search till you find him, though it take you three days or three years.

3. When you do find him, let it serve you as a salutary lesson not to lose him again.

4. For your encouragement. I would say seek Him and you shall find Him. You shall find Him when you search for Him with all your heart.

5. Where you will find him. "The Lord is in his holy temple." "And where two or three are met together in my name there am I in the midst of them." And however large and august the assembly by which he is surrounded, he will attend to your case: this is his father's business, and this is the business which he is about.

Scope of Miracles.

The Gospel miracles differ from all others in their nature and frequency, and in the disinterestedness which characterized them. Neither the Saviour nor his disciples ever wrought a miracle for their own personal benefits. Dr. Carson well says:

"Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick." Did you, Paul? And why did you leave him sick when you possessed the power of working miracles?—Why were you so profuse of your miracles in Melita, while you are so

sparing of them among your best friends? For the very reason of showing that miracles are rather for the private benefit even of the heirs of glory. God is sovereign in this as well as in everything else. Jesus healed the ear of the high priest's servant, while Paul did not heal his friend Trophimus. The Apostles exercised their power, not by their discretion or caprice, but by the suggestion of the Holy Spirit. This, then, is a providential fact the record of which, though to human wisdom trifling, is yet of great importance to the children of God. They are not to expect that they will always be free from sickness, or that their sickness will be soon dismissed.—They have reason to trust that God will always be with them, and will turn everything to good for them.—But they must submit to him as a sovereign who gives no account of his matters.

A SABBATH SCHOOL INCIDENT.—At a meeting in Exeter Hall, London, where there was a vast number of Sabbath-school children assembled, a clergyman arose on the platform, and told them of two bad little boys whom he had once known, and of a good little girl whom he afterwards learned to know. This little girl had been to Sabbath-school, where she had learned "to do good every day." Seeing two little boys quarrelling, she went up to them, told them how wickedly they were acting, made them desist from quarrelling, and induced them to attend Sunday-school. These boys were Jim and Tom. "Now children," said the gentleman, "would you like to see Jim?"

All shouted with one voice, "Yes! yes!"

"Jim, get up!" said the gentleman, looking over to another part of the stage. A reverend looking missionary arose and looked smilingly upon the children.

"Now, would you like to see Tom?"

"Yes! yes! resounded through all the house."

"Well, look at me—I am Tom, and I too have been a missionary for many years. Now, would you like to see little Mary Wood?"

The response was even more loud and earnest than before, "Yes!"

"Well, do you see that lady over there in the blue silk bonnet—that is little Mary Wood, and she is my wife!"

DEATH OF THE RELIGIOUS, NO SORROW.—A lovely young lady, in her near approach to dissolution, observing her father overcome with grief, thus pertinently remonstrated with him: "Why, sir so much grief? Had an offer of marriage been made me by one who in himself was all you could wish, and whose situation in life was far superior to mine, but whose residence must be in a remote part of the kingdom, perhaps the consideration of advantage and promotion to me would have reconciled you to my removal, though it would have been little other than a separation for life. But I am now about to be promoted incomparably beyond anything that could have occurred in this world. Then why this reluctance? Our next meeting will be in circumstances of high improvement, joyful, and perpetual."

PURSUIT OF PLEASURE.—Lovers of pleasure generally look forward to a future repentance, and expect to lead a Christian life before death overtakes them. But they are often cut off in the midst of their days, without any opportunity for reflection and repentance. An exchange gives a striking illustration.

A young man left London for the purpose of "enjoying himself." His object was not the gratification of a laudible curiosity, but pleasure.

He reached Rome in time for the carnival: his purpose was to enter into all its gayeties. He obtained an introduction to a masquerade ball. It was on Sabbath evening that he joined the masks, and continued with them in the dance till morning.

On Monday he returned to his lodgings in a paroxysm of delirium. On Tuesday an acquaintance found him in that state. He called a physician, who pronounced the life of his patient to be in imminent danger. His friends, anxious about his spiritual state, sent for a minister. He came, but could do the sufferer no good. His reason had departed. No words of truth could reach him.

On Saturday he was laid in the grave! On Saturday, the week preceding, his mind was wholly occupied with the anticipated pleasures of the ball. A part of God's holy day was spent in the excitement of the dance. During the remainder of his stay on earth he was delirious. Thus ended his pursuit of pleasure.

