

Debate at Pine Flats, PA

Tuesday, September 20, 1859

As the debate between Brother Franklin and Dr. Wm. Shadrach will not be published by authority, I propose to furnish the readers of the REVIEW a brief synopsis of it, from my notes. As these notes were hastily taken, I cannot give as full an account of each days proceedings as I could wish; but will try and present, substantially, the arguments on both sides, so far as I could understand them: for I must confess, that some of Dr. Shadrach's arguments were too profound for my limited capacity. Whether this is because the Doctor did not understand himself, or because I am not versed in Baptist theology, I can not tell; and no matter.

The debate opened on Thursday, Aug. 25th, with the following proposition, viz: "Do the Scriptures teach that baptism is ordained of God, as the medium through which, under the New Disposition, penitent believers in Christ obtain the remission of their past sins?"

In support of this, Bro. Franklin's first argument was, that we are said to be baptized *into* Christ are regarded in Scripture as forgiven—are called saints, while no others are so regarded. This is the boundary between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of darkness—the marriage ceremony that unites us, formally, to Christ—changes the relation, Matt. xxviii.19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Rom. VI.3: "Know ye not, that so many as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Gal. iii.27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." 1 Cor. Xii.13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Bro. Franklin distinctly stated, in the outset, that baptism had nothing to do with changing the; and yet Dr. S. persisted till the last in charging upon us "baptismal regeneration"—that *we* make depend on baptism precisely what *they* suspend on faith; thus trying to make the impression by baptism *alone*, just as he taught remission by faith *alone*. Bro. F. maintained that we have all the faith, all the repentance, all the change of heart, that the Baptists know anything about; but that the sinner is not regarded as forgiven—as in Christ—till he is baptized. That we are not said to believe into Christ, nor confess into Christ.

This argument seems to have been entirely beyond the comprehension of Dr.S. In fact, he did not understand it at all. About the nearest he could come to it was this" The gentleman tells you that we believe and repent *in* Christ, but not *into* Christ, ." This about all the reply he attempted to make. I suppose he had never heard nor seen the argument before, and was not prepared for it. From some cause or other he was very much confused throughout his entire opening speech.

The second argument of Bro. F., was drawn from the last commission, Mark xvi.16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be *saved*"—pardoned. Luke xxiv.46, 47: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and *remission of sins* should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." When salvation is promised on any number of named conditions, though it may depend on more, it can never can depend on more, it never can depend on *fewer* conditions than are specified in the promise. This argument was passed in silence by the Doctor. No notice was taken of it, so far as I recollect, from first to last. I suppose one of three things to be true: either he forgot it, (though his attention was more than once called to it.) Or could not answer it, or else considered these words of Jesus beneath

his notice. Just here, lest I forget it, I must mention one or two of his favorite expressions: “The man’s faith may be genuine, his repentance evangelical, his heart all right, but he must wait for pardon till my friend (Mr. F.) Comes in his *priestly character* and *dips* him.” “Till Mr. Franklin gets him into the water.” “Till his sins are washed away in baptism,” etc. These and many similar phrases, seemed to afford great “aid and comfort” to his Pedobaptist friends.

Bro. Franklin’s third argument was founded on Acts ii.38: “Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” To this Dr. S. replied by asking, “Does the gentleman translate the Greek preposition *eis*, *in order to*? “That he may get his sins pardoned?” “Would he baptize *eis*, *in order to*, the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?” Grave and learned questions truly! He then paraded fifteen passages where *eis* is connected with baptism, and in every case, but this *one* (Acts ii.38) is translated *into*. Yet, he did not venture to say that it ought to be so translated here; nor did he attempt to give any translation of it. He knew that, if he would say it should be rendered, “on account of,” (though this is really what he was contending for—his true position,) there was “*a deadfall* set for him,” and he prudently avoided it. Bro. F. admitted that *eis* might here be translated *into*; but that would not destroy the force of his argument; for we cannot enjoy the remission of sins till we come *into* a state of forgiveness, which, according to this rendering of *eis*, is entered by baptism. Hence, Mr. S. might have well have saved himself the trouble of collating his fifteen passages. He gains nothing by changing *for* to *into*. “Does the gentleman say,” said Bro. F., “that the proposition *eis* should always be rendered by *into*? Or, that words must invariably, and regardless of the context, be translated in the same way? Matt. xxvi.28 we have an expression precisely similar to this both in the Greek and English: “This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Was the blood of Jesus shed *into the remission of sins*? Not into, nor because of, but *for*—in order to—the [*procurement of*] remission of sins. So, on the day of Pentecost, Peter commanded them to ‘repent and be baptized,’ not because their sins were already were forgiven, but in order—not to *procure*, but—that they might *enjoy* the remission of sins.”

To all this there was no reply. Bro. Franklin asked: “Does the gentleman believe the answer of Peter was right? Does *he* give the same answer to inquiring sinners? Dr. S. responded that he did believe Peter right, but did not say whether he was *in the habit of* giving the same answer to sinners or not. But, notwithstanding he acknowledged that Peter gave the right answer, he was very careful to warn his people (*the elect*) not to let Bro. F. (who argued only that precisely the same answer should now be given the sinner as was given on Pentecost) deceive them with his “*pestiferous heresy*.” This needful warning was repeated again and again, till the last day of the debate, when it became necessary to prove that they could not be deceived—could not fall away. Then, no such warning was heard. Bro. F. said he had no need to warn the people not to let Dr. S. deceive them; and proposed to come to Pennsylvania and spend a month or two traveling and preaching with Dr. S., as this would afford him (the Doctor) a good opportunity to oppose this “*pestiferous heresy*.” The proposal was not accepted.

Argument fourth John iii.5: “Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he *can not enter into* the kingdom of God.” What God says *can not be*, no one need say *can be*. “Born of water,” is admitted by almost all commentators, creeds and books of discipline, to refer to baptism. There are here three terms expressive of the steps by which a sinner passes out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God’s dear Son, viz: 1st Born of the Spirit 2nd Born of water. 3rd. Enter into the kingdom of God. We have also three terms in the commission corresponding to these; 1st. He that *believeth*; 2nd. Is *baptized*. 3rd. Shall be *saved*. This same series is also found in Eph. V.25,26: “Christ

also loved the church, and gave himself; that he may sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.” These terms, arranged in the order in which conversion and pardon take place, will stand thus: 1st. The *word*—through the hearing of which *faith* comes; 2nd. The washing of water; 3rd. Sanctify and cleanse, or pardon.

Dr. S. responded that John iii.5 might *possibly have some faint allusion* to baptism; “but,” said he, “let the gentleman prove that wherever the word water is found in the Bible, baptism is meant.” “According to Mr. Franklin’s teaching, the ordinance of baptism did not exist at that time, and yet Nicodemus was reprov’d for not understanding it. I understand Jesus to simply lay down the doctrine that the sinner must be born again. The passage is parallel to Ezek. xxxvi.25,26: “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be; ‘a new heart also will I put within you;’ ‘Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, *is* born of God’—not *shall be*, after the gentleman *dips* him.” All this would have come with some grace from the lips of one who believes in and practices sprinkling; but it sounded very strange when uttered by one who is himself a “*dipper*,” and a D.D. in the “*Baptist*” Church. Luther, Wesley, the Westminster divines, as well as hosts of scholars and critics of his own church, have acknowledged “born of water,” John ii.5, to mean baptism: but he, more penetrating than they, thinks it “may possibly have some slight allusion to baptism!”

Bro. F. next introduced the account of Paul’s conversion: “Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” His sins were not washed away by the water, but by the blood of Christ, into whose death he was baptized. Dr. S.’s only reply to this, so far as my notes testify, was, to affirm that whatever *washing* was done was the work of Saul. Ananias commanded *him* to wash away his own sins. Bro. F. responded: “This is the precise language of Scripture, and if Mr. S. don’t like it, he must not quarrel with me.

Rom.vi.17 was next adduced by Bro. F. “God be thanked,” etc; “but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you: being *then made free from sin*, ye became the servants of righteousness.” This was fully elaborated by Bro. F., but not so much as hinted at by his opponent.

1 Pet. iii.21 constituted Bro. F.’s seventh and last argument. “The like figure [Salvation of Noah and his household by water] whereunto *baptism doth also now save us*.” By some apt illustrations Bro. F. showed how and why salvation is ascribed to different causes. When faith is the topic of the speaker or writer, we are said to be justified by faith; when works is the topic, by works, etc, etc.

Dr. S. replied to this argument by asking: “Was it the water that saved Noah?” The Scripture says he was “saved by water,” but not by water alone.

Dr. S offered *one* objection to the doctrine, viz: It subverts the meaning of all religious rites and ordinances; which are *signs* of something beyond themselves. Illustrated by the Jewish sacrifices, etc. Baptism is the sign or emblem of washing away sin. Bro. F responded that the Scriptures nowhere call baptism a sign nor a seal. Dr. S. maintained that man enters Christ by *faith alone*—is in him when he believes—before he is baptized. Bro. F. troubled him a good deal with the following syllogism. According to Mr. S’s doctrine, you *can* get into the church of Christ without baptism; but you *can’t* get into the Baptist Church without baptism; therefore, the Baptist Church is not *the* church of Christ.” The Doctor’s first attempt to dispose of this, was to affirm that the Baptist is not *the* church of Christ, but *a* church of Christ, “a mere *branch* or fragment” of the church of Christ. Bro. F. then changed his syllogism thus: you *can* get into a church of Christ without baptism; but *can’t* get into *a* Baptist Church without; therefore a Baptist Church is not a church of Christ. Seeing himself defeated here, he then tried to offset with the following logic! You *can* get into heaven without baptism; but you *can’t* get into Mr. Franklin’s church without baptism; therefore Mr.

Franklin's church is not the church of Christ.

But enough for the present. I will not undertake to describe the confusion of Mr. Shadrach in his first speech, nor the bitterness and venom evinced by him in those that followed.

Second Proposition—"The converting power is in the written word—in its facts arguments and motives."

This proposition is one of Dr. Shadrach's own framing, as will be seen by reference to his letter of Feb. 15, 1859. He there says, "If you dislike the form of the proposition as submitted, you can change it to suit your own pleasure, provided it *embraces the point at issue*. Is the converting *power* in the written word—in its arguments, facts and motives?" Bro. Franklin, in his reply of Feb. 28th, says "I also accept your own words for proposition 2nd ." Then in Dr. Shadrach's letter of March 7th, he says: "I accept for our 2nd proposition the question as stated in your last, viz. 'Is the converting power in the written word,' etc." Thus it appears that Dr. S, when he wrote his letter of Feb. 15th, regarded this proposition as "embracing the point at issue" between the Baptists and Disciples on this subject; and, in his letter of March 7th, apparently without any misgivings or hesitation, agrees to discuss it, and appears to have been perfectly satisfied with its form till the morning the debate began. Yet, strange as it may seem, on his first interview with Bro. Franklin, he proposed to amend the proposition so as to read, "The converting power *of the Holy Spirit*," etc. Not, he said, because he thought the sense of the proposition would be changed, but because he thought Bro. Franklin *intended to take advantage of him*—thus, in advance, imputing to his opponent an evil intention, and at the same time showing that "the converting power," whether in the word or out of it, had *Not turned* him "evil surmising" to that "charity" that "thinketh no evil." Bro. F. positively refused to make any alteration, not because of any change that might be made in the sense, but because that was not the time for changing propositions. By advice of his friends, the Doctor agreed to debate the question as he first worded and afterwards accepted. But why was this effort made, at so late an hour, to "*supply the ellipsis*" (as he expressed it)? Was it because he was convinced that the opinion of some of his intelligent brethren, that he had taken grounds that were untenable, was correct?

After Bro. F's refusal to amend, Dr. S committed to writing all that had passed between them, and called upon three or four friends to sign the instrument. Bro. Franklin's friends declining to have anything to do with so unprecedented and unmanly a transaction. What use the Doctor intends to make of this *ex parte document* doth not yet appear, as nothing was said in debate about changing the proposition, except a mere allusion to it by Brother Franklin.

In opening the discussion of this question, Bro F stated that there was no question as to whether God or Christ, or the Spirit, exert a power in conversion; nor whether the Spirit *can* operate independent of the word; but simply how *does He operate*? Where is the converting power? Is it in the written word? No question about what God *can* do; but *what does* He do?

1st. The commission of Jesus to the Apostles makes the gospel the power of God; also the commission given to Paul "to open their eyes, to turn [convert] them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God Acts xxvi.18 How did he open their eyes? Let him tell: "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints was this grace [of apostleship] given, that I should *preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ*; and to make all men *see* what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God; who created all things by Jesus Christ;" Eph. iii.8,9. Why preach the gospel to every creature? "By it you are saved," 1 Cor. xv.2 "It is the power of God to salvation," Rom. i.16. If the converting power is not

in the gospel, why preach it to sinners?

2nd. “The law of the Lord is perfect, *converting* the soul,” Psa.xix.7, was the second argument of Bro. F. This scripture cannot be true and the proposition false; for it clearly states that the law of the Lord—the written word—*converts* the soul. Does Mr. Shadrach believe this? If he does, he yields the question.

3rd. “Of his own will *begat he us with the word of truth*, James i.18. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, *by the word of God*, which liveth and abideth forever.” “*And this is the word which the gospel is preached unto you;*” 1Pet.i.23&25 “For in Christ Jesus *I have begotten you through the gospel*, 1 Cor.iv.15 “I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds,” Philemon 10th verse. Such scriptures as these constituted the third affirmative argument. The word of truth is the word of the Spirit; for, “It is not ye that speak, but the *Spirit that speaketh in you*. Hence the Spirit puts forth its power through the “written word.”

4th. The parable of the sower Matt. xiii.8,9 furnished a fourth argument. “The seed is *the word*.” “No seed, no fruit,” holds good in the kingdom of Christ as well as the kingdom of nature. The reason why the wayside, stony ground etc did not bear fruit, was not the seed was bad, for it was the same as that sown in good ground; but the reason is given in the 15th verse: “For this peoples heart has waxed; and their ears are dull of hearing, and *their eyes they have closed*; lest at any time they should *see* with their eyes and *hear* with their ears, and should *understand* with their heart and should be converted, and I should heal them.” Hence, if men are not converted, it is not because the Spirit does not do his work—not God’s fault, but man’s, who has the power to hear, believe, and obey “what the Spirit saith,” or refuse.

Fifth affirmative argument “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth;” Rom. i.16. Not *a* power, nor *one* of God’s, but *the* power. See also 1 Cor.i.18. “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved *it is the power of God*. Does Mr. S believe these scriptures? How can these be true, and the proposition false?

6th. Bro. Franklin’s sixth argument was based on John xx. 31: “But these [signs] are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name.” Hence, faith comes by reading or hearing “the written word”—its facts arguments, motives.” If anyone wants *evangelical* faith, here it is; for Mark and Luke were evangelists. Or, does he prefer *apostolic* faith? He will find it here; for Matthew and John were Apostles. Does he want *spiritual* faith? The Spirit inspired these men to speak and write. Does he want *saving* faith? “These are written,” etc :that believing you *might have life* through his name.” This, then, is the faith that saves—that gives life—call it *historical* or what you choose.

On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit entered the Apostles, and through them preached the gospel to the people; “and when they *heard this*, they were pricked in their heart and cried out, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” When the eunuch (Acts viii.) Was to be converted, the Spirit spake unto Philip, the preacher, telling him to join himself to the chariot, inspired him to preach Jesus to the Ethiopian, and when his work was done, caught him away. The words of Jesus, who appeared and spoke to Saul in the way, converted him. The Apostles always *preached the word* to sinners *to convert them*. Was any one ever converted without the word? Did any one ever hear of a revival without preaching? *No religion, human or divine, has ever found its way to a neighborhood, or a heart, without human instrumentality*. “Why does Dr. S. preach, why is he an agent of a publication society why does he reply to me,” said Bro. F. “If he does not expect to persuade men by facts, arguments and motives?” “Then is our preaching vain.”

Such is a brief outline of Bro. Franklin's argument in defense of his proposition. In giving these six distinct arguments, I have not presented along with them Dr. Shadrach's reply, for one simple reason—he made no reply. True, he made a *speech*, yes, three of them, but not in reply to the scriptures adduced by Bro. F; *not one of them* was taken up and logically disposed of. Some of them were referred to in passing, but no attempt was made to answer them. Indeed, he admitted that he *believed* and *taught* them all, just as much as Bro. F, who, in presenting these scriptures, some of which are in almost the precise words of the proposition which Dr. S. was denying, would often ask, “Does the gentleman believe his Bible?” His speeches were rather in reply in reply to a few scraps of the writings of Bro. Campbell, and B.W. Stone, detached from their context by N.L. Rice and J.B. Jeter, and read from their works under the pretense that he was reading from the *Christian Baptist* and *Millennial Harbinger*. These extracts have been so long bandied about by the enemies of the Reformation as to render it unnecessary to quote from them here. The object was to prove that B.W. Stone had said that Christ was a mere creature, (which allegation I will notice more fully in another article,) and that Bro. Campbell had taught that the Holy Spirit had spent all his power, and *could* only operate through arguments, facts and motives. Because Bro. F. objected to the phrase “Triune God,” used by Mr. S, he was represented as denying the divinity of Christ. The doctrine of the Disciples was *rationalistic, atheistic, dangerous, ruinous*. If Mr. Franklin's doctrine was true, there was no propriety in praying and no inducement to pray; it ignored the doctrine of divine providence—an omnipresent God; was allied to German neology etc, etc; all of which was promptly responded to by Bro. F so far as any response was needed.

Dr. S offered a few objections or rebutting arguments to the doctrine, which the curious can find in *existence* by reference to Rice and Jeter. I will give all I can now gather from my memoranda, and I think I noted down all that were offered. 1. This entrance of the Spirit into the Apostles on Pentecost subverts Mr. F's theory. (How does it subvert it?) 2. His theory (viz., that the converting power is in the word) subverts many passages of Scripture—1 Cor. iii.6: “I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.” 3. “For we are his workmanship, *created* in Christ Jesus unto good works,” Eph. ii.10. 4. “Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart,” 2 Cor.iii.3. Frequent reference was had by Dr. S, to John iii.8, “The wind bloweth where it listeth,” etc, not to make any thing plainer, but to bewilder and befog. Bro. F gave M.E. Lard's translation of this passage, remarking that this rendering would *stand till the day of judgement*, and that it fully sustained his position on the converting power. “The Spirit breathes (or speaks) where it sees fit, and you hear its voice, but you know not whence it comes and whither it goes: in this way is (begotten) every one that is begotten by the Spirit.” How is a person begotten by the Spirit? By hearing what it says, or being enlightened by its truth. See Lard's “Review,” p.115

Dr. S concluded his *argument* by again admonishing his people not to give heed to the *outgushing* of this *strange* gentleman—teaching in “Kentuckian trumpet tones” an old, rotten, exploded system—fifteen hundred years old.

I am safe in saying that, in the judgment of all the impartial, Dr. Shadrach's effort was regarded as an entire failure—a complete breakdown. More than one of his own brethren acknowledged the defeat; and from the fact of his arguing it all next day, instead of the question then pending, I judge he felt it himself. It is hard to kick against the goads.

Third Proposition—“The Scriptures authorize the practice of the Baptists in praying for the conversion

and pardon of sinners before baptism.”

The first Scripture cited by Dr. Shadrach in support of this proposition was Ezra i.1 : “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and put it also in writing.” etc. That the force of this argument might be clearly seen, let it be stated thus: The Lord *stirred up the spirit* of king Cyrus, that he made a proclamation; *therefore* it is right to pray for the conversion and the pardon of sinners before baptism! His second scripture was Ezra vi.22: “For the Lord had made them joyful and *turned the heart of the king* of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.” *If the Lord can turn the heart of a king* to his people, it is of *course* scriptural to pray for the conversion and pardon of sinners before they are baptized.

Nehemia i.11 was the third passage quoted: “O, Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name; and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king’s cupbearer.” The connection between premise and conclusion here, is so apparent as to need no comment.

His fourth scripture was Proverbs xxi.1: “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the river of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.” If the king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, who can say any thing against praying for the pardon of sinners before baptism? Acts v.31 was next cited: Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” In connection with this, Acts xi.18 was read: “Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.” God grants repentance and remission to Israel, and to the Gentiles repentance unto life.; *therefore* the practice of the Baptists in praying with sinners at the anxious seat is scriptural. What can be clearer than that? Next in order, came Philippians i.29: “For to you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him but also to suffer for his sake.” This is so plain that “the wayfaring man *need* not err therein.”

His next is equally plain—2 Timothy ii.25, 26: “In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” Rom. x.1: “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.” *Therefore* the Baptists are right in praying for the pardon of sinners before baptism. Once more, 1 Tim. ii.1,2: I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority etc. It is scriptural to pray for all men, and *therefore*, to pray for pardon previous to baptism. It was maintained by Dr. S. that the ministry of angels overthrows “this old Gnostic theory.” He seemed to be dissatisfied with his defense of the proceeding proposition, on the converting power, and spent the greater part of his time in “combating the theory” (to use his own words) “that God has exhausted all his power in the word of truth.” The sinner, he affirmed, is pardoned through faith, (which is the gift of God) and unconditionally—without any act on his part. His speeches, as usual, were interspersed with a goodly number of choice phrases; such as “Till he got enlightened in the water.” “Baptism, the *only* turning point.” “The sinner is dead till he is baptized,” etc, etc. These were accompanied with his usual warning to beware of the *dangerous doctrine*. I should have stated above, that Cornelius and Saul of Tarsus were referred to, as praying before they were baptized and the language of Jesus, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,” quoted. His chief objection to the doctrine was, that it ignores the presence of God both in nature and grace.

Bro. Franklin replied, that there was no question as to the necessity of prayer, nor the propriety

of praying for sinners; but whether the Baptists, in bringing sinners to the mourner's bench, or anxious seat, and praying for their conversion and pardon before baptism, was authorized by Scripture—whether the penitent believer is to look for pardon in answer to the prayers of God's people, or obedience to the command of the Lord; that the Disciples pray for their children, their friends, that they do not expect the Lord to pardon them till they obey him—are *baptized into him*. No sooner had Bro. Franklin mentioned the *mourner's bench* than Mr. Shadrach's moderator arose and called for the reading of the proposition, affirming that there was nothing in it about the *mourner's bench*. Bro. F. replied that there *was* nothing in it about the "*practice of the Baptists*," and there was something in the practice of the Baptists about the mourner's bench, and they ought not to be ashamed to defend their practice.

The scriptures read by Dr. S were summarily disposed of. They had no bearing on the question at hand. Nobody doubted that God *could* stir up the heart of a king—that the king's heart was in the hand of the Lord—that God gave repentance and forgiveness of sins, etc. They might have had something to do with the question on the converting power, but are altogether irrelevant here. Cornelius was *not* converted and pardoned before he was baptized, or in direct answer to his prayer, as Dr. Shadrach alleged; for he was directed to send for Peter, who should tell him words whereby he and his house *should be saved*—what he *ought to do*. See Acts x.6 and xi.14.

Saul of Tarsus prayed,"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The Lord did not answer this prayer by immediately forgiving his sins, but sent him to Damascus where it should be told him what he *must* do. Ananias found him praying, but did not tell him, as Dr. S would, to *pray on till it pleased the Lord to pardon him*; but to "arise, and be baptized and wash away his sins, calling on the name of the Lord,"—Here is the place for prayer: *obey the Lord, calling on his name*. Bro. Franklin illustrated the folly of attempting to substitute something else for the appointments of God, 1. By the brazen serpent(Num.xxi) 2. By the destruction of Jericho(Josh. vi) 3. By the healing of Naaman's leprosy,(2 Kings v) Had those bitten by serpents prayed instead of looking at the brazen serpent, they could not have been healed; nor would the walls of Jericho have fallen, had Joshua and his host substituted prayer for marching around the city and blowing the ram's horns. Naaman, like Dr. S, wanted Elisha to erect a mourner's bench and "call on the name of the Lord, his God;" but he was not healed till he complied with the Lord's appointment—till he dipped himself seven times in the Jordan. The cases of conversion given in the Acts of the Apostles were then taken up, and not a single case was found to correspond with the "practice of the Baptists." No instance can be given of mourners going away from the inspired teachers uncomforted, unconverted, unforgiven. The preachers are to blame for keeping sinners so long in doubt and agony. Dr. Shadrach warns the people of our "dangerous doctrine," but the danger is in keeping sinners mourning so long, when they might be comforted—in putting them off from day to day, till they find peace where it is not promised.

If, as Dr. S. says, the sinner is born of God *the moment he believes*, why, when he comes forward, believing and penitent, get down with him at the anxious seat, and pray that he may be *converted and pardoned*? "The legs of the lame are unequal."

In the course of the day Dr. S. brought up again the charge that B.W. Stone had said that Christ was a mere creature; and read an extract from the *Christian Baptist* of 1827 (which I have not now at my command) to sustain it. Bro. Franklin replied that the extract read did not sustain the allegation; and besides, Mr. Stone was not at that time a Disciple, and, more than all, his teachings were opposed by Bro. Campbell. And, as an offset to this, and to show that the charge of Socinianism came with a bad grace from a Baptist minister, in full fellowship with J.B. Jeter, Bro.

F. read the following: "It is not true that physical power can not produce a moral effect. God created man, not by arguments or words, but by the direct exercise of physical power, in his 'own image'—which image comprehended righteousness and true holiness. Was not this a moral effect produced by a physical cause? CHRIST WAS CREATED HOLY. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee;" said the angel to Mary, 'and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore that holy thing which shall be borne of thee shall be called the Son of God;" Luke iv.35. Was not the holiness of the Redeemer a moral quality?" —*Jeter's "Campbellism Examined."* page 127.

This is not the sentiment of someone, thirty years ago, who was not even a member of the Baptist Church; but of a minister in full fellowship, who has made himself notorious by his opposition to this "dangerous sect," Socinian in sentiment, and of "atheistic tendency." "Keep it before the people" that the Baptists, who are foremost of all others in propagating the slander that we deny the divinity of Jesus, are sustaining in the ministry a man who says, "*Christ was created.*"

Fourth Proposition—"The Scriptures authorize the Baptists and Disciples to commune together, when, in the providence of God, it is their privilege to meet together on the Lord's day."

Mr. Franklin affirms, Dr. Shadrach denies.

Bro. F stated that he tried to get a proposition that would embrace all Christians, all the children of God; but Dr. S. was not willing to take the negative; the question was constantly narrowed down to its present form. The following arguments were then presented:

1. It is the Lord's table and for the *Lord's people*—not the Baptist's table and for the *Baptist people*; nor the Disciple's table and for their people. We recognize pious Baptists as Christians—children of God—and invite them to a place at their father's table. While we are trying to break down the wall of partition between Baptists and Disciples and unite them, Dr. S and his brethren are trying to divide, distract, alienate. We plead for union of Christians; they for "Is Christ divided?" For whereas there is among you envying and strife and *divisions*; are you not carnal and walk as men?"

2. The Lord gave the communion to the *disciples*, not the Baptists. Are you then a *disciple of Christ?*—you have a right to his table. Dr. Shadrach baptizes, not into the Baptist Church, but into the Church of Christ—*he makes disciples and calls them Baptists*. Hence, Baptists are really disciples misnamed. They are baptized in the name of Christ, and ought to wear his name and no other. Paul recognizes this principle when he asks, 1 Cor. i.13, "Were you baptized in the name of Paul?" He would say, "If you were baptized in my name, you are *Paulites*—follow me; but if in Christ's name you are Christians, follow Christ." Dr. S. recognizes Methodists, Presbyterians, etc., as Christians; why doesn't invite them to the Lord's table? Is his church better than the church of Christ? Is the Baptist's table more sacred than the Lord's table? According to his views, Methodists, Presbyterians, etc. are in the church of Christ and have a right to the Lord's table, but they are not in the *Baptist Church*—have no right to the *Baptist table*; therefore the Baptist Church is not the church of Christ, and the Baptist table is not the Lord's table.

3. "There is one body," composed of all the disciples of Christ—all this children of God—all Christians. No matter whether we can tell who these Christians are or are not, so far as this proposition is concerned. If the Baptists and Disciples are members of the "*one body*" they ought to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," and partake of the symbol of that body. The Scriptures recognize no Baptist body, Presbyterian body; etc, but *one body*, the church of the living God—the pillar and support of the truth. This body is not cut up into fragments and "branches" but is a unit—has *one* Head, is animated by *one* Spirit, has *one* Faith, *one* Hope, *one* Baptism, *one* God

and Father of all.

Dr. S. responded, that he would not abuse the intelligence of the people by replying to such arguments as these. That every body knew that it was the Lord's table for the Lord's people—that Jesus gave the communion to the *disciples*—that there is one body, composed of all the children of God. But the church, being the pillar and support of the truth, it was her duty (*i.e.*, the duty of the Baptist) to keep out error—to withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly. He then went on to give the following reasons why they refuse to commune with the Disciples:

1. They deny the doctrine of justification by *faith only*.
2. They deny the agency of the Holy Spirit in regeneration.
3. They deny to the church the privilege of praying for the pardon of sinners before baptism.
4. They hold in their fellowship and ministry, men who deny the atonement and divinity of Jesus.
5. They hold fellowship with Universalists.
6. They hold fellowship with *avowed* Materialists.

These were well *seasoned* with choice extracts, (professedly read from the *Harbinger*, but really) from the Campbell and Rice Debate—such as, that “all sorts of doctrine have been preached by all sorts of men”—that “there are preachers among us who are not fit to lay a leg of mutton on God's altar,” etc. etc.

To these charges Bro. F. replied that whether the Disciples present were Christians or not, they at least manifested the spirit of the Christian to sit and listen to such misrepresentation and abuse. It was sufficient evidence that they were worthy of communing with the Baptists. In the early days of the reformation some evils existed that were mourned over by Bro. Campbell and all good men among us, and have since corrected. Are we to be held responsible for all that is said and done by irresponsible men? Will Dr. S. endorse all that his brethren have said and written? If so, he will endorse some things that he is here to deny. If difference in sentiment is to divide the church, it will cut up the Baptists into many “*fragments*,” for they differ both in “faith and order” more widely than we. See the following”

1. Spurgeon and others hold and advocate *open* communion; Dr. Shadrach is a *close* communionist.
2. Dr. McClay, J.G. Oncken and others practice weekly communion; Dr. Shadrach opposes it.
3. Mr. Crowell, editor of the *Watchman*, and Mr. Ford, editor of the *Repository*, teach Repentance before Faith; Dr. D.R: Campbell, and many others, Faith before Repentance.
4. Some maintain that Disciples uniting with the Baptists should be rebaptized, others deny it.
5. J.B. Jeter says, “*Christ was created.*”
6. The Baptists of North Carolina baptize for the remission of sins.
7. Dr. Waller believed in falling from grace.
8. Some Baptist churches have a confession of Faith, others repudiate all creeds.
9. Many of the Baptists want a correct translation of the Bible and support the “Bible Union;” others do not.

Dr. S. finds no difficulty in communing with all of these; not even with Jeter, and the North Carolina Baptists, but because B.W. Stone, Dr. Thomas and some others, many years ago, advocated doctrines that were opposed by the great body of the brotherhood then, and are never taught by us now, his *conscience(?)* won't let him commune with the Disciples.

Space and time forbid further details. The above will give some idea of the *drift* of the argument.

Fifth Proposition-- "Is the weekly celebration of the Lord's supper enjoined upon the churches of Christ by scriptural authority?" Mr. Franklin affirms. Dr. Shadrach denies.

To the discussion of this question but one hour was devoted to giving to each half an hour, with the *privilege* of a second speech of fifteen minutes. This will account for the absence of some arguments that are usually advanced in support of the proposition. It was argued (1st) from the custom of the primitive church, as *all history testifies*. Mosheim and others tell us that it was the practice of the church in the days of the Apostles and for some time after, to break bread on *every first day* of the week. That this was the apostolic practice was proved (2nd) from Acts xx.7: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto, (ready to depart on the morrow) and continued his speech till midnight."

The object of their coming together was not to hear Paul preach, but to *break bread*. It was not a certain first day but *the* first day. The Jews were not commanded to remember *every* Sabbath day and to keep it holy, but *the* Sabbath day; yet they all understood it to *mean every Sabbath day*. No one thought of caviling and quibbling, because God had not said, "Remember *every* Sabbath day." So, whenever there comes a first that is not *the* first day, we will be at liberty to dispense with the breaking of bread; but not till then. We read nothing in the scriptures of meeting every month, every quarter, no *every first day of the week* let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gathers when I come." No one doubts that "the first day of the week," here means *every* first day of the week.

The First Christians "continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of the bread and in prayers," Acts 11. 42. Why strike out all the communication and retain all the rest? The usual objection to weekly communion is, that it becomes too common. The same maybe urged with equal truth against frequent praying, and all other acts of worship. If you want to hear a cold lifeless prayer, call on some old backslider, who hasn't been to a meeting in three months. Or if you want a dry, husky, that would put every body to sleep get some one at it who only preaches once a month. If we love the Savior, we want to remember him often- we never grow weary of his commandments; they never become "too common". To teach that Christians may attend to this when they please (*and not at all, unless they choose*) is to encourage neglect of God's appointments.

Dr. Shadrach responded that he did not deny that Christians *have the privilege* of breaking bread weekly if they see fit; but he did not regard it obligatory- as "enjoyed by scriptural authority". Did not deny that Christians ought to meet for preaching, prayer, etc., every first day- There was no *precept* in Scripture enjoining it, and *but one example*, Acts xx. 7. (Is not that enough?)

The passage quoted from 1 Cor. xvi. 2, concerning the collection for the saints on the first day of the week, did not *prove* that we ought to commune every first day. Did the disciples continue steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine *only on the first day of the* first day or the week. The Doctor then gave us his view of the nature of ordinances, which I failed to comprehend sufficiently to give any idea of it here, without, probably doing him injustice. This last question he discussed with more fairness and in a better spirit than any of the former. While he granted to all Christians the privilege of breaking of bread every first day, if they thought by so doing they could advance themselves in the divine life, he himself wanted the privilege of refusing to do so. "According to thy faith, so be it unto thee." "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." "*Choose your mode.*"

The disputants having each the privilege of fifteen minutes for a second speech, Bro. F. arose and said that, as Dr. S. had acknowledged *our practice right*, he was perfectly satisfied, and would leave him to decide about his own practice.

P.S. I am glad to know that, on this subject of weekly communion, the Baptists are advancing in the

right direction, as the following statement will show. More than twenty years ago, ten or eleven members of the Baptist Church in Connellsville, Pa. became convinced that it was their duty to commune every Lord's day; and wrote a memorial to the church, requesting that privilege. This being denied, they asked the church "by what authority did they these things." The response was, that there was no scripture forbidding it, but it was *contrary to the rules of the church*. Choosing to obey God rather than man, they began to "come together on the first day of the week to break bread," and *for this offense alone, they were all excluded*. They immediately organized on the Bible as their only creed. The same church afterwards excluded some of her members for communing with them, but has now ceased to do so. "Pass on the Light"

Sixth Proposition—"Do the Scriptures teach that true believers, the children of God, may so fall away as to be finally lost?" Mr. Franklin affirms, Mr. Shadrach denies.

The scriptures and arguments adduced by Bro. F. in support of this proposition were arranged under the following heads:

I. Some of the elect have become reprobate, while some of the reprobate have been elected.

1. Esau, who had a birthright, lost it; while Jacob, who had none, obtained that of his brother, (Gen. xxv.29-34.) All Calvinistic creeds quote this as a proof text. Esau, so fell away that he could not inherit the blessing, though he sought it carefully with tears, (Heb. xii.17.)

2. The Jews who were once the people of God—the natural branches of the olive tree—were broken off because of unbelief—and the Gentiles were grafted in. This olive tree is not the church with its "branches," as many suppose, but Abraham. The Jews are the natural branches—his children according to the flesh; the Gentiles, by the gospel, are grafted in—become his children by faith. If the church is the olive tree, who are the branches? Not the members of the church, for they are the church itself.

3. Judas, who was an Apostle, and in the confidence of Jesus, his own familiar friend, fell by transgression, so as to be finally lost.—"None of them is lost but the son of perdition;" John xvii.12. If Judas was not a believer, from what did he fall? From infidelity? This would be *falling upwards—falling into faith!* The Scripture tells us the time when Satan entered him—when he fell.

II. Some for whom Christ died, perish. All are exhorted to fear lest they fail of the grace of God. 2 Peter ii.1: "But there were false prophets also among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." Rom. xiv.15 "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died." Does not Dr. S. believe that those "for whom Christ died" are children of God? Why this exhortation, if there is no danger of destroying them? If they are not "true believers," they are destroyed already. "He that believeth not is condemned already." Heb. ii.2,3, For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Heb. iv.1, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Why should we fear if there is no possibility of our being finally lost—of not entering into that rest? If Dr. S.'s doctrine is true, we will certainly "escape," whether we neglect the great salvation or not. His doctrine is calculated to encourage the neglect of duty. It has no comfort in it for any one, unless it be for old backsliders and preachers that have lost their character, and want to impose on the people. No wonder Dr. S. is so easy about communing every first day of the week. He thinks there is no danger of his being finally lost, whether he breaks bread or neglects it. His system destroys all accountability. Rev. xxii.19,

“And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things that are written in this book.” None but “true believers, the children of God,” have any part in the book of life, and they “may so fall,” by their own act, as to have their part in these taken away, which is equivalent to being finally lost. Dr. S. ought to be warned by this, and handle the word of God honestly.

III. Scriptures which speak of falling from grace, turning from righteousness, etc. Ezek. xviii. 24: “But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? None of his righteous deeds that he hath done shall be remembered: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.” Gal. v.4: “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” Heb. xii. 15; “Looking diligently lest any man fall of the grace of God.” Heb. x.38, “Now the just man shall live by faith; but if any man draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him.” 1 Cor. ix.27: “But I keep under my body, and bring it unto subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” The ‘righteous’ spoken of by Ezekiel are certainly “true believers;” yet the prophet tells us they may turn from their righteousness, and die in their sins. Will they not be finally lost? Can any man fall from grace? Or draw back, who has never gone forward? Was not Paul a true believer, a child of God? Yet he seemed to think there was at least a possibility of his falling away. He certainly did not believe Dr. S.’s doctrine—Heb. vi.4-6: “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.” There can be no doubt of those who were once enlightened and made partakers of the Holy Spirit, being the children of God; yet the Apostle supposes they may “fall away,” so as to be beyond repentance: and what is not possible is not supposable.

Heb. x.26,27: “For if we sin willfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.” There is, then, a possibility of a Christian sinning willfully. In view of this, what a fearful thing it is for a man to say, that, let him do what he will he can never fall so as to be finally lost! Rev. iii.5: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” The converse of this is: he that does not overcome, is not faithful unto death—shall not be clothed in white; but his name shall be blotted out of the book of life. Are there any names in the book of life but those of the children of God?—2 Peter i. 10-11 “Wherefore the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if you do these things ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” If, then, we do not do these things we will surely fall, and fail of an entrance in the everlasting kingdom—will finally be lost. Everything depends on our obedience. “Blessed are they who do his commandments; that they may have right to the tree of life.” “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me.” The righteous are everywhere represented as justified, because they have *done* the will of God, and sinners as condemned for not doing it. Dr. S.’s doctrine, like Universalism, is calculated to “comfort the ungodly.”

In reply, Dr. Shadrach denied that there was anything in the proposition about falling from grace. The question was not, whether a Christian might not *in some measure fall* but whether he can “so

fall away as to be lost.” Who has not, at some time fallen? Three-fourths of Mr. F.’s time might have been saved if he had suggested in advance his train of argument. For no election, or effectual calling in the universe will save the man that don’t keep the commandments. Although God has determined to save some—has elected or ordained them to eternal life—he has also determined to save some of them through certain means, and without the use of these means they cannot be saved. Paul told the Galatians that if they went back to Judaism they had “fallen from grace,” by trying to help out or improve Christianity with the law of Moses. The passage from Ezek. xviii has nothing to do with eternal salvation; but “he that doeth these things shall live by them .” Mr. F. doesn’t discriminate between the covenant of Moses which had its conditions and could be broken, and the covenant confirmed of God in Christ, and can not be broken but by God himself. Who ever heard of Esau being one of the elect? What has his rejection to do with this question? “The powers of the world to come,” in Heb. vi.5, is translated by the Bible Union: “The powers of the Christian dispensation.” If they fall away from this there is no other dispensation. But this passage does not say they *will* fall away, but *if* they fall away. Mr. F. bases a positive doctrine on a mere hypothesis—a supposition. Jesus says, “If I were to say, I know not the Father, I make myself a liar.” Does this prove that he might so fall away as to deny God? Again, “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.” Was there a likelihood that he would *not be lifted up*? Does the language of Paul, 1 Cor. ix.27, prove that he had any apprehension that he *would* be a castaway? We ought to always be on our guard lest we be drawn aside—lest we find out that we are not “*true believers.*” “I tell the gentleman,” said Dr. S., that, “unless he is converted from these silly notions, all the election in the universe will not save him. He says the tendency of my doctrine is to make men neglect their duty. Did he ever hear me say any thing depreciative of practical piety?”

The Doctor here introduced a rebutting argument founded on the immutability of God’s covenant *made in eternity* with Christ. As the basis of this, he read Heb. viii chapter, “I will make a new covenant with the house of Judah, etc— and their sins and iniquities *will I remember no more.*” Also Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27: “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit also will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will take away and cause you to walk in my statutes, and *ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*” God made a covenant with Adam, a holy man, and it was broken: no wonder then, that every other covenant with man should be broken. His covenant with Noah he will not break, nor that with David in which he promises a son to sit on his throne, nor the covenant of redemption made with Christ. The sun and moon may be blotted out, but God’s covenant can never fall. No man can be saved till he is in Christ *his surety.* “By grace are ye saved—not by works, lest any man should boast.” If this covenant has conditions, man has nothing to do with them: Christ fulfilled them all. The procuring of salvation is the work of Christ alone. As there was perfection in the procuring of it, so is there perfection throughout. Read Rom. viii. 29-30; John vi.44,45. 1 Pet. 1,2: “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God,” etc. The procuring of salvation is the work of Christ alone. As there was perfection in the procuring of it, so is there perfection throughout. Read Rom. viii. 29-39; John vii.44,45. 1 Pet. i.2: “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God,” etc. Jude i.1—“to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and *preserved in Jesus Christ,* and called.” If God justifies, who shall revoke his will? Who shall separate us from the love of God? The warnings and exhortations of the Bible are all right, and necessary to encourage Christians to the world, and prove them to themselves that they are children of God

Judas was never a true believer. “Jesus knew from the beginning who should betray him.” “I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil.” He fell not from grace, but from ministry.

Bro. F. responded that, by admitting that the “true believer” may “fall from grace” Dr. S. had virtually given up the question; for if men fall from grace, and so die, they die without the grace of God by which we are saved. His quotation from Eph. ii.9, *Not of works,* ” to have any bearing on this question, must mean, without obedience; but Paul says, in the next verse, we are “created in Christ Jesus unto *good works; that we should walk in them.*” Dr. S. says he teaches men to obey the commandments. So does the Universalist, and at the same time tells him he’ll be saved whether he keeps them or not. His whole theory on contingencies is wrong. Whatever is affirmed conditionally, by Jesus or the Apostles, is possible. It was possible for Jesus to deny his Father, or to refuse to be lifted up; for he acted voluntarily. He had power to lay down his life, or withhold it. *He humbled himself,* and became obedient unto death. Hence, when the Apostle says, *If they shall fall away,*” *it implies the possibility of falling.* So with all similar passages. Were there no power to *disobey,* there would be no power to obey. The covenant recorded in Jer. xxxi., and read by Dr. S. from Heb. viii., and upon which he bases his theory, was not made with Christ, as he says, but with “their fathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt.” Where did he ever learn of a covenant *made in eternity,* between the Father and Son? There is not a word about it in the Bible. He is right in saying that God determined to save sinners through certain means; but it is equally true that God determined to save sinners through certain means; but it is equally true that God ordained that all who make use of the means shall be saved, and all who refuse or neglect them will be lost. The Scripture no where says that Judas never believed, but that Jesus *knew from the beginning* who should betray him. He thinks it strange that I mentioned Jacob and Esau; but every one well acquainted with Calvinism knows that this is one of their favorite texts. The passage read from the eighth chapter of Romans does not say that a Christian can not *separate himself* from the love of God, but that none of the things there mentioned can do it. Our salvation depends not on outward circumstances and the conduct of others, but on our own acts, God being our helper. “Dr. S. has found it convenient to *pass by* most of my arguments, just as he says God *passed by some of you.* As he is the respondent, why did he not take up them in order and dispose of them? It is easier to declaim scraps of his old sermons on the covenant made in eternity, than to reply to me.”

In his closing speech (contrary to the rules of discussion) Dr. S. introduced a new argument from John x.27-28: “My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me; and I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” After quoting the words “and they follow me,” said Dr. S. :”*If they do this* they will go to heaven.” Then, of course, if they do not they will not go to heaven, but be “finally lost.” Thus he replied to his own argument, and thus closed the “Pine Flats Debate.”

The attendance was large all the time, and a deep interest manifested. When the discussion closed every body seemed to be in good humor. Nothing occurred to mar our enjoyment or alienate friends. The people met and parted each day on the most friendly terms. This is a practical demonstration that discussions *may* be conducted without engendering enmity and strife. True, they are not always so conducted, but this abuse of a *good institution* is no argument against it. From fair and friendly discussion truth is always the gainer. But let us cultivate a spirit of piety rather than controversy, and at the same time, “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,” “giving an answer to every man that shall ask a reason of the hope that is in us with meekness and fear.” May the Lord enable us to walk that none of all his followers be “finally lost.”

L.R. Norton
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