MINUTES
OF THE TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
CAMPBELL COUNTY ASSOCIATION
OF REGULAR BAPTISTS,
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CIRCULAR LETTER.

Dear Brethren:

Desiring to render our annual meeting a source, both of happiness and profit to the churches, we again address you in a Circular Letter. In looking over the subjects which have presented themselves for consideration, we have selected the following, viz:

The duty of the churches with respect to our increase of laborers in the ministry. We say the duty of the churches, because each church is an independent body, amenable to no other body, admitting no intrusion within her inclosures. She is the highest ecclesiastical tribunal known in our denomination. With her decisions there can be no interference, from them no appeal. Hence it is her duty to cultivate her own gifts, and if she does not she must answer to God for the neglect. The subject divides itself into two parts—1st. The duty—2d. The principles which should guide a church in bringing forth candidates for the ministry.

1st.—The duty: Christ said to his disciples, Matt. 9, 38—"Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." In this command the solemn duty is imposed on each disciple of Christ, of praying to the Lord for an increase of ministers of the gospel. But the command of Christ to pray for an increase of laborers implies the promise of an increase, and that we are confidently to expect and carefully examine the field for such increase. We consider the point as proven, that it is the duty of every disciple of Christ, 1st. To pray for an increase of ministers. 2d. To expect an answer to their prayers. 3d. To look for the increase within their own limits. Were this duty faithfully discharged, the entire field would be surveyed in prayer and faith and hope.

2d. We notice the principles which should guide a church in bringing forth candidates for the christian ministry. The first step, in bringing forward a candidate, is, to grant him a license, by vote of the church, to exercise his gifts in preaching the gospel. This course, if not universal, is, at least, widely prevalent, and to this incipient step we call your special attention. An act so solemn and momentous in its results, requires earnest prayer; and due deliberation with respect to the qualifications requisite to a profitable discharge of this most important branch of ministerial duty. 1st. We remark, a desire to preach the gospel must not be regarded as an
study; may prove a lasting benefit. The second remark is, that they should open the way before him for this improvement of the mind. Do we not know of some young man, who might be useful in the harvest, but who feels the want of this cultivation and desires it ardently, but whose way is hedged up by poverty? How small would be the sacrifice, and how rich might be the return. While we were resting in the dust, the influence we might thus exert would be rolling its tide of blessings round the world. Brethren, think on these things and the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding.