

The Christian.

ST. JOHN, N. B., - - - JUNE 1897.

EDITORIAL.

THE SABBATH AND THE LORD'S DAY.

The first day of the week commemorates the resurrection of the world's Redeemer, and is hence the most precious day to the redeemed of the Lord. God proclaimed at his open grave, "Thou art my Son, THIS DAY have I begotten thee." Ps. ii. 7; Acts xiii. 33; Heb. i. 5. The disciples must have had some urgent reason for meeting on the day their Lord arose, even when they did not expect to see him. Had they met on the seventh day they would have no fear of molestation; but on this day the doors were closed for fear of the Jews.

Jesus approved of their meeting and met with them. The sight and loving words of their risen Lord so gladdened the hearts of the disciples that they were begotten again into a living hope by his resurrection.—(1 Peter i. 3.) So that on the very day the Lord was begotten from the dead his ten apostles were begotten into living hope. Thomas was not with them when Jesus came; but on the next first day of the week when Jesus met with them Thomas was there and he also was begotten into a living hope—(John xx. 24)

The Holy Spirit honored the Lord's rising day in coming from heaven and filling the apostles so that they would tell the assembled nations in their own languages the wonderful works of God, and so preach the gospel as to lead three thousand souls to Christ. From that day forward his people were called "the church," and the birthday of God's Son proved to be also the birthday of his church.—(Acts ii; Lev. xxiii. 15.)

It is no wonder then, that this was ever after the meeting day of the church—a day of worship and of joyful remembrance of their Saviour's death and resurrection. There can be no surer sign of apostacy than a willful abandonment of such meeting.

Many are horrified to hear of the ten commandments being done away. They regard it as the grossest infidelity and utter disregard of God's authority and law—a rejection of the Old Testament, etc. This alarm arises mostly from a misconception of what is meant by *done away*, supposing it to be a condemning or destroying of the ten commandments when it has no such meaning. A young sailor on his first trip is on a rocky coast at midnight. At 1 a. m. he accidentally hears the captain say, "In a few hours the stars will be *done away*." He hears no explanation, and is in terror at the thought of being left in utter darkness on that dangerous coast. But at 9 a. m. he tells the captain of his terror and of his mistake. "Now I see how the stars which were so helpful and so glorious at 1 a. m. are *done away* and have no glory. We cannot see a star now because they are swallowed up in

the greater and grander light of the sun." In this way the decalogue or ten commandments are *done away*.

In II Cor. iii, Paul tells plainly that what was written on stones had once been glorious, but now has no glory by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which was *done away* was glorious, MUCH MORE that which *remaineth* is glorious, showing that the light of the decalogue has been as completely swallowed up in the glory of the gospel as the star-light was lost in the excelling light of day. Yet in the face of all this Adventists deny that the decalogue has been *done away* and contend that its light is so perfect that no glory can excel it. Even in the Old Testament are *two* commandments so much greater than the ten that on them hang all the law and the prophets. The first is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and strength." The second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." These are unchangeable and eternal, and cannot be *done away*.

If the decalogue were perfect it would perfectly describe the life of the Son of God. He kept that law, but he did more. It is true that he had no God but one. That he made no graven image or likeness of anything in heaven or earth, or bowed down to them, or worshiped them. He did not take the name of God in vain, etc. He remembered and kept holy the Sabbath. He did not steal or kill. Did not bear false witness against his neighbor, etc. He honored his father and mother, and did all that the decalogue commanded; but was this a perfect description of his wonderful life? How would that description compare with that of the New Testament? The peoples' testimony who saw what he did was, "He hath done all things well." After Pilate's earnest search to find a reason why he should crucify him, "I find in him *no fault*" was his testimony. That of his inspired apostle who was with him day and night for years is, "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth," etc. But better than all is the repeated testimony of God, "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am WELL PLEASED."

What does the decalogue say of Jesus' intense love of God? or his love for his neighbor, even of his enemy? It has in it no command to love any one.

Let the reader place side by side the decalogue and Jesus' sermon on the mount, and ask, Does one excel the other in glory? or are they equal?

When the man came kneeling to Jesus and asked, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Jesus repeated a number of the ten commandments. The man answered, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." Jesus did not deny that he had done so, but looked on him and loved him. Still these commandments were not enough. That law was not perfect and made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did. He said to the young man, "One thing thou lackest; go

thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven," etc. (Mark x, 17, 22).

What this man lacked was not an obedience to any of the ten commandments, but of obedience to the second of the *two*.

The priest and the Levite who passed by the man who fell among the thieves without helping him did not break one of the ten commandments, but they broke the second of the *two*. Let him who disputes this tell which one of the ten they broke. (Luke x. 31, 32).

The Jews in Paul's day did not believe that the glory of the decalogue was *done away*. They read the Old Testament and Moses' law to justify and guide them to heaven. But they saw there no mercy for the transgressor. The man who was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath was taken out and stoned by his brethren without pity till he died. He would not feel the love of God when dying, nor would they when thus stoning him. Those who read Moses had veiled hearts, keeping out the love of God. In this law shone the terrible justice of God, filling them with terror, but no love to reach their hearts.

But when the reading turns to the Lord Jesus, the veil is taken away. They see the strict justice of God as it shines in Jesus Christ who took the sinner's place and died the just for the unjust to bring us to God. His cross removes the veil and the love of God reaches and conquers the heart. The gospel thus reveals a glory that eclipses the law, and the Lord's day is much more glorious than the Sabbath.

To keep the first day of the week as primitive Christians did is immensely profitable now. To meet their brethren around their Lord's table to remember his dying love, to learn his will and sing his praise, kindle afresh their love to Christ and to one another and assists them through the week to honor their Lord.

In I Cor. xv., Paul tells what the gospel is, what it had done for these believers, and what it would finally do for them, "If they KEPT IT IN MIND. To *commemorate* is to call to remembrance by a solemn act (*Webster*) or about the same to *keep in mind*. Now, says Paul to Christians, You will be saved now and forever if you keep in mind the gospel. When you take the Lord's Supper you commemorate his death for our sins. When you do it on his rising day you commemorate his resurrection. So that this at least greatly helped them to keep the gospel in mind and be saved, just as the fourth of July celebration helps the American to keep in mind the nation's independence.

To those that are without, it is also a great blessing—an enduring monument to the truth of the gospel.

Jesus' death was public. All readers of history are told that he was crucified. Not so with his resurrection. Only a few saw him. His enemies said he died for blasphemy, for saying he was the Son of God.