

The Christian.

ST. JOHN, N. B., . . . OCTOBER, 1893

EDITORIAL.

A JOYFUL MEETING.

Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.
John xx. 20.

The Christian should be always able, with meekness and fear, to give a reason of his hope and a reason of his religious acts. The Seventh-day Adventists censure us "or meeting to worship on the first and not on the seventh day of the week. They say that Constantine and the Pope first changed the day of worship from the seventh to the first day, and that we have no higher authority for the change.

There is no account in the New Testament of Jesus or His disciples meeting for worship on the first day of the week *before His death*, but His custom was to meet on the seventh. (See *Lu' s iv. 16; Mark vi. 2*). There is no account of Jesus or His disciples meeting on the seventh day of the week *after He rose from the dead*, but always on the *first* day of the week. (See *John xx. 19, 26; Acts ii. 1 and xx. 7, etc., etc.*) Jesus' death and resurrection made a wonderful change in religious matters and among them in the weekly worship. Old things had passed away and all things had become new. So it was Jesus and His disciples who first changed the worship from the seventh to the first day of the week and who kept it changed. The first day was first observed by Christ and His Disciples the very day He rose from the dead and brought life and immortality to light hundreds of years before Constantine and the Pope, and hence the absurdity of charging the latter with the change.

There is nothing in the seventh day of the week pointing to Jesus' death and His resurrection, but everything in the first day, as well as the example of the Lord and His inspired apostles. Those, therefore, who in the face of all this ignore the first day and contend for the seventh, declare by their actions, "We are Moses' disciples; we know that God spoke unto Moses," etc., etc. We will be guided by what God said to the fathers in times past by THE PROPHETS, but will not be guided by what He has in THESE LAST DAYS SPOKEN TO US BY HIS SON, whom He hath appointed heir of all things. (Heb. i. 1, 2). It is an old and a fatal mistake to belittle Christ on the plea of exalting Moses.

It was right for the disciples to meet on the first day of the week, for Jesus met with them and confirmed His previous promise, "Wherever two or three of you shall meet together *in My name*, there I am in the midst." In His name means by His authority, and whether He had told them before His death to meet on that day (which is highly probable) or not, He approved of it by meeting with them.

It proved to the disciples a joyful day and a glad meeting. Till then sorrow had filled their hearts. Every step in their experience since Jesus had broken to them the sad secret of His death seemed to bring them nearer its awful realization. Their shameful desertion of Him when falling into the hands of His enemies still intensified the bitterness of their grief. They had broken every pledge of fidelity to Him and all forsaken Him and fled. Now they could not get near Him. His enemies had Him, and they could only behold afar off how they treated Him. What would the disciples not have given for one hour of His private company to hear His sweet voice, confess their cowardice and implore His pardon, but they could not get near Him. Afar off they saw Him scourged, crowned with thorns, clothed in purple and mocked as Caesar's rival. They saw Him nailed to the cross between two thieves and heard His earnest prayer and apologies for His mocking murderers,

and they saw Him bow His head and die. To them all seemed to be over now, their hopes all fled. Who can describe or imagine their sorrow? But the ten were together and doors closed against the Jews who might assault them. Jesus stands in their midst saying, "Peace be unto you."

1st. The sight of Jesus was so unexpected. No testimony of others would be believed on that matter. Now they saw Him, the very same Jesus who was crucified. Here He was the conqueror of death. Enemies challenged Him to come down from the cross and shun such a death. Friends hoped he would do so. But He did *not* come down. He met death in its worst form and armed with all its power and conquered death, and He is here with His brethren, not ashamed of them. They were glad that He did so much more than to come down from the cross and escape from the last enemy.

2nd. His salutation made them glad. Not a word of upbraiding. He knew and pitied their weakness and had come to fulfil His rich promise, "My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Christ's peace is like no other. Sin is the cause of strife and war. Christ having made peace by the blood of His cross now meets his disciples to make it theirs, so that the peace of God might reign in their hearts, yes, that it might *reign* in their hearts by Christ, not only dwell in their hearts, but so dwell as to utilize and control every trouble and every emotion for their best interests and the glory of Christ. His death for our sins delivers his people from sin and all that sin can do.

3rd. The joy which Jesus gives is altogether different from what the world gives, it is *permanent*. He says: "Your joy no man taketh from you." Among earth's greatest joys is that of the married pair. It is innocent and for the present continuous, but it is marred by the thought of death and separation. Not so with Jesus' peace and joy. His bride has no alloy ahead. The union increases and grows until it reaches the joy unspeakable and full of glory. This made the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. No man could take from them their peace and joy. Persecution and tribulation only increased it; hence, when threatened and beaten for preaching the gospel, they departed, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus.

4th. But the sight of Jesus was a pledge of their own resurrection. He became the first fruits of them that slept. "He is the wave offering of a certain harvest." When they saw their resurrected brother and heard his sweet assuring words of peace in glad anticipation, they would sing even on this side of the grave redemption's triumphant song. "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

How all Christians should prize the Lord's day and the exalted privilege of meeting to remember His death and resurrection. Where would we sooner be than surrounding the Lord's table on the Lord's day when He comes to be glorified in His saints and admired in all them that believe? Then all His disciples will be glad to see the Lord.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THURSDAY.

August 31st—a beautiful day and a delightful time on the steamer "State of Maine," from St. John to Eastport. We landed at Eastport about twelve o'clock. At two o'clock we were aboard the little steamer for Lord's Cove, Deer Island. Bro. Stevens was on hand with pencil and paper, locating us for the annual. About fifty aboard he had to locate, and he was skilful enough to give every one of us splendid homes. Three o'clock we reached our destination—Lord's Cove, or the Cove

of the Lord's—among whom was James A. Lord, now settled in Cincinnati, Ohio, one of the most successful and efficient preachers in the United States. At four o'clock we attended our first meeting. First a song, then a few remarks by Sister Darst, of Boston, then a few short, earnest prayers and a scripture reading by Sister Flaglor. Then followed a grand talk by Sister Darst—on the work of missions. How inspiring it is to listen to one on the magnitude of this work who has the truth written in their soul! The lamp of light in our hand is good, but the day-star that shineth in our hearts is better.

At 7.30 the Annual Meeting of 1893 began, Bro. James E. Barnes in the chair. He gave us some very appropriate remarks relative to the blessings of Christian association. Bro. Stevens followed with a speech of welcome, bidding us all a hearty welcome to their homes and hearts. Bro. Ford replied by intensifying the worth of Christian fellowship that is such a blessed foretaste to our home above. Sister Gates offered a few words from a heart filled with devotion and love to God—a love made more sacred and dearer by the sad events of the past year. Bro. Emory spoke very tenderly and earnestly of the fellowship of the saints, and the changes, some that are bright and some that are dark, that are occurring from year to year. Bro. Cooke called our attention to some of the rich blessings God had granted to us during the year.

At eight o'clock Bro. Ford and Bro. Northcutt took the meeting. After the song, "Jesus Lover of My Soul," Bro. Ford read Matthew, seventeenth chapter, and offered prayer. Bro. Northcutt then discoursed to us from Matt. vii. 24, taking for his subject "On the Rock," or "Can God Save the Little Cabin." Although space will not allow even a synopsis of the discourse, we will be permitted to note a few of the thoughts presented. "There is but one way to heaven, but many ways to destruction. The way that one is saved is the way that every one must be saved." "We must build on the rock, and that means we must do what Christ commands, just because He has commanded it. The way our fathers did may or may not be right, but this should not be the reason for our action. We should do as Christ has said, because He said it. Too many are going the way their fathers and teachers went because of their faith and love in them, and not because of the sayings of Christ. . . . God does not ask us to do great things, but He does ask us to build on Christ by doing what He commands us. . . . We may not all be able to build houses equally as good, but we can all so build on the Rock that our house will stand. Our talents, our privileges and our environments may be different. The little cabin home may not have the ability or privilege to build the home that others may build, yet they can build as safely and as surely. We cannot, therefore, judge others, as we know not their circumstances. Could we know their conditions, we would have mercy and not be so harsh in our judgments. We must therefore learn to pity and not to blame. . . . The building must be done here. When the storms come we will have no time to build. . . . It is Christ that makes our building or character worthy. It is Christ in our baptism and Christ in our prayers and Christ in our life that make them effectual. Let Christ be in all our labors and in all our giving. Let Him be our all in all."

The discourse went home to all our hearts to remain there. We can never forget the earnest, tender, burning words of that discourse.

FRIDAY.

Prayer-meeting at nine o'clock, led by Bro. Emory. This was one of the most earnest meetings we ever enjoyed. Bros. Cooke, Ford, Devos, Leonard, Rowison, Dawson, Barnes, Sisters