

Original Contributions.

"Ye Are Not Under Law, But Under Grace."

REPLY TO ELDER S. C. ADAMS BY R. H. MOSS.

NUMBER I.

I feel impelled to reply to what Bro. Adams has said, under the above heading, by a profound conviction that the cause of Christ will suffer greatly unless a direct reply is made. I am glad that the editor is indirectly replying, but think that the gravity of the case demands a direct and explicit defence of the truth. I wish it understood that I entertain for Bro. Adams a high personal regard, that I recognize in him a devoted, earnest, self-sacrificing Christian of unblemished character and reputation, one worthy of being esteemed "very highly in love for his work's sake." I also cheerfully admit that Bro. Adams is capable of instructing me in many things to my great profit. When such a man publicly puts forth such teaching, and advocates positions which are so subversive of the peace and morality of the church, the demand is imperative that they be squarely met, and their influence counteracted by a presentation and defence of the truth. I shall endeavor to avoid the use of such expressions as "foolish and carnal men," "needs that one should teach them," "foolish Galatians," "teachers," (?) as they are not arguments:

I notice next that there is a general unreliability both in the quotation and application of the Scriptures, in the articles under review. We have, in the main, a very small part of a sentence quoted. No regard or attention is paid to the context, or the purpose for which the Holy Spirit used the language. A proposition is stated which was not in the mind of the Spirit, and in most instances as far from it as earth from heaven; and then parts of sentences which, in some instances, have the merit of a jingle of word, and in some not even that much, are arrayed in its support. I shall instance some of these: " * * God tried the power and virtue of this kind of 'law' for 1500 years, and then pronounced it a miserable failure in that it was 'weak and beggarly.'" I am sorry that an expression so full of reverence and disrespect to God has found its way into one of our papers over the signature of so good a man as Bro. Adams, and I

here enter my earnest protest against the publication of any more of them, even though they be written by him.

Bro. Adams, evidently means to affirm that the Holy Spirit applies the expression weak and beggarly to either the law of Moses or to "statutory and commanded law," or to both. This I emphatically deny. It seems to me that it would have been well for him to have proven a promise that is so important to his argument, instead of assuming it, and thus making his argument weak and beggarly, by begging the very thing he ought to have established. I earnestly wish that he had waited until he had done this, as in that case he would not have proceeded any farther. The expression weak and beggarly is found but once in the New Testament. "Gal. 4: 9: 'How turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments wherunto ye desire to be in bondage over again.'" Bro. Adams assumes that this means the rudiments of law. A quotation of the third verse will clearly show his mistake: "So we also when we were children were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world." When Paul says in the ninth verse "to be in bondage over again" he clearly means the rudiments of the world and not of law or of the law. The rudiments of the world—dancing, circus and theatre going, the practice of adultery under the divorce laws of our States, etc, are as far from the law of God as evil from good. This clearly shows that every time Bro. Adams has used this quotation, he has applied it to something that is as far from that to which the Spirit applied it, as is earth from heaven.

I have thus destroyed one of his main premises, and in doing so sapped the foundation of his entire argument; and more are to follow.
Centerville, Or., 14, 1882.

Public Prayer.

Since the publication of my articles on the subject of prayer, I have received a request from a very excellent and able minister of the Gospel, to furnish an article upon public prayer. It was stated that two articles had appeared in the *Polaris* against it, and claiming that our Savior did not teach or command public prayer. I have not seen the papers, and cannot imagine what kind of argument can be used against it, except it

may be that Christ did *not* command it. This would be a very conclusive argument to all those who think that christianity consists in a system of faith and worship, and that "the church" is to be governed by statutory law, or a code of commandments. It is very strange that people have not yet learned that Christ came to implant in the hearts of men, a law of life, or a principle of action, that should bring them into union and harmony with God, and cause them to "always do those things" that are good and right; and are, therefore, "well pleasing unto God." The very spirit and genius of the Christian religion is found in the meaning of the word religion. It comes from *religere*, which means *to bind back*, or *to tie back*. The alienation and "separation by wicked works," is healed, when man is restored to his natural union and harmony with God. In this union and harmony he should ever live; in the peace and liberty of that perfect love he should ever walk. That union with God cannot be maintained except by constant communion with God. Hence the necessity that we should "pray without ceasing." Whatever exhortation or admonition is given, is for the one purpose of maintaining and intensifying our perfect union and harmony with God. Whatever we do is for the purpose of promoting this spiritual relation. It is rightly called growth." Whatever will cause us "to grow in grace," and "to grow up into the stature of men and women in Christ," is the true bread of life. If we do not "speak often one to another," we would soon become cold and selfish. If we do not "pray with and for each other," we would soon cease to pray even for ourselves. "If we should forsake the assembling of ourselves together," we would soon become lukewarm, if we did not even forsake God himself. Abstaining from natural food will produce natural death, so abstaining from spiritual food will produce spiritual death. The assembling of the saints is one of the natural means of "keeping these things in remembrance," and "praying with and for each other," is one of the best means of promoting love and fellowship with each other and with God. The object of assembling together is "for edification," for "growth," and for spiritual development. Some of the means to be used as "spiritual bread" are reading the sacred

Scriptures, "singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs," and "praying with and for each other." These exhortations and suggestions have no more the character of "commandments" or statutory law, than the statement that we should eat and breathe, in order to live, or that "husbands should love their wives" and children, in order to live in happiness, and make home a heaven. When the Scriptures are read, if we receive it into a good and honest heart, it cannot fail of being "profitable;" for it is one of the means that is "able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among the sanctified." When Paul instructed Timothy "how he ought to behave himself in the house of God," he said, "I exhort that first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men." And if men and women "pray earnestly" and offer "effectual fervent prayer," there is no assembly but what would be "edified" and made better, if one or more *such* prayers were the only services of the hour. I cannot see who can doubt it or deny it.

A man who knows nothing of the real "spirit of prayer," or of "earnest fervent prayer," and who "performs divine service," according to a commanded law, can never pray, and knows nothing of the value of real prayer. But "if there is one among you" who has the spirit of Christ, and whose "fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ," I would say with James, "Let him pray one for another" in the public congregation, for "the effectual fervent prayer of a godly man availeth much." Instead of public prayer being unprofitable, every Christian knows that the congregation's "sweet hour of prayer" is the most profitable for spiritual strength, and hallowed communion and fellowship with God, and with one another, of all the services of "the house of God."

Further argument is therefore unnecessary. "I would, therefore, that men pray everywhere."

S. C. ADAMS.

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NUMBER V.

There are still many "carnal men" who "discern not spiritual things;" who seem to think that there is but one kind of law spoken of in all the book of God. If you