

Original Contributions.

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

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

Listen to this farther, "In the world and in the flesh we plow and sow and reap; we buy and sell, and come under the law of marriage, and are freed from the law of marriage." There is no mistaking the import of this language. It clearly asserts that the law of Christ is silent on the marriage relation, and that men are free and bound, as the law of the State frees and binds them, which is bad enough, or worse still, as they are free and bound by their own wills; for Paul is quoted entirely out of connection, "Let him do what he will he sinneth not." If it were true, that the most important relation of this world was completely ignored by our Savior in his law, it would be a reproach against his wisdom and law, from which they could never recover, and the infidel would have a weapon indeed. It is entirely foreign to all the facts in the case. The language of Jesus already quoted regulates the marriage relation, for all men and all time. Read 1 Cor. 7; Eph. 5: 22-33; and 1 Peter 3: 1-7, and see how clear and emphatic is the law in the true tabernacle or church of God for the marriage relation. That marriage is a divine, and not a human institution, is so clearly taught in the Scriptures, that it is regarded by all Christians as a romantic truth. That God should have instituted this relation, and then left it to the powers that be to regulate is clearly absurd. He has, in his law, regulated the relations which men have established, as governor and governed, master and slave. How much more then would he regulate what he had himself instituted. He says, "We may engage in all these earthly things" as godly men or Christians, and if "the perfect laws of liberty" control our hearts in all things I can truly say with Paul "Let him do what he will he sinneth not." How can "the perfect law of liberty" control men's hearts, unless in their lives they obey it? If they should follow the teaching I am opposing, and thus entirely ignore and disregard one of its most important moral laws and obligations, in their life and conduct, it would be worse than useless to talk about that law controlling

their hearts. When "the perfect law of liberty" is in the minds and hearts of men, they will yield a complete and loving obedience to all its requirements, and not seek to evade them by saying that they are "weak and beggarly," "statutory and commanded," and that as God's freemen they are above and free from, and not under them. One of the crying evils of our times is the laxity of sentiment and conviction in regard to the marriage obligation, and the consequent frequency of divorce and remarriage. This evil has been commented upon and deeply deplored, by men of the world, who contemplated its results only as they affected the stability of men's social relations, and the welfare of society. To what extent its evils would have reached by this time, had it not been for the saving salt of the law of Christ, and its enforcement upon the hearts and convictions of men by his servants, it is impossible to tell. Certain am I, that with all that they have done, to stay the evil, it is yet of fearfully alarming proportions. It destroys the sanctity of the marriage vows and obligations. Men and women, lightly and flippantly, take upon themselves these obligations, and repeat the vows, calculating that if they find them distasteful or unpleasant they can dissolve them, and try again. It destroys the home, brings great and irreparable evils and sufferings upon innocent children. It paves the way for scenes of violence and bloodshed, as witness the shooting to death of A. D. Richardson, by the real husband of the woman, who had sought and obtained in Indiana a divorce from him because she preferred Mr. R. to him. And see how evils multiply themselves. H. W. Beecher desecrated and trailed in the dust, the banner of Christianity by performing the marriage ceremony between these two, while one of them lay upon his death bed. When men of the world notice, write against, and deplore these things, where should the Christian be found? What should be his attitude toward them? Certainly he should not advocate positions which would make the matter almost infinitely worse, by destroying one of the greatest safeguards that God has placed around this institution, in giving men the law of the Gospel regulating it. Bro. Adams may say that he means that only godly men are free from this law, and that ungodly men

are under it. I know of no principle by which anything that is morally wrong for an ungodly man, could be morally right for a godly one. On the contrary, I believe that the godly man's moral obligation is as much greater and more binding, as his profession is greater and better than the ungodly man's. I would think it important under any circumstances, that the teaching of our brotherhood on this subject, should be understood, but that importance is greatly magnified by the appearance and teaching of the articles under review, and while I greatly regret the necessity I can do no less than to oppose such teaching with all my strength and power. I must be allowed to respectfully protest against the application of such expressions as "foolish Galatians," "teachers" (?) "does greatly err not knowing the Scriptures," "is not sufficiently instructed in the kingdom of God," &c., to such men as those from whom I have quoted, and, indeed, to all our writers and teachers. If necessary I could furnish a long list from the Campbells onward. In my humble judgment Bro. Adams has entirely misapprehended the basis, seat, or ground of difference between the law of Moses and the law of Christ in his articles; he has scarcely, if at all, touched upon the reasons for the doing away of one and the bringing in of the other. He has entirely mistaken the nature of Christian freedom. He teaches that the Mosaic dispensation was all law, while Christianity is all grace, that the one was all flesh, and the other all spirit, that the laws of the one were all carnal or fleshly commandments, and the laws of the other all spiritual principles, that the laws of the one were written on paper, while all the laws of the other are written in the mind and heart. Making the last first and the first last, I shall try to show his misapprehension and mistake by developing the teaching of the Scriptures upon these points. I shall affirm and try to prove that God has, in all ages and in all his dealings with men, demanded the heart and mind, and that he has written his law in the mind and heart, in the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, as well as in the Christian. In the 11th chapter of Hebrews Paul gives a long list of godly men, beginning with Abel, who acted by faith. As faith works through love, (Gal. 5: 6), and cleanses the

heart (Acts 15: 9), it will be apparent at once that the law of God was in their minds and hearts, and that the law of love was in force from man's creation, or in both Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations. Read the 4th, 5th and 6th chapters of Deut., while I note 4th and 6th, "Keep, therefore, and do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding," verse 9: "Only take heed to thyself and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart;" verse 29: "But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. 5: 27, "Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always." 6: 5-7, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might; and these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children." 11: 1, "Therefore, thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and keep his charge and his statutes and his judgments and his commandments always." 30: 6, "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul that thou mayest live." Lev. 19: 18, "But thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, I am the Lord."

These quotations demonstrates that God demanded men's hearts and minds in the law of Moses; that the Jews were under the law of love; that that law consisted of statutes and commandments; that the measure of love was the keeping of the commandments; that under the law of Moses the true or real circumcision was that of the heart, as Paul so truly declares, and that the law of Moses so far from consisting entirely of carnal and fleshly commandments, was also highly spiritual. It could not have been otherwise, coming as it did from God. They also clearly show that God puts his laws into men's minds and hearts, by having them written and providing directly and explicitly that they shall be taught to others, by those who receive them by inspiration (as did Moses and the apostles) or those who learn them from their writings, as we, in this day, must do. If there is any difference between