

his own will, but the will of him that sent him. (As this subject—the absoluteness of God, is not too frequently discussed, I wish to impress deeply every sentence and thought). “I can of my ownself do nothing,” says Jesus. “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish *his work*.” Then Christ while among men, was under law—the *will* of his Father. The work he had to do was his Father’s. But what was the *nature* of this work? “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” Then he did not come to condemn, but to save. Again, “The Son of Man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” Then his errand, his mission into the world, was limited—limited to efforts to *save*, without being vested with authority to destroy. He could weep over Jerusalem, *but could not burn it*, because he was under law to his Father, who had not sent him to do this kind of work. Then, though it may seem irreverent to say, Christ *could not* burn that city, it is true he could not without transcending his mission, which he would not do. Fidelity forbade it. God was working through him, and nothing but God’s will could be done. This same *will* is still in operation; and though he has set his king upon his holy hill of Zion, he still “works all things after the counsel of his own will.”

Christ, as king, commissioned his apostles. Was their commission limited authority, or unlimited? Unlimited say some, because they were his ambassadors, clothed with the authority of his government. ’Tis admitted they were thus clothed, but for a special, a limited work—to act for the government, in promoting the interest of the government—building up the nation, without any authority to dissolve the government—injure it in any way; or to meddle with its internal order or arrangements—strong as the government itself, to act for the government in promoting its interests; but powerless to turn against it, being exclusively a onesided power. An ambassador cannot dissolve our legislative assemblies, depose our state governors, nor even our county sheriffs. In short, he cannot prevent the lowest government officer, from discharging the least duty of his office; for every government officer is backed by the whole government, in discharging all official

duties. While admitting this is true in earthly governments, the question arises, Is it true in reference to the apostles, as Christ’s ambassadors? Paul may settle this.

“If I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.” For this he had no authority. “Not that we have *dominion* over your faith; but are helpers of your joy.” “We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.” Onesided authority. “Though I should boast somewhat more of *our authority*, which the Lord hath-given us for *edification*, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed.” “Which the Lord gave for building you up, and not for casting you down.” Rev. ver. (2 Cor. 1: 24; 10: 8; 13: 8, 10). These Scriptures speak of the same limitations of apostolic authority that are common to the authority of ambassadors. Apostles could do nothing against the truth—nothing against the order of things established by the truth of the gospel in the churches; but for its promotion. Their authority was given them to promote edification—for building up individuals and churches; but they had no authority for pulling down—discouraging, preventing the discharge of duties, or in any wise hindering their growth and development. They could tell them how they were loved by God, and of the hope set before them, and thus help their joy. They could speak of the spiritual gifts in their possession, tell them for what they were given; tell them how best to use them for the greatest good; to seek more, as more were attainable by earnestness and prayer; that they might abound to edification, as the exercise of these gifts promoted edification. “As ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.” As the exercise of gifts promoted edification, and as apostolic authority was restricted to promoting edification, apostles had no authority to hinder the exercise of these gifts. They could not say to the least saint, Keep silence, in reference to the exercise of any spiritual gift. God had conferred these gifts, as he saw fit, and none could intimidate. This is decisive. This is settled, if Scripture can settle anything. Then when Paul said, “Let the women keep silence,” he had no reference to the exercise of any spiritual gift, as apostolic authority did not permit such an act. It would be nothing short of

fighting against God. If women had spiritual gifts conferred upon them, it was the will of God they should exercise them, and were permitted so to do. This will be considered in our next.

Hebron, O.

SOUL FREEDOM.

There is nothing to be compared with freedom. To be free is to be most like God. True we are his servants; but this servitude is for our freedom. To serve him is the only freedom. To serve him is to live in harmony with truth external and internal. There are only two worlds, the internal (soul) and external. God dwells in the external and the internal, if not in the latter we are in constant discord. Then the sooner poor soul, you get in concord with God the better. Harmonize yourself with his eternal truth. Be free. The blessed secret of this freedom, is the right to choose the right and to shun the wrong. The world knows no other such freedom. This is the only true freedom. It is generic.

The soul must be true to itself and to God, the one is synonymous with the other. If the soul is not true to truth, to God, it is false to every noble impulse, false to its nature, false to its beings end and aim, false to its Creator, false to the conditions of its being. This is the veriest slavery, this is doing under the lash of Satan, obeying the voice of a fiend.

God has marched effectively against human slavery, He has and is marching effectively against the more prevalent slavery of sin. Too, he is uprooting the bondage of rite, form, ceremony, politics and public opinion. These must go before the all conquering spirit of truth-freedom. Truth is so broad so many sided that he who obeys her voice must march ever onward. She leads right up to the battlements of the third heaven, through them and before the throne of the Most High, there she has origin, whence she proceeds conquering and to conquer. She is the thoughts of God uttered in love and must abide for ever.

The undefiled true soul receives truth as water receives water. They are of one. God is their author. Conscience is truth, the voice of God in the soul. Conscience speaks and we must obey or be defiled. Conscience is our guardian angel ever watching and protecting us. To be free is to yield, unhesitating, to conscience. Is to lay aside mere

opinion, public or private and follow truth.

It becomes us to look about us and determine whether we are free, or whether we are bowing to some tyrant lash of opinion, hobby, or worse. One a slave to ones own whims is a menial indeed.

J. W. C.

Correspondence.

Letter from Bro. T. F. Campbell.

SPRINGFIELD, Mo.

Dec. 28, 1883.

Dear Herald:

We are in the midst of the Christmas holidays, yet the season is remarkably open and the weather very pleasant. Though situated on the summit of the Ozark mountains, we have not had a flake of snow. A little sleet—not enough to cover the ground—fell a few days ago. It remained only a few hours. This state of weather will seem almost incredible to those who have seen in the papers accounts of the deep snows and intense cold of the East, North and West. This season is surely exceptional, or Springfield would become noted for the mildness and salubrity of its climate. The usual revelry, with occasional debauchery and murder characterize this, as former festivals of this semi-barbaric origin.

The papers are full of deeds of blood perpetrated in drunken carousals on Monday and Tuesday last. It may well be doubted whether the social enjoyment and devotional exercises can, in any measure, compensate for the iniquity incident to the occasion.

It is stated in a leading secular paper which ought to know whereof it speaks, that there are more intoxicants used and more crime perpetrated on the 25th day of December than any other day of the year. If this be true, can Christians knowingly approve and participate in a custom as a religious festival, which has not in the Bible one word to authorize?

God has given us fifty-two feast days in each year in which we are to celebrate the death, but not one in which to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. The reason is obvious. Our salvation is nowhere coupled with the latter, while all our hopes and aspirations are directly associated with his death, burial, resurrection, ascension and glorification. How strange it is that men will not be content with