

we do, or, which is the same thing, let us do evil that good may come, shows that one's damnation is just: for it shows what a vile estimate such place on the doctrine.

It is not predestination that licenses a man to do wrong in any sense. But, as a thief will take shelter anywhere to conceal his crime, so one that loves sin will contend for his just so much as even to assail the righteousness of God to obtain a plea in his justification, and will seek a shelter anywhere, even if on the horns of the altar of holiness. If man is such a sinner that he must be killed dead to stop him from committing sin he will give all for his life which so loves sin, and will even thrust himself into the daring position of those that say, we have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement. Such will even say that God made us as we are, and it would be unjust to damn us. This is a refuge of lies that cannot stand the overflowing scourge, in the day when judgment shall be brought to the line, and righteousness to the plummet. Then all counterfeits will be detected.

If a man loves error or false doctrine more than the truth he may hide it under some specious form or refuge of falsehood in time, but God judges the heart, and shall render to every man according to his work.

Still another class, who censure God in defending their wicked course, is the one that make no pretensions to religion, but cover their course under the plea—that, according to the doctrine the Baptists hold, we can do nothing good; therefore we will continue in sin, or do 'evil that good may come. That this general teaching is from the devil is manifest in his temptation on the mount: "If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down, for it is written, he shall give his angels charge over thee," &c. Here Satan imitates Christ in quoting Scripture. But he does what the Scriptures do not command; namely he tells Christ to cast himself down.

To cast ourself down would be to sin. To argue that it does not matter what a man does is to cast himself down, or tempt God. It is the woman that is overtaken unawares in the field and cries out that finds favor—not the one that runs after false lovers. A man's logic is an expression of his inward character. If our logic infers that we are licensed to sin, our premises rest on the rotten foundation of a wicked heart. If we know that the Lord is a hard master and gathers where he strews not, then we are required to prepare for such a reckoning by a more diligent use of our talents; but the man who says Jesus is a hard master does not wish to serve him.

But says one, "where sin abounds does not grace much more abound;" and, if it is needful for sin to abound in order for grace to much more abound, is not God unrighteous if he should take vengeance? This is speaking as a man would speak, as all natural men would speak. But if this is so then how would God judge the world? If it is not so how

could a sinner be saved? Grace saves sinners. Grace is more than mercy, or pity, it includes both. Pity could be shown to one we did not love. Likewise mercy, and this might minister to one suffering without changing his character; as a merciful man shows mercy to his beast, but it still remains a beast. But grace changes the character and condition of one justly condemned, and righteously brings him salvation—brings him salvation in so glorious a way that it is marvelous—marvelous that such a sinner could be saved at all—marvelous that he is so wonderfully, so righteously saved—made a new creature in Christ: "Behold what manner of love." It is love—more than mercy and pity; but including them both, that embraces sinners dead in sins; even love with great mercy. It also gives a new life by birthright and heirship. So that the Spirit of God is given us and we do not want to sin. The refuges of lies are all gone.

None but those taught by grace can love it, or even understand it.

My friend, are you one that cannot live as well as you wish; that cannot, or you are afraid you do not, love God as he deserves to be loved and adored—that fails to know as much as you wish of salvation? So that you, instead of laying an ambush to commit sin, have already committed more than you wish, and your grief is that you cannot cease from sin. If so this is such evidence as I humbly conceive penitent souls have of a work of grace.

Are you so killed to self and sin, that it is your great desire to serve God—not so much because you fear death, hell and the devil, as because you love and fear God; and does it seem good to you that salvation is by grace; then are you among those killed to the love of sin. Are you prompted by a principle of love to Jesus as God to obey him and keep his commandments; and do you wish to glorify him in your body and spirit, and does it seem to be only a reasonable service to thus present your body a living—not a dead, stinking—sacrifice; then you are already saved, and the refuge of lies is swept away. Your bed is a good one. God will be all your bed in your sickness, and will provide a table for you in the very presence of your enemies. You have liberty in the Lord. Your covering is of wrought gold, and you are covered with the skirt of Christ's righteousness. You never seek a plea, or liberty to do wrong, but wish the Lord to keep you from evil that it grieve you not. You are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

END OF THE EIGHTH VOL.

This issue closes another year of ZION'S LANDMARKS.

This has been an eventful year of judgments in floods, and wind; yet many mercies have been extended to poor man.

The unbounded mercies of a long-suffering Providence have been bestowed upon us. The wonder is that the judgments are not heavier. For this is an evil generation, from the office seeker that takes bribes and

covets money, to the voter that can be bought: from the pulpit teacher who divines for reward, to the pew-holder that endorses and upholds his wicked teacher.

We have been, in Eastern North Carolina, remarkably exempt from pining sickness. Altogether our land yields her full increase—the heavens drop down their plenty of fatness, and God blesses us.

It has been my privilege this year to visit many Associations of Baptists. In every one great harmony and joyful steadfastness in the faith is manifest. There has been in some of them considerable increase in membership. Many of the preachers are traveling and preaching much, and the good fruit of this is manifest; showing that when the Holy Ghost separates them unto this work the labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Quite a number of promising young preachers is coming on to serve the Churches. God always has a reserve—of which he calls some into the harvest to bear the burden and heat of the day.

I have received much kindness from my precious brethren this year. They are near my heart. If I could be of true service to such a people, and God be glorified, what a great blessing to me. To be a faithful, humble gospel preacher and writer, serving the Lord God acceptably, and comforting his people, and being thus useful to men, would be to me better than any riches or glory of earth.

The present time indicates great peace among the Churches of the saints of the Most High God. As the moments pass many fall and sleep in Jesus, and we are all hastening to the glorious appearing of our Lord.

ASSOCIATIONS.

These bodies are representative in their character. Churches form a friendly and brotherly compact, and, because they could not all conveniently assemble in Associations, they select some of their number to represent them. These messengers are servants of the Churches so sending them, and are to be wise and discreet in attending to matters that come up; and should faithfully transact whatever is thus committed to them, just as the Churches themselves, if assembled, would do.

But what powers have the Churches, so represented. They have no legislative powers—can make no laws. Jesus is the law-giver in Zion. Her duty is to obey and endure.

Certain rules are needful for the maintenance of order, and the preservation of fellowship; these rules are drawn from the gospel. No Church out of gospel order could be fellowshipped. Any Church holding any members in disorder could not be retained without correcting such disorder. The Association can deal only with its Churches in this matter, but not with individual members of Churches. Dealing with its Churches or with other corresponding Associations can extend no farther than to matters of fellowship which is the ground of correspondence.

No Association can rightfully put

a burden on any one Church or a number of them any more than a man could put a burden on one—even the least—member of his body, without its being felt by the entire body. Churches even have no might except as they are in the Lord, and walking in his ordinances; and their strength is to abide in the order of the New Testament.

What is then the use and benefit of Associations? They are of good service in preserving order and fellowship among Churches and brethren. For they furnish good opportunities for brethren to meet together and hear and see each other, and strengthen one the other by the mutual faith of each. The preaching brethren generally are thus often together, and a general correspondence is preserved. It is evident even from the conduct of the Apostles, that we should be careful to commit the precious teachings of the Lord to faithful men who shall likewise commit them to others, in successive generations, down even to the coming of Christ, and, also, that the golden chords of love should reach from stake to stake in all the outposts of the militant Church.

But what if this wise measure for general correspondence among churches should be abused? What if some Association should usurp authority and lord it over Churches, and the servant rebel against the employer; would this be a good reason for dispensing with Associations entirely? No; not if they are useful when not abused. Some bad men have been found in the pulpit doing much mischief, but we should not from that say that preaching is not needful.

We think that all difficulties that could, should be kept out of Associations. If brethren will pursue the gospel rule it will be but seldom necessary to carry up a difficulty into an Association.

How beautiful and good for brethren to meet in gospel harmony, from various quarters, in Associations?

YES, A GOOD THING.

In my traveling this year in Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia, I have but seldom seen liquors of any sort used by Baptists. It has been only now and then brought out and used.

Baptists have no worldly Temperance societies to keep them sober. Their fulness is in Christ, in whom they are complete. He writes his law in their hearts, and with the proper application of gospel discipline administered in tender faithfulness, and brotherly affection, which is an observance of this law, they have all that is needed to keep them sober.

As a medicine, and in cases of infirmity or weakness, spirituous liquors do good, and in such cases it is proper to use them. Otherwise, it is better not to drink at all.

Baptists should be sober people. I am glad to see the general disposition of our brethren is to abstain from the traffic of this thing, which does so much more evil than good when abused; and that they keep away from grog-shops, and set sober, good examples on the one hand, and, on the other hand, do not bind themselves to human societies with oaths and pledges to keep sober; showing that they are temperate from principle.