

# Zion's Landmarks.

DEVOTED TO THE DEFENSE OF THE PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS.

"TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY."

Vol. ix--No. 4.

Wilson, N. C., January 1, 1876.

Whole No. 196.

## Zion's Landmarks,

P. D. GOLD, EDITOR.

PUBLISHED SEMI-MONTHLY

—(at)—

WILSON, NORTH CAROLINA.

Two Dollars Per Annum.

JANUARY 1st, 1876.

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P. D. Gold, Wilson, N. C.

### Communicated.

[By request.]

THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON DELIVERED AT BROOKSVILLE, COOSA COUNTY, ALABAMA, ON THE 4TH SABBATH IN SEPTEMBER, 1875: BY ELDER J. E. W. HENDERSON.

TEXT.—"Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father," 1st JOHN 2: 24.

Brethren and Friends:—

THE small portion of the word which I have read in your hearing involves a vast deal of important subject matter—more indeed than I shall be able to bring to notice in one short discussion. I desire, however, to show its true meaning; and its inseparable relation to, and harmony with, the general chain and connection of the written word: and in order to do so I propose to examine, briefly, the immediate connection in which it stands. The seventh and eighth verses of the chapter read thus, "Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him, and in you, because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." The inspired writer here presents a very peculiar form of expression, and one, which at a mere glance might seem contradictory in itself. The old commandment referred to, which the chosen people of God had from the beginning, was doubtless one of the commandments of the ritual law,

which enjoined upon them to love God with all their heart, &c., and their neighbor as themselves. This original commandment has never been abrogated, yet, it is fulfilled only in those who are spiritual—"who love God because he first loved them"—to whom the spiritual love of God has been manifested. It should be observed that this commandment was delivered to Israel on tables of stone, not on fleshly tables of the heart: also bear in mind that the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to his law, &c. Nevertheless, God, the all-wise law-giver has provided ample means by which his holy law can be, and is fulfilled, magnified and made honorable. This provision is in Christ—as in the new, or gospel dispensation, so was it in the old, or law dispensation fulfilled in the regenerate children of God by his grace, and a manifestation of his special love to them by which they were made to love him. Mark the expression, "which thing is true in him, and in you." Now to be short, the old commandment, from the beginning—the delivery of the law to the national Israel) was to love God and each other; but the people of that nation, who represented the Church of God, in an unregenerate state did not possess the truth of this commandment in themselves, yet it was as true in God then as it ever had been, or ever will be. It is a glorious truth that God has never placed his chosen people under a law, nor suffered them to incur the just penalty of any law for which he has provided no means of satisfaction, if he had, his children could not love him and love each other as he has commanded—it would not be true in him. "The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning."—The word in the law, the letter. "Again a new commandment I write unto you."—The same commandment given from God the Father to his chosen people under the law dispensation, which in him was a fixed and unalterable truth, is now renewed, or repeated under the gospel, and applied only to the manifested children of God, and is now a truth in them as it was before a truth in him, because the very love which this, once old, but now new commandment enjoined is "shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them," (Rom.) "Because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth"—the darkness—the shadowy dispensation is past, and the true light of gospel grace now "shines in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brethren is in dark-

ness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him." Verses 9 and 10 confirm the position that the commandment is to love one another; and oh! my dear brethren, how easy it was for us to do this in the beginning of our christian life—when this commandment became new to us in the divine element of gospel grace—indeed, so complete was the translation that the very soul was full of love to God and to his people, and the very essence of the doctrine of free grace took possession of the mind—the song burst from the joyful lips,

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me."

This is the doctrine which God's children have heard from the beginning, and this is the manner of its fulfillment in them: hence the text: "Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning." The word *let* seems to imply the power to hinder, and some take the latitude to argue the doctrine of final apostacy from this text. Now, while I am free to admit that there is much depending upon our obedience to this divine injunction, I propose to show from the scriptures that, the doctrine of apostacy as taught by arminians is a ~~total~~ ~~error~~ ~~and~~ ~~is~~ ~~not~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~taught~~ ~~by~~ ~~any~~ ~~man~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~church~~ ~~of~~ ~~Christ~~ ~~the~~ ~~son~~ ~~of~~ ~~God~~ ~~the~~ ~~father~~ ~~and~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~spirit~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~promise~~ ~~made~~ ~~unto~~ ~~us~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~beginning~~ ~~of~~ ~~our~~ ~~faith~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~father~~ ~~and~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~son~~ ~~and~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~spirit~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~promise~~ ~~made~~ ~~unto~~ ~~us~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~beginning~~ ~~of~~ ~~our~~ ~~faith~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~father~~ ~~and~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~son~~ ~~and~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~spirit~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~promise~~ ~~made~~ ~~unto~~ ~~us~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~beginning~~ ~~of~~ ~~our~~ ~~faith~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~father~~ 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