

The Signs of the Times, Vol. 20 (1893, 1894)

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November 13, 1893

"One Book" *The Signs of the Times* 20, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

A great many people who would be shocked at the suggestion that they are infidels, imagine that faith is entirely consistent with a disbelief of many of the records of the Bible, especially of the Old Testament. They think that they believe the gospel, yet they make no scruple of pulling the Old Testament record of that gospel to pieces. There are many portions of the Bible that they are very doubtful about; and as for the story of Jonah, and the account of the flood, they can scarcely have patience with anyone who professes to believe them. The Bible account of the creation of the earth they regard as at the best only a beautiful fable.

Can one believe the gospel and disbelieve the Old Testament? Let us see. The apostle Peter speaks about the salvation of our souls, and says: "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." 1 Peter 1:10-12.

Read the above text carefully, and you will see that it states that the prophets of old ministered the very same things that are announced by those who preach the gospel. Then the prophets must have written the gospel. When Peter was preaching Christ in the house of Cornelius, he said, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43. And the apostle Paul said: "Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand unto this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come; how that Christ must suffer, and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the gentiles." Acts 22:22, 23, R.V. Therefore whoever says that the Old Testament does not contain the gospel, says that the apostle Paul did not preach the gospel.

Suppose the position be taken that the story of the creation, and of the fall of man, is only a fable. If that were so, then there would be no gospel at all. For if there were no fall of man, there need be no redemption. So that if the account of

the fall were imaginary, then we have the entire gospel built on a fable, which would make it also a fable. And, besides, if the story of creation and the fall of man be a fable, how can we know that the whole Bible is not the same? We must either accept the whole Bible, or reject it all. We cannot pull it into pieces.

Take the account of the prophet Jonah. Many people would feel almost insulted if it were intimated that they were so simple as to believe it. They say that it never really happened; that the great fish never swallowed Jonah, and that it would have been impossible for him to live three days in its belly. But Christ said, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matt. 12:40. Now if Jonah was never in the whale's belly, and could not have been, then we have the Saviour likening his death and resurrection to an impossibility. Therefore to deny the story of Jonah is to deny the foundation of the gospel.

It will not do in this case to say, as so many of the "higher critics" do, that the Saviour spoke of the things that were currently reported among the Jews as illustrations, taking the people on their own grounds without stopping to explain that those things were really fables. If the story were not true, the Lord knew it; yet he said that just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale, so he should be in the heart of the earth. If the story of Jonah were not true, then we have Christ saying that he would not be in the heart of the earth at all. Is it not better to believe a thing that we cannot understand, than to throw away the entire gospel? Who dare say that it is of no importance whether or not we believe all the records of the Old Testament?

The saddest part of this matter is that the people have not been led into this loose way of regarding the Bible by professed infidels, but by professed ministers of the gospel. It is they who are responsible for the current of unbelief that is carrying so many away. Indeed, one can scarcely pick up a religious journal without seeing more or less about the controversy that is now going on over the Bible. There is a controversy, for there are many ministers who stand for the truth of the Bible; yet there are so many ministers of high standing and influence who seem to be actuated by intense fear that the people will really believe too much of the Bible, that it is necessary to raise a voice of warning. We need not pass sentence of condemnation upon those ministers, but simply warn the people to leave them as false teachers.

LESSONS FROM THE FLOOD

We have just seen a sermon on the flood which, instead of seeking to strengthen the faith of the weak, is almost wholly devoted to an attempt to prove that there never was any such thing. Here are some of the statements. We give them because doubts in regard to the flood are becoming quite common. The preacher says: "No student of science is able to believe that any such flood as that recorded in the early chapters of Genesis ever took place in the history of the human race." "We are not to take the account of the deluge for history infallibly inspired and rigidly accurate in all its details." "That view," he tells us, "is no longer held by persons of ordinary education." How easy it is to brush aside a

proposition with the statement that no one of ordinary education believes it. A false fear of being called ignorant is at the bottom of a large part of the infidelity of these days.

But what about the flood? May we throw it aside as a myth, and still hold fast our faith in the gospel, and in the Bible in general? Let us see. Christ used the flood and its time as an illustration of the last days. "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." Luke 17:26, 27. In the book of Hebrews we are informed who the "all" were who were destroyed by the flood: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Heb. 11:7. It was the world that was condemned by the preaching of Noah, because they did not believe it; and it was the world that was destroyed by the flood. Christ in person, and also through his chosen apostle, bears witness to this.

Again, the flood is put in the same list as the creation of the world and the general judgment. The apostle Peter says that they who scoff at the promise of the coming of the Lord are willingly ignorant of the fact that "by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3:5-7. Whoever discounts the story of the flood, thereby discounts the story of creation, and also the promise of the coming of the Lord to judge the world. The same word that brought the flood upon the earth, created the earth, and will make it new again. The Scriptures, from Moses onward, testify of Christ, and they cannot be rejected without rejecting Christ.

Still further; if the story of the flood is a myth, then there is no comfort in the gospel. It is upon that fact, and the things connected with it, that the Lord gives us assurance that he will not forget us. Speaking to Jerusalem which is above, and is the mother of us all, which is now desolate, mourning the absence of her children, God says: "For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee." Isa. 54:9. Her joy and glory will be the restoration of her children, by the salvation of the righteous; therefore the assurance that God will save his people is no greater than

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the assurance that there was a flood in the days of Noah. "As I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee." But if there were no flood, then the Lord did not swear that the waters of the flood should no more go over the earth; and so in that case we have no assurance that he will remember to save his people.

Again, we read the words of inspiration through the apostle Peter: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the

old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; . . . the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." 2 Peter 2:4-9. If the Lord did that, he knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations; but if he did not do that, what then?-The only conclusion is that he does not know how to deliver the godly out of temptations. And so those who deny the story of the flood throw away all the consolations of the gospel.

More might be said in the same line, but this is sufficient to show that no one can lightly deny any part of the sacred record. It all stands or falls together. No, that is not correct; it all *stands* together; it does not fall, notwithstanding the assaults of men. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Ps. 119:89. "Thy word is true from the beginning; and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever." Verse 160. We have written this to call attention to what is involved in setting aside any portion of the Bible, and to enable the reader more clearly to see that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that that man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. It is all profitable, and all necessary.

July 9, 1894

"Cast Your Care on God" *The Signs of the Times* 20, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

The words of inspiration by the apostle Peter are, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." 1 Peter 5:6, 7.

How few there are who do this! Some do not seem to realize that God cares for them. David knew it, for he said by the Spirit, "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me; thou art my help and my deliverer." Ps. 40:17. And Jesus said: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." Luke 12:6, 7.

God not only knows our need, and cares for us, but he is able to do whatever his love prompts him to do. Happy the man who can say with Job, "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." Job 42:2, Revised Version. Or with Paul, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12.

"Casting all your care upon him" means, therefore, to put it upon him, and to leave it there, with the assurance that he will see to it. "Roll thy way upon the Lord. Trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." Ps. 37:5, margin. When we go to a railway station, we deliver our luggage into the hands of a porter, and then go our way, thinking nothing more about it, confident that it will be taken care of. Surely we ought to trust the Lord more than we do a man.

But the trouble with so many is that they deal with the Lord just as they do with the railway porter,-they deliver their luggage-their cares-into his hands, and then after a while they take it from him again. We are to cast our cares on the Lord, and leave them there forever, receiving his peace as our surety, and not to take them again, as the traveler does his luggage. He says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

In the first book of Samuel we have an instance of this rolling the burden upon the Lord and trusting him. Hanah was greatly troubled. Her childless condition had been a reproach to her. She had suffered hardship because of it. So she prayed to the Lord for a son. Eli, misunderstanding her, had reproved her, and she said: "Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad." 1 Sam. 1:17, 18.

Young translates the last clause, "And her countenance hath not been and for it any more." A strictly literal rendering is, "And her face was not to it again." That is, she had thrown her burden upon the Lord, and she left it there, and went her way, thinking no more about it. She did not resolve that she would think no more about it, but her trust in the Lord, that he would bring her desires to pass if according to his will, was so great that she could not sorry about the matter any more; and her face, as a natural consequence, ceased to be sad. From the above precepts and example let us learn how to trust God.

August 7, 1894

"Intolerant of Evil" *The Signs of the Times* 20, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

At the fiftieth annual meeting of the London Y.M.C.A. one of the speakers, the head master of Harrow, said in this course of his address:-

If a Christian would be like Christ, he must be strong and even fierce in character. He must be intolerant of the things that are wrong; he must not suffer them, must not endure them for an instant.

Just think what influence might be exercised by this great meeting if we were all resolved that in public and in private life we will be intolerant, as intolerant as Christ was, of things that are evil, and base, and vile. Talk about public men and public opinion! We are public opinion. It is in our power to say, as Christian men and women, what we deem to be right; and, depend upon it. If we stick to that which we deem to be right in Christ's name, there is no power on earth that can stand against us.

Unfortunately, that idea is very common. This very statement was highly eulogized by a daily paper that is prominent in the ranks of reform, and most people would read it without thinking of its real tendency, which is the worst sort of persecution. It means that every professed Christian is to make his ideas of right and wrong the standard of everybody else, and then to do the best he can to force others to come to that standard. Of course people working singly in such

a way would accomplish nothing, and would be regarded as nuisances; and so they must unite and agree on certain points, and then by their combined power and influence compel other people to come to the same standard. There is in human nature enough tendency in that direction, without clergymen teaching it as a Christian duty.

The only way in which a man can rightly be intolerant of evil is to be intolerant of it in himself. The Christian is represented as a soldier, and the Christians life is a warfare, but not against men:-

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. 10:3-5.

Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God. He resisted even unto blood, striving against sin; but by no means could he be called intolerant. Fierceness is not a characteristic of a lamb. He was the light of the world, which means that he enlightened the world in respect to righteousness. He "condemned sin in the flesh," both by his life and his words; yet he did not presume to condemn men. He said, "If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." John 12:47.

And so he instructed his disciples. "Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves." Luke 10:3. It is the wolves and not the lambs that are intolerant. Christ's followers are simply to bear a plain testimony, leaving the Holy Spirit to impress it upon the people, and the Lord himself to deal with those who will not accept it.

This was made very clear by the parable of the wheat and the tares. When the servants of the husbandman told him that tares had appeared in the wheat, and asked if they should root them out, he replied: "Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." Matt. 13:29, 30. In the same chapter the Saviour explained that "the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels." The end of the world and the coming of the Lord is the time when evil is to be rooted out by force. And it is to be done only by the Lord and his angels.

The spirit of intolerance is the spirit of the Papacy. It is a most insidious evil. The intolerant one persuades himself that he is actuated solely by righteous zeal for the Lord, when he is in reality moved only by zeal for his own opinions. He opposes an evil, not so much because it is evil, but because it seems to defy him, or, in other words, "it outrages public sentiment." And he seeks to enforce something that he judges to be right, simply because he judges it to be right, and not because the word of the Lord commands it. If he knew the commandment of the Lord, he would know that it is love, and that force and intolerance are a violation of it, because "the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." 2 Tim. 2:24, 25.

October 22, 1894

**"Stumbling-blocksóFoundation Stones" *The Signs of the Times* 20,
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E. J. Waggoner

If you would only give up that idea of keeping Saturday, you might do so much more good. You preach Christ, and hold him up in an attractive manner before the people, and if you would be content with that, you might reach thousands where you now reach tens, but your preaching that the seventh day should be kept instead of Sunday, is a stumbling-block-a barrier to keep them away from Christ.

Thus spoke a friend to the writer a few days ago. The speaker was sincere, and was not the first one to entertain such a thought. Others have said, and many more have thought, that the preaching of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is a barrier to prevent people from coming to Christ. "If it were not for that," say they, "you might have multitudes join your ranks." Let us examine the matter briefly.

The fourth commandment, which enjoins the observance of the seventh day of the week,-the Sabbath of the Lord,-is one of the ten. The first and second forbid the worship of any false god and the making and worshipping of images. Would our friends say that they are stumbling-blocks in the way of people's accepting the gospel?-Perhaps not, yet to many people they are such as truly as the Sabbath ever can be.

A missionary goes to Africa. He finds the natives wholly given to idolatry. They have charms and *fetiches* by the thousand. He begins to preach the gospel, presenting Christ to the poor people, who are much attracted, when, lo, he begins to talk about the worship of images, the use of charms, etc.! This cools their ardor. One of the most intelligent comes to him and says: "Why do you not preach the way the Roman Catholic missionaries do? They simply present the gospel, and do not bother the people with the law. Our people are thoroughly settled in the worship of these idols. To give them up would cause much inconvenience and ridicule. The Catholic missionaries allow us to use them as aids to devotion, and if you would do the same, you might make thousands of converts; but as it is, you are simply presenting a barrier to keep people away from Christ. Your preaching of the law nullifies the good that your preaching of the gospel might do."

Would any man be at loss to know how to answer such a question? Could not every reader of the Bible point out the fact that the worship of the one true God, and him alone, is the very object of the gospel, and that to gain image-worshipping professors of Christianity would be a calamity?

Take the eighth commandment. It says, "Thou shalt not steal." Now there are quarters in nearly every large city where the people live almost entirely by preying upon others. Indeed, it appears to them that they are compelled to steal in order to live. People will not employ them because of their bad characters.

Some of them would gladly reform, but they have a police record, and it is a sad fact that even many professed Christians have a strong aversion to a man who has been *addicted* to gross sin. Consequently the path of honesty seems to be closed up to these unfortunate people.

Now a true missionary goes into the slums, and practices Christ. But someone says to him: "You are cutting off your own usefulness in these parts by telling the people that it is a sin to steal. Don't you see that their ancestors for generations back have been thieves, and they were trained from infancy to steal, and if they should leave off stealing they could not live? Say nothing about the stealing, and you can raise up a vast congregation here, and do much good; but by making so much of the eighth commandment, you are keeping people away from Christ."

The fallacy of such talk need not be pointed out. But why are the first, second, and eighth commandments any better than the fourth? How is it that they are an essential part of the preaching of the gospel, if the fourth commandment be against it?

In a very popular religious journal we have seen a correspondence carried on under the heading "The Bible a Barrier." One of the writers says:-

My trade has brought me into contact with a great many fellows of my own age in London and elsewhere, and nearly all must be ranked as agnostics, simply because of the narrowness of their teachers, who have tried to force them to look upon all the Bible as perfectly true, and as all equally inspired.

So here we have another stumbling-block. How many thousands of people there are who are kept out of the church solely by the Bible! There is not the slightest doubt but that the whole world would be "converted" almost in a body if practical belief in the Bible were not made an essential part of conversion. But when would be the use of preaching which ignored the Bible?

But this is not all. The apostle Paul found that Christ himself was a stumbling-block. He wrote, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." 1 Cor. 1:23. "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient." 1 Pet. 2:6-8.

It is even so to-day. "The offense of the cross" has not yet ceased. Christ is still a stumbling-block to many. Many will be kept out of heaven because they cannot get there without faith in Christ. If Christ were but left out, how many people would believe. Believe what?-Why, that they are about right as they are, and that they are safe in doing as they please.

Notice that, although Christ is a stumbling-block, he is also "a sure foundation." What some imagine to be a hindrance to them others find to be a support and a joy. Even so it is with the Bible and with all the commandments. For Christ is in the word, and the law is in Christ. The law of God was in his heart, and he kept all the commandments. Ps. 40:8; John 15:10. To the extent that

people find any one of the ten commandments a stumbling-block, to that same extent do they find Christ a stumbling-block, for his life is nothing but the perfection of the law in action.

It is the hardness of the human heart that causes people to "stumble at the law," so that the stumbling-block is in reality the stubborn heart. It was this that caused the ancient Jews to fall. See Rom. 9:31-33; Heb. 3:12-19; 4:11. The one who finds a stumbling-block in the fourth commandment would find one in anything else that seems contrary to his inclination and convenience. Whoever will exercise "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21), thus keeping "the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12), will find the stumbling-blocks removed, and will be one of those who will "raise up the foundations of many generations." Isa. 58:12.

December 24, 1894

"A Lesson from Real Life" *The Signs of the Times* 20, 59.

E. J. Waggoner

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:1.

"Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one mans disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Verses 18, 19.

"The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." 1 Cor. 4:20. The promises and the gifts of the gospel are not matters of mere theory, but of fact. And, in order to show us the reality of the power, Jesus Christ came to earth and demonstrated it in such a way that all can comprehend it. In the life of Christ we shall find every gospel truth illustrated. Let us see something of how the above texts work in real life.

A woman whose life had been slowly and steadily wasting away for many years, and who had spent all her living in a vain attempt to recover her health, and was only made to suffer the more from the experiments of many physicians, heard of the great Physician, and went to him. She was timid, and the multitude of people pressed about Jesus so closely that she could scarcely approach him; but "she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." Her faith was rewarded, for as she touched the border of his garment, immediately she was fully healed.

Although Jesus was crowded and jostled by the people, he instantly detected that gentle touch. That touch was different from every other, because it was the touch of faith, and it drew power from the person of Jesus. When the disciples wondered that in the midst of such a crowd he should ask, "Who touched?" he said, "Someone did touch me; for I perceived that power had gone forth from me." That power was the power of his life, for it supplied the woman's need, and what she wanted was life.

Here we have something that our mind can lay hold of and our senses can appreciate. A real thing was done. Something real went from Jesus into the woman. It was not imagination; it was not a figure of speech; but it was an actual fact that the woman was healed. She had the life that she before lacked, and that life came from Jesus. We can never know what life is-only its Author can understand it-but we do know the need of it, even of the righteous life of Christ, and here we see how it is obtained, for the words of Jesus to that poor woman show that she was healed in the same way and by the same means by which we are justified and have peace with God. He said unto her, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." Luke 8:48. If we should apply the words of the apostle Paul to her particular experience, we might read, "Therefore being made whole in body by faith, she had peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Perhaps this may enable someone to grasp more fully the reality of the righteousness which comes by faith of Jesus Christ.

Nothing is said about forgiveness of sins in this instance, but we may be sure from other instances that such faith as the poor woman had brought healing of soul as well as of body. But no one need have a doubt as to whether this is really parallel to Rom. 5:1, and an illustration of the truth there stated, for we find the same words used with express reference to sins. In the preceding chapter (Luke 7) we are told of the sinful woman who anointed the feet of Jesus after her tears of repentance had washed them Jesus did not repel her, but said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven." And then followed words almost identical with those with which he dismissed the poor woman of whom we have been reading. To the woman who was well in body, but mortally diseased with sin, Jesus said, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Luke 7:50. Compare Luke 8:48.

This proves beyond all possibility of doubt that the same thing is done in the forgiveness of sins that was done in healing the woman with the issue of blood. The method is the same, and the results are the same. Therefore, as we know that something real was done for the diseased woman, so we may be sure that something real is done for the repentant sinner. Just as something real, although invisible, went from Jesus into the person of the diseased woman, making her perfectly well and strong, even so we are to know that something real comes from Christ into the person of the repentant sinner, making him whole, and free from sin.

That something is nothing less than the

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actual life of Christ. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Verse 7. The blood is the life; and so it is the life of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from sin. This is what we read in Rom. 5:10, in continuance of the statement that, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

Many think that the forgiveness of sins by the imputed righteousness of Christ is something that exists only in the mind of God. Of course they acknowledge its reality, yet at the same time they do not realize it. There is always something unreal about it in their minds. The trouble is that they fail to grasp and to make real the Living connection between Christ and them. There is between the true disciples and Christ a connection as real as that between the vine branch and the parent stalk. The forgiveness of sins is too often thought to be illustrated by the payment of a poor man's debt by a rich friend. If a rich man pays the debt of a poor man, then the shopkeeper credits the poor man with the sum, and the record on the books shows that the debt is canceled. Of course the poor man is benefited, but he does not actually receive anything that will keep him in future. But it is different when God for Christ's sake forgives sins.

Christ "gave himself for our sins." Gal. 1:4. His life is given to be manifest in our mortal flesh. 2 Cor. 4:17. Just as the sap flows through the vine to the farthest branches, and just as the life of Christ went into the poor, diseased woman, to make her perfectly well, so the sinless, endless, inexhaustible life of Christ flows into those who have faith in him, to cleanse them from sin, and to make them walk in newness of life.

His life on earth was one of obedience to the commandments of God. John 15:10. The law of God was in his heart (Ps. 40:8), so that his very life was the fullness of the law. He fulfilled the righteousness of the law. Matt. 5:17. That is, the fullness, the perfection, of the law appeared in his life. And it is by this life that we are saved. It is not that we are counted righteous because Jesus of Nazareth was righteous eighteen hundred years ago, but because "he ever liveth," "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever," to save by the power of his endless life all that come to him.

Jesus fulfilled the righteousness of the law, in order "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:4. The Revised Version reads, "That the *ordinance* of the law might be fulfilled in us," and gives "requirement" in the margin, as an alternative. The idea is, therefore, that Christ kept the law, in order that its utmost requirement might be fulfilled in us, not *by us*, but *in us*, for whereas we have no power to do even what we know to be right, Christ dwelling in us does the right by his own power through our members when we yield them to him. This he does for all who trust him. And thus it is that "by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous."

We may thus know two things, first, how we are made partakers of Christ's life, and, second, what the nature of that life is, and what it will be in us. The miraculous healing of the poor woman shows us the first. The second we learn by reading the ten commandments, and by studying the life of Christ. All that was in his life when he was on earth is in it now, and that is what he gives to us. And that which was not in his life cannot possibly be given to us in it. Everything that is not in his life is sin, and Christ is not the minister of sin.

The Signs of the Times, Vol. 21 (1895)

February 14, 1895

"Doubt and Murder" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

When Jesus read the prophecy of Isaiah, in the synagogue at Nazareth, and began to say to the people, whose eyes were fastened upon him, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." Luke 4:21, 22. The Spirit of the Lord was indeed upon him, and as the result his words produced conviction. Involuntarily they responded to the power of the Spirit.

Then came in another feeling. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" They gave place to doubt. True, the words which Jesus had read and spoken had come with the force of the Holy Spirit, and they had acknowledged their gracious power; but they could not make the gracious words harmonize with their reason and experience, and so they lost the blessing.

The same thing is repeated again and again in these days. People hear burning words of truth, which cause their own hearts to burn in response, and then doubt comes in under the guise of "prudence" and "caution." "We must not be too quick to accept new things;" "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" "We will not commit ourselves until we see how this thing is going to turn." "We cannot be too cautious"-these and many other things hold many people back from following the convictions produced by the Holy Spirit. Looking at the matter from a worldly critical point of view, they conclude that the influence of the Spirit was only a sudden impulse, which it would be most unwise to yield to. They are confirmed in this view by the fact that, as the result of their unbelieving calculation, the Spirit's voice has been silenced, and they no longer feel that response in their hearts to the words of truth. And thus carnal wisdom proves their ruin.

But this is not the end. The Gospel narrative tells us that the very people who at first bore witness to the gracious words of Jesus, seized him a few minutes later, and attempted to throw him down headlong from a precipice. Murder was in their hearts. That they did not kill Jesus was only because they had not the power.

What caused this change?-nothing but cherishing of a single doubt. Here is a warning for those who think that doubt is a trivial matter. Every doubt has murder connected in it. Those doubts which seem so perfectly "natural" that you scarcely call them doubt, but only the manifestation of proper caution are the things which if cherished, will cry, "Crucify him." It is not a light thing to doubt the witness of the Spirit of God. One of the things which made David a man after God's own heart, was the fact that he "made haste, and delayed not" to keep the commandments of God, when they were made known to him. Ps. 119:60. Take heed not to quench the Spirit by doubt.

March 14, 1895

"Comfort in Conviction" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

"It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John 16:7, 8. The first thing that the Holy Spirit does in the way of comforting is to convict of sin. But does the Holy Spirit condemn? Christ said, "I came not to condemn the world." There is a difference between conviction and condemnation, and in the recognition of this difference we get the Lord. Many suppose that when the Lord reproves, it is a sign of his anger against us.

Conviction is showing a man that he is guilty. Condemnation is the putting of the sentence upon him. We are already under condemnation, because of transgression. Now the Lord comes to us and convicts us by his Spirit, but when he has brought us to this place where we are convicted and acknowledge the fact that we have sinned and are worthy of death, just there the Lord come in and takes away the condemnation. He carries us to that point, and then the sentence is remitted.

God describes himself as the "Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." 2 Cor. 1:3, 4. He comforts us by showing us sin. The comfort of God's reproof lies in the fact that the very thing which causes the conviction is the

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righteousness which is given to take away the sin for which we are convicted.

Now what is the purpose of the comfort which the Lord gives us?-That we may be able to comfort any who are in trouble. God gives us his Spirit in order that we may be able to minister the same to others. So before we can be of any use in proclaiming the message of the Gospel to others, we must receive this comfort in the conviction of sin.

Here is the line between condemnation and justification. We may hold back and pass into condemnation, or we may yield and have no condemnation. If when the conviction comes we accept it, and the righteousness which brings the reproof, then there is no condemnation. But "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John 3:19. When the Holy Spirit comes, the light is come. It is shining into our hearts to make us see where we have been making mistakes and failings. Many things which we thought virtues we find to be vices. Our diffidence was trust in ourselves, and the fear that we thought was modesty and goodness we find is simply self-love and sensitiveness and the fear of what somebody might say. We thought it was an evidence of our humility, when it was pride.

That is an evidence that "thy light is come." Now if we cling to self, that light will be condemnation and become darkness, "and if the light which is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness!" We had been in darkness all the time, because the light which was shining had not been received. Now if the light shines and we allow it to become darkness, we are worse off than before. But

yielding to it, we who sometimes were darkness become "light in the Lord." Eph. 5:8.

March 28, 1895

"Visited and Redeemed" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 13.

E. J. Waggoner

When Zacharias, filled with the Holy Ghost, prophesied at the birth of John the Baptist, he said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people." Luke 1:68. John's message was to prepare the way of the Lord. It is specifically prophesied of in Isaiah: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isa. 40:3-5. Further on it says, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him."

The work which John began, therefore, was not only to prepare people for the first advent of Christ, but was to continue until the Lord should come with strong arm to redeem, bringing his reward with him. See Rev. 22:12. So the same work is still going on. "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed," and we have it revealed to us now in the things which God has made. The everlasting Gospel is but a call to worship Him that made heaven and earth and all things. The light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon all me.

Then we may say the same thing which Zacharias spoke by the Spirit: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people." Anyone can say, "He hath visited and redeemed me." We have redemption through his blood in the forgiveness of sins, because the blood of Christ stands for the life of Christ. We have redemption through his life, for he gave his life a ransom for many. Matt. 20:28.

When did he visit us? Long he has been saying to every one, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Rev. 3:20. He is a welcome visitor, too, because he brings his provision with him, when we have nothing. When we say continually, Lord, abide with us, he does abide. He will stay as long as we are willing to have him, and his presence is life and redemption. This is as really true to-day as when Zacharias spoke, and whoever believes it must be as happy over it as he was.

Redeemed! A slave set free! It requires no great stretch of imagination to see how a slave, a captive, driven, scourged, and bound, would feel with his fetters removed, and his freedom given to him. He would be a happy man. He would not receive the news of freedom stoically, and with a long face-not if he believed the message. His heart would be so full he would leap for joy.

The Lord wants us to rejoice, not because we think we ought to rejoice, but because we have so vivid a sense of his redemption that we know it to be a fact. We have been captives of a cruel master, and now we are redeemed. We know it because the Lord says so. He has bought us, and given us his own life. Now, when the enemy comes in the form of doubt, in the form of indifference, envy, pride, slavish fear-in a thousand different forms-trying to force us back into bondage, we are to maintain the fact that we are free. Eternal life is our right, through Christ. Let us stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.

April 4, 1895

"Christ's Trust in Adversity" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

There is no time when one would naturally feel less that the Lord is with him than when being sorely tempted. But that is the very time when we must know it and confess it.

The tempted one says: I am bad; is the Lord in me now? I believe he was there in that good meeting, when every one was happy. But here I am alone, and feeling depressed, and everything goes wrong, and the enemy is tempting me, and I feel as though the Lord had left me. By and by when this temptation passes, and I feel better, and as though the Lord was with me, I will confess it then.

But it is in the trial that we need him with us. It was in the trial that the Saviour confessed the Father. "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? . . . Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me?" Isa. 50:5-9.

When Jesus was in the judgment hall, and every one of his disciples had forsaken him, and the soldiers were mocking him and heaping upon him the refinement of insult, who saw in him the Son of God? Not even his own disciples. There was no outward evidence. The priest and soldiers saw no sign that he was the Son of God. "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." What evidence had he himself? What fruit of all his labors was there? He had chosen twelve disciples, and one of them had betrayed him, one had denied him with cursing, and all had fled. Of course his enemies would throw this in his face. They doubtless said, "You came making great professions; but where are your followers?" We know that they did mock at his claim to be the Son of God. See Matt. 26:68;

What evidence did the Saviour have?-The word of God. "I know I shall not be ashamed. He is near." It is the same in the temptation in the wilderness. Weakened by fasting, his visage "marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men," a wanderer in the desert, the devil comes to him and says, "You do not look much like the Son of God." Himself coming as an angel of light, he tries to make out that Christ is an impostor. He says: If you are the Son of God, you created all things. Why don't you take these stones and satisfy your hunger?

And Christ knew that he could have done it. He knew that he was the Son of God in the wilderness, just as well as when, at the last supper, he washed the feet of the disciples as an humble one, he knew "that he was come from God, and went to God." He held to the word of God all through his temptation. He confessed, and declared the name of the Lord, witnessing a good confession.

That is what it means to confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. It does not mean simply on certain occasions when there seems to be a wave of glory sweeping over the congregation, and we are moved in spite of ourselves. It is so just as much when we are physically helpless. It is just as true when the enemy is pressing us with temptations. It is as much so when afflictions are pressing about us, as when all is pleasant and clear. To confess is to hold the word of God as true continually. And the value of confession is confessing it in the heart. "Believe in thine heart." "This word shall be in thine heart." Let not the enemy snatch it away.

It is only by the fixed knowledge, through his word, that God is with us, that we can ever resist any temptation. So when the enemy comes in like a flood, let the Spirit of the Lord lift up this standard against him in your heart: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Keep "the faith of Jesus," and the victory is yours.

April 18, 1895

"The Kingdom of Christ" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

When Christ was before Pilate, he said, "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." John 18:36. Christ did not refrain from fighting because his following was too small to cope with the Roman Government, because each one of his loyal disciples, together with himself, could have had a legion of angels at his back. Matt. 26:53. But his kingdom was not of this world, and could not use earthly power. The using of force would have been his ruin, for he himself said, "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

There was a time when the disciples and all the people were going to take Jesus by force to make him king, and if he had consented, the whole Jewish nation would have flocked to his standard; but he would not listen to the

proposition. Surely if the kingdom of Christ could be advanced by civil power, then was the time to make use of it. The fact that Christ would have nothing to do with it, shows what he expects of his followers. By allowing himself to be betrayed into the hands of wicked men, and suffering the cruel death of the cross, Christ showed how only his kingdom can be gained and advanced. Because of the suffering of death, he was crowned with glory and honor. Let none of the professed servants of Christ think to gain the kingdom in a different manner. To make such an attempt is to deny Christ and to make his sufferings of no account.

Men have nothing to do with giving Christ his kingdom. All they are called upon to do is to yield themselves to the Holy Spirit, that they may be fashioned into fit subjects for the kingdom which the Lord God will give unto him. True, "the government shall be upon his shoulder," but it is "the zeal of the Lord of hosts" that is to give it to him. Isa. 9:6, 7. The Father has sworn to give unto him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession (Ps. 2:7, 8); but when he receives them it is that he may dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. But he will do it in person, and not by deputy.

Christ himself showed how and when he was to receive his kingdom. He spoke a parable for the benefit of those who thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He likened himself to a nobleman who "went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." "And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom," etc. Luke 19:1-27. Christ has now gone to that far country to receive the kingdom. The receiving of it is described in Dan. 7:13, 14. When he comes the second time, he will come in his kingdom. Then he will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance upon them that know not the God. 2 Thess. 1:7-9. Then will these that would not have him to rule over them be slain before him, "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." And when he shall have destroyed all the wicked, "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matt. 13:43. "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Christ is now sitting upon his Father's throne (Rev. 3:21), reigning as a priest, and devising peace for his people (Zech. 6:12, 13). He is the "one Mediator between God and men." 1 Tim. 2:5. He is Mediator between God and men, not between God and nations. Moreover, his authority as Mediator is not that of compulsion, but that of love and entreaty. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if *any man* hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Rev. 3:20.

Christ's ministers are ambassadors, not judges nor officers in earthly kingdoms. The ambassador who should presume to interfere in the affairs of the country to which he is sent, or who should even express his opinion about the politics of that country, would at once lose his position. Christ's ministers are sent as ambassadors to the whole world. They are to know nothing of nations as nations, but only to deal with individuals. Whether those individuals be in a palace or a hovel, makes no difference. Princes and peasants are all the same to them, so far as their mission is concerned, only they acknowledge constituted

authority wherever they are. Of the affairs of nations, they have no opinion to express, for they are not sent to judge the world, but to save the world.

The sum of the whole matter, therefore, is that, while Christ is supreme over everybody, and everything, he is to be left to exercise his supremacy in his own way and time. No men, not even his own followers, are to presume to exercise authority in his stead. He is indeed "the Prince of the kings of the earth," but no man nor body of men is authorized to be his deputy in exercising dominion. Only divinity can exercise divine power. Christ himself uses no force, neither over men as individuals, nor over nations and therefore none of his followers can do so. He judges no man now, although all judgment has been committed to him, because there is a day appointed when all shall stand before his judgment seat. Therefore his followers are to "judge nothing before the time until the Lord come." Until that time they are to be content to be in this world even as he was,-despised and rejected, pilgrims and strangers.

April 25, 1895

"Satisfaction" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

"There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." Isa. 48:22. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Isa. 57:20. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." James 4:1-3.

This is a description of man by nature. Everywhere we find unrest and dissatisfaction. The poor have no cause to envy the rich, for discontent is found in the mansions as well as in the hovel. Those in any station of life who are perfectly contented, are in a very small minority. Everywhere we see people working for happiness in various ways, vainly confident that they will find it if they pursue the object of their desires for enough.

Although these longings are so often for things forbidden, and for that which only increases the dissatisfaction, it is God himself who has implanted this in the human heart. It is not that God has caused men to desire unlawful things, but that the desire of unlawful things is only the perversion of a desire which God himself has planted in man.

God is a bounteous provider. He scatters his benefits with a lavish hand. He desires that men should enjoy the abundance which his love has prepared, and that they should be satisfied. He is no niggard, neither is he a tyrant. He knows what will perfectly satisfy every soul, yet he never attempts to compel any one to find satisfaction in his way. He knows that no one can be satisfied under compulsion, and that even that which is real will not satisfy unless it is the individual's own choice. So he gives every one full liberty to choose whatever he will.

Jesus Christ is "the Desire of all nations." Hab. 2:7. There are comparatively few of the people in the world who know him and who recognize him as the object of their desire, but it is a fact that all the varied longings of the human heart can be satisfied in Christ, and in him alone. God has implanted desires in every soul which can be satisfied only by the possession of Christ, then, they may see in him the object of their desires and be drawn to him. The devil's work is to deceive people with the thought that those desires may be satisfied in some other way than by the possession of Christ.

David was a man of like passions with other men. His flesh was sinful, and as full of evil desires as any other human flesh. Yet when the Spirit enlightened his understanding, he said, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." Ps. 62:1. And again: "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Ps. 84:2.

How can it be made to appear that the appetites and lusts of the flesh are really the crying out of the flesh after God?-Simply by the fact that no man was ever yet satisfied by the indulgence of fleshly appetites and lusts. The drunkard drinks to satisfy a craving that is never satisfied. The vicious and licentious man, in common with the miser, finds no satisfaction in the gratification of his passion. The reason why he follows the lusts of the flesh so eagerly, is that they make him their slave, deluding him with the idea that the next time he will find that complete satisfaction which evades him this time. The Lord, knowing that he alone can give the soul perfect and complete satisfaction, calls to us, saying, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Isa. 55:2.

What are we to eat?-The flesh of Christ, which is true meat. Of those who obey the call, and eat of his fullness, it is said: "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." Ps. 36:8.

What a wonderful God is ours! How tender, and loving, and thoughtful! What wonderful provision he has made for the salvation of every soul! He has so constituted man that he cannot find peace and rest outside of himself; for the reason that everything outside of him is death, and in him alone is life and safety. Those unsatisfied longings of weary hearts are but a proof of the tender, loving care of the Father above, in that he will not leave any of his children without continually reminding them of the fullness that he has to bestow; for every want felt by mankind is but the announcement, if they would recognize it so, of the fact that God has something which he wishes to give us,-something which will satisfy the want. Only at his hand can "the desire of every living thing" be satisfied. Ps. 145:16.

Thus God has provided comfort for us, even from our very weaknesses and lusts. Here is help for the tempted. No matter how much the flesh cries out for sinful pleasure, we may be assured that those things are "deceitful lusts," that will not give the satisfaction they promise; and then the comfort comes in the knowledge of the fact that the longing is in reality for Christ, and that by accepting

him for all that he is, the desire will be satisfied. There is life and victory in that. Knowing that, we may count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, because with the very temptation he provides the way of escape, that we may be able to bear it. Then we shall be able to sing:-

"O Christ, in thee my soul hath found,
And found in thee alone,
The peace, the joy, I sought so long.
The bliss till now unknown.

"Now none but Christ can satisfy;
None other name for me;
There's love, and live, and lasting joy,
Lord Jesus, found in thee."

May 2, 1895

"What Is Protestantism?" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 18.

E. J. Waggoner

The name "Protestant" is derived from the *protest* of the German princes, which was read at the Diet of Spire, in 1529. The word therefore originated with the Reformation, and the principles of Protestantism are the principles of the Reformation.

It is a mistake to suppose that Protestant is simply a negation, or that it means any particular set of dogmas. Protestantism is not a statement of what Luther believed, nor of the doctrines that were held by Wycliffe, or Zwingli, or Melancthon, or any other reformer. But it does consist of the principles which prompted all the real reformers that have ever lived. Let us note that principle, as exhibited by a few of the reformers, beginning with Wycliffe, who was in many respects the greatest of them all.

Of the principles that were common in the days of Wycliffe, and in which all the clergy had to be experts, Wylie (*History of Protestantism*, book 2, chapter 1) says:-

Philosophy then lay in guesses rather than facts. Whatever could be known from having been put before man in the facts of nature, or the doctrines of revelation, was deemed not worth further investigation. It was too humble an occupation, to observe and deduce. In the pride of his genius, man turned away from a field lying at his feet, and plunged boldly into a region where, having no data to guide him, and no ground for solid footing, he could learn really nothing. From this region of vague speculation, the explorer brought back only the images of his own creating, and, drawing up these fancies as facts, he passed them off as knowledge.

Wycliffe turned from this mass of rubbish to find in the Bible the only true wisdom, so that among the "heresies" which the Catholic Church found in his writings is this, that "wise men leave that as impertinent which is not plainly expressed in Scripture." He held that "if there be any truth, it is in the Scripture, and there is no truth to be found in the schools that may not be found in more

excellence in the Bible." And he also taught that "Christ wished his law to be observed willingly, freely, that in such obedience men might find happiness. Hence he appointed no civil punishment to be inflicted on transgressors of his commandments, but left them to a punishment more severe, that would come after the day of judgment."

To those who fear that in some of his teaching he was going too far, Wycliffe said:-

We do not sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, or we should abide by the authority of his word, especially of the evangelists, as of greater weight than every other. It is the will of the Holy Spirit that the books of the Old and New Law should be read and studied, as the one sufficient source of instruction; and that men should not be taken up with other books, which, true as they may be, and even containing Scripture truth, are not to be confided in without caution and limitation.

The fact that he translated the whole Bible into the language of the common people, shows that in the Bible and the Bible alone was Wycliffe's hope of any real reformation.

Coming down to the days of Tyndale, we find him speaking thus in regard to false clergy of his day:-

A thousand books had they lever to be put forth against their abominable doings and doctrines, than that the Scriptures should come to light. For as long as they may keep that down, they will so darken the right way with their mist of sophistry, and so tangle them that either rebuke or despise their abominations, with arguments of philosophy, and with worldly similitudes, and apparent reasons of natural wisdom, and with wresting the Scriptures unto their own purpose, clean country unto the process, order, and meaning of the text; and substitute them in descanting upon it with allegories and amaze them, expounding it in many senses before the unlearned lay people (when it hath but one literal sense, whose light the owls cannot abide) that though thou feel in thine heart, and art sure, how that all is false that they say, yet couldst thou not solve their subtle riddles.

Which thing only moved me to translate the New Testament. Because I perceived by experience how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the Scriptures were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue.

Luther's whole work was based upon the Bible. It was the Bible that he found chained in the monastery at Erfurt, that turned him from darkness to light, and was the beginning of the Reformation to Germany. The Bible was at that time chained in every sense of the word, for the common people could not get at it, and even if they could, they could not read it, because it existed only in an unknown tongue. But Luther unchained it, for he translated it into the simple language of everyday life, so that every peasant could read it.

In the controversy over the mass, Luther, although opposed to that ceremony, deprecated force, and said: "It is by the word that we must fight, by the word must we overthrow and destroy what has been set up by violence. It will not make use of force against the superstitious and unbelieving." "The mass is a bad

thing; God is oppose to it; it ought to be abolished; and I would that throughout the whole world it were replaced by the supper of the Gospel. But let no one be torn from it by force. We must leave the matter in God's hands. His word must act and not we. And why so? You will ask. Because I do not hold men's hearts in my hand, as the potter holds the clay. We have a right to speak; we have not the right to act. Let us preach; the rest belongs to God." "Our first object must be to win men's hearts; and for that purpose we must preach the Gospel. To-day the word will fall in one heart, to-morrow into another, and it will operate in such a manner that each one will withdraw from the mass and abandon it. God does more by his word alone than you and I and all the world by our united strength."- *D'aubingne's History of the Reformation, book 9, chapter 3.*

It matters not that Luther was not always consistent with these principles. There has been scarcely a single reformer in the world, who continued a reformer as long as he had. But these are the principles which made all the Reformation that there ever was. They were summed up in the following manner in the protest at Spires:-

Seeing . . . that there is no sure doctrines but such as is conformable to the word of God, that the Lord forbids the teaching of any other doctrine, that each text of the Holy Scripture ought to be explained by other and clearer texts, that the Holy Book is in all things necessary for the Christian, easy of understanding, and calculated to scatter the darkness, we are resolved, with the grace of God, to maintain the pure and exclusive preaching of his holy word, such as is contained in the Biblical books of the Old and New Testaments, whither abiding anything therein that may be contrary to it. This word is the only truth; it is the sure rule of

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all doctrines and of all life, and can never fail or deceive us. He who builds on this foundation shall stand against all the powers of hell, whilst all the human vanities that are set up against it shall fall before the face of God.

Thus it is that we cannot go to the writings of any man or any company of men to find out what Protestantism is. The reformers were but fallible mortals, and did not know all of the Scriptures. Custom had a strong hold on the best of them, so that they were persuaded by long habit that many things which they allowed were really according to the Scripture. True Protestantism is simply the truth of the Bible, without the addition of any man's opinion. Therefore to be a Protestant is not to believe just what Luther or any other reformer believed, but to hold to the Bible; and the Bible is explained by the Holy Spirit, as the sole guide in life. He who does contrary to this, is not a Protestant, no matter by what name he is called.

May 23, 1895

"Gladstone on the Lord's Day" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

A Great Perplexity

One of the most striking features of the Sunday question is the perplexity that exist among men as to why it should be observed. If this perplexity were confined to those who make no profession of religion, there would be nothing wonderful in it; but the fact is that it exists in the minds of those who profess to be perfectly sure that Sunday is the divinely-appointed day of rest. Thus the New York *Independent* of March 28 begins a review of a recent article by Professor Za. . . on the Sunday, with these words:-

One of the knotty problems which the student of New Testament and early ecclesiastical literature must meet deals with the origin of the Christian Sunday as a day of worship, and the why and wherefore of the change from the seventh to the first day

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of the week as the day for public worship in the primitive church.

In like manner, Mr. Gladstone, in his recent article on the Lord's day, says that there are two peculiarities in the defense of the Sunday. The first is that-

There are important auxiliaries, who put wholly out of view the revealed sanction and the properly Christian motive.

The other possibility is said to be that-

Very many of these defenders, whose motive and profession are not secular but distinctly religious, are singularly ill-equipped with consistent or perspicuous ideas of the subject.

And yet again he says on this latter point:-

As to ideas, it can hardly be said that in our own country, of which alone I speak, the general mind is possessed with any conception at once accurate and clear, of the religious ground on which we are to observe the Sunday.

What a strange condition of things! Here is the Sunday, which is held to be the very chief of Christian institutions, and the observance of which is supposed to be absolutely necessary to the preservation of religion; yet of its two classes of defenders one is wholly secular, and the religious class do not have any definite idea of the religious grounds for Sunday observance!

Let the reader not fail to give particular attention to this significant fact, that in the nineteenth century after Christ there is no uncertainty nor clear idea among professed Christians concerning what is supposed to be one of the most vital points of Christianity. People are everywhere crying out, in substance, "Tell us what we believe, and why we believe it; especially tell us why we keep Sunday." Could there be any more conclusive evidence that Sunday observance has no real foundation whatever?

A Worthy Champion

But now we have Mr. Gladstone to the rescue. The first part of his article appeared in March, but we delayed commenting upon it until it should be completed. It was the most widely advertised of any article that we have seen for a long time, but no more widely than the reputation of the author warranted. It is

safe to say that no man in the United Kingdom is better equipped for the task than Mr. Gladstone. A Churchman born, a thorough scholar, perfectly at home in every branch of learning, knowing classical literature by heart, and nearly as well acquainted with theological literature as with the classics, a trained and experienced controversialist, a master of language, knowing how to marshal arguments and to put them in the most telling manner,-surely if there is anything in a case, Mr. Gladstone is the man to set it forth. If he fails, it is the fault of the case and not of the man.

We have no disposition to criticize, and the object of this present article is solely to set before our readers the arguments for Sunday, as produced by Mr. Gladstone. If they are satisfied with them, and believe that the foundation which he lays for Sunday observance is sound, that is their privilege. We are anxious only that when men make the choice between the two days,-the seventh and the first,-they may perfectly understand the reason why they do so, and may know exactly on what foundation each stands.

Sunday and the Fourth Commandment

Having stated that the general mind does not possess any clear and accurate conception of the religious ground on which people observe Sunday, Mr. Gladstone proceeds to say:-

There is a hazy, but still practical and by no means superficial, impression that in some way it has to do with the original command delivered through Moses, so often recited in our churches, and backed there by the definite petition that God will incline our hearts "to keep this law." We do not in due proportion weigh or measure two facts which bear materially on the case. Two changes have been imported into this law: one of them into its form, the other into its spirit. The first has been altered by translation of the commandment from the seventh day of the week to the first; the second, by imparting to it a positive and affirmative, in addition to its originally negative and prohibitory sense.

Give good heed to several points admitted in the foregoing statement: First, the observance of Sunday is not in harmony with the fourth commandment. Second, the commandment as given required the observance of *the seventh day of the week*. Third, this is an acknowledgment of the fact that the day called Sunday is the first day of the week, and is not the day named in the commandment, and that the day commonly called Saturday is the seventh day of the week, and is the day named in the commandment. If these points are well grasped, there is no difficulty in arriving at a perfect understanding of the case.

Note further the admission that two changes have been *imported* into the law of God, namely, in its form and in its spirit. That means a complete change, so that in reality Mr. Gladstone agrees with Prebendary Eyton, that-

To discuss, then, any questions about Sunday observance, in connection with the fourth commandment, is obviously to discuss questions which cannot be settled in that fashion. Sunday. . . has no possible connection with the Jewish Sabbath, either so regards its fundamental idea of observance, or even as regards its divine sanction.

It is obvious that a law that has been changed in both form and spirit is essentially another law; therefore, according to Mr. Gladstone, as well as Prebendary Eyton, Sunday keeping has no connection whatever with the fourth commandment.

It is worth while, in passing, to call attention to the fact that the commandment is not merely negative and prohibitory, but is positive as well. It starts out with the positive injunction, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," and then proceeds to tell what day the Sabbath day is. Therefore it did not stand in need of any change to make it positive.

A Foreign Importation

One other point should be given special attention, and that is that the Bible contains no trace of this amended commandment. The Bible contains only the original commandment as spoken by Jehovah himself from Mt. Sinai, with a voice that shook the earth. The changes in the law have been altogether "imported;" they are entirely foreign to the Bible and its Author.

This is admitted by Mr. Gladstone, when, after speaking of the failure to recognize "the ascent that the fourth commandment of the Decalogue has made, and the development and explanation that it has received under the Christian dispensation," he says-

Hence perhaps it is that we have but imperfectly grasped what is implied in what we familiarly call the observance of Sunday. Possibly there may have been a concurring cause for this defect in the indisposition of many minds, after the crisis of the Reformation, to recognize any action of the church apart from the Scriptures.

This point thus admitted is directly stated in the following words, that occur later on-

The seventh day of the week has been deposed from its title to obligatory religious observance, and its prerogative has been carried over to the first-under no direct precept of Scripture.

Now we have the case squarely before us. The fourth commandment requires the observance of the seventh day of the week. That seventh day is the day immediately preceding the day known as Sunday. This commandment has been changed both in form and in spirit. But the change was not authorized by Scripture, and the record of it is not contained in Scripture. It was wholly the action of "the church." Therefore the change was not in reality ever made in the commandment, which remains exactly the same as it was in the beginning. So that in the Sunday we have an institution of "the church" put forth as a rival to the Sabbath of the Bible. He who observes the seventh day follows the Bible, while he who observes the first day follows "the church." The issue therefore is plain. It is the Sunday against the Sabbath, - "the church," against the Bible. Which will you choose?

A Bold Assumption

Again we quote from Mr. Gladstone:-

The Christian community took upon itself to alter the form of the Jewish ordinance, but that was with a view to giving larger effect to its spiritual purpose. The seventh day had been ordained as the most appropriate, according to the Decalogue, for commemorating the old creation. The advent of our Lord introduced us to a chain of events by which alone the benefits of the old creation were secured to us, together with the yet higher benefits of the new.

Note this well: God himself gave the fourth commandment. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." "For we know that the law is spiritual." Rom. 7:12, 14. Yet "the Christian community," without any Scripture warrant, "took upon itself" to alter the commandment, "with a view to giving larger effect to its spiritual purpose." That is to say, "the Christian community" presumed to be able to improve God's work. It claimed to be more spiritual than God himself. Of course there could be no scriptural warrant for such an interference with God's law, since the Scripture says, "As for God, his way is perfect" (Ps. 18:30), and, "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever" (Eccl. 3:14). It remained for a so-called "Christian community" to oppose and exalt itself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that it set itself forth as God. It matters not what that "Christian community" is called, the fact remains that it brought about the change in the observance of the day of rest only by doing what is ascribed to the "man

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of sin," "the son of perdition." 2 Thess. 2:3, 4.

The New Creation

Let it be noted that the seventh day never commemorated "the old creation." When the seventh day was sanctified as the Sabbath, the heavens and the earth were new. The seventh day commemorates the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, unsullied by the curse. It commemorates the new creation, when God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good. The Apostle Paul writes, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creation." It is even this new creation that the Sabbath is designed to commemorate; for the Lord says that he gave the Sabbath to his people, "that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Eze. 20:12. And since it is Christ that is made unto us sanctification, the seventh day is the badge and reminder of his sanctifying power. The seventh day commemorates the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, and the power of God to create new men to inhabit them. The first day of the week commemorates nothing but the blasphemous presumption of a so-called "Christian community" that "took upon itself" to give larger effect to the spiritual purpose of the commandment of God. The first day as a rest day is therefore simply the badge of antichrist.

The "Record of Facts"

But some one will ask is Mr. Gladstone does not claim that there is some warrant in Scripture for the change. Yes, he does, and we propose to give every particle of the evidence that he produces, and in his own words. He says that the change has been made "under no direct precept of Scripture"-

Yet with a Biblical record of facts, all supplied by St. John, which go far towards showing that among the apostles themselves, and therefore from apostolic times, the practice of divine worship on the Lord's day has been continuously and firmly established.

It will be borne in mind that by the term "Lord's day" Mr. Gladstone means the Sunday. We shall presently give special attention to this term, but will pass it by for the present, to quote the "record of facts" which the Apostle John is said to give, which "go far" towards establishing the apostolic origin of Sunday keeping. Here is the entire "record of facts," in Mr. Gladstone's own words:-

On the day of the resurrection itself, in the evening, the disciples were solemnly assembled, with the doors shut "for fear of the Jews" (St. John 20:19), and the Lord, in his risen body, appeared among them, to confer on them their great mission (Verses 21-23). Again on the eighth day, or, as we should term it, seven days after the great day of the resurrection, we have a similar assembly and a like appearance, which records the confirmation of the faith of St. Thomas. Verses 26-28. The same apostle who had linked together thus markedly those three occasions, introduce the Apocalypse to us with a proem that shows a deep sense of its dignity and importance, and next proceeds to localize it, first in place, by describing the isle of Patmos as the scene, and then, in time, by specifying that he was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Rev. 1:9, 10.

This is the complete "record of facts" which Mr. Gladstone says "go far towards showing" that Sunday was kept from the days of the apostles. Notice that he does not claim that these facts actually show that Sunday was observed by them; he simply cautiously claims that they "go far" towards showing it. We will now examine each statement in detail, and then we shall see just how far they go, and how far they fall short of showing any divine sanction whatever for Sunday keeping.

A First-Day Meeting

First we have John 20:19, where, after speaking of the resurrection of Jesus, the apostle says:-

"Then the same day at evening, being the first [day] of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."

Now we submit to every candid person that there is not in that verse the slightest hint of Sunday sacredness. If a man entirely ignorant of the Sunday controversy, and therefore unprejudiced, read it, he could gather from it nothing further than that the disciples were fearful lest the Jews should include them in the condemnation of Jesus, and that they therefore huddled together in a room with closed doors, and that Jesus hastened after his resurrection to calm their

fears. Scarcely anything more is needed to show the unscripturalness of Sunday observance than the fact that this verse is relied on to prove it.

"After Eight Days"

The next fact referred to is given in John 20:26:-

"And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you."

Compare this with the words of Mr. Gladstone concerning it:-

Again on the eighth day, or, as we should term it, seven days after the great day of the resurrection, we have a similar assembly and a like appearance.

But the scripture does not say that the appearance was "on the eighth day," nor even "eight days after," but "after eight days." By no method of "reduction descending" known to mathematics could "after eight days" be made the same as "seven day after." The first appearance being on Sunday, the second one, "after eight days," could not by any possibility be earlier than Monday night of the following week. The use of this verse only still further emphasizes the absence of Scripture to sustain Sunday observance.

"At Home"

But it is a matter of the utmost indifference whether that meeting with the disciples was on Sunday night or Tuesday night; for there is not the slightest hint of any sacredness attaching to the time. Note the expression, "His disciples were *within*." That is the common form of expression to denote that people are at home. Can it mean that in this instance?—Certainly, and it can mean nothing else. We read that after the disciples had seen Jesus ascend to heaven they returned to Jerusalem, "and when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James." Acts 1:18.

So from these two texts we learn that the disciples, fearing lest the sight of them should stir up the passions of the mob, shut themselves closely at home, where Jesus came in to see them on the day of his resurrection, and again some time in the middle of the next week.

What have we next?—The next and the last fact cited is the declaration made by John that he was in the Spirit on

The Lord's Day

Very good; but what has that to do with Sunday? What say the Scriptures?—They tell us in plain terms what day the Lord's day is. Thus, in Ex. 20:8-10 we read:-

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work, but *the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.*"

Again, referring to this same day of the week, the Lord says:-

"If thou turn away thy foot from *the Sabbath*, from doing thy pleasure on *my holy day*; and make the Sabbath a delight, the holy, of the Lord, honorable," etc.

Note the two texts. One tells us that the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, and the other tells us that the Sabbath is *the Lord's day*, and holy. The seventh day, therefore, and none other, is the Lord's day. And that was of this very day that the Saviour declared himself to be Lord, when he was falsely accused of breaking it. Matt. 12:8. He therefore claimed it as his day. With what fact then, can any one assume that the first day of the week is the Lord's day?

An Invention to Meet a Want

The answer to that last question is found in the fact that "the Christian community "took upon itself," without any Scriptural warrant, to change the ordinance of God. Having done that, and wishing afterward to make it appear that the Bible sanctions their wickedness, they simply declared that the term "Lord's day" meant Sunday. When asked for proof that Rev. 1:10 refers to Sunday, they merely pointed to their own word, that is, they perverted the Bible to make it appear to sanction their deeds, instead of making their actions harmonize with it. The term "Lord's day," as applied to Sunday, is pure invention, with no foundation whatever in the Scriptures.

Looking at the whole of the so-called evidence for the Sunday, it is evident that it is but an afterthought; that is, there is not anything whatever in the Scriptures from which a person coming to them ignorant of the customs of "the church" could possibly get the idea that the first day of the week is to be, or that is ever was, observed by anybody. Now people find themselves keeping Sunday, without knowing the reason why. They wish to know why, and appeal to those who are supposed to know, who straightway try to find in the Bible an excuse for their custom. No wonder that their efforts bear the stamp of failure. The *Christian Commonwealth*, which is by no means favorable to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, says that Mr. Gladstone's article "may be regarded as

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timely," but is nevertheless constrained to add:-

However, it must be admitted that Mr. Gladstone is not at his best in the line of argument for himself in the article under consideration. There is too much "glittering generality" and not enough definiteness in order to carry conviction.

The fault is not in Mr. Gladstone, but in the case itself. Where Mr. Gladstone has failed, who can hope to succeed? His failure was predicted by a minister of his own church, who said:-

This much I may prophesy-that with all his great genius, and all his deep and reverent knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, he will not be able to quote a single passage in the New Testament which states that the Christian Sunday is a substitute for the Jewish Sabbath.

The Real Ground

Another writer, Prebendary Eyton, also of the Church of England, says:-

The observance of Sunday in the Christian church comes to us with quite a different sanction, and based on different grounds, from that of the Jewish Sabbath. It rests upon no direct divine command; no word is said about it in the New Testament.

If Sunday defenders will all take up this position, and stick to it, there will very soon be an end of all perplexity over the Sunday question. We have no words of condemnation for those who do so. Indeed, our whole effort is to this end, that all may know the exact grounds on which both the seventh day and the first day are observed. When it is seen and acknowledged that while the observance of the seventh day rests on the fourth commandment and the example of Christ, the observance of the first day rests solely on the authority of "the church," the Sabbath controversy will come to an end. There will then be just two classes,- those who accept the Bible only as the rule of life, and those who take the church as the only infallible guide. Then the man who is now perplexed will simply have to decide whether he will follow the Bible or "the church," and the Lord himself will judge between the men who make the decision.

E. J. W.

June 20, 1895

"How to Obey" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

In the record of the call of the apostles, we have a lesson on how the Lord wishes men to obey his call, "Follow me." Simon and Andrew were fishers. Jesus said, "Come, and follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." Not a moment did they hesitate, but "straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him." Mark 1:17, 18.

Peter and John were also fishers. They were in their boat mending their nets, which had been broken by the great number of fish that they had just taken. See Mark and Luke 5:6. Jesus called them, "and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him."

"And after these things he went forth, and a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt custom, and he said unto him, Follow me. And left all, rose up and followed him." Luke 5:27.

There are two great difficulties that confront people when they are asked to follow Christ. That is, most people are confronted by one or the other of them. One of them is the poverty of the one called, and the other is the wealth. One man hesitates because he has hard work to make a living, and he doesn't know how his family will be provided for if he obeys the Lord. Another man has so extensive a business on his hands that it is impossible to leave it, at least until he had time to arrange his affairs.

Both these classes of people are represented in the above calls, but they took no account of the difficulties. We know that Peter had a family, and, being a humble fisherman, could not have been wealthy. Yet he did not stop to consider

how he should supply his family if he obeyed the voice of Jesus, but left his nets, and went with him.

Levi was wealthy, for the office of publican was a very lucrative one; yet he left his business at a moment's notice, when Jesus called to him, "Follow me."

So it was with Paul. He says, "when it pleased God, who separated me from my mothers womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach

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him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Gal. 1:15, 16.

That is the way the Lord wishes men to obey his voice. He reveals himself in the Sabbath of the fourth commandment-the seventh day, see Ex. 20:8-11-and says to them, "Follow me." Many hesitate. With some it is their poverty that stands in the way. They don't see how they can live if they keep the Sabbath, forgetting that people who do not keep the Sabbath also die, and forgetting that it is the Creator of the heaven and the earth who calls them, forgetting that he who calls them to obey him, says, "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine" (Hag. 2:8), and also, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof" (Ps. 24:1). Of his power to provide for his followers, we have a striking proof in the wonderful draught of fishes that the disciples took at his word.

The more wealthy are still more inclined to hesitate to obey the call which Jesus sends them in the Sabbath, because the Sabbath is the best day for business. They do not reflect that it is he who gives them power to get wealth (Deut. 8:18), and that he is just as able to give wealth to those who obey him as he is to give it to those who disobey him; and that, after all, "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

Men cannot be too slow to follow strange and doubtful voices; they cannot be too cautious about moving when God has not spoken; but they cannot be too quick to obey the voice of the Lord. David said, "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments." Ps. 119:60. And then he declared that he would run in the way of the commandments of God. God's will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven; and in heaven the angels "do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word." E. J. W.

"Willing and Able" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

The teachings of the epistles of the New Testament are all illustrated by the life of Christ. For instance, we read in Gal. 1:4 that Christ "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." The will of the Father was manifest in the Son, and that will is that we might be delivered from this present evil world.

This is practically illustrated by the miracle of cleansing the leper, which is recorded in Luke 5:12-15. The leper said to Christ, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, "I will; be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him."

Here we see the effect of the will of God in Christ Jesus, upon one who submitted to it. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." 1 Thess. 4:3. How easily that will is accomplished is seen in the case with which the leper was cleansed. From that we are to learn how to be cleansed from the leprosy of sin. Knowing that it is the will of God that we should be cleansed from sin, and that he has given Christ power over all flesh (John 17:2), we may approach him with confidence. The apostle says:-

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." 1 John 5:14, 15.

So we may come to the Lord, not as the leper did, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," but saying, "Lord, I am unclean; thou canst cleanse me, and it is thy will to do so; therefore I know that thou dost hear and answer, and I have cleansing from thee." For the promise is, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." E. J. W.

"Working With Him" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

Behold in the miraculous draught of fishes, recorded in the fifth of Luke, the difference between working without the Lord and working with him. Jesus said, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." Peter answered, "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." The result was that "they inclosed a great multitude of fishes."

This miracle, which immediately preceded the calling of four of the apostles, was designed as a lesson for them, and for us as well. We may learn that work under the direction of the Lord, and with his presence, will bring great results, even after much more serious toil in the same place, without him, has accomplished nothing.

We hear a great deal in these days about working *for* the Lord, but very little about working *with* him. Now this latter is what the Bible speaks of, while it says nothing about the former. There is a vast difference. Many people, in their zeal to work for the Lord, set tasks for themselves which he has not required. This is not always the case; but if one is content to work only *with* the Lord, such a mistake can never be made.

He who works *for* the Lord often labors with all his might, but with only his own might, and then asks the Lord to bless his efforts. He who labors *with* the Lord asks the Lord to work in him "both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." He who speaks only the words of the Lord, needs not to ask the Lord to "give power to the word," because he knows that "no word from God shall be void of power." His word will accomplish that which he pleases, and prosper in the thing whereto he sends it.

"We, then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." E. J. W.

"Grass and Trees" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

The message which God send to prepare a people for his coming is briefly summed up in these words: "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; . . . but the word of our God shall stand forever." Isa. 41:6-8. "For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth; so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways." James 1:11. Such is man-as frail and as helpless as the grass. His breath is in his nostrils, and he is nothing to be accounted of (Isa. 2:22), for his life is but "a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14). Yet God does not despise the grass, but clothes it with wondrous beauty, surpassing the glory of Solomon. See Matt. 6:28-30. And so we are to learn that God does not despise our low estate, but cares for us, even to the extent of clothing us with his own beauty. He who does not forget the grass will surely remember man.

Even in the grass the mighty power of God is shown,-power to push aside all obstacles. As long as it is rooted in the soil in which God has placed it, his power works through it, till it has accomplished his purposes. So the power of God may be manifested in the feeblest of men, until they have been brought to the standard that he has designed for them,-even to "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

But when God thus accomplishes his purpose in them-as he did it in all who are as passive in his hand as is the grass-they cease to be considered as grass, and are called trees. The message which tells us that we are grass is a message of comfort, in that it reveals to us the word of power. Now to all those who receive that comforting message from the Lord, comes this further message of comfort, that he has come:-

"To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Isa. 61:3.

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God." Ps. 92:12, 13.

And so we have this wonderful growth of grace, that, whereas we start as grass, we develop into tress, which cannot be withered nor wrenched from their place, nor even bent by the mightiest blasts that may blow. What wondrous possibilities there are for those who are rooted in Christ! E. J. W.

June 27, 1895

"How Do You Hear?" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

How Do You Hear? -"Take heed what ye hear." Mark 4:24. These are the words of the Saviour, and they are as important now as when first uttered.

But what shall we hear? This is answered by the directions as to what we are not to hear. "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge." Prov. 19:27.

Thus we are to hear the words of knowledge. And what words are they? Again we read: "For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Prov. 2:6. The words of the Lord, therefore, are the words of knowledge.

In Christ are hid "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col. 2:3. He speaks the words of knowledge, because he speaks only the words of God. "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God." John 3:34. Therefore the word of God concerning Christ is, "Hear him." Luke 9:35. His words are God's words, and we are to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. All other words are worse than useless.

But there is still another exhortation as important as the other. It is this: "Take heed therefore how ye hear." Luke 8:18. A man may hear the right thing, and yet not be profited, because he does not hear in the right way. How then shall we hear?

In the first place, we should hear with gladness. The angels in heaven hearken to the voice of God's word. Ps. 103:20. They listen attentively, lest any word should escape them.

In the second place, they listen for the purpose of obeying. They "do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word." Whoever listens in this way will have no difficulty in understanding what he hears, for "if any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching."

Lastly, it is important that we hear so attentively that we do not forget. There are some from whom the word is snatched away as soon as it is heard. Then it does them no good. "But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." 1 John 2:5. We are to *hold* the word. Where?-In our hearts. Let it remain there, so that its life will permeate every portion of the being, and it will make you "perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." E. J. W.

"Thou God Seest Me" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

"And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly." Luke 22:61, 62.

Consider what was wrought by that look of Jesus. It reminded Peter of his sin. It awoke in him a consciousness of guilt. With that consciousness of sin came contrition. He went out, and wept bitterly. That was also wrought by the look. But "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Ps. 51:17. Therefore that look which carried conviction and

contrition, also brought forgiveness. For "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

There is healing power in the look of the

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Lord. Even the beasts are troubled when the Lord hides his face from them. Ps. 104:29. How much more then must men be troubled when they do not walk in the light of his countenance.

There is also salvation from sin in the Lord's look. When Daniel prayed for his people, he said, "Open thine eyes, and behold our desolations." Dan. 9:18. And also, "Cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate." Verse 17. So the psalmist says, "Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved." Ps. 80:3, 7, 19.

Sin cannot endure the presence of the Lord. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil." Hab. 1:13. So, as the bright sunlight destroys disease germs, the light of God's countenance destroys the seeds of sin. What a comfort, then, to be able to say, "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins, in the light of thy countenance." Ps. 90:8. When the light of his countenance shines upon them, they vanish.

We need not be afraid to have the Lord see us. Rather should we rejoice that he condescends to look upon us. One of the most blessed promises in the Bible is this: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Isa. 66:2.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

July 4, 1895

"A Lesson for All Time" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

The Second Psalm

In this psalm we have questions and answers and exhortations. They are applicable at all times, but most especially at the present time, as we shall see. The psalm begins with the question:-

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?"

The word "heathen" is the same as "nations." Among men the word "heathen" is usually considered as synonymous with "uncivilized;" but the Bible calls all men heathen who do not serve the Lord, no matter how much they may have of the veneer and polish of what is called civilization. It will be noticed that in the margin we have "tumultuously assemble" as the equivalent of "rage."

Plotting against the Lord

What is the cause of the tumultuous gatherings of the people? And what is the vain thing which they imagine? The second and third verses give the answer:-

"The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

The reader will see, by looking at John 1:41 and margin, that the words "Anointed" and "Christ" are the same. Therefore we may read, "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Christ."

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Thus it is quoted in Acts 4:25, 26. The Father and the Son are inseparable. It is impossible to speak against one without opposing the other. It is impossible that there should be such a thing as believing in God but not in Christ. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." John 14:6. They are one in redemption, as they are one in creation.

Notice well that the hands and cords of both are the same. Some people like to persuade themselves that in casting away the law of the Lord they are following Christ. They try to believe that Christ came for the purpose of turning men from their obligation to keep the law of God. That is a part of the "vain thing" which the people imagine. He who seeks to cast off the law of the Lord, is rejecting the yoke of Christ. Jesus says, "I and my Father are one." John 10:30. The law of God is the law of Christ.

Rejecting God's Love

What is there about the law of God that should cause men to try to shake it off? Is it a burdensome yoke?-Not by any means. Jesus said: "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matt. 11:28-30. Now see how perfectly this agrees with what is said of the law: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13:10. Instead of being a burdensome yoke, the law of God in Christ gives peace and rest. It is a comfort. "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life." Prov. 6:23. "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." Ps. 119:165.

Since the law of God is love, it is evident that those who seek to cast away God's bands and cords, are rejecting his love. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:7. Christ is he by whom men are drawn (John 12:32), because in him is God's law of love. To reject the law of God is to reject Christ.

Everlasting Cords

It is indeed possible for men to cast away from them the loving bands of God's law; but can they break them asunder?-Never. "The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness." Ps. 111:7, 8. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Ps. 119:89. Therefore "it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke 16:17. The cords with which God draws men are the cords of love, or his law, and this love is everlasting; consequently those cords are everlasting. Men may shake them off, but it is a "vain thing" to think of breaking them.

Men fancy that they have done away the law, when they have only made it void in their own hearts. They think that the law of God has changed, when it is only they who have changed. The Papacy, "that man of sin," has boasted great things against God, setting itself forth in the place of God; but yet the prophecy says that at its greatest it can only "*think to change* times and laws." Dan. 7:25. It can go no farther than the thought; it can accomplish nothing except vainly to persuade itself and its dupes that it has the power. The law of God is "like the great mountain." Far better mighty puny man think to level the Alps or the Himalayas with pickax and spade, than to overthrow the law of God.

Opposition to God

There is no nation on earth that has not set itself in opposition against God. No argument will be needed to establish this statement so far as it concerns what are called "heathen nations." But what about the so-called "Christian nations"? They have done the same thing. Following the lead of the Papacy, they have every one enjoined the observance of the first day of the week in direct opposition to God's law, which commands the observance of the seventh day. Let a man who is in court to answer for working on Sunday quote the fourth commandment, and he will be told that the court does not recognize that, and that the law of the land must be enforced, no matter what the Bible says. Thus men exalt themselves above God. In setting aside the Sabbath of the Lord for this Sunday of pope and pagan, governments to-day as really set themselves against Christ as did "Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the gentiles, and the people of Israel."

A Laughable Farce

How does the Lord regard these attempts upon his law? Here is the answer:-

"He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision."

It is well known that ants have means of communicating among themselves, and that they have a form of government, doubtless as perfect for them as human government is for men. Suppose now that we were able to understand

their language, and should overhear them plotting to overthrow this government and all other governments. Would there not be a peal of laughter that would sound throughout the earth? The idea is too ridiculous for consideration. But the difference between ants and men is not nearly so great as that between men and God. "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." Isa. 40:17. No wonder that God laughs at the "great swelling words of vanity" that men speak.

Men may rage and storm, but the government of God is in no danger. Every attack upon it will only recoil upon the misguided men who make it. It is forgetfulness or ignorance of this fact that causes people sometimes to manifest so much zeal in defending the Lord's cause. Many laws have been made by men for the purpose of "protecting" the religion of Jesus Christ. If those men had known the Lord, they would rather have sought his protection for themselves. We wonder that every such law, however conscientiously made, has been a miserable failure. Since it was uncalled for, it was only in the way. The attempts of men to prop up the government of God are as ridiculous, even if they be not as wicked, as the attempts of men to overthrow it. They show that men vainly imagine themselves to be more powerful than God, and that he is dependent upon them. When God laughs at human designs against his government, we need not be alarmed, for its safety. Our only anxiety should be to seek, and to induce others to seek, His protection.

Troubling the Wicked

What will God do to those wicked people?

"Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure."

In the margin we have "trouble" as the formative of "vex." Notice that it requires only a word from the Lord to throw men in confusion. It is not necessary that he even speak; a look is sufficient. When the horde of Pharaoh were pursuing Israel through the Red Sea, "it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians." Ex. 14:24. We can trust the Lord to defend and protect his own cause and his own people.

A Royal Decree

In the face of the plots against his government, the Lord says:-

"Yet have I anointed my King upon Zion, the hill of my holiness."

Men may think to break asunder the hands of the Lord and his Anointed, but nevertheless the proclamation of Christ as King is calmly made in the face of it. And when Christ has thus been proclaimed King, what will be the result? Here is the announcement which Christ makes to prove his right to reign:-

"I will declare the decree; The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

The prophet declares: "The government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." Isa. 9:6, 7.

God's Everlasting Kingdom

Let it not be forgotten that only "the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." It is not done by any human agency. It is the Lord God, and not man, who gives to Christ

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the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth.

When the nations are given to Christ, together with the whole earth, for what purpose is it? He himself tells us in the remainder of the decree which God issued to him:-

"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

In the second chapter of Daniel the nations of earth are represented as an image composed of various metals. The kingdom of Christ is represented as a stone cut out of the mountain *without hands*, with the following result: "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Dan. 2:35.

That image represented the nations of earth until the end of time. The head of gold represented Babylon, which passed away hundreds of years before the first advent of Christ. The breast and arms of silver, representing Medo-Persia, long since ceased to figure in the affairs of the world. The brass, representing Grecia, crumbled to pieces under the iron monarchy of Rome; and Rome itself, represented by the legs of iron, went into a decline soon after one of its governors hearkened to the wicked counsels of the people, and crucified the Lord of glory. Then it became divided, retaining some of the strength of the iron, but incapable of united action, and in that condition, it has been for about fourteen hundred years. That is a long time as men count, but not long enough for God to forget. We are living in the days when we must expect as the next great event the smiting of the nations, and their utter destruction by the Lord.

An Exhortation

In view of all this, how important the exhortation:-

"Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled."

In this last we have given the literal rendering, as in the Revision. Very soon will the wrath of the Lord be kindled. How are the kings and judges of the earth to kiss or acknowledge allegiance to the Son, and thus escape his wrath?-

Manifestly by obeying his commands. Certainly not by presumptuously passing laws designed to "protect" him and his cause. The Lord asks for their submission, not for their support. This is shown by the closing words of the psalm:-

"Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

Instead of thinking to uphold the government of God, men, even though they be kings, are to seek his protection for themselves. This will not be done by their passing laws defining how, other people shall worship God, but by their personally obeying the laws that God himself has made for the guidance of all men, both high and low. When the time comes that the Lord takes possession of his inheritance, and begins to reign, and "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men," flee to hide themselves in the dens and caves of the earth, saying to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. 6:15, 16), each one will be acting only for himself. Even so they must act only for themselves in serving God, if they will yield to him. No man, even though he be king or judge, can serve God for another. Each individual, however high or low, is called upon to render personal obedience.

The thing that God calls upon men to do is to cease fighting against him. That message, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; he instructed, ye judges of the earth," is one which the servants of God are now to bear. "Before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings," the message is to go. It is not a message of denunciation, but of entreaty. Every nation of earth has set itself up against God, and successive rulers and judges have accepted as a matter of course what has been done by their predecessors, and have acted on the same plan. Not all are by any means knowingly guilty of opposition to God. Therefore they are to be shown what is the real power of God, that they may have opportunity to yield to it.

It is natural for men to make much of the fact that cruel persecution results from the laws that have been made to supply a supposed deficiency in the government of God. But that evil, although great, is only secondary. The primary and the chief evil is the opposition to God's law. If they would deal fairly with God, no injustice could possibly result to men. And the burden of those who love the Lord will ever be, not that they are oppressed, but that God is dishonored, and that those who are dishonoring him are endangering their own souls. The evil with its consequence is to be faithfully set before them, together with the invitation and assurance, "O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him." E. J. W.

July 11, 1895

"Feeding on the Word" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

Feeding on the Word. -Whatever a man eats that is not real food, is not only useless to him, but is a positive injury, since it taxes the digestive organs without

adding any strength. Therefore anything that one eats that is not or cannot be assimilated, and does not go to build up the system, is only a damage.

Even so it is with our reading. If we read that which is not useful,-that which does not tend to build us up, and make us stronger mentally and spiritually,-it is only an injury to us. It is even worse than eating that which is not good food. It is both a waste of time and a wasting away of the faculties.

It is much the same if we read even good matter, and do not think as we read. To be sure we are not having our minds poisoned, as when worthless trash is read; but the mental powers are not strengthened by such reading, but vitiated instead. Such a manner of reading weakens the memory, and is little better than dreaming. In short, if we do not get positive nourishment by what we read, our reading is, to say the least, of no benefit to us.

Apply this now to our reading of the Bible. If we read it simply as a story book, we get no real benefit, except that we are kept from reading, something that is not good. If when we read the promises, or the record of victories which were gained through those promises, we see nothing more than the bare fact that certain men had certain experiences, then our reading is. Like swallowing lumps of food that is in itself good, but which is not digested nor assimilated.

The Bible is the language of the Spirit of God spoken through men. Consequently it is not the language simply of the men who perused it. The Spirit of God, who knows the human heart and its needs, as well as the divine gifts, has put language into the mouths of certain men, which may be used by all. So when we read the words of David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, . . . who forgiveth all thine iniquities" (Ps. 103:1-3), we are to appropriate that language as our own. If we do so, we shall understand the Scriptures, and shall be benefited by them. But if we are content to read it simply as David's experience, it is the same to us as though it had not been written.

Let us learn to read the Scriptures in this way, and the Bible will soon be a new book to us. The reading of it will be a delight. When we read reproofs and warnings, we shall know that they mean us personally; and when we read the promises which always accompany reproofs, we shall rejoice in them as much as though we were addressed by name. When we read the statement of experience, we shall adopt it as our own, and realize all the benefit of it.

Until we learn to read the Bible in this way, we cannot be said to really believe it. We may indeed believe that God spoke to and blessed David and Paul; but if we do not make that language and blessing our own, we do not really believe the word, for it is addressed to us. If you wish to know if you really believe the whole Bible, you may test yourselves by this text:-

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. 2:20.

If you read this merely as Paul's experience, then you have not learned to believe the Bible. But if in reading it you can speak that word "I" as meaning yourself, and can repeat the text intelligently as the language of your own heart, as the Spirit of God meant you should, then you really believe not that verse alone, but the whole Bible, and the joy of God's salvation is yours. E. J. W.

"Bruised and Healed" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

Our little child has fallen and bruised herself badly. The flesh is black and blue and swollen. Her eyes fill with tears, her lips quiver, and her whole body is trembling with the pain and the fright. Her countenance and her very attitude are a pitiful appeal for help and sympathy.

What is to be done in such a case? Every parent knows what is the first impulse, kiss what brings the most speedy relief. Some soothing remedies may be applied, but the greatest relief comes from the folding in the parent's arms, and the loving kisses of sympathy that are bestowed. The little one settles down quietly, the strain is relaxed, the trembling ceases, and soon the pain is forgotten.

What a common occurrence this is, and yet how slow we are to learn the lessons suggests. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Ps. 103:13, 14. We are but children. Compared with God we are far more helpless than our children are compared with us. God deals with us as sons, and we are his children; and his love and pity for us are as much greater than ours for our children as God is greater than we are.

Think of that statement, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." He pities them in just the same way, only infinitely more. That is to say, he takes us up in his arms, if we will but come to him, knowing that he is our Father, and he soothes the pain and heals the bruise. For "he healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds." Ps. 147:3. Christ says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The Spirit of the Lord is upon him "to heal the broken-hearted," "to set at liberty them that are bruised," "to comfort them that mourn."

That is just what we need. We have fallen and are sorely bruised. We are "laden with iniquity," "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." Isa. 1:5, 6. Our need is desperate.

Believing that the Lord is indeed our Father, we come to him, and find that his arms are stretched out to receive us. He says, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Isa. 66:13. What does this mean but that

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he will take us up in his arms? How else does a mother comfort her babes? When Jesus was on earth, he took up the little ones in his arms, and in so doing he was but manifesting the love and tenderness of the Father.

We are sadly battered and bruised by sin. But "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isa. 53:4, 5. How blessed is the assurance that-

"There is mercy with the Saviour;
There is healing in his blood."
"For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind;

And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully king."

These things are real. They are not figures of speech. They are as real as God himself. To doubt the reality of God's comfort, to doubt that "underneath are the everlasting arms," and that God does as really fold us in his embrace as the earthly father does his child, is to doubt the reality of the existence of God. We cannot know anything of God except as he reveals himself to us. To doubt that he is just what he declares himself to be, is to doubt that he exists at all. But in all his word he has revealed himself as the tender, pitying, loving Parent.

Let us then come to him believing that he is, and that he delights in mercy. Then, having tasted that the Lord is precious, we shall say, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for thy love is better than wine." Why not allow the Lord to be as real to us as he actually is?

"If our love were but more simple,
We should take him at his word;
And our lives would be all sunshine
In the sweetness of our Lord."
E. J. W.

"How Moses Knew" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

How did Moses learn about the creation? There was no man living when the heavens and earth were created, so he could not have learned the story from man. Those who assume that he compiled the narrative from various existing documents, do not help the matter at all, for no man who lived before Moses had any better chance to learn about creation than he had. Even Adam had no more personal knowledge of the facts of creation than Moses had; for creation was complete when Adam first saw the light. He saw nothing of the process himself. Then how did Moses know what to write? Did he imagine it?—Not at all; he wrote just what he knew, because the Lord God told him. He who created the heavens and the earth "made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel" (Ps. 103:7), for the Lord spoke to him mouth to mouth. Num. 12:8. This is the way the entire Bible was written, "for no prophecy ever came by the will of man; for men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost."

Not an Allegory

Some people like to strike a happy mean between the idea that the first chapters of Genesis are actual history, and the theory that they are pure fiction, by claiming that they are allegorical. Of all such it may be said, "They know not what they do." They do not realize that any view other than that those chapters describe actual occurrences is a denial of the whole Bible, and of the very Gospel. The third chapter of Genesis tells how sin came into the world, and contains the first promise of the Saviour who should die for the sin. To deny the literalness of that account is to deny the story of the cross. Upon the first and

second chapters of Genesis the fourth commandment is based. If they were not literal history, the Sabbath would be gone. This indeed is why those chapters are discredited. But they who discredit the story of creation, and the Sabbath, do not realize that in so doing they are denying sanctification. God says, "I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Eze. 20:12. Without the knowledge of creation and the Sabbath there can be no knowledge of perfect sanctification. "Thy word is true from the beginning." Ps.119:160. It is all "profitable for doctrine, for reproof for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

Creation and the Cross

The eternal power of God is clearly seen in the things that he has made. Rom. 1:20. Creation is the measure of God's power. Not that any one save God can measure it, because it is infinite; but the power manifested in creation is the same power that saves men from sin. Rom. 1:16, 17. So that the Gospel is simply creative power applied to sinful men. See Eph. 2:10; 2 Cor. 5:17. But the preaching of the cross is also the power of God. 1 Cor. 1:17, 18, 23, 24. Christ crucified is the power and the wisdom of God, and so it is the Gospel. On the cross Christ shed his blood to reconcile us to God, in the forgiveness of our sins. Col. 1:14; Rom. 5:9, 10. The blood of the life (Lev. 17:11, 14), so that it is the taking of the life of Christ that reconciles us to God. But we have redemption through his blood, because in him were all things created. Col. 1:14-16. He is the source of the creation. Rev. 3:14. All created things sprang from his life. So that the power of the cross, by which we are saved, is the power by which the worlds were made. Thus it is that if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, or a new creation. Only as we consider the power of God as manifested in creation, can we learn the wonderful power of the cross. David said, "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work, I will triumph in the works of thy hands." And Paul wrote, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." And both of them gloried and triumphed in the same thing. E. J. W.

July 18, 1895

"Doubts and Thistles" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

Doubts and Thistles .-It is very bad for a farmer to have thistles growing abundantly in a field. The best thing for him to do is to kill their roots, and thus clear the field of them. But if he will not do that-if he is determined to raise thistles-then let him cut off the tops before they ripen, so as not to sow thistles in his neighbor's field. We have seen the air full of thistledown from the field of a slack farmer, providing a crop for all his neighbors, yet we never saw the original crop diminished by so much as one thistle. Remember this! You cannot diminish you own crop of thistles by sowing your neighbor's field with them. Even so it is

with doubts. If you have them, the best thing to do is to root them out. But if you will not do this, do not sow them in the heart of your neighbor. Keep them to yourself. By giving expression to them, you sow the seed in the hearts of others, and do not in the least diminish the amount in your own heart. Keep your thistles and your doubts to yourself. E. J. W.

"How do You Know?" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

"But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, who shall descend into the deep (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead)? But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. 10:6-10.

This is the way of righteousness, and this is what we want to learn. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Righteousness come by him; but where shall we find him? Who knows anything about him? We have in the Bible the story of his life, and have read about his crucifixion and resurrection ascension to heaven; but how do we know that it is true? We never saw the men who wrote the Bible, nor anybody who did see them. Who knows that Christ ever came into the world to save sinners, about which we have read? If we should ask the average man whom we meet to-day if he believes there was and is such a being as Jesus of Nazareth, he would say, Yes, of course. You say you believe it, but what reason have you for believing it? Can you give any evidence of it?

This is a fair question, and one that we ought to expect that the world will ask. The Lord expects that people will ask us a reason of the hope that is in us, and tells us that we should always be ready to give an answer. There are different ways people have of answering this question; but there is only one right way. Now and again we see in papers professedly devoted to Christian evidences, efforts to substantiate the truth of the Gospel by references to contemporary heathen writers who had mentioned the Scriptures, or by quotations from the ancient fathers, who professed faith in them. We sometimes see quotations from the sayings of great men of past days, or from men still living, who said they believed the Bible; and if they, with all their learning and greatness, believed it, why should not we? But that is no reason to us at all. We cannot believe it because somebody else does. We may believe the person to be honest in his belief, but that cannot make us know it. No man, however great and learned, can believe, but that cannot make us know it. No man, however great and learned, can believe for another, no matter how mean and ignorant he may be.

Now the question comes to every professor of Christ, How do you know that such a person as Jesus of Nazareth ever lived? It is a question which every disbeliever in the Bible has a right to ask, and to which he has a right to expect

an answer. It will do no good to berate him as an infidel; that will only serve to confirm him in his unbelief by leading him to think that his questions cannot be answered. How will you answer?

You may tell him you believe it. Very good; but that will not convince him, for there are other people who believe other things that are not true. He does not question the fact that you believe, but wishes to know why. You may quote to him great men, but what of that? The Lord himself would not admit that as evidence. On one occasion he said, "I receive no testimony from men." It makes no difference how many men the questioner might be referred to, he would still want to know how they knew it was true.

Knowing by Faith

There is only one way of knowing, and these words of Paul in Romans point that out. We have searched for him, but this scripture says we have not to ascend into heaven to bring him down, nor into the deep, to bring up Christ, but "the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach." "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." This is the righteousness of faith; and in Eph. 3:17 we read that Christ dwells in the heart by faith. We can really know nothing in this world about Christ except that which we know by personal experience. The testimony of hearsay is valueless. We must tell only what we know. We have read about the crucifixion and resurrection, that Christ "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust;" that, "in that he died, he died unto sin, and in that he liveth, he liveth unto God;" and that "death hath no more dominion over him;" but how do we know this is true?—By proving it.

Witnessing to the Truth

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus." Now to confess a thing means to tell the truth about it. We are here as witnesses for God, just as the believers were sent out after Pentecost to be witnesses unto the Lord in Jerusalem, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." Isa. 43:10. We are to be witnesses with him, who is the "Faithful and True Witness." When the Saviour was asked before the Roman governor if he was a king, he "confessed and denied not." And Paul says he "witnessed a good confession" before Pontius Pilate. 1 Tim. 6:13. In doing this he said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." John 18:37. We are to confess with him to the truth.

One who is a witness must run no risk in his testimony. When we go into the witness box, we are put under oath to tell the truth, and only what we *know* to be truth. It will not do to tell what we *think* is true, or what others think is true. There is always the possibility that what we merely think is true is not so, and if we tell what we merely *think* is true, we run the risk of perjuring ourselves. So we dare not speak of things which we do not know positively.

Is Jesus of Nazareth raised from the dead? It may be you have talked about Christ and the resurrection. Do you know that he was dead, and is risen? The whole Gospel is summed up in that. The angels announced to the shepherds the birth of Christ, and said that the message was one of glad tidings of great joy, which should be to all people. Then if you have known the fact, and do know it, it is joy to you, and you must have found joy in proclaiming it. If you have not found all joy and peace in it, then you must have missed the Gospel in some way, and if you have professed to believe it, then you have been bearing false witness in your testimony.

It may be that you have assumed the birth of Jesus as a fact so well established that you thought it was hardly necessary to prove it. "Everybody," you say, "believes that Christ lived and was crucified." No; there are more who do not believe it than there are who do believe it. Even in what are termed "Christian lands," there are many who do not believe it, and we cannot rest in the assumption that everybody believes it.

False Witnesses

Perhaps in the very telling about it to others, there was a dolefulness in the testimony which belied it. Unbelievers coming into a meeting where professed believers were in the witness box testifying before the Judge, would often get the idea that it is a very gloomy thing to be always giving up something. There is such a sadness, such a feeling of want and dissatisfaction in many testimonies, that they would think there was little attractiveness in Christ. There is a bearing of false witness before God; because the angel from heaven announced that this was a message of great joy, and here are those talking about it who give the impression that there is no joy in witnessing to it, but a hard striving after something that we hoped to get but did not have.

Then, again, you have perhaps said that Jesus was raised from the dead, and have assumed that this was so generally accepted that you did not need to prove it. Some day some one may come to you face to face, and ask you how you know that Jesus was raised from the dead. You may say, O, the Bible says so! But he will ask you how you know that the record is true. Here is a live question which comes to us eighteen hundred years after Christ. And were it not possible for us to-day to give just as sure evidence, and to speak just as positively as did the apostles, we should have to give up. If you do not know of positive knowledge that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead, then it is not possible for you to witness to it. Surely witnesses for God ought to be as sure of their testimony as witnesses before an earthly magistrate are required to be; and that means that you know of your own personal knowledge, irrespective of what others have told you. If you can not do that, you know nothing about it, and must stand down from the witness box.

The apostle Paul was brought before the magistrate on this very question at one time. He was on trial for his life, accused for saying that there was another King than C sar, namely, one Jesus. But the Roman government, on investigation, said he found it a question of religion only, about one Jesus whom

the Jews said was dead, but whom Paul affirmed to be alive. Acts 25:17-19. A very simple question, but one which involved the whole Gospel. Paul could stand before the court and testify under oath that Jesus was risen from the dead.

It is a wonderful thing. You are telling

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men that One who was dead came to life. How do you know it?-I was reading it in a book and-But hold, if we want the testimony of a book, we will get the book; you must tell only what you know. Well, I was at a place and heard a man speaking very positively, and he told a story which fitted together perfectly; and he made the matter so plain that I believed it. But again you are missing the point; it is not some other man's testimony that you are to give, but only your own. Did Jesus really die, or is the whole story a myth? Was it merely assumed that he died and rose again?

How do we know that Jesus lives?-We have talked with him, we have heard his voice, and we can say positively that he lives at our house. Suppose that a man has disappeared, and foul play is suspected. We are called to testify as to our knowledge of him, and can say that he is not dead, because he is living at our house, and we have been in conversation with him every day. That is evidence enough as to our knowledge of him. Moreover, there is a record to put in evidence. The record says that Jesus was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead. Now this Being with whom we are in communion every day corresponds exactly with the specification of the records. We find the truth of the record demonstrated by him every day.

Here are habits of one kind and another, which might be enumerated by the score. In fact, our whole life was perverse. In spite of ourselves, we found that these habits would assert themselves and make us miserable. There was impatience, and we would say words that were wrong, and, although resolving most solemnly to refrain from allowing such feelings to enter the heart, we found that it was impossible to shut them out. We were helpless in the hands of these habits, and could not shake them off.

What We Have Seen

Well, we saw Jesus of Nazareth. We saw him being led to Calvary. We saw him crucified. Some one may say, "I don't believe you saw that." We cannot help it; we saw Jesus set forth crucified before our eyes, and that for which he was crucified was the sin of the world, *our* sin. And when he told me that he "loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20), I believed him. In fact, we had had evidence of his love before that. He had borne witness from our earliest infancy to his love, and, although we had gone our own way and denied him, yet "he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." He did not withdraw his love and his life from us. So we had had previous witness of his love for us and his power.

Created with Him

So when he told us again that he loved us and would deliver us from the sin that bound us, we believed him, and gave ourselves to him. He said he would identify himself with us, and he did; although sinless, "he was made to be sin for us," counting our sin as his. We had gone astray, and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. So when he was crucified, he was crucified for our sin. We saw him lifted up, and we consented to be crucified with him. And we knew it was a crucifixion too. It was no fancy; for when we came to give up these evil things, we found that the whole life was composed of them, and it was giving our life. We found that the disease of sin was in the blood itself, and it was taking our very life to have it taken away. But we said to the Lord, "We identify ourselves with you, as you with us;" and so we were crucified with him. And in that crucifixion we found him a wonderful Being, the like of which had never lived on the earth before; for, although crucified, he still lived, and when we accepted his terms, and told him that he might take our life in the crucifixion, we took his life for us, and ever since he has lived with us.

Living with Him

How do we know he lives? Is there any evidence that we are not dreaming?—Yes; because our faith brings him as a living being into our heart, and that thing which we found utterly impossible is now done. We can say, "The life which I know live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. 2:20. Therefore we can witness that Jesus Christ is not in the heavens, nor in the deep, but in our heart. And this is the way in which the apostle Peter says we are to be able to give a reason for our hope. He says, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15. It could not be done in any other way, because Christ in us is the only hope of glory. Col. 1:27. He in whom Christ is not formed, has no hope at all.

Some one may say, "I should like to know this." You may know it just as well as anybody if you wish. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." The reason is that Christ is righteousness, and he dwells in the heart by faith; our faith in that which is a fact, makes us know the fact.

Faith in a Fact?

If the story of Jesus of Nazareth were a myth, no faith that we could put in it would make it a fact. One cannot believe a lie so strongly as to make it a truth. We cannot believe in a thing which does not exist, so strongly as thereby to make it exist. Therefore that which through faith we find to be an actual fact, must

have been a fact before we believed it. Our faith in the story of Jesus, that he was born, and was crucified, and that he lives, produces an actual power in us to do that which we could not do ourselves, or which no power of man could do. And this shows that the story is not a myth, but a present, living reality.

We did not believe in that thing before the power operated in our heart, but the power worked in us because we believed. We saw Jesus Christ lifted up before us, and we were crucified with him, and in that crucifixion we demonstrated the fact that he is risen from the dead. The crucifixion is because of sin, and it is a giving up of life in all there is of this life. But "if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." 1 Cor. 5:10. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Gal. 2:20. The living is the life of Christ in us. The joy of the Lord is the strength of our life. Neh. 8:10. So let us not tell our neighbors and friends that the Christian life is a doleful one. But there is no use in our telling them that it is not a good life, unless the joy and peace of it are seen in the telling of it, and are manifested in the life.

Giving and Taking

One part of the life is a giving up, a crucifixion. But do not tell the world that that is all there is of Christianity. We cannot persuade men to give up their sinful habits and pleasures by simply talking about giving up. "What is there left?" they will say. If they give their sinful pleasure up in Christ, seeing him crucified, and are crucified with him, in the very giving up they get something else,-they get his life, and this life is peace and righteousness. In him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. In him all things come which are in heaven and earth. "Wherein he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Each man may have but a very small portion of this world, but if a man had all the world, we can say to him, "Give this up, and take Christ and in him you will have all the treasures of the universe; for in him are all things, and in him we have obtained an inheritance." Eph. 1:11. The Spirit of God is to make known to us "what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what are the exceeding greatness of his power," to us. We are to give everything we have, and what vast possessions are ours to give up? What have we?-Our wretchedness, misery, poverty and blindness. We had an impatient disposition. What returns did it make to us? The dislike and ill-will of many. The pleasures we thought were yielding us something at the time, but afterwards they left emptiness or disease behind them. "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death." Rom. 6:21. Although we had not felt to the full the death, there was a certain looking forward to the judgment; and the fear of death resulted from the continued bondage. Now the word comes, "Give up all this, and take Christ and his riches, and in his strength you will overcome the evil habits whenever they attempt to put you under the old bondage," and your faith in that act makes

it a fact to you. Your belief in the fact that Christ is crucified and risen, makes it a fact that Christ lives in you, and brings all the joy of the universe into your life.

We go to Calvary. We may never have seen that spot just outside the walls of Jerusalem. Not many have either the time or the means to go there; and it would not add to their faith in Christ if they could. We are glad we do not have to go to Jerusalem, either to see the place or to see him crucified. Calvary is right here. Here is the cross set up, and we see Christ set forth crucified among us. Gal. 3:1. We see him as Isaiah saw him, "high and lifted up." He is crucified for all the sins of the flesh, and they are all ours. We say, "Lord, I will go to the cross with thee, and be crucified with thee." And as we see him lifted up from the earth we see in him something wonderful,-we see in him joy in the midst of tribulation; we see in him righteousness under provocation such as no man on earth ever had. There are power and attractiveness in all these things.

Lifted Up from the Earth

And now we believe, and are crucified with him; and what comes to us? As he is lifted up from the earth, we are lifted up with him from the earth. O, the preciousness of this fact to every one who knows and believes that there is anything better than this earth and its sin, and who can joy in the sunlight of heaven! The marvel of it is that our belief, makes us know it, because we experience the same thing, and so can bear witness that it is a fact. Then we can go and bear witness to the world that Jesus Christ is crucified and risen again. We know it is so, because we not only saw him crucified, but were crucified with him, and are raised to life with him.

And that was not the end of it. We found that, although it was an unequal partnership, he made it equal. We gave our life, which had only poverty and death in it; his part was to give his life, an endless life, which we took as righteousness and peace to us.

Peace in Christ

This is how we know that the Bible is true, and that Jesus of Nazareth is raised from the dead. We say from the heart that Jesus is crucified for our sins; he died for us, and now he lives, and we know he lives; for our faith brings him into our life, and faith keeps him there, so that in the midst of temptation there is peace and deliverance. Yes, even in the face of the enemy, he gives rest and assurance. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." Ps. 23:5. The enemy surrounds us, and is ready to make a charge upon us, but the Lord says: "Never mind them; come and let us sit down at the table, and feast our souls upon the good things prepared. Their power is gone, and they can do no harm." So we laugh them to scorn, and delight ourselves in the abundance of his table, with the enemy raging all about us.

Every enemy that comes against the soul to destroy it is the same old enemy that came against Jesus of Nazareth, and he conquered them. They know him; for Christ gained the victory on the cross. On the cross he completed the work,

and the enemy was everlastingly overthrown, and all his strength taken away, together with all his armor wherein he trusted. When the enemies come, we know that it is only a show of armor they bring; so we say to them, "Christ is risen, and Christ lives in us." That which we state with positiveness because we believe it, and our belief makes it true to us because it is everlastingly true in itself, whether we believe it or not,-that act puts the enemies to flight; for they have been beaten and overthrown by the same life, and therefore have no desire to try conclusions with it again. So we hold up the life, and claim it as ours, and it is our safety and defense. The victory is already gained for us in the life of Christ, so that all we have to do is to allow ourselves to be continually crucified with him, that thus we may have his life in us. And thus any man who is a sinner, and knows himself to be a sinner, and desires to be free from that bondage of evil habits, may say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:57. E. J. W.

July 25, 1895

"Our Teacher" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

Our Teacher. -"Teach me Thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies." Ps. 27:11. "Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths." Ps. 25:4. This is a prayer that all need to utter continually, because "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps;" and God's way, which is infinitely higher than man's way or his comprehension, is the only right way.

We are so ignorant and so dull of comprehension that we have need to pray with emphasis, "Make thy way straight before my face." Well for us is it that we have a Teacher who is very considerate, "who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way." Even though we have neglected, or even despised, previous instruction, he is still patient to give wisdom, "and upbraideth not."

Here are some good promises for our encouragement: "What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." Ps. 25:12, 14. "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching." John 7:16. "The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way." Ps. 25:9. Moses was the meekest man, and "He made known his ways unto Moses." Who can estimate the favor of being taught the way of the Lord, and being allowed to share his secret?

But there is one indispensable requisite to gaining this knowledge, and that is meekness. "Be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." 1 Peter 5:5. Who has this clothing?-Nobody, for meekness and humility are foreign to human nature. All men are by nature "wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." But God provides white raiment, and he himself will take away the filthy rags, and clothe us with "change of raiment."

That is, the Lord teaches his people, and himself provides the clothing necessary for attending the school. E. J. W.

"God's Glory His Gospel" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

When Isaiah saw the Lord on the throne, high and lifted up, surrounded by the seraphim, he heard those beings cry one to another, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." Isa. 6:3. These words were spoken hundreds of years ago. Are they true now, and is the earth now full of the glory of the Lord?—Most certainly; all the while the word has been, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isa. 60:1.

The whole earth is full of the glory of God. He has revealed it in every blade of grass, in every flower, in everything that he has made. "His glory covers the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise." The plant springing up and yielding its fruits, is showing forth the glory of God; for when at Cana in Galilee Christ accelerated the process, and, instead of waiting six months for the rain to come down and be taken up into the vine and converted into the juice of the grape, changed the water into wine by the power of the same word which sends the rain and is the life of the plant, it was written that this beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, "and manifested forth his glory."

Power and Glory

The power of God is the glory of God. He showed his mighty power in the resurrection of Christ from the dead; but Christ was raised from the dead "by the glory of the Father." The power of God is also shown in the things that he has made, and the Gospel, which is this power manifested unto salvation, is the "glorious Gospel" of God. The Gospel is glory; it is also power. And the whole earth is full of it. The earth preaches no set sermons. It does not begin with firstly, secondly, thirdly, and deliver an artistic address. What does the earth do?—It receives the life from God, and manifests it forth. It simply receives the gifts that God sends upon it, and glorifies God in returning the fruits of the life. That is the Gospel. The Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth," "for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith."

Why All Do Not Glorify God

Some one may ask, "Then why am I not as much to the praise of God as the heavens?" Simply because you do not desire to be. We are exactly what we wish to be. It is a fact that God satisfies the desire of every living thing. The trouble with some is that they do not want to be satisfied.

If you really want to know the Lord, nothing in the world can hinder, because the Lord wants you to know him. There is no use in standing off and saying we want to know the Lord, and want to serve him, when for many years he has been seeking for us, and knocking for us to open the door and let him in and has been

speaking to us in very way he could. He has spoken to eyes, and ears, and to every sense we have; for there is not a thing in heaven or earth that does not proclaim the power and the glory of God.

Therefore, as soon as we are willing to believe that the Lord is better than we are, then he is more at peace and rest than we are, he shall have him; for we shall then be willing to give up our ways and our poverty, our unrest and disquietude, and have the peace and rest of God, and the riches and righteousness which he has given to us. But this is a giving up of all there is of self. To give up our ways means to confess that we do not know as much as we thought we did, and that is hard. It is a difficult thing to say that we are mistaken, and that we have no wisdom, or might, or anything that is good and worth having. This hurts; but it is our saying that the Lord is greater than we are and that we are willing that his life in us shall manifest forth his glory, that we all may be to the praise of the glory of his grace. E. J. W.

August 1, 1895

"Saved by His Life" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 30.

E. J. Waggoner

Every lost soul will one day acknowledge that God has done everything for him, and that God gave him life and he would not hold it. God has given eternal life to every soul on this earth. "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom. 5:18.

"The law entered that the offense might abound." How many have offended against God?-"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Sin abounds in the heart of man. The natural heart is the most prolific soil in the world. Men have tried to cut off the weeds of sin and dig them out, but they have sprung up and overshadowed everything. That is abounding sin. But the statement is that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. Therefore every soul is surrounded with an atmosphere of grace. God has done everything for men. "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" says the Lord. Every power to act that the man has, every capability of sinning, has been because of the grace of God perverted. Our very existence is because of the grace of God. Our life is the breathing in of the grace of God; but if we do not consciously accept God, if we do not yield to him, of what use is the life? "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Then those who breathe in the grace of God do it in vain if they do not acknowledge it.

How much of the grace of God we have squandered! How much we have perverted and abused! We have used it as a common thing. This thing comes to us with a force that would be crushing were it not for the knowledge that grace brings salvation. There is no room for condemnation; for the moment we recognize the grace we have squandered, the breath we have used in idle talk and to deny Christ, the powers we have used to work

our own evil way of selfishness, the very recognition of that fact brings knowledge of the grace that forgives sin.

O, the wonderful patience of God! Day after day and year after year he showers his grace. He causes his sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sends his rain on the just and the unjust. He sends the fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. He is witnessing of himself all the time, and has patiently kept it up year after year, while we were groveling like the beast, not recognizing it. But if we begin to recognize it, what can we not expect of the Lord." "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. 5:10. We are saved by the same thing that reconciles us. In his death he gave his life to us, and when we recognize that, and as we are recognizing it, we are saved by his life. E. J. W.

"Hardening Pharaoh's Heart" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 30.

E. J. Waggoner

When the Lord sent Moses to demand the release of the children of Israel, he said, "I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand," "but by a strong hand;" and again, "I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go." Ex. 3:19; 4:21.

This is by many supposed to show that Pharaoh could not help himself, but that he was obliged to exhibit stubbornness, and to refuse to allow Israel to go forth. As a consequence, they doubt the justice and mercy of God. They think that God purposely made Pharaoh just what he was, in order that he might make an exhibition of him.

If that were true, it would be an exhibition of God's denial of himself; for justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne; mercy and truth go before his face. Ps. 89:14. He is love. 1 John 4:8. "He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." Lam. 3:33. He is longsuffering, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9.

God says that he raised up Pharaoh in order to show in him his power, and that his name might be declared throughout all the earth. Is it not strange that people should from this at once jump to the conclusion that God raised up Pharaoh on purpose to cast him down? Is that the only way that God has of showing his power and making his name known?—Most assuredly not. His power is shown in his salvation; and his wondrous works declare his excellent name. See Psalms 8. To conclude that God willfully hardens men's hearts and makes it impossible for them to do right, in order that he may torment them, argues very little, if any, acquaintance with God.

Let us note a few points in the narrative of God's dealings with Pharaoh, which will indicate how Pharaoh's heart was hardened. When Moses and Aaron first appeared to Pharaoh, certain miracles were performed. These were counterfeited by the magicians, so that the king, who loved a lie better than the truth, refused to believe the divine message, although evidence was given that

the power with Moses was superior to that with the magicians. This was repeated several times.

The magicians, however, could not remove the plagues that they brought in imitation of those brought by the Lord, and so when the plague of frogs became intolerable, Pharaoh appealed to the servants of God, saying, "Entreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the Lord." Ex. 8:8. It will be seen that Pharaoh had learned who the Lord is. According to his request, Moses cried unto the Lord, "and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields." *"But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said."* Verse 15.

Again, swarms of flies plagued the people, and Pharaoh again relented. "And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and intreated the Lord. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; and he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; there remained not one. And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go." Ex. 8:30-32.

Other plagues were sent, all the details of which are not given, and Pharaoh still refused to keep his word. Then the terrible hail came, mingled with fire, so that the crops and flocks were destroyed. "Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail. And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. Intreat the Lord (for it is enough) that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer." Ex. 9:26-28.

Here was a confession of sin and an acknowledgment of the Lord and his righteousness. The result showed that Pharaoh's sorrow was not a godly sorrow, but only the sorrow of the world, produced by fear; nevertheless God took him at his word. This is an evidence of the kindness of the Lord, and of his unwillingness that any should perish. Although he can read the heart, and knew Pharaoh's insincerity, and that he would not hold fast to his confession and promise, that made no difference. God acted as though Pharaoh's repentance was sincere, so that he could have no excuse.

"And Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread abroad his hands unto the Lord; and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth. And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go; as the Lord had spoken by Moses." Ex. 9:33-35.

Thus we see that it was the mercy of the Lord that hardened Pharaoh's heart. When the judgments of God came, he repented; but as soon as favor was shown him, he became stubborn again. Thus he mocked the Lord and despised his mercy. Where can the Lord be blamed in this affair? If a man will not be moved either by judgments or by favors, what can be done for him? He despises the goodness and forbearance and longsuffering of God, and after his hardness and

impenitent heart treasures up unto himself wrath. He brings his own destruction upon himself, and God is clear.

The mercy of the Lord endureth forever. Even in the punishment of the wicked, God does not forget mercy. The sun that melts the wax, hardens the clay. The same glory that transforms those who yield themselves to God, consumes those who are contentious and do not obey the truth. And so the dealing of God with Pharaoh is cited by the apostle, in the ninth of Romans, as an evidence of the mercy and longsuffering of God. E. J. W.

"Not of Man" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 30.

E. J. Waggoner

The writer once talking with an infidel, who, in the course of the conversation, referred to the course which one of his neighbors had taken in a business transaction. The action referred to was evidently dishonest, and the infidel said with some warmth, "Now I don't think there was any Christianity in that." "Of course there was not," was the reply; "but the fact that you think so, shows that you know that Christianity does not sanction such things. It shows that you know in your heart that Christianity is good; why then do you not accept and practice what you know to be the truth?" This was a new way of looking at the matter, and he acknowledged that he had no excuse.

The Gospel does not derive its character from the character of the men who profess it. It comes from God. Men may live ungodly lives, but that does not disprove the Bible. On the contrary, it makes the truth the more vivid by the contrast. Men may deny the faith; they may apostatize and say that it is all a sham; but that does not shake the Gospel any more than it would make the fortress of Gibraltar fall down if some of the men who are now stationed there should desert, and say that it is built of cardboard. It is solid rock, no matter what may be said of it.

So whenever we hear that some professed follower of Christ has dishonored the name, or is teaching some wild doctrine, we can say, as Paul said when some fell into the error of supposing that the resurrection was already past, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure." God is true, his word is sure, though every man be false. E. J. W.

"Judaism and Christianity" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 30.

E. J. Waggoner

Many people speak familiarly about "Judaism," who have very faint ideas of what it is. When they hear of some who keep the Sabbath according to the fourth commandment, they speak of them as "Judaizing," because they think that Judaism means the religion enjoined in the Old Testament. But that is a great mistake.

Judaism means the religion of the Jews,

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but neither in the days of Christ and the apostles, nor since that time, have the Jews understood and believed the teaching of the Old Testament. If they had,

they would have been Christians; for the religion of the Old Testament is Christianity.

Jesus said to the unbelieving Jews: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" John 5:46, 47. From these words we learn that the Jews did not believe the writings of Moses. Therefore it is evident that the religion of the Jews-Judaism-was not and is not the religion taught by Moses. The religion taught by Moses was that which he received directly from the Lord, and it set forth Christ and him only.

The apostle Paul says that in his earlier days he made great progress in "the Jews religion," "being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions" of the fathers. Gal. 1:13, 14. The Jews' religion, therefore, or Judaism, consisted in following tradition. But this was directly opposed to Old Testament teaching, for Jesus told them that by their traditions they made void the commandments of God (Matt. 15:3), and said of them, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Verse 9. Here again we see that Judaism is the rejection of the Old Testament, instead of the acceptance of it. No man, therefore, who faithfully follows the religion of the Old Testament, can be called a Judaizer. On the contrary he is a Christian.

Again, the apostle Paul tells us that a veil was upon the hearts of the Jews, even in the days of Moses, so that they could not understand what Moses delivered to them. See 2 Cor. 3:13-16. He says, "Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." But he adds that when the heart turns to the Lord the veil is taken away. This shows still further that the religion of the Old Testament is Christianity, and that the Jews who reject Christ, do so solely because they do not really believe the writings of Moses.

What then is Judaism?-It is the rejection of the Gospel, as set forth in the Old Testament, and a following of tradition. When, therefore, we find people who know that the fourth commandment requires the observance of the seventh day of the week, commonly called Saturday, and who keep Sunday instead of that day, although they know that the Scriptures nowhere sanction it, neither in the Old Testament nor the New, but that Sunday observance stands wholly on tradition and custom, we may know that they are following the essential principles of Judaism, which consists in substituting tradition for the commandments of God. They may differ from the Jews in regard to the tradition which they follow, but they are one with them in principle.

Further, we have read the words of Jesus to the Jews, telling them that they could not believe him, because they did not believe Moses. The reason is that Moses wrote of Christ. It is evident, therefore that they do not see Christ in the Old Testament, even in the writings of Moses, do not understand and believe the Old Testament. But they who do not believe the Old Testament, including the writings of Moses, do not really believe in Christ. Therefore they who reject the Old Testament writings, do really also reject the New Testament. They are in precisely the same condition as the Jews, for both fail to see Christ in the Old Testament.

Every word of God is pure and true, and has life. A person, therefore, who knows only a very small portion of the Bible, may know and believe in Christ. But it is impossible for any to be real believers in Christ, when they reject any portion of the word which he has spoken, and which testifies of him. And it was his Spirit that testified in all the writers of the Old Testament. 1 Peter 1:10, 11.

Let no one fear that by keeping the commandments of God, as set forth in the Old Testament, he will be a Judaizer. He can not keep those commandment except by faith in Christ. They are in Christ and Christ is in them. The keeping of the commandments of God, by the faith that appropriates the life of Christ, is true Christianity. He kept the commandments (John 15:10), and he is the same to-day that he was when on earth in the flesh. Heb. 13:8. All that he did on earth was in order "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." Rom. 8:4. It is by his obedience that we are made righteous. Rom. 5:19. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2:6. E. J. W.

August 8, 1895

"Afraid of Moses" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

Many people seem to have a special antipathy to Moses, and to anything that pertains to him. Let anything be quoted from the first books of the Bible, and they will cry out, "O, that's in the law of Moses!" or, "Moses wrote that." Well, what if he did? Does that diminish its value?

Why not as well say when the Psalms are read, "O, David wrote that!" or object to other prophecies because Isaiah or Jeremiah wrote them? Why is there not as much reason in objecting to things quoted from the epistles of the New Testament because they were written by Paul, or Peter, or James, or John? Was Moses inferior to these men? Was he less favored of God?

Hear what the Lord said: "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all Mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold." Num. 12:6-8. "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." Deut. 34:10.

Christ testified that to disbelieve Moses was to disbelieve in him. See John 5:46, 47. Moses wrote of Christ. He wrote of the sacrifice of Christ, of justification through faith in his blood, of the coming of the Lord, of the resurrection of the dead, of eternal life, and of the glorious reign of the saints in the kingdom of God. Let us beware, lest, in speaking disparagingly of Moses, we be found rejecting the Master, of whom he testified, and whose reproach he suffered. E. J. W.

"Studying Error to Learn Truth" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

We have read a list of the qualifications of a minister of the Gospel, among which was this, that "he should be well abreast of the latest destructive Biblical

criticism, so as to refute its arguments." The idea that in order to refute error men must study it, is altogether too common. It shows itself in the idea that in order to avoid evil, men must go where it is, and learn all about it.

If people reasoned the same way with regard to food, everybody would soon die. If they thought that in order to be able to detect poison, and guard their children from it, they must taste all the poisons that are known, the fallacy would soon be exposed. There are very few men, comparatively, who know all about poisons. What do the people do who are ignorant of poisons?—Why, they sensibly determine to taste nothing which they do not know to be wholesome, and thus they escape all danger.

Some parents make the mistake of warning their children against all sorts of evil, so that they may be able to avoid it. This is well illustrated by the following. A mother called out to her son, "Tom, are you teaching that parrot to swear?" The reply was, "No, I am just teaching it what words it must not say."

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Of course those would be the very words that the parrot would use. And so it is with children. If they are told all about the evil that is in the world, they will be sure to try it. Let their minds be filled with that which is good, and they will have less tendency to follow the evil. Then when they see or hear of evil practices or teachings, they will be able at once to detect the evil by its contrast with the truth and the good with which they are familiar.

The person who sets himself the task of studying all the forms of error, has an endless task before him. The result will be that he will never get to the study of truth. The minister who studies the works of infidels, and of the destructive critics of the Bible, will be apt to feed the flock on the driest kind of husks. The carpenter does not try to find all the crooked sticks in the world, so that he may recognize a crook when he sees it, but he simply learns the use of the square, and then he can in a moment tell whether or not a stick is straight.

The inspired advice of the apostle Paul should be heeded by all: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." 2 Tim. 3:14. E. J. W.

August 15, 1895

**"Lessons from One of Christ's Miracles" *The Signs of the Times* 21,
32.**

E. J. Waggoner

Lessons from One of Christ's Miracles. —When Jesus had fed five thousand men, besides women and children, with five loaves and two small fishes, and they had all eaten till they were satisfied, he said to his disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

Here was more than an ordinary lesson in economy. It is doubtful if any one would have thought of saving the remnants of the dinner, if Jesus had not spoken of it. If any thought were given to it, it would naturally have been on this wise. There is no use in bothering with these little fragments, when we have one with

us who can so miraculously supply us with abundance. But Jesus in this has shown us that while he supplies our need, he does not pledge himself to supply our extravagance. We must show our appreciation of his bountiful gifts by not squandering them.

The men who saw how easily Jesus had provided food for the multitude at once resolved to take him and make him their king. Here was such a king as they desired,-one who could assure them a living. They felt sure that they would never be troubled with a scarcity of provisions with him for their king, no matter whether the season was good or bad. A good living, without any work, has been the desire of certain classes, even till this day. People will readily profess faith in Christ when they are led to believe that Christianity consists in being supported without any effort on their part.

But Jesus frustrated their designs by taking himself out of their way. They had entirely mistaken his mission. When they found him the next day on the other side of the sea, he reproved them for seeking him because of the loaves and fishes. He wished to be followed for his own sake, for the rich spiritual blessings that he could bestow, and not for merely temporal supplies.

There are many to-day who are making the same mistake about Jesus that the Jews of old made. Even Christian ministers are falling in with the idea, and are causing the people to believe that Christianity means short hours and long wages. They are trying to catch the masses with the promise of abundance of loaves and fishes. By such inducements they are only preparing the people for a bitter disappointment, and for rejecting Christ as fiercely as the Jews did when they found out that he would not serve their selfish ends.

It is true that Jesus has promised that all needful things shall be given to us, but the first thing is to seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness. He does not promise wealth, nor even comfort, in this life. It is enough that the disciple be as his Lord, and he had not on earth a place of his own whereon to lay his head. With power to feed others, he was dependent on the kindness of friends for his own daily food. The reproach of the Jews, as he hung on the cross, was true. "He saved others; himself he can not save." He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

"Hearken, my beloved brethren. Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him." James 2:5. The portion of Christ's followers is in this life poverty of worldly goods, and the riches of his grace, but in the world to come they will have possessions far beyond the utmost stretch of human imagination. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." E. J. W.

"The Waves and the Rock" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

It is impossible to imagine what some of the song writers would do if they were shut off from likening the Christian life to a voyage upon the ocean, and the Christian to a man in a boat tossed by the waves, and buffeted by the winds. But

if they had a strick regard for Scripture imagery, they would be forced to forego such illustrations.

The Bible does refer to the sea, but not as affecting the Christian. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Isa. 57:20. It speaks also of the man who does not have faith in God, but who wavers. "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." James 1:6. But surely a man receives nothing from the Lord.

When a ship is in the sea, it must of necessity be more or less at the mercy of the winds and the tide. Perhaps this is the reason why so many who have accepted the idea of the "Gospel ship" as scriptural, have supposed that instability is a necessary part of Christian experience. They expect to be up and down, according to the state of the tide.

But what saith the Scripture? The Christian is not on the restless waves, but on the solid rock. The Lord "brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." Ps. 40:2. Walking upon a rock is vastly different from being rocked in a boat.

The wind and the waves have no effect upon the rocks. The tide rises and falls, but the rock remains unchanged. The fierce waves beat against it with a thundering sound, but it moves not. It does not even tremble. Therefore he who is upon the solid rock can not be affected by the ebb and flow of the tide, nor by wind or weather. Jesus said, "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." Matt. 7:24, 25.

Jesus Christ is the everlasting Rock. "He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness

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in him." Ps. 92:15. His word is the same as himself. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Ps. 119:89. "The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness." Ps. 111:7, 8. "They are Spirit and they are life," even his own eternal life. Reader, where are you? Are you floating upon the sea? or are you established upon the Rock? E. J. W.

"Not Justified by Works" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

"But you know we are not justified by the law, but by faith; no works of our own are of any effect whatever." These are the words with which many seek to parry the force of the commandment which says: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work." Ex. 20:8-10.

It is strange that nobody ever thinks of urging this as a reason for not keeping Sunday, even when Sunday is supposed to be enjoined by the fourth commandment; but as soon as it appears that the only day to be observed is the seventh day of the week, immediately we are told that we cannot be saved by the

works of the law; and that is supposed to absolve us from all necessity of keeping "the Sabbath according to the commandment." Let us give this matter a little careful examination.

There is nothing made more clear in the Bible than that no man is justified by works, but that justification is wholly by faith. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2:8, 9. "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:5-7.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Isa. 64:6. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Rom. 3:24, 25, 28.

These texts show plainly that no works of man have any effect in securing his justification. But do they discredit the law?-Not by any means. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3:31. The law is the only standard of justice; because, "not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." Rom. 2:13. Christ's righteousness is perfect obedience to the law, which was within his heart. John 15:10; Ps. 40:8. Christ dwells in the heart by faith (Eph. 3:17), and it is his presence in the heart that justifies us, as we by faith take his life instead of our own. So we are justified by faith, because faith brings Christ and his obedience into the heart and life.

Now let us read something in continuation of texts already quoted. The apostle tells us that we are not justified by works, "for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained [prepared] that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. The good works come as soon as we become new creatures in Christ.

Again: "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable." Titus 3:8. How are we to maintain good works?-By faith, just as we received them; for we are exhorted, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Col. 2:6.

The case, then, is simply this: The law is the standard of righteousness, but the law is spiritual, and we are carnal (Rom. 7:14), it is the perfect righteousness

of the Holy Spirit, and therefore infinitely above us. Our best efforts are only violations of it. But Christ is the righteousness of God, because he is God. The law of God is therefore his very nature. He was made flesh, and dwelt among us (John 1:14), being in all things "made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Heb. 2:17. He is "the wisdom of God, and the power of God," as well as the righteousness of God, and therefore "what the law could not do, in that

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it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." What for?-"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." Rom. 8:3, 4.

Thus we see that, although we are not justified by the works of the law, we are by no means justified in ignoring and transgressing the law. Christ has called us unto liberty, but not that we should make that liberty an occasion to the flesh. Gal. 5:13. We find our liberty only in seeking is precepts. Ps. 119:45. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17), and "the law is spiritual;" therefore only in obedience to the law, which is found in Christ, is there true liberty.

In closing, let us see how the argument which is brought against the Sabbath, as noticed at the first, will work when applied to some of the other commandments besides the fourth. The idea is that since we are not justified by the works of the law, therefore we are not required or expected to keep the commandment which says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," and which tells us that the seventh day is the day upon which we should rest. Now the third commandment says, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Suppose I am a swearer, and some one who hears me take the name of God in vain, reminds me of that commandment. But I reply: "Ah! do you not know that we are not justified by the works of the law, but by faith? Christ has set me free from the law, and therefore I swear; I dare not keep that law, lest I be brought into bondage." Would not my reprover be shocked at my blindness, which would justly seem to be almost, if not quite, blasphemy? and would he not tell me that Christ died for the express purpose of saving me from the sin of swearing? And if I should plead the same excuse for lying and stealing, he would tell me that faith in Christ does not warrant me in breaking the eighth and ninth commandments, but that it is for the purpose of saving me from those, and from all other sins.

We are not justified because we do not take the name of God in vain; yet no one would on that account risk his salvation by swearing. We shall not be saved simply because we do not steal; but few, if any, would expect to be saved if they were thieves. We cannot be justified by the ninth commandment; yet we have the positive statement that all liars shall perish. No one can claim admission to heaven on the ground that he has never killed anybody; but it is as certain that no one would think of basing a claim to heavenly glory on the fact that he was a murderer. So while we are not justified by the fourth commandment, we are not therefore justified in breaking it. Christ saves men to obedience.

Reader, are you one of those who have been "partial in the law"? If so, stop and ask yourself why you have any more right to disregard the fourth commandment than you have to disregard the third. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." This is true of the whole law, and not merely of a portion of it. May you therefore be one of those of whom it will be said, "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12. E. J. W.

"What Does It Mean?" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

As Jesus was coming down from the mount of transfiguration, with Peter, James, and John, "he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean." Mark 9:9, 10. What did it mean?-It meant just that, and nothing else. But they were sure in their own minds that it could not mean that Christ should really die and rise again, and so they kept wondering and speculating as to what it could mean.

And that is the way that thousands of the followers of Christ are doing to-day. They read something in the Scriptures, and straightway they ask, "What does this mean?" They feel quite sure that it must have some mysterious meaning, different from what the words themselves indicate, because they have it settled in their minds how it must be, and are sure that the thing actually declared can not ever take place. Thus they miss the instruction and comfort of the Scriptures, and are unprepared for the things that come. If the disciples had learned to take the Lord at his word, they would not have been thrown into such confusion when he was crucified. They learned better afterwards; let us learn now from their example to believe that the word means what it says. E. J. W.

August 29, 1895

"He Upbraideth Not" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5.

In this statement of fact we have both encouragement and instruction-encouragement in approaching God, and instruction as to how we should treat those who are in need. We learn both lessons at once; for when we know how the Lord treats us, we know how we should treat others.

The natural man's first impulse when there is a case of need is to inquire if the one in need is worthy. How often when in trouble we have heard the reproachful and unfeeling remarks, "Well, you brought it all upon yourself; you are suffering no more than you deserve." Often the best comfort our friends give us is, "If you had listened to me, you would have been saved this trouble. I gave you advice and help, and you neglected the advice and wasted the assistance, and now I

have nothing more for you; you must get out of your difficulty the best way you can." How many of us have used similar language! Job's friends have many successors.

Not so does God deal with the erring. If any lack wisdom, he giveth liberally, and "

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upbraideth not." He does not say, "You ought to have known better." No doubt we ought, but that does not help us now. He supplies the need, and leaves his goodness to lead us to repentance, and to preserve us from similar errors in future.

But one will say, "I know that I am to blame for the condition in which I find myself; I have brought all this evil upon myself, and so I have not the face to ask God to do anything more for me." The promise of God was given for just such cases. If we were not to blame, there would be no need for the assurance that he *upbraideth not*. A just God would certainly not reproach us for what we could not help. The fact that he assures us that he upbraideth not is the encouragement to those who are blameworthy. We are worthy of blame, but reproaches will not supply our need. So it is enough for the Lord that we are now willing to receive wisdom from him. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John 3:17. With this assurance we draw nigh in confidence.

Here is the same blessed assurance made more emphatic. "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses." Ps. 107:17-19.

We bring ills of all kinds upon ourselves. Our own foolishness has brought both physical and spiritual sickness upon us. We ought to have known better, but we did not. That makes no difference; we may nevertheless draw near, and ask with boldness. God will not upbraid us, and he will surely give to us. The fact that we acknowledge our foolishness gives us a strong claim upon his wisdom. How can any soul be discouraged, or charge God with heartless indifference to the needs of his children?

But this is not all. The same psalm has further comfort for us. Go back to the tenth verse and begin to read: "Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron; because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High—therefore he brought down their heart with labor; they fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder."

In the former case we had God's kindness in helping those whose calamity was the result of their own ignorance and folly; in this text we have God's goodness to those who have rebelled against him, and who have despised his counsel. By their stubborn rebellion against his words, and their contemptuous rejection of his counsel, they have brought darkness and iron bondage upon

themselves. They are chained in the dark cell. Yet in spite of their past rebellion, when they cry unto the Lord, he upbraideth not, but saves them out of their distresses, breaking their bonds, and bringing them out of the dark prison into light. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

In the parable of the prodigal son we have this characteristic of God beautifully illustrated. Read the fifteenth of Luke, and note these points: (1) The son had received his full allowance from his father. (2) He went away and squandered his portion in riotous living. (3) When he went back to his father, he had not a penny left, but was in rags, and starving. (4) His father received him back with joy, running to meet him "when he was yet a great way off." (5) Not a word of reproach was uttered. The father's heart yearned for his son, and he was glad to see him coming back; reproaches might have sent him away again in despair. It is only loving-kindness that draws. (6) But this was not all. It was not enough for the father to receive him without reproaches, and allow him henceforth to abide at home portionless. No, the prodigal was received as a son, and restored to the position that he had before he went away. He was a son, and therefore an heir.

Behold in this a picture of God's dealing with wayward souls. He has given us all things. He has supplied us bountifully. Having received his good gifts, instead of glorifying him with them, we have wasted them. He has received no better, and we have not been the gainers. With time and talents wasted, we cannot now render unto him the service that we ought to and that we wish we could. What then?—Why, he who redeems us teaches us also to redeem the time; he receives us as sons, makes us heirs of himself, and supplies all our need, "according to his riches in glory." Phil. 4:19. Rejoiced that we are even now willing to serve him, he spends no time in reproaches, but renews his gifts to us as freely as though we had never been wayward, rebellious spendthrifts.

"O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" E. J. W.

September 5, 1895

"Let It Be" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." Eph. 4:31. How many have read these words and have thought, "Oh, that it might be so!" and how earnestly they have tried to put away that evil speaking, together with "the root of bitterness" whence it springs, and have failed, because "the tongue can no man tame, it is

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an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." James 3:8.

The same trouble has been found with the similar exhortation, "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Col. 4:6. O, yes, if we only could; but how often have we

resolved that we would not be betrayed into hasty speech, and have almost immediately been covered with shame because of the foolish things that issued from our mouth "before we thought"!

Again we read the divine exhortation, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Phil. 2:3, 5. And similar to this is the exhortation, "Let brotherly love continue." Heb. 13:1. What a blessed state of mind this must be, and what a heaven there would be on earth if such a state of things only existed, even among those who profess the name of Christ! Yet how many who have set this blessed ideal before themselves, find themselves wondering how it is to be attained!

It is the man who is "carnal, sold under sin," who is obliged to say, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Rom. 7:18. God is just and kind. He is not a tyrant, and he does not set tasks before his people without showing them the way to perform them. He not only shows the way, but supplies the power, the trouble is with our reading of his commands and exhortations. Let us read one more and see if that does not begin to suggest the way out of the difficulty:-

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Col. 3:15. Surely we cannot control the peace of God. We cannot manufacture it, and put it within our hearts. No, only God can supply peace, and this he has already done. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." John 14:27. "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints." Ps. 85:8. The fact that only God can put his grace into the heart, and cause it to rule there, should indicate to us that it is he who is to fulfill those other exhortations in us.

Once more we read, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Col. 3:16. This, together with the text quoted just before, tells us the whole secret. It is by the word of God that these things are to be done. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zech. 4:6. The word of the Lord, which sets before us these desirable attainments of thought and speech, is the agency by which they are supplied.

What can the word of the Lord do?-Read Ps. 33:6, 9: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." "And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." 1 Peter 1:25. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; and the power of God is seen in creation. Rom. 1:16, 19, 20. Therefore the power by which the commands and exhortations of the Holy Spirit are to be fulfilled in us is the power by which the heavens and the earth were made.

Turn then to the simple story of creation. God said, "Let there be light: and there was light." Gen. 1:3. Again, God said, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so." Verse 9. Again, God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so." Verse 11. Once more: "God said, Let there be lights in the

firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so." Verses 14, 15. And thus we read throughout the entire story of creation.

The darkness had no power in itself to bring forth light. The waters could not gather themselves together into one place. The earth could not make a mighty exertion, and send forth the trees laden with fruit. Much less could the sun, moon, and stars create themselves. That which was not, could not bring itself into existence. But at the word of God, saying, "Let it be," everything came into being. The words, "Let there be" so and so, carried with them the power of being. The thing required was in the words requiring its production.

Now "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10, margin. And "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:13. We are to remember that the exhortations that we read at first are not the exhortations of a man, but that they are the words of God to us. The same One who in the beginning said, "Let there be light," and, "Let the earth bring forth grass," says to us, "Let all bitterness, and wrath. . . . be put away from you." Just as the first was done, so must the other be accomplished. "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." Isa. 61:11. Therefore when we read the exhortations to let certain evil things be put away from us, and to let certain graces appear, we are not to regard them as commands for us to put them away, but as the agency by which the task is to be accomplished.

God's power to create is as great now as it ever was. He who in the beginning caused the ground to bring forth fruit, and who made a perfect man of the dust of the ground, can take these earthen vessels and make them "to the praise of the glory of his grace." We are to become so familiar with the fact that God is Creator, that when he says, "Let this be done," we shall at once and continually respond, "Amen; even so, let it be done, Lord Jesus;" and thus the new heart will be created, from which will proceed thoughts and words acceptable in his sight. E. J. W.

"Carrying the Light" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

Who has not seen a little child attempt to grasp a handful of sunshine? It would close its hand in the sunlight, and would manifest great surprise when it found, on opening its hand in the shade, that the sunshine had escaped. We are amused at the simplicity of the child, unmindful of the fact that we ourselves often manifest less wisdom in a similar case of far more importance.

For instance, we have learned that the word of God is light. We perhaps believe that if we only have that word we shall have light; and so we make attempts to seize and hold it. When the word is spoken with great clearness, people often jot down the thoughts in their notebooks, and make a special note of

the text of Scripture that was referred to, in the hope of carrying the light away with them. But when they have gone to their homes, and have opened their books, they are surprised to find that the light does not shine forth. They thought to show the light to their friends, but it has fled even as the sunshine from the hands of the little child. This time we are not amused, for the case is too serious for amusement.

In each case the desire was most laudable. To "catch the sunshine" is one of the most necessary things. To wish to carry it to others is a blessed thought. The child does catch and carry the sunshine, but in a different manner from what it thinks. Living in the bright sunlight, it takes up the life-giving rays in its blood, and they are manifested in rosy cheeks, sparkling eyes, sturdy limbs, and a cheerful spirit. It carries the sunshine in its life, and carries it to others, too, because "a merry heart doeth good like a medicine." The difference between a child who lives in the sunshine and one who lives altogether in the shade is manifest to every one who sees them. The child of the shade can not by an occasional run into the sunlight gather up a supply to sunshine in its hands and pockets to distribute to others. There is no other way of carrying sunshine than in the blood.

Even so it is with the light of the word of God. We can not carry it in our hands, nor in our pockets, nor even in our mouths. Light is life, and there is no way of carrying it except in life. "But of the heart are the issues of life," and we are told, "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." Deut. 6:6. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Col. 3:16. When the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness are received and absorbed into the life, there will be no difficulty in carrying them to others.

Of Christ it is said, "In him was life, and the

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life was the light of men." John 1:4. The life of Christ is the only true light, for he says, "I am the light of the world." John 8:12. Since there is no light except in the life of Christ, it is most evident that no man can carry that light except by having the life itself. So Jesus says, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." We may "walk in the light as he is in the light," and not only so, but we ourselves may be lights. Indeed, we are expected to be lights. "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light." Eph. 5:8. Also, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Phil. 2:14, 15.

The sun shines without an effort because it is light. Christ shines because he is light itself. His life is light and his word is life. Therefore whoever receives that word into his heart and life, will shine with the same light, and with no more conscious effort than the sun itself makes. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." E. J. W.

September 12, 1895

"On Trial" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

In last week's issue we made brief mention of the appearance of the managing director of the International Tract Society-the missionary agency of the Seventh-day Adventists-before the Clerkenwell Police Court, London, Eng., to answer for Sunday work. In this we desire to show what is really involved in the case.

In the first place, let it be clearly understood that these facts and statements are not published for the sake of eliciting sympathy for the society. Much less is it for the purpose of arousing any feeling against the authorities, who are so courteous in the performance of what they conceive to be their duty. We would ask our readers to leave us and the among of the fine entirely out of the question, and to think only of the truth involved and of their own relation to it. It is not the International Tract Society, but the truth of God, that is called in question. But when truth is put upon trial, if it be indeed the truth, it becomes the judge, before whom even judges and kings, in common with the people, are called to render account.

When Jesus Christ, who is the Truth, was before Pontius Pilate, the question which that governor asked as, "What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?" Matt. 27:22. The people cried out, "Let him be crucified." Thus the people, as well as Pilate, acted as judges in the case. Against Jesus, "both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together." Acts 4:27.

Truth is the final judge of all. It is a trite saying that nothing is ever settled until it is settled right; but nothing is ever settled right until it is settled according to truth.

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Every judgment, therefore, which is contrary to the truth will at last be reversed. In this life truth is on trial, not simply before civil courts, but before all the people. Each one for himself is called upon to decide what shall be done with the truth. But while the truth is thus on trial, it is in reality the people themselves who are on trial; for as they judge the truth, so will the truth judge them. The day of judgment will simply be the announcement of the judgment which people have in this life pronounced upon themselves in their dealing with the truth.

This case, therefore, instead of being the International Tract Society before the Clerkenwell Police Court, is the truth before the people, and it is before this court that the truth appears to plead. What then is the truth in the case?

Clearing the Way

In order to get at the exact truth, it is necessary to clear away any mistaken ideas that may exist. Therefore let it be emphasized that there is no question of "sweating" employÈs, or in any way whatever infringing upon their rights. In making the charge before the court, the factory inspector said that the persons who were mentioned in the charges were "protected persons," and that it was

forbidden to employ them on Sunday. But the fact is that in this case, at least, it is Sunday alone that is sought to be protected.

The young women in question do work that is ordinarily done by women in a printing house. They work at their own desire. Like the women who followed Jesus to the cross and the tomb, they rest the Sabbath day according to the commandment (Luke 23:55, 56), and in harmony with the same commandment they labor on the first day of the week. If the society should refuse to employ them on that day, they would work upon it just the same, wherever they could find proper work to do. It is evident, therefore, that it is ridiculous to speak of such persons as being "protected" by the Factory Act.

What Is the True Rest Day?

The real question at issue is incidentally stated in the *Chronicle's* comments upon the case. We quote from its issue of August 3:-

The managing director of the eccentric body known as the Seventh-day Adventists was again before Mr. Haden Corner yesterday for putting the peculiar principles of the body into practice by employing women on Sunday. It is the cherished faith of this particular sect that it is sinful to work on Saturday, and accordingly its employees make holiday on that day. This, of course, is purely a matter for the Adventists themselves, but when they seek to restore a balance which they conceive to be wrong by *making Sunday an ordinary working day*, Her Majesty's Inspectors would be neglecting their duty if they did not take note of the circumstances.

We have emphasized the words in the *Chronicle's* statement which indicate the real question at issue. It is not primarily a question of whether or not certain individuals shall be employed at a given work, but it is whether or not Sunday shall be made "an ordinary working day." This is the real case, and we will now proceed with the evidence, which is all upon one side.

The Commandment

God came down from Mount Sinai "with ten thousands of saints," and "Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." "Our of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness," God spoke the ten commandments "with a great voice." Here is the fourth:-

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20:8-11.

Sanctifying the Sabbath

God blessed the Sabbath day, the seventh day, and sanctified it. He made it holy, and he calls upon men to keep it holy. Not that men can by any act of theirs diminish its holiness, but by profaning it they bring sin upon themselves.

To sanctify is to set apart for a sacred use, and to distinguish the thing sanctified from everything else. By his own word God has distinguished the seventh day of the week from every other day of the week, and has said that creation from secular labor on that day is to be the mark by which its sanctity is recognized.

It is evident, therefore, that the seventh day cannot be kept holy according to God's command unless it is regularly observed as a rest day, and every other day of the week is habitually used as a working day. Work on Sunday is not for the purpose of restoring a balance conceived to be wrong, but in simple recognition of the explicit command of the God of the universe.

To Whom Given

"The Sabbath was made for man." Mark 2:27. The Sabbath commandment, therefore, is for every man, no matter what his position in this world.

Moreover, it was made at the creation, and given to the head of the human family. It is the memorial of the creation of the heavens and the earth, and consequently a mark of the power of the Creator, calling to mind his power to create man anew in Christ Jesus. The fourth commandment therefore demands the obedience of every soul on earth.

A Matter of Fact

It should be noted that the question of the Sabbath is not one of somebody's belief or interpretation, but of fact. Those who have the matter of the day of rest before them, whether they be lawmakers, judges, or workingmen, have not to take account of men's opinions or beliefs, but of hard and plain facts. They have not to deal with what people may think, but with what God says. The commandment is so explicit that there is no chance for misunderstanding it. That this is so may be shown by some

Admissions

made by people of widely differing profession. None of them, however, observe the seventh day, which makes their statements all the more forcible.

THE "STANDARD"

To begin with the latest that has come to our notice, we quote from the *Evening Standard* of August 3. In speaking of the case in question it said:-

The magistrate who has to deal with cases of this sort is not to be envied. It is indisputable that the seventh day, not the first, was set apart for rest and worship. There is nothing more than tradition to explain how or when or why the early Christians exchanged the seventh day for the first. Mr. Haden Corner did wisely to refuse all argument, limiting upon the law-so did Pilate, his victim might explain.

MR. GLADSTONE

In his article on "The Lord's Day," in the March number of the *Church Monthly*, Mr. Gladstone said:-

The seventh day of the week has been deposed from its title to obligatory religious observance, and its prerogative has been carried over to the first, under no direct precept of Scripture.

THOMAS SCOTT

In commenting on Acts 20:7, concerning the rest day, Mr. Scott wrote:-

The change from the seventh day to the first appears to have been gradually and silently introduced, by example rather than by express precept.

CANON EYTON

In a series of sermons on "The Ten Commandments," preached at Holy Trinity, Chelsea, and published in 1894 by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Mr. Eyton, after having stated that "the Sabbath was the solemn recalling of God to the mind of the people," said:-

The observance of Sunday in the Christian church comes to us with quite a different sanction, based on different grounds, from that of the Jewish Sabbath. It rests upon no direct divine command; no word is said about it in the New Testament. . . . there is no word, no hint, in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday.-*Pages 61, 62.*

Again:-

Into the rest of Sunday no divine law enters.-*Page 63.*

Still further:-

The observance of Ash Wednesday or Lent stands on exactly the same footing as the observance of Sunday.-*Page 64.*

REV. ISAAC WILLIAMS, D. D

In a book entitled "Plain Sermons on the Catechism," published by Longman's, Green & Co., 1894, the above-named churchman makes the following statements:-

Where are we told in Scripture that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day.-*Page 224.*

The reason why we keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because the Bible, but because the church, has enjoined it.-Page 236.

CANON KNOX-LITTLE

This eminent churchman, in his book on "Sacerdotalism," in which he pleads for certain customs not warranted by the example of Christ, says:-

It is certain that our Lord when on earth did observe Saturday, and did not charge Sunday, but no one, as far as I know, has ever been called a "sacerdotalist"

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for departing from his undoubted habit of "resting on the seventh day."-Page 76.

And again, referring to those who urged the example of Christ against the rites which the Canon upholds, says:-

Their effort strictly to adhere to our Lord's example *to the letter*, in spite of the usage of the church, implies that they know better what our Lord desired than his church. If they are consistent, as I have said, they must keep Saturday, not Sunday, as the day of rest.-Page 92.

THE LATE DR. R. W. DALE

In 1871 a book entitled "The Ten Commandments," written by this eminent Congregationalist, was published by Hodder & Stoughton, of whom it has been said that their imprint is a certificate of orthodoxy. In that we read:-

It is quite clear that, however r.dly or devotedly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping Sabbath.

The Sabbath was founded on a specific divine command. We can plead so much command for the obligation to observe Sunday.-Page 106.

There is no reason to believe that the apostles required their converts to keep the first day of the week as a day of rest.-Page 118.

As it is difficult to determine the exact time when Jewish Christians ceased to rest on the Sabbath, it is also difficult to determine the exact time when Christians generally began to rest on Sunday.-Page 110.

"Eccentricity"

Time and space do not permit us to quote all the admissions of a similar nature which we have in hand. What is the evidence?-Simply this, that the Scriptures of God enjoin the observance of the seventh day of the week as a sacred day of rest, and the use of Sunday as an "ordinary working day." And yet a body of Christians who follow the word of God and the example of Jesus Christ, are styled "eccentric" for so doing. Well, it is better to be eccentric than disobedient. Why these men from whom we have quoted do not observe the Sabbath of the Bible instead of a day for which there is no divine authority whatever, is for them to settle with the Lord. But the fact that they excuse

themselves from obeying his plain command is no warrant for others to do likewise.

The Human against the Divine

From what has preceded, it is very evident that the question to be settled is one of authority; it is a question of whether God ever appointed, and that by his command all other days of the week are ordinary working days.

It is also a fact that men, solely on their own motion, have presumed to substitute another day for the Sabbath of the Lord. It is not necessary just now to inquire into the origin of this change; it is enough to know that it was done by men, without any divine authority, and in the face of God's commandment. The magistrate said that Parliament had made the Factory Act, which requires the recognition of Sunday as a rest day, and that he would not be doing his duty if he did not impose a penalty for the violation of it. The inspectors also say that they would not be doing their duty if they did not prosecute for the neglect to regard it. Now those men would be perfectly right if Parliament were supreme; but there is another side to the question.

God has sanctified the seventh day as the Sabbath, distinguishing it from all other days by making them ordinary working days. Now we say that we, including magistrate, officers, and people with ourselves, are not doing our duty if we do not obey the Lord. Parliament itself is composed only of men. They are not God but are subject to him. It is as much the duty of members of Parliament to obey the Lord as it is that of the humblest man. And no man is absolved from his duty to God because members of Parliament have been so unmindful of their duty to God as to enact laws in direct opposition to his law. With all respect to Parliament, we are bound to consider it as infinitely inferior to God, and its authority as nothing as compared with his. We say, therefore, "We ought to obey God rather than men." And this duty rests upon magistrates and other officers of the law as much as it does upon us.

Defiance of the Law

It has been said that the International Tract Society, in continuing Sunday work, notwithstanding the prohibition of the Factory Act, is defying the law. This comes from taking a very superficial and narrow view of the case. Let us look farther and deeper.

God is supreme. He is the Creator. His law existed before there was a man or a nation. It is the law for all mankind and the universe. Now, if it seems to the magistrate and to others that a simple failure to comply with a human law that prohibits labor on Sunday is defiance of that law, what will they say of the making of that law in open opposition to the law of God? Is not that where the defiance of the law comes in? The very existence of Sunday laws on the statute books is an open insult to God, and a defiance of his authority.

Let us make this matter clear by an illustration. Here is a family of a dozen children. Their father sets them all at work, giving express directions as to how

the work shall be done. In order that no mistake may be made, he writes out the directions very plainly.

Very soon they become careless, and almost before they are aware of it they find themselves doing exactly contrary to the directions. Only one has been faithful. The rest say, "Well, our way is just as good, and we will continue it." But this is not all. Not content with disobeying orders, they pass a formal vote that their way shall be followed by all, and then, because the one still clings to the original instructions, they accuse him of defying them. Any one can see that the fact is that he is not defying them, because they have no authority in the matter, but that they are guilty of the most daring act of defiance.

The application is easy, and the parallel perfect. God has made of one blood all nations of men. He is the Father of all, both high and low. All men, no matter what their birth or station, are alike subject to authority. His law says that the seventh day is the Sabbath, and that the other six are laboring days. But certain men have taken it upon themselves (that is, Mr. Gladstone's language) to alter his ordinance, and to say to their fellows, "You must recognize another day as the Sabbath." Some, however, continue quietly to obey the law of the Lord, and they are charged with defying the law.

But what are the facts?-Simply this, that the law which thrusts itself into the face of God's law has no jurisdiction whatever. To disregard it is not to defy law, but is the only way in which one can be truly law-abiding.

When our fellow-mortals forget or defy the claims which God has upon them in common with us, and enact laws contrary to his, they are simply presuming to act where they have no jurisdiction. It is no man's duty to obey such a law, and much less to enforce it upon others. On the contrary, it is the duty of all to obey God rather than man. When human law opposes the law of God, it is the solemn duty of every man to break that human law, since only by breaking can they obey God. Not England, but the God of the universe, expects every man to do his duty.

Guilty or Not Guilty

It is stated in the papers that the managing director in behalf of the society pleads guilty. Perhaps the court took it so, but that was not the case. He was not asked to plead whether he was guilty or not. He was simply asked if he admitted the charge that certain persons had been allowed to work on Sunday, and as an honest man he could do no other than say that he did. But that was not an admission of guilt. He could not by any possibility have pleaded guilty, since no manner of guilt attached to Sunday work, and the employment of willing laborers on that day.

But the great court day is fast approaching when the Judge of all shall sit, and all both "small and great," shall stand before him to hear the decision of their cases. In that day no allowance will be made for the fact that man held an office in civil government. God "without respect of persons judged according to every man's work."

The law of God will be the sole standard in that judgment. As the result of which says, every mouth is stopped, and all the world stand guilty before God. All

have broken that holy law. Legislators, in making laws, have simply been doing in a formal way what every man has done in his heart, for all have rebelled against God's authority. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "Who then can be saved?"

With men it would be impossible, but God's infinite love and wisdom make it possible for "whosoever will." The case is closed. We are all guilty. If we, whether kings, judges, officers, or common people, continue until the judgment day to put human laws and human authority above God's will and authority, we shall have no power to offer

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for our mouths will be stopped. "Guilty" will be stamped upon our faces.

But now we plead guilty, acknowledging our wicked rebellion against God, and our usurpation of his authority, we shall be guiltless in the day, for "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," for the sins of rulers and judges as well as for those of the most obscure in this world.

This invitation, therefore, which we extend to all in this time, when men are being tried to see on whose side they will elect to stand at last, is to come to Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath day, and find in him true Sabbath rest, the sanctification from sin. E. J. W.

September 19, 1895

"They Can Not Be Separated" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

In the days of Jesus of Nazareth there were many who did not believe in him, but who professed to believe in Moses. Some of them said, "We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is." John 9:29. To the one who stood up for Jesus, they said, "Thou art his disciple, but we are Moses' disciples."

But what was the actual fact? They did not believe on Moses any more than they did on Christ. He said to them: "There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" John 5:45-47

The highest testimony given to Jesus as the One sent from God, is this which the Lord spoke to Moses: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him;" he "shall be destroyed from among the people." Deut. 18:18, 19, Acts 5:23. It is evident, therefore, that anybody must believe in Christ if he really believes Moses.

But there is another side. In these days we find many who profess to believe in Christ. They have no sympathy for the Jews who refused to accept him, and they wonder at the blindness of that people. But they do not profess to believe very much in Moses. Many of them openly depreciate his writings as out of date. If the authority of Moses is not openly discredited by them, he is at least slighted. Yet these same persons profess the most implicit faith in Christ.

What is the position of these last?-It is precisely that of the Jews of old. Listen again to the words of Christ: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings how shall ye believe my words?"

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In vain are all professions of faith in Christ by those who discredit Moses. The two can not be separated. He who believes the one must believe the other also, and he who denies the one denies the other as well; for both were sent by God with the same message. To deny Christ while professing to believe Moses is exactly the same as denying Moses while professing to believe Christ. Happy will that man be who in the judgment shall not be condemned either by the words of Moses or of Jesus. E. J. W.

"Purging the Church" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

This is the way a Church of England clergyman has proposed, in a letter to the *English Churchman*, to purge that body of the Ritualism which is fast making it an exact copy of the Roman Catholic body:-

There is a "constitutional means of purging the church through Parliament," and it is the only "constitutional means" and the only "practical means." Secession won't "purge the church;" moving the table to the center of the church won't "purge the church." It would be moved back again by the next incumbent, perhaps. But make it, by Act of Parliament illegal, under suspension or deprivation, for any clergyman to turn his back to the people, to use lighted candles except in case of atmospheric darkness, or at any time during service to make the sign of the cross, or to use a mixed chalice, or any other than pure wheaten bread at the Lord's Supper, or any hymn during the administration of the Lord's Supper, or to wear any vestment other than the surplice, except in the case of the bishops, the usual episcopal robes being allowed, and the academical hood and black gown in the pulpit; and then, as I have said before, no reformation would be required in our purely Protestant church, no progress in Ritualism or Romanism would or could be made, as far as outward symbols are concerned, and Ritualists and Romanistic teachers would then find that there is no scope for their purposes in the Established Church of England.

The statement that under such an act of Parliament no progress in Romanism could be made, "as far as outward symbols are concerned," is quite safe. But what difference does it make whether any progress toward Romanism is made in "outward symbols" or not if inwardly the clergy and members are full of Romish sentiment? If the sentiment is within, it is no worse for it to find expression; and if it is not within, there is no danger. And there is no one so enamored of civil

legislation for the church that he will claim that an act of Parliament can change men's hearts.

The Jewish Church was never more corrupt than when it was most strict in all the externals. Hear the words of Christ: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also." Matt. 23:25, 26.

Read also the lists of sins recited by the apostle Paul, as being committed in the last days by those possessing "a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3:1-5. The *form* may be secured by strict legislation, but the more acts of Parliament are depended upon for purging the church, the more will the power of godliness be denied.

Suppose that an act of Parliament were obtained, what charity could be given that it would not be repealed by some succeeding Parliament? It is majorities that make laws; and even though a majority might at present be opposed to the outward forms of Romanism, the inward tendency would not be legislated out of a single soul, and in time a majority would be found, who would reverse everything.

How then shall the church be purged, not only of Ritualism, but of every other evil? Here is the answer: "Christ also love the church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water *by the word*." Eph. 5:25, 26. Said Christ, "Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." John 15:3. "If we walked in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7.

Here is cleansing that is cleansing indeed. Every attempt to cleanse the church by any other means will prove as ineffectual as to attempt to stop the flood of a river with a barbed wire fence. Indeed, civil legislation for the church only increases the evil; for the only real Gospel power is the power of God; and just to the extent that the church depends on civil power, will it neglect the power of God; and where the power of God is lacking, there the power of the devil will be supreme. And thus of the legislation in behalf of religion, instead of purging the Church, will at last bring it into the condition described by the angel:-

"Babylon the great is fallen, is falling, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Rev. 18:2. There is only one way by which this deplorable condition can be brought about, and that is by the churches depending on worldly power, in defiance of the word of God.

"Thus saith the Lord; cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited." Jer. 17:5, 6.

"Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the

Lord his God, which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is; which keepeth truth forever."

Parliament cannot change the heart, but God can create a new heart; Parliaments, with all their powerlessness, are subject to change, but God in His might is "from everlasting to everlasting." E. J. W.

"Another Day'ó'To-day" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

"Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Heb. 4:7.

God had promised rest to the children of Israel, and he took them out of Egypt to lead them to it. Then, as now, rest could be found only by learning of the Lord. Matt. 11:28, 29. But they rebelled against him, refusing to learn of him, although they saw his works marvelously wrought out before their eyes. The promise of anything does not profit any one unless it is accepted; but the children of Israel did not believe the Lord, and "so we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." Heb. 3:19.

But the unbelief of men can not make the faith of God of none effect; therefore there still remains a rest to the people of God. Though men believe not, yet He abideth faithful. The same promise of rest still remains-nay, the rest itself remains-and "we which have believed do enter into rest." The rest is all prepared, and was ready even in the days of ancient Israel, for "the works were finished from the foundation of the world." The evidence of this is found in the statement that "God did rest the seventh day from all his works." Heb. 4:4. When works are all finished, rest must necessarily begin. So the rest began on the seventh day of time, when "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Gen. 1:31.

What were the works that were finished when God rested the seventh day?- The heavens and the earth had been newly created. A garden had been planted, in which man had been caused to rest, and the dominion of the whole earth had been given him. But through unbelief that rest was lost. Man sinned; and sin brought unrest and weariness into the world, for "the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it can not rest." Isa. 57:20.

Man lost the rest, but God did not. His rest is eternal, unaffected by any action on the part of man. Moreover, God did not forsake man, nor utterly take from him the rest which he had forfeited. He gave his only Son, who "is made unto us wisdom, and

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righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. 1:30. "By him were all things created" (Col. 1:16); and the Sabbath, that memorial of creation, and the proof that the rest of God is ready for men when they believe, is left to us, that we may know that he has the power to sanctify us (Eze. 20:12). The Sabbath, the identical rest into which God entered on the completion of creation, is the rest which was given to man in the new earth. It is God's rest, and can be gained and kept by man only as he has faith in Christ. He who keeps it through faith in Christ, has the sure pledge of final possession of the earth again made new.

It was to this possession that God was leading the children of Israel. But they could not enter in because of unbelief. Joshua did not give them rest. Heb. 4:8, margin. But God had sworn by himself that the rest should be given, and so "it remaineth that *some* must enter therein." Therefore since they to whom it was first preached did not enter in, he still holds out the offer to all who will accept it. If the children of Israel had been real children of faithful Abraham, the rest would have been given in their day, and so the day of salvation would have closed. But they were not faithful, and since God's promise and oath to Abraham must be fulfilled, and his seed must be as the sand on the seashore, another day of salvation was offered.

What is this other day? Read the first text again: "Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief; again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Heb. 4:6, 7. That other day is *to-day*. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6:2.

Notice the statement that God "*limiteth* a certain day." In speaking of "another day" God limited the time to "to-day." Since the ancient people of Israel refused the rest which the Lord offered, God holds out another day in which we may heed the gracious call: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and that day is to-day. "To-day" is the only day that God has ever promised to man in which he may accept salvation. He has offered no time of repentance after death; he has not offered some time next year, nor next week, nor even to-morrow; but only "to-day."

There are many who hear the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation, who think that at some future time they will accept it. They do not think that they can do so to-day, because it is not convenient. Some would like to have their own way a little longer. Others have important matters of business that they think must be attended to before they can accept. They think that they must have their plans all perfected in this world, which is soon to pass away, before they can accept the other world, which is to endure forever. They are unconsciously like the child who refuses to run from the tide which is rapidly coming in, because he has not yet completed the little house that he is building in the sand. Like the child, they forget that when the tide comes in, it will sweep away the house of sand, so that it will be the same as though it had not been built.

Vast interests center in to-day. In one day an eternity of rest may be gained or lost. Think of it! God has given us one day in which we may gain an endless day. Eternity against to-day. Why should anybody hesitate as to the choice? "This is the day which the Lord hath made." It is a glad day, because in it righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost may be obtained. Let us therefore "be glad and rejoice in it."

"Come, weary soul, and here find rest;
Accept redemption, and be blest;
The Christ who died, by God is crowned
To pardon on redemption ground."
E. J. W.

September 26, 1895

"The Testimony of the Bible to Itself" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

Some persons object that what the Scriptures say as regards their Inspiration is not proper evidence—that we ought rather to have outside testimony concerning the Scriptures. It is true that, ordinarily, in the case of a man, his own testimony concerning himself is not conclusive; but it is not so in the case of the Bible. We must either take its testimony concerning its own inspiration, or else reject it entirely. He who doubts its testimony on this point will doubt it upon every point. Accepting the Bible as a book

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of truth, we must necessarily accept all that it says of itself.

We know that it speaks the truth when it tells us about ourselves, therefore we accept its testimony as true when it speaks of itself. The woman of Samaria said, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?" So we know that the testimony of the Bible is the testimony of that same one.

The Pharisees found fault with Christ because he said, "I am the light of the world." They said: "Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. Jesus answered and said unto them; though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true; for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye can not tell whence I come, and whither I go. . . . It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me." John 8:13-18.

The Pharisees could not see the Father, and therefore they would not accept Christ's testimony concerning himself. If they had believed Jesus, they would have *known* that his testimony was true. It is by faith that we understand. He who believes has evidence of the strongest kind. He who believes God's word, accepting it not as the word of man, but as it is indeed, the word of God, knows that the Spirit of God is witnessing through it.

There is sufficient evidence to enable anybody to accept the Bible as the word of God; but the strongest evidence of all comes to the man after he has believed. This evidence can never be exhausted or measured, but becomes stronger the longer it is considered. E. J. W.

October 3, 1895

"The Spirit and the Word" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

The Spirit and the Word.- "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for he giveth not the Spirit by measure." John 3:34, R.V. In the common version the words "unto him" are added, although they are not in the original, as is indicated by their being in italics. However, it makes really no difference whether they are in or not, for the meaning is the same either way. The plainly

expressed idea is that God gives the Spirit without measure unto the one whom he sends, and who fulfills his mission by speaking the words of God.

Of course there is no question but that this refers primarily to Christ. God "send his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:10. God had said to Moses concerning Christ, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." Deut. 18:18. So Jesus said, "Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." John 12:50. And again, "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." John 14:24.

It was "through the eternal Spirit" that Jesus offered Himself to God. Heb. 9:14. It was by the Spirit, therefore, that he spoke. But the word was not simply in his mouth but in his heart. The testimony of Christ was, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation, lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest." Ps. 40:8, 9. The word being in his heart, it guided all his acts as well as his speech; so that Jesus both lived and spoke the words of God. And the Spirit was with him, without measure, both to speak and to do whatever the Father required of him.

But Jesus said of his disciples, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." John 13:18. He said also, "I have given them thy word." Verse 14. Because he whom God has sent it sent to speak the word of God. This word of testimony can not be truly spoken except by the Spirit; for "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. 12:3.

The word of truth can not be spoken unless it fills the heart; "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Matt. 12:34. See also Deut. 6:6, 7. Therefore it is evident that he who truly speaks the word of God, lives the word of God. Such an one lives "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He does not slight one precept.

Now come in the fullness of the promise that he who fulfills the mission on which he is sent, namely, to speak the word of God, will have the Spirit without measure. It is for this special purpose that the Spirit was promised and given. Jesus said, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8.

The Spirit was manifest in the church without limit, as long as the church held forth the word of God. It was only when the professed people of God turned from the mission on which they were sent, leaving the word of God for fables, that the powerful manifestations of the Spirit disappeared. Would you have to the full the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Give yourself wholly to the word of God, to hold it forth in its wholeness and perfection, and the Spirit will be given without measure. E. J. W.

"Hearing the Word" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

Hearing the Word.- But let it be remembered that it is the word of God, and not that of men, that is to be heard. If men are really sent from God, and preach only the word, then it is all right; but let it never be forgotten that faith can not come from hearing the word of men. It is evident, therefore, that when men speak we must be able to discern whether or not they are speaking the word of God. That means that we must know the word of God for ourselves. We must study it for ourselves, recognizing God's voice in it, to know exactly what he says. If this is done, there will be no difficulty in the matter of faith. That man who gives himself patiently to the study of the word of God, will have faith just as surely as he will have strength if he eats good food and breathes pure air. E. J. W.

"Everything from Heaven" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

When John the Baptist was reminded by some of his disciples that his influence among the people was waning, and that the multitudes were flocking to Jesus, he replied, "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." John 3:27.

If the truth of this answer was recognized and believed by all men, there would be a perfect condition of society. It is well worth studying.

In the first place, it shows us the uselessness of seeking position and influence for ourselves. "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from Heaven." Therefore he does not really possess that which he has gained by his own self-seeking. Or, to put it more correctly, that which one gets by his own selfish seeking is nothing. Whoever, therefore seeks position and influence for himself, is pursuing a shadow. Such seeking is worse than useless.

Again, the will of heaven towards us cannot be thwarted by any other person. The reception of the gifts of heaven depend solely upon ourselves. If we are willing to receive what Heaven has for us, no person on earth can stay it from bestowing them. Therefore it follows that we shall more certainly have everything that the God of heaven wishes us to have. A belief of this would produce perfect contentment in us. Moreover, if any position or influence is taken from us, we may know that it was taken by the will of Heaven. We are not to blame men for it. Even the man who may possess it instead of us is not to be blamed. If there be any blame, we are the ones to whom it belongs. God may have taken it away because we did not use it properly. Or there may be no blame at all, but the purpose for which God gave it to us may have been served. But in any case we are not to blame men for what we have lost, since gifts are only at God's disposal.

With these words of John we may place those written by the apostle James, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither

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shadow of turning." James 1:17. Therefore we need not mourn if we lose the position which was good, and which offered such facilities for serving God; because when it goes we may know that it would not be good for us any more. Not only are we certain to have every good thing that God has for us, if we are

willing to receive it, but everything that comes from God is good. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Who can not see that it is worse than foolish to complain when good comes to him?

"Let good or ill befall,
It must be good for me,
Secure of having Thee in all,
Of having all in Thee."

One thing more should be learned, and that is not to boast. Since a man can receive nothing except that which is given him from Heaven, what wickedness it is to boast of any gifts that we may possess! "For who maketh thee to differ [from another]? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. 4:7.

He who remembers that God gives only good things, and everything that is good, and who lives in constant recognition of the fact that he is dependent on heaven alone, and who therefore commits himself to the heavenly keeping, will, though poor and unknown, find even on earth the riches and satisfaction of heaven. E. J. W.

October 10, 1895

"Breathing in the Gospel" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 39-40.

E. J. Waggoner

"Common Things." -How many go on day after day and year after year receiving the light of the sun, breathing the air of heaven, and never think of recognizing God in them. These things are regarded as only "natural," the sun shines because it is natural for it to do so; the air is here as a regular, thing; the grain and the fruits grow because that is their nature; and these all are but common things.

Common to Heaven. -"Common things!" If it were possible for one who goes on day after day receiving these things from God without recognizing them continually and praising God for them,-if it were possible for such an one to get to heaven, he would think it a common thing to see the glory of God day by day, and would regard the water of life as a common thing. If a man sees the glory of God in his works here, and takes it as a common thing, he would regard the glory seen in the works of God in heaven as the same; for it is the same glory and the same power, only there it will be revealed in fuller measure than the eye of mortal man can endure.

Common Paganism. -A man may profess to be a Christian, may belong to the church, and may use the name of God in his prayers every day,-taking his name in vain,-but if he does not recognize God as a present, living Saviour, who in the gifts of food and drink, and air and sunshine, and everything, is simply giving as his own life and salvation, that man is simply in paganism. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, "for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Rom. 1:16, 17. And the power of God is seen in the things that he has made. Verse 20. Therefore, as

the Gospel is the power of God, we should see the Gospel in the things that are made, in the sunlight, air, food, and drink, and all things. The righteousness of God is revealed in them. It was the failure to recognize the power and righteousness of God in the things that are created, that made men base heathen. See Rom. 1:18-28.

Breathing in the Gospel. -"The just shall live by faith." But men live by breathing, whether just or unjust. When God made man, he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being. The ungodly man has all his life been using that breath-not recognizing God in it-to speak his own words, and even to blaspheme. He has been making the Lord to serve with his sins (Isa. 43:24), by perverting the breath of the life of God. But when that unjust man takes the breath by which he lives as being indeed the very breath of the life of God, and lives in the recognition of it, then he is living by faith. And faith justifies. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Such a recognition of the life of God implies a constant yielding to God to direct the life to his own glory. God has multiplied the means of grace, so that in all the things that he has made men may see him, and believe on him unto salvation. E. J. W.

October 17, 1895

"Studies in Romans" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

Under this heading it is proposed to conduct, as nearly as can be done in writing, a class study of the Epistle to the Romans. It is designed to be literally a *study*, and it is hoped that the "study" will not be all on the part of the writer, but that the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be encouraged to acquire for themselves an acquaintance with an epistle that is doubtless the greatest treatise ever written.

In each number the text for the week will be quoted, in order to facilitate the study. The reader, however, should use his Bible freely. Read the verses to be studied very frequently, and form the habit of questioning each verse, after the manner indicated below, only more closely. In this way the force of the words, used by the apostle will stand out clearly, and the thought will be fixed in the mind, in the exact words of the Scripture.

Inspiration assures us that in all of the epistles of Paul there are "some things hard to be understood." 2 Peter 3:16. Perhaps this is the case with the Epistle to the Romans in a greater degree than with any other epistle. But they are not impossible to be understood, and it is only the "unlearned and unstable" who wrest them unto their own destruction who thus miss the point of Paul's writings. They who have a desire to understand and who read the simple promises of the Bible with profit, will not be among that number.

In beginning this study it will be an encouragement to the reader if he will remember that it is simply a letter written to the church in Rome. We can not suppose that the congregation in Rome differed from the great body of Christians

in general, and of them we read that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." 1 Cor. 1:26. The truest followers of Jesus have always been among "the common people." So in the church in Rome there were doubtless shopkeepers, artisans, day laborers, carpenters, gardeners, etc., and many servants in the families of wealthy citizens, together with a few who might hold some position of rank. When we consider that it was confidently expected that people of this sort would understand the letter, we may be encouraged to believe that the same class of people can understand it now.

Paul's exhortation and assurance to Timothy form the best guide to the study of all the epistles, and the whole Bible as well. "Consider what I say, for the Lord shall give thee understanding in all things." "God is his own interpreter." The words of the Bible explain the Bible. This is why you should closely question the text so as to get at exactly what is said, in connection with what precedes and follows. Nothing can take the place of prayerful meditation upon the exact words of the Bible. By this means the most unlearned in this world's wisdom may become mighty in the Scriptures. The Lord has said just what he means, and the only way to find out just what he means is to become thoroughly familiar with just what he says, just as he says it.

The notes that accompany the text in this study are designed to fix the student's attention more closely upon the word, and for the benefit of the casual reader. That the study of this epistle may be greatly blessed in those who pursue it, and that the word may become more highly esteemed by all, because of the increased light that the Holy Spirit may cause to flash from it, is the earnest prayer of the writer.

The SalutationóRomans 1:1-17

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God (which he had promised afore, by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures), concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; by whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name; among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ; to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Questioning the Text

What did Paul declare himself to be?

"A servant of Jesus Christ."

To what was he called?

"Called to be an apostle."

To what was he separated?

"Separated unto the Gospel of God."

Was this Gospel first announced in Paul's day?

"Which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures."

Whose Gospel is it?

"The Gospel of God."

What is this Gospel, or good news, about?

"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord."

Who is this Jesus?

He "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power."

What is his power as the Son of God?

"According to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

For what purpose did Paul receive grace and apostleship from Christ?

"For obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name."

In what blessed condition were the people in Rome?

"Beloved of God."

What were they called?

"Called saints."

What was the request of the Spirit for them?

"Grace to you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

A Bond Servant. -"Paul, a servant of Jesus." It is thus that the apostle introduces himself to the Romans. In several other epistles the same expression is used. Some people would be ashamed to acknowledge themselves servants; the apostles were not. It makes a vast difference whom one serves. The servant derives his importance from the dignity of the one served. Paul served the Lord Jesus Christ. Everybody may serve the same Master. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?" Rom. 6:16. Even the ordinary house servant who yields to the Lord is the servant of the Lord, and not of man. "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Jesus Christ." Col. 3:22-24. Such a consideration as this can not fail to glorify the most menial drudgery.

Our version does not give us the full force of the term which the apostle uses when he calls himself a servant. It is really "bond servant." He used the ordinary Greek word for slave. If we are really the Lord's servants, we are servants bound to him for life. It is a bondage that is itself freedom, "for he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman; likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant." 1 Cor. 7:22.

Separated. -The apostle Paul was "separated unto the Gospel." So is every one who is really the servant of the Lord. "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye can not serve God and mammon." Matt. 6:24. No man can serve the Lord and have other service besides that. "What do you mean to say that a merchant or other business man can not be a Christian?" By no means. What I said was that a man can not serve the Lord and at the same time have other service. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the

Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Col. 3:17. If the man is not serving the Lord in his business, then he is not serving the Lord at all. The true servant of Christ is truly separated.

But this does not mean that he separates himself from personal contact with the world. The Bible gives no countenance to monkery. The most hopeless sinner is he who thinks himself too good to associate with sinners. How then are we to be separated unto the Gospel? By the presence of God in the heart. Moses said to the Lord: "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up thence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." Ex. 33:15, 16.

But the one who is separated to the public ministry of the Gospel as the apostle Paul was, is separated in a special sense in that he may not engage in any other business for personal gain. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." 2 Tim. 2:4. He can not take any position, however high under earthly governments. To do so is to dishonor his Master, and to belittle his service. The minister of the Gospel is the ambassador of Christ, and there is no other position that can approach it in honor.

The Gospel of God. -The apostle declared that he was "separated unto the Gospel of God." It is the Gospel of God "concerning his Son Jesus Christ." Christ is God and therefore the Gospel of God, of which the apostle speaks in the first verse of the chapter, is identical with "the Gospel of Christ" of which he speaks in the sixteenth verse. Too many people separate the Father and the Son in the work of the Gospel. Many do so unconsciously. God, the Father, as well as the Son, is our Saviour. "God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten son." John 3:16. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Cor. 5:19. "The council of peace" is "between them both." Zech. 6:13. Christ came to the earth only as the representative of the Father. Whoever saw Christ, saw the Father also. John 14:9. The works which Christ did, were the works of the Father, who dwelt in him. Verse. 10. Even the words which he spoke, were the words of the Father. Verse. 24. When we hear Christ saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," we are listening to the gracious invitation of God the Father. When we see Christ taking the little children up in his arms, and blessing them, we are witnessing the tenderness of the Father. When we see Christ receiving sinners, mingling with them, and eating with them, forgiving their sins, and cleansing the hideous lepers with a touch, we are looking upon the condescension and compassion of the Father. Even when we see our Lord upon the cross, with the blood streaming from his side, that blood by which we are reconciled to God, we must not forget that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," so that the apostle Paul said, "the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28.

The Gospel in the Old Testament. -The Gospel of God to which the apostle Paul declared himself to be separated, was the Gospel "which he had promised afore by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures" (Rom. 1:2); literally, the Gospel which he had before announced or preached. This shows us that the Old

Testament contains the Gospel, and also that the Gospel in the Old Testament is the same Gospel that is in the New. It is the only Gospel that the apostle preached. That being the case, it should not be thought strange for people to believe the Old Testament, and to refer to it as of equal authority with the New Testament.

We read that God "preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Gal. 3:8. The Gospel preached to the people when Paul lived was the same Gospel that was preached unto the ancient Israelites. See Hebrews 4:2. Moses wrote of Christ, and so much of the Gospel is to be found in his writings that a man who does not believe what Moses wrote, can not believe in Christ. John 5:46, 47. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43.

Paul had only the Old Testament when he went to Thessalonica, "and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead." Acts 17:2, 3. Timothy had nothing in his childhood and youth but the Old Testament writings, and the apostle wrote to him: "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. 3:14, 15. Then go to the Old Testament with the expectation of finding Christ and his righteousness there, and you will be made wiser unto salvation. Do not discriminate between Moses and Paul, between David and Peter, between Jeremiah and James, between Isaiah and John.

The Seed of David. -The Gospel of God is "concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." Rom. 1:3. Read the history of David, and of the kings who descended from him, and who became the ancestors of Jesus, and you will see that on the human side the Lord was handicapped by his ancestry as badly as anybody can ever be. Many of them were licentious and cruel idolaters. Although Jesus was thus compassed with infirmity, he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." 1 Pet. 2:22. This is to give courage to men in the lowest condition of life. It is to show that the power of the Gospel of the grace of God can triumph over heredity.

The fact that Jesus was made of the seed of David means that he is heir to the throne of David. Of David's throne the Lord said, "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever." 2 Sam. 7:16. David's kingdom is therefore coextensive with the inheritance promised to Abraham, which is the whole world. See Romans 4:13. The angel said of Jesus, "The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall

be no end." Luke 1:32, 33. But all this involved his bearing the curse of the inheritance, and suffering death. "For the joy that was set before him" He "endured the cross, despising the shame." Heb. 12:2. "Wherefore God also hath

highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." Phil. 2:9. As with Christ, so with us; it is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom. He who fears reproach, or who makes his lowly birth, or his inherited traits, an excuse for his shortcomings, will fail of the kingdom of heaven. Jesus Christ went to the lowest depths of humiliation in order that all who are in those depths might, if they would, ascend with him to the utmost heights of exaltation.

Power by the Resurrection. -Although Jesus Christ was of lowly birth, he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. 1:4. Was he not the Son of God before the resurrection? and was he not so declared to be? Certainly; and the power of the resurrection was manifested in all his life. To speak of nothing else, the power of the resurrection was shown in his raising the dead, which he did by the power dwelling in him. But it was the resurrection from the dead that settled the matter beyond all doubt for men. After his resurrection he met the disciples, and said unto them, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matt. 28:18. The death of Christ shattered all the hopes that they had centered in him; but when he "showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days" (Acts 1:3), they had ample proof of his power. Their sole work thenceforth was to be witnesses of his resurrection and of its power. The power of the resurrection is according to the Spirit of holiness, for it was by the Spirit that he was raised. The power given to make men holy is the power that raised Jesus from the dead. "His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness."

The Obedience of Faith. -Paul said that through Christ he had received grace and apostleship for the obedience of faith among all nations. True faith is obedience. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom He hath sent." John 6:29. Christ said, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Luke 6:46. That is, a profession of faith in Christ which is not accompanied by obedience, is worthless. "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead." James 2:17. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Verse 26. A man does not breathe in order to show that he lives, but because he is alive. He lives by breathing. His breath is his life. So a man can not do good works in order to demonstrate that he has faith, but he does good works because the works are the necessary result of faith. Even Abraham was justified by works, because "faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness."

"Beloved of God." -That was a most comforting assurance that was given "to all that are in Rome." How many people have wished that they could hear an angel direct from glory say to them what Gabriel said to Daniel, "Thou art greatly beloved"! The apostle Paul wrote by direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and so the message of love came as directly from heaven to the Romans as it did to Daniel. The Lord did not single out a few favorites by name, but declared that all in Rome were beloved of God.

Well, there is no respect of persons with God, and that message of love to the Romans is ours as well. They were "beloved of God" simply because "God so

loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3. And this everlasting love to men is not shaken, although they forget it; for to those who have turned away, and fallen by their iniquity, he says, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely." Hosea 14:43. "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful; He can not deny Himself."

"Called Saints." -The reader will notice that the words "to be" in Romans 1:7 are indicated as supplied, so that instead of "called to be saints," we may read literally, "called saints." God calls all men to be saints, but all those who accept him he calls saints. That is their title. When God calls people saints, they are saints. These words were addressed to the church in Rome, and not to the Church of Rome. The Church of Rome has always been apostate and pagan. It has abused the word "saint" until in its calendar it is almost a term of reproach. No greater sin has ever been committed by Rome than the distinction it has made between "saints" and ordinary Christians, making practically two standards of goodness. It has led people to think that laboring men and housewives were not and could not be saints, and has thus discounted true, everyday piety, and has put a premium on pious laziness and self-righteous deeds. But God has not two standards of piety, and all the faithful people in Rome, poor and unknown as many of them were, he called saints. It is the same to-day with God, although men may reckon differently. E. J. W.

October 24, 1895

"Studies in Romans. Debtor to All" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

The first seven verses of the first chapter of Romans are the salutation. No uninspired letter ever embraced so much in its greeting as this one. The apostle was so overflowing with the love of God that he could not write a letter without covering almost the whole Gospel in the salutation.

The next eight verses may well be summarized in the words "debtor to all," for they show the completeness of the apostle's devotedness to others. Let us read them carefully, and not be content with one reading:-

"First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto), that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles. I am debtor both to the Greeks,

and to the barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also." Rom. 1:8-15.

Questioning the Text

For whom did the apostle give thanks to God?

"I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all."

What does he say is the chief characteristic of the Romans?

"Your faith."

How prominent was their faith?

"Your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world."

What did the apostle always do for them?

"Make mention of you always in my prayers."

How often did he pray for them?

"Without ceasing."

How emphatically does he make this statement?

"God is my witness."

How did he say that he himself served God?

"Whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his Son."

For what did the apostle pray concerning the Romans?

"Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you."

Why was he so anxious to see them?

"I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift."

Why did he wish to impart a spiritual gift to them?

"To the end ye may be established."

What had he often purposed?

" Oftentimes I purposed to come unto you."

Why had he not gone?

"But was let [hindered] hitherto."

Why had he purposed to go to them?

"That I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other gentiles."

How did Paul hold himself as related to men?

"I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians, both to the wise, and to the unwise."

What was he therefore willing to do?

"So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also."

A Great Contrast .-In the days of the apostle Paul the faith of the church in Rome was spoken of throughout all the world. Faith means obedience; for faith is counted for righteousness, and God never counts a thing so unless it is so. Faith "worketh by love." Gal. 5:6. And this work is a "work of faith." 1 Thess. 1:3. Faith also means humility, as is shown by the words of the prophet, "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith." Hab. 2:4. The upright man is the just man; the man whose soul is lifted up is not upright or just; but the just man is such because of his faith; therefore only the man whose

soul is not lifted up has faith. The Roman brethren, therefore, in the days of Paul, were humble.

But it is far different now. An instance is given by the *Catholic Times* of June 15, 1894. The pope had said, "We gave authority to the bishops of the Syrian rite to meet in synod at Mossul," and had commended the "very faithful submission" of those bishops and had ratified the election of the patriarch by "Our Apostolic authority." An Anglican paper had expressed surprise, saying, "Is this a free union of equal churches, or is it submission to one supreme and monarchical head?" To which the *Catholic Times* replies: "It is not a free union of equal churches, but it is submission to one supreme and monarchical head. . . . To our Anglican pleader we say, You are not really surprised. You know well what Rome claims and always will claim, obedience. That claim is now, if it ever was, before the world." But that claim was not before the world in the days of Paul. In those days it was the church in Rome; now it is the Church of Rome. The church in Rome was famous for its humility, and its obedience to God. The Church of Rome is famous for its haughty assumption of the power of God, and for its demand for obedience to itself.

Praying without Ceasing .-The apostle exhorted the Thessalonians to "pray without ceasing." 1 Thess. 5:17. He did not exhort others to do that which he did not do himself, for he told the Romans that without ceasing he made mention of them always in his prayers. It is not to be supposed that the apostle had the brethren at Rome on his mind every waking hour of the day, for in that case he could not have thought of anything else. No man can be consciously in prayer every moment, but all can continue "instant in prayer," or, as Young translates it, "in the prayer persevering." Rom. 12:12. This is in harmony with what the Saviour said, that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint," or grow weary. Luke 18:1. In the parable that follows, the unjust judge complains of the "continual coming" of the poor widow. That is an illustration of praying without ceasing. It is not that we are to be every moment in conscious prayer, for then important duties would be neglected, but it is that we should not grow weary of praying.

A Man of Prayer .-This is what Paul was. He made mention of the Romans in all his prayers. To the Corinthians he wrote, "I thank my God always on your behalf." 1 Cor. 1:4. To the Colossians, "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you." Col. 1:3. Still more emphatically he wrote to the Philippians, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy." Phil. 1:3, 4. Again to the Thessalonians, "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith," etc., 1 Thess. 1:2, 3. And further, "Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith." 1 Thess. 3:10. To his beloved son in the faith he wrote, "I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day." 2 Tim. 1:3.

"Rejoice Evermore." -The secret of this is to "pray without ceasing." See 1 Thessalonians 5:16, 17. The apostle Paul prayed for others so much that he had no time to worry about himself. He had never seen the Romans, yet he prayed

for them as earnestly as for the churches that he had raised up. Recounting his labors and sufferings, he adds that they are "beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." 2 Cor. 11:28. "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." He fulfilled the law of Christ by bearing the burdens of others. Thus it was that he was able to glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ suffered on the cross for others, but it was "for the joy that was set before him." They who are wholly devoted to others, share the joy of their Lord, and can rejoice in him.

"A Prosperous Journey." -Paul prayed earnestly that he might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to visit Rome. Read the twenty-seventh chapter of Acts, and you will learn just what kind of journey he had. Most people would say that it was not a prosperous journey. Yet we do not hear any complaint from Paul; and who can say that he did not have a prosperous trip? "All things work together for good to them that love God." Therefore it must have been prosperous. It is well for us to consider these things. We are apt to look at matters from a wrong side. When we learn to look at them as God looks at them, we shall find that things that we regard as disastrous are prosperous. How much mourning we might save if we always remembered that God knows much better than we do how our prayers should be answered!

Spiritual Gifts .-When Christ "ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Eph. 4:8. These gifts were the gifts of the Spirit, for he said, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." John 16:7. And Peter said on the day of Pentecost: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Acts 2:32. These gifts are thus described: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." 1 Cor. 12:4-11.

Established by Spiritual Gifts .-"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." What is the profit? "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Eph. 4:12, 13. The gifts of the Spirit must accompany the Spirit. As soon as the early disciples received the Spirit in accordance with the promise, they received the gifts. One of the gifts, speaking with new tongues, was manifested that very day. It follows, therefore, that the absence of the gifts of the Spirit in any marked degree in the

church, is evidence of the absence of the Spirit, not entirely, of course, but to the extent that God has promised it. The Spirit was to abide with the disciples forever, and therefore the gifts of the Spirit must be manifest in the true church until the second coming of the Lord. As before stated, the absence of any very marked manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit is evidence of the absence of the fullness of the Spirit; and that is the secret of the weakness of the church, and the great divisions that exist. Spiritual gifts establish the church; therefore the church that does not have those gifts can not be established. Who may have the Spirit?-Whoever asks for it with earnest desire. See Luke 11:13. The Spirit has already been poured out, and God

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has never withdrawn the gift; it only needs that Christians should ask and accept.

"I Am Debtor." -That was the keynote of Paul's life, and it was the secret of his success. Nowadays we hear of men saying, "The world owes me a living." But Paul considered that he owed himself to the world. And yet he received nothing from the world but stripes and abuse. Even that which he had received before Christ found him was a total loss. But Christ had found him, and given himself to him, so that he could say, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. 2:20. As Christ's life was his life, and Christ gave himself for the world, Paul necessarily became a debtor to the whole world. This has been the case of every man who has been a servant of the Lord. "David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep." Acts 13:36. "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Personal Labor .-There is a foolish notion prevalent that ordinary labor is degrading, especially to a minister of the Gospel. It is not all the fault of the ministers themselves, but largely the fault of the foolish people about them. They think that a minister must always be faultlessly attired, and that he must never soil his hands with ordinary manual labor. Such ideas were never gained from the Bible. Christ himself was a carpenter, yet many professed followers of him would be shocked if they should see their minister sawing and planing boards, or digging in the ground, or carrying parcels. There is a false dignity altogether too prevalent, which is utterly opposed to the spirit of the Gospel. Paul was not ashamed nor afraid to labor. And this he did not merely occasionally, but day after day while he was engaged in preaching. See Acts 18:3, 4. He said, "These hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." Acts 20:34. He was speaking to the leaders of the church when he said, "I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Verse 35.

Slandering Paul .-At the second international convention of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, February, 1894, the main address for one evening was on the subject of "Paul, the Great Missionary." The speaker

said that "Paul had a faculty for dividing up the work so that he undertook very little of it himself." It was a foolish and wicked idea to present before young volunteers for missionary service, because it was an utter falsehood, and it was anything but a compliment to the apostle. In addition to what has been cited above, read the following: "Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you." 2 Thess. 3:8. "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you." 2 Cor. 12:15. "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent." 2 Cor. 11:23. "But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." 1 Cor. 15:10. The grace of God is manifest in service for others. The grace of Christ led him to give himself for us, and to take upon himself the form and condition of a servant. Therefore he who has the most of the grace of Christ will labor the most. He will not shun work, even though it be the most menial service. Christ went to the lowest depths for the sake of man; therefore he who thinks that any service is beneath him, is altogether too high for association with Christ.

Gospel Liberty .-Gospel liberty is the liberty that God gives men through the Gospel. It expresses His idea of freedom. It is the freedom seen in nature and in all the works of His hands. It is the freedom of the winds, blowing where they list; it is the freedom of the flowers, scattered everywhere through wood and meadow; it is the freedom of the birds, soaring unrestrained through the heavens; the freedom of the sunbeam, shooting from its parent orb and playing on cloud and mountain top; the freedom of the celestial orbs, sweeping ceaselessly on through infinite space. This is the freedom which flows out from the great Creator through all his works. It is sin that has produced what is narrow and contracted and circumscribed, that has erected boundary lines, and made men stingy and niggardly. But sin is to be removed, and then perfect liberty will be realized once more in every part of creation. Even now this freedom may be tasted, by having sin removed from the heart. To enjoy this freedom through eternity is the glorious privilege now offered in the Gospel to all men. Who that claims to love liberty can let this opportunity pass unimproved? E. J. W.

October 31, 1895

"The Mystery of Godliness" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

The Mystery of Godliness.- When Christ was here on the earth in the flesh, it was God manifest in the flesh. "Believest thou not," he said, "that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" God was in him in the flesh which he voluntarily took,-the only-begotten Son abode in the bosom of the Father, and therefore he knew no sin, although in sinful flesh. This is "the mystery of godliness." This being a fact by the word of God, whosoever confesses the fact, whosoever "confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God," and whosoever

"confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God." But it is a fact whether it is confessed or not. It is a glorious truth,-one that, although Christ has "gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him, "he still abides with men. He has come in the flesh." You can go to the tempted and outcast with that, and assure them that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, and that every sin that they have committed, and even the sinful nature which led them into those sins, he takes upon himself, and identifies himself with it, assuming all the responsibility for the uncommitted, with the life which has been perverted. O the blessedness of the fact that "God hath made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21. Tempted, and suffering as no man ever has suffered in the flesh for sin, he knew no sin. Again and again he said that of himself he could do nothing, but he trusted God and when we read that His son Christ came and took all the weaknesses of sinful flesh, we also read that these weaknesses too manifested themselves in his life. Therefore, also, from the heart we confess the fact which the Scripture tells us, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh even now, and even in us, because we are in the flesh, the recognition of that brings also the comfort with it, that in him was no sin while in the flesh, therefore his life, while we confess it, cleanses us from sin. E. J. W.

November 7, 1895

"The Great Gift" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 44.

E. J. Waggoner

Divine Arithmetic

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you," says the apostle Peter, "according as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." 2 Peter 1:2, 3.

Have we, then, all things that pertain to life and godliness? If we believe that, there isn't the like of it anywhere in the world as to possession. It discounts everything. "All things that pertain unto life and godliness." They are all ours.

I can claim it all, and know it is mine, and yet not rob you in the least. It is all yours too. Grace is not divided; it is multiplied, the apostle says. It is not, "Grace and peace be divided among you." The Lord's arithmetic is always in progressive ratio. Having his grace and righteousness, we may take for the multiplier just as many people as there are in the world, so that every one of us has the whole of it.

Not only so, but it is multiplied to every individual as well. How can anybody believe that and be gloomy, or despondent and discouraged? He has given to you by His power all things that pertain to life and godliness. If you believe that and always believe it, there will be steady progress in divine life.

Prayer with Thanksgiving

All the time is the time to believe the Scriptures. But many professed Christians do not believe the Scriptures when they pray. They go to the place of prayer, and leave the promises behind. They go to the bank, and leave the check book at home, and then wonder that they get nothing. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." Heb. 11:6. His divine power hath given unto us all things, and they are ours to possess now.

He who believes that he has been given all things, righteousness and life, and holds to that belief, finds in it righteousness. This is our victory; for "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." The man who believes this word will never g. . . the Lord and be disappointed. All that he has to do is to take, and take, and keep taking.

By this we can understand what the apostle says, "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Phil. 4:6. But can a person who believes the word of God contain himself for thankfulness? It can not be otherwise than that thanksgiving will accompany every prayer of faith, and that which is not a prayer of faith is useless.

We have as good a title to life and godliness as the Lord Jesus Christ himself, because it is his by divine right, and he gives it to us. He has as good a right to give it to us as he has to possess it. Then we have as good a right as he has. No one can convey to another a better title than he himself has; but in this case the Lord has given us himself, and so we have his right and title.

We do not come to the Lord, then, in some uncertain, halting way, to ask for we know not what; not as the Samaritans, of whom Jesus said to the woman, "Ye worship ye know not what." "We know what we worship." Instead of coming to the Lord, and praying and going away without knowing that we have received anything, feeling as in a fog, we can walk in the sunlight all the time, thanking God in all of our petitions that he has given us all things, and finding strength in our knowledge of the fact.

But there are so many professed Christians

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who are always living in a fog bank. Clouds are always over them. They do not know whether they have anything or not, and are always talking about how needy and helpless they are. But it is a true and faithful saying that God's divine power hath given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. Then take of the Lord's free gift.

Exceeding Great and Precious Promises

The apostle Peter goes on from the words with which we began, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." O, the wonder of the promises of God. We take the promises and by them become partakers of the divine nature. All we

have to do to be partakers of the divine nature, is to believe that he has given it to us.

How can there be any dull thankless prayers? How can there be any half-hearted, lifeless testimonies? Every heart that believes must sing for joy, for this same apostle says that, believing, we "rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." We have been groping in darkness, wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and he comes to us with all things, and says: "All are yours. Take them. Buy without money." It is because the things that he gives can not be purchased with money. They have been bought by the precious blood of Christ.

"Unto you that believe he is precious," because his promises are precious. All the promises of God are in him; and so by believing his promises we are simply laying hold upon Christ. Christ dwells in the word. "Christ liveth in me," is the cry of the believer. There is power in that to put the devil to flight. Maintain it in the face of the enemy, and that Name that is above every name, -that Power that has spoiled principalities and powers, -dwelling in you will accomplish the same thing for you that it did before in the world. That is resisting the devil steadfast in the faith; and when we resist, he flees. E. J. W.

"Studies in Romans. The Righteousness of God" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 44.

E. J. Waggoner

The two lessons that we have already had, have covered the introduction to the main body of the epistle. The first seven verses are the salutation, the next eight treat of personal matters concerning the apostle and the brethren in Rome, the fifteenth verse being the link which unites the introduction to the directly doctrinal portion of the epistle. Let the reader note carefully the verses referred to, and he will readily see that this is not an arbitrary division, but that it plainly appears. If in reading any chapter, one will note the different topics touched upon, and the change from one subject to another, he will be surprised to find how much easier it is to grasp the contents of the chapter, and to hold them in mind. The reason why so many people find it difficult to recall what they read in the Bible, is that they try to remember it in bulk, without giving special thought to the details.

In expressing his desire to meet with the Roman brethren, the apostle declared himself to be debtor to both Greeks and barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise, and therefore ready to preach the Gospel even in Rome, the capital of the world. The fifteenth verse, and the expression, "preach the Gospel," give the keynote to the whole of the epistle, for the apostle glides from this naturally into his theme. Accordingly, we have next

The Gospel Defined. Rom. 1:16, 17

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For

therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith."

Questions on the Text

What had the apostle declared himself ready to do?

"I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome." Verse 15.

Of what was he not ashamed?

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."

Why was he not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ?

"Because it is the power of God."

In what respect is it the power of God applied?

"It is the power of God unto salvation."

To whom is the Gospel the power of God unto salvation?

"To every one that believeth."

In what order?

"To the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

What is revealed in the Gospel?

"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed."

How is it revealed?

"From faith to faith."

Of what is this an illustration?

"As it is written, The just shall live by faith."

"Not Ashamed." -"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." There is no reason why any man should be ashamed of the Gospel; nevertheless, many men have been and are ashamed of it. Many people are so ashamed of it that they could not think of lowering themselves so much as to make a profession of it; and many who do make a profession of it are ashamed to let it be known. What is the cause of all this shame? It is that they do not know what the Gospel is. No man who really knows what the Gospel is. No man who really knows what the Gospel is, will be ashamed of it, or of any part of it.

Desire for Power .-There is nothing that men desire so much as power. It is a desire that God himself has planted in man. Unfortunately, the devil has deceived the most of mankind, so that they seek for power in the wrong way. They think that it can be found in the possession of wealth or political position, and so they rush to secure those things. But these do not supply the power for which God has created the desire. This is shown by the fact that they do not satisfy. No man was ever yet satisfied with the power that he obtained by wealth or position. However much they have, they desire more. No man finds in them just what he thought he would; and so he grasps after more, thinking that he will find his heart's desire farther on; but all in vain. Christ is "the desire of all nations" (Hag. 2:7), the only Source of complete satisfaction, because he is the embodiment of all the real power there is in the universe the power of God "Christ the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:24).

Power and Knowledge .-It is commonly said that knowledge is power. That depends. If we take the statement of the poet, that "the proper study of mankind

is man," then certainly knowledge is anything but power. Man is nothing but weakness and sin. All men know that they are sinners, that they do things that are not right, but that knowledge gives them no power to change their course. You may tell a man all his faults, and if you tell him nothing more, you have weakened rather than strengthened him. But he who with the apostle Paul determines to know nothing "save Jesus Christ and him crucified," has knowledge that is power. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. To know Christ is to know the power of his endless life. It is for lack of this knowledge that men are destroyed. Hosea 4:6. But since Christ is the power of God, it is quite correct to say that power is the one thing that men need; and the only real power, the power of God, is revealed in the Gospel.

The Glory of Power .-All men honor power. Wherever power is manifested, there will always be found men to admire. There is no one who does not admire and applaud power in some form. Powerful muscles are admired and boasted of, whether they be those of man or of beast. A mighty engine that moves vast weights with ease always attracts attention, and men honor the one who constructed it. The man of wealth, whose money can command the service of thousands, always has admirers, no matter how his money is obtained. The man of noble birth and position, or the monarch of a great nation, has multitudes of followers who applaud his power. Men desire to be connected with such an one, because they derive a certain dignity from the connection, although the power is not transferable. But all the power of earth is frail and but for a moment, while the power of God is eternal. The Gospel is the power, and if men would but recognize it for what it is, there would not be any who would be ashamed of it. Paul said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Gal. 6:14. The reason for this was that the cross is the power of God. 1 Cor. 1:18. The power of God, in whatever form manifested, is glory, and not for shame.

Christ not Ashamed .-Concerning Christ we read, "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Heb. 2:11. "God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. 11:16. Surely if the Lord is not ashamed to be called the brother of poor, weak, sinful mortals, man has no reason to be ashamed of him. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1. Ashamed of the Gospel of Christ! Could there possibly be a worse case of the exaltation of self above God? For to be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God, is an evidence that the man who feels thus ashamed really thinks himself superior to God, and that it is a lowering of his dignity to be associated with the Lord.

"Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far
Let evening blush to own a star;
He sheds the beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine.

"Ashamed of Jesus! just as soon
Let midnight be ashamed of noon;
'Twas midnight with my soul till he,
Bright Morning Star, bade darkness flee."

Saved by Faith .-The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Eph. 2:8. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16:16. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John 1:12. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Rom. 10:10. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." John 6:29. Faith works. Time would fail to tell of those "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, . . . out of weakness were made strong," etc. Heb. 11:33, 34. Men may say, "I can not see how it is possible for one to be made righteous simply by believing." It makes no difference what you can see; you are not saved by sight, but by faith. You do not need to see how it is done, because it is the Lord who does the work of saving. Christ dwells in the heart by faith (Eph. 3:17), and because he is our righteousness, "he also is become my salvation" (Isa. 12:2). We shall have salvation by faith illustrated more fully as we proceed in our study, because the book of Romans is devoted wholly to this one thing.

"To the Jew First." -When Peter, at the request of Cornelius, the Roman centurion, and the command of the Lord, went to C sarea to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, his first words when he heard the story of Cornelius were, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Acts 10:34, 35. This was the first time that Peter had ever perceived that truth, but it was not the first time that that thing was true. It had been a truth as long as God had existed. God never chose anybody to the exclusion of anybody else. The wisdom that comes from above is "without partiality." James 3:17. It is true that the Jews as a nation were wonderfully favored by the Lord; but they lost all their privileges simply because they assumed that God loved them better than he did anybody else, and were exclusive. All through their history God was trying to make them see that what he offered them was for the whole world, and that they were to pass on to others the light and privileges which they shared. The cases of Naaman, the Syrian, and of the Ninevites to whom Jonah was sent, are among the many instances by which God sought to show the Jews that he was no respecter of persons. Then why was the Gospel preached "to the Jew first"? Simply because the Jews were nearest. Christ was crucified at Jerusalem. It was from there that he commissioned his disciples to preach the Gospel. At his ascension he said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8. It was most natural that they should begin to preach the Gospel in the place and to the people nearest them. This is the secret of all missionary work. He who does not labor in the Gospel in his home, will not do any Gospel work although he goes to a foreign country.

The Righteousness of God .-The Lord says: "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment; and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be forever and my righteousness shall not be abolished. Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law." Isa. 51:6, 7. "My

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tongue shall speak of thy work; for all thy commandments are righteousness." Ps. 119:172. The righteousness of God, therefore, is his law. Let this not be forgotten. The term "the righteousness of God" occurs frequently in the book of Romans, and much confusion has resulted from giving it arbitrary and varying definitions. If we accept the definition given in the Bible, and do not abandon it in any instance, it will simplify matters very much. The righteousness of God is his perfect law.

Righteousness and Life .-But the ten commandments, whether engraved on tables of stone or written in a book, are only the statement of the righteousness of God. Righteousness means right doing. It is active. The righteousness of God is God's right doing, his way. And since all his ways are right, it follows that the righteousness of God is nothing less than the life of God. The written law is not action, but is only a description of the action, but is only a description of the action. It is a picture of the character of God. The very life and character of God are seen in Jesus Christ, in whose heart was the law of God. There can be no righteousness without action. And as there is none good but God, it follows that there is no righteousness except in the life of God. Righteousness and the life of God are one and the same thing.

Righteousness in the Gospel .-"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed." Wherein? In the Gospel. Bear in mind that the righteousness of God is his perfect law, a statement of which is found in the Ten Commandments. There is no such thing as a conflict between the law and the Gospel. Indeed, there are not in reality two such things as the law and the Gospel. The true law of God is the Gospel; for the law is the life of God, and we are "saved by his life." The Gospel reveals the righteous law of God, because the Gospel has the law in itself. There can be no Gospel without law. Whoever ignores or rejects the law of God, has no knowledge whatever of the Gospel.

The First View .-Jesus said that the Holy Spirit should convince the world of sin and of righteousness. John 16:8. This is the revelation of the righteousness of God in the Gospel. "Where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom. 4:15. Sin can not be known except by the law. Rom. 7:7. Therefore it follows that the Spirit convicts of sin by making known the law of God. The first view of the righteousness of God has the effect of making a man feel his sinfulness, just as we feel our littleness when gazing upon a lofty mountain. And as the grandeur of the great mountains grows upon us, so God's righteousness which is "like the great mountains" (Ps. 36:6) appears greater the more we look at it. Therefore he who looks continually at the righteousness of God, must continually acknowledge his own sinfulness.

The Deeper View .-Jesus Christ is the righteousness of God. And "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John 3:17. God does not reveal his righteousness in the Gospel in order to cause us to cower before him because of our unrighteousness, but that we may take it and live by it. We are unrighteous, and God wishes us to realize it, in order that we may be willing to receive his perfect righteousness. It is a revelation of love; for his righteousness is his law, and his law is love. 1 John 5:3. So "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. If when the preaching of the Gospel reveals to us the law of God, we reject it and find fault with it because it condemns our course, we are simply saying that we do not desire that God should put his own righteousness upon us.

Living by Faith .-"As it is written, The just shall live by faith." Christ is "our life." Col. 3:4. We are "saved by his life." Rom. 5:10. It is by faith that we receive Christ Jesus, for he dwells in our hearts by faith. Eph. 3:17. Dwelling in our hearts, he is life, for out of the heart are the issues of life. Prov. 4:23. Now the word comes, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith." Col. 2:6, 7. As we receive him by faith, and we walk in him as we have received him, we shall "walk by faith, and not by sight."

"From Faith to Faith." -This seemingly difficult expression, which has been the subject of so much controversy, is very simple when we allow the Scripture to explain itself. In the Gospel "the righteousness of God" is "revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Note that "from faith to faith" is said to be parallel with "the just shall live by faith." Just means righteous. The reader has noticed that some versions have "righteous" in 1 John 1:9 where the KJV has "just." Both are the same. God's life is righteousness; he desires that our lives shall be righteousness also, and therefore he offers to us his own life. This life becomes ours by faith. That is, just as we live naturally by breathing, so we are to live spiritually by faith, and our whole life is to be spiritual. Faith is the breath of life to the Christian. So just as we naturally live from breath to breath, we are to live spiritually from faith to faith. We can live but one breath at a time; so we can not live spiritually except by present faith. If we live a life of conscious dependence upon God, his righteousness will be ours, for we shall breathe it in continually. Faith gives us strength, for those who have exercised it "out of weakness were made strong." Heb. 11:34. So of those who accept the revelation of God's righteousness "from faith to faith," it is said, "They go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." Ps. 84:7. E. J. W.

November 14, 1895

"Studies in Romans. God's Revelation to Man" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 45.

E. J. Waggoner

Let us not the student forget that it is from the very words of the Bible that one is to learn. All the real help that any teacher can be to any one in the study of the Bible is to show him how to fix his mind more clearly upon the exact words of the sacred text. Therefore, first of all, read the text over many times. Do not do this hastily, but carefully, paying particular attention to every statement. Do not waste one moment in speculating as to the possible meaning of the text. There is nothing worse than guessing the meaning of a text of Scripture, unless it is the acceptance of somebody else's guess. Nobody can know any more of the Bible than the Bible itself tells; and the Bible is just as ready to tell its story to one person as to another.

Question the text closely. Probe it again and again, always in a reverent, prayerful spirit, to make it reveal itself. Do not be discouraged if you do not at once see all that there is in the text. Remember that it is the word of God, and that it is infinite in its depth, and that you can never exhaust it. When you come across a difficult statement, go back and consider it in connection with what precedes. Do not think that you can ever get at the full meaning of any text apart from its connection. By constant application to the words of the text, in order to be sure that you know exactly what it says, you will soon have them constantly in your mind; and it is then that you will begin to reap some of the rich fruits of Bible study; for at unexpected times new light will flash from them, and through them from other scriptures as you read.

Our last lesson covered verses 16, 17, which contain the statement of what the Gospel is, and what it reveals to men. The remaining portion of the chapter may be summarized thus:-

The Justice of Judgment. Rom. 1:18-20

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his external power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

How Men Lost Knowledge. Rom. 1:21-23

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."

Result of Ignoring God. Rom. 1:24-32

"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves; who changed the

truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections; for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature; and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one towards another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful; who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

Questioning the Text

From what place is the wrath of God revealed?

"The wrath of God is revealed from heaven."

Against what is the wrath of God revealed?

"Against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."

What is done to the truth by ungodly men?

"Who hold down the truth in unrighteousness." Revised Version.

What is the justice of the revelation of God's wrath against all ungodliness of men?

"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them."

How is it that the knowledge of God is manifest in them?

"For God hath showed it unto them."

Since what time have the invisible things of God been seen?

"Since the creation of the world." Revised Version.

What are these invisible things?

"His everlasting power and divinity." Revised Version.

By what are the everlasting power and divinity of God made known?

"Being perceived through the things that are made." Revised Version.

What, then, is the condition of all who sin?

"They are without excuse."

When they knew God, wherein did they fail?

"When they knew God, they glorified him not as God."

In what respect did they fail to glorify him?

"Neither were thankful."

What caused their ingratitude?

They "became vain in their imaginations."

What was the result of their vain imaginings?

"Their foolish heart was darkened."

In what sad condition were they?

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."

What did they then do?

"Changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."

To what were they left as a consequence?

"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts."

How did they pervert the truth?

They "changed the truth of God into a lie," "exchanged the truth of God for a lie," Revised Version.

What false worship did they introduce?

They "worshiped and served the creature more [rather] than the Creator."

What was the result of this self-exaltation and creature worship?

"For this cause God gave them up to vile affections."

What was the result of their refusing to have God in their knowledge?

"God gave them over to a reprobate mind," or "a mind void of judgment."

With what were they therefore necessarily filled?

Being filled with all unrighteousness," etc.

All Unrighteousness Condemned .-The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. "All unrighteousness is sin." 1 John 5:17. "But sin is not imputed when there is no law." Rom. 5:13. Therefore enough of the law of God is known in all the world to deprive all people of any excuse for sin. The statement in this verse is equal to that in the next chapter, that "there is no respect of persons with God." His wrath is manifested against all unrighteousness. No person in the world is so great that he can sin with impunity, and no person is so insignificant that his sin will be overlooked. There is strict impartiality with God. He "without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work." 1 Pet. 1:17.

Restraining the Truth .-The statement is that men "hold down the truth in unrighteousness." Some people have superficially read Rom. 1:18 as though it said that men may possess the truth while they themselves are unrighteous. It does not say so. Sufficient evidence that such a thing is not meant is found in the fact that the apostle is speaking in this chapter especially of those who did not possess the truth, but had exchanged it for a lie. Although they had lost all knowledge of the truth, they were in condemnation for their sin.

The statement is that people restrain the truth by unrighteousness. We might note the fact that when Jesus went into his own country "he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Matt. 13:58. But the apostle in the text before us means much more than this. He means, as the context plainly shows, that people by their perverseness restrain the working of the truth of God in their own souls. But for their resistance of the truth, it would sanctify them. And herein is seen the

Righteousness of God's Wrath .-The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and justly, too, "because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto

them." Note particularly the statement that that which may be known of God "is manifest in them." Although in the common version the margin gives "to them" as an alternative reading, the Greek gives no warrant for any such rendering. No matter how blindly men may sin, the fact remains that they are sinning against great light, "because that which may be known of God is manifest in them." With such knowledge not only before their eyes, but actually within them, it is easy to see the justice of God's wrath against all sin, no matter in whom it is found. Even though it should not be perfectly clear to us how the knowledge of God is really placed in every man, we may accept the apostle's statement of the fact. In the wonderful description of the foolishness of idolatry, given in Isaiah, we are told that the man who makes an idol lies against the truth which he himself possesses. "He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he can not deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" Isa. 44:20.

Seeing the Invisible .-It is said of Moses that "he endured, as seeing him who is invisible." Heb. 11:27. This was not a privilege peculiar to Moses. Every other man may do the same thing. How? Because the "invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made." There has not been a time since the world was created when all men did not have the knowledge of God within their grasp.

"Lord, how thy wonders are displayed
Where'er I turn my eye!
If I survey the ground I tread,
Or gaze upon the sky.
"There's not a plant or flower below
But makes thy glories known."

Eternal Power and Divinity .-The invisible things of God that are known by the things that are made are his everlasting power and divinity. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." Ps. 19:1. Jesus Christ is "the power of God." 1 Cor. 1:24. "For in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist." Col. 1:16, 17. "He spake, and it

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was." Ps. 33:9. He is "the firstborn of all creation." Col. 1:15. He is the source, or beginning, of the creation of God. Rev. 3:14. That is to say, all creation springs from Christ Jesus, who is the power of God. He spoke the worlds into existence from his own being. Therefore the external power and divinity of God are impressed upon everything that has been made. We can not open our eyes, we can not even feel the breeze upon our face, without having a clear revelation to us of the power of God.

"We Are His Offspring." -When Paul upon Mars' Hill rebuked the Athenians for their idolatry he said that God is not far from every one of us, "for in him we live, and move, and have our being." The men to whom he was speaking were heathen, yet it was just as true of them as it is of us. Then he quoted one of their

own poets, who had said, "For we are also his offspring," and placed upon it the stamp of truth, by saying, "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." Acts 17:27-29. Every movement of men, and every breath, is the working of the external power of God. Thus the eternal power and divinity of God are manifest to every man. Not that man is in any sense divine, or that he has any power in himself. Quite the contrary. Man is like the grass. "Every man at his best state is altogether vanity." Ps. 39:5. The fact that man is nothing in himself, and even "less than nothing, and vanity," is evidence of the power of God manifested in him.

God's Power in the Grass .-Look at the tiny blade of grass just pushing its way through the hard ground to the sunlight. It is a very frail thing. Pull it up, and you will see that it has not power to stand alone. Even scrape the soil away from it as it stands in the earth, and it will at once lose its upright position. It depends upon the soil to hold it up, and yet it is pushing its way to the surface through that very hard soil. Dissect it as carefully as you please, and you will find nothing to indicate the possession of power. Rub it between your fingers, and you will see that there is scarcely any substance to it. It is about as frail a thing as there is in nature, and yet it will often remove quite large stones that are in the way of its growth. Whence comes this power? It is not inherent in the grass, but is nothing less than the power of the life of God, working according to his word, which in the beginning said, "Let the earth bring forth grass."

The Gospel in Creation .-We have seen that in every created thing the power of God is manifested. And we also learned from the scripture studied last week that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation." God's power is ever the same, for the text before us speaks of "his eternal power." The power, therefore, which is manifested in the things which God has made is the same power that works in the hearts of men to save them from sin and death. Therefore we may be assured that God has constituted every portion of his universe a preacher of the Gospel. So then men may not only know the fact of God's existence from the things which he has made, but they may know his eternal power to save them. The twentieth verse of the first chapter of Romans is an expansion of the sixteenth. It tells us how we may know the power of the Gospel.

The Stars as Preachers .-"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard [or, "without these their voice is heard"]. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." Ps. 19:1-4. Now read Rom. 10:13-18: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the Gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and

hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

In this text all the objections which men raise against the punishment of the heathen are answered. As stated in the first chapter, they are without excuse. The gospel has been made known to every creature under heaven. It is admitted that men can not call on one in whom they have not believed, and that they can not believe in one of whom they have not heard, and that they can not hear without a preacher. And that which they ought to hear, and which they have not obeyed, is the gospel. Having stated this, the apostle asks, "Have they not heard?" and at once answers his own question by repeating the words of the nineteenth psalm, "Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Thus we learn that the speech which the heavens utter from day unto day is the Gospel; and the knowledge which they show from night unto night is the knowledge of God.

The Heavens Reveal Righteousness .-With the knowledge that that which the heavens declare is the Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation, we can easily follow the nineteenth psalm through. It seems to the casual reader that there is a break in the continuity of this psalm. From talking about the heavens, the writer suddenly begins to speak of the perfection of the law of God, and its converting power. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." Verse 7. But there is no break at all. The law of God is the righteousness of God, and the gospel reveals the righteousness of God, and the heavens declare the Gospel; therefore it follows that the heavens reveal the righteousness of God. "The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory." Ps. 97.6. The glory of God is his goodness, because we are told that it is through sin that men come short of his glory. Rom. 3:23. Therefore we may know that whoever looks upon the heavens with reverence, seeing in them the power of the Creator, and will yield himself to that power, will be led to the saving righteousness of God. Even the sun, moon, and stars, whose light is but a part of the glory of the Lord, will shine that glory into his soul.

Without Excuse .-How evident it is, therefore, that men are without excuse for their idolatrous practices. When the true God reveals himself in everything, and with his power makes known his love, what excuse can men have for not knowing and worshipping him? But is it true that God makes known his love to all men? Yes, it is just as true as that he makes himself known, for "God is love." Whoever knows the Lord must know his love. This being the case with regard to the heathen, how utterly without excuse are people who live in lands where the Gospel is preached with an audible voice from his written word.

The Cause of Idolatry .-How is it that if God has so clearly revealed himself and his truth, there are so many who are in utter ignorance of him? The answer is given, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful." There is one thing which God has given as the seal and sign of his divinity, and that is the Sabbath. Speaking of men, he says, "Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Eze. 20:12. This is in keeping

with what we have learned in Romans; for our text tells us that God's power and divinity are perceived by thoughtful people through the things that he has made; and the Sabbath is the great memorial of creation. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work. . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20:8-11. If people had always kept the Sabbath as it was given, there would never have been any idolatry; for the Sabbath reveals the power of the word of the Lord to create and to work righteousness.

Vain Imaginations .-Men became vain in

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their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Gibbon says of the speculations of the ancient philosophers that "their reason had often been guided by their imagination, and their imagination had been prompted by their vanity." The course of their fall was the same as that of the angel who became Satan. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." Isa. 14:12-14. What was the cause of this self-exaltation and fall? "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." Eze. 27:17. Dependent entirely upon God for all the wisdom and glory that he had, he did not glorify God, but assumed that all his talents sprang from himself; and so, as he disconnected himself in his pride from the Source of light, he became the prince of darkness. Even thus it was with man.

Changing the Truth into a Lie .-"There is no power but of God." In nature we see the manifestation of mighty power, but it is the working of God. All the different forms of force which philosophers name, and which they declare to be inherent in matter, are but the working of the life of God in the things that he has made. Christ is "before all things, and by him all things consist," or hold together. Col. 1:17. Cohesion therefore is but the direct power of the life of Christ. Gravitation also is the same power, as we read of the heavenly bodies, "for that he is strong in power; not one faileth." Isa. 40:26. But men looked upon all the operations of nature, and, instead of seeing the power of the one supreme God in them, they attributed divinity to the things themselves. So, as they looked upon themselves; and saw what great things they could achieve, instead of honoring God as the giver and upholder of all things, the One in whom they lived and moved and had their being, they assumed that they themselves were by nature divine. Thus they changed the truth of God into a lie. The truth is that the life and power of God are manifested in everything that he has made; the lie is that the force which is manifest in all things is inherent in the things themselves. So men put the creature in the place of the Creator.

Looking Within .-Marcus Aurelius, who is accounted the best of the heathen philosophers, said: "Look within. Within is the fountain of good, and it will ever

bubble up, if thou wilt ever dig." That expresses the spirit of all heathenism. Self was the supreme thing. But that spirit is not peculiar to what is known as heathenism, for it is very common in these days; nevertheless, it is nothing but the spirit of heathenism. It is a part of the worship of the creature instead of the Creator. It is but natural that they should put themselves in his place; and when they do that, it is a necessary consequence that they look to themselves, and not to God, for goodness. When men look within, what is the only thing that they can see? "Evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." Mark 6:21, 22. Even the apostle Paul said, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Rom. 7:18. Now, when a man looks at all this evil which is in him by nature, and thinks that it is good, and that he can get good out of himself, the result can be plainly seen: the vilest wickedness must be the result. He virtually says, "Evil, be thou my good."

The Wisdom of this World .-"The world by wisdom knew not God." Keeness of intellect is not faith, nor is it a substitute for faith. A man may be a brilliant scholar, and still be the basest of men. Several years ago a man charged with half a score or more brutal murders was hanged, and yet he was a scholar and a scientist, and had held a high position in society. Learning is not Christianity, although a Christian may be a learned man. Modern inventions will never save men from perdition. Some modern philosopher has said that "idolatry can not live by the side of the highest art and culture that the world has ever known." But at the same time men were sunk in such wickedness as referred to by the apostle in the last part of the first chapter of Romans. Even the reputed wise men were such as are there described. It was the natural result of their looking at themselves for righteousness.

In the Last Days .-Read the last verses of the first chapter of Romans if you wish to have a picture of the world in the last days. The one who believes in a millennium of peace and righteousness before the coming of the Lord will doubtless be shocked; but he needs to be. Read that list of sins carefully, and then see how exactly it tallies with the following: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lover of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3:1-5. This all springs from self, the very source of the evil with which Paul charged the heathen. Those things are the works of the flesh. See Gal. 5:19-21. They are the natural result of trusting in self. In spite of the declaration of the apostle, there are very few who will believe that this state of things will ever be general, and especially among those who profess godliness. But the seed which produces such a crop is already sown broadcast. The Papacy, "that man of sin," "the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped," is the strongest force in professed Christendom, and its power is daily increasing. And how is it increasing? Not so much by the direct accessions as by the blind acceptance of

its principles by professed Protestants. It has placed itself above God in thinking to change his law. Dan. 7:25. It boldly adopted the heathen sun festival day, Sunday, in the place of the Sabbath of the Lord, the memorial of creation, and defiantly points to it as its badge of authority. And the majority of Protestants follow in its train, accepting a custom which stands for the exaltation of man above God, the symbol of justification by works instead of by faith. When professed Christians cling to a human ordinance in spite of the express command of the Lord, and support their custom by appeals to the Fathers, men who were learned in the philosophy of heathenism, the road to any evil which their hearts may choose is but a down grade. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." E. J. W.

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"Studies in Romans. Universal Judgment" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 46.

E. J. Waggoner

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Ps. 1:1, 2.

"My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Prov. 2:1-6.

Here we have the secret of the understanding of the Bible: study and meditation, coupled with an earnest desire to know the will of God in order to do it. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." John 7:17. Repetition review is one of the prime essentials to knowledge of the Bible. Not that any amount of study will compensate for lack of the Holy Spirit's guidance, but that the Holy Spirit witnesses through the word.

A Look Backward

In this study of Romans we wish to carry along with us as much as possible of what we learn. We will therefore take a view of the first chapter as a whole. We have found that it is naturally divided somewhat as follows:

Verses 1-7, the salutation, containing an epitome of the whole Gospel.

Verses 8-15, Paul's personal interest in the Romans, and his sense of obligation to them and to all mankind.

Verses 16, 17, what the Gospel is, and what it contains.

Verses 21-23, the corruption of wisdom.

Verses 24-32, the result of unthankfulness and of forgetting God.

A careful reading of the chapter shows that the main thought is that God has made himself known to every soul in his creation, and that even the most degraded heathen know that they are guilty and are worthy of death for their wickedness. "Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." Verse 32. So "they are without excuse." This leading thought of the first chapter should be well in mind before beginning the second chapter, for the second is a continuation of the first, and dependent upon it.

A Wider View. Rom. 2:1-11

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honor, and peace to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for there is no respect of persons with God."

Questioning the Text

What declaration does the apostle make to man?

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man."

What man is it that is inexcusable?

"Whosoever thou art that judgest."

Why is the man that judges inexcusable?

"For wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself."

How is it that he condemns himself?

"For thou that judgest doest the same things."

Of what may we be sure?

"We are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things."

Therefore what is the man who judges evil-doers not to think?

"That thou shalt escape the judgment of God."

What leading question is asked of the self-righteous judge?

"Despise thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering?"

Of what is such an one ignorant?

"Not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

What do such treasure up for themselves?

"Treasurest up unto thyself wrath."

In accordance with what is this wrath treasured up?

"After thy hardness and impenitent heart."

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Against what time is this wrath treasured up?

"Against the day of wrath."

What will then be revealed?

"Revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

What will God then render?

"Who will render to every man according to his *deeds*."

To what class will he render eternal life?

"To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality."

What will he render to them that are contentious, and that do not obey the truth?

"Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish."

Unto how many will this be rendered?

"Upon every soul of man that doeth evil."

In what order?

"Of the Jew first, and also of the gentile."

Is God as impartial in his rendering of rewards as of punishment?

"But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."

What is not found with God?

"For there is no respect of persons with God." He "without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work." 1 Peter 1:17.

Acknowledging their Guilt .-The truth of the apostle's statement is easy of demonstration concerning the heathen and their deeds, that they know that they are worthy of death. When Adam and Eve had eaten the forbidden fruit, they were afraid to meet God, and hid themselves. Fear is a necessary accompaniment of guilt, and a proof of it. "Fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." 1 John 4:18. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are bold as a lion." Prov. 28:1. "But the fearful . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire." Rev. 21:8. If the heathen did not know that they were guilty, they would not expect punishment for murdering or stealing, and would not arm themselves for defense.

An Unanswerable Charge .-There is wonderful shrewdness in the way that the apostle works up the charge made in the first verse. The first chapter is confined to the heathen. All will agree with the apostle's statement that they are guilty of most abominable wickedness. "They ought to know better," is the almost involuntary exclamation. "They do know better," is the apostle's reply, or, at least,

they have a chance to know better, and they do know that they are not doing right. "They are without excuse." Whatever men may think about the responsibility of the heathen, all agree that their practices are to be condemned. Then comes the crushing rejoinder: "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." We are caught, and can not escape. If we know enough to condemn the unrighteous deeds of the heathen, we by that very judgment acknowledge ourselves to be without excuse for our own misdeeds.

All Alike .-"Thou that judgest doest the same things." It is clear enough that anybody who knows enough to condemn evil in another is without excuse for his own sins; but all will not at once see that the one who judges another does the same things. Read, therefore the last verses of the first chapter again, and compare the list of sins with that found in Gal. 5:19-21, and it will be seen that the things which the heathen do, and for which we can readily see that they are guilty, are but the works of the flesh. They are the sins that come "from within, out of the heart of men." Mark 7:21-23. Whoever is included in the term "man" is subject to just such things. "The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works." Ps. 33:13-15.

Self-condemned .-Therefore, since all men are alike sharers in one common human nature, it is evident that whosoever in the world condemns another for any misdeed thereby condemns himself; for the truth is that all have the same evil in them, more or less fully developed; and the fact that they know enough to judge that a thing is wrong, is a declaration that they themselves are worthy of the punishment which they see that the other one deserves.

Sympathy, Not Condemnation .-The robber often cries out, "Stop thief!" after some other man, in order to direct pursuit away from himself. So people condemn sin in others, in order that it may not be suspected that they are guilty of the same things. Often, too, people

"Compound for sins they are inclined to

By damning those they have no mind to,"

but of which they are actually guilty by reason of their human nature. Since all flesh of man is the same, we ought to be filled with humiliation, instead of contempt, when we hear of a gross sin that is committed; for it is really a picture of what is in our own hearts. Instead of saying, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men," we should bear the burden of the erring, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted. Very often the man whose weakness we feel inclined to condemn, has not failed so badly as we should have done if we had been tempted in the same way, and to the same degree.

Outcry Against Sin .-When Talkative left Faithful to decide upon the subject of their conversation, Faithful proposed this question: "How doth the saving grace of God discover itself when it is in the heart of man?" And then Bunyan proceeds thus:-

Talk. I perceive then that our talk must be about the power of things. Well, it is a very good question, and I shall be willing to answer you; and take my answer in brief thus: First, where the grace of God is in the heart, it causeth there a great outcry against sin. Secondly-

Faith.-Nay, boldly let us consider of one at one I think you should rather say, it shows itself by inclining the soul to abhor sin.

Talk. Why, what difference is there between crying out against and abhorring sin?

Faith. O, a great deal! A man may cry out against a sin, of policy; but he can not abhor it but by virtue of a godly antipathy against it. I have heard many cry out against sin in the pulpit, who can yet abide it well enough in the heart, house, and conversation. Joseph's mistress cried out with a loud voice, as if she had been very chaste; but she would willingly, notwithstanding that, have committed uncleanness with him.

A keen perception of right and wrong, and

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a vigorous denunciation of sin, will never justify any man. On the contrary, they only deepen his condemnation. It is a sad fact that too many of the so-called reformers of the present day seem to think that Gospel work consists largely in the denunciation of evil practices. A detective is not a minister of the Gospel.

Judgment According to Truth .-"But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things." "Hold," says one, "I am not sure of that." Well, you may very easily assure yourself of it. 1. God exists. We are agreed as to that. 2. He is the source whence every created thing comes. 3. Every creature is absolutely dependent upon him. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." 4. Since all life depends on him, it is evident that the continuation of man's life depends upon his agreement and union with God. 5. Therefore God's own character must be the standard of judgment. 6. But God himself is truth. "There is no unrighteousness in him." 7. But he has made a revelation of himself and his righteousness to all men. "His righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen." Ps. 97:2. 8. Therefore all men, from the least to the greatest, are without excuse for their sin. 9. Then it is plain enough that when God judges all men, without exception, his judgment is according to truth. And earth will be constrained to join with heaven in saying, "Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus." "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments." Rev. 16:5, 7.

No Escape .-No one need think that he can escape the righteous judgment of God. It is usually the most enlightened who flatter themselves that they shall escape. It is so easy for us to think that our great knowledge of right and wrong will be counted for righteousness, to persuade ourselves that our condemnation of the sins of others will make the Lord believe that we could never be guilty of such things. But that only makes our condemnation the more clear. The first chapter of Romans knocks all the props from under every man. If the lowest are justly held guilty, there is no escape for the "higher classes." "God shall bring

every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12:14.

God's Goodness Leads to Repentance .-"Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." God is the perfection of purity and holiness; man is altogether sinful. God knows every sin, yet he does not despise the sinner. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John 3:17. Christ said, "If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not." John 12:47. In everything that he said and did, he was simply representing the Father. God "is long-suffering to usward;" and "the long-suffering of our God is salvation." 2 Pet. 3:9, 15. Now it is impossible that one should consider the goodness and long-suffering of God without being humbled and moved to repentance. When we consider how tenderly God bears with us, it is not possible that we should deal harshly with our fellow-men. And if we do not judge, we shall not be judged. Luke 6:37.

Repentance Is a Gift .-"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Eph. 2:8. "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:30, 31. But it was not to Israel alone that God gave repentance through Christ. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43. And so plainly did God make this appear that even the exclusive Jews were forced to exclaim, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Acts 11:18.

Incentives to Repentance .-The goodness of God leads men to repentance. Therefore the whole earth is full of incentives to repentance, for "the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord." Ps. 33:5. "The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy." Ps. 119:64. God may be known through his works, and "God is love." All creation reveals the love and mercy of God. And we need not try to improve on the Scriptures, and say that the goodness of God tends to lead men to repentance. The Bible says that it does lead them to repentance, and we may be sure that it is so. Every man is being led toward repentance as surely as God is good. But not all repent. Why? Because they despise the riches of the goodness and forbearance and long-suffering of God, and break away from the merciful leading of the Lord. But whoever does not resist the Lord, will surely be brought to repentance and salvation.

Treasuring up Wrath .-In the first chapter we learn that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Therefore all who sin are treasuring up for themselves wrath. It should be noted that in the judgment God is clear. Men receive only what they have worked for. God is not arbitrary. He has not fixed arbitrary decrees, and declared that whoever violates them shall be visited with vengeance. The punishment that will come upon the wicked is the necessary result of their own choice. God is the only source of life. His life is peace. Now when men reject him, the only alternative for them is wrath and death. "For that they hated knowledge, and did

not choose the fear of the Lord; they would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them." Prov. 1:29-32. Trouble and death are bound up in sin; they are what men choose when they refuse the Lord.

"According to His Deeds." -Unbelievers often say that it is not just for God to condemn a man simply because he does not believe a certain thing. But he does not do so. Not a word can be found in the Bible about judging a man according to his belief. Everywhere it is said that all will be judged according to their works. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16:27. "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. He "judgeth according to every man's work." 1 Pet. 1:17. The man who says that his work is all right, sets himself up as judge in the place of God, who says that every man is all wrong. God is Judge alone, and he judges strictly according to a man's work, but a man's work is decided by his faith. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." John 6:29. It is not for any man to judge himself, and say that his work is all right. It is for him simply to trust the goodness and mercy of the Lord, that his work may be wrought in God.

Immortality and Eternal Life .-God will render eternal life to them who seek for glory and honor and immortality. Christ "hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." 2 Tim. 1:10. Life and immortality are two different things. Whoever believes on the Son of God has eternal life. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. We have eternal life as soon as we know the Lord; but we can not have immortality until the Lord comes, at the last day. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor. 15:51-53. We are to seek for immortality; that of itself is proof that no man has it now. Since Christ has brought it to light through the Gospel, it is evident that immortality can be found in no other way than through the Gospel. Therefore those who do not accept the Gospel will never have immortality.

Tribulation and Anguish .-Those who sin are the children of wrath. Eph. 2:3. Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, are sure to come upon evil doers. But tribulation and anguish will have an end. The fact that none receive immortality except

the ones who are Christ's at his coming, shows that all others will eventually cease to exist. There will be torment in connection with the punishment of the wicked, but the torment, however long it may continue, will come to an end in the utter destruction of the wicked. God's indignation will come to an end. "For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction." Isa. 10:25. The call is: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy

chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." Isa. 16:20, 21. "He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger forever." Ps. 103:9. His anger will cease, not because he will become reconciled to iniquity, but because iniquity will come to an end with its workers.

"To Every Soul." -Tribulation and anguish will come upon "every soul of man that doeth evil," and "glory, honor, and peace to every man that worketh good." None will be left out. There is not a soul so poor and ignorant that he will be passed by, nor one so wealthy and learned that he will be allowed to escape. Wealth and position will have no influence in that court. God has made the revelation of himself so plain that every man has had an opportunity of knowing him. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold down the truth in unrighteousness." Note well that his wrath is revealed against sin. Only those persons will suffer who cling to sin, and will not allow God to take it from them. In the final blotting out of sin, they are necessarily blotted out with it.

To the Jew First .-This statement is sufficient to show that God is no respecter of persons. Indeed, the apostle states as a necessary conclusion that "there is no respect of persons with God." "First" does not always refer to time. We speak of a man as being the first man in the country, not because there were no men before him, but because he is the chief man. In school a certain one is the first one in his class because he is the best scholar. The Jew is the one who has had the greatest revelation made to him, and therefore it is just that he should be chief in the judgment. The text shows, however, that God has no special favor to the Jew over other men. If glory, honor, and peace come to the Jew first, so also do indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish. The question is not, "What is the man's nationality?" but, "What has he done?" God will render to every man according to his deeds, "for there is no respect of persons with God." E. J. W.

December 5, 1895

**"Studies in Romans. The Law and Judgment" *The Signs of the Times*
21, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

A few words may suffice to bring to mind what we have already studied. The first chapter of Romans may be briefly summed up as setting forth the condition of those who know not God, and the way in which they lost their knowledge, together with the fact that they are wholly without excuse. Then, just as we are ready to hold up our hands in horror at their wickedness, and to launch forth severe condemnation upon them, the apostle turns to us, and shuts our mouths with the stinging words, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." And so the second chapter proceeds to show that all will be subjects of God's righteous judgment, "for there is no respect

of persons with God." Thus we are brought to a confirmation of the fact that God is impartial, by a comparison of the

Two Classes in the Judgment. Rom. 2:12-16

"For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law (for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another); in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel."

Questioning the Text

What proves that there is no respect of persons with God?

"For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law."

What is to become of the ones who have sinned without law?

They "shall also perish."

How shall those perish who have sinned without law?

"Without law."

What of those who have sinned in the law?

They "shall be judged by the law."

When shall this be?

"In the day when God shall judge the secrets before God."

What will simply hearing the law not do for men?

"For not the hearers of the law be just before God."

Who alone shall be justified.

"The doers of the law shall be justified."

But what of the men who have never heard the law?

"These, having not the law, are a law unto themselves."

What do they show by their actions?

"Which show the work of the law written in their hearts."

What shows that even without the law they have some knowledge of what the law requires?

"Their conscience also bearing witness."

How do they regard the different actions done by themselves.

"Their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."

By whom will the secrets of men be judged?

"God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ."

In accordance with what will the judgment be?

"According to my Gospel."

Without Law, and in the Law .-Although it is quite certain that when the Lord comes the second time there will be no people on the earth who have not heard

the preaching of the word, it is a fact that thousands and millions have died without ever having seen or heard of the Bible. They are the ones to whom the apostle refers as "without law." Yet it is plainly set forth that they are not

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absolutely without law, but only without the written law. The fact that they have some knowledge of the law is stated in the verses following, and is proved by the fact that they are counted sinners; but "sin is not imputed where there is no law." Rom. 5:13.

All Sin Punished .-Whether we have had the written law or not, all are alike counted sinners. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Rom. 1:18. The heathen are declared to be without excuse; and if they who have not the written law are without excuse, they who have the law in their hands are of course far more inexcusable. God is just. "We know that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things." Yet all who sin, whether in the law or without the law, are to be punished. This is sufficient to show that "without law" does not mean without any knowledge of God. The first chapter settles that. The trouble with too many who read this statement that all shall be punished, and who think that it does not seem just, is that they forget, or are ignorant of, what is contained in the first chapter. It is a great mistake to take any single verse of the Bible and separate it from its connection.

They Shall Perish .-That is declared to be the fate of the wicked. The apostle Peter tells us that the world is "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3:7. What is meant by "perish?" It means just the opposite of living forever. On one occasion some people told Jesus of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, and Jesus replied, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Luke 13:1-3. Again we read, "The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." Ps. 37:20. Therefore the statement that those who sin shall perish means that they shall die, that they shall be utterly extinct, that "they shall be as though they had not been." Obadiah 16.

Strict Impartiality .-That means strict justice. Sinners will be punished, whether they live in heathen lands or in so-called Christian lands. But no one will be judged by that of which he knew nothing. God does not punish men for violation of a law of which they knew nothing, nor does he hold them accountable for light that they have not had. It is very plain that those who have the law must know many things that are not known to those who do not have it in written form. All men have light enough to know that they are sinners; but the written word gives those who have it a knowledge of many particulars of which those are ignorant who do not have it. Therefore God in his justice does not hold the latter accountable for many things for which the former will be judged. "As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law." The man who has rejected light, whether it be little or much, is obviously guilty.

The Root of Sin .-To some it seems unjust that those who have had but comparatively little light should suffer death for their sins, the same as those who have sinned against the greatest light. Their difficulty arises from the fact that they do not consider what sin really is. God alone is good. Luke 18:19. He is the source of goodness. Whatever goodness ever appears in man is only the working of God in him. But he is also the source of life. With him is the fountain of life. Ps. 36:9. God's life is righteousness; therefore there can be no righteousness apart from the life of God. Now it is evident that if a man rejects God, he effectually cuts himself off from life. It matters not that he has had but comparatively little knowledge of God, if he rejects that light he rejects God, and thus rejects life. And by rejecting the little that he has seen of God, he shows that he would reject God in any case. Sin is simply separation from or rejection of God; and that means death.

Justified .-Here is another term the meaning of which should be settled once for all. We have seen that righteousness means conformity to the law of God, and so we shall understand it throughout the book of Romans and the whole Bible. Rom. 2:13 shows that "just," or "justified," means the same thing. Who are the justified ones?-They who do the law. We need not here stop to consider the fact that is stated later, that there are no doers of the law; all we are concerned with now is the statement that to be justified means to be in a condition of harmony with the law of God. The matter of how men get into such a condition will be considered later. Let it not be forgotten that "just means "righteous," and that both mean a state of harmony with the law of God, which is his life.

Hearing and Doing .-"Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." That is, it makes no difference how much a man knows; his knowledge will not justify him. People who have had great advantages are very prone to look with contempt upon those who have been less favored, and to feel pride because of their own superior knowledge, forgetting that their superior knowledge only makes their own shortcomings the more marked. The man who knows much and does wrong is obviously more blameworthy than the one who knows only little. "Take heed therefore how ye hear." Luke 8:16. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any man be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." James 1:22-25.

A Law unto Themselves .-"These, having not the law, are a law unto themselves." They have not the written law, and so they are their own law. "Which show the work of the law written in their hearts." So the law that they are unto themselves is nothing different from the written law. This statement is the same as that in the first chapter, namely, that "that which may be known of God is manifest in them." God has revealed himself, and therefore his law, not only *to* every man, but *in* every man. Christ is God, and he is "the true light which

lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. In the judgment even the heathen will stand self-condemned.

Accusing and Excusing .-"Their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." The French have a proverb to the effect that "he who excuses himself accuses himself." This is a true proverb. No man thinks of excusing himself if he does not think that he is at fault. If a thing be right, it needs no excuse. And so in the statement that the heathen either excuse or else accuse one another for the things that they do, we find evidence that their conscience continually condemns them. Even in the things which they try to make themselves believe are right, they show that they know that they are wrong.

A Parenthesis .-The reader will note that verses 13, 14, 15 are thrown in by way of explanation, to show that, although the heathen are said to sin without law, and to perish without law, they are not absolutely without law, but only without the written law. This needs to be noted in order not to become confused in following the apostle's statement about the judgment. The connection is found by reading verses 12 and 16 together, thus: "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;" "in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel."

Judged by Jesus Christ .-God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. Christ is the representative of the Godhead in all things,-in creation, in redemption, and in judgment. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." John 5:22, 23. "He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Acts 17:31. The fact that the judgment will be conducted by Christ, "who gave himself for

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our sins," who died to redeem men, and who is our Advocate with the Father, the propitiation for our sins, "and not for ours only, but also for the whole world," is assurance to all men that the judgment will be conducted with the utmost fairness.

According to the Gospel .-The judgment is according to the Gospel. This is additional evidence that love is always combined with justice. In fact, the justice of God is always love itself, for God is love, and he can never be anything else but love, for he can not deny himself. And he is always just. His mercy appears even in his judgments. "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever. . . . To him which divided the Red Sea into parts; for his mercy endureth forever; and made Israel to pass through the midst of it; for his mercy endureth forever; but overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea; for his mercy endureth forever." Ps. 136:1-15. Since the righteousness of God-the law-is revealed in the Gospel, and men are judged by the law, it is plain that the Gospel is not omitted in the judgment. The Gospel is in reality nothing else but the law of God in Christ.

"My Gospel." -Paul says, "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel." What does he mean by "my Gospel"? Is it that he has a Gospel that is peculiarly his own, or from himself?-By no means. Let him explain himself. "But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Gal. 1:11, 12. The Gospel which Paul preached was the word which he had received from the Lord Jesus Christ himself; and therefore his statement in the text before us is the same as saying that this judgment will be according to the word of the Lord. E. J. W.

December 12, 1895

"Studies in Romans. Form and Fact" *The Signs of the Times* 21, 49.

E. J. Waggoner

In the first chapter, it will be remembered we have a representation of the case of the heathen. In the second, as far as already studied, we have the case made general. Now the verses immediately before us, we have in unmistakable language the direct, personal charge.

"Thou Art the Man." Rom. 2:17-24

"Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest them boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonorest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the gentiles through you, as it is written."

Questioning the Text

To whom does the apostle now address himself?

"Behold, thou art called a Jew?"

in what does the one called a Jew rest?

"And retest in the law."

Of what does he boast?

Makest thy boast of God."

What does he know?

"And knowest his will."

How is it that he knows God's will?

"Being instructed out of the law."

Knowing the will of God through being instructed out of the law, what is he able to do?

"Triest the things that differ," marginal reading.

Of what does his knowledge of the law give him confidence?

"Are confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes."

What, and what only, does he have in the law?

"Hast the *form* of knowledge and of the truth in the law."

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What questions imply that he has not the *fact* or the truth of the law?

"Dost thou steal?" "Dost thou commit adultery?" "Dost thou commit sacrilege?" "Through breaking the law dishonorest thou God?"

What shows that these leading question are really positive charges of breaking the law?

"For the name of God is blasphemed among the gentiles through you, as it is written."

A Professed Jew .-Are professed Christians to throw away this portion of the book of Romans as not applicable to them, since it is addressed to a professed Jew? By no means. Professed Christians are the very ones who are meant by the apostle. Read the description: Thou "retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law." Whom does he address? Every one who professes to know the Lord, no matter by what name he is called; every one who thinks himself fully qualified to instruct others in the way of the Lord.

"Called a Jew." -It should not be overlooked as a trifling matter that the apostle does not say, "Behold, thou art a Jew," but, "Behold, thou art called a Jew." People are not always what they are called, nor what they call themselves. Beginning with the seventeenth verse the apostle settles the question of who are Jews. Before we have finished the chapter it will seem that by using the word "called" he meant to intimate that the one addressed and described in the following verses is not really a Jew, and is not considered so by the Lord.

Claiming to Be Jews .-In Revelation 2:9 we read, "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." And again, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." Rev. 3:9. From this we see that to be a Jew indeed is so high an honor that many will falsely claim it. Yet the people called Jews have been held in contempt by the greater part of the world, for many hundred years. At no time and in no part of the world, since the New Testament was written, has it ever been an object for anybody to claim that he was a Jew, in the common acceptation of the term. The Jews as a class have never been in such honor that it would benefit one's prospects to be called one. But it has been and is very often an advantage for a man to be known as a

Christian, and very many have falsely made the claim, in order to better their business prospects.

Jew and Christian .-It is not straining the text at all to say that when "Jew" is used in these verses, it means what is now known as "Christian." This will be apparent if we consider what a real Jew is. We may quote enough to show that from the beginning a true Jew was one who believed in Christ. Of the head of the race the Lord Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." John 8:56. He believed in the Lord, and it was counted to him for righteousness; but righteousness comes only through the Lord Jesus. Moses, the leader of the Jews, esteemed "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Heb. 11:26 The rebellious Jews in the wilderness tempted and rejected Christ. 1 Cor. 10:9. When Christ came in the flesh, it was "his own" that received him not. John 1:11. And to crown all, Christ said that no one could believe the writings of Moses unless he believed on him. John 5:46, 47. Therefore it is evident that no one is or ever has been a real Jew unless he believes in Christ. He who is not a Jew indeed is of "the synagogue of Satan."

"Salvation Is of the Jews." -Jesus said to the woman of Samaria at the well of Jacob, "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews." John 4:22. Christ himself was "made of the seed of David according to the flesh," and was therefore a Jew; and there is no other name than his "under heaven . . . whereby we must be saved." No other people on earth, besides the Jews, have ever had so high a name. No other people have been so highly favored of God. "For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" Deut. 4:7, 8.

Resting in the Law .-As stated in the verse last quoted, the Jews had committed to them the most perfect law in the universe, God's own. It was called "the testimony," because it was for a witness against them. They were not taught that they could get righteousness out of it, although it was perfect, but the contrary. Because it was so perfect, and they were sinners, it could have nothing but condemnation for them. It was designed only to drive them to Christ, in whom alone they could find the perfect righteousness that the law requires. "The law worketh wrath" (Rom. 4:15), and Christ alone saves from wrath. But they "rested in the law," and therefore rested in sin. They "trusted in themselves that they were righteous." Luke 18:9. They found no righteousness, "because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." Rom. 9:31, 32.

Boasting of God .-This is something different from making one's boast in the Lord. Ps. 34:2. Instead of rejoicing in the Lord's salvation, the Jews boasted over their superior knowledge of God. They did indeed have more than others, but they had nothing that they had not received, yet they boasted as though they had not received it. They glorified themselves, rather than God, for the knowledge that they had; and therefore they put themselves in the condition of the heathen who "when they knew God, glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations." Whatever reader is inclined to censure the ancient Jews for their vain boasting, let him remember how he himself has often

felt on comparing himself with the inhabitants of heathen countries, and with the "lowest class" in his own land.

God's Will His Law .-The apostle says that the Jew knows the will of God, because he is instructed out of the law. This is sufficient to show that the law of God is his will. Indeed, no argument should be needed on this point. The will of any government is expressed in its law. Where there is an absolute ruler, his will is always law. God is an absolute ruler, although not an arbitrary one, and as his will is the sole rule of right, it follows that his will is law. But his law is summed up in the Ten Commandments; therefore the Ten Commandments contain a summary statement of the will of God.

The Form of Knowledge and Truth .-Although the Ten Commandments contain a statement of the will of God, which is the perfection of wisdom and truth, they are only a statement, and not the thing itself, just the same as a picture of a house is not a house, although it may be a perfect picture. Mere words written in a book or graven in stone have no life; but we know that the law of God is life everlasting. Only in Christ can the living law be found, since he is the only manifestation of the Godhead. Whoever has the life of Christ dwelling in him, has the perfect law of God manifest in his life. But he who has only the letter of the law, and not Christ, has only the form of knowledge and of truth. Thus, the law is often rightly said to be a photograph of the character of God. But a photograph or other picture is only the shadow of the reality; it is not the very substance. He who has Christ has both the form and the substance, since one can not have a thing without also possessing its form. But he who has only the statement of the truth, without Christ who alone is the Truth has the form of godliness without the power thereof.

Hard Questions .-In verses 21-23 the apostle asks some hard questions. "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonorest thou God?" Let

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each soul that has been wont to pride himself upon the correctness of his life answer these questions for himself. It is easy and natural for a man to pride himself upon his "morality." Men who are not Christians comfort themselves with the thought that they live "moral" lives, and that therefore they are as well off as though they were Christians. Let all such know that there is no morality except conformity to the law of God. Everything that is in any respect below the standard of that law is immorality. Knowing this, let them see if they have perfectly kept that law.

"Dost Thou Steal?" -Most people will say, "No; I am honest in all my dealing." Very well, but let us not decide the case offhand. Let us examine the Scripture. It says, "The law is spiritual." Rom. 7:14. "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12. No matter how correct we are in our outward

acts, if in spirit or thought we have transgressed, we are guilty. The Lord looks at the heart, instead of the outward appearance. 1 Sam. 16:7. Again, it is just as wrong to steal from God as to steal from man; have you given God his due? Have you dealt in a perfectly honest way with him? Hear what he says: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Mal. 3:8, 9. Does this mean you? Have you rendered to God that which is his due in tithes and offerings? If not, what will you answer when the word of inspiration asks, "Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?"

"The Law Is Spiritual." -In the fifth chapter of Matthew the Saviour has set forth the spirituality of the law. He says that unless our righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, we can not enter the kingdom of heaven. What was their righteousness? He said to them, "Ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." Matt. 23:28. Therefore, unless we are righteous inwardly, we are nothing. God desires "truth in the inward parts." Ps. 51:6. Following on in the fifth chapter of Matthew, the Saviour shows that one may break the sixth commandment, which says, "Thou shalt not kill," by the utterance of a single word. He also shows that we may break the seventh commandment which says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," by a look and a thought. The same principle of course obtains with all the commandments. This being the case, it becomes one to be very careful about saying that he has perfectly kept the law.

Some have said that the Ten Commandments are a very low standard, and that a man might keep them all and still not be worthy of admission into respectable society. Such know nothing about the law. As a matter of fact, a man may break all the commandments, and still figure as a shining light in the "best society."

The Name of God Blasphemed .-"The name of God is blasphemed among the gentiles through you, as it is written." Who has done this? The one who teaches the law, and who says that one who teaches the law and who says that one should not take the name of the Lord in vain. When David sinned in the case of Uriah's wife, God said to him, "By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." 2 Sam. 12:14. That is, he was a professed follower of the Lord, and by his violation of the law of the Lord he had given unbelievers a chance to say, "There, that is a specimen of Christianity." Who is there that can say that as a professed follower of the Lord he has always correctly represented the truth? Who is there that must not admit to himself and God that, either by his words or actions, he has very often misrepresented the truth which he professed? Who is there that has not by his failures, either in teaching or acting, given people a miserably inadequate idea of what true godliness is? In short, who is there that must not say yes to the apostle's question, "Through breaking the law, dishonorest thou God?" And since thus the name of God is blasphemed through professed Christians, who is there that can declare himself guiltless before God's law? E. J. W.