**“‘Enforcing’ the Ten Commandments” American Sentinel 12, 7.**

E. J. Waggoner

**E. J. Waggoner, in Signs of the Times**

The law of God, which is His righteousness, is the one thing which men are to seek. Christ said, “I know that His commandment is life everlasting.” John 12:50. We also are to know the same thing. The law itself is spiritual; it is life everlasting. But life is not a figment, a fancy; it is real, and wherever there is life there must be something living. {AMS February 18, 1897, p. 105.1}

When we read the commandment is life everlasting, it does not mean that the written characters are life. They simply declare the fact. Everlasting life is in Jesus Christ. “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” John 5:26. He is the fountain of life. Psalm 36:9; Jeremiah 2:13. {AMS February 18, 1897, p. 105.2}

The commandment or law of God is everlasting life because it is His own life. Then is the life of the Spirit of God; and putting the Spirit of God into the hearts of men puts the life of God there. It is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ, it gives freedom and peace with God. “The Spirit is life, because of righteousness;” and “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” Romans 8:1, 2, 9, 10. {AMS February 18, 1897, p. 105.3}

Nothing less than the life of Christ is the law of God; and anything contrary to the life of Christ is condemned. Then we can leave the *right* of any body of men to enforce the law of God entirely outside of the question. It is merely a question of *power*. Has it the power to enforce the law of God? Has any government on earth power to take the life of God and put it into the hearts of its subjects? Certainly not. {AMS February 18, 1897, p. 105.4}

Then when men do make religious laws, and in force religion upon people, it is certain that they are not enforcing the religion of Christ. Therefore when they do that, those who are loyal to Christ can have no complicity with it whatever. It is paganism, no matter what form of truth there may be. It is but the former without the power or life. If such enforcement is put in the very terms of the Bible, it is only the more thoroughly pagan; for it is paganism trying to palm itself off as Christianity. {AMS February 18, 1897, p. 105.5}

The attempt to enforce the ten commandments, even just as they read, would be the greatest dishonor men could offer to the Lord. It would be saying that the law of God is no better than any man may be of himself. It is the same as saying that a man is all right if he keeps the law so that no man can find fault with him. But the man he merely refrains from the outward violations of the law may be worse than the man who utterly disregard it, and knows he is guilty. In the latter case the man has nothing more in to trust, while in the other, the man is building himself up in his own righteousness, and things that he is all right as long as he keeps a letter so far as men can discern. {AMS February 18, 1897, p. 105.6}

But the law is spiritual, and only the power of the Spirit can work righteousness in an individual. The recognition of civil government as having anything to do with the law of God, is directly opposed to the idea of justification by faith. {AMS February 18, 1897, p. 105.7}

To lay down a rule or law requiring obedience to the law of God, with a penalty for disobedience, is to say to a man, “You could keep it if you would try; but you will not try, and so we will compel you to do it.” This is putting man on and equality with God. {AMS February 18, 1897, p. 105.8}

Anything less than the life of God is sin, and therefore for any power to attempt to enforce any of the precepts of Christ is simply an attempt to compel people to sin, and to hold them in sin. {AMS February 18, 1897, p. 105.9}

**“Priestism in Power” American Sentinel 12, 8.**

E. J. Waggoner

**“Present Truth.” (London, Eng.)**

It is said that the witch doctors, or Fetish priest, rule over the King of Benin, and that their influence is responsible for most of the human sacrificing and slaughtering in that country. Go where one will in the world, or look through secular history, and it will be found that wherever a priestly caste has most influence in government there has been the greatest wickedness. Many think that this is solely because it is bad religion that gets into power, and that if only good religion could be lifted to the authority in the councils of State it would be a desirable thing. But good religion asks for no authority or power from man; it rests upon the power of God and preaches a gospel of divine power. Whenever religion forsakes this in order to secure power in the State it becomes bad religion, and its whole influence is evil, whether among whites or blacks, civilized or uncivilized. {AMS February 25, 1897, p. 122.1}