**“Christian Growth” The Bible Echo 7, 19.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Christian life is a continual growth. Peter says: “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:17, 18. The only way to keep from falling from that which we have, is to grow. David says of the righteous man that “he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.” Psalm 1:3. This means continual growth. {BEST October 1, 1892, par. 1}

We read of the path of the just, that it “shall be as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” Proverbs 4:18. But “the just shall live by faith;” therefore it must be that their faith increases. {BEST October 1, 1892, par. 2}

To the Hebrews, the apostle wrote: “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.” Hebrews 6:1. And in the epistle to the Philippians Paul said: “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 3:12-14. Here is set forth a continual reaching out for some higher attainment. The calling of God in Christ Jesus, is a calling to holy or righteous living, for we read: “But like as he which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy.” 1 Peter 1:15, 16, Revised Version. {BEST October 1, 1892, par. 3}

That faith is susceptible of growth, is plainly declared by the Scriptures. Paul had hope that when the faith of the Corinthian brethren was increased, he should be helped by them to preach the gospel in the regions beyond them. 2 Corinthians 10:15, 16. To the Thessalonians he wrote that he prayed exceedingly night and day, that he might see them, and might perfect that which was lacking in their faith. 1 Thessalonians 3:10. And still later he wrote: “We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth.” 2 Thessalonians 1:3. {BEST October 1, 1892, par. 4}

This last text contains the whole of the argument that we have made. Their faith grew, and as a consequence their charity abounded. Charity, or love, is the fulfilling of the law. It is the manifestation of the righteousness of God, and is a result of true faith, for faith works by love, and the only righteousness which will be accepted when the Lord comes is that which is by the faith of Christ, “the righteousness which is of God by faith.” Such being the teaching of Scripture, there is no reason why we should not understand Romans 1:17 just as it reads: The righteousness of God is revealed, or manifested, from faith to faith. {BEST October 1, 1892, par. 5}

One or two notable instances recorded in Scripture will illustrate this. The apostle records that “by faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.” Hebrews 11:31. This case has been a cause of stumbling to some who have not given careful thought to it. It is well known that Rahab lied to the men sent by the king of Jericho to seize the spies (see Joshua 2:2-6), and they imagine that in saving her God placed a premium on lying, and that it is right sometimes to lie. Neither is true. Rahab was saved, not because of her lie, but because of her faith. She, in common with all the people of Jericho, had heard how the Lord dried up the waters of the Red Sea, and how he had led the Israelites; but she alone, of all the inhabitants of Jericho, believed that the hand of the Lord was in the matter, and that he had given the land of Canaan to the Israelites. She had simple faith, but was totally ignorant of God’s law. In the code of heathen morality, lying was accounted a virtue, and she knew nothing better. But her faith made it possible for her to be saved, and brought her into a place where she could learn righteousness. As a natural consequence her faith in God would increase when she learned more of him. In her case we have a clear instance of the revelation of the righteousness of God from faith to faith. {BEST October 1, 1892, par. 6}

The sum of the whole thing is that it is faith that brings God near to us. If we first believe that he is, he will reveal himself to us more fully. If we rejoice in that light and walk in it, our faith will be increased, and that will bring more light. As with Rahab, so with all. God does not grant us a blessing because we are righteous, but in order that we may become righteous. When our faith brings us to Christ, it is that we may learn of him. To our faith we add virtue and knowledge. But as faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, it follows that the more we really know—accept—of the word of God, the greater will be our faith. And so, increasing daily in faith, the just go on from strength to strength, until the dawning of the perfect day ushers them into the immediate presence of God. {BEST October 1, 1892, par. 7}

**“The Unconquerable Life” The Bible Echo 7, 20.**

E. J. Waggoner

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness of apprehended it not.” John 1:4, 5, R.V. The marginal rendering, “overcome,” gives us the exact meaning of the text, and conveys a message of great comfort to the believer. Let us see what it is. {BEST October 15, 1892, par. 1}

CHRIST is the light of the world. See John 8:12. But His light is His life, as the text quoted states, he says, “I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” The whole world was in the darkness of sin. This darkness was due to lack of knowledge of GOD; as the apostle Paul says that the Gentiles are “darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of GOD because of the ignorance that is in them because of the hardening of their heart.” Ephesians 4:18. {BEST October 15, 1892, par. 2}

Satan the ruler of the darkness of this world, had done his utmost to deceive man as to the true character of God. He had made the world believe that GOD was like a man-cruel, vindictive, and passionate. Even the Jews, the people whom GOD had chosen to be the bearers of light to the world, had departed from GOD, and while professedly separate from the heathen, were enveloped in heathen darkness. Then CHRIST came, and “The people which sat in darkness sought a great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, to them did light spring up.” Matthew 4:16. R.V. His name was EMANUEL, GOD with us. “GOD was in CHRIST.” GOD refuted the falsehoods of Satan, not by loud arguments, but simply by living His life among men, so that all might see it. He demonstrated the power of the life of GOD, and the possibility of its being manifested in men. {BEST October 15, 1892, par. 3}

The life which CHRIST lived was untainted by sin. Satan exerted all his powerful arts, yet he could not affect that spotless life. Its light always shown with unwavering brilliancy. Because Satan could not produce the least shadow of sin in the life, he could not bring it within his power, that of the grave. No one could take CHRIST’S life from Him; He voluntarily laid it down. And for the same reason, when He had laid it down, Satan could not prevent Him from taking it up again. Said He: “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My FATHER.” John 10:17, 18. To the same intent are the words of the apostle Peter concerning Christ: “Whom GOD hath raised up having lose to the pains of death; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it.” Acts 2:24. Thus was demonstrated the right of the Lord Jesus CHRIST to be made a high priest “after the power of an endless life.” Hebrews 7:16. {BEST October 15, 1892, par. 4}

This endless, spotless life CHRIST gives to all who believe on Him. “As thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true GOD, and Jesus CHRIST, whom thou hast sent.” John 17:2, 3. CHRIST dwells in the hearts of all those who believe on Him. “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.” Galatians 2:20. See also Ephesians 3:16, 17. {BEST October 15, 1892, par. 5}

CHRIST, the light of the world, dwelling in the hearts of His followers, constitutes them the light of the world. There light comes not from themselves, but comes from CHRIST, who dwells in them. Their life is not from themselves, but it is the life of CHRIST manifest in their mortal flesh. See 2 Corinthians 4:11. This is what it is to live “a Christian life.” {BEST October 15, 1892, par. 6}

This living light comes from GOD in a never-failing stream. The psalmist exclaims: “For with Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light shall we see light.” Psalm 36:9. “And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, a proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” Revelation 22:1. “And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth, say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:17. {BEST October 15, 1892, par. 7}

“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:53, 54. This life of CHRIST we eat and drink by feasting upon His Word, for He added, “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.” Verse 63. CHRIST dwells in His inspired Word, and through it we get His life. This life is given freely to all who will receive it, as we read above; and again we read that Jesus stood and cried, saying, “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.” John 7:37. {BEST October 15, 1892, par. 8}

This life is the Christian’s light, and it is that which makes him a light to others. It is his life; and the blessed comfort to him is that no matter how great the darkness to which he has to pass, no darkness has power to put out that light. That light of life is his as long as he exercises faith, and the darkness cannot affect it. But all, therefore, who professed the truth of the Lord, have the confidence that can say, “Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.” Micah 7:8. {BEST October 15, 1892, par. 9}