**“The Value of Praise” *The Present Truth* 14, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

**PRAISE, THE STRONGEST ARGUMENT**

According to the Scriptures, the strongest argument against all opposition to the truth of God, is praise. This appears plainly from the eighth psalm. We quote from the Revised Version:— {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 257.1}

*“O Lord, our Lord,
How exellent is Thy name in all the earth!
Who has set Thy glory upon the heavens.
Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast
Thou established strength,
Because of Thine adversaries,
That Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 257.2}*

From the mouths of babes and sucklings comes a power that is sufficient to stop the mouths of the enemies of the Lord. But little children cannot argue and discuss; if they attempted, their reasoning is feeble, and the effect is painful, because it is unnatural for them, and out place. What does naturally come from the mouths of children?—Praise, gladsome praise, and joy. This is seemly, and is the power that can stop the mouths of enemies. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 257.3}

This is not merely our conclusion. We have the words of the Lord for it. When the children cried in the temple, as Jesus entered it after His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and said, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” and the priests were displeased, Jesus said to them, “Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou has perfected praise?” Matt. xxi. 16. Thus we have Christ Himself as authority for the statement that the “power” mentioned in the eighth psalm is praise. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 257.4}

It is difficult to frame an argument to which a shrewd man cannot make some plausible reply, a reply at least plausible enough to cover his retreat. But who can frame an argument against praise? There is nothing to reply to. Even the enemy’s anger against the truth and the one who holds it, must to some extent be appeased, because “a soft answer turneth away wrath.” Then let us use the argument of praise more and more. Aye, let us learn how to use it to the exclusion of everything else. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 257.5}

“It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most High.” Ps. xcii. 1. “Praise ye the Lord; for it good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.” Ps. cxlvii. 1. “Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! Let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him in the assembly of the elders.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 257.6}

**WHO MAY PRAISE THE LORD?**

A strange question! some may say. Yes, it is a strange question, but not an unnecessary one, since there are many poor souls who do not dare praise the Lord, because they think that they are not good enough to do so. They pray to the Lord, the best they know how, and they have the most sincere desire to serve Him, but they do not dare venture to praise Him. Well, one sentence is enough to answer the question that we have asked, and it is this: “Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.” Ps. cl. 6. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.1}

The poor, unworthy people may praise the Lord? Nay, not *may*; that is too feeble; they *must*. If you will persist in regarding the words, “*Let* everything that hath breath praise the Lord,” as merely a permission, and not as the commandment that it is, then read the 117th psalm:— {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.2}

*“O praise Jehovah, all ye heathen,
Laud Him all ye nations!
For His goodness rules powerfully over us,
And Jehovah’s faithfullness is ever-enduring!*Hallelujah*.”
(Hallelujah means “Praise ye Jehovah!”) {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.3}*

The very heathen, wickedest people in the world, are called upon to praise the Lord. Well, why not? They are the ones who most of all need to praise the Lord. The more wicked a man is, the more need there is that he should praise the Lord. If the heathen should praise the Lord, they would at once cease to be heathen. Praise is worship, and they who worship the Lord are righteous. So it is to the unworthy and the wicked that the command is specially directed, “Praise ye Lord!” The others are doing it already. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.4}

**SALVATION AND PRAISE**

In the fiftieth psalm, last verse, we read these words of the Lord: “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God.” Of course the reader knows that the word “conversation,” as commonly used in the Bible, means “way, manner of life.” But there is more to be said about this verse. In the Hebrew text there are not nearly so many words as appear in the English, and if only the very words that appear in the Hebrew were translated, with no additions, we should have the text as indicated in the margin of the Revised Version, thus:— {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.5}

“Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me, and prepareth a way that I may show him the salvation of God.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.6}

Here, then, we have an answer to the question, “What must I do to be saved?” The answer is, “Praise the Lord.” And what then? Keep on praising the Lord, He who begins to praise the Lord, and continues to praise Him, will as surely be saved day by day and for ever, as the sun shines in the heavens, or as God lives. Let us see how this may be; it is not difficult to understand. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.7}

If one is thanking and praising the Lord, that one is certainly not sinning against Him, is he? One cannot praise the Lord, and at the same time blaspheme His name, or in any way speak slightingly of Him. The mere statement of the case proves it: He who praises the Lord serves Him. The highest angels in heaven do no more than this. The living beings that are nearest to God, forming part of His throne, “rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” Rev. iv. 8. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.8}

**PRAISE IS THE MOST NATURAL THING**

The fact that praise brings salvation will appear more vividly when we think of this phase of the subject, that praise is the easiest and most natural thing in the world. If all men, the ungodly man, would act in harmony even with their own standard of common civility, they would be continually praising the Lord, and would be saved. It is universally recognised that when a person receives a gift he ought to thank the giver. The wickedest man, the one who will rage the most at the name of God, will thank you if you do him a favour. Hand an infidel any book that he wishes to read, or answer his inquiry as to the right road to take, and he will thank you. If he comes down to breakfast in the morning and finds a bouquet of fresh flowers at his plate, his first thought will be to ask who gave them to him, and his next will be to thank the one who so kindly remembered him. Every man will do these things, and there is no one who would not feel that it was a gross breach of politeness to fail to recognise favours bestowed. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.9}

Very well, let each one simply be consistent. Let him not discriminate, and give thanks for some things, and neglect to do so for others. Above all things, let him not say “Thank you” for little things, and say not a word for the greatest favours. “Of course not! Who would be so foolish?” Let us see. You come to the table, and find food. How did it come there? The good housewife placed it there, to be sure; but she did not make it. No man on earth could make a grain of corn. No man can make fruit grow from the ground. All that any man can do is to watch it. It is God that “causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that He may bring forth fruit out of the earth.” Ps. civ. 14. He opens His hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing. Ps. cxlv. 16. Is it seemly to take these things continually from the hand of the Lord, and never thank Him for them? {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.10}

It is a great blessing, or favour, if you prefer to use that word, to be able to breathe. If you have never thought of it, you will realise it if you get into a close room where the air is almost used up, or have your lungs so filled up that you cannot breathe without pain. Now where do you get your breath? You do not make the air. Your neighbour does not furnish it to you. It comes regularly and continually, without any thought on your part. It comes when you are asleep, and not able to think of it. It is your life, the most necessary thing in the world, and yet you get it for nothing, absolutely free. Isn’t it worth thanking for? {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.11}

And there is the light. You could not get along without it. It is life. Every day it comes new. Is it consistent to say “Thank you” to one who hands you a flower, and never say a word to the One who creates the light and the air and the moisture that made it grow? Just be honourable and fair. Deal with God as justly, and treat Him as civilly, as you do your fellow-men. “Render therefore to all their dues; ... fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.” Begin with the first thing at hand, and thank the one who gives it to you, and do so with everything that you receive, and you will then be a perfect man. Come now, that is a fair proposition, isn’t it? All that is required of you is to use ordinary civility, and give thanks impartially for all that you get, to whomsoever gives you them. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 258.12}

Do this, and your mouth and heart will continually be filled with praise to the Lord, “who giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.” When you once begin, you will find things enough to be thankful for. Do not cease giving thanks until you have exhausted everything that there is for which to give thanks. Remember that it is not enough to have thanked a person once for a favour, when he repeats it. If he does a thing for you twice, the thing to do is to thank him the second time, as well as the first. If he does not tire of repeating the favour, surely you ought not to tire of thanking him for it. The gift of life and light and breath and all things is continuous, and therefore the thanksgiving must be continuous. I will not urge you to do this heartily. No matter how you feel about it, simply recognise the Lord in His gifts, and have this ability to thank Him for what you receive of Him. Do this, and the greatness of the gifts received from Him will impress itself more and more upon your mind, so that soon thanks will come spontaneously, and you will not know how to stop. Then all will be well with you, for when you acknowledge that every breath that you breathe you get from Him, you will see that He is your life, and the same rule of fairness that led you to thank Him for what He gives, will lead you to allow Him to control His own life. “In all thy ways knowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.” Prov. iii. 6. When God directs your steps in His own way, your way will be right, for “as for God, His way is perfect.” Then {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 259.1}

*“Oh, worship the King, all glorious above!
And gratefully sing His power and His love;
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendour, and girded with praise. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 259.2}*

*“Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,
And gently distills in the dew and the rain. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 259.3}*

*“Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail-
In Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail;
Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end!
Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer and Friend!” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 259.4}*

**“The Epistle to the Galatians. Love, the Fulfilling of the Law” *The Present Truth* 14, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

Our lesson in Galatians has been largely on the subject of liberty. We have had presented to us the condition of bondage in which all men find themselves by nature. Then we saw the liberty which Christ gives, namely, freedom from sin. Being made free from sin means at the same time to be made free from the law, since when we cease to sin we come into harmony with the law, and it no longer holds us prisoners. This is a most desirable state, and therefore we have the exhortation to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 259.5}

Then we are again warned against the presumption of thinking that we can by any works of our own satisfy the law, and are shown that any such attempt is a complete rejection of Christ, and therefore leaves us wholly in sin,-in debt to the law in every particular. “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.” Gal. v. 6. A person is either circumcised or uncircumcised. Those two words cover every possible condition of mankind. Therefore the statement is that there is no power in humanity, under any circumstances whatever, to do the law, but that the law is fulfilled only by faith, working by love. And this brings us to the {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 259.6}

**LESSON FOR THE WEEK**

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.” Gal. v. 13-15. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 259.7}

**WHAT IS LOVE?**

Since the whole law is fulfilled by loving, it follows that all we have to study at present is the nature of love. We can by no means hope to exhaust the subject, but we can in a few words consider some of the important features of love, which are commonly overlooked. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 259.8}

Love Means Service. — Our text shows this: “By love serve one another.” It therefore means consideration of others, instead of one’s self. Jesus Christ, who had greater love than is known among men, said that He “came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Matt. xx. 28. Said He, “I am among you as He that serveth.” Luke xxii. 27. When He came to this earth, He “took upon Him the *form of* a servant.” Phil. ii. 7. He did not act the hypocrite. He did not appear to be something that He was not. All that He changed was *His form*. He did not need to change anything else; for He was already a servant. He was in the form of a King, even the King of kings; and if He had come to the earth in that form, everybody would have been so overawed, not to say dazzled by the brightness of His glory, that they could not have appreciated His character. Therefore He changed His form, so as to appear like a servant, so that the world might see that, although He is Lord and Master, He is also Servant, and that the depth of His service is measured by the greatness of His power as King. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 259.9}

Love Is Unselfishness. -This follows from the foregoing; for since love means service, and service means the doing of something for others, it is evident that love takes no thought of itself, and that he who loves has no thought but of how he may bless others. So we read, “Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil.” 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5, R.V. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 259.10}

A Deplorable Error. -It is just on this vital point that everybody in the world is making or has made a mistake. Happy are they who have found out their mistake, and have come to the understanding and practice of true love. “Love seeketh not her own.” Therefore self-love is not love at all, in the right sense of the word. It is only a base counterfeit. Yet the most of that which in the world is called love, is not really love for another, but is love of self. Even that which should be the highest form of love known on earth, the love which is used by the Lord as a representation of His love for His people,-the love of husband and wife,-is more often selfishness than real love. Leaving out of the question, as unworthy of notice, marriages that are formed for the purpose of gaining wealth or position in society, it is a fact, which all will recognise when their attention is called to it, that in nearly every case the parties to a marriage are thinking more of their own individual happiness than of the happiness of the other. Of course this condition of things exists in varying degrees, and in proportion as real, unselfish love exists, is there real happiness; for it is a lesson that the world is slow to learn, that true happiness is found only when one ceases to seek for it, and sets about making it for others. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 260.1}

“Love Never Faileth.” -These are the words of Inspiration, found in 1 Cor. xiii. 8. Here, again, is a test which shows that much that is called love is not love. Love never ceases. The statement is absolute, *never*. There is no exception, and no allowance made for circumstances. Love is not affected by circumstances. We often hear about one’s love growing cold, but that is something that can never happen. Love is always warm, always flowing: nothing can freeze the fountain of love. Presently we shall better understand why this is so; but now it is sufficient for us to learn the fact that love is absolutely endless. We have the Word of the Lord for this, and that should be enough. We may reject love, we may refuse to love, we may drive love from our hearts; but the quality of love is unchanging. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 260.2}

Love Is Subjective. -Perhaps this sub-title needs explanation. It means simply this, that love depends upon the individual who loves, and not upon the one loved. That is really to say, as already said, that love does not depend on circumstances. Love is impartial and unlimited. The word “neighbour” means whatever dwells near. Love, therefore, extends to everything with which it comes in contact. He who loves must necessarily love everybody. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 260.3}

Right here it may be objected that love does make distinctions, and the case of husband and wife, or of any of the members of a family, may be cited. But the objection does not hold, for the family relation, rightly understood, was institute in order that by a union love might the more effectually be manifested to others. On the principle that strength is not merely doubled, but increased tenfold, by union, as shown by the statement that “one shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight,” union multiplies the working value of love. If two persons, each of whom has this unselfish love to all mankind, unite in love, then their union makes them ten times better able to serve others.” That is too high an ideal,” you say. Well, we are talking of a very great and high thing now; we are talking of love, absolute and unqualified. Poor, frail, needy human beings can not afford to accept anything but the best. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 260.4}

Why Love. -Sometimes when a declaration of love is made, the loved one asks, “Why do you love me?” Just as if anybody could give a reason for love! Love is its own reason. If the lover can tell just why he loves another, then that very answer shows that he does not really love. See; Whatever object he names as a reason for love, may sometime cease to exist, and then his supposed love ceases to exist; but “love never faileth.” Therefore love can not depend upon circumstances. So the only answer that can be given to the question as to why one loves, is, “because;” because of love. Love *loves*, simply because it is love. Love is the quality of the individual who loves, and he loves because he has love, irrespective of the character of the object. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 260.5}

“Love Is of God.” -This statement, found in 1 John iv. 7, is an explanation of all the difficulties that may appear in the foregoing statements. God exists, and no explanation of His existence can be given. Even so it is with love, for love is simply the life of God. “Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” 1 John iv. 7, 8. He who does not love those who do not love him in return, does not love at all; for God’s love is the only real love, and He loves even those who hate Him. “We also were aforetime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and His love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us.” Titus iii. 3, 4, R.V. We naturally love those who are lovable, and think that we can not be expected to love those who are hateful, and who hate us; but God loves the hateful, and those who hate Him. “If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?” “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Matt. v. 46, 48. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 260.6}

Some one may quote 1 John iv. 19, “We love *Him*, because He first loved us,” as at least a partial contradiction of the statement that love takes no account of the loveliness or unloveliness of the object, but loves simply because it exists, and must love, regardless of the object. But the text is only a repetition in another form of the fact that “love is of God.” Rightly translated, as in the Revised Version, the verse reads, “We love, because He first loved us.” But for the love of God, it would not be possible for any human being to love; just as, if it were not for the life of God, there would be no life in man. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 260.7}

Perfect Peace. -From the statement in Rom. xiii. 10, that “love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law,” it will be seen that Christian love does not possibly admit of wars and fightings. Its possession makes it impossible for one to say, as is frequently said in these days, “I have been an advocate of peace and arbitration for twenty-five years, but—” and then go on to say that under such provocation as now exists war is welcomed. “Love worketh no ill to his neighbor;” and no philosophy can ever make it appear that it does a man any good to kill him. When the soldiers asked John the Baptist what they should do, as followers of the Lamb of God, to whom he pointed, he replied, “Do violence to no man.” Luke iii. 14. Those who asked were “soldiers on service,” as we see from the margin of the Revised Version. And the margin also gives as the alternative rendering of John’s answer, “Put no man in fear.” It would be a very mild war in which this command was followed. Love never does any harm to anybody; but love is active, since it is the life of God; therefore love is always doing good. Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, “went about doing good.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 260.8}

How Possible. -It appears that it is no light thing to fulfil the law of love. How is it possible for anybody to fulfil the law? With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. Therefore this love is possible to man only as God dwells in the heart. “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Rom. iii. 5. Love is of God, and that is why love is the fulfilling of the law of God. The Holy Spirit puts God’s own life of love into the heart, and because it is His life, it flows back to Him in love. The reader will notice that only love to one’s neighbor is spoken of in the text; but since love is of God, and one can not love at all unless the love of God is in the heart, it follows that whoever loves his fellow-men must necessarily love God. If one does not love his fellow-men, that is an evidence that the love of God does not dwell in him. 1 John iii. 17, 18. “He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” 1 John iv. 20. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 261.1}

The Only Question. -From all this it is evident that the only question that love can ask is, “How much can I do?” When the love of God is fully shed abroad in the heart, there is no such thing as seeking to do as little as possible. The one who has that love will not be seeking to minimize the law of God. He will not spend any time trying to show that a part of it, if not the whole, is abolished. In fact, he will not be negative at all. Negation, contradiction, never yet did anybody any good, but whatever does not do good does harm; and “love worketh no ill to his neighbor.” It is not by telling what you do not believe, and telling what is not true, that men are saved, but by “speaking the truth in love.” “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous.” 1 John v. 3. His commandments are not grievous, because love is not grievous. Put up no barrier in your hearts to the love of God, and you will find no difficulty with a single one of His commandments. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 261.2}

**“Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. The Marriage Feast. Matt. xxii. 1-14” *The Present Truth* 14, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

MAY 8

How many times Jesus, in His teaching, said, “The kingdom of heaven is like,” and then spoke a parable through which spiritual instruction was imparted to His hearers by a comparison with the well-known facts or experiences of life. By following this method His teaching was also universal in its character, equally well adapted to the needs of all peoples of all times. So it is with the lesson of this week. Although first spoken to those who “sought to lay hands upon Him,” and who did soon afterward take and by wicked hands crucify and slay Him, yet it is equally applicable to us now, and it is in its personal application that we shall consider it. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 261.3}

And first there is {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 261.4}

**THE REPEATED INVITATION**

“He sent forth his servants to call them which were bidden to the wedding.” And again he urges them, “All things are ready: come unto the marriage.” Then there is the refusal: “They would not come.” “They might light of it.” But afterwards the call is sent “into the highways” and “the wedding is furnished with guests,” and among them is found the man “which had not on the wedding garment.” There being no excuse for his presence at the marriage in that condition, the order is given to “cast him into outer darkness.” Let us study each one of these steps in the parable in its application to personal experience. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 261.5}

**THE WHOLE BIBLE SAYS COME**

Throughout the whole Bible the invitation is being constantly given to us, “Come.” When the world was threatened with destruction by the flood, “the Lord said unto Noah, *Come* thou and all thy house into the ark.” This was an invitation to salvation, and was put on record for our benefit. Under various forms this invitation is repeated through the Scripture until it is given the threefold form in the last chapter of the Book: “And the Spirit and the bride say, *Come*. And let him that heareth say, *Come*. And let him that is athirst *come*.” Through the prophet Isaiah it is said: Ho, every one that thirsteth, *come* ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; *come* ye, buy, and eat; yea, *come*, buy wine and milk without money and without price.... Incline your ear, and *come* unto Me.” Isa. lv. 1-3. This Gospel invitation is repeated by the Saviour in the flesh, saying, “*Come* unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” We are urged, “*Come out* from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, ... and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you.” 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. And in view of a time of trouble, now near at hand, the Lord has said unto us, “*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 world for their iniquity.” Isa. xxvi. 20, 21. Then there is the final call: “*Come*, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Matt. xxv. 34. Although the invitation has been often rejected, yet “being full of compassion,” He continues the call, so that it is written, “But to Israel He saith, All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.” Rom. x. 21. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 261.6}

That heart must be hard indeed which will not yield to all these gracious invitations. Come, and let us “return unto the Lord.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 261.7}

*“Come, every soul by sin oppressed,
There’s mercy with the Lord;
And He will surely give you rest,
By trusting in His Word.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 261.8}*

**HOW THE INVITATION IS REFUSED**

What an emphasis it puts upon the deceitfulness of sin that it can be said, “And they would not come,” “but they made light of it.” Invited by a King, but refusing the invitation! And for what? “One to his farm, another to his merchandise.” To make light of the invitation is not necessarily to ridicule it in words. It is rather to esteem it lightly in comparison with others things, to place small value upon it, to neglect it. As compared with the value of “farm” and “merchandise” these men did not regard the king’s invitation as worthy of their serious attention. Now the “farm” and the “merchandise” are all right enough in their place, but theirs is not the first place. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” Eternal interests should receive the first attention. “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard.... How shall we escape, *if we neglect* so great salvation.” Moses placed a true estimate upon the worth of the Lord’s call to him, for we read that he “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, ... esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.” Those who accept the invitation to the marriage are more than mere spectators, for they share the inheritance with the King’s Son. “Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.” “For all things are yours.” He therefore shows true wisdom who does not regard “his farm” and “his merchandise,” “the things which are seen,” which are temporal, as more worthy of his attention than the things of the kingdom, “the things which are not seen” which are eternal. Our highest good, here and hereafter, will be found in listening attentively and obediently to the word of the Lord to us. “Hear and your soul shall live.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 261.9}

**THE WEDDING GARMENT**

But there were those who responded to the King’s invitation, “and the wedding was furnished with guests.” Yet there was one among them who thought his own garments good enough in which to appear before the King, and so he did not trouble to put on the “wedding garment,” which at an eastern marriage is furnished without charge to all the guests. Of course he was conspicuous amond the rest and naturally the King inquired, “Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garments?” Inasmuch as the King supplied this garment and all that was required of a guest was simply to put it on, there was no excuse for appearing there in his own soiled garments, just as he came in from “the highways,” “and he was speechless.” The lesson is a personal one to us and its meaning need not be misunderstood. It is plainly set forth to us in the typical experience of Joshua the high priest: “Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments form him. And unto him he said, Behold, *I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment*.... So they ... clothed him with garments.” Zech. iii. 3-5. “We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags” (Isa. lxiv. 6), but “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with *the robe of righteousness*.” Isa. lxi. 10. This is “the best robe” which the Father provides for every wandering son who returns to Him. This is “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.” The Apostle Paul knew the value of this gift as compared with any righteousness of his own, and it was in view of this that he said: “Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and *be found in Him*, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, *the righteousness which is of God by faith*.” Phil. iii. 8, 9. Inasmuch as this righteousness is a free gift, those who do not possess it are “without excuse.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 262.1}

**THE LORD’S COUNSEL**

In this time, when “He is near, even at the doors,” and when it will so soon be said, “The marriage of the Lamb is come,” the experience of the man “which had not on a wedding garment” should appeal to all with special force. Just now, when the tendency is so strong to trust in one’s self and in our own righteousness in some form, there comes the word of the Lord, “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of Me.... *white raiment that thou mayest be clothed*, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.” Rev. iii. 17, 18. “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk anked, and they see his shame.” Rev. xvi. 15. It is evident that the “King came in to see the guests” before the marriage feast actually took place, so that only those who were “ready” should go “in with Him to the marriage.” This means a period of investigation preparation to the coming of the Lord, and this work is actually going on now. Soon will the work go forth, “He which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: ... And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Rev. xxii. 11, 12. “Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” Matt. xxiv. 44. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 262.2}

*“When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found,
Clothed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 262.3}*

**“The Graves of Lust” *The Present Truth* 14, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

It was a terrible epitaph to write over men who, but a year before, had been filled with such bright expectations. When they left Egypt it seems as though all the sorrow and darkness lay behind, and before them stretched the glad, unbroken vista of a happy future. With God Himself for their Guide, and the Promised Land for their destination, how could it be otherwise? {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 262.4}

Now it was all over for them. Others might perhaps enter the goodly land, but these had only found dishonourable graves in the desert, and the name of their resting-place told the sad tale of their unhappy fall, for “they called the name of that place Kiebroth-hattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted.” Num. xi. 34. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 262.5}

Only a few months had elapsed since the mighty power of God had brought them out of Egypt, humbling to the dust the greatest kingdom of the earth, and parting the waters of the Red Sea for their passage. Every day they had eaten the bread of heaven, drinking of the spiritual Rock that followed them, and led by the pillar of cloud until it brought them to the mount of God. There they had stood in the awful presence of Jehovah and heard His own voice speaking out of the midst of the fire, the great things of His law. They had been connected with a movement which had no parallel in the history of the world, taken as a nation from the midst of another nation, by signs and by wonders, by a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm, but it had availed them nothing. All their experience in the past, their anticipations of the future, were buried in the graves of lust. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 262.6}

Yet the ending was inevitable. The world passeth away and the lust thereof (1 John ii. 17), and since they were not estranged from their lust, and would not be, there was nothing before them but a grave. “When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.” James i. 15. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 262.7}

They need not have been so enslaved by their desires. God could have delivered them from these as easily as He had saved them out of the hand of their oppressors in Egypt, but they did not care to be delivered. It was not that they lacked any good thing, but their minds had gone back longingly to the carnal pleasures of Egypt, the things they used to indulge in before they started on the strait and narrow way. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 263.1}

As they allowed their minds to rest on those vanished pleasures the desire grew, until all present and future good seemed worthless in comparison. They wept as the talked together of the fish they used to eat freely, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlick. Num. xi. 4, 5. Life seemed empty indeed without these. Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent (Num. xi. 10), as though for some dire calamity. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 263.2}

God would have filled their mouths with better things, but it would not do. “My people would not hearken to My voice and Israel would none of Me. So I have them up unto their own hearts’ lust.” Ps. lxxxi. 11, 12. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 263.3}

They had fully chosen for themselves what they would have. It was Egypt that supplied what their souls desired, and in their hearts they turned back again into Egypt. Acts vii. 39. Yea, they despised the pleasant land, and so they lost the privilege of entering in. It was useless to lead them any further. Lust had conceived and brought forth sin, and the sin quickly did its work. So the brief record reads,-“There they buried the men that lusted.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 263.4}

“Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted;” and “they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.” 1 Cor. x. 6, 11. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 263.5}

**“Slow to Anger, Plenteous in Mercy” *The Present Truth* 14, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

The story is told of two rabbis, Joshua and Eliezer, who came one day to Jerusalem, and saw a fox running about on Mount Zion. At this sight Joshua wept, but Eliezer began to laugh heartily. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 263.6}

“Why are you so glad?” asked Joshua. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 263.7}

“And why do you weep?” asked his friend in return. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 263.8}

“I weep,” answered Joshua, “because I see the fulfilment of Jeremiah’s lamentation, that the mountain of Zion has become so desolate that the foxes dwell there.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 263.9}

“And just for that reason,” said Eliezer, “I rejoice; for when I see with my own eyes how God fulfils His threatenings to the smallest detail, I see therein an assurance that not one of His gracious promises shall fail. Every one of them shall be fulfilled, for the Lord is much more willing to show mercy than to execute judgment.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 263.10}

**“‘Not Under the Law’” *The Present Truth* 14, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

The following is from one of the Lent Lectures by Canon Gore at Westminster Abbey. The one from which this was taken was on the seventh of Romans, published in the *Church Times* of April 15. We quote it merely as showing that the truth here presented, which is identical with what has been set forth in the PRESENT TRUTH, is not peculiar to this paper. Canon Gore is not a Sabbath-keeper, although the truth concerning the statement, “Ye are not under the law,” logically involves Sabbath-keeping, as is well known by many who try to make it mean the abolition of the law. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 264.1}

“Ye are not under the law, but under grace.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 264.2}

“In a certain sense, and in a lower sphere, we can understand what St. Paul means if we think of our own relation to the civil law. We are not under that law. There are those laws telling us we are not to make a riot in the streets. But we are not under the law. We do not feel the burden of it. It has no relation to us, this law. We pass the policeman without any sense of alarm. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 264.3}

“Why is it that we are not under the law? Because to us, respectable citizens, the law is altogether with us, on our side, and we are on the side of law. It is part of our own life. We have got beyond it, as it were-not because we are not bound to keep it, but because we are altogether on the side of that which law represents. It is, as it were, part of ourselves. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 264.4}

“So it is that we may in part understand what St. Paul means when he says, ‘Ye are not under the law, but under grace.’ Christ, the Person of Christ, whose will it is the law expresses, is our Master, our Friend. We belong to His life; we are doing His will; we are living by His spirit. ‘Ye are not under the law.’ It is no longer there to threaten you. ‘But under grace’-for He whose the law is, is your life, and by His will ye are living, and in His love ye flourish.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 264.5}

**“The Use of War” *The Present Truth* 14, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

The makers of implements of war are now reaping a harvest, and are looking forward to still greater gains when war actually beigns. To a newspaper reporter Mr. Hiram Maxim said a few days ago:— {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 265.1}

Of the great quantities of guns and ammunition and all sorts of war material we have been selling to both Governments, it would be easier to say what the orders placed in our hands have *not* called for than what they have. Both Spain and America have been eager to take every mortal thing in the way of war instruments we could supply. Guns of all sorts, from rifle caliber up to heavy artillery, have been in strong demand, and there has been such a call for the Maxim automatic guns which are built at the United States Government ordnance works, and by several private firms in the States, who pay a royalty to us, that we have just granted additional permits for the manufacture of them in the States. The making of these automatic guns is being pushed forward rapidly in Spain, too, where we have the only authorised private arms factory. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 265.2}

But this is not all. Continuing his talk Mr. Maxim said:— {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 265.3}

Gun and ammunition makers look upon the coming engagements between the two Powers as an invaluable test of modern weapons of precision and the latest inventions in projectiles and ammunition. There has not yet been a good battle, with good men on both sides, using the best guns and modern ironclads. In the war of the rebellion, in the States, the ironclads used were what would now be classed as obsolete, and the guns tried on them were old-fashioned cast-iron ones. The Chino-Japanese war was too one-sided to afford a fair test of the comparative value of modern weapons and armour; but if Spain and the United States fight we shall have some data to go by, as there will be good guns and good ships on both sides. Certainly there will be no lack of personal courage, and there may be some extraordinary new developments. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 265.4}

Not the least striking and horrible sign of the times is the fact that cultured men can coolly discuss war as a means of demonstrating on human beings the merits and defects of weapons, so that they can know how to make them more deadly. Human life is not considered as of any value in comparison with pounds, shillings, and pence. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 265.5}

**“Catholic Population” *The Present Truth* 14, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

Cardinal Gibbons points to the fact that while in the beginning of the century the Catholics in the United States numbered about 40,000, the Catholic population to-day is between ten and twelve millions. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 265.6}

**“Back Page” *The Present Truth* 14, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

The *Daily Mail* says that “another ladies’ club has gone over to the great majority, and added a smoking club to its accommodation. This is the Writers’ Club, in Norfolk street.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.1}

The manager of the Crystal Palace states that although there were over 197,000 visitors to the Palace during the Easter holidays, “not a single instance of drunkenness or disorderly behaviour was reported. Nor was a single shrub injured, nor a statue broken.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.2}

It is reported that “negotiations” are now proceeding between Russia and China for the leave of Kin-Chau. Russia first peremptorily demanded the place, threatening to use force to eject the Chinese garrison, and thus the way for “diplomatic action” was successfully prepared. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.3}

On Wednesday afternoon, April 20, the building so well known all over the world as “Spurgeon’s Tabernacle” was totally destroyed by fire. It is doubtful if the destruction of any other single building in the world would cause regret in more hearts than the destruction of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, which has been styled “the Cathedral of Nonconformity.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.4}

Although at the time of the PRESENT TRUTH’S going to press (April 24) war has not been formally declared, the two nations, Spain and the United States, are practically at war. Diplomatic relations have been broken off, the Spaniards not waiting even to receive the ultimatum of the American President, and the fleets of both countries have sailed, and Havana has been blockaded. This is the beginning; the end will be with far less rejoicing for all participants. Happy are those who, in times when nations rises up against nation, have their citizenship in heaven, and their dwelling-place in the Most High, so that no partisan sympathy ruffles them. The “perfect peace” that is given to those whose minds are stayed on God, is something far different from that which the world gives. It is not the peace of the “neutral” who, although not a combatant, has all the enthusiasm and warlike feelings of one, but it is the peace of God that flows out to all men in equal measure, knowing no distinctions whatever among mankind. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.5}

Russia is determined not to be behind in the preparation for bloodshed. Besides three ironclads announced to be built at the Baltic ship-yards and at the St. Petersburg Admiralty Docks, two more battleships each of 12, 675 tons, will at once be laid down at the Sebastopol and Nicholaieff Yards. Upwards of twenty torpedo boats and two first-class cruisers are now in course of construction on the Black Sea. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.6}

New York correspondents report that according to previous arrangement, church bells were rung in several cities in the United States when the President’s ultimatum, which was considered a virtual declaration of war with Spain, was made known. The same bells also rang a few months ago on the supposed birthday of the Prince of Peace. The same bells ring for peace and for war. “My brethren, these things ought not so to be.” {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.7}

The Bill proposing a modification of the present law concerning dueling was before the Italian Chamber last week, but it was killed by the speech of Professor Venturi, an inspector of lunatic asylums, who upheld the duel as a mark of cultured and delicate sentiments of honour. He remarked that dueling was practiced only by the most honourable classes, officers, politicians, and journalists, and declared that its abolition in Great Britain indicated a deplorable decadence of the sentiment of honour. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.8}

It does seem like a breath from the barbarous Middle Ages, to hear dueling upheld as a necessary part of civilisation, and yet if people are going to kill each other, it doesn’t seem to make much difference how they do it. Really, dueling seems more reasonable than ordinary war, which is defended by “the church.” In the former, two men fight because they both feel that they have been personally injured, and they are angry, while in war thousands of men who have no grievance whatever fight against others, whom they never saw. In the duel, the combatants have a dog’s excuse for fighting, while in war there is none whatever. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.9}

The poor old Pope is in a quandary; he doesn’t know where to place his sympathy in the present conflict between Spain and the United States. Spain is and always has been intensely Catholic, and has times without number demonstrated its faithfulness to the Pope, even to the death-of all those not in harmony with him. On the other hand, the Pope considers the Catholics of the United States the pick of the flock, and looks to that country as the hope of the Church for the future. Truly, he who in this evil world has the task of posing as the representative of Christ, and at the same time interfering in earthly politics, has a hard lot. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.10}

An invitation to dine with the Queen is a command, and takes precedence of all other engagements. No matter what plans or appointments one has made, if he receives a message from Her Majesty, all other obligations are cancelled. Well, the King of kings has issued an invitation to every one to come to the feast which He spreads. His gracious call is, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” How strange that the most trivial things are considered sufficient excuse for not accepting this invitation! What gross disrespect to God, and violation of His commandments, it is to slight His invitation. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.11}

In speaking of the last days Christ said that there should be “upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity;” “men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world.” Luke xxi. 25, 26, R.V. The word rendered “fainting” might equally well be rendered “expiring,” as indicated in the margin. How literally this is being fulfilled even now, may be seen by the following form the New York reports of the fatal character of the “war fever” in America:— {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.12}

Large numbers of people are reported to have become violently insane through over excitement, many have committed suicide through brooding over the *Maine* disaster, and several murders have occurred through fights over the Cuban question. {PTUK April 28, 1898, p. 272.13}