**“Can We Keep the Sabbath? No. 2” The Signs of the Times, 8, 16.**

E. J. Waggoner

One of the most common objections that people urge against keeping the Sabbath is that it is peculiar, and that very few people observe it. There are two classes of people who make use of this argument. The first class attempts to make capital out of it against the Sabbath, and argue that since the Sabbath is observed by so very few people, it cannot be right, assuming that the majority must be right. The second class believe that the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, but have not the courage to live out their convictions of duty. They say, “If everybody else would keep the Sabbath, I would be glad to do so too.” {SITI April 20, 1882, p. 187.1}

The first class might easily be convinced if they wished to be. Let us see to what absurdity the theory that the majority must be right will lead us. Less than four hundred years ago it was the universal belief that the earth was flat, and that it was stationary. For hundreds of years no one had thought of questioning this belief; and when, finally, a few bold spirits ventured to advance the idea that the earth is spherical, and that it moves, they were regarded as fanatics and dangerous heretics. But the proof that the earth is round was convincing, and now all enlightened nations hold to that belief. Now if it be true that the majority must be right, we must conclude that several centuries ago the earth was really flat, but that, as people advanced in knowledge it gradually assumed its present shape. Many other conclusions equally absurd must be accepted if we hold to the theory that whatever is popularly believed is right. But the advocates of that theory rarely urge it on any subject except the Sabbath. The truth is that the opinions of men have no effect whatever on facts. Men’s opinions change, but the truth is always the same. {SITI April 20, 1882, p. 187.2}

Those who dare not venture out alone to obey the truth, may have their faith strengthened by considering some cases that are on record. Paul says in Romans 15:4, that “whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” {SITI April 20, 1882, p. 187.3}

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews contains a list of notable men. We are referred to Noah, who “walked with God” in an age when the “wickedness of man was great in the earth,” and “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” It must have been no slight effort for Noah to face the world with such an unpopular truth as that the world was to be destroyed by a flood. No doubt he was jeered at in a most unmerciful manner, and considered a fool, but the event proved the wisdom of his course. Had he waited for people enough to accept the truth for that time to make it respectable, before commencing to build the ark, he would have been drowned with the rest. {SITI April 20, 1882, p. 187.4}

Abraham is another individual who is held up as an example of faith. I think we do not generally realize the full extent of the sacrifice that he made when he obeyed the command, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, and unto a land that I will show thee.” His father’s family, as we learn from Joshua 24:2, 3, were idolaters. No doubt he had to endure much opposition and ridicule from his relatives, for thus leaving them and going away with apparently no object whatever, without even knowing where he was going. No one who starts out to obey God in these times can have a darker prospect to all outward appearances, than Abraham had. Had he drawn back, instead of becoming the father of all the faithful, his name might never have appeared among them. Other instances might be cited indefinitely. {SITI April 20, 1882, p. 187.5}

Who does not honor those moral heroes? and who has not wished that he might be even like them, and be accounted worthy to share in their reward? Well, who is there that cannot? They were men, subject to weaknesses and temptations the same as men are nowadays. They lived in the world, associated with their fellow-men, and transacted business, the same as men do now. How, then, did they become so honored of God?-Simply because they were willing to be regarded as peculiar; they thought more of God’s approval than they did of the applause of men. For this we hold them in high esteem, yet we shrink from doing what we commend in them. We may, however, be like them if we will, for their cases are recorded, as Paul says, simply for our encouragement. {SITI April 20, 1882, p. 187.6}

We shall find, if we study carefully, that the Bible says much in favor of peculiar people. The Jews were brought out from Egyptian bondage that they might serve the Lord, and be a peculiar people. Paul says in Titus 2:14 that Christ “gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” The apostle here speaks especially to those who are “looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” It seems, then, that the people of God need not hope to become popular in these days any more than in the past. Christ was very unpopular: “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” John 1:11. Very few believed on him, and they were of the most despised class, and at the last even these forsook him, while he suffered the most bitter persecution. And what does he say to his disciples? If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.” Those, then, who are waiting for truth to become popular before accepting it, will wait in vain. {SITI April 20, 1882, p. 187.7}

One thought in regard to this expression, “peculiar people.” The idea is not meant to be conveyed that people are to strive to make themselves conspicuous by their peculiarity. The people of God are peculiar simply because they are “zealous of good works,” in a time when men (professed Christians) are “lovers of their own selves,” “despisers of those that are good,” etc. 2 Timothy 3:1-5. Christ was peculiar in this respect, yet he was a pattern of humility. This people are to be like him; not despised on account of individual peculiarities, but because of their steadfast adherence to truth. “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” John 15:18, 19. {SITI April 20, 1882, p. 187.8}

Who is not willing to suffer with Christ? When he endured so much for us, can we not endure a little for him? If it were possible for us to get to heaven without any suffering, would we not feel ashamed to say that we had never suffered for him? We have also this to comfort us, that whenever we suffer for the truth, he suffers with us, and accounts all injury done to his people as done to himself. And to crown all, we are assured that “if we suffer we shall also reign with him,” and that “our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” E. J. W. {SITI April 20, 1882, p. 187.9}

**“Sunday Law Sentiment” The Signs of the Times, 8, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

Anti-Chinese legislation has of late been such an all-absorbing topic on the Pacific Coast, that but little space is devoted in the newspapers to the Sunday Law. Although the friends of the Sunday closing movement seem as determined as ever to press the matter, public sentiment in general does not seem to have yet reached that point where a very rigid enforcement of the law may be expected. {SITI April 27, 1882, p. 199.1}

So far as we know, only four convictions have been obtained since the decision of the Supreme Court. In Oakland, the first two cases, both saloon-keepers, resulted in conviction, and in each instance the fine was placed at $50.00, the highest amount allowed under the law. In the third case the jury returned a verdict of “Not guilty,” almost immediately. {SITI April 27, 1882, p. 199.2}

In San Francisco several saloon-keepers have been tried, but in every case the jury has acquitted or else failed to agree. Last week, however, a prominent hatter was convicted and sentenced to pay a fine of ten dollars. This would indicate that the enlightened jurors of San Francisco think selling hats on Sunday worse than selling whisky. People may get along with old hats or go without, but whisky is regarded as a necessity. These three cases, with one in Sacramento, are the only convictions of which we have any knowledge at present. {SITI April 27, 1882, p. 199.3}

After a trial in a Police Court in San Francisco, last Friday, in which the jury disagreed, the Judge informed the Prosecuting Attorney that if a conviction did not follow the second trial of the case, on the 10th of May, he would dismiss all the Sunday Law cases now on the docket of the court. And this is, we think, an index of the feeling of most of the officials. They are opposed to the law at heart, do not think that convictions can be obtained, and desire to be rid of the insurmountable amount of work before them. {SITI April 27, 1882, p. 199.4}

The League of Freedom is rejoicing somewhat over what looks like an evidence of weakening on the part of the Home Protection. The President of the San Francisco League claims that he was approached by a prominent member of the Home Protection Society with the statement that the latter society would withdraw all complaints for a consideration. He refused the offer on the ground that the League of Freedom had no fears as to the result. He offered to meet the Executive Committee of the Home Protection Society and give full proofs of his statements, with the name of the individual who made the offer. The Protectionists refused to meet him, but said that he could make his statement through the papers, which he refused to do. Thus the matter stands. Each society professes to feel confident that it will accomplish its purpose. {SITI April 27, 1882, p. 199.5}

A large mass-meeting was recently held in Sacramento, and several resolutions were presented, among which was the following:- {SITI April 27, 1882, p. 199.6}

*Resolved*. That in the approaching political campaign we will support no candidate for the Legislature who is pledged to the repeal of the Sunday Law of California. {SITI April 27, 1882, p. 199.7}

Rev. Mr. Hansen, in speaking of these resolutions, said he hoped they would be acted on by a rising vote. He said the friends of the law meant business, and the politicians were going to have a lively time on this question, and the men who want to have a foothold in the future had better look to it where they step now. The friends of the law had resolved to “fight fire with fire, and blood with blood, and money with money.” His remarks were loudly applauded. When the vote was taken, the entire audience, with few exceptions, rose in the affirmative, and none in the negative. A committee of some of the leading citizens was appointed to wait on the Mayor to request that the best efforts of the authorities be employed to enforce the Sunday Law. In this connection it is well to note that at a meeting of the Licensed Dealers’ Association, a few evenings before, it was resolved to make politics secondary in the next election, and to support no man who would not promise to vote for a repeal of the Sunday Law. Also the Democratic convention in San Francisco adopted an anti-Sunday resolution at a recent meeting. {SITI April 27, 1882, p. 199.8}

From these statements our readers can get a pretty fair idea of the present status of the Sunday cause in California. Whether the law is repealed at the next session of the Legislature or not, the matter will not end there. The advocates of Sunday observance are too numerous and too determined to let the matter drop; and those who have set themselves to actively oppose the law will not submit without a struggle. As has been stated before, the principal result of the present agitation in California will doubtless be to stimulate those in the East who are working for a Religious Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, to make more decided efforts than ever before. {SITI April 27, 1882, p. 199.9}

It may not be amiss to state for the benefit of some who still seem to misunderstand our position, that Seventh-day Adventists take no sides in this controversy. We have no part in it whatever. We say “God speed” to every effort to prohibit the liquor traffic, but cannot join a purely Sunday movement. In this and coming time, it is ours simply to watch the fulfillment of prophecy that we may not be taken unawares, and to “fear God, and keep his commandments,” for this, and nothing less, if our “whole duty.” E. J. W. {SITI April 27, 1882, p. 199.10}