**“The Sabbath-School. Review of Acts 13-18; 1 and 2 Thess.” The Signs of the Times, 9, 41.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Lesson for Pacific Coast.-November 10.  
Review of Acts 13-18; 1 and 2 Thess.  
NOTES ON THE LESSON.**

The Bible, unlike most books, is adapted to all times and all classes of people. Much of it was written for a special purpose, for the reproof or encouragement of those then living, yet it is as applicable to us as it was to persons who lived hundreds of years ago. The parables of Christ were all given for the purpose of meeting some pressing want, yet they are as fresh to-day as when uttered. All of the epistles were addressed to persons who lived in the days of the apostles, yet Christians in all intervening time have felt that they were for them as much as for those who are named in them. In the case of the epistles to the Thessalonians, we readily see that the apostle had in mind not only the Thessalonians brethren, but those especially who would live in the days immediately preceding the coming of the Lord. If we remember this fact, it will add new force to many passages. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 485.1}

In the fifth chapter of 1 Thessalonians, the apostle gives several short precepts that are worthy of our careful consideration. First we notice the exhortation to the brethren to “know” those who labored among them, “and to esteem them very highly in love for their work sake.” And what is the work for which the brethren are to esteem those who labor among them? It is to admonish, or, as Paul says to Timothy, to “reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.” Ministers are not to be esteemed because they succeed in pleasing their hearers, or in expressing the sentiment of the congregation, but because they are faithful in exhortation and reproof. The true Christian will always love the one who faithfully admonishes him, no matter how severe the rebuke may be. David said, “Let the righteous smite thee; it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head.” {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 485.2}

The apostle writes: “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly.” He does not seem to have had any faith in the idea that no one has any right to interfere to set matters right in the church; that church difficulties are to be left alone to work themselves clear. He knew that under such circumstances they usually work themselves clear through the church. As much reproach is brought on the cause of God by lax discipline as by any other thing. The church relation is of divine origin, and unless each member does his duty faithfully, and all work in harmony, its object will be defeated. On this point we can do no better than quote the words of another:- {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 485.3}

“The word here used is one which properly means *not keeping the ranks;* and then irregular, confused, neglectful of duty, disorderly. The reference here is to the members of the church who were irregular in their Christian walk. It is not difficult for an army, when soldiers get out of their places in the ranks, or are thrown into confusion, to see that little can be accomplished in such a state of irregularities and confusion. As little difficulties is it, when the members of the church are out of their places, to see that little can be accomplished in such a state. Many a church is like an army where not half of them could be depended on for efficient service.... an army would accomplished little if a large proportion of it were irregular, idle, amiss, or pursuing their own aims, to the neglect of the public interest, as there are members of the church, who can never be depended on in accomplishing the great purpose for which it was designed.” {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 485.4}

“See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.” The easiest way to see that this injunction is carried out would be for each one to hold his own evil tendencies in check. But if there are those who do not practice that charity which is described in 1 Corinthians 13:4, 5, then the church has a duty in the matter. It is the duty of the body to see that the members are in harmony. This should not be done in a harsh, censorious matter, but in accordance with the command in Leviticus 19:17, 18: “Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.” {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 485.5}

“Despise not prophesyings.” It must be remembered that there is a difference between prophecies and prophesyings. The command does not have reference especially to the prophecies of the Old Testament, or of the New, although it is a sad fact that they are quite generally despised at the present day. But it has to do with something in the present tense. It needs no argument to show that this chapter is addressed through the Thessalonians to those who would be living in the very last days. Then it must be that there will be some in the last days who will prophesy, and not only so, but there prophesying is to be esteemed. There will be false prophets, but this only makes it the more certain that there will be true ones. Joel says, “And it shall come to pass afterward [“in the last days,” Acts 2:17], that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughter shall prophesy, and your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.” But if there are to be both true and false prophets, how can we tell which to believe? The same rule applies now as of old: “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 485.6}

It is not optional with us whether or not we will try the spirits. The command is, “Prove all things.” We are in duty bound to test every doctrine or professed truth that is presented to us. To turn away from a new truth, simply because it is new to us, and then to imagine that we cannot be condemned, on account of our ignorance, is a fatal mistake. We do not know but that the new thought may be true; therefore we are to turn upon the blazing light of God’s word, to try it. If it proves to be good, then we must hold it fast, at whatever sacrifice. This necessarily implies the utter rejection of everything that is bad, for good and evil cannot dwell long together. Not only must we reject the wrong; but we must “abstain from all appearance of evil.” {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 485.7}

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly.” Entire sanctification is most clearly brought out in the Scriptures, as necessary for all; but like every good and necessary thing, it has been sadly abused. The prevalent idea at the present time is that sanctification is a state of mind or feeling; a state in which the individual feels very good, in short, perfectly satisfied with himself. It arises from the idea that the sole object of religion is to make man happy. This is a mistake. Man’s first great duty is to please God, whether the duty be pleasant or disagreeable. And we can please God only by keeping his commandments. With this agree the words of Christ. “Sanctify them through thy truth; by word is truth.” We can test every man’s professed sanctification by the law of God. If his life is wholly devoted to carry out its requirements, his sanctification is genuine; but if he ignores, or tramples upon God’s law, or any portion of it, his sanctification is spurious. And true sanctification does not loudly proclaim its own excellence. “Charity [love] vaunteth not itself.” The man who loudly “professes entire sanctification,” may well be suspected of insincerity. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 485.8}

Much of the so-called sanctification is a manifestation not only of selfishness but of obstinacy. A religion of feeling must necessarily be a selfish religion. The great object of the person is to get in a state of mind where nothing will trouble him. Duty may be acknowledged in theory, but if it is contrary to the feelings, it is rejected. We have known persons who confessed that the fourth commandment is as binding now as it ever was, and that there is not the slightest warrant in the Bible for Sunday-keeping, yet they deliberately decided not to obey, because they did not *feel* as though they ought to. They had such a “perfect love” for God that they were excused from obeying him! We think we are warranted in calling such a course a manifestation of “perfect obstinacy” and self-will. Purity of heart and soul comes only through obeying the truth. 1 Peter 1:22. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 485.9}

“And pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” “There,” says one, “You materialistic Adventists do not believe that man is a compound body, composed of soul, body, and spirit; and what do you do with this text?” We accept every word as true. Our friends are sometimes too hasty in telling what we do and do not believe. We believe most heartily that man has a soul, body, and spirit, because Paul speaks of those different part; but we utterly reject the idea that any or all of these parts are essentially immortal, because the Bible gives positive evidence to the contrary. If these elements compose the man, what reason have we to suppose that the man can maintain a conscious existence without any one of them? Such a supposition is contrary both to reason and Scripture. See Psalm 146:3, 4, etc. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 485.10}

2 Thessalonians 1:9 says that the wicked “shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” This is commonly supposed to mean that the wicked will be banished from the presence of the Lord, and that this alone will constitute their punishment. But, in the first place, to be out of God’s immediate presence is what the wicked desire; no greater punishment could be devised for them, than to be obliged to be in the sacred presence of God. Wicked men do not now seek the place where God manifests himself, and we cannot suppose that they ever will, unless they become converted. Indeed, the prophets tell us that at the last day, the wicked will say to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.” Revelation 6:16. And secondly, there is no place in the universe where the wicked could flee from the presence of God. See Psalm 139:7-12. The wages of the sinner will be death, destruction that comes from the presence of the Lord. And when their destruction shall have been accomplished, no place will be found for them. Daniel 2:35. The wails and blasphemies of the damned will not forever rise to mar the harmony of a portion of God’s universe, for there will come a time when “every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them,” will unite in saying, “Blessing and honor, and glory, and power, unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.” E. J. W. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 485.11}

**“That Blessed Hope” The Signs of the Times, 9, 41.**

E. J. Waggoner

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” There are several points that may be noted on this text: 1. Those who are dead are represented as asleep. The term is very common in the Bible. Read Job 7:21, Daniel 12:2; John 11:11-14, etc. The righteous are asleep in Jesus. 2. This being the case, it follows that the dead are unconscious, for a sleeping man knows nothing of what is going on around him. The general tenor of the inspired writings is in harmony with this idea. For examples see Job 14:14-21; Psalm 6:5; 88:10-12; 115:17; 146:3, 4; Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, 10. 3. It is folly to say that we cannot know anything of the future. Paul said that he would not have his brethren ignorant; if we believe his words, we must admit that something can be known of man’s future. 4. It is not wrong for Christians to sorrow; the only sin is in giving away to uncontrollable grief, as did the heathen. They, having no hope, indulged in the most extravagant expressions of sorrow-tearing out the hair, rending their garments, uttering loud shrieks, cutting their flesh, etc. A Christian’s grief may be even more acute than that of the heathen, for Christianity tends elevate, and to quicken the sensibilities, but it will always be tempered by hope. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 487.1}

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” From what place will God bring them? “From Heaven,” many persons say. But the apostle says that those whom he brings have been *asleep*, and if the view of our friends be true, it must be that the saints in heaven do nothing but sleep, and that is absurd. The psalmist says, “In thy presence is fullness of joy; at the right hand there are pleasures forevermore.” We think it will need no argument to convince any rational person that David’s conception of “fullness of joy” and “pleasures forevermore” would not be met by a long period of unconscious sleep. Those who are asleep are in the grave, and from thence God will bring them, even as he did our Lord. Just as surely as Jesus died and rose again, so surely will God raise from the dead all the sleeping saints. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 487.2}

“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] which are asleep.” Paul says, “we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord.” From this some have supposed that Paul expected that the Lord would come in a very few years, and that he would live until that event; but this was not his expectation. We must believe him when he says, “For this we say unto you *by the word of the Lord*.” Paul received his instruction directly from Heaven. Not to say that Paul was mistaken in regard to the time of Christ’s second advent, is equivalent to saying either that he was not inspired, or that the Holy Spirit was mistaken. Neither of these positions can be taken by those who believe the Bible. That Paul had a correct idea of the time of the second advent, is clear from 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8. In his vivid narrative, Paul speaks of things to come as though they were present. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 487.3}

The word “prevent” is from the Latin words *pre*, before, and *venio*, to go, meaning “to go before,” and was formerly used in this sense. It is so used in King James’ version. See Psalm 88:13; 119:147, 148. But as one who went before another was able to “head him off,” as it is commonly expressed, the word finally became restricted to its present signification, to hinder. The Revised Version has the passage in harmony with modern usage. The word “conversation” is another word whose signification has been thus changed. It now means simply familiar talk; but in the Bible it has an entirely different meaning, being applied to one’s manner of life. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 487.4}

“For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven

with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” We cannot regard this text in any other way than as a description of an actual occurrence to take place in the future. If the expression, “the Lord himself,” does not mean Jesus Christ in person, but is a figure of something else, what words could the apostle have used to express the reality? If this be figurative language, then there is no literal language in the Bible. It it agrees, however, with the words which the angel spoke to the disciples at the ascension of Christ. Acts 1:9-11. The last clause of the verses quoted settles an important point. “And *so* shall we ever be with the Lord.” How shall we be with the Lord? By the descent of Christ to raise the dead and change the living. Can we not be with him before that time? No; for so he told his disciples when on earth. The ardent Peter said, “Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake;” John 13:27; but still Jesus did not reverse his former sentence: “As I said unto the Jews, Whither I go ye cannot come; so now I say to you.” Then he comforted them with these words; “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” This is the “blessed hope;” with these words the apostle Paul commended Christians to comfort one another. Men should be careful how they attempt to improve on the methods laid down by inspiration. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 487.5}

Some time ago a religious journal of note made an admission on this text, that was fatal to the popular view (the one which it also holds), that all men have inherited immortality. It said: “It is hard for us to understand how those converts could have imagined that it was peculiarly unfortunate to die before Christ’s second coming. It was because they imagined, and Paul too, perhaps, that Christ was to come soon, in the lifetime of some of them (we have already shown that he did not imagine any such thing), and that his coming was physical; and they did not understand the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.” That is, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is so opposed to the doctrine of Christ’s second coming, that those who hold to the former necessarily ignore the latter. We believe that this is the case. But the doctrine of Christ’s second coming is one of the most prominent in the whole Bible, and it must therefore follow that the Bible is opposed to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. It was well said that “they did not understand the doctrine of the immortality of the soul;” but if Paul and his co-laborers did not understand nor teach it, whence is it that our modern teachers have learned so much about it? Have they a later revelation in which inspiration has corrected its former mistakes? Away with a doctrine which leads men to treat God’s word. Such teachers would do well to ponder upon Paul’s words to the Galatians brethren. Galatians 1:8. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 488.1}

“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” No argument can be drawn from this to prove that Christians cannot know anything about Lord’s coming, for the next verse shows that he comes as a thief only to those who cry “Peace and safety,”-those who are not watching. The brethren, Paul states, are not in darkness that that day should overtake them as a thief. Christ gave his disciples very full instructions in regard to the times and the seasons (see Matthew 24), and as the whole gospel was revealed to Paul by the Lord himself, he had imparted the same information to the Thessalonians brethren. The prophecies of the Old Testament, especially the Book of Daniel, give much light on the times and the seasons. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 488.2}

On 1 Thessalonians 5:10, Dr. Barnes makes the following comment:- {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 488.3}

“‘Whether we wake or sleep.’ Whether we are found among the living or the dead when he comes. The object here is to show that the one class would have no advantage over the other. This was designed to calm their minds in their trials, and to correct an error which seems to have prevailed in the belief that those who were found alive when he should return, would have some priority over those who were dead. ‘Should live together with him.’ The word rendered ‘together’ is not to be regarded as connected with the phrase ‘with him,’ as meaning he and they would be together, but it refers to those who wake and those who sleep, those who are alive and those who are dead,-meaning that they would be *together*, or would be with the Lord *at the same time;* there would be no priority or precedence.” {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 488.4}

That is exactly the truth on this important subject. Happy would it be for Christianity if the churches had never departed from it. E. J. W. {SITI November 1, 1883, p. 488.5}

**“The Sabbath-School. 1 Corinthians 2:6-4:21” The Signs of the Times, 9, 43.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Lesson for Pacific Coast.-November 24.  
1 Corinthians 2:6-4:21.  
NOTES ON THE LESSON.**

“Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought; but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world.” In the previous chapter, Paul had said that “the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;” and in the beginning of this chapter, he says that he came not to the Corinthians “with excellency of speech or wisdom,” or with “enticing words of man’s wisdom.” He is not willing to admit, however, that he really uttered any foolishness, although it seems so to the scoffers. He had not spoken the “wisdom of this world” but the wisdom of God, which is infinitely superior. He says that he spoke this wisdom “among them that are perfect.” By this he means, not those who are sinless, for there would be no object in preaching to such at all; but to those who were somewhat advanced in Christian knowledge-who had received enough of the Spirit of God to enable them to appreciate the beauties of the gospel plan. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 509.1}

This wisdom, he says, “none of the princes of the world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” This text proves that skepticism depends more upon the condition of the heart than of the head. Those who put Christ to death were ignorant of his true nature. Had they *known* that he was the Son of God, not one of them would have lifted his hand against him. Why did they not know? They had listened to his teachings, and had witnessed many of his miracles. But instead of becoming convinced, as hundreds of others did, on the same evidence, they closed their eyes and ears, and steeled their hearts, lest they should be converted. The reason for this course lay in the fact that their own selfish interests were involved; Christ uttered plain truth which condemned their most cherished habits of life; to follow him would be at the cost of great personal inconvenience to themselves, and they therefore deliberately resolved to reject him. No person, however, can long remain in a state of self-condemnation, and when one has willfully rejected clearly revealed truth, it does not take him long to become firmly convinced that the error which he accepts is truth. And so the Jews, although their minds had once been enlightened, were ignorant of Christ when they crucified him. In like manner, we have known the most bitter opponents of the true Sabbath of the Lord to be those who had once acknowledged its claims, and even kept it. They rejected light, and darkness came upon them, so that they did not have their former clear conception of truth. “If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 509.2}

In the ninth, tenth, and the eleventh verses Paul proceeds with the argument to show why the gospel seems like foolishness to the wicked. “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” Human reason cannot grasp the wonderful truths of the gospel. The blessings which God stands ready to bestow upon those who obey the gospel, have no meaning to those who serve self. When Christians tell of the great love of God, how it lifts them above earthly trials and sorrows, they seem to the worldling to be simply fanatical. This is because the things of the Spirit of God are spiritually discerned (verse 14). In the eleventh verse the apostle clenches his argument by saying, “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” That is, that as no one can know the thoughts and designs of the man, except the man himself, so none but the Spirit of God can comprehend the things of God, and he alone, therefore, is capable of revealing them to others. It would be far less absurd for a man to profess to understand all the hidden thoughts of his neighbor’s mind, than for one entirely destitute of the Spirit of God to imagine that he is capable of passing judgment upon the truths of the gospel. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 509.3}

This eleventh verse has been used as proof of the inherent immortality of man but one must have that doctrine firmly fixed in his own mind before he can derive any comfort from this text, for it declares no such thing. That there is a spirit in man, is plainly stated many times in the Bible; but that that spirit is an entity of itself, distinct from the man; that it of itself alone is capable of thought; or that it can maintain an existence separate from the body, is not stated, either by this text or any other. These things are always assumed, and then various texts of Scripture are interpreted, in accordance with that assumption. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 509.4}

In the third chapter, the apostle says that he was unable to give the Corinthians all the instruction that he wished to, on account of their lack of spirituality. They had suffered the Spirit to come into their hearts only to a limited extent, and consequently could appreciate but little of the truth. They were as babes, requiring milk, the proof of their carnal condition is found in the fact that there were among them “envying, strife, and divisions.” These things may exist with worldly wisdom, but are incompatible with “the wisdom that is from above,” which is “first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good friends, without variance [R.V.], and without hypocrisy.” James 3:17. Without this wisdom, all other attainments will profit nothing. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 509.5}

The apostle next guards them against forming factions among themselves, calling themselves after some favorite minister. He would not have any favoritism in the church, as to the ministers, for that would tend to create divisions. The minister is nothing of himself, whatever his talents may be, for the increase comes from God, for whom all our fellow-laborers. He first compares the ministers to husbandmen, and the church to a vineyard, and then he likens them to the architects, and the church to the building which they rear for God. If the building is truly God’s, it can have but one foundation, that is Christ.1 Corinthians 3:11; Ephesians 2:19, 20. If a man lays any other foundation, it comes to nothing; but “the foundation of God standeth sure.” 2 Timothy 2:19. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 509.6}

It makes a great deal of difference, however, how a man builds even on the sure foundation. “Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” 1 Corinthians 3:12-15. It is evident from Paul’s statement, “ye are God’s building,” that the gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, and stubble, “that may be built upon the true foundation, indicate different classes of people in the church of God. The gold, silver, and precious stones are the good,-those whom the fire cannot harm; while the wood, hay, and stubble represent those who will finally be cast into the fire and consumed. The day of Judgment will reveal the characters of all, so that “every man’s work shall be made manifest.” “The fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.” This does not mean that every man will have to pass through purgatory, nor does it have the slightest reference to such a place; the meaning is brought out in verses 14 and 15, where it is declared that some will abide, and some will be burned. And so the class of work that has been done by the minister will be revealed by the fire. The next two verses are clear. If it is seen that the laborer has built enduring substance on the foundation he shall receive a reward;” for “they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.” Daniel 12:3. But if any man’s work be burned; if his converts prove to be only worthless stubble, he will suffer loss; the joy of seeing many in the kingdom of God as a result of his labors, will not be his; yet he himself shall be saved. Surely every minister has need to “take heed how he buildeth.” {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 509.7}

And the individual members have no less need of care. The Church is the temple of God, in which his Spirit dwells. “If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy.” How can one defile the temple of God? By cherishing some sin; by harboring vain and evil thoughts, envy, malice, hatred, an unforgiving or fault-finding disposition. All these bring reproach upon the church. It is a fearful thing for a man to come into, or continue in, a church, and still cling to evil thoughts and practices. His punishment will be greater than though he had committed the same sins without the pale of the church; for now he has defiled the temple of God. Then “let no man deceive himself;” but “let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” E. J. W. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 509.8}

**“Our Lord’s Last Passover” The Signs of the Times, 9, 43.**

E. J. Waggoner

There is nothing in the life of our Lord that is unimportant; no act that should not be studied most carefully and reverently. But of all the recorded events of his earthly ministry, those immediately connected with his death. Everything centers around this point; it is that upon which all our hope depends. It is not strange, therefore, that the order of the events connected with the last supper should be (as has been the case) the subject of much careful study. It is true that some deprecate any special effort to locate different events in our Lord’s life, thinking that it tends to divert the mind from the moral truths intended to be conveyed; but to us it seems highly proper. Indeed, each study appears to be very necessary if we would realize the full import of all that he did. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.1}

It will be admitted that Christ was very careful in regard to the fitness of things. We cannot conceive of his doing anything out of place. Many scenes in his life that appear abrupt, and for which no reason can be given when considered by themselves, are fully explained when we consider the circumstances under which they took place. Of course there are many incidents in the life of Christ which cannot be assigned to any particular time or place. They are complete in themselves. But we think that those events in the life of our Lord which stand closely related to any other event, may be properly located by a careful study of the different accounts given by the four evangelists. And as such study makes the narrative seem more real to us, and brings us to a clearer understanding of our Lord’s life, the important truths which he taught must thereby certainly make a deeper impression upon us. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.2}

It is not because there has not been much discussion on the subject that it is taken up here. The various conflicting theories have been treated at length; so great that the average reader often becomes confused before he arrives at the author’s conclusion. And in the books on this subject we find, as we think, a mixture of truth and error. We shall endeavor as much as possible to simplify the evidence in the account, and so present it that all may take their Bibles and trace the matter for themselves. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.3}

Matthew and Mark give almost precisely the same account of the events of the passover night. They note this sitting down to supper, the designation of the one who would betray Jesus, and the Lord’s supper. Both follow the same order. It is quite certain, that while they have omitted many things, they have given those events in their proper order. Luke does not follow the same order, but he mentions one point which the others omit-the strife among the disciples. John says nothing about the Lord’s supper, but he gives a minute account, which is not mentioned by any of the others. A comparison of the four accounts will show that John’s is the most complete in its detail, and we shall therefore use that as a basis. Separating it into its parts we have the following table:- {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.4}

1. The supper. John 13:2. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.5}

2. Jesus rises and watches. Verses 4-11. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.6}

3. He takes his garments again. Verse 12. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.7}

4. He explains his act and bids them follow his example. Verses 12-17. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.8}

5. He says that one sitting at the table with him would betray him. Verse 18. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.9}

6. He tells how the traitor may be known. Verses 23-26. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.10}

7. He gives the sop to Judas. Verse 26. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.11}

8. Judas immediately goes out. Verse 30. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.12}

Before going further we must harmonize an apparent discrepancy in John’s narrative. In verses 2 and 4 we read: “And supper being ended.... he riseth from supper,” and then follows the account of the feet washing. Thus the idea generally obtains that the passover supper was entirely finished before the feet washing was performed. But in verses 12, 23-30, we again find them at supper. The question now arises, What relation, in point of time, does the feet washing sustain to the passover supper? We reply, It took place at the beginning of the supper, and offer the following proof: The original for, “And supper being ended,” is, *kai deipnon genomenon*, which may be translated, “And supper being ready.” The Revised Version renders it, “And during supper.” Greenfield’s Lexicon has it, “During supper.” Robinson’s Lexicon, on the verb alone, says: “f) of any location, *e.g.* a repast, *to be prepared, made ready*, John 13:2.” The Emphatic Diaglott: “While supper was preparing.” Speaker’s Commentary: “During supper.” Clarke’s Commentary: “While supper was preparing.” Campbell: “While they were at supper.” Barnes says on this text: “This translation expresses too much. The original means, *while they were at supper*; and that this is the meaning is clear from the fact that we find them still eating after this. The Arabic and Persic translations give it this meaning.” Other good authorities give this meaning also. It may then be considered as settled that John’s account is consistent with itself, and that the feet washing took place during, or near the beginning of, the meal. If supper was ready, and they were already sitting down when this event occurred, it would be perfectly consistent to say that it happened *during supper*. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.13}

We will now consider a circumstance mentioned only by Luke-the strife among the disciples. It is recorded in Luke 22:24, after the account of the supper and the pointing out of the traitor. But there is very strong evidence to show that Luke’s account is not chronological. And here we would remark that although Luke’s account is very minute in his description of many things, he seems to have in general made no attempt to follow the order of events. His account of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness is a case in point. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.14}

We first notice that the language of Luke 22:27 is similar to that of John 13:16. Christ’s reproof and instruction in Luke 22:25-27, are evidently the same as his remarks in connection with the ordinance of feet washing. It is most natural to conclude that this humiliating ordinance was given immediately in connection with the strife of the disciples as to who should be accounted the greatest. It is impossible to think for a moment that any such strife could have taken place *after* that lesson on humility. But we have seen that the feet washing took place at the beginning of the supper. Then the strife (Luke 22:24) must have preceded the supper, and is recorded by Luke out of its proper place. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.15}

Again, concerning what would the disciples be most likely to contend at that time? we answer. They would naturally contend as to who should have the precedence at table. Among the ancients the distinctions in age or rank were clearly defined, and at table the oldest or most honorable had certain seats assigned them. An instance of this is found in Genesis 43:33. Among all people, even at the present time, there is a difference, in point of precedence, in the seats at the table, and table etiquette is very clearly defined and strictly observed. The same point is brought out in Matthew 23:6; Mark 12:38, 39; Luke 14:7-11, where Christ reproved those who chose the chief places. There is certainly nothing else concerning which they could strive for the precedence on this occasion. And this strife furnished an occasion for Christ to give them the most impressive lesson on humility. But this again shows that the ordinance of the washing took place at the beginning of the meal. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.16}

Some may object, and say that their strife was as to who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, and that it did not refer to their place at the table. But the disciples still looked for a temporal kingdom, which they thought Christ was soon to set up; and they would naturally expect that their rank in the kingdom would be determined by the position they occupied previous to its being set up. With this view their place at table was to them a matter of great importance. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 511.17}

That we may keep the subject clear in our minds, we will now state in their order the events that occurred up to the present point of the investigation. 1. Supper being ready, Jesus sat down. He was the host, and of course took the first place. 2. A strife arose among the disciples as to who should have the place of honor, that being, doubtless, the one nearest to Jesus. 3. To rebuke this unseemly strife, he rose from supper and proceeded to wash their feet, teaching them by precept and example that humility was the only ground of preferment in his kingdom. 4. Having completed this ceremony, he resumed his garments and sat down again to supper. E. J. W. {SITI November 15, 1883, p. 512.1}

*(To be Continued.)*

**“The Sabbath-School. 1 Corinthians 5-9” The Signs of the Times, 9, 44.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Lesson for Pacific Coast.-December 1.  
1 Corinthians 5-9.  
NOTES ON THE LESSON.**

The fifth chapter of 1 Corinthians is devoted to a scandalous offense that had been committed by a number of the Corinthian church. From the first verse we learn that the apostle did not always receive his information concerning the needs of the church direct from the Spirit, but often from other sources. The fact that he often depended upon credible reports, does not in the least detract from his character as an inspired apostle. God does not tell men that which they can find out as well for themselves. In this case Paul charges the church to purge itself, lest the single sin should corrupt the whole body. Verses 6, 7. Strict discipline is what the church owes to the steadfast members, no less than to the disloyal ones. The church at Corinth, however, was puffed up, not because of this sin, but in spite of it. While the whole body should have been mourning the shame that had come upon them, and making efforts to remove it, they were congratulating themselves on their prosperity. Indeed this sin may have served to make manifest their pride, because it is likely that many were Pharisaically boasting because *they* had not walked disorderly, not thinking that by tolerating sin in the church, they themselves became responsible for it. It has been well said that “Men are always elated and proud when they have the least occasion for it.” When church members feel a tendency to complacence and boasting, it is time to examine themselves to find out what is wrong. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 521.1}

“I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators.” 1 Corinthians 5:9. The apostle here refers to a previous epistle, which has not been preserved. After briefly considering the supposition that the reason why it was not preserved was that it was not inspired (a thing not very probable), Barnes says: “If inspired, they may have answered the purpose which was designed by their inspiration, and then have been suffered to be lost-as all inspired *books* will be destroyed at the end of the world. It is to be remembered that a large part of the *discourses* of the inspired apostle, and even of the Saviour himself (John 21:25), have been lost. And why should it be deemed any more wonderful that inspired *books* should be lost than inspired *oral teaching!* Why more wonderful that a brief letter of Paul should be destroyed than that numerous discourses of him who spake as never man spake should be lost to the world? We should be thankful for the books that remain, and we may be assured that all the truth that is needful for our salvation has been preserved and is in our hands. That *any* inspired books have been preserved, amidst the efforts that have been made to destroy them *all*, is more a matter of wonder than that a few have been lost, and should rather lead us to gratitude that we have them, than to grief that a few, probably relating to local and comparatively unimportant matters, have been destroyed.” {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 521.2}

“But now have I written you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, for a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.” Verse 11. This is by many regarded as equivalent to saying that they should not partake of the Lord’s Supper with members of the church who were guilty of the above-mentioned sins; but the connection seems to strongly indicate that the prohibition extends to ordinary meals. Of course this would shut off communion, for they would not commune with one with whom they could not eat a common meal. To say that they shall not eat with a certain class is a far greater restriction than to say that they must not commune with them. Now in his former epistle Paul had said that they were not to company with fornicators. Of course that would effectually shut off partaking of the Lord’s Supper with them. Still they were not to abstain absolutely from all dealings with such men, for that would necessitate, as Paul says, a removal from the world. But now he is more rigid than before, and says that if one who professes to be a Christian is guilty of such practices, they are to show their abhorrence of his course, by refusing even to eat with him. The reason for this is readily seen: If a man made no profession, but was known to be a heathen, no one would think of holding the church responsible for his crimes, even though its members had dealings with him. But should the members of the church associate with one who had been, and perhaps still professed to be, one of their own number, and who was notoriously licentious, the world would think that the church still recognized him as a Christian. So they were not to be seen in his company *at all*. This course was to be followed, not in a spirit of harshness, but for the reputation of Christ’s cause. And this restriction would not prevent them from relieving the wants of any who might need aid. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 521.3}

The violation of the tenth commandment is quite generally regarded as a comparatively venial offense, but Paul places the covetous man in no enviable position. Covetousness, the use of abusive language, and extortion, are classed with drunkenness and adultery. The Greek word for covetous is defined by Liddell and Scott as “one who has or claims more than his share.” If Paul’s injunction were strictly obeyed, what a thinning out there would be in many churches. There are few churches in which there are not some who are so desirous of having more than their share that they will even rob God of his portion. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 521.4}

“Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?” 1 Corinthians 6:2, 3. This language will allow of no other interpretation than that the saints will have some part to act in apportioning the amount of punishment due to wicked men and angels. Some have taught from this text, that the people of God will ultimately gain the ascendancy in this world’s affairs, so that all public offices will be filled by them; but this cannot be true, for a plain distinction is made between the judgment which the saints are to exercise, and “the things that pertain to this life.” Christ himself taught the same thing to his followers when he said to them: “In the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Matthew 19:28. This is at the last day,-the time when Daniel says that judgment is to be given to the saints of the Most High. Daniel 7:22. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 521.5}

It remains for the prophet John to fix definitely the time when the saints will engage in this work of judgment. We have already learned that it is when Christ comes, and that is when the righteous are raised. 1 Thessalonians 4:16. In Revelation 20:4 we read: “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” The next verse shows that this thousand years commences with the resurrection of the righteous (at Christ’s coming), and ends with the resurrection of the wicked, who will be raised to suffer the second death, which is described in the succeeding verses. From this it is plain that when the saints are made immortal, they at once enter upon the work of judging. Just how much of the work is allotted to them, we cannot of course tell, but it will have to do simply with the fixing of the sentence, and not with the execution, for that is committed to Christ. See John 5:26, 27. If Christians could only realize that they must be ready, when Christ comes, to take part in such a work as this, their minds would not be so much taken up with light and frivolous things that do not elevate and strengthen them. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 521.6}

When Paul says, “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?” he must not be considered as giving any sanction to litigation; for he says in verse 7, “Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?” Their cause might be just, yet rather than engage in strife, they should suffer themselves to be defrauded. Paul had no sympathy with the idea that men must stand up for their personal rights, although he was very jealous for the honor of God’s cause. E. J. W. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 521.7}

**“Our Lord’s Last Passover. (Continued.)” The Signs of the Times, 9, 44.**

E. J. Waggoner

*(Continued.)*

We have now to consider the remaining events of the passover supper, and the institution of the Lord’s Supper. Although in Exodus 12, where the directions for the passover are recorded, there is no mention made of wine, we learn from the Rabbinical writings that four cups were drank during the meal. Matthew and Mark speak only of the cup which Christ blessed as the emblem of his blood. Luke speaks of two cups, chap. 22:17, 20. The first one mentioned is one of those drank during the passover supper; the second, verse 20, is plainly said to be the emblem of Christ’s blood. And this verse furnishes proof that the Lord’s Supper was instituted at the close of the passover supper; for Luke says: “Likewise also he took the cup *after* *supper*; saying, This is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 523.1}

There is no disagreement between Luke 22:29, and Matthew 20:26: “The first says: “Likewise also [he took] the cup *after* supper;” the latter says: “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.” The unleavened bread was on the table as part of the passover meal. While they were at table, and some of them still eating, Jesus took of this bread, and did as is recorded. This act, and the solemn manner of Christ marked the close of the Passover meal, so that when he took the cup it was indeed *after* supper. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 523.2}

We have now sufficient data from which to ascertain whether or not Judas partook of the Lord’s Supper. All of the evangelists state that it was while they were at supper that he was pointed out. Matthew 26:21-25; Mark 14:18-21; Luke 22:21-23 John 13:18, 21-26. Thus the prophecy in Psalm 41:9 was fulfilled. John tells us (13:26) that the traitor was designated by Jesus giving him a sop when he had dipped it in the dish. But this shows that they were then partaking of the passover, which as we have seen, was *after* the feet-washing, and *before* the Lord’s Supper. John further tells us that when Judas had received the sop he “went immediately out.” John 13:30. The conclusion, then, is unavoidable, that Judas was not present when Jesus instituted his memorial supper. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 523.3}

Matthew 26:27 is urged as an objection against this conclusion. “And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.” Mark also says that they all drank of it. But we reply that “all” need not necessarily refer to the twelve, but might refer only to all who were present; for after Judas had left them, and Christ was in the garden with only the eleven, he said to them, “All ye shall be offended because of the this night.” No one will claim that Judas was present with them. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 523.4}

Luke’s account is supposed by some to disprove this conclusion. In order to make the subject perfectly clear, we will give his account in full. Verse 17: “And he took the cup [one of the passover cups], and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves; 18. For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. 19. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. 20. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. 21. But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.” {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 523.5}

The objection is, that Christ is here represented as mentioning the traitor but not until after it had taken place, and that, consequently, Judas was at the Lord’s Supper. To this we answer thus: 1. We already proved that the Lord’s Supper *followed* the passover (see verse 20), and that Judas left *during* the passover supper. See John 13:30, in connection other proof given above. 2. We have also seen that Luke’s account is not chronological; that he mentions many events out of their regular order. There is, therefore, no alternative left us but to conclude that Luke has not followed the consecutive order of the events in this instance. Should we conclude otherwise, we not only make confusion of the accounts of the other evangelists, but we make Luke inconsistent with himself. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 523.6}

But it is still further objected that there is no break between verses 19 and 20, and that the statement, “Behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table,” closely follows the words, “This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you,” the two sentences being connected by the conjunction “but.” Keeping in mind the two points already brought out, as just mentioned above, a reference to the Greek of the text will remove this objection. The word translated “but” in verse 21 is *pleen*. Liddell & Scott’s Lexicon gives this definition: “Adv. after parenthesis, *yet, still, but*.” Robinson says of it: “At the beginning of a clause, *much more, rather, besides*, passing over into an adversative particle, *but rather, but yet, nevertheless;*-Also where the writer returns after a digression to a previous topic.” Andrews’ Latin lexicon says the same of the corresponding word in the Vulgate. Thus this objection is entirely removed. Luke introduces the subject of the passover, and speaks of the cup. This seems to remind him of the Lord’s Supper, and he briefly describes that in verses 19, 20, they being thrown in parenthetically, and in verse 21 he resumes the narrative concerning the passover. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 523.7}

We think, therefore, that Luke’s account does not disagree in the least with that of the other evangelists, nor disprove our conclusion that Judas was not present when the Lord’s Supper was instituted. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 523.8}

This fact is not without weight upon the subject of open or close communion. When we consider the nature and object of the Lord’s Supper, it will appear that Christ could not have allowed Judas to remain on that solemn occasion. The object of the Lord’s Supper is stated thus: “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, eat to show the Lord’s death till he come.” 1 Corinthians 11:26. This information Paul says he “received of the Lord.” The supper, then, was intended as a memorial, to keep in mind the death and not merely to keep the fact in mind, but as an expression of the partaker’s belief in Christ death. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 523.9}

But a mere belief that Christ died is not sufficient to constitute Bible belief in this great sacrifice. The devils believe, but their belief is of no benefit to them. There are many disbelievers in Christianity who will admit that there was such a being as Christ, and that he died; and yet their belief is of no profit to them, for they do not discern Christ’s divine nature, nor the object for which he died. We must understand that he died to vindicate the claims of justice; that God’s law had been broken, and that the death of the sinner was demanded; that Christ died in man’s stead, that through faith in him we might be saved from death. But “faith without works is dead,” and therefore our faith in Christ is nothing unless accompanied by obedience. To reap any benefit from Christ’s sacrifice we must turn from our sins, and keep the whole law of God. See Isaiah 1:16-18; 55:7; Romans 6:1-6; Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 6:46, etc. Now no one, however “liberal,” would claim that one who has no faith in Christ could be allowed to partake of the Lord’s Supper. No one would think of inviting a heathen or a profane worldling to that ordinance. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 524.1}

But, as we have seen, faith in Christ implies an honest desire to keep God’s law; consequently, no one who is a violator of law of God, even though he may profess faith in Christ, has a right to come to the Lord’s table. We think this proposition cannot be controverted. We do not say that one must be without fault before he can commune, but he must have repentance for his sins, and an earnest desire to put them away. With trust in God, that he for Christ’s sake will forgive sin, the individual must humbly strive to walk in the light as fast as God shows it to him. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 524.2}

Now how was it would Judas? We find that he had cherished his selfish and avaricious feelings, and had finally yielded to them altogether, and had been stealing from the common purse which our Lord and his disciples had. John 12:6. He had been carrying on a constant deception. He had become so hardened, even under the sublime teachings and solemn warnings of Christ, that he had bargained to betray his Lord. He had deliberately sold himself to the devil for twenty dollars. He was a thief, a liar, a murderer, and a traitor; a villain of the deepest die; a hardened, unrepentant sinner. And his sin is augmented by the fact that he sinned against the greatest light that any man could have. It would have been sacrilege for such a one to each of the Lord’s Supper; to partake of the body and blood of Christ. We read: “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.” 1 John 1:7. But Judas was walking in darkness, and could have no fellowship with Christ and his loyal disciples. He had nothing in common with them. He was with them, but not of them. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 524.3}

These two positions strengthen each other. From the very nature of the Lord’s Supper, as explained by the Holy Spirit, we see that it would have been morally impossible for Judas to remain on that occasion; and by our Lord’s action we may learn something as to what persons may be permitted to eat of the supper which is called by his name. For in the light of the foregoing testimony it seems clear that Christ designed that the traitor should be pointed out at the time that he was, so that he might withdraw and not be present at the ordinance which was to follow. This idea is strengthened by our Lord’s words to Judas, “What thou doest, do quickly.” Although none of the disciples fully understood that Judas was to betray Christ (or that he was to do it immediately), John 13:28, yet the fact that Christ knew of his intentions, and that nothing could be gained by further attempt at concealment, would naturally cause him to obey Christ’s command to go at once. E. J. W. {SITI November 22, 1883, p. 524.4}

(*To be Concluded*.)

**“The Sabbath-School. 1 Corinthians 10-15” The Signs of the Times, 9, 45.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Lesson for Pacific Cost.-December 8.  
1 Corinthians 10-15.  
NOTES ON THE LESSON.**

Paul’s first the epistle to the Corinthians was written because grievous errors had arisen in the church, which he wished to correct.The fifth, eleventh, and fourteenth chapters are especially directed against certain evils of which that church was guilty. The existence of these faults was made known to Paul, not by revelation from Heaven, but by the reports of those who came from Corinth, and because one sin, at least, was so well known as to be the subject of common talk. See 1 Corinthians 1:11; 5:1; 11:18. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.1}

From the consequences attending their perversion of the Lord’s Supper (chap. 11:30) we may well suppose that this error was even more displeasing to God than the sin described in chapter five; the reason why is, that it shows great lack of spiritual discernment, and such a degree of irreverence as would lead to the commission of almost any sin. We learn from verses 20-22, 33, 34 that they were in the habit of making a regular meal of the Lord’s Supper, each one helping himself to all that he could get, making this solemn ordinance a disgraceful revel. There are at the present day well-meaning persons who, although they do not behave so badly as did the Corinthians, make the Lord’s Supper an occasion for partaking of an ordinary meal. Concerning such a custom the apostle exclaims in astonishment: “What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.” Verse 22. Dr. Barnes has so excellent a comment on this verse,-condemning the gross perversion of the Lord’s Supper, but another evil that has sprung up in most modern churches,-that we quote it:- {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.2}

“Do you not know that the church of God is not designed to be a place of feasting and revelry, nor even a place where to partake of your ordinary meals? Can it be that you will come to the place of public worship, and make them the scenes of feasting and riot? Even on the supposition that there had been no disorder, no reveling, no intemperance, yet on every account it was grossly improper to make the place of public worship a place for a festival entertainment.” {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.3}

What would the good Doctor say if he could know that many, even of the denomination which he so worthily represented, think that a church is not well equipped unless it has a commodious kitchen attached. As for those who need a regular meal in church, as an act of piety, let them learn by these words of Paul, how displeasing their course is to God: “Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.” 1 Corinthians 11:33, 34. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.4}

In the twelfth Chapter of 1 Corinthians Paul corrects some errors in regard to Spiritual gifts. It seems that the church at Corinth had some members who were highly gifted, and others who aspired to prominent positions. There was a strife among the brethren as to whose endowments were the greatest. Many seemed to have thought that one who had no remarkable gift was of no use in the church, and accordingly became puffed up when they viewed their own gifts. In the course of the chapter, the apostle, under the figure of the body, shows that although different members have different offices, none are to be despised on account of their lowly position. He then gives them a strong but delicate reproof for their course. He urges them to earnestly desire the best gifts that God has to bestow, but proceeds to show them something more excellent than high endowments, without which these amount to nothing. That something is charity, or, more properly, love. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.5}

The first three verses of chapter 13 show the importance of love. From them we learn that it is possible for a person to have faith in the highest degree, to be able to prophesy, to have all wisdom, to be able to speak as an angel, to be charitable (in the common acceptation of the term) to the extent of giving away all his goods, and finally, to give up his life as a martyr, and still amount to nothing in the estimation of God. Such a statement as this must certainly have caused the Corinthians to regard themselves with less complacency. It should have this effect on us. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.6}

We cannot here enter into any extended examination of this subject. One or two references must suffice. John says, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.” 1 John 5:3. Paul says that “love is the fulfilling of the law;” and Christ himself said that all the law and the prophets were summed up into two great principles, love to God, and love to man. Matthew 22:36-40. We conclude, then, that this thing which is greater than all gifts of prophecy or of wisdom, and without which they are nothing is simply the keeping of the commandments of God, not as a matter of outward form, but from the heart. Peter says that charity [love] covers a multitude of sin. 1 Peter 4:8. And James says that the same result is accomplished by converting a sinner from the error of his ways. James 5:20. But a sinner is converted only by the application of the law of God. Psalm 19:7; Romans 7:7-10; James 2:25. So we see again that the keeping of the commandments is that charity of which Paul writes. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.7}

In the fifthteen chapter of 1 Corinthians we have direct and most unmistakable proof of the falsity of the doctrine that men are naturally immortal, or that they receive their reward at death. The apostle first proves (verses 3-8) beyond all cavil that Christ was really raised from the dead; for if the testimony of above five hundred persons who saw him alive after he had been put to death, does not establish the fact beyond all contradiction, then nothing can be proved. But since it is a fact that Christ is raised from the dead, how can any one say that there is no resurrection from the dead? See verse 12. The same power that raised up Christ, has promised to raise all mankind; and the fact that Christ was raised is proof of his power to fulfill this promise; hence Christ’s resurrection is a pledge of the general resurrection. Whoever says that there is no resurrection, denies that Christ is risen, and virtually declares that the twelve apostles and the “five hundred brethren,” were false witnesses. Verses 13-16. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.8}

In this matter Paul establishes the fact that there will be a resurrection. There can be no misunderstanding of this argument; it is as simple as it is conclusive. Then he goes over the ground again, and shows what would be the consequences if there were no resurrection. “For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” Verses 16-18. Mark that Paul does not say that if the dead rise not something terrible will happen to those who have fallen asleep in Christ; he does not say that in such a case they *will perish;* but he says that if the dead rise not, those who have fallen asleep in Christ “*are perished*.” Then it necessarily follows that they are in the same condition *now* (with a resurrection in prospect) that they would be in to all eternity, if there were no resurrection. Why is it that they are not really perished? Because they have the promise of a resurrection from the dead,-a promise made by One who never fails. The condition of the dead now is in nowise different from what it would be if Christ had not died and rose again, nor from the condition that those will be in who will suffer the second death, except that in that case there is a limit and in these there is none. There can be no other fair construction put upon Paul’s words here; whosoever, therefore, affirms that the righteous that are now enjoying the bliss of Heaven, must leave Paul out of the account. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.9}

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.” Verse 20. Some have imagined a discrepancy between this statement and the fact that some were raised from the dead even before Christ’s death; and others have tried to make a difference between the resurrection of those persons,-Lazarus, the widow’’ son, etc.,-and that of those who were raised at or after Christ’s resurrection. But this is not necessary in order to harmonize the Scripture narrative for there is no discrepancy. Lazarus had as literal a resurrection as did Dorcas, or Christ himself. His resurrection, however, was accomplished only by virtue of Christ’s promised death and resurrection, which, since God had promised it, was the same as already accomplished. Christ was the first-fruits; not the first in point of time, but the chief. And since his resurrection was that by which the resurrection of all was made possible (see verse 21), it might be said to be the first. In one sense it was indeed the first, for as soon as it was promised it was virtually done; had this not been the case, no miracles of raising the dead could have been done before the resurrection of Christ. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.10}

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Verse 22. There is no condition to this statement; it includes both good and bad. Those who claim that only the righteous are raised, must also claim that none but the righteous die in Adam; for the “all” in the latter part of the verse must mean the same as the first “all.” Adam sinned, and thus fell under the power of death; and since he could not transmit to his posterity that which he did not possess himself, all men are mortal. We receive mortality part of our inheritance from Adam. But to all the promise of a resurrection is given. This, however, can give no satisfaction to the universalist, for Paul immediately adds: “But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.” This implies that there will be some who are not Christ’s at his coming, and this fact is plainly stated in Matthew 13:38-42; 25:31-41, etc. The first are raised to eternal life; the second, to damnation, eternal death. John 5:28, 29. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.11}

As shown above from verses 13-18, Paul declares that the dead have no conscious existence-neither good nor bad have inherent immortality. In verses 51-55 he tells us how and when immortality will be given to the righteous. At the last trump the living shall be changed “in a moment, in the twinkling of the night,” and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” This must be done because corruption cannot inherit in corruption. Verse 50. It follows from this that the good do not at death receive their incorruptible reward, for incorruption is not put on till Christ comes. When that event shall take place, and the mortal shall have put on immortality, “Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” Then, and not till then, will the redeemed shout, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.12}

The apostle fitly closes this chapter with the following words: “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” The word “therefore” shows that this is a conclusion from what has preceded. Why should they be always abounding, and how do they know that their labor is not in vain? Because they now know that there will be a resurrection, and that death is not the end of all things; they can look beyond for a reward. The conclusion is unavoidable, however, both from this and previous verses, that if there were no resurrection from the dead, all their labor would be in vain. The common view that man is naturally immortal, robs Christ of his highest prerogative, that of life-giver, and opens the way for men to ignore him altogether; but the view which we advance is in harmony with the Bible statement that “the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord,” and is consistent with the fact that the redeemed will be able to say, “Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.13}

E. J. W. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 533.14}

**“Our Lord’s Last Passover. (Concluded.)” The Signs of the Times, 9, 45.**

E. J. Waggoner

*(Concluded.)*

To the proposition that none but those who show their faith in Christ by obedience to God’s law can rightfully partake of the Lord’s Supper, it may be objected that, although Christ, who was its founder, had a right to bar whomsoever he saw fit, his followers are not competent judges as to who is worthy and who is not; that they have no right to deprive anyone of the privilege. It is claimed that such an act savors of bigotry, and is a mark of illiberality. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 535.1}

To this we would reply. (1) That it is the Lord himself who sets the standard; his followers dare not go beyond him. (2) That the question of liberality or illiberality is not concerned in the case. One may be liberal with that which is his own, and may dispose of it as he pleases; but to take the same freedom with that which is anothers would be sin. But the supper in question is “the Lord’s Supper;” consequently no one but he can dispense its privileges. The word “illiberal,” when used with reference to those who do not believe in communing with law-breakers, is sadly misapplied. (3) Those who do so cannot be said to deprive anybody of the privilege of communion. They simply refuse to commune with them for the obvious reason that communion with them is impossible. There is not perfect union and harmony. There cannot be while one keeps the law and the other pursues in breaking it. “For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion has light with darkness?” (4) No one decides as to another’s fitness or unfitness; the individual does that for himself. If he professes to have faith in Christ and to love God’s law, no one can have any right or wish to exclude him. He may be at heart a law-breaker, although correct in his profession; but of this no one can judge. God alone can read the heart. If the individual presumes to act the part of a hypocrite, the responsibility is his own. And (5) As to being deprived of the privilege of the Lord’s Supper, we would reply, that it is very far from being a privilege to one who is unworthy. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 11:15 that he who does not discern the Lord’s body is an unworthy partaker. The phrase, “not discerning the Lord’s body,” means that the individual does not realize the nature and object of the ordinance. This would be the case if the person did not realize that Christ’s blood was shed “for the remission of sins that are passed,” and that when we accept it in our case we virtually pledge ourselves to abstain from sin in the future; “to walk even has he walked.” In short, if a person presumes upon the mercy of God, and thinks that the sacrifice of Christ renders any effort on his part unnecessary, he would certainly be unworthy. And Paul says that he who eats and drinks unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 535.2}

The ordinances of the Gospel our duties to be performed, and not merely privileges to be enjoyed. But they are not duties that are enjoined upon all, irrespective of their condition. There are two kinds of duty-primary and secondary; and it is the non-performance of the first that makes necessary the performance of the second. It is every person’s duty to keep the law of God. There is no individual who is free from this obligation. Had man never sinned, keeping the law of God would have been his whole duty. But all men have sinned, and now God commands all men everywhere to repent. Christ died that we might find forgiveness of our sins by repentance and faith in him, and we are called upon to show our faith by performing certain duties. But we are not called upon to do these duties without first having repented. Christ’s teaching was, “Repent ye, and believe the gospel.” Paul preached, “Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” This is the true order. And the repentance must be complete. We must keep the whole law. Keeping eight-tenths or nine-tenths of the law is not enough. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 535.3}

As we have before remarked, then, there is no exclusive ess about the matter. Certain ones who do not render obedience to all the law of God, will say, Come, let us partake of communion together. We would be glad to do so, but how can there be communion when there is disagreement? When they say, Let us commune together, it is equivalent to saying, Let us show our union or agreement; let there be perfect harmony between us, and yet they refuse to agree. It is sometimes said: We will waive this point; we will not let our opinions interfere; we will agree to disagree. But an agreement to disagree is disagreement still, and brings no union. Beside it is not our opinion that separates us, but the commandment of God. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 535.4}

But what if the person asking to commune does not understand all the law, but is walking up to all the light that he has? Then give him the further instruction that he needs. If he has *been* conscientiously walking in all the light that he had, he will thank God for further light, and will at once accept it. But what if he cannot see as you do, and is still honestly trying to do right? Then pray that his eyes be opened. If he is really honest, God will not permit him to wander in darkness. But whether honest or dishonest, whether walking in the light or self-deceived, there can be no true communion where there is material disagreement. The Saviour prayed thus for his disciples: “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.” John 17:11. And in this prayer He included his whole church, for He said: “Neither pray I for these alone but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as now, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.” Verses 20, 21. Christ, then, did not contemplate many churches, nor one church with the individual branches “each serving God in his own way,” but an individual church, between the members of which the union should be as close as it was between him and the Father. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 535.5}

And this union and harmony was not intended to be a union which should be brought about by an agreement to ignore certain doctrines of the word of God, for that would be union only in name. The prayer of the Lord Jesus was: “Sanctify them through the thy truth; thy word is truth.” Christian union, therefore, can only exist where all believe and speak the same thing. The apostles continually urged this state of things upon those to whom they wrote. Romans 12:16; 15:5; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Philippians 2:2; 3:16; 1 Peter 3:8; etc. To say that it is impossible for all to see alike, is to impeach the wisdom of Christ and his inspired apostles. The exhortation of Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:10 is peculiarly noteworthy: “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no division among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same judgment.” Nothing could indicate more perfect unity than this. All must have one mind and one judgment. And this state of things existed in the early church, as we learn from Acts 4:32. “And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul.” What has been done can be done; and this condition must necessarily exist among the true followers of Christ. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 535.6}

There is another lesson that we may learn from the example of Christ on this occasion; one that all the followers of Christ should ever keep in mind, and which if acted upon, would take the edge off from any such epithet as “exclusive” or “bigoted.” It is this: Christ could not suffer Judas to commune with his loving followers, and yet he washes his feet. What an amazing instance of humility! The King of glory condescends to wash the feet of his betrayer, a vile wretch with whom he could have nothing in common. No word of harshness or reproach for his perfidy, but a manifestation of tenderness, as though he were his best friend. And after giving Judas this proof of his gentleness and humility, he gives him to understand all his villainy is known, and delicately requests him to do his work at once, that his presence may not mar the scene of harmony and love that should follow. E. J. W. {SITI November 29, 1883, p. 535.7}