**“Comments on Galatians 3. No. 9” The Signs of the Times, 12, 34.**

E. J. Waggoner

We think the reader who has carefully followed us through the seventh of Romans and the third of Galatians, will have no difficulty in seeing how thoroughly the majesty of the law is vindicated throughout, and its perpetuity shown, and also how beautiful is the harmony between the law and the gospel. Right here we wish to quote a pertinent passage from John Wesley:- {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.1}

“It is the ordinary method of the Spirit of God, to convict sinners by the law. It is this, which being set home on the conscience, generally breaks the rock in pieces. It is more especially this part of the word of God which is quick and powerful, full of life and energy, and ‘sharper than any two-edged sword.’ This, in the hand of God and of those whom he hath sent, pierces through all the folds of a deceitful heart, and, ‘divides asunder even the soul and spirit;’ yea, as it were, the very ‘joints and marrow.’ By this is the sinner discovered to himself. All his fig leaves are torn away, and he sees that he is ‘wretched, and poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked.’ The law flashes conviction on every side. He feels himself a mere sinner. He has nothing to pay. His ‘mouth is stopped,’ and he stands ‘guilty before God.’ {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.2}

“To slay the sinner is the first use of the law; to destroy the life and strength wherein he trusts, and convince him that he is dead while he liveth; not only under the sentence of death, but actually dead unto God, void of all spiritual life, ‘dead in trespasses and sins.’ The second use of it is to bring him unto life, unto Christ that he may live. It is true, in performing both these offices, it acts the part of a severe schoolmaster. It drives us by force, rather than draws us by love. And yet love is the spring of all. It is the spirit of love which, by this painful means, tears away our confidence in the flesh, which leaves us no broken reed whereon to trust, and so constrains the sinner, stripped of all, to cry out in the bitterness of his soul, or groan in the depth of his heart,- {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.3}

*‘I give up every plea beside,-
Lord, I am damned, but thou hast died.’ {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.4}*

“The third use of the law is to keep us alive. It is the grand means whereby the Holy Spirit prepares the believer for larger communications of the life of God. I am afraid this great and important truth is little understood, not only by the world, but even by many whom God hath taken out of the world, who are real children of God by faith. Many of these lay it down as an unquestioned truth that when we come to Christ we have done with the law, and that in this sense ‘Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth.’ ‘The end of the law’-so he is ‘for righteousness,’ for justification, ‘to every one that believeth.’ Herein the law is at an end. It justifies none, but only brings them to Christ, who is also, in another respect, the end, or scope of the law,-the point at which it continually aims. But when it has brought us to him, it has yet a farther office, namely, to keep us with him. For it is continually exciting all believers, the more they see of its height, and depth, and length, and breadth, to exhort one another so much the more:- {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.5}

*‘Closer and closer let us cleave
To his beloved embrace;
Expect his fullness to receive,
And grace to answer grace.” {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.6}*

“Therefore, I cannot spare the law one moment, no more than I can spare Christ, seeing I now want it as much to keep me to Christ as I ever wanted it to bring me to him. Otherwise, this ‘evil heart of unbelief’ would immediatley ‘depart from the living God.’ Indeed, each is continually sending me to the other,-the law of Christ, and Christ to the law. On the one hand, the height and depth of the law constrain me to fly to the love of God in Christ; on the other, the love of God in Christ endears the law to me ‘above gold or precious stones.’”-*Sermon 34, “Properties of the Law.”* {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.7}

The above view of the law is a just one. But all have not so clear an understanding of the law and the gospel as Wesley had. Since some, following the lead of Dr. Clarke, have either confounded the moral law with the Levitical or ceremonial, or else have supposed that the third of Galatians refers principally to the ceremonial law, it may not be amiss to show briefly why it is impossible that the ceremonial law should be the subject of discourse in that chapter. A few points will suffice. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.8}

1. Paul says that “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” Verse 13. Now (a) There was nothing in the ordinances of the ceremonial law to condemn any one. Condemnation could come only through violation of the ten commandments. The ceremonial law was the sum of the gospel ordinances in the Jewish age. And there was no curse in any way attached to it, any more than there is to the gospel. It certainly did not curse those who carried it out with a sincere heart; for such, like David, offered “sacrifices of joy;” and those who neglected it and thus showed their unbelief, were condemned by the moral law alone, because of their sins; as Christ said, “he that believeth not is condemned already.” (b) Even admitting that the ceremonial law had a curse connected with it, or was itself a curse, “we” never had any connection with that law, and consequently could not be redeemed from it. (c) The Galatians, to whom this epistle was personally addressed, were chiefly converts from among the heathen, and had never had any connection with the ceremonial law. Therefore, although Paul might properly tell them to keep clear of it, he could not say that they had been redeemed from it. (d) The result of Christ’s being made a curse for us is “that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” And the blessing of Abraham comes on the Gentiles only as they are redeemed from iniquity,-the transgression of the moral law. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.9}

2. Therefore “the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” Galatians 3:22. Only the moral law could conclude men “under the sin.” There was nothing in the rites and ceremonies of the Levitical law that was of primary obligation,-nothing that could show men to be sinners. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.10}

3. “But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.” Galatians 3:23. This is in no sense true of the ceremonial law. It did not precede faith, but followed it. No one ever heard of such a thing as the ceremonies of the Levitical law being performed by one who knew nothing of Christ. But it is true of all men that, before they have faith in Christ, they are “under the law,” condemned, and “shut up” to the faith which may be revealed to them, as the only means of freedom from condemnation. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.11}

4. “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” Galatians 3:24. By no possibility can this refer to the ceremonial law. This text is sometimes read as though it said that the law was our schoolmaster to point us to Christ, and then it is asked, “What is there in the moral law that points to Christ?” The answer is, of course, that there is nothing. But the text says the law brings us to Christ. We have shown how the moral law does this, by giving the convicted sinner no rest until he flees to Christ. The ceremonial law, however, brought no one to Christ. It was simply the means by which those who already believed in Christ as the one who should be offered for sin, might indicate their faith in him. The ceremonial law comprised the gospel ordinances of the Jewish age. The order was, first the moral law to convict of sin and show the necessity for Christ, and then the rites of the ceremonial law to indicate and keep alive the faith that they already had. See Leviticus 4, noting especially verses 2, 13, and 27. Justification has reference only to the moral law. From the transgression of that, man needs justification; but the law cannot justify any sinner, it can only condemn. And so it drives him to Christ, that he may be justified by faith. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.12}

“But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” Galatians 3:25. But it was only after faith came that people had anything to do with the ceremonial law. Is there a man in this age who has more faith than Moses, or David, or Isaiah, or Jeremiah, or Daniel, who all prophesied of Christ, and who looked to him for salvation? Those men “through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.” Hebrews 11:33, 34. And yet all their lives long they performed the rites of the ceremonial law. If Galatians 3:25 refers to the ceremonial law, those faithful men ought never to have offered one of the sacrifices of that law. It was their faith, however, that led them to offer the sacrifices of the ceremonial law, as Paul says, “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.” Hebrews 11:4. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.13}

“The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” Galatians 3:24. The past tense can be used here only by those who have come to Christ and have been justified by faith, as Paul shows in the next verse. Since the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, it must still be the schoolmaster (pedagogue) to those who are not in Christ, and must retain that office until every one who will accept Christ is brought to him. Therefore the law will be a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ, as long as probation lasts. But the Levitical law passed away hundreds of years ago; therefore it cannot be the law referred to here. To put the matter briefly, we may say that if the law is a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ, to divest it of that office while there are men still out of Christ, yet willing to come to him, would be to prematurely cut them off from hope of salvation. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.14}

We would by no means be understood as holding that the ceremonial law does not figure in the epistle to the Galatians. The controversy over the ceremonial law drew out the epistle. But there was in that controversy, which this epistle must have effectually settled for all candid minds, something deeper than the mere question whether or not men should be circumcised. Paul repeatedly asserts that it makes no difference whether or not a man is circumcised. “Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing.” But when men submitted to it as a means of justification, that moment it became a serious matter, for such an act is a rejection of Christ. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.15}

Suppose a man has accepted Christ and in him has been made “a new creature.” Now suppose that he is led to accept circumcision, or any other work, as a means of justification, thereby rejecting Christ; what will be the immediate result? He will at once go into sin; for out of Christ no man can by any possibility refrain from sinning. No matter to what heights of holiness a man may have attained, just as soon as he loses sight of Christ as his “wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,” he becomes carnal and cannot please God. This was the case with the Galatian brethren. They had been called into the grace of Christ; but some had troubled them with another gospel-a gospel of works and not of faith-which was no gospel at all, and by accepting it they had lost their faith in Christ, and consequently had become sinners “under the law.” And it is on this account that the apostle exclaims, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth (Compare Psalm 119:142, 151), before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?” (Galatians 3:19) and again, “Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?” Galatians 5:7. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 534.16}

But this is sufficient. We did not design to discuss the whole book of Galatians, but simply to show that it gives no comfort to the enemies of the law of God. We wish the reader to keep in view the main thought in our study,-that God desires that all men should be saved. His love is as boundless as the universe, and reaches to the least of his creatures. But he cannot endure it in his presence. Neither could the sinner be happy in the presence of the pure and holy God. Nay, more, it would be impossible for the sinner even to look upon God. Everything that dwells with God must be in perfect accord with him. But all men have violated his holy law, and are by it condemned to death. God has a glorious inheritance promised to the righteous, but who can obtain it? No one can make himself righteous. The sinner studies the law, and learns what sort of a character he ought to have, but that only condemns him the more. It provides no way of escape, but drives him toward the door of mercy, which is ever open. Then, instead of profitless struggles, being justified by faith he has peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus the law proves to be the strongest ally of the promise by faith. And this tutorship it exercises until the Seed comes to whom and through whom the promise was made, and then God’s people being all righteous, it ceases to drive them. They are “in Christ,” and the law is in their hearts. In Christ they find everything. No need have they now to teach one another the way of truth, because the truth, is in their hearts. More than this, they are all taught of God, and their peace is like a river, constantly flowing. Fully reconciled to God, they see his face, and in his presence find fullness of joy, and at his right hand enjoy pleasures forevermore. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 535.1}

Reader, “now is the accepted time: now is the day of salvation.” “To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God;” but if with sincerity you pray with the psalmist, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me,” he will for Christ’s sake pardon all your iniquity, and then, being a new creature in Christ, you can say, “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.” Psalm 119:97. W. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 535.2}

**“The Only Sure Guide” The Signs of the Times, 12, 34.**

E. J. Waggoner

Says the apostle Peter: “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.” 2 Peter 1:19. What does he mean by saying that we have a “*more sure* word of prophecy”? Does he mean that we have one word of prophecy that is more sure than some other word of prophecy? By no means, “for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (verse 21), and therefore it is all equally true. But the apostle has just before related the experience of the apostles with Christ in the mount of transfiguration, when they saw Christ in the glory which he will have when he comes again to earth, and they heard the voice of God saying, “This is my beloved Son.” The apostles were treated to a miniature representation of the coming of the Lord, and so Peter assures the brethren that he had been an eye-witness of the things which he made known to them. But, nevertheless, says he, “We have a more sure word of prophecy?” That is, the testimony of prophecy is more sure than the evidence of our senses. Therefore we must believe the prophecy, even though it is directly contrary to the evidence of our senses. He who thus accepts the Bible can never be deceived, while the one who trusts even his own senses in preference to the Bible will sooner or later surely be led into fatal error. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 535.3}

**“Feeding upon Christ” The Signs of the Times, 12, 34.**

E. J. Waggoner

A friend asks what is meant by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ (John 6:53-57), and wishes to know if it has any connection with the bread and wine of the Lord’s Supper. In reply we would say that it evidently has the closest connection. Christ said: “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.” John 6:53-56. Now is evident that no man can literally eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, and this caused the unbelieving to choose to stumble. But Christ meant that by faith we should appropriate him to ourselves, and thus live godly lives for him, just as one lives physically by what he eats. Says Paul: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20. So Christ continues: “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” John 6:57. It is by faith that we have that close communion with Christ which enables us to live as he himself would live; for “the just shall live by faith.” {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 535.4}

The Lord’s Supper is the visible manifestation of this faith which thus appropriates Christ. When Christ broke bread, he said, “This is my body, which is broken for you.” Then he took the cup and said, “This cup is the new testament in my blood: for, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.” 1 Corinthians 11:24, 25. And Paul immediately adds: “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup ye do *showed the Lord’s death*.” Verse 26. It is in the death of Christ, and our death and burial with him, that we are united to him. It is only in his *broken* body that we partake. And in partaking of the bread and the wine of the Lord’s Supper, we are fulfilling John 6:53-57 as literally as it is possible for us to fulfill it. Of course this is true only so far as the Lord’s Supper is partaken of understandingly, and not as a mere form. He who partakes of it as a mere matter of form, not discerning with the eye faith, the Lord’s body, eats and drinks damnation to itself. Such a person does not eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, but eats and drinks simply bread and wine, and of course does not comply with the divine command. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 535.5}

Let no one, however, imagine that Christ’s words in John 6:53-57 can be fulfilled only when the Lord’s Supper is eaten. If the Christian is to live by Christ, and he can live in no other way, he must continually feed on Christ. A man cannot live a year, a month, or even a week without spiritual food anymore than he can live and grow physically without daily partaking of literal food. The true Christian *abides* in Christ, and Christ *abides* in him; there is daily and hourly communion. He does not receive Christ on a fixed or varying occasions, but Christ *dwells* in him; and so when he partakes of the Lord’s Supper, he indicates outwardly that union which always exists, and by that act his union by faith is strengthened. And thus living by Christ who lives by the Father, the Christian becomes “filled with all the fullness of God.” W. {SITI September 2, 1886, p. 535.6}

**“Their Wisdom Is Perished” The Signs of the Times, 12, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

The subject of the International Sunday-school lesson for August 15 was “Christ Teaching Humility,” the text being John 13:1-17. We do not design in this article to consider in detail the subject of feet-washing as a Christian ordinance, for that ground was thoroughly canvassed in the “Notes” in the SIGNS of that week; but we wish to call attention to some of the “expositions” of the text that are given in the various religious journals. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.1}

First we pickup the *Christian Union*. It says on verses 12-16:- {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.2}

“Feet-washing seems here to be as explicitly commanded as the Lord’s Supper. Yet there is no evidence that it was practiced in apostolic times, nor is in general use in the Christian church to-day. It is practiced in some Greek convents, by the Pope once a year on Maundy Thursday, and by some minor Baptist sects, chiefly confined to Pennsylvania. This apparent regard of Christ’s seemingly explicit command can be defended only on the general ground that no ceremonial is of the essence of Christianity; that what Christ prescribes is not the symbol, but the spirit symbolized.” {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.3}

Then we think it would be well for “the Christian church” to learn the meaning of these words which are found in this connection: “The servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.” If Christ gave it an explicit command (as he did in this instance), and “the church” has taken it upon itself to decide that compliance with that command is not necessary, then certainly the servant has, in his own estimation, got quite a distance above his Lord. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.4}

“No ceremonial is of the essence of Christianity.” Very true; but that is no reason for disregarding the ceremony if it is commanded. We should not refuse to follow certain ordinances because those ordinances may be performed in a mechanical matter, but should see to it that we perform them with the spirit. We all know that love is shown by obedience to the expressed wishes of another. We also know that a child may mechanically or from necessity obey any given command, and that then the obedience indicates no love. That is, love is manifest, not by the mere performance of the act, but by the spirit with which that act is performed. Now recognizing this fact, a boy will say, “It seems quite plain that my father told me to care for this garden; but since the essence of love and obedience is not in any form, nor in outward acts of obedience, I will pay no attention to what he said, but will be sure to have a strong *feeling* of love in my heart.” The father would quickly decide that such a son was too “progressive.” {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.5}

It is not true that feet-washing was not practiced in apostolic times, as is shown by 1 Timothy 5:10. But even if the Saviour’s command had never been obeyed, that would not be the shadow of a reason why we should not obey it. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.6}

Next we pick up the Methodist *Recorder*. On verse 14 it has the following:- {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.7}

“The command will rather find its fulfillment in all kinds of mutual condescension and help than any literal observance.”-*Alford*. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.8}

Oh, yes; that settles the matter. Mr. Alford’s *dictum* is sufficient. To be sure Christ said, “Ye also ought to wash one another’s feet,” but Dean Alford says that he didn’t mean what he said, and so we need not trouble ourselves over the matter any more. This is a sample of the pernicious use of commentaries, and of the perniciousness of nineteenths of the comments that are written. When a man gives a scholarly criticism of the meaning of some terms in the original, or when he compares several texts bearing on one point, and shows the necessary conclusion therefrom,-that is legitimate comment; but when he ventures to give his own *opinion* of a text, unsupported by any authority, it were better for that matter if he had never written a commentary; and people who implicitly trust any commentator who will even once give his own *opinion* as to the meaning of a text, are willingly walking into darkness. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.9}

The *Christian at Work* has a comment very similar to that of the *Christian Union*. It says:- {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.10}

“Finally the application of the entire transaction comes out in the words: ‘If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet.’ This is not to be literally understood; for neither the apostles nor the members of the early church, though acting under the direction of the Spirit, ever actually practiced feet-washing as a religious rite.” {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.11}

To this we would say, (1) That because a public record of the performance of an act is not kept, that is no evidence that the act was not done. The thing having been commanded, we naturally conclude that it was practiced, except when the church was not led by the Spirit; for obedience to known requirement is an evidence of being led by the Spirit. (2) In 1 Timothy 2:10, feet-washing is mentioned by Paul as a well-known Christian duty, and one entirely distinct from acts of hospitality and relieving the afflicted. (3) Obligation to perform any deed can rest only on an expressed commandment, and not on the action of any other persons. When a thing is commanded, it is our duty to do it, even if everybody else disregards it. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.12}

But the *Christian at Work* overthrows its own theory when it says concerning the Saviour’s command:- {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.13}

“It means that as the Lord found it not inconsistent with the highest dignity and glory to minister in all lowliness unto the weakest, so we must find exaltation and happiness by doing likewise.” {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.14}

Just above it said that feet-washing is not to be practiced, because (as it claims) the apostles and the members of the early church did not do so. Then by the same “reasoning,” ministering unto the weak and lowly is not to be done unless “the church” in all ages has done so. Now the veriest tyro in history knows that the great apostasy began in the very days of the apostles, when there were many in the church who loved to have the pre-eminence, and that for hundreds of years the members of the church, instead of finding exaltation and happiness in serving the weak, found it in building themselves up at the expense of others. And so according to the popular exposition of John 13:1-16, it is now every man’s duty to look out for himself, regardless of others. When one begins to “*explain* away” the Bible, he may as well *throw* it away. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.15}

The *Sabbath Recorder*, however, caps the climax of absurdity in the following extract:- {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.16}

“In company with a traveling companion, we reached the house of another friend about noon, after a long journey on foot, under a hot sun, and over a dusty road. We had barely passed the customary greetings, and taken our seats in the best room, when the good woman of the house asked us to take off our boots. Seeing that we hesitated, she repeated her request in a manner which plainly showed that she was not joking. We accordingly took them off, and she took them out of the room. Presently she returned them as neatly blackened as they had been for some time. When she set them down she said, ‘And thus I have fulfilled my Lord’s command to wash the disciples’ feet.’ And who shall say that she had not done so?” {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.17}

Everybody ought to say that she did not. In the first place, even if our Saviour’s command had reference only to acts of hospitality, it would not be fulfilled by performing such acts and then calling attention to it. True hospitality, as well as true obedience, is unostentatious. But the idea of saying that for one person to black another’s boots is a fulfillment of our Lord’s word, “Ye also ought to wash one another’s feet,” is too absurd for serious comment. According to this exposition, the Saviour’s words should be read thus: “If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to black one another’s boots! For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” The simple statement of the case refutes it. Besides, the reader will notice that the act of feet-washing is to be reciprocal: “Ye also ought to *wash one another’s feet*.” Now allowing that to wash feet means to black boots, in order to have the command fulfilled in the case under consideration, the editor of the *Recorder* ought to have turned around and blacked the good woman’s shoes. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.18}

The very absurdity of such an exposition as the above is, after all, the most serious thing about it; for it is sad to think that men will thus sport with a divine command. It is nothing less than making void the commandments of God. On the same principle men rest on Sunday, and say that they are thus obeying the Lord’s command to “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” With as much reason others are sprinkled with a few drops of water, and say that they are obeying the injunction to be baptized. On such a principle of interpretation there is no conceivable act that may not be construed into obedience to some divine command. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.19}

It is sad to think that because of such deviations of plain precepts, men are losing their power to comprehend the simplest truth; but so it is. The Lord says: “Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men; therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.” Isaiah 29:13, 14. When a wise man turns aside from the plain commandments of the Lord, he becomes the most dangerous of counselors. W. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.20}

**“Who Is Worthy?” The Signs of the Times, 12, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

W. D. C. asks: “When will Matthew 25:31-46 be fulfilled? Are ‘my brethren’ (verse 40) a third class distinct from the sheep and the goats? It seems as if those who have heard the gospel would not be so surprised at the words of Christ.” {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.21}

A reading of the text itself should suffice to answer the question. “When the Son of man shall, in his glory, and all the holy angels with him,” can be nothing but the glorious second advent of Christ, when “he shall send his angels with a great sound of the trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four wins, from one into heaven to the other” (Matthew 24:31); when “he shall reward every man according to his works.” Matthew 16:27. At that time, as now, there will be but two classes,-the righteous and the wicked. A reading of the passage will show, that those on the right hand are the righteous, and that those on the left, the goats, are of the wicked. There is not now, nor will there ever be, any class between these two; if a man is not good, he is bad: there can be no middle ground. Says Christ: “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.” Matthew 12:30. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.22}

Now as to the question of surprise which the righteous ask, verses 37-39, we see nothing in it to indicate that those who ask it have never heard the gospel. Humility is the characteristic of the Christian. If they have learned of Jesus, who is meek and lowly of heart, they will be very unconscious of their own worthiness. There will be no spirit of boasting. If they should say, “Yes, Lord, we know that we have done all these things; we have served you faithfully,” that would be an indication that they had heard the gospel and vain. See Matthew 7:22, 23. But no such spirit will exist among those are really Christ’s. No one will think of proclaiming his own worthiness, because, as a matter of fact, no one will have any worthiness of his own, but will be “complete in him, who is the head of all principality in power.” Colossians 2:10. And so instead of thinking of themselves, or claiming anything because of their own merit, the redeemed will with one accord unite in saying, “*Worthy is a Lamb* that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 550.23}

**“Camp-Meeting in Santa Barbara County” The Signs of the Times, 12, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

This meeting, the third of the kind that has been held in the State this season, was held at Santa Maria, just within the north boundary line of Santa Barbara County. The camp was located in a eucalyptus grove close by the village, and was a pleasant place to see. Its arrangements, as well as the uniform quiet on the grounds, and the promptness and order with which everything was conducted, called forth many expressions of surprise and admiration from all who attended either as campers or as a transient visitors. Many had supposed that camp-meetings were always scenes of disorder and confusion; they seemed surprised to learn that people can worship God in a house of cotton with as much decorum and reverence as they can in a house of wood. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 551.1}

The attendance, both of our own people and others, was small. The time of the camp-meeting was a little unfortunate, it being a time when nearly everybody was engaged in threshing. This, of course, was sufficient reason for the limited transient attendance; and the fact that our brethren in that section have newly come to the faith, and could not realize the importance of a camp-meeting, will account for the absence of some of them. But we think that an impression was made on all who were present that will be lasting, and that will not be confined simply to them. Visitors who came out of a curiosity went away to sound the praises of a meeting where all was peace. Visitors who came out of curiosity went away to sound the praises of a meeting where all was peace and quiet; and some who were in the dark as to duty, went away rejoicing in the light of present truth. All seemed very grateful for the instruction given, and no one could doubt but that the souls of all were refreshed, as they testified of their increased knowledge of the love and mercy of God, and of their determination to press forward to new victories in the strength of that love. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 551.2}

The spirit of sacrifice manifested by those that came to the meeting was commendable, and will, we believe, bear fruit. From nearly one hundred miles south, and from an equal distance north, women and children rode in open wagons over mountain roads, camping out at night under their wagons, that they might be present. It is almost needless to add that they were present at the beginning of the meeting, and that they stayed until the close. This is not, however, meant as a reproach to those were present only a portion of the time. We are convinced that all made the strongest effort possible under the circumstances. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 551.3}

The expenses of the meeting were promptly and cheerfully meet. As an item of encouragement we also note that the attention of many is being directed to the College, and that some from the southern countries will attend the coming term. We believe that our educational institutions were planted in the province of God, and that upon them largely depends the future of the young among us, as well as the general advancement of the cause. We believe that God designs them to wield an influence that has as yet scarcely been dreamed of but by few. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 551.4}

All left for their homes with good courage, with regrets that the meeting closed so soon, and with a determination that the next one should be more largely attended if their influence could do aught toward accomplishing that result. W. {SITI September 9, 1886, p. 551.5}

**“In the Law” The Signs of the Times, 12, 36.**

E. J. Waggoner

The expression, “under the law,” occurs twelve times in King Jame’s version of the New Testament, in the following verses: Romans 3:19; 6:14, 15; 1 Corinthians 9:20 (three times), 21; Galatians 3:23 (the equivalent expression “under a schoolmaster,” is found also, in verse 24); 4:4, 5, 21; 5:18. In previous articles we have considered all these instances of the use of the term, except Romans 3:19, and 1 Corinthians 9:20, 21. In every case thus far we have found that it indicates a state of sin, and consequently of condemnation by the law. The one who has violated the law is under sentence of death, and so the law is represented as being upon him, holding him down to death. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.1}

Now in Romans 3:19, a different thought is presented to one who reads the text carefully. We will read it: “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” On reading this some one will say, “Your idea that ‘under the law’ means condemned by the law certainly cannot hold here, for that would make the text of no force; it would be the same as saying, ‘What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are condemned by the law, in order that every one may be condemned,’ and that would be nonsense.” The point is well taken, and we should have to conclude that the term “under the law” does not always indicate a state of sin and condemnation, if it were not for the fact that the expression does not really occur in Romans 3:19 at all. In all the texts which we have heretofore considered, the Greek words which are rendered “under the law” are, *hupo nomon*, which should be rendered, as they invariably are, by the phrase “under the law.” But in Romans 3:19 the Greek words which in King James’s version are rendered “under the law” are, *en to nomo*, which cannot properly be translated in any other way than “*in* the law.” The same expression is found in the Greek of Romans 2:12, where the translators have correctly rendered it “in the law.” {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.2}

The text under consideration should therefore read thus: “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are in the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before [margin, subject to the judgment of] God.” That is, the law speaks to those who are within its jurisdiction, or, as Professor Boise renders it, “within its sphere,” and as a consequence it declares that all the world are subject to the judgment of God, because it shows that all are sinners. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.3}

The expression, “that every mouth may be stopped,” is very forcible. When a man is brought into court, and charged with any crime, he begins, through his counsel, to plead his own cause, and to try to establish his innocence. But sometimes the evidence of a man’s guilt is so overwhelmingly clear that he has no defense to make; his mouth is stopped, and he is forced to acknowledge the justness of the charge against him. So the law of God speaks to those over whom it has jurisdiction, and charges them with sin; and the evidence is so clear that no one can speak a word in self-defense, but all the world stand condemned before God. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.4}

By this rendering of Romans 3:19, and it is the correct one, we are taught an important truth concerning the extent of the law’s jurisdiction. Note these points: The law speaks only to those who are within its sphere; if any such have violated it, it condemns them, and it can condemn no others. The law has no power to condemn any who do not owe allegiance to it, or who are outside its pale. Now Paul has shown (Romans 3:9-18) that there is not a person on earth who has not sinned, and he therefore emphatically declares that the law, speaking only to those within its jurisdiction, stops *every mouth*, and condemns *the whole world*. There could be no more forcible way of saying that *every individual in the world* is amenable to the law of God. Jews and Gentiles are all in the same condemnation, because they are all within the pale of the law, and have all violated it. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.5}

Perhaps some may think that this makes a contradiction between Romans 3:19 and Romans 2:12, but there is none. It is true that Romans 2:12 speaks of those “without law” as distinct from those “in the law;” but those who are spoken of as without law, are also spoken of as having sinned, and we have already learned (1) That “sin is the transgression of the law,” and that “where no law is there is no transgression,” and (2) that Paul, in verses 14, 15, shows that these same ones who are in one sense without law, “show the work of the law written in their hearts,” and that they therefore do have the law. Some sin in the face of the full light of the law, while others sin against only that knowledge of the law which they have by nature; but all are counted as sinners in God’s sight, and they could not be so reckoned if they were not amenable to the law; hence he declares that all are in reality “in the law.” {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.6}

Let us now read 1 Corinthians 9:20, 21: “And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ) that I might gain them that are without law.” In this text the term, “under the law,” occurs four times. In the first three instances, reference to the same thing is made in each case. In the fourth instance, however, in verse 21, the Greek is *en to nomo*, as in Romans 3:19, and should be rendered “*in* the law.” Then the verse would read, “To them that are without law [I became] as without law, (being not without law, but *in* the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.” {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.7}

In order to get the full force of this text, we must note the verse immediately preceding, and the two following: “For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.” “To the weak become I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel’s sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.” These verses, taken in connection with the 20th and 21st, show Paul’s meaning to be that in his ministerial work he sought to adapt himself, as far as possible, to the condition of those for whom he labored. He did not approach all men in the same manner, but adapted his teaching to the different classes of people whom he taught. He took every one upon his own ground. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.8}

To the Jews, he became as a Jew. This he could easily do, for he was himself a Jew, and knew all their habits and customs. The book of Hebrews is an instance of how he became as a Jew to the Jews. From their own history, their Scriptures, and their religion, he demonstrated the Messiahship of our Saviour, and also his whole work in connection with the plan of salvation. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.9}

To them that were under the law, he became as under the law, that he might gain them that were under the law. That is, he drew on his own experience as a sinner, that he might successfully labor for those who felt the condemnation of God’s law upon them in consequence of their sins. The seventh chapter of Romans is an instance of this. If Paul had not felt the terrible anguish which comes from the knowledge of an offended God, and the sense of impending doom, and the wondrous peace which comes from believing in Jesus, he could never have written a chapter so full of encouragement to the convicted sinner. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.10}

To them that were without law, that is, to the Gentiles who had not the written law, and the full knowledge of God, he became as without law, that he might gain them that were without the law. An instance of this is given in his dealing with the Athenians, Acts 17:22-31. He took them on their own ground, and from their own heathen worship, and their own heathen literature; he demonstrated to them the existence of a great Creator, and the certainty of a future general Judgment. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.11}

But while he became to them as without law, he says that he was in reality “not without law to God, but in the law to Christ.” That is, he all the time recognized his obligation to keep the whole law of God, and that Christ was to him the end of that law for righteousness,-he did all things only by the aid of Christ. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.12}

This closes up the consideration of the expression “under the law.” Taking out 1 Corinthians 9:21 and Romans 3:19, in which texts, as we have seen, the term does not really occur, we can arrive at this positive conclusion, that in every instance of its occurrence, “under the law” indicates a state of sin and condemnation. And since it is everywhere stated that only those who are in Christ are free from the condemnation of the law, and that all who are not in Christ and have not his Spirit, are under the law, the fact that the law is still in active operation is everywhere demonstrated. W. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.13}

**“The End Near” The Signs of the Times, 12, 36.**

E. J. Waggoner

“How do you explain the many passages in the New Testament that speak as if the end was close at hand? *If* the translators got the hang of those passages, those who first read them *must* have understood that the day of the Lord was at hand. Can it be that they spoke only of the persecutions shortly become? or did they think the interval between the persecutions and the advent shorter than it proved to be? {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.14}

“1 Corinthians 7:29 seems to many to teach that the end was near; yet from verse 26, and from Dean Alford’s translation, I understand him [Paul] to mean that the time of trouble was near, and that he is not speaking of the end; but many texts, such as Romans 13:14; 1 Corinthians 1:6-8; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 Timothy 6:14; Hebrews 10:34, 36, 37; 1 Peter 4:17; Revelation 1:1, 3, seem to teach those to whom they were written that the end would be in their day.” W. D. C. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.15}

1. As to the passages that speak of the coming of the Lord and the end of the world, we don’t explain them; we simply take them just as they read, and believe them. And we do not doubt but that the translators got the “hang” of those passages; in fact, we are glad to *know* that they got the correct idea of them, because we love the Lord and rejoice in the assurance that he is coming. We should be in a deplorable condition, indeed, if there were no passages in the Bible assuring us that the Lord is coming. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.16}

2. We cannot allow that the New Testament writers were deceived as to the coming of the Lord. If we could think that they were to the slightest degree mistaken on this point, we could not be sure that they were not mistaken on every point. We believe that the whole Bible was written by inspiration of God, that it is equally inspired, and all equally true. If they text seems to us doubtful, or difficult to be understood, we lay it to our own ignorance, and not to the ignorance of the holy men of God who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.17}

3. It is a fact that some of those to whom Paul wrote got the idea that the coming of the Lord was going to take place in their day. But they did not get it from Paul’s sermons or letters. There were some who were attempting to *deceive* the brethren by a *pretended* epistle from Paul (See 2 Thessalonians 1:3), and this led Paul to repeat what he had told them while he was with them,-that Christ would not come until after the Papacy had arisen, and had run its course of persecution and blasphemy. Certainly, then, *we* have no chance to be deceived, and suppose that the immediate coming of the Lord was preached in the first century; for although there are some passages which, taken alone, might seem to indicate that such was the case, we have the whole Bible, and are not obliged to take any one passage by itself. The Bible is one harmonious book. It was written by many men, but they all had the same Spirit, and so in every part it bears uniform testimony. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 566.18}

4. 1 Corinthians 7:29 does not say that the Lord’s coming is at hand, and therefore we do not need to go to any commentary to find out that Paul was writing of the then “present distress.” So that passage, with other similar ones, doubtless refers to impending persecutions, and all were so understood by those to whom they were addressed. The instruction, however, which they contain is directly applicable to those who live when the coming of the Lord is close at hand. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 567.1}

5. When the New Testament writers speak directly of the coming of the Lord, as in 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10; Revelation 1:1, 3, we have no right to suppose that they had reference to persecutions, or to anything but the coming of the Lord. The two texts to which we have just referred may be taken as a sample of all. The first one reads thus: “For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.” This brings to view the coming of the Lord as the Christians hope. Death is nowhere set forth as the object of the Christian’s solicitude.The coming of the Lord is the blessed hope, the consummation of all things, and nothing else could be set before Christians of all ages to stimulate their energies. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 567.2}

As to such texts as Revelation 1:1, 3: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; ... Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand;” or Revelation 22:20: “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly;” they were literally true when written. The things which John wrote did begin shortly to come to pass. More than that, it could truly be said that the Lord’s coming was at hand. We must acknowledge this when we remember that the day of Pentecost was in “the last day” (See Acts 2:16-21), and that Paul wrote in the last days. Hebrews 1:1, 2. It was true then that the coming of the Lord was “at hand,” although not *immediately* at hand; it is a thousand fold more true now. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 567.3}

6. Everything in the New Testament was spoken or written to individuals then living, and was applicable to them; but it is also applicable to us. Comprehensiveness is a characteristic of the words of inspiration. Yet many things have a more direct application to us than to them. Suppose that the Bible had been only partly written centuries ago, and that all reference to the mere coming of the Lord had been left to be written at the present time; what evidence would we have that it was a divine inspiration? If reference were made to certain signs already fulfilled, everybody would say that was conjecture. But the Saviour gave us ground for the firmest assurances of faith, when centuries ago he foretold his coming, and the signs which would indicate its nearness. The fact that those signs were then foretold, made it possible that any one who accepted the words of inspiration *just as they are recorded*, should be deceived. Let us, then, not spend time in “doubtful disputations,” but let us believe that “yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry;” and “let us holdfast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised.” W. {SITI September 16, 1886, p. 567.4}

**“How We May Know” The Signs of the Times, 12, 38.**

E. J. Waggoner

Some people refuse to accept the Bible because there are so many things in it they cannot understand. If they could understand the Bible, they would accept it and Christ. Such need never expect to understand the Bible, for “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Corinthians 2:14. If a man would understand the Bible, to begin with it is necessary for him to understand and believe, only these two simple verses: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” 1 Timothy 1:15. If he has mastered these two texts and all he has to do to master them is to believe them with his whole heart, then he is a child of God, by faith in Christ Jesus, and being in Christ, he has the Spirit of Christ, and may discern spiritual things. If he grows in the knowledge of Christ, he must necessarily grow in wisdom, for Christ is our wisdom as well as all or redemption. 1 Corinthians 1:30. In Christ “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Colossians 2:3. Therefore in Christ we may obtain all wisdom, but out of him we must remain ignorant. So we say to all, if you wish to understand the Bible, confess your sins to God, accept the sacrifice which he has provided, and receive his pardon. There is no Biblical knowledge which is not possible to the thoroughly converted man. {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.1}

**“The Sabbath and Conversion” The Signs of the Times, 12, 38.**

E. J. Waggoner

The following question and answer we find in the report of a “gospel service” in San Francisco on a recent Sunday night:- {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.2}

“Is the Sabbath done away with?” {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.3}

“If you are a Jew, No. But it is deplorable to see a person claiming to be a Christian, and going back to Judaism. The Sabbath is the seventh day, but they are not converted people who keep it. Some people devote so much attention to the Sabbath question that their religion is all Sabbath and no Christ.” {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.4}

That is, the thing is done and it is not done. We leave the question as to how a thing can at the same time both be and not be, to those who are more skilled in casuistry than we are. We read that “the Sabbath was made for man;” then if it is abolished, it must be abolished for man; and if it is not abolished, it must remain for man. We have great respect for the Jews, but we do not believe that they were any more entitled to be called men that we are; therefore we do not believe the Sabbath was made specially for them. The Sabbath was made for all who are included in the general term “man.” If there are any people to whom the term “man” does will not apply, then perhaps the Sabbath was not made for them. Keeping the Sabbath is no more Jewish than is worshiping the true God, or refraining from blasphemy, murder, and adultery. Therefore to keep the Sabbath is not to go back to Judaism. {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.5}

“The Sabbath is the seventh day, but they are not converted people who keep it.” The seventh-day Sabbath is the Sabbath commanded in the law, and the psalmist says, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” Psalm 19:7. The law, including the Sabbath, is that which converts the soul, and brings it to Christ; now if a man, having come to Christ, rejects that which alone could bring him to Christ, he necessarily, in so doing, rejects Christ. Therefore to say that the Sabbath-keeper cannot be a converted man is unscriptural and false. {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.6}

If the man had said that *not all* could keep the Sabbath are converted, we should be obliged to agree with him. Not all who profess to worshiped the true God, are converted. Not all who profess to accept Christ as their Saviour, are converted. Said Christ: “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Matthew 7:22, 23. But this does not prove that no one can be converted if he worships God or prophesies in the name of Christ. Yet we might as well say that it does as to say that a Sabbath-keeper cannot be converted. {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.7}

Answers such as the one quoted above may satisfy those who “love to have it so;” but the fact that these questions are continually being asked, shows that people are thinking about the Sabbath; and in these investigations many will reject the foolishness of men, and will accept the word of the Lord which “endureth forever.” {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.8}

**“The Pork Question Again” The Signs of the Times, 12, 38.**

E. J. Waggoner

Some time ago we wrote a short article for the SIGNS in answer to a question concerning the use of swine’s flesh. Shortly after, we gave an explanation of Peter’s vision, in reply to one who gave that as divine authority for pork eating. In that we showed that God did not give Peter a vision for the purpose of teaching him that it was his duty to eat pork, but to teach him that he should call no *man* common. We also stated the fact that the distinction of clean and unclean beasts was not peculiar to the Levitical economy, but that it existed from the earliest ages, and that consequently the abolition of the ceremonial law had no effect upon the hog. As proof that the distinction of clean and unclean beasts existed before the Jewish age, we referred to Genesis 7:2, 8; 8:20. {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.9}

A friend, however, takes exception to this, and claims that Genesis 9:3 shows that there was no distinction, but that all beasts were alike good for food. That verse reads thus, “Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.” Every moving thing that liveth would include not only the hog but rats, toads, lizards, bats, buzzards, porcupines, centipedes, spiders, and scores of lesser vermin, which we think even our pork-loving friend would not wish to have included in his bill of fare. But our friend will say the text says, “Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you,” and we are not at liberty to say that it does not mean what it says, even though it may appear unreasonable. It is true that we are not at liberty to put our construction on the text, but we must allow one text to explain another. {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.10}

We often find that a comprehensive statement is made in one place, and that exceptions to it are noted in another. For instance we read in Exodus 16:4: “Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day.” If we should confine our attention to this text we should suppose the people gathered manna seven days in the week, but in the 26th verse we read: “Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, and yet there shall be none.” Now when we read Exodus 16:4 we read it in the light of the other verse, and know that the Lord meant that they should gather manna every working day; so, likewise, when we read Genesis 9:3, we read it in the light of Genesis 7:2, 8; Leviticus 11:7, 8; Isaiah 65:3, 5; 66:17, and others, which say that certain animals, the swine among them, are unclean and unfit for food. Therefore we know that the Lord meant that he had given to Noah every living thing of clean beasts for meat, and Noah must certainly have so understood it. {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.11}

Our friend brings up Romans 14:2, 3, 14 as evidence that pork eating is allowable. But these texts have no reference whatever to the eating of pork. The question here as in 1 Corinthians 8 is concerning things offered to idols. There is no reason to suppose that the word meat means flesh simply; on the contrary, it must necessarily include fruits and grains as well, for these were offered to idols. Now the question was, Is it lawful to eat any food that has been dedicated to an idol? Paul declares that it is, but he would not make it a matter of dispute. If a brother newly come to the faith thought that to eat food that had been offered to an idol was a recognition of that idol, he should be permitted to abstain from it and select food that had not been so dedicated. Neither should those who knew that there was no harm in it cause the weak brother to stumble by partaking of it. Almost all food which the heathen used was dedicated to their gods, so that Christians could scarcely have found anything to eat if it had been true that such a food was not lawful to be eaten. But Paul declared that an idol was nothing and that to dedicate food to it had no affect upon it, and so he said, “Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience’ sake.” {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.12}

1 Corinthians 10:27 is quoted as proof that we are at liberty to eat anything and everything. That reads, “If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.” The next verse, however shows what is referred to for it says, “But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that showed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof.” If the matter of pork eating had been under discussion it would not have been necessary to say, “asking no questions for conscience’ sake,” for the man could tell if the dish were pork without asking any questions; but he could not tell that food had been offered to idols, unless he should ask, and this Paul tells them not to do because it is of no consequence. {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.13}

Again we read, “For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” 1 Timothy 4:4, 5 this text is quoted in favor of pork eating, but like Genesis 9:3 it is too comprehensive. There must be exceptions, for there are creatures whose flesh is unwholesome and poisonous. The fifth verse in this case deprives the pork eater of all the comfort which he seeks to draw from it, for no one can find where swine has been sanctified by the word of God. {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.14}

One more text we must notice. Our friend quotes Colossians 2:16, 17, but what has already been said covers of this text. Paul is speaking here of the ceremonial law, and we have already seen that the distinction between clean and unclean animals was before the ceremonial law. All must admit that this distinction was made in the very beginning, for immediately after the fall sacrifices were made to God, and no right-minded person could think that the sacrifice of a hog or other unclean animal would be acceptable to God, even if the Bible said nothing about it. Therefore the distinction of clean and unclean beasts could be no part of the shadow of which Christ is the body. But if our friend thinks that he can trace some connection between pork eating and the mystery of Christ, we should like to have him show it to us. {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 598.15}

We have considered these texts at this length before an explanation of them was asked, and we wish to give the true sense of them. We still adhere to our belief that the eating of swine’s flesh is forbidden by the word of God. We cannot believe that the Lord delights in what twenty-five hundred years ago he called an abomination. And we emphatically protest against such a low view of Christ’s sacrifice as would lead to the supposition that it was made largely in order that men might be at liberty to eat whatever their perverted appetites might crave. W. {SITI September 30, 1886, p. 599.1}