**“The Work of the Church” The Signs of the Times, 14, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

Last week we answered a question in regard to the Sabbath; but there was an expression in the question, to which we wished to call attention, but as it had no special connection with the Sabbath question, we left it for separate notice. We therefore reprint the question:— {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.1}

“If that particular day [the seventh day of the week] is essential, is it possible that God would have permitted the Christian church, whom he designed for such a glorious work, through all these eighteen hundred years to make such a great mistake?” {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.2}

The point which we wish especially to note at this time is the statement that God designed the Christian church “for such a glorious work.” We do not question this in the least; but we fear that our correspondent has the too common misapprehension of what that glorious work is. We suspect that he holds the popular view that the work of the church is to gather to itself all the people of the earth, so that when Christ comes he will find the inhabitants of the world all at peace with him and each other, and waiting to receive him. If he does not hold this view, it will do no harm to give it a brief notice for the benefit of others. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.3}

That all the people of the world will not accept the gospel, is one of the plainest things. The Bible states it, and observation confirms the statement. When Christ shall be revealed from Heaven, it will be “in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Thessalonians 1:8. This could not be the case if all men were obeying the gospel. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.4}

Again, our Saviour said:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.5}

“And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.” Luke 17:26-30. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.6}

This certainly is very different from a temporal millennium to precede the coming of the Lord, in which all shall know the Lord. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.7}

The days that will immediately precede the coming of the Lord will be perilous days for the righteous, because of the wickedness that will abound. Says the apostle:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.8}

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.” 2 Timothy 3:1-4. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.9}

Here we have the description of wickedness that is almost inconceivable; and although in Romans 1:29-31 we have almost the same sins ascribed to the heathen, the latter times will be worse than the former, in this respect, that whereas the heathen were abominably wicked, they had not the Bible, and did not pretend to know God, while in the last days the wickedness will be in the church, anon, “those who profess the gospel of Jesus Christ.” {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.10}

Look out over the world to-day, and what is seen? Fraud, deceit, embezzlement, forgery, theft, licentiousness, murder, adultery, drunkenness, and every species of vice running rampant, and justice seems to have far more than the proverbial amount of blindness, so that she cannot see it. And what does the apostle say? “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” 2 Timothy 3:13. Surely these things do not point toward the conversion of the whole world. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.11}

Moreover our Saviour has given us an exhortation based upon the fact that the mass of mankind will follow evil rather than good. Said he: “Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Matthew 7:13, 14. Under these circumstances, an exhortation to zeal and faithfulness is very necessary; for when the current is toward destruction it requires a struggle to go in the right way. In the last days, more than any other, it will be the most natural thing in the world to do wrong, and extremely difficult, and out of the ordinary course of things, for one to do right. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.12}

Now if there is no probability, nor even a possibility, that all men will receive the truth, then most certainly it cannot be the duty of the church to accomplish the conversion of the world. God does not ask the church to do impossibilities. But this does not mean that God has nothing for the church to do, nor that its work is not a glorious one. Its work is to hold up the light of truth to the world, so that “whosoever will” may rally to the standard. Surely this is a glorious work. Let us read a few texts. Says Paul:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.13}

“Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.” Philippians 2:14-16. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.14}

The work of the church is to hold forth the word of life; and it can do that only by being blameless and harmless. For while the truth of God is a light, the members of the church are not merely to hold that word forth in their hands, but are to let it shine forth from themselves, so that they themselves shall be light. As the Saviour said:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.15}

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 5:14-16. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.16}

The church is the light of the world only when its members are the workmanship of God, “created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Ephesians 2:10), and these works are constant, so that the light burns with a steady flame. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.17}

Those who are in this condition are “workers together” with God. 2 Corinthians 6:1. This is indeed a glorious calling. But those who are not in this condition are not of the church of Christ at all. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.18}

Some will say that this view of the subject has a tendency to discourage the church in its evangelistic efforts. But this is not so; it is the view that the Lord himself gives, and we most certainly allow that he knows better than men can, what will be for the best. For our part, we cannot see what could be more discouraging to evangelistic effort than the attempt to convert the world. The only reason why utter discouragement has not come ere this to those who hold that doctrine, is the fact that their standard of what will constitute the millennium has gradually been lowered to meet the circumstances of the case. Next week we shall show some of the dangers attendant on the belief in the conversion of the world before the coming of the Lord. W. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.19}

**“Heathen Philosophy” The Signs of the Times, 14, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

Last week we considered briefly the wickedness of the ancient heathen world, and now we wish to investigate the primary cause of their degradation, and inquire concerning the influence of heathen philosophy. In this, as in the former article, the Bible must be our guide. “Then they [the heathen],” says the apostle, “knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.” Romans 1:21-23. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.20}

“They became fools.” That is, they lost that knowledge of God which they had possessed; for it is the fool who says, “There is no God.” The gods of the heathen were of their own making, and had no influence over them, to keep them from evil, and so, while the heathen believed in the gods, and had forms of worship, they acted as though there were no God. Now it is not necessarily with his lips that the fool denies the existence of God; he may deny God in his heart, and actions are the language of the heart. So, in the sight of Heaven, the heathen, in spite of their philosophy, were fools. We may here remind the reader that these words of the apostle are not necessarily confined in their application to people resident in heathen lands. The inhabitants of so-called Christian countries, if when they know of God, do not glorify him as God, but, professing themselves to be wise, glorify themselves are, in the Bible sense, heathen. And if they persist in their course, there is nothing to prevent them from sinking to the same depths of vice that the ancient heathen did. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.21}

In spite of the wisdom of their philosophers, the heathen were counted as fools, or, more properly speaking, their professed wisdom was the direct cause of their foolish degradation. Paul says, “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” In order to demonstrate this, is will be necessary to take a brief glance at ancient heathen philosophy. In so doing we shall take as a sample of the world, not the poorest, but that which is universally acknowledged to be the most elevated in its tone. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.22}

Plato was the most illustrious philosopher of ancient times. He is regarded as, in a sense, the father of philosophy, for he was the first philosopher who founded a school. After his death he was worshiped as a god, and many of the Athenians sacrificed to him. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.23}

Although Plato is said to have developed and systematized the philosophy of Socrates and of others who had preceded him, it is well known that he himself had no real “system.” That is, he had no fixed principles of truth by which he tested, and around which he gathered, new ideas. Says Prof. G. F. Holmes (McClintock and Strong’s Encyclopedia, art. Plato): “There is little in Plato of a dogmatic character,” and “much of tentative, skeptical, and undefined exploration.” Again we read, in the same article:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.24}

“Very few of the treatises of Plato are constructive or dogmatical. Nearly all of them are simply negative or inquisitorial. The latter do not seek to maintain any dependence on the former.... His object was not the establishment of a doctrine, but the stimulation of candid investigation, in order to free his hearers from the stagnation of thought and the obsession of vulgar or treacherous errors. He was not a *doctrinaire*, but an inquirer; or, rather, he taught the need and practice of investigations, not a body of conclusions.” {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.25}

The testimony which we quote is from a source prejudiced, if in either direction, in favor of Plato, so our readers may be sure that we are doing him no injustice. Now let us notice the above paragraph. First, Plato’s treatises are nearly all negative. Second, there is no attempt at uniformity. Third, it would naturally be supposed, he did not seek to establish any doctrine, but only to stimulate inquiry. Now we would not appear to deprecate the “stimulation of candid investigation;” but when the “investigator” has no fixed principles of truth as the basis of his investigation, and his investigation leads to no definite conclusions; when one thought is not in harmony with that which preceded it, and is itself contradicted by that which follows,-we cannot look upon it with much respect. We cannot see that such investigation is good for anything; indeed, we think it can be shown that it is worse than nothing. When a person is so “unprejudiced” that he regards everything as equally good, and is not certain that anything is good, he certainly is not a safe man to follow. The position of modern “agnostics” is precisely the same as that of Plato. Indeed, Plato deserves the name of the “first great agnostic,” rather than that of “philosopher.” While calling himself a philosopher, “lover of wisdom,” he did not profess to *know* anything, and he held no idea with sufficient firmness to be willing to be held responsible for its promulgation. Says the author above quoted: {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 550.26}

“He never appears *in propria persona* [in his own person]. There is nothing to connect him before the Athenian dicasteries with any tenet in his writings. *There is a constant avoidance of definite doctrine*, a frequent censure of written instruction, a continual reference to the ‘obstetrical procedure,’ and a deliberate renunciation of all responsibility.” {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 551.1}

This was the man who had the chief influence in reaching the minds of the heathen for several hundred years. How could it be expected that they would have any fixed moral principles? If the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into the ditch? What shall we say then, when we learn that, by multitudes of professed Christians, Plato has been regarded as little less than inspired? and that many of the “Fathers” of the first centuries regarded the Platonic philosophy as preliminary and even paramount to Christianity? Must we not conclude that such “Christianity” would have radical defects? We might cite as proof of the demoralizing effect of the writings of Plato and other philosophers, the condition of the church in the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, when philosophy took the place of the Bible in the theological schools. It was against this soul-withering “philosophy” that Luther struck some of his hardest blows; and, but for the influence it had gained in the church, the Reformation would not have been necessary. It is because of Plato’s great influence on the Christian church, as well as on the heathen world, that we devote space to the characteristics of his philosophy. Again we quote:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 551.2}

“The *imagination of Plato was the commanding facility of his intellect*, and he followed its beams too far.” {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 551.3}

“The philosophy of Plato is essentially mystical, and consequently unsubstantial; and, though mysticism may inflame, spiritualize, and refine natures already spiritual and refined, it is heady and intoxicating, and apt to justify willful aberrations, and to awake every fantastic conviction on the same level with confirmed truth.”-*McClintock and Strong*. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 551.4}

But the fatal defect in Plato’s philosophy was the position he took concerning the mind, and its relation to the body and to the whole universe. He held that the mind or soul holds the same relation to the body that God does to the world. The preexistence of souls was a cardinal point in his philosophy, and it is to him that the Mormons are indebted for the theory which is the foundation of their polygamy. Like the Mormons, he held that not only men, but plants and all inanimate objects also, have souls, which existed prior to themselves. Thus, Prof. W. S. Tyler, of Amherst College, says:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 551.5}

“There is no doctrine on which Plato more frequently or more strenuously insists than this,-that soul is not only superior to body, but prior to it in matter of time, and that not merely as it exists in the being of God, but in every order of existence. The soul of the world existed first, and then it was clothed with a material body. The souls which animate the sun, moon, and stars, existed before the bodies which they inhabit. The pre-existence of human souls is one of the arguments on which he uses to prove their immortality.”-*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, *art. Platonism*. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 551.6}

And that was the only means by which he could conceive the immortality of the soul. If the soul is by nature immortal, the doctrine of the pre-existence of souls must be true. Like modern scientists, however, who invent a hypothesis upon which they build a beautiful structure, and then proceed as though their hypothesis were a fact, Plato did not bother himself with *proving* the pre-existense of souls. So, also, Christians who adopt from Plato the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul, have conveniently lost sight of the absurd and atheistical doctrine on which it rests. Some of the most eminent of the “church Fathers,” however, and especially Origen, accepted without question all the vagaries of Plato concerning the pre-existence of souls. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 551.7}

In a preceeding quotation, mention was made of Plato’s frequent reference in his treatises to the “obstetrical procedure.” The following extract from McClintock and Strong (art. Platonic Philosophy) will serve to explain that term:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 551.8}

“The midwifery of the mind which Socrates professed, and which Plato represented him as professing, necessitated the assumption that truth was present potentially in the mind, and that it only required to be drawn from its latent state by adroit handling. It could not be latent, nor could it be brought forth, unless it lay there like a chrysalis, and descended from an anterior condition of being. It was in a superterrestrial and antemundane existence that souls had acquired [*ethereal sense*], but before their demission, or return to earth, they had been steeped in oblivion. The acquisition of genuine knowledge was thus the restoration of the obliterated memories of supernal realities.” {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 551.9}

This theory was the logical outcome of the theory of the pre-existence of souls, and there is no abominable wickedness that could not find shelter under it. It absolved the possessor of it from all sense of obligation to God, or of necessity of looking to him for wisdom; every man thus became his own god, his own lawgiver, and his own judge. The consequence would most naturally be the conclusion that whatever is, is right; and since “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,” evil came to be regarded as good. This theory and its results are directly pointed out by these words of the apostles:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 551.10}

“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves.” Romans 1:22-24. W. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 551.11}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

In answer to inquiries that have been made, we will state that Mrs. E. G. White and Elder W. C. White will both attend the Oakland camp-meeting. More definite plans have been laid for this meeting than for any camp-meeting ever held in this State, and there ought to be a larger attendance than ever before. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.1}

The *Jewish Tidings*, of Rochester, N.Y., is an advocate of the transfer of Jewish worship from Sabbath is Sunday, and says: “It is better to worship your God at a *convenient time* than to make unnecessary sacrifices.” There are thousands who profess to be Christians, who hold no higher views of religious service. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.2}

On Thursday, the 30th ult., Brother C. H. Jones, president of the Pacific Press Publishing Company, started for the East in company with his family in a party of friends. His principal business East is the establishment of a branch office in New York City. He will return immediately after General Conference. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.3}

The old saying about “carrying coals to Newcastle” may be replaced in California by the one, “carrying fruit to Newcastle.” This little village of Placer County now claims to be the largest shipper of local fruits in California. It is estimated that 15,000,000 of fruit will be shipped from that place this season. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.4}

Any of our friends who contemplate going East soon, will do well to correspond with us. Another party of our people will leave Oakland for the East on Thursday, the 27th inst. Those who go on this excursion will have many advantages that they could not have if they went along. Write at once for particulars to the editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.5}

We are in receipt of a good-looking poster all the way from Basel, Switzerland, announcing that a camp-meeting of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in Tramelan, September 22-26. Our Oakland camp-meeting will also be in session at that time. We believe that this will be the first camp-meeting ever held in Switzerland, and the second in Europe, and we pray that it may have abundance of success. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.6}

The reason which Doctor Dowling, of Cleveland, gave for renouncing close communion, is the following, which he gave in an interview with a reporter:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.7}

“I cannot longer appear even to unchurched the vast majority of God’s people because they and I may differ as to the historical administration of an ordinance. If there is any question at all, I would rather err on the side of charity.” {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.8}

The *National Baptist* very pertinently inquires if he would receive into his church, without baptism, the members of Padobaptist Churches. If he would not, then he would be unchurching them as much as by non-communion with them. This simply shows that when Baptists practice open communion they at once particularly say that baptism is not essential to church-membership, and so show that there is no reason for their separate organization. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.9}

A correspondent of the *Golden Gate* asks the following question:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.10}

“If Satan can really turn himself into an angel of light and fool people, as our friends tell us, why not give him a permanent employment in that direction at once, and so benefit humanity.” {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.11}

For the simple reason that we do not think that it is of any real benefit to people to be fooled. We do not love to be deceived, and therefore the golden rule demands of us that we should do all in our power to keep other people from being deceived. However, there are so many people who are willing to be fooled by Satan, that he will not lack employment while they live. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.12}

The following editorial statement of present Jewish belief, made by the *Jewish Times and Observer* (San Francisco), will be read with interest:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.13}

“Judaism does not recognize any mediator between God and man.... The Messianic idea with us does not refer to a personal Messiah, but to a period of time when, through education, toleration, and enlightenment, mankind will live in peace and happiness with each other. The distinctions and rivalries of creeds and religions will be forgotten in the common desire to promote human happiness and welfare. Religions will continue to exist, not as antagonists, but as aids to one common and glorious result. This is the sum and substance of the Messianic idea from a Jewish standpoint.” {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.14}

Every reader of the Old Testament well knows that this is a wide departure from ancient Judaism; but it is not so far removed from the “faith” of the mass of professed Christians, as the editor of the *Times* and *Observer* thinks it is. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.15}

The Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America has just held a session in Tremont Temple, Boston. The Rev. Frederick Campbell, writing an account of it, speaks of the incongruity of a Catholic convention in a Baptist house of worship, and says truly that no Catholic Church would be open to a similar Protestant organization. It is indeed noteworthy that in all the hobnobbing of so-called Protestants and Catholics, all the concessions are on the Protestant side. Mr. Campbell’s report closes with following statements, which needs no comment:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.16}

“The sessions of the convention opened and closed with prayer; all knelt; then the president repeated the words, ‘In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost,’ while all crossed themselves; a few petitions followed, with the Lord’s prayer, and the repetition of the opening words with the same crossings. At the close of Thursday morning’s session, the assembly was breaking up in confusion, when the president shouted, ‘Kneel in prayer; we need it;’ a heated dispute having just closed, down they dropped, laughter prevailing all over the room and continuing until the close of the devotions, the President, ‘Father’ Conaty, losing control of his voiced by reason of his merriment as he pronounced the closing words, ‘In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen.’ Such is the devotion of Rome.” {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.17}

The question of “liberality” comes again to the front in connection with Dr. Dowling’s action in regard to the Lord’s supper. He says that he cannot any longer seem to unchurch those professors who do not believe as he does in regard to baptism. In other words, he dare not any longer hold to a principle for the sake of the principle, when so many hold an opposite position. The charge of exclusiveness and illiberality is an old one against those who adhere closely to the plain instruction of the Bible. But “charity” is a much abused word, and has of late years been made to cover a multitude of sins, in a sense which the Scriptures never contemplated. No man has a right to be “liberal” with that which is not his own. He may invite to his own table whosoever he chooses, but the Lord’s table does not belong to him, and he has no right to invite to it anybody who has not complied with the conditions which the Lord has set. Every man has explicit conditions, without compliance with which he will not admit people to his own table, one of which is that they shall have clean hands and face. When water is abundant and free, he would esteem it a gross insult if one of his servants should invite to his table a lot of people whose hands had been four days guiltless of water. Then why should he take liberties with the Lord’s table? The whole of the great apostasy in the early centuries resulted from the fear on the part of the Christians, of seeming to set themselves too much about other people, by a close adherence to the precepts of Christ. So they lowered the standard. True charity consists in instructing people in the perfect way of truth, and not in taking concessions which will only confirm them in error. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.18}

At the annual convention of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America, recently held in Boston, the irreverence of which is elsewhere referred to, there was not perfect unanimity. Mr. Elliott, a priest from New York, gave utterance to some plain sentiments about liquor sellers, characterizing them as enemies to liberty, and the deadliest venom of politics, and denying that the liberty of the Christian has anything to do with the liberty of those who sell drink. At the close of this speech, Mr. Hogan, a priest from Trenton, N.J., arose, and set the seal of Catholic approval upon liquor-selling in the following manner:- {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.19}

“In the first place, before condemning anything as unworthy of liberty, it should be shown that it is wrong. I say, it is not wrong *per se*. I say, with all proper consideration for the reverend father who presides here, and for all others in this convention, that it is not wrong and will not be condemned by the church. It is wrong, decidedly, as saloons generally are carried on. I favor Catholic total abstinence as much as anybody here, but it is not our duty to come here and denounce the saloon keeper to whom we give the sacrament every week. I ask, if I am not speaking what is Catholic, that we are going too far and trespassing on Catholic teaching when we denounce saloon keepers indiscriminately. We must make a distinction. It is those who oppose the sale of liquor whenever, who must be denounced and be avoided, and who are committing sin, and are not worthy of liberty. But where the sale is carried on, according to Catholic tradition, I say these men should not be denounced. We should not be allowed to drift from teaching that is Catholic to that which is non-Catholic.” {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.20}

It is but just to say that there were many expressions of disapproval of the sentiment; but we think that Mr. Hogan had the strongest position. And if the Catholic Church gives the sacrament to saloon keepers every week, as it does, it must certainly approve of their business. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.21}

We have already noted the fact that the Congregationalists and Presbyterians in Japan have united. Now the news comes that they call the ministers bishops, thus, as the *Congregationalist* says, taking “the stiffness out of prelacy by a single crushing blow.” That is exactly in accordance with the custom of Seventh-day Adventists, who call all their ministers elders. Elder and bishops are according to the Scripture, different names for the same official. {SITI September 7, 1888, p. 560.22}

**“The World for Christ” The Signs of the Times, 14, 36.**

E. J. Waggoner

We quoted Scripture last week to show that there is no warrant for the idea that all men will be converted before the Lord comes. This week, according to promise, we wish to show the evil tendency of that theory. Among those by whom it is held, the expression at the head of this article is very common, and is considered as an indication of a lack of understanding of the Bible, and of the true work of the church. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.1}

Those who hold to the idea that the world must all be converted, claim that any other view must have a tendency to discourage missionary effort. This is not the case, for since they cannot know who will be saved and who will not, but are sure that some will accept the gift which is offered to all, they can faithfully obey the Lord’s command to labor, not knowing “whether shall prosper either this or that,” trusting results to the Lord of the harvest. All we have to do is to hold forth the word of life; if we do this faithfully, we are not responsible for the results. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.2}

On the other hand, one of two things, either one disastrous, must result from the theory of the world’s conversion:- {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.3}

1. Since there is not the slightest prospect that the world will be converted, but, according to the apostle’s words, evil men and seducers are getting worse and worse, and false systems of religion are making converts faster than the Christian religion, people who look for the conversion of the world must inevitably become discouraged. No person can long keep up heart in a struggle for the impossible. There must be, if no prospect, at least a promise of success in order for men to keep from giving up in despair. But in the matter of the world’s conversion, there is neither prospect nor promise. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.4}

2. But it must be confessed that we do not see the church getting discouraged. Religious workers exhibit a confidence that is mournfully absurd. They will write of the world’s standing armies, of how all Europe is one vast military camp, and how the one thought seems to be war and preparation to kill people, and in the same breath will speak of the prospects of universal peace. Now since it is absolutely certain that there will never be peace on earth until the Prince of peace destroys the fierce people from the earth; since there never will be on this earth universal knowledge of God, until those who know not God and obey not the gospel are punished with everlasting destruction, it follows that those who look for the reign of righteousness before the coming of the Lord, and who think they see indications of it, will be satisfied with a spurious righteousness. In short, they will accept the form for the substance, and will call the world Christian when all it has of Christianity is the name. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.5}

Before we present a scripture which proves this conclusion, we wish to show how this theory of a temporal millennium leads naturally to the doctrine of universalism and of future probation, or probation after death. Thus: there has never been a generation since the fall, in which all men have served the Lord. All will admit that the greater portion of mankind in every age of the past have been corrupt; they have not even been professedly religious. But why should the last generation be more highly favored than any other. If it be true that in order for the gospel not to be a failure, all the people in the world must be converted, then it is equally true that for the same reason all who have ever lived in the world must be converted. If it is necessary to the vindication of the power of the gospel, that this or some future generation should all be saved, then it is just as necessary to the vindication of the power of the gospel, that all of every generation should be saved. Thus the doctrine of the world’s conversion before the coming of the Lord, is in reality universalism. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.6}

But, as has before been stated, the greater portion of mankind have not known God, and have died in their sins. Therefore, if the doctrine of the world’s conversion be true, it must be that all those multitudes will be converted while in a state of death, or in some future state, which is positively unscriptural. Moreover, that theory does really cast discredit upon the power of the gospel, and makes it necessary for some other gospel to be preached, since it teaches that what the gospel has not accomplished in this life will be accomplished in another. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.7}

Again, the theory that the world must be converted before Christ comes, is a denial of the scriptures which states that when Christ comes he will punish the wicked; for if all men are converted, there will be no wicked to punish. And this is virtually an arraignment of God for his judgments upon the wicked of one generation, so that there will not be any to punish, he ought to have done so in the past. The theory really charges God with double dealing; it says that his ways are not equal. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.8}

So we see that the theory of the conversion of the world, instead of being simply a pleasing fancy, a harmless delusion, is a monstrous perversion of the Scriptures. It also sets at naught the doctrine of the soon coming of Christ, ignoring all those signs which prove that this generation shall not pass away until all things shall be fulfilled. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.9}

Now look at a Bible picture of national religion, and its consequences. We quote from Isaiah 2:2-5:- {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.10}

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.” {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.11}

This is the result toward which those look who shout, “The world for Christ.” Mark, the scripture does not say that people will actually walk in the law of the Lord, but that “many people shall go and say” that certain things shall take place. That this national Christianity will be only a sham, an outside show, and not real service to God, is indicated by the next four verses, which say:- {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.12}

“Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers. Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots; their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made; and the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself; therefore forgive them not.” {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.13}

These verses show that while they profess that they know God, in works they deny him. They will be worshiping something of their own creation. Since it is utterly impossible that all men should be converted, it follows that those who will not hear to anything else, will gradually lower their standard of what true Christianity is, until it comes down to where the mass of the people are, and then they will declare that the world is converted. This, of course, will cause the world to be satisfied; and so we see that the doctrine of the world’s conversion will result in the hardening of men to the influence of pure Christianity, and will confirm them in their practices. And what will be the final result? The prophet continues:- {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.14}

“Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.” “And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he arised to shake terribly the earth. In the day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefs of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake the terrible the earth.” Isaiah 2:10-12, 19-21. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.15}

In that day of the Lord the earth shall be melted (2 Peter 3:10, 11; Isaiah 24:19, 20), and sinners shall be destroyed out of it; “nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” 2 Peter 2:13. And when the earth shall thus be freed from the curse, then will be fulfilled the word of the Lord which is written: “And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them” (Jeremiah 31:34); for “all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.” Isaiah 54:13. W. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.16}

**“Heathen Philosophy. (Concluded.)” The Signs of the Times, 14, 36.**

E. J. Waggoner

Whoever reads the fifth book of Plato’s “Republic,” will find sufficient evidence of his blunted nonsense, or, rather, his total lack of moral sense. In that book, which, like all Plato’s works, is in the form of conversations with the young men of Athens, he teaches that women should engage in warfare and all other affairs, equally with the men, and should go through the same course of training as the men, and in the same manner, namely, naked. Says he: “But as for the man who laughs at the idea of undressed women going through gymnastic exercises, as a means of utilizing what is most perfect, his ridicule is but unripe fruit plucked from the tree of wisdom.” {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.17}

He further teaches that in the model republic the women, as well as all property, shall be held in common, and he adds: “It follows from what has been already granted, that the best of both sexes ought to be brought together as often as possible, and the worst as seldom as possible, and that the issue of the former union ought to be reared and that of the latter abandoned.” {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.18}

Those children that should be thought fit to be saved alive, were to be brought up by the State, in a general nursery, and were never to know their parents, neither were the parents ever to have any further knowledge of their own children. Then the people were to be “without natural affection.” After people attained a certain age, the State was to release its control of their “marriages,” and they were to be allowed promiscuous intercourse, only the issue, if any resulted from such unions, was to be destroyed. We beg the reader’s pardon for intruding such things upon his notice, but it is absolutely necessary in order to dispel the glamor that has been thrown around Plato. There is a growing tendency to regard Plato as almost a Christian, and as really a forerunner of Christianity. We wish to disabuse as many as possible of this idea, for his influence will be as fatal now as it ever was, to whoever comes under its spell. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.19}

We have now all the data necessary to enable us to understand how the “philosophy” of which Plato’s is the best sample, would naturally lead to the most absurd and even abominable actions. In the first place we call to mind the fact that the “philosophers” started out in their “search after truth” with no preconceived ideas concerning it, and with no standard but their own minds, by which to test the truthfulness of what they might learn. They professed to be perfectly unprejudiced. According to the Scripture record, they “spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.” Acts 17:21. Like children with toys, they eagerly seized upon each new thought, no matter how contrary it might be to that which they had previously entertained. For the time this new thought excluded everything else, and then gave place to another new idea. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 566.20}

Many so-called “scientists” of modern times are pursuing a similar erratic course. As a consequence many things that a few years ago were held by “scientists” as sacred truth, are now by the same men counted as folly; and there is no evidence that many “truths” which are now so surely “demonstrated,” may not a few years hence be regarded as palpable errors, and be replaced by others equally erroneous. Indeed, there has never been any agreement among “eminent scientists” even on the most vital points, especially as to the formation and age of the world, and the means by which men and animals were placed upon it. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.1}

We believe most heartily in true science and philosophy. “Science is knowledge duly arranged and referred to general truths and principles upon which it was founded, and from which it is derived.” This is a true definition of true science. Anything which has not the characteristics noted in this definition-anything into which conjecture enters-is not properly science. According to the definition of science, there are certain well-established truths and principles upon which the knowledge which constitutes any science must be founded, and with which it must agree. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.2}

Now the first great principle upon which all true science must rest, is that there is a God who created all things. This is a self-evident truth-a truth that is patent to the mind even of the uneducated savage. Pope’s familiar lines, {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.3}

*“In the poor Indian! whose untutored mind
So God in the clouds, or hears him in the wind.” {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.4}*

Express the fact that the existence and power of God are so plainly revealed in nature that the idolater is without excuse, and so the psalmist justly calls the atheist a fool, as one who cannot appreciate even the alphabet of evidence. These principles, therefore, must precede all investigation. They must be so clear to the mind of the would-be scientist, and so firmly believed by him, that they are regarded as self-evident. All doubt concerning them must be settled before he can proceed. They are the foundation of the structure which he is to rear; and no wise mechanic would proceed to lay timbers and build a house upon a foundation of whose stability he was doubtful. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.5}

From this stand point it is easy to see why Plato and all the other heathen philosophers did not succeed in finding the truth, and why they did not have any well-defined and systematic theory. In the very beginning they departed from the only source of wisdom: “When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.6}

It may be argued that Plato and the other philosophers held some things that were in themselves true, even if they were not systematically arranged with reference to some great central truth, and therefore it may be asked how the horrible wickedness which is portrayed in the first chapter of Romans can be directly chargeable to the teachings of philosophy. A few quotations from Scripture make this point clear, and complete the argument concerning heathen philosophy:- {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.7}

“Now *the works of the flesh* are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Galatians 5:19-21. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.8}

“And the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for *the imagination of man’s heart* is evil from his youth.” Genesis 8:21. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.9}

“*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.*” Jeremiah 17:9. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.10}

“*For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies*; these are the things which defile a man.” Matthew 15:19, 20. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.11}

“The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Romans 8:7. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.12}

These scriptures most clearly prove that man is by nature corrupt and depraved. The evil things recorded in Galatians 5:18-21 are “the works of the flesh;” not those which man has acquired, but things which proceed out of his heart; things which are inherent in his very nature. This being the case, it will be seen at once that whenever a person follows his *natural* inclination, and makes his own mind the criterion of right and wrong, he must inevitably do that which is evil. One of Bacon’s rules for guarding against certain forms of error, is based on a recognition of this fact. He says:- {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.13}

“In general let every student of nature take this as a rule, that whatever his mind seizes and dwells upon with particular satisfaction is to be held in suspicion.” {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.14}

As we have already seen, Plato’s philosophy made the human mind the lord of itself and of all the world beside; he held that the unaided human intellect was competent to decide between truth and error. Therefore his disciples, trusting in themselves alone-“professing themselves to be wise”-could not fail to choose error, and that of the worst description, because error is most congenial to the human mind. The natural heart will choose that which is most like itself; and, since “the heart is deceitful above all things,” when truth and error are placed side by side, the heart that is not renewed by divine grace, and completely subject to the law of God, will turn away from the truth and cling to the error. True, some things may be done that in themselves are all right, but, being done from a selfish motive, they become really evil. Love,-love to God and to our fellow-men,-is the sum of all good. Whatever is not the result of such love is only evil. We need not, therefore, be astonished at any error that is held or has been held by mankind. Plato’s positively immoral teaching was only the logical result of his “philosophy.” W. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 567.15}

**“Not so Very Strange” The Signs of the Times, 14, 36.**

E. J. Waggoner

A San Francisco paper remarks that “it is rather astonishing to read a statement that a middle-aged member and trustee of Dr. Talmage’s Brooklyn Tabernacle has been a ‘medium,’ off and on, ever since he was fourteen years old, when the spirit of a departed uncle took possession of him, and that for a long time past he has been making a very handsome because as a ‘trance’ physician.” {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 568.1}

We see nothing astonishing in it, for we have the best of evidence to show that the churches are full of Spiritualists. Many church-members are Spiritualists and attend Spiritualist *séances*, but dare not yet avow their belief, lest they should lose caste; and many others are Spiritualists, and do not know it. Is it any more astonishing that a member of Dr. Talmage’s church should be a Spiritualist medium, than that Dr. Talmage himself should preach Spiritualist sermons, telling about how he is going to come back to his people after he dies? If the Doctor expects to come back, it is perfectly natural that he should have some members in training to be able to recognize him, and to convey his message to the people. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 568.2}

**“A Papal Abomination” The Signs of the Times, 14, 36.**

E. J. Waggoner

Not long since there was a wedding party on the high seas, off the coast of San Francisco. The parties to the transaction live in Alameda, but they chartered a tug boat, engaged a Catholic priest to perform the ceremony, and went outside the jurisdiction of the United States to have it performed. The reason for this was that the bridegroom and bride were uncle and niece, and the laws of the United States do not allow marriage between relatives. The Bible also forbids marriage to persons so nearly related, but these people had a dispensation from the Pope allowing their marriage. The law of God makes no exceptions in favor of any; the law of the State does not relax its claims, in order to allow certain privileged ones to violate it; but the Pope sets himself above all law, human and divine. The Catholic Church claims to be the conservator of the marriage relation, yet it is the only power that authorizes incestuous marriages. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 569.1}

**“A Church Institution” The Signs of the Times, 14, 36.**

E. J. Waggoner

The enforcement of Sunday observance stands for the union of Church and State to the fullest degree that such a union was ever effected. It stands for the enforcement by law of all the ordinances and customs peculiar to the church. For Sunday is an institution of the church, adopted from paganism, it is true, but no less a church institution that is the mass. Moreover, it has assumed the rank of a divine institution, so that with many its claims are as valid as those of any ordinance instituted by the Saviour. This is shown by the names commonly given to it, namely, “Christian Sabbath,” and “Lord’s day.” Now if the right to enforce one “Christian institution” by civil law be granted, the right to enforce all other Christian institutions necessarily follows. If people may be compelled to observe the “Lord’s day,” then they may be compelled to celebrate the Lord’s Supper. Our friends who are so zealous for Sunday laws will erelong take this ground, or else they will be enforced to admit that they want Sunday observance enforced simply because they do want it, and, being in the majority, are found to compel other people to do as they do, whether they believe as they do or not. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 569.2}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 36.**

E. J. Waggoner

To the question, “Is there anything on the tobacco question that would be useful to place in the hands of a boy of eight ten or who is learning to smoke?” the *Youth’s Companion* gives the following reply: “Probably not. There is something, however, that might be useful to place in the hand of his father by way of a deterrent.” We have heard of such a thing being used with good effect. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.1}

“How to Treat Your Brother-in-law,” was announced as the subject of the discourse at one of the Oakland churches last Sunday evening. No doubt the preacher who selected that sensational topic would say that his discourse was a “practical” one; but we cannot imagine what connection it has with the gospel. Many ministers act as though their hearers are all converted, and sure of Heaven, and that all they have to do is to amuse them on the passage. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.2}

The *Rescue* mentions the rule of the Napa College, prohibiting “the use of tobacco in all forms, and of all intoxicating liquors,” and says: “If it be true that this is the only institution where these are made an issue, it clearly indicates where our children should be sent for education, without fear of contamination, or initiation into evil habits.” But it is not true, for Healdsburg College has from the beginning strictly prohibited the use of tobacco and liquor. Neither one has ever been used about the institution, and no one who used either would be received. A place of any kind were there is a more lively, healthful moral influence than at Healdsburg College would be hard to find. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.3}

At the time of writing this item, Sunday, September 9, work on the camp-ground is progressing finely. The large preaching pavilion, 100x150 feet in size, is up and carpeted. Besides this, there are the sixty-foot book tent, the restaurant tent, the store, and a dozen family tents ready for occupancy, and indeed some of them are already occupied. A good company of men are working faithfully, and we are sure that as far as depends on the committee, no item of necessary preparation for a successful camp-meeting will remain unfinished by the 20th of the month, when the meeting begins. We hope that at that time the people will have done everything on their part, and will be there in large numbers. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.4}

“Prophetic Lights,” is the name of one of the neatest books that has ever been issued by the Pacific Press Publishing Company. It contains one-hundred and eighty pages, 4x7 inches in size, with five full-page engravings, and numerous smaller ones. The book is devoted, as the name indicates, to a consideration of some of the lights that shine from the Bible for the instruction of men during the night of time. Each chapter is complete in itself, yet there is a general connection. Beginning with some of the prophecies concerning the first advent of Christ, and their fulfillment, and it takes up some of the prophecies concerning nations, that have been fulfilled in a remarkable manner, and then presents other predictions from the same word, which, from a knowledge of the past, we are sure must also be fulfilled to the letter. No theories are advanced, but every prophecy noted is explained by the plain declarations of the Bible itself, and history. The illustrations are all new, and were designed especially for this book. Each one is a study in itself, and aids much in making the Scripture narrative or prediction more vivid. Everyone who has seen the book is delighted with it. It is in two styles of binding, paper and cloth. The paper edition is intended solely for circulation with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Price in cloth binding, with the original design in cover, embossed in gold and jet, a $1.25. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.5}

One of the State deputies of the order of Good Templars reports that the night selected for the institution of a lodge was “prayer-meeting night,” but that the two churches in the community adjourned their meetings, and “came in and helped us, both ministers becoming charter member;” which the *Rescue* declares to be “a fact on which both the ministers and the order are to be congratulated.” Perhaps the order may be congratulated, but the cause of temperance cannot be. When any professedly temperance work becomes a rival of the church, its usefulness as a temperance concern is gone, for there cannot be any real temperance that is not Christian temperance. We have in this another proof of the fact, which we have known for a long time, that the success of the order of Good Templars bears no relation to the success of the cause of temperance. Temperance has nothing whatever to do with secrecy. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.6}

A new book just issued by the Pacific Press Publishing Company, and one which should have a wide circulation, is “Fathers of the Catholic Church,” a brief examination of the “falling away” of the church in the first three centuries, and of the causes which led to the great apostasy. People who have listened to learned discourses about the Fathers as staunch supporters of orthodoxy, should get this book and find out just what kind of men they were. Ample quotations are made from the writings of some of the most prominent of them; and valuable information is given concerning many customs of the church. Following is the table of contents:- {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.7}

The Heathen World; Heathen Philosophy; The Apostolic Church; The Fathers; The “Epistle of Barnabas;” Hermas and Clement; The “Epistles of Ignatius;” The “Teaching of the Apostles;” Irenaeus, Justin Martyr; Clement of Alexandria; Tertullian; Origen; The Great Apostasy-Heathen and Catholic Mysteries; Perversion of the Ordinance of Baptism; Sign of the Cross and Images; Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead; “Pious” Frauds; Immorality in the Church; Relic and Martyr-Worship; Sunday and Christmas; Sun-worship and Sunday; Growth of Papal Assumption; Appendices. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.8}

A copious index enables the reader to find out at a moment’s notice any statement by any author that is quoted in the book. Contains nearly 400 pages, bound in cloth, gold title on side. Price, $1.00. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.9}

A subscriber wishes to know if the SIGNS approves of Adventists being in common attendance on the meetings of the Salvation Army, of their speaking in their meetings, and partaking with them of ice-cream suppers. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.10}

We consider the methods of the Salvation Army to be the worst sort of a caricature on religion, and we cannot understand the condition of mind which will enable a well-instructed Christian man to find any pleasure in them. That they are a conscientious and respectable people among them, is nothing to the point; the fact remains that their proceedings have more in common with the circus or the minstrel show than with Christianity. We are not prepared to admit that they do any good. Their preaching is all emotional and destitute of practical Christian instruction, for the reason that few if any of their speakers have any Christian experience. We cannot believe that men who have just come from the bar-room and the gambling-table, and who have been “converted” by a big noise, are capable of leading people to Christ. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.11}

Besides this, the language used by the speakers of the army is irreverent, and sometimes as shocking to the sensibilities as intentional swearing. We have never seen anything entertaining or instructive either on the streets or in the few barrack meetings that we have attended; and we would most earnestly protest against anybody attending their meetings out of curiosity, since no one can afford to hear sacred names and subjects handled in so flippant a manner. The *War Cry* is the organ of the Army, and here is an utterance clipped from the issue of February 10:- {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.12}

“Right here, I want to say that I believe the word ‘faith’ is the most unfortunate one to be found between the leaves of the New Testament. I can’t believe in a God like the God of Moses, I can’t believe in a God who would come down in anger and swear, and call for vengeance, and who had to be reminded by a man like Moses of his promise to save a certain people.” {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.13}

This language, which was part of a speech, was “heartily commended” by another speaker. That it is downright infidelity no one need be told, the opinion, in short, is that the Army tends to beget irreverence and immodesty on the part of its members, and contempt for religion on the part of onlookers. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.14}

The finest thing that has come to our table for a long time is the new catalog descriptive of the Medical and Surgical Sanitarium, Battle Creek, Mich. Although we are quite familiar with the institution, and its workings, we read the description from beginning to end, and enjoyed it. Whoever sees and reads it, will second our statement that to see such an institution is almost worth making a trip to Michigan. And the best of it is, the description is not in the least exaggerated. The managers announce that they are willing to be held to a rigid account for every statement or representation made. The illustrations are from photographs, so that they are exact copies of what they claim to represent and they are gems. Whoever is so fortunate as to get one will be sure to preserve it, for it is worth keeping. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.15}

We are not above making mistakes, nor above correcting them when we have made them. Last week we said that the camp-meeting at Tramelan, Switzerland, would be in session at the time of the California camp-meeting. We were just one month out of the way. The Tramelan camp-meeting was held August 22-26. {SITI September 14, 1888, p. 576.16}

**“Work of the Holy Spirit” The Signs of the Times, 14, 37.**

E. J. Waggoner

What a marvelous change the Holy Spirit is able to work in those of whom it takes possession! We have a striking example of this in the case of the apostles. On the morning of the ascension they asked Jesus: “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” Even with the instruction that they had received since Christ’s resurrection, they clung with childish pertinacity to their own crude ideas of his work. They all looked for a temporal kingdom, and a speedy deliverance from the Roman yoke. They were familiar with the prophecies, yet they did not understand them. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 579.1}

Look at them ten days later, and know the difference. When the multitude began to enquire the meaning of what they saw, and others began to ridicule, the apostles at once rebuked the scoffers with dignity, and began to unfold the prophecies. There was no hesitation, no apologies. They spoke with authority, as though they had long been familiar with what they were teaching. What made this difference? They were “filled with the Holy Spirit.” This was all. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 579.2}

But let no one think that the Holy Spirit can accomplish such results for all indiscriminately, and do away with the necessity of the exertion on the part of the individual. By no means. These men had been with one mind persevering in prayer for this very object. They were also of that class mentioned in John 7:17; they had been, and were still, followers of Christ; so it was to be expected that they should know of the doctrine. And lastly, they had studied the word of God for themselves, and had done all they could to understand it. To use a homely illustration, the wood was laid in position, and the kindlings were all prepared for a fire; all that was needed was the application of the spark to set the whole into a blaze.The Holy Spirit accomplished these wonderful results, because the way was prepared for it to work. Let us remember that that same Spirit will be given as freely to-day, if the necessary conditions are only fulfilled. Whose fault is it that Christians do not have more of the Spirit? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 579.3}

**“The Majesty of Bible Precepts” The Signs of the Times, 14, 37.**

E. J. Waggoner

There is no weakness in them. No one of them is emasculated by the modern prefix “try.” The Bible says, “Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye doubled-minded.” “Cease to do evil, learn to do well.” “Depart from evil and do good.” And thus through the whole book from Genesis to Revelation, a moral precept is never prefixed with the enfeebling “try,” now so universally common. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 580.1}

Just think of the Bible saying, Try to depart from evil! Try to cleanse your hands, ye sinners! Try to speak the truth, to one another! And instead of, “Do not kill.” “Do not steal.” “Do not commit adultery,” suppose we had, Do try not to kill! Do try not to steal! Do try not to commit adultery! It is time to stop experimenting in morals. None of it is from above. It is all from beneath, a device from the devil to break down the force and majesty of the precepts of the Bible. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 580.2}

That glorious book never uses the word “try” in any such connection. It knows nothing of experimental morals. “Try” is never properly used except where a failure may be justifiable. A failure in morals never was and never can be justified. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 580.3}

**“Custom Against Truth” The Signs of the Times, 14, 37.**

E. J. Waggoner

The student of church history is well aware of the fact that there was less perversion of the ordinance of baptism in the early centuries, than of any other. Of course, in the general religious declension of that age, the real spirit of this ordinance, as of every other, was largely lost. When faith gave way to form, as did when the pagans, with whom religion was nothing but form, came into the church in droves, the church in general lost sight of the fact that it is faith that saves, and attached saving virtue to the water of baptism. Of this we have evidence in the writings of Tertullian. Various additions to the rite were made, such as the blessing of the water, the anointing of the candidate, marking him with the sign of the cross, giving him milk and honey, etc.; but the act of baptism itself remained unchanged. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.1}

All church historians, no matter what their own belief and practice, are forced to agree that sprinkling and what is termed infant baptism were unknown at least in the first two centuries. Nevertheless, after giving the facts in the case, they often make queer attempts to nullify their force, by ingenuous theories and artless sophistry. A good instance of this is given in a new work, entitled “Christian Archaeology,” by Chas. W. Bennett, D.D. Professor of Historical Theology in Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois, with an introductory commendation by Dr. Ferdinand Piper, of the University of Berlin. It is the fourth volume of the “Biblical and Theological Library,” edited by George R. Crooks, D.D., and Bishop John F. Hurst, D.D., of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and is very highly recommended by the religious press. Both the author and the editors are fully committed to the custom of sprinkling, and of administering the rite to infants, and therefore their testimony is of the more value, since it is directly opposed to their practice, and to their argument in the book itself. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.2}

On page 392 of “Christian Archaeology” we find the following:- {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.3}

“While no positive statement relative to infant baptism is met in the Scriptures, or in the writings of any Fathers earlier than Irenaeus and Tertullian, by the end of the second century mention is made of the baptism of children, and in the third, of infants. But even in the fourth, the practice of infant baptism is not general, since eminent Fathers, whose parents were Christians, did not receive baptism till adult age.... From the fourth century the propriety of the baptism of infants was unquestioned, and the practice was not unusual; nevertheless, adult baptism was the more common practice for the first six centuries.” {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.4}

On page 396, under the heading of “The Mode of Baptism,” we find the following statement:- {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.5}

“There is not the slightest evidence that, during the apostolic period, the mere mode of administration underwent any change. The customary mode was used by the apostles in the baptism of the first converts. They were familiar with the baptism of John’s disciples, and of the Jewish proselytes. This was ordinarily by dipping or immersion. This is indicated not only by the words used in describing the rite, but the earliest testimony of the documents which have been preserved gives preference to this mode.” {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.6}

Finally, on page 467, we find the following:- {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.7}

“We are compelled to believe that while immersion was the usual mode of administering baptism from the first to the twelfth century, there was very early a large measure of Christian liberty allowed in the church, by which the mode of baptism could be readily adjusted to the peculiar circumstances.” {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.8}

Every student will know how much value to place on the “Christian liberty” that existed in the early centuries of the church, and which consisted in the unchristian practice of perverting the plainest precepts of the Bible, to suit the notions of the interpreter. This is not liberty at all, but license, and most unwarranted license. Christian liberty lies in only one direction, and that is liberty to do right; and right is nothing else than what the Bible enjoins. When men take the liberty to depart from the rules laid down in the Bible, they cease to be Christian, and their acts are not to be followed. Therefore that which in the preceding paragraph is called “Christian liberty” was nothing but pagan license. It was the same kind of “Christian liberty” as that which leads people to attend horseraces, theaters, and dances, etc., and to gamble in church fairs. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.9}

The effect of the author to overthrow what he could not deny, is most amusing. On pages 390-406 there are ten cuts, which are copied from ancient frescoes representing (or rather caricaturing) baptismal scenes, some of them evidently intended to represent the baptism of Christ. The author has inserted these pictures in order to counteract as much as possible the testimony which truth compelled him to give concerning baptism; for in none of these pictures is the candidate represented as being immersed. In some of them, the candidate is represented as just coming out of the water, so that it is impossible to tell whether the rite that had evidently just been performed was immersion or pouring. In others, however, the administrator is represented as laying his hand on the candidate’s head, or else pouring water upon it from a vessel. From these cuts the author finds authority enough to warrant the substitution of sprinkling or pouring for immersion. This is what might be termed *pictorial theology*. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.10}

But in these very pictures the inconsistency of those who appeal to custom instead of to the Bible is most clearly revealed. We quote the author’s own description of the first caricature:- {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.11}

“Christ stands in the Jordan, whose waters reach to about the middle of the body, while John, standing on the land, and holding in his left hand a jeweled cross, is pouring water from a shell held in the Baptist’s right hand. The symbolic dove, descending directly upon the head of Jesus, completes the baptismal representation. The Jordan, IORD, *symbolized by a vicegerent bearing a reed, introduces into the scene a heathen demon*.”-*P. 404*. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.12}

The italics are ours. It is passing strange, and a wonderful instance of the blindness which custom induces, that a Christian author can put forth as authority for the practice of Christians, a *picture* in which he acknowledges that there are heathen elements, and this too in the face of his previous acknowledgment that the scriptural and apostolic baptism is immersion. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.13}

This, however, is not all. In all of these ancient caricatures (with two exceptions), the candidate who is being sprinkled or *poured* is perfectly nude. In the two exceptions he has on a single garment. Therefore, according to the testimony of these pictures, there is the same authority for sprinkling instead of immersing that there is for stripping the candidate of his clothes. As a matter of fact, which is attested by Bingham, people were baptized naked before sprinkling was substituted for baptism. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.14}

To sum up the case: Immersion is the only baptism known to the Bible writers. Sprinkling, and the administration of the rite to infants, was not known in the church until the third century, and did not become common before the sixth century. It is therefore an institution of the Catholic Church. All the authority that Protestants can claim for it is the custom of that church. Some pictures, however, have been found, which represent the candidate for church-membership as being sprinkled; and in order to get sprinkling as near apostolic times as possible, some archaeologists are quoted as *supposing* that these pictures were made in the second century, notwithstanding the statement of the author that sprinkling was not known so early in the church. But however this may be, the pictures represent the candidate as naked, and introduce a confessedly heathen element. So that whoever cites them as warrant for the practice of Christians stultifies himself. To such contemptible shifts does *custom* force its devotees to resort. How much better to acknowledge the Scripture truth that “the customs of the people are vain,” and to follow the Bible and that alone. W. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.15}

**“The Apostolic Church” The Signs of the Times, 14, 37.**

E. J. Waggoner

From a failure properly to discriminate between pure religion and the practices of many who profess religion, two grave errors have arisen: 1. Infidels have concluded that Christianity is but little, if any, in advance of many forms of heathenism, or of atheism. Judging Christianity by false professors thereof, they lose sight of the fact that there is such a thing as “pure religion.” 2. Believers are in danger of thinking that whatever has been done by “the church” must of necessity be in harmony with religion. This second error is as bad as the first, for in either case the individual will fall far short of the true standard. To know what true religion is, we must look only at the Bible and the life of Christ as therein portrayed. Of all those who have stood this earth, he alone had no sin; in him religion was revealed pure and undefiled. There have been men “of whom the world was not worthy,” and yet the record of their lives is not altogether perfect. If we should take for a model the most perfect mortal, we should be led into error; how much greater, then, must be our danger, if we follow those whose lives were far below the standard of pure and undefiled religion. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.16}

It is not to be supposed, of course, that Christians would think of taking the course of irreligious people as models for their own lives; but a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and since the conscientious, people in the professed churches, is evident that whosoever follows “the church” instead of Christ will be led into error. That the professed church of Christ has always had in it elements of corruption which would make it an unsafe guide, is as evident as is the fact that Christ has a church here on earth which is composed of frail, erring mortals. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.17}

If we go back to the first followers of Christ, we find one who was so utterly base as to sell his Lord for a paltry sum of money. Naturally avaricious, Judas yielded little by little to the temptations of Satan, who always attacks men on the side of their natural inclination, until the devil finally had complete control of him; yet all this time he was numbered among the followers of Christ. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.18}

But the weakness of the early disciples was not confined to Judas. They were all men, and consequently were liable to err even when full of zeal for the Master. James and John wished to call down fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans, because these people were not willing to receive Christ. Jesus rebuked his rash followers, saying, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.” See Luke 9:51-56. Peter, who was so often reproved by Jesus for his hasty spirit, at one time denied his Lord with oaths; and, still later, he used dissimulation to such a degree that Paul was forced to withstand him to the face. Galatians 2:11-14. Even the grave and upright Barnabas was carried away with the dissimulation, which met with such a stern rebuke from Paul. And later these two yoke-fellows who had labored together under the direction of Heaven, showed that they were still human, by falling into so sharp a contention that they were obliged to separate. Acts 15:36-41. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.19}

Let no one think that we speak slightingly of these men. They were divinely appointed to their work, and we honor them as devoted men who hazarded their lives for the sake of Christ, whose chosen servants they were. We love them for what they were, as well as for their work’s sake. It was necessary that Christ should commit to men the preaching of the gospel, and those to whom he first committed it were men of like passions with others. They were men who, like those to whom they preached, had to depend on Christ *and go on unto perfection*. And we know of no reason why Inspiration has placed on record some of their failures, except that we might learn not to look even to the best of men, for an example. The message which they bore was pure, but they, in common with all mankind, stood in need of its sanctifying influence; and which they strove to be “ensamples to the flock,” they directed the minds of all only to Jesus, the author and finisher of the faith. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.20}

If there were imperfections among the immediate disciples of Christ, it is no more than could be expected that those who believed on him through their word would also exhibit human imperfections before they were perfectly sanctified through the truth. And if among the twelve there was one who had a devil, why need we wonder that hypocrites should continually contaminate the church by their presence? Said the apostle Peter, in his letter to the church: “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you; whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.” 2 Peter 2:1-3. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.1}

Paul in his address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, said: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” Acts 20:28-30. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.2}

These two scriptures show that the inspired apostles knew that there would be not only imperfect, erring members in the church, but also false teachers, who, like Judas, would deny the Lord that bought them. Among the elders of the church, there were to arise unprincipled men who would bring in “damnable heresies.” We need not be surprised, therefore, when we find the professed church, soon after the days of the apostles, largely filled with the abominations of heathendom. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.3}

Even in the days of the apostles, while their straight testimony was being delivered, this spirit of corruption crept into the church. To the Thessalonians Paul wrote that long before Christ’s second advent there would come a “falling away,” and that the “man of sin” would be revealed, sitting in the temple of God, virtually professing to be God, and opposing all that pertains to God and his true worship, and then he added that “the mystery of iniquity doth already work.” 2 Thessalonians 2:3-7. Paul knew that even in the churches of his own planting there were elements of corruption that would eventually contaminate the whole body. If we examine the record, we can detect these incipient evils for ourselves. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.4}

The church at Corinth was raised up by the personal labors of Paul, yet he was obliged to reprove the members for the spirit of contention and division (1 Corinthians 1:11-13), which was carried so far that they went to law with one another in the heathen courts (1 Corinthians 6:6-8). So little spiritual discernment did they have, that they made the Lord’s Supper an occasion for feasting and drunkenness (1 Corinthians 11:17-22), and they tolerated incest of a kind that was disapproved even by the licentious heathen (1 Corinthians 5:1, 2), and did not feel that for it they had any cause for shame. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.5}

In Paul’s second letter to Timothy we find mention of one of the “damnable heresies” which were brought into the church. Says Paul: “But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.” 2 Timothy 2:16-18. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.6}

A single passage in Paul’s letter to the churches in Galatia shows the danger to which all the converts from among the heathen were exposed. Said he: “Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.” Galatians 4:8-11. Of course the Galatians, in common with all heathen, were given to immoral practices and senseless ceremonies before their conversion. And as men when they lose their faith and love, begin to go back to the things to which they were addicted before conversion, so the Galatians were on the point of going back to the “weak and beggarly elements” to which they had formerly been in bondage. They had gone so far back as to “observe days, and months, and times [see Deuteronomy 18:10], and years,” and Paul feared that his labor for them had all been thrown away. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.7}

Still later the apostle John wrote: “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.” 2 John 7. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.8}

Again he wrote to the well-beloved Gaius: “I wrote unto the church; but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words; and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.” 3 John 9, 10. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.9}

Here was a man in the church setting himself in direct opposition to the apostle John. He was not a private member, but one who had to such a degree the pre-eminence which he loved, that he could cause people to be cast out of the church. This leader in the church refused to receive the instruction which the apostle had written, and cast out of the church those who were willing to receive it. Not content with this, he railed against the inspired servant of the Lord. Surely it cannot with reason be claimed that “the church,” even in the apostolic age, ought to be taken as a model. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.10}

Once more testimony concerning some in the early church must suffice. Another apostle thought it necessary to exhort the faithful to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and the following is the reason: “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” Jude 4. Further on he brings this fearful charge against these men: “But these speak evil of those things which they know not; but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.” Jude 10. And still further on, the apostle plainly states that bribery was practiced in the church. He says: “These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.” Verse 16. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.11}

Our object in quoting these passages has not been to dwell upon the shortcomings of men in the early church, but simply to make prominent the fact that bad men were in the church from the earliest period. There were many good men also in the church at that time; but the question is, How are we to decide as to who were bad and who were good? “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” By comparing their lives with the standard of the Bible, we readily ascertain what actions were good and what were evil. W. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.12}

(*To be concluded in No. 38*.)

**“Christianization of Japan” The Signs of the Times, 14, 37.**

E. J. Waggoner

Fifteen years ago, “when the edict forbidding the profession of Christianity was revoked, there was not a prominent man in Japan who dared acknowledge that he believed in Christ.” Now, however, we are told that “sentiment has changed, and the leading men desire the Christianization of the empire.” But why? Because it is becoming popular. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 593.13}

**“The Commentary. The Wrath of the Dragon” The Signs of the Times, 14, 37.**

E. J. Waggoner

***THE THIRD ANGEL’S MESSAGE.*
THE WRATH OF THE DRAGON.
(Lesson 11. Sabbath, October 6, 1888.)**

1. Just after what notable working will the Saviour come? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.1}

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.2}

2. How great will be the signs and wonders? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.3}

“For there shall are rise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matthew 24:24. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.4}

3. Why is it they deceived them that perish? 2 Thessalonians 2:10, last part. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.5}

4. What special manifestation of the truth have we found that there will be just before the coming of the Lord? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.6}

“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.” “And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.” Revelation 14:9, 10, 14. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.7}

5. Are the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus the truth? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.8}

“Thou art near, O Lord; and all thy commandments are truth.” Psalm 119:151. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.9}

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” John 14:6. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.10}

6. Are the commandments of God in the faith of Jesus *righteousness?* {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.11}

“My tongue shall speak of thy word, for all thy commandments our righteousness.” Psalm 119:172. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.12}

“For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.” Galatians 5:5, 6. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.13}

7. What is the object of Satan is deceiving, line miracles and wonders? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.14}

“And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.” Revelation 13:14. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.15}

8. What is the object of the Third Angel’s Message?-*To save men from the worship of the beast and his image.* {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 584.16}

9. Then with what will be Satan’s last conflict before the coming of the Lord.”-*With the Third Angel’s Message and with those who receive the love of it.* {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.1}

10. What does this message lead men to do? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.2}

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.3}

11. In what manner does the second beast of Revelation 13 speak? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.4}

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.” Verse 11. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.5}

12. What power, and seat, and authority as the first beast? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.6}

“And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.” Verse 2, last part. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.7}

13. What is the great dragon? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.8}

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Revelation 12:9. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.9}

14. What then is the source of the dragon spirit? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.10}

15.Through what power did he manifest his wrath when the Saviour was on the earth?-*Pagan Rome*. Verses 4, 5; Matthew 2:1, 2, 8, 16; John 18:31; 19:12, 15, 16. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.11}

16. Through what power did he manifest the wrath in the Dark Ages?-*The beast*. Revelation 13:2, 5-7; 12:14-16; Daniel 7:23, 24; Matthew 21:21, 22. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.12}

17. Through what power will his wrath be poured out against the last of the church?-*The image of the beast in association with the beast*. Revelation 13:12, 14. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.13}

18. What will specially excite his wrath against the poor remnant in this last effort? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.14}

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.15}

19. What will the Third Angel’s Message do just at this time?-*It will go to every nation, and people, urging them to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus*. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.16}

20. What is it then that will cause the devil to be a particularly wrathful, and to put forth all of his power?-*The Third Angel’s Message*. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.17}

21. Which side will get the victory? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.18}

“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.” Revelation 15:2. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 585.19}

**“The Commentary. The Working of Satan” The Signs of the Times, 14, 37.**

E. J. Waggoner

***THE THIRD ANGEL’S MESSAGE.*
THE WORKING OF SATAN.
(Lesson 15. Sabbath, October 13, 1888.)**

1. What will be said to the people just before the Lord comes? Compare Isaiah 8:19 with verse 17. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.1}

2. What is the object of their seeking unto them that have familiar spirits?-*To obtain communication with the dead*. Verse 19, last part. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.2}

3. What is that doctrine called?-*Spiritualism*. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.3}

4. Do the dead know anything? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.4}

“For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.” Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.5}

5. What are the familiar spirits which these persons have, and with which men are invited to communicate? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.6}

“For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” Revelation 16:14. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.7}

6. What have we found to be one great object of these miracles and lying wonders? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.8}

“And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.” Revelation 13:14. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.9}

7. What does this prove?-*That Spiritualism will act a most important part in making the image to the beast, and enforcing the worship of the beast and his image*. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.10}

8.When the National Reformers secure their National Constitutional acknowledgment, what do they expect? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.11}

“Let us acknowledge God as our Father and Sovereign, and Source of all good, and his blessing will be upon us. Crime and corruption will come to an end, and the benign reign of Jesus, our rightful Lord, will be established.” “Either like them [the Jews] we will reject him and perish, or, become a kingdom of our Lord and his Christ, we shall fill the earth and endure for ever.” “And when we reached the summit... the train will move out into the mild yet glorious light of millennial days, and the cry will be raised, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.’”-*New York National Reform Convention, 1888, pp. 49, 75, 47.* {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.12}

9. When they shall have set up what they call his kingdom, what then do they expect? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.13}

“When we finish our testimony, *then Christ will come and finish his work.”-Secretary J. M. Foster, in Reformed Presbyterian and committee, December, 1887, p. 403.* {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.14}

10. By whom will there be great signs and wonders wrought to deceived? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.15}

“For there shall are rise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matthew 24:24. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.16}

11. Who will finally manifest, and work with, all power? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.17}

“Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit is mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of is coming.” 2 Thessalonians 2:8. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.18}

12. As these great wonders are to be wrought by false christs, and as Satan is to work the greatest of them, then in what form will Satan present himself in this?-*In the form of a false christ*. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.19}

13. When the National Reform kingdom shall have been formed, and Satan, by this great wonder-working power, shall be transformed into an angel of light, and thus shall come impersonating Christ, then what will be the universal shout?—“*Christ is come;” “the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ.*” {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.20}

14. Then who will be the king of the National Reform government? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.21}

15. Is Spiritualism expecting such a new messiah? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.22}

Spiritualism promises a new messiah, and announces his coming “to this very generation.” The *World’s Advance Thought* is the *avant-courier* of the new spiritual dispensation, and in its issue of April 5, 1886, says:- {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.23}

“Another sun of righteousness is called for on earth, and the messenger cannot be far off whose life mission it shall be to practically illustrate the new truths that will be vouchsafed. He will not be a mere racial messiah, nor a half-world messiah, as was the great Nazarene; but steam locomotion and lightning communication, and the harmonizing influences of commercial intercourse, have made a whole world messiah possible, and such the next one shall be. Though themselves ignorant of the fact, as the body, the great and multiplying army of mediums are his *avant couriers*.” “The unanimity of the answers may thrill the world with the promise of a new messiah.” {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.24}

12. What says infidelity? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.25}

“Now I think I can safely say that if the National Reform movement succeeds, and God will sign and send his edicts, so that there can be no doubt about their authority, the disbelievers will cheerfully obey them, and if Jesus will come and sit visibly on the throne, where we can see and talk to him, there will be no unbelievers, and all will obey.”-*P. F. Shumber, First Creek, La.*, in a letter to the editor of the *American Sentinel, September 1, 1887.* {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.26}

17. What says the National W.C.T.U.? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.27}

“The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, local, State, National, and world-wide, has one vital, organic thought, one all-absorbing purpose, one undying enthusiasm, and it is that *Christ shall be* this world’s king. Yes, verily, this world’s king in its realm of cause and effect; king of its courts, its camps, its commerce; king of its colleges and cloisters; king of its customs and its constitutions.”-*Union Signal, December 1, 1887, p. 2*. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.28}

18. Taking all these with the other different bodies that now favor the National Reform movement, and how general will be the acceptance of the king of the National Reform government? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.29}

19. What have we found is given to save men from this terrible deception? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.30}

20. Then who alone will refuse to acknowledge the National Reform king?-*Those who receive the love of the truth of the Third Angel’s Message*. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 586.31}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 37.**

E. J. Waggoner

We are glad to announce that Elder S. N. Haskell has returned to this country, after an absence of eighteen months, and that he expects to be with us during the last week of our California camp-meeting. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.1}

We print two Sabbath-school lessons and to sets of International Notes in this number of the SIGNS, that there may be no break in the series on account of the omission of the paper next week. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.2}

In accordance with our usual custom of omitting one paper during the annual camp-meeting, no paper will be issued next week. The subscribers, however, will receive their full number. This paper is No. 37; and No. 38 of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will bear date of October 4. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.3}

The unusual experience of a very heavy thunder shower was the lot of the people of Central and Northern California on the 14th and 15th inst. While some damage has been done to fruit, especially to the raisin crop, the damage is not very extensive, and is more than counterbalanced by the good that has been done in a sanitary direction. The air has been purified, accumulated filth has been washed away, and the face of nature is refreshed as in the springtime. The shower, just preceding the camp-meeting, will very much increase the comfort of the campers. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.4}

The *Congregationalist* says: “The fact that many foreigners are accustomed to use Sunday as a day for picnics, though a fact greatly to be lamented, by no means proves that they are disloyal to American institutions, or at all in sympathy with anarchy.” We don’t quote this as an item of news, but because, through the efforts of the National Reformers, the idea is becoming so prevalent that Sunday work or recreation is at least “un-American,” if not absolutely traitorous. The fact that men who do not keep Sunday may be as good and loyal citizens as it is possible for men to be, will need to be repeated a great many times in the next few years. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.5}

The *Southern Evangelist*, the organ of Sam Jones and Sam Small, amuses itself and its readers with the following bit of sophistry concerning the millennium: “In spite of the spirit of jealousy between the nations of Europe, and their immense armaments, we believe that the world is growing more peaceful. One thing that makes it so is the fact that the enginery of war is so powerful now that armies would soon be destroyed.” That is to say, that extensive preparations for war are the best indications of peace. Personally, we should feel much safer in the presence of a man of bad character, if we knew that he was unarmed, then we should if he was armed. And just think what kind of a millennium these men will be satisfied with, when the chief reason they can give for the peace which they predict is that men will be afraid to fight. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.6}

The workers’ meeting on the camp-ground began at the appointed time, with about forty present. The comparatively small attendance at the first may be accounted for in two ways: First, a workers’ meeting is a new feature, and probably many had not fully comprehended its nature; and second, our regular camp-meeting covers twelve days, so that for those who attend the preliminary meeting, there is in reality a three weeks’ camp-meeting. But the attendance has steadily increased, and the interest, which was excellent from the beginning, has deepened. Three public meetings have been held daily, besides numerous meetings for consultation. Both the temporal and spiritual interests of the meeting are being provided for; and we believe that hereafter the workers’ meeting will be as sure a thing as the camp-meeting, even though camp-meeting itself should be even longer than the present appointment. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.7}

The Chicago correspondent of the New York *Evangelist* tells of the success of the effort to close the saloons in Hyde Park on Sunday. That place has about eighty thousand inhabitants, and about two hundred saloons, many of which are said to be “of the worst class.” The writer says that “to close these and all other saloons, has been apparently a very easy work.” He says also that the people proposed to keep the saloons closed on Sunday. And now we want to know why those good people do not keep those saloons “of the worst class,” and all others, closed on every day of the week. We are unable to understand why a people who are strong and determined enough to close two hundred saloons with apparently very little effort, cannot make a little appreciable effort, and close them all the time. Is it because they are willing to compromise the matter, and allow the saloon men full swing for six days, if they can be left in the undisturbed possession of their Sunday? {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.8}

The New York Breweries Company has opened an agency in London for the sale of New York lager beer, and several other large brewery companies are about to do the same. Of course, in order to get rid of their slop in England, they must sell it as low at least as English beer is sold, and so New York beer will be sold in London at a trifle over half what it sells for in New York. The fact that American brewers can ship beer to London, and sell it for half what they receive for it in this country, and still make money, shows what an immense profit is made on the stuff. Yet in all the cry about hard times, and the strikes organized by so-called labor unions, we have heard no voice raised against the beer. If the money which laboring men give to the brewers were given to their own families, there would be very little need for complaint. There is no other monopoly that grinds the poor man so much as the liquor traffic does. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.9}

For some time a so-called “gospel” tent has been erected in this city, in which certain “Evangelists” hold forth nightly. A few evenings ago one of the preachers gave utterance to the following comforting remarks:- {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.10}

“People are dying now and going to either Heaven or hell. Some of you may have a husband in hell, wife in hell, brothers or sisters in hell, a father or mother in hell, or children in hell.” {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.11}

And then he concluded his address with some thoughts calculated to encourage his hearers. He said:- {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.12}

“Dear ungodly people, you who think God’s people are a trouble to you because we warn you of your danger and tell you about the way of salvation, have a little patience. You will soon be in hell, and God’s people will not trouble you there, for there will not be a Christian in hell.” {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.13}

It is such stuff as this, miscalled gospel preaching, that makes infidels. {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.14}

**“Spiritualist Church-Members” The Signs of the Times, 14, 37.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Oakland *Tribune* of the 15th has the following, which is exactly in harmony with testimony that we have often given in the columns of the SIGNS:- {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.15}

“A young widow lady of this city in conversation with a *Tribune* reporter a few days since, said she had received frequent visits from her husband, who died two years ago-that he fully materialized, and while sitting in a chair near her, talked and acted just as he used to. ‘There can be no mistake,’ she said, ‘about this; but you must not mention it in connection with my name, as it might make me a great deal of trouble. I am a member of the Presbyterian Church here, and wish to remain so. But if it was known that I had become a believer in Spiritualism and was having *s*é*ances* in my house, there is so much prejudice against it that I would have to suffer.’ The lady would not release the reporter till he had explicitly promised not to make any such use of what she had told him as to compromise her in her church relations. Mentioning the circumstances, but not the name, to one of her city pastors a few days later, he said: ‘I am not at all surprised, for I have reason to believe that there are many secret Spiritualists among our church-members. They are very quiet about it, though, fearing to lose caste.’” {SITI September 21, 1888, p. 592.16}