**“Front Page” The Signs of the Times, 16, 39.**

E. J. Waggoner

God is not confined to one land or territory or country. Jesus died for the world; and he who has the Spirit of Christ will be one upon whose heart lies the burden of evangelizing the world. Oh, for larger hearts! Oh, for more of the Spirit of Christ to enlarge our hearts! {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 500.8}

There are ten million pupils in the Sunday-schools of the country. A better showing ought to be made in orals, but the fact is thousands leave the Sunday-school for the saloon, and the downward path in other directions. There is certainly a failure somewhere. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 500.9}

The Minneapolis ministers look upon the intention of the coming International Exposition management to open the ground on Sunday “as most unwise for the enterprise, contrary to the wishes of millions entitled to respect, and in direct opposition to the word of God. We sincerely appeal to the commissioners in charge to protect this day of rest.” It might be well to ask these commissioners how an open fair on Sunday would be worse than an open fair on Monday, according to the word of God. The true Sabbath of the Lord needs no such “protection.” {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 500.10}

The giving of the gospel of Christ to the world, the conversion of souls, will never be accomplished by elaborate system or increased machinery, or the multiplication of societies. We have Christian associations of young men and young women. We have societies of Christian Endeavor; we have W. C. T. U.’s, and Y. W. C. T. U.’s, and King’s Daughters, and no one knows how many other societies. Every additional society is confession on the part of that church within whose pale it is organized that the work of that church fails to meet the divine requirement. Organization according to God’s plan, thorough and complete, is good; but it cannot convert souls. “Power comes from God.” It is not by might or by strength or by power or by wisdom of man that souls will be saved, but by the power of the Spirit of God. That Spirit will be given to him who seeks faithfully, earnestly, and in God’s way. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 500.11}

The following from the *Lutheran Witness* of September 7 shows the trend of the English High Church:- {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 500.12}

“A priest of the Anglican Church proposed the question, whether the bishop of Lincoln, who is arraigned before the court of the primate of England for ritualistic practices, has not the right of appealing to the pope, the ‘patriarch’ of the whole church? The priest, who is the spokesman for many others, maintains that the thirty-nine articles refuse to acknowledge the temporal, but not the spiritual, jurisdiction of the pope in England. This certainly proves that the ritualistic high-church men of the established Episcopal Church of England are only Jesuits in disguise.” {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 500.13}

The Pope is becoming the great pacifier of the nations, and it looks as though he might soon be of the churches. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 500.14}

**“That Blessed Hope” The Signs of the Times, 16, 39.**

E. J. Waggoner

“But I would not that ye should be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” There are several points that may be noted on this text: 1. Those who are dead are represented as asleep. The term is very common in the Bible. Read Job 7:21; Daniel 12:John 11:11-14, etc. The righteous are asleep in Jesus. 2. This being the case, it follows that the dead are unconscious, for a sleeping man knows nothing of what is going on around him. The general tenor of the inspired writings is in harmony with this idea. For examples see Job 14:14-21; Psalm 6:5; 88:1-12; 115:17; 146:3, 4; Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, 10. 3. It is folly to say that we cannot know anything of the future. Paul said that he would not have his brethren ignorant; if we believe his words, we must admit that something can be known of man’s future. 4. It is not wrong for Christians to sorrow; the only sin is in giving away to uncontrollable grief, as did the heathen. They, having no hope, indulged in the most extravagant expressions of sorrow-tearing out the hair, rending their garments, uttering loud shrieks, cutting their flesh, etc. A Christian’s grief may be even more acute than that of the heathen, for Christianity tends to elevate, and to quicken the sensibilities, but it will always be tempered by hope. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 500.15}

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” From what place will God bring them? “From heaven,” many persons say. But the apostle says that those whom he brings have been *asleep*, and if the view of our friends be true, it must be that the saints in heaven do nothing but sleep, and that is absurd. The psalmist says, “In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.” We think it will need no argument to convince any rational person that David’s conception of “fullness of joy” and “pleasures forevermore” would not be met by a long period of unconscious sleep. Those who are asleep are in the grave, and from thence God will bring them, even as he did our Lord. Just as surely as Jesus died and rose again, so surely will God raise from the dead all the sleeping saints. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 500.16}

“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep.” Paul says, “we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord.” From this some have supposed that Paul expected that the Lord would come in a very few years, and that he would live until that event; but this was not his expectation. We must believe him when he says, “For this we say unto you *by the word of the Lord*.” Paul received his instruction directly from heaven. Now to say that Paul was mistaken in regard to the time of Christ’s second advent, is equivalent to saying either that he was not inspired, or that the Holy Spirit was mistaken. Neither of these positions can be taken by those who believe the Bible. That Paul had a correct idea of the time of the second advent, is clear from 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8. In his vivid narrative, Paul speaks of things to come as though they were present. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 500.17}

The word “prevent” is from the Latin words *pre*, before, and *venio*, to go, meaning “to go before,” and was formerly used in this sense. It is so used in King James’ version. See Psalm 88:13; 119:147, 148. But as one who went before another was able to “head him off,” as it is commonly expressed, the word finally became restricted to the present signification, to hinder. The Revised Version has the passage in harmony with modern usage. The word “conversation” is another word whose signification has been thus changed. It now means simply familiar talk; but in the Bible is has an entirely different meaning, being applied to one’s manner of life. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 500.18}

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” We cannot regard this text in any other way than as a description of an actual occurrence to take place in the future. If the expression “the Lord himself” does not mean Jesus Christ in person, but is a figure of something else, what words could the apostle have used to express the reality? If this be figurative language, then there is no literal language in the Bible. It agrees, however, with the words which the angel spoke to the disciples at the ascension of Christ. Acts 1:9-11. This last clause of the verses quoted settles an important point: “And so shall we ever be with the Lord.” How shall we be with the Lord?-By the descent of Christ to raise the dead and change the living. Can we not be with him before that time?-No; for so he told his disciples when on earth. The ardent Peter said, “Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake” (John 13:27); but still Jesus did not reverse his former sentence: “As I said unto the Jews, Whither I go ye cannot come; so now I say to you.” Then he comforted them with these words: “In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” This is the “blessed hope;” with these words the apostle Paul commanded Christians to comfort one another. Men should be careful how they attempt to improve on the methods laid down by inspiration. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 506.1}

Some time ago a religions journal of note made an admission on this text, that was fatal to the popular view (the one which it also holds), that all men have inherited immortality. It said: “It is hard for us to understand how those converts could have imagined that it was peculiarly unfortunate to die before Christ’s second coming. It was because they imagined, and Paul too, perhaps, that Christ was to come soon, in the life-time of some of them [we have already shown that he did not imagine any such thing], and that his coming was physical; and they did not understand the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.” That is, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is so opposed to the doctrine of Christ’s second coming that those who hold to the former necessarily ignore the latter. We believe that this is the case. But the doctrine of Christ’s second coming is one of the most prominent in the whole Bible, and it must therefore follow that the Bible is opposed to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. It was well said that “they did not understand the doctrine of the immortality of the soul;” but if Paul and his co-laborers did not understand nor teach it, whence is it that our modern teachers have learned so much about it? Have they a later revelation in which inspiration has corrected its former mistakes? Away with a doctrine which leads men thus to treat God’s word. Such teachers would do well to ponder upon Paul’s words to the Galatians brethren. Galatians 1:8. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 506.2}

“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” No argument can be drawn from this to prove that Christians cannot know anything about the Lord’s coming, for the next verse shows that he comes as a thief only to those who cry, “Peace and safety,”-those who are not watching. The brethren, Paul states, are not watching. The brethren, Paul states, are not in darkness that that day should overtake them as a thief. Christ gave his disciples very full instructions in regard to the times and the seasons (see Matthew 24), and as the whole gospel was revealed to Paul by the Lord himself, he had imparted the same information to the Thessalonian brethren. The prophecies of the Old Testament, especially the book of Daniel, give much light on the times and the seasons. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 506.3}

On 1 Thessalonians 5:10, Dr. Barnes makes the following comment:- {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 506.4}

“‘Whether we wake or sleep.’ Whether we are found among the living or the dead when he comes. The object here is to show that the one class would have no advantage over the other. This was designed to calm their minds in their trials, and to correct an error which seems to have prevailed in the belief that those who were found alive when he should return, would have some priority over those who were dead. ‘Should live together with him.’ The word rendered ‘together’ is not to be regarded as connected with the phrase ‘with him,’ as meaning he and they would be together, but it refers to those who wake and those who sleep, those who are alive and those who are dead,-meaning that they would be *together*, or would be with the Lord *at the same time*; there would be no priority or precedence.” {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 506.5}

That is exactly the truth on this important subject. Happy would it be for Christianity if the churches had never departed from it. E. J. W. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 506.6}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 16, 39.**

E. J. Waggoner

Some time ago, under the heading “Destroying the Foundations,” we made a few comments on the course adopted by some, of rejecting the five books of Moses, and with them necessarily the whole Bible, in order to get rid of the seventh-day Sabbath. To some it may seem strange that any should pull down a house, foundation and all, in order to get rid of one piece of timber; but such a course is very significant. The Sabbath is so interwoven with the whole of divine revelation that it cannot be removed without undermining the whole structure. The Sabbath is based on the facts of creation; and it cannot be abolished until it can be proved that God did not create the heavens and earth in six days and rest the seventh. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 506.7}

There is but one mention of Jesus sleeping in all the record of his life. This was not in the quiet of mountain retreat, or in the homes of friends, but, strangest place of all, it was in a storm at sea, when those who had followed the sea all their lives were in mortal terror, the storm having continued till the ship was full of water. Jesus was asleep. The waves might roll, the storm rage, but the Master of the universe could not be destroyed. “No water can swallow the ship where lies the Master of ocean and earth and skies.” Is not this a lesson of comfort and trust to the child of God? If Jesus is with us, though he seems to be sleeping, we are safe, whatever may take place. If we continue to trust, in God’s time he will allay the storm. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 506.8}

A Christian cannot grow unless he partakes of spiritual food. He may be indeed a child of God, his sins all forgiven, his heart changed; but to maintain this relation, to make progress in divine life, in other words, to grow to the stature of a full-grown man in Christ Jesus, he must partake of the required food. That food is the word of God. The “sincere milk of the word” will cause the young Christian to thrive even as the healthful child thrives on its natural food. 1 Peter 2:2. Jeremiah says: “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.” Jeremiah 15:16. And as we must partake of daily physical food in order to maintain strength, so daily the child of God should seek God’s word, listen to his voice, appropriate it to himself and his condition, and make it a part of his very being. {SITI October 6, 1890, p. 506.9}

**“Front Page” The Signs of the Times, 16, 40.**

E. J. Waggoner

Nowhere in God’s word are the people of God promised a reward at death. Death is ever treated as an enemy. Those who die are in the enemy’s land (Jeremiah 31:16); death is the last enemy to be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:26); it will be destroyed at last in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14). The promise of God is that those who believe in him will be raised up in “the last day.” John 6:40. Again, Jesus says: “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and *then* he shall reward every man according to his works.” Matthew 16:27. The coming of Christ is that great event around which cluster the brightest and best hopes of Christians,-life, joy, peace, a kingdom incorruptible, forevermore; and all these come through the presence of Christ. Glad day! why should not the child of God love it and long for it? {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 506.10}

**“For Our Sake Also. Romans 4:17-25” The Signs of the Times, 16, 40.**

E. J. Waggoner

The fourth chapter of Romans is one of the richest in the Bible, in the hope and courage which it contains for the Christian. In Abraham we have an example of righteousness by faith, and we have set before us the wonderful inheritance promised to those who have the faith of Abraham. And this promise is not limited. The blessing of Abraham comes on the Gentiles as well as on the Jews; there is none so poor that he may not share it, for “it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.” {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 506.11}

The last clause of the seventeenth verse is worthy of special attention. It contains the secret of the possibility of our success in the Christian life. It says that Abraham believed “God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.” This marks God’s power; it involves creative power. God can call a thing which is not as though it existed. If a man should do that, what would you call it?-A lie. If a man should say that a thing is, when it is not, it would be a lie. But God cannot lie. Therefore when God calls these things that be not, as though they were, it is evident that that makes them be. That is, they spring into existence at his word. We have all heard, as an illustration of confidence, the little girl’s statement that “if ma says so, it’s so if it isn’t so.” That is exactly the case with God. Before that time spoken of as “in the beginning,” there was a dreary waste of absolute nothingness; God spoke, and instantly worlds sprang into being. “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.... For he spake, and it was; he commanded, and it stood fast.” Psalm 33:6-9. This is the power which is brought to view in Romans 4:17. Now let us read on, that we may see the force of this language in this connection. Still speaking of Abraham, the apostle says:- {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 506.12}

“Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.” Romans 4:18-22. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 506.13}

Here we learn that Abraham’s faith, in God, as one who could bring things into existence by his word, was exercised with respect to his being able to create righteousness in a person destitute of it. Those who look at the trial of Abraham’s faith as relating simply to the birth of Isaac, and ending there, lose all the point and beauty of the sacred record. Isaac was only the one in whom his seed was to be called, and that seed was Christ. See Galatians 3:16. When God told Abraham that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed, he was preaching the gospel to him (Galatians 3:8), therefore Abraham’s faith in the promise of God was direct faith in Christ as the Saviour of sinners. This was the faith which was counted to him for righteousness. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 506.14}

Now note the strength of that faith. His own body was already virtually dead from age, and Sarah was in a like condition. The birth of Isaac from such a pair was nothing less than the bringing of life from the dead. It was a symbol of God’s power to quicken to spiritual life those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Abraham hoped against hope. There was no human possibility of the fulfillment of the promise; everything was against it, but his faith grasped and rested upon the unchanging word of God, and his power to create and to make alive. “And therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness.” Now for the point of it all: {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 506.15}

“Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.” Romans 4:23-25. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.1}

So Abraham’s faith was the same that ours must be, and in the same object. The fact that it is by faith in the death and resurrection of Christ that we have the same righteousness imputed to us that was imputed to Abraham, shows that Abraham’s faith was likewise in the death and resurrection of Christ. All the promises of God to Abraham were for us as well as for him. Indeed, we are told in one place that they were specially for our benefit. “When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself.” “Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.” Hebrews 6:13, 17, 18. Our hope, therefore, rests upon God’s promise and oath to Abraham, for that promise to Abraham, confirmed by that oath, contains all the blessings which God can possibly give to man. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.2}

But let us make this matter a little more personal before leaving it. Trembling soul, say not that your sins are so many and that you are so weak that there is no hope for you. Christ came to save the lost, and he is able to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him. You are weak, but he says, “My strength is made perfect in weakness.” 2 Corinthians 12:9. And the inspired record tells us of those who “out of weakness were made strong.” Hebrews 11:34. That means that God took their very weakness and turned it into strength. In so doing he demonstrates his power. It is his way of working. For “God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence.” 1 Corinthians 1:27-29. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.3}

Have the simple faith of Abraham. How did he attain to righteousness?-By not considering the deadness and powerlessness of his own body, but by being willing to grant all the glory to God, strong in faith that he could bring all things out of that which was not. You, therefore, in like manner, consider not the weakness of your own body, but the power and grace of our Lord, being assured that the same word which can create a universe, and raise the dead, can also create in you a clean heart, and make you alive unto God. And so you shall be a child of Abraham, even a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. E. J. W. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.4}

**“A Superficial Age” The Signs of the Times, 16, 40.**

E. J. Waggoner

The *Christian at Work* of September 18 has some severe strictures on the public schools which we are inclined to think are generally true, not because the schools are public schools, but because they are conducted according to the spirit of the age. The above journal says: {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.5}

“In the opinion of thoughtful persons are public schools are by no means what they ought to be. The subjects of study are too multiplied, the time given to each too meager and inadequate. The system of ‘cramming,’ by which a pupils memory for mere words is developed abnormally and at the expense of his faculties of discrimination and sound judgment, now so popular and almost universal, is an utter perversion of the true conception of education. It transforms a bright boy or girl into a temporary parrot, ready to astonish every hearer with a seemingly brilliant performance, which, however, upon further attention, it turns out to be little more than a species of clipped and empty-headed gabbie. There is in all this no grasp of the underlying principles, no comprehension of the nature of things, no real intellectual and symmetrical training. It is exactly in the mental constitution what a course of gymnastics would be in the physical which should take infinite pains to exercise the muscles of one arm and should leave those of the other arm, chest, back, and legs, entirely inactive and undeveloped. In both cases a monstrosity is the result.” {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.6}

Superficiality is the fault of the age-superficial education, superficial politics, superficial philosophy, superficial theology, and, worse than all, superficial religion. Our fathers, who had but few books and newspapers, who knew scarcely anything of the light literature of to-day, studied more, thought more, meditated more, and laid a better foundation for character in abiding principles which but few of the youth of this generation know. But, as the *Christian at Work* points out, character is more necessary than all else. Parents, see to it that your boys and girls are laying the foundation of character beneath the surface, on the principles of truth, justice, and integrity, and love of God. Days now will count years by and by. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.7}

**“Unprofitable” The Signs of the Times, 16, 40.**

E. J. Waggoner

From the *Interior* of October 2 we clip the following question and answer:- {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.8}

“*Dear Interior:* Please give me some points and scriptural quotations and arguments by which I may answer the seventh-day Adventists, and thus defend our Sabbath as the first day of the week. A. S. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.9}

“If these people will not accept the apostolic example of setting apart the Lord’s day for worship-if they set themselves against the church from the beginning, and refuse to give the supreme honor to Christ, ‘neither would they believe though one should rise from the dead.’ We do not think it profitable to argue with such.” {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.10}

There are thousands of people who are seeking for the same light and knowledge, who are getting nothing in return. Notice that the *Interior* does not quote the words of Christ: “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.” No; for “Moses and the prophets” give no sanction to Sunday-keeping. So the *Interior* parodies the words of Christ, putting tradition and custom in the place of the Scriptures. But if it ignores Moses and the prophets, surely it ought to allow some weight to the words of Jehovah: “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work.” To be sure, the *Interior* assumes that the apostles, putting themselves above their Lord, set apart the first day of the week for rest and worship; but it wisely refrains from attempting to give the scriptural quotations which would establish the fact. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.11}

It talks about refusing to give supreme honor to Christ. Let us see wherein Christ is honored. Is by observing a day that commemorates nothing, and concerning which he has made no command? or by obey his commandment, and observing the day which commemorates creation completed, and thus honors Christ as the divine Creator? No one can acknowledge Christ’s divinity without acknowledging him as Creator; and everyone who acknowledges him as Creator, must, to be consistent, acknowledge that He who created also rested upon the seventh day, and blessed and sanctified it, so that the seventh day is the only Lord’s day. Therefore to accuse Christ of changing the day of the Sabbath (a thing impossible to do), is to array Christ against himself. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.12}

At first our thought was, What a pity that religious papers, which set themselves as guides, should put off an earnest inquirer with such an evasion, as the *Interior* has done; but on second thought it seemed as though good might come of it. A virtual acknowledgment that there are no “scriptural quotations and arguments” by which Seventh-day Adventists may be answered and the first-day sabbath defended, is far better than to jumble a lot of irrelevant texts together, and claim that they make out a case. The *Interior* is right; it is indeed not profitable to argue against the Bible declaration that the seventh day is the Sabbath. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.13}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 16, 40.**

E. J. Waggoner

Brother Grant Adkins and wife, who have labored in tent work in California this last season, left this city the 6th inst. To labor with Elder J. W. Scoles in Tennessee. Tennessee has, in the last four years, made herself notorious by her oppressive Sunday laws, but she has many honest souls who are longing for truth and light. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.14}

The time to trust God is not by and by, but *now*. How often do we hear Christians says: “I will trust the Lord,” “I will give myself to him,” “I am going to do better by God’s grace,” all of which look forward to the future. The time to trust God is *now*, the time to give ourselves to God is *now;* the time to do by his grace is *now*. “God is a very *present* help” to all who believe him. We only live in the Now; the Future is ours only as it becomes the Now. The name of our God is not I WAS, or I WILL BE, but “I AM.” {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.15}

At this writing (October 6), a party of twelve or more design to start the 13th instant for the East. Among these are Elder J. N. Loughborough and wife, Brother Delmer N. Loughborough and wife, Elder Isaac Morrison, Brother D. E. Scoles, Sister Lena Hudson, the senior editor of this journal, Elder E. J. Waggoner, and family, and others. Elder Loughborough will take charge of the Nebraska conference, of which he has been elected president. The many burdens he has borne in California render change and less burdens absolutely necessary to the maintenance of health and life. May God bless him abundantly in his new field. Brother Morrison and Scoles go East to attend the ministers school at Battle Creek, Mich. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.16}

Dr. E. J. Waggoner will take a prominent part in teaching in the ministers’ school at Battle Creek, Mich., this winter. We regret exceedingly to lose his help from this office; in fact, we know not how we could get along without him if it were not for the assurance that our work was God’s work, and that he will supply “all our needs.” Brother Waggoner will still write for the SIGNS. May God bless him in his many and hard labors there. May we not ask the prayers of our readers that God may bless us here also, and make our publications the means of saving many souls? We are glad to welcome to this coast our old co-laborer in the British field, Elder J. H. Durland, who will assist us much in our work. {SITI October 13, 1890, p. 514.17}

**“Principles and Precepts” The Signs of the Times, 16, 41.**

E. J. Waggoner

The word “law” is derived from the same root as the words “lie” and “lay,” and primarily has the same meaning. “A law is that which is laid, set, or fixed, like statute, constitution, from Lat. *statucee*.”-*Webster*. And in harmony with this, the same authority gives us the first definition of the word “law,” “A rule of order or conduct established by authority.” It is a favorite saying with those who would make void the law of God while professing allegiance to his word, that the ten commandments are good, but that they are adapted only to fallen beings, and hence cannot bind angels nor redeemed saints, nor even people in this world who have been converted. Let us see how such a theory agrees with the definition of law. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 514.18}

We will suppose that the angels are free from law, and that redeemed saints are to have a like freedom. In that case there would be nothing “laid down” for their guidance-no rule or order of conduct established by authority. In fact, there would be no authority, and each one would act independently of all the others. There would then exist in heaven the same thing that would exist on earth if there were no law, namely, anarchy; for that means “without rule.” But “God is not the author of confusion,” and therefore such a state of things cannot exist in heaven, and if not in heaven, then of course not among the saints still on earth. The case may be stated thus: 1. When there is no law there is anarchy and confusion; there can be nothing else. 2. Confusion cannot exist among God’s people, whether in heaven or on earth. 3. Therefore the people of God are always and everywhere subject to his law. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 514.19}

Seeing that it will not do to claim that any beings are absolutely free from law, the enemies of the truth have invented a specious theory, with which, unfortunately, many firm believers in the law of God have been captivated. It is this: The law, they say, as it exists in the ten commandments hang on the two great principles of love to God and love to man, and it was these principles alone that existed before the fall, and these alone will be the law for the redeemed. Some there are who claim that these *principles* are all the law is abolished; for it is the same thing in reality, while it has the *appearance* of great deference to the truth of God. Let us examine it. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 514.20}

It is utterly impossible for anyone to be guided by an abstract principle. Certain principles may have a controlling influence on our lives, but they must be embodied in definite precepts. As an illustration, we will relate a portion of a conversation which we once had with a gentleman who claimed that Christians have nothing to do with the ten commandments. The question was asked him, Is there, then, nothing for Christians to do? Answer: “Yes, they must love the Lord.” Very good, but how are they to show that they love the Lord? Answer: “By doing what he tells them to do.” Well, what is it that contains specific statements of what the Lord requires us to do to show our love for him? Answer: “Young man, I am older than you are.” The reader will wonder, as we did, what bearing this had on the subject. It showed that the man saw that the only possible *answer* was,“The law of God,” an answer which would not agree with his theory, hence he chose to give none. But the illustration serves to show that principles, to be obeyed, must be embodied in precepts. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 514.21}

Says the beloved disciple, “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.” 1 John 5:3. So when we read that the first great commandment is, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Matthew 22:37), we know that it means nothing more nor less than that it is our first and highest duty to keep, both in letter and in spirit, all those commandments which define our duty to God. In no other way can we show that we love him. In fact, nothing else but that is love for him. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 514.22}

Suppose for a moment that a man were placed here on earth with nothing to serve as a rule of life except the statement that he must love God supremely and his neighbor as himself. He sets out with a firm determination to do his whole duty. But erelong he is found doing something which God abhors. We will suppose that he is adoring the sun and moon. When reproved for this, he might well reply: “I did not know that I was doing anything wrong; nothing was said to me about this matter. I had a feeling of love and gratitude to God, and did not know how to manifest it in any better way than by paying homage to the most glorious of his created works.” By what law could the man be condemned? He could not justly be condemned, because the will of the Creator on that point had not been made known to him, and he could not reasonably be expected to know the will of God if it had not been revealed. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.1}

It will be seen by a very little consideration, that to put a man on the earth with nothing but a general command to love God, and at the same time to expect him to do nothing displeasing to God, would be to assume that the man had infinite wisdom. For God is infinite; and if a man, without being told, finds out what God requires, it can only be because he can comprehend infinity. But this is an impossibility. “Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?-No, indeed; the creature that could know the mind of God any further than it was directly revealed by him, has never existed. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.2}

Then since, as we have conclusively proved, there must be a law for all creatures, and since this law must be definitely expressed, and since, moreover, the whole duty of man is to love God above all things, and his neighbor as himself, we are shut up to the conclusion that the ten commandments always have been and always will be the rule of life for all created intelligences. In direct support of this, Solomon says: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.” Ecclesiastes 12:13. This settles the matter, at least for the present time. John also says that the love of God is to keep his commandments; but it will be our duty to love God to all eternity; therefore it will always be our duty to keep the commandments of God. And it makes it no less a duty because it becomes our highest pleasure. To the natural man, duty is irksome; the object of making him a new creature in Christ is that it may be a pleasure for him to do his duty. Paul says that God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, thus condemning sin in the flesh, in order that the “righteousness [requirements] of the law might be fulfilled in us.” Romans 8:3, 4. The object of the gospel is to make us like Christ, who said, “I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.3}

In addition to the above, we offer the words of the prayer which Christ has commanded us to pray to God: “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” Matthew 6:10. Now the will of God is his law. See Romans 2:17, 18; Psalm 40:8. We are taught by this prayer, then, that when the kingdom of God is established on this earth, God’s law will be kept here even as it is now kept in heaven. And David says, by inspiration, that the angels that excel in strength “do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.” Psalm 103:20. That is, they are anxious and delight to keep God’s commandments. Duty is with them a pleasure. And when God’s kingdom comes, we also, if permitted to become subjects of it, will delight to do God’s will, and will keep all his commandments, of which “every one” “endureth forever.” We shall then do perfectly what we now are (or should be) striving to do in spite of the weakness of the flesh. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.4}

This subject will be continued in another article, in which we shall consider the objection that there are certain commandments of the decalogue which angels or glorified saints could not violate if they wished to, and that therefore it is absurd to suppose that obedience to those commandments is required of them. E. J. W. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.5}

**“A Serious ‘Drawback’” The Signs of the Times, 16, 41.**

E. J. Waggoner

The New York *Observer* of October 2 has a letter from its Pacific Coast correspondent, entitled “A Sabbath in San Francisco.” After speaking of the flourishing growth and the commercial importance of the city, and of the numerous charities that are liberally sustained, he adds:- {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.6}

“True, there are some drawbacks here as there are in all the cities of our land. Attractive as the city is, and in its main features very desirable as a place of residence, yet the good people who have come from the East regret the absence of some things with which they have always been familiar. There are no Sabbath law in California, and no recognition of it on the statute-books of the State. Labor of all kinds can be carried on without hindrance, stores may remain open for the transaction of business as on any other day of the week, places of amusement may be open without interference form the authorities, while noisy demonstrations can go on as usual. But while there is the absence of all Sunday laws, we must not draw the conclusion that there is no respect paid to the Lord’s day. Truth compels us to state the fact that San Francisco is a Sabbath-keeping city. The drift is plainly in that direction. The moral sentiment of the people is largely in its favor, and with very rare exceptions you will find as much order and quiet in the streets as in some of our most favored Eastern cities. Those who knew California twenty years ago now witness a far different order of things. The mass of the people respect and keep the Lord’s day.” {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.7}

We can faintly imagine the pain that must have wrung the heart of the correspondent as truth compelled him to pen the above paragraph. We now understand something of the anxiety with which the hearts of all Sunday-law advocates turn towards California. What zealot for Sunday laws could contemplate such a condition of things as just described, without undergoing anguish of soul? Think of it; in San Francisco, where they have no Sunday law, the Sunday is actually as well observed as in the more favored cities in the East! How dreadful! And what is worse, the Sunday is much better observed than it was twenty years ago, when California had a Sunday law! This is heart-rending! Such a state of things must be changed at all hazards. San Francisco must not be allowed to struggle along, hampered by such “drawbacks.” {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.8}

Perhaps some innocent person may ask, “Where is the ‘drawback’ in not having a Sunday law, and why should its absence be regretted if Sunday is observed in San Francisco as well as in our ‘most favored Eastern cities,’ and better than it was when California had a Sunday law?” Do you not see? It is not a ‘drawback’ to the city of San Francisco, but to the cause of religious legislation. Is it not evident that if this state of things is allowed to continue, people will conclude that Sunday laws are not necessary in order to have Sunday observed? More than this, when truth compels the zealous Sunday-law advocate to admit that Sunday is better observed in San Francisco now than when it had a Sunday law, some impertinent fellows, who have more logic than reverence for bigotry, will soon be claiming that Sunday laws are a detriment to proper Sunday observance. And then the advocates of religious legislation will have no argument except the one which a gentleman who is active in the movement recently used with us, “We are determined to have a Sunday law anyway.” What! let people continue to observe Sunday without a Sunday law? Never. That would be worse than to allow sick people to get well without a physician. E. J. W. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.9}

**“Back Page: Sun-god” The Signs of the Times, 16, 41.**

E. J. Waggoner

Israel’s making of the sun-god, or golden calf, is an emphatic lesson of man’s natural depravity. They had promised, but in their own strength, that they would obey God’s voice (Exodus 19:5), and they were no doubt honest in this; but their hearts were unregenerate, and deceived themselves. A deceived heart turned them aside. Isaiah 44:20. The only way by which we can do God’s will is to be regenerated-born again-the heart of enmity to God’s law taken away, and the new heart given. The only means by which we can keep God’s commandments is by his strength, put on through faith in Christ. Every other way, every covenant in our own strength, will, like that of Israel at Horeb, gender to bondage. Galatians 4:24. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.10}

Sabbath, October 11, was a good day for the church in Oakland. Elder E. J. Waggoner, who closes his pastorate over this church, covering a period of some years, spoke in the morning, basing his remarks on 2 Corinthians 4. The prominent thoughts presented were that not alone in the life to come did God reveal to us the blessings and joys of the eternal world, but even now he revealed them to us by his Spirit; that while the glorified people of God will sometime walk in immortality, in the presence of God, in the joys of the world to come, it was the privilege of the Christian to walk there even now by faith; and that God designed the sufferings even of this present life to work out in us even here an eternal weight of glory through the exceeding riches of his grace. The very things over which the natural man would become discouraged would prove stepping-stones to the Christian, who would come off more than conqueror in the conflict. After the sermon a social meeting was held, in which eighty testimonies were borne in a little over forty minutes, with no dry or prosy ones among them. There were present a part of the crew and some of the missionaries of the ship *Pitcairn*, who hope to sail westward within a week, and Elder J. N. Loughborough and others soon to go eastward to other fields of labor. It was a good day. God grant that all these his people may meet in the glad “harvest home.” {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.11}

All departure from God’s word means idolatry, and the farther one strays from the letter of his warning or his command, the more flagrant becomes his idolatry. In the very beginning God provided means to guard men against idolatry, but that means has been grossly neglected, with the result that is so fully demonstrated in the history of man. He established at creation a memorial of the creative power of the true God. The one grand distinction between the true God and all false gods is that the true One created the heavens and the earth. No false god has ever claimed, nor was it ever claimed for him, that he created anything. {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.12}

We read in Exodus 20:11 that “in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; *wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it.” Is it reasonable to suppose that if men had faithfully celebrated this weekly memorial day, they would have come to believe in any other god? See Ezekiel 20:12: “Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” We see, then, that the one object of the Sabbath, was a memorial of the true God. Is there any less necessity for such a safeguard to-day than there was in ancient times? {SITI October 20, 1890, p. 522.13}

**“Front Page: Golden Rule” The Signs of the Times, 16, 42.**

E. J. Waggoner

The golden rule as stated by Christ is, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,” and then he adds that “this is the law and the prophets.” There is certainly no room for religious legislation in the above. Legislation for the support of any religious institution or dogma is anti-christian. Would that this might be learned by all Christians. {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 522.14}

Earnestness in seeking God depends upon our sense of need. If we feel self-sufficient, strong in our own strength, wise in our own wisdom, our seeking will to a great extent be in vain. There will come a time in our experience when we will fall, not because God wishes it, but because we trusted in our own strength, and he would teach us that our strength is weakness, and that in him alone is safety found. Blessed is that man who can learn his own weakness and lay hold on God’s strength without falling. {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 522.15}

The giving of God’s law was designed not only to impress Israel with a sense of its holiness, but the world itself which should afterward read the record. The manner in which God spoke the law, the terrible majesty attending the events, the way in which it was given, separate and distinct from all others, on tables of enduring stone,-all were designed to show how holy and sacred were the ten words of God, the sum of all morality, the compendium of all righteousness. Here it is said God made known his holy Sabbath. Nehemiah 9:14. What is meant by this, seeing that the Sabbath was understood before (Genesis 2:2, 3; Exodus 16)?-This, evidently: God knew that men would say that the Sabbath was ceremonial in character, and therefore not binding, as were other moral precepts; therefore he made known its true character by placing it in the very bosom of the decalogue, guarded before and behind by immutable moral precepts, so that men could never with any reason say that the Sabbath was not as binding as the first, or sixth, or any other commandment. The law of God’s rest-day, as of all the other parts of that law, is immutable and eternal. {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 522.16}

**“Salvation—Present and Future” The Signs of the Times, 16, 42.**

E. J. Waggoner

There are some scriptural expressions that have been so misused by ignorant and fanatical persons that they have almost fallen into disrepute among sober-minded people. One of these terms is the word “saved,” as applied to an individual in this present life. In a certain class of revivals it is very common to hear persons who have been wrought up to the proper pitch of excitement, testify that they are saved. The more that can be induced to rise and say with greeater or less vehemence, “I am saved,” or who in response to the question, will hold up their hands to that effect, the greater the list of “converts” the revivalist has to report. Now we earnestly deprecate any such methods as this; yet simply because the term “saved” is abused, we ought not to reject it, any more than we would refuse to believe in presence conversion, because the term is used by many people who have not the slightest idea of its meaning. {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 522.17}

The word “saved” is frequently used in the Bible in a sense similar to that of “conversion.” Paul says: “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:18. Here it is used in the present tense, and has no reference to future salvation. Again he says: “Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” 2 Timothy 1:8, 9. {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 522.18}

To the same intent the word is used in Titus 3:4-6:- {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 522.19}

“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.” {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 522.20}

Other texts might be quoted, but these are sufficient. They show that when one has been forgiven for all his past transgressions,-when the burden of sin that clung to him as a body of death, has been removed,-and a new heart has been given him,-a heart loving righteousness and hating iniquity,-it is proper to say that he is saved. The trouble arises from confounding that salvation with eternal salvation. There is a salvation which is wholly future, as is evident from the following texts:- {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 522.21}

“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” Matthew 24:12, 13. Here we learn that those who are converted-saved-must endure to the end if they would be saved. {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 522.22}

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Peter 1:3-5. Here again we learn that at “the last time” a salvation is to be brought to those who, having a hope in God through the resurrection of Jesus, endure, through the grace of God, to the end. There is a possibility that this present salvation may not be lasting, that those who have “tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come” (Hebrews 6:5, 6), may fall away; but the salvation “to be revealed at the last time” cannot be lost, as is seen by the following text: {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 522.23}

“But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with *an everlasting* salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.” Isaiah 45:17. From this we learn of a salvation that is to be everlasting, that will be shared by Israel-all who overcome. This is the salvation that is to be revealed at the last time. {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 530.1}

Now, what connection have the two? Simply this, the first is a preparation for the second. One is salvation in the kingdom of grace, and the other is salvation in the kingdom of glory. Paul, in writing to the Colossians, prays that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing,- {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 530.2}

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” Colossians 1:12-14. {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 530.3}

Here is present salvation, and translation into a kingdom; yet it is not until Christ comes “the second time without sin unto salvation” (Hebrews 9:28), sitting upon the throne of his glory, accompanied by all his holy angels, that he says to the righteous: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Matthew 25:34. Now, of those who have been delivered from the powers of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God’s grace, “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” only those will have an entrance ministered unto them “abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,” who heed the exhortation, “Give diligence to make your calling and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10, 11), so that they do not fall. {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 530.4}

The kingdom of grace receives subjects to be fitted for the kingdom of glory. It saves men from the guilt and the love of sin, clothing them with the divine nature, so that when the Lord shall come in his glory, they may be clothed upon with immortality, which will then be the only thing lacking. But none will share this glory who indulge in vain boasting, or who imagine that a work just begun for them is already done. “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” E. J. W. {SITI October 27, 1890, p. 530.5}