**“An Example of Faith” The Signs of the Times, 17, 22.**

E. J. Waggoner

[Extract from a discourse on Romans 4 at the late General Conference.] {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 155.8}

In the fourth chapter of the book of Romans we have faith in a concrete form. The narrative of the lives of Abram and Sarai in connection with the birth of Isaac, furnish a practical example of justification by faith. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 155.9}

Abram was not justified by works; but he believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Abraham received the seal of circumcision. Why? To cause him to believe?—No, but because he had believed. It was a seal of the righteousness which he had by believing. The promise to Abraham and to his seed was that he should be heir of the world. This promised inheritance was to be for an “everlasting possession.” Genesis 17:8. Therefore it was a covenant of righteousness, sealed by a seal of righteousness, and the inheritance was to be a righteous inheritance, which none but the righteous can gain. 2 Peter 3:13. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 155.10}

The promise to Abram depended upon one thing-his having a son. Twenty-five years elapsed from the time the promise was made until it was fulfilled. “Abram staggered not at the promise of God,” but Sarai did, and “Abram hearkened unto the voice of Sarai.” She undertook to help the Lord to carry out his plan. But Hagar was a slave, and her child could be nothing but a slave, born after the flesh. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 155.11}

The seed promised Abram were to be free men, not slaves, therefore nothing was gained by this plan of Sarai’s. The time came when Sarai realized that the only thing for her to do was to believe that God was able to carry out his promise without her help. Then “through faith” she “received strength to conceive seed.” The birth of Isaac was a miracle. From a human standpoint it was utterly impossible for Abram and Sarai to become the parents of a child. She conceived by the power of God. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 155.12}

Abram and Sarai did nothing to gain the promise, except to believe, and yet the child of the promise was their own child. So with Christians. Nothing can be done to gain the righteousness of Christ save only to believe the promises. We are told to believe the promises. God has promised to make us righteous, and the only way to obtain that righteousness is to believe that God is able to impute it. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 155.13}

When men are content to believe God, and submit themselves to him, there is power in his promises to work out their righteousness for them, without any power of their own. How are men made righteous, or partakers of the divine nature?—“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that *by these* ye might be partakers of the divine nature.” The power lies in the promise of God. How can we make the promises effectual to us?—By believing them. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Confess your sins, believe that God forgives them as he has promised, and the promise is yours, your sins are forgiven. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 155.14}

The promises of God may be likened to “promissory notes.” How many may have these notes?—“Whosoever will.” They are good for a certain amount of blessing. That amount can never be drawn in full, because God is able “to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think.” Men take a promissory note to the bank and get the gold on it. Christians take the promises of God to him and cash them for a blessing. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 155.15}

How can God give us righteousness when we are so sinful? We cannot understand how, nor do we need to inquire. It is just as great a miracle for God to make an unrighteous man righteous as it was for him to create the world. If a man calls a thing which is not as though it were, he tells a falsehood; but when God calls a thing which is not as thought it were, the very fact of his calling it makes it so. God not only makes our hearts righteous when there is no righteousness there, but he does more than that, he makes our hearts righteous when there is nothing there but unrighteousness. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 155.16}

A man is just as much an infidel who does not believe that God can speak righteousness into his heart as a man who, by the theory of evolution, does away with the Mosaic record of creation. No limit can be put upon the power of God. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 171.1}

We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. We get to be the children of God in the same way as Isaac was born,—by believing, as Abraham and Sarah believed. The promise is to him “that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly.” {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 171.2}

There was much implied in the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. Through no other son could the promise of the inheritance come. Christ could not come into the world except through Isaac. Cut off Isaac, and what hope was there of a Saviour?—None; Abraham, to all appearances, would cut off all hope of his own salvation. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 171.3}

Wonderful is the faith here exhibited. Abraham believed that God could raise Isaac up again, and yet the very one (Christ) through whose power he believed Isaac would be raised up, had not come, and could not come except through Isaac. Nevertheless God had promise, and Abraham believed, although he was called upon to do that very thing which to human sight would cut off all hope of even having the promise fulfilled. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 171.4}

The promise itself was immutable, and that immutable promise was confirmed by an immutable oath. Therefore God is under obligation to fulfill his promises to all who claim them. The very throne and existence of God are pledged to this, and not to do it would be for God to deny himself. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 171.5}

By and by God will come and say, “Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” Christ is the sacrifice here referred to. It is through him we come. He is the surety of the covenant. E. J. W. {SITI June 1, 1891, p. 171.6}

**“The Peace of God” The Signs of the Times, 17, 24.**

E. J. Waggoner

[Abstract of a talk on Romans 5 at the late General Conference at Battle Creek.] {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.7}

“Therefore being justified by faith,” that is, being made conformable to the law by faith, “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” The only way that man can be made conformable to the law, and live free from condemnation, is by having faith in the promises of God. In Christ there is no unrighteousness, therefore there is nothing but righteousness. By believing on Christ, the Christian has the righteousness of Christ. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.8}

But does not James say that there must be works, or the faith is of no avail? It is true that faith is made perfect by works. James 2:22. But it is by faith and faith alone that men are justified. The very text which speaks of Abraham’s being justified by faith, states that the works were only the outgrowth of underlying faith, and that by this work the scripture was fulfilled which says: “Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.” Works are the outgrowth of faith. “It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good-pleasure.” We give ourselves into the hands of Christ. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.9}

He comes and *takes up his abode* with us. We are as clay in the hands of the potter; but it is Christ who does all the good works, and to him belongs all the glory. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.10}

“We have peace with God.” What is peace? It is not a feeling, but a fact. Many think that they must experience a “certain feeling” which they will know is the “peace of God.” But they have never had the peace of God, and therefore cannot know what kind of feeling it ought to be. Satan might give a certain happy feeling, and if the Christian had only the feeling to go by, he would be deceived. The Lord does not deal in feelings, but in facts. Peace is the opposite of war, strife, emulation. We are either at peace with God or else at war. If at war, it is because we are carrying on rebellion. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.11}

How do we fight God?—By following sinful practices. Anyone knowingly indulging in one sinful practice is warring against God. God is a God of peace. Christ left his peace with his followers. “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.” Between God and his dear Son in heaven there is a “counsel of peace.” They counsel for the peace of man. There is only one condition on which man can have that peace-unconditional surrender, surrender all to God, and then there is peace in the heart, no matter what the feeling may be. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.12}

“Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them.” “O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” What rich comfort in these words! Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.” So his peace is likened to the continual flowing of the river, and the never-ceasing roll of the ocean wave; therefore it matters not what the feeling is, for if all sins have been confessed, God is faithful and just to forgive them; and we are at peace with him. The condition of peace is the condition of being justified by faith. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.13}

“By whom [Christ] also we have access by faith into this grace [unmerited forgiveness and favor] wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Righteousness can be wrought in men day by day by the same power by which Isaac was born of parents who were practically dead. When people once gain this experience, the next thing they will be constrained to rejoice in the hope of the coming of the Lord. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.14}

We live in the present, not in the future. Read 1 Peter 1:5-9. Salvation belongs to us to-day just as much as it will when in the kingdom of God. No one but ourselves can deprive us of it. Says Peter, “Receiving [present time] the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” Our present salvation is our only hope of a future salvation. “Kept by the power of God” is the expression used by Peter, and it denotes precisely the same condition—“being justified by faith”—in the fifth chapter of Romans. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.15}

The same power that will make men immortal in the life to come justifies them-makes them conformable to the law-by being in harmony with it every day. Says Paul in the letter to the Philippians, chapter three, verse twenty-one: “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, *according to the working* whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.16}

In Ephesians 3:16 Paul, in an inspired prayer, prays that they might be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, “according to the riches of his glory.” The grace of God is equal to the glory of God. God’s throne is a throne of glory, and the grace wherein we stand is backed by the glory of God. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.17}

“We glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience.” Some say that tribulation worketh *impatience*. This is not true. If a man is not justified by faith, tribulation will develop the impatience that is in him. How is it, then, that tribulation worketh patience? Let these texts answer: “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” 1 Peter 5:7. “Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.” Psalm 55:22. “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.18}

He takes the heavy loads away. What is that burden?—Anything that worries or vexes us. It matters not whether it be a small thing-a little trial-or a great one. Cast it on the Lord. We rejoice in tribulation because we have Christ with us, and we cast all the burdens on him. He is able to bear them. He has already borne them for all the world, so we cannot add to his burden. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.19}

How do we get rid of the burdens?—Give them to Christ, and then say, “He has them.” And he has them whether you feel any different or not. Then you will experience the truth of the words, “I will give you rest.” It is rest even though the physical pain still racks the body, for Christ bears that tribulation, and you are lifted up above all pain. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.20}

How did the martyrs go to the rack and the stake with songs of joy on their lips? Was that mere bravado?—No; Christ bore their burden, and in him they had peace. Out of a full heart they sang their praise to him. Thus they were happy and joyous, and scarcely noticed the pain while the flames crept around them. We will have to “pass through great tribulation.” It may be the lash on the naked flesh, or it may be the thumbscrew. Human nature shrinks from such torture. In Christ we can bear it. Gain an experience in him now, and in the trying time he will not forsake you. He can bear that great burden as well as a small one. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.21}

Christ will be ours then as well as now, and the life we live will be in him. No man in this world will be able to stand in that time unless he has previously learned the lesson of faith. Now is the time, while the lesson may be learned under easy circumstances. Great as will be the tribulation of that time, we will pass through it with rejoicing. That rejoicing must be learned now. E. J. W. {SITI June 15, 1891, p. 171.22}

**“Life in Christ” The Signs of the Times, 17, 25.**

E. J. Waggoner

[Extract from a discourse on Romans 5.] {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.23}

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, *much more*, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Many act and talk as if Christ was dead, and irrecoverably dead. Yes, he died; but he rose again, and lives forevermore. Christ is not in Joseph’s new tomb. We have a risen Saviour. What does the death of Christ do for us?—Reconciles us to God. He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Now mark! It is the *death* of Christ that brings us to God; what is it that keeps us there?—It is the life of Christ. We are saved by his life. Now hold these words in your minds: “Being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.24}

Why was the life of Christ given? “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Then Christ gave his life that we might have life. Where is that life? And where can we get it? In John 1:4 we read, “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” He alone has life, and he gives that life to as many as will accept it. John 17:2. Then Christ has the life, and he is the only one who has it, and he is willing to give it to us. Now what is that life? Verse 3: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” Has a person who *knows* Christ eternal life?—That is what the word of God says. {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.25}

Again he says in John 3:36: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” These are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. How do we know that we have this life? This is an important question. “We *know* that we have *passed* from *death* unto *life*, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding I him.” {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.26}

Says one, “We know that we will get eternal life by and by.” Yes, that is true, but there is something better than that; we get it *now*. This is not a mere theory, it is the word of God. Let me illustrate: Here are two men-brothers—to all appearances they are alike. But one is a Christian, and the other is not. Now the one that is a Christian, although there is nothing in his external appearance to indicate it, has a life that the other has not. He has passed from *death*—the state in which the other one is—to life. He has something that the other has not got, and that something is *eternal life*. The words, “No *murderer* hath eternal life abiding in him,” would mean nothing if nobody else had eternal life abiding in him. {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.27}

“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; *because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son*.” 1 John 5:10. God cannot lie, and so when we say that the words of God are not so, we make liars of ourselves. Now, according to this scripture, we make God a liar, if we believe not the record that God gave of his Son. What, then, must we believe in order to clear ourselves of that charge,—of not believing this record and thus making God a liar? The next verse explains it: “*And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*.” {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.28}

Some people are afraid that this idea of justification by faith, and eternal life, will get men away from the commandments. But nobody but the one who is justified by faith—who has Christ’s life—does keep the commandments; for God says that we are justified by faith, and if we say we are not, then we make God a liar,—we bear false witness against him, and we break the commandment. In the verse just quoted we are told what we are to believe in order to be cleared from the charge of making God a liar. We are to believe that God has given to us eternal life in Christ. As long as we have the Son of God, we have eternal life. By our faith in the word of God we bring Christ into our hearts. Is he a dead Christ?—No; he lives and cannot be separated from his life. Then, when we get Christ into our hearts, we get life there. He brings that life into our hearts when he comes. How thankful we ought to be to God for this? {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.29}

When Jesus went to Bethany, he said to Martha, “I am the resurrection and the life.” We have already read about passing from death unto life; how was that done?—Only by a resurrection. In Christ we have a resurrection to a new life. Note the following: Paul prays that he may know him and the “*power of his resurrection*.” What is the power of that resurrection? In Ephesians 2:4, 5, 6, and 7 we read: “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us [made us alive] together with Christ (by grace ye are saved).” {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.30}

Notice, he *hath* done this, and he “hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We were dead, we are quickened, and we are raised up to sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. We must have, and we can have, the life of Christ to-day; for when he comes, he will change our vile bodies by the same power by which he *has* changed our hearts. The heart must be changed now. It cannot be changed except by the life of Christ coming in and abiding in it. But when Christ is in the heart, we can live the life of Christ, and then when he comes, the glory will be revealed. He was Christ when he was here upon earth, although he did not have a retinue of angels and glory visible about him. He was Christ when he was the Man of Sorrows. Then, when he ascended, the glory was revealed. So with us. Christ must dwell in our hearts now, and when he comes and changes these bodies, then the glory will be revealed. {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.31}

In Hebrews 5:2 we learn that the work of the high priest was to be one of compassion. “Wherefore in all things it behooved him [Christ] to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” Hebrews 2:17. What is done by the compassion of Christ?—Strength is given to us. What benefit is the compassion of Christ to us?—He know the strength we need. He knows what we need, when we need it, and how we need it. So the work of Christ as priest is for one thing-to deliver us from sin. What is the power of Christ’s priesthood?—He is made priest, “not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an *endless life*.” That is the power by which Christ delivers you and me from sin this day, and this hour, and every moment that we believe in him. {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.32}

Christ was immortal before he came to earth. He was God. What is the essential attribute of divinity?—Life. If Christ was immortal, and therefore had life, how could he die?—I don’t know. That is a mystery; but I am so glad that One did die for us, who had life that could not be touched by anything, and that was successful in resisting the attacks of the enemy. Then so powerful was he that he could lay his life down and take it up again. Why was it that no one could take life away from Christ?—Because he was sinless, and if there ever had been another man on earth who lived without sin he too could never die. But there never was but the One who trod this earth who was perfectly sinless, and that was Jesus Christ of Nazareth. No one could take life away from Christ. The wicked had no power to kill him. He laid his life down. If he had not chosen to do that, no one ever could have taken it from him. {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.33}

God raised him up, “having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.” It was not possible that death should hold Christ. He had power in his life that defied death. He laid down, and took death upon himself, that he might show his power over death. He defied death, he entered right into the realms of death-the grave-to show that he had power over it. Christ laid down his life; and when the time came for him to do so, he took it up again. Why was it that death could not hold him?—Because he was sinless. Sin had spent all its force on him, and had not marred him in the least. It had not made a single blot upon his character. His was a sinless life, and therefore the grave could have no power over him. It is that same life which we have when we believe on the Son of God. Give your sins to the Lord, and take that sinless life in their place. {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.34}

The life of Christ is divine power. In the time of temptation the victory is won beforehand. When Christ is abiding in us, we are justified by faith, and we have his life abiding in us. But in that life he gained the victory over all sin, so the victory is ours before the temptation comes. When Satan comes with his temptation, he has no power, for we have the life of Christ, and that in us wards him off every time. Oh, the glory of the thought, that there is life in Christ, and that we may have it! {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.35}

The just shall live by faith, because Christ lives in them. “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Yes, we are crucified with Christ; but is Christ dead?—No, he has risen again; then we have risen with him. But we are in the flesh. That is true; but in the flesh there may be the divine life that was in Christ when he was in the flesh. E. J. W. {SITI June 22, 1891, p. 171.36}