**“Being Justified” The Signs of the Times, 19, 26.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1. What does this mean? What is it to be justified? Both professors and non-professors often mistake its meaning. Many of the former think that it is a sort of half-way house to perfect favor with God, while the latter think that it is a substitute for real righteousness. They think that the idea of justification by faith is that if one will only believe what the Bible says, he is to be counted as righteous when he is not. All this is a great mistake. {SITI May 1, 1893, p. 388.3}

Justification has to do with the law. The term means making just. Now in Romans 2:13 we are told who the just ones are: “For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.” The just man, therefore, is the one who does the law. To be just means to be righteous. Therefore since the just man is the one who does the law, it follows that to justify a man, that is, to make him just, is to make him a doer of the law. {SITI May 1, 1893, p. 388.4}

Being justified by faith, then, is simply being made a doer of the law by faith. “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.” Romans 3:20. The reason for this is given in the previous verses. It is because there is none that doeth good. “They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” Verse 12. Not only have all sinned, but “the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Romans 8:7. So there is a double reason why a man cannot be justified by the law. In the first place, since he has sinned, it is impossible that any amount of subsequent obedience could make up for that sin. The fact that a man does not steal anything to-day, does not in the least do away with the fact that he stole something yesterday; nor does it lessen his guilt. The law will condemn a man for a theft committed last year, even though he may have refrained from stealing ever since. This is so obvious that it does not need any further illustration or argument. {SITI May 1, 1893, p. 388.5}

But further, the man has not only sinned, so that he cannot be justified by any amount of after obedience, even if he were to give it, but, as we have read, it is impossible for any man by nature to be subject to the law of God. He cannot do what the law requires. Listen to the words of the apostle Paul, as he describes the condition of the man who wants to obey the law: “For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.” Romans 7:14-18. It is therefore clear enough why a man cannot be justified by the law. The fault is not in the law, but in the man. The law is good, and that is the very reason why it will not justify a wicked man. {SITI May 1, 1893, p. 388.6}

But what the law cannot do, the grace of God does. It justifies a man. What kind of men does it justify?-Sinners, of course, for they are the only ones who stand in need of justification. So we read, “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Romans 4:4, 5. God justifies the ungodly. Is that not right?-Certainly it is. It does not mean that he glosses over a man’s fault, so that he is counted righteous, although he is really wicked; but it means that he make that man a doer of the law. The moment God declares an ungodly man righteous, that instant that man is a doer of the law. Surely that is a good work, and a just work as well as a merciful one. {SITI May 1, 1893, p. 388.7}

How is the man justified, or made righteous?—“Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Romans 3:24. Remember that to justify means to make one a doer of the law, and then read the passage again: “Being made a doer of the law freely, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” The redemption that is in Christ Jesus is the worthiness or the purchasing power of Christ. He gives himself to the sinner; his righteousness is given to the one who has sinned, and who believes. That does not mean that Christ’s righteousness which he did eighteen hundred years ago is laid up for the sinner, to be simply credited to his account, but it means that his present, active righteousness is given to that man. Christ comes to live in that man who believes, for he dwells in the heart by faith. So the man who was a sinner is transformed into a new man, having the very righteousness of God. {SITI May 1, 1893, p. 388.8}

It will be seen, therefore, that there can be no higher state than that of justification. It does everything that God can do for a man short of making him immortal, which is done only at the resurrection. But this does not mean that, being justified, there is no more danger of the man falling into sin. No; “The just shall live by faith.” Faith and submission to God must be exercised continually, in order to retain the righteousness-in order to remain a doer of the law. {SITI May 1, 1893, p. 388.9}

This enables one to see clearly the force of these words, “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.” Romans 3:31. That is, instead of breaking the law, and making it of no effect in our lives, we establish it in our hearts by faith. This is so because faith brings Christ into the heart, and the law of God is in the heart of Christ. And thus “as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” This one who obeys is the Lord Jesus Christ, and his obedience is done in the heart of everyone who believes. And as it is by his obedience alone that men are made doers of the law, so to him shall be the glory forever and ever. {SITI May 1, 1893, p. 388.10}

**“The Power of the Name” The Signs of the Times, 19, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

In another article we have seen what mercy is; in this we shall consider its power. When Moses stood upon Mount Sinai to receive the tables of the law from the hands of the Lord, “the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.” Exodus 34:5-7. All this is the name of the Lord. Therefore, when we consider the power of mercy, we are simply considering the power of the name of the Lord. {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 388.11}

David said: “He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.” Psalm 103:10, 11. This shows the extent of the mercy of the Lord, but we are not to consider it simply as great in extent. That which is of immense size is usually of great power, and that is just the idea that is here conveyed. Accordingly, some versions give a more literal rendering of the original, thus, “For as the heaven is high above the earth, so mighty is his mercy toward them that fear him.” The mercy of the Lord fills the universe, and it is powerful in proportion to its extent. {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 388.12}

In the case of the healing of the blind man, which we recently studied, we have an instance of the power of the mercy of the Lord. Bartimaeus cried out, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.” When Jesus asked what particular thing he wanted, he replied, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.” Jesus said, “Receive thy sight; thy faith hath saved thee.” And immediately he received his sight. What gave him his sight?-It was the mercy of the Lord. So we see that the mercy of the Lord is not merely a feeling of sympathy. It has power. In that case it opened the eyes of the blind. {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 388.13}

Remembering that the name of the Lord is mercy, let us read the account of the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. He had never walked in his life. His friends had laid him at that gate, in order that his helplessness might appeal to the charity of the numerous passersby. Presently Peter and John came into the temple. The man asked alms of them as of others. “Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.” The result was immediate. “And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.” {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 388.14}

This was accomplished by the name of Jesus. This Peter declared to all the multitude that gathered around the man and the disciples. “And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.” Acts 3:12-16. {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 388.15}

Before we can learn all the lesson that this miracle is designed to teach, we must read what Peter said the next day when he was brought before the council to answer for the good deed. The priests said, “By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?” “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of the builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:8-12. {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 388.16}

Now note a few points. In the first place, we learn that salvation from sin comes in the same way that strength to walk came to the lame man. The name by which he stood before the people perfectly whole is the only name by which man can be saved. Therefore from this miracle we are to learn the way of salvation. {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 388.17}

It is therefore important that we note that the man was impotent. That means that he had no power. That is just the condition of all men by nature. “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” Romans 5:6. The experience of all is that described by the apostle Paul: “For I know that in me (that is in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.” Romans 7:18. The power to do good does not reside in fallen human nature. {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 420.1}

The man was impotent from his birth. So it is with us in regard to spiritual things. The weakness which we feel when we do good is weakness that is a part of humanity. But as in the case of the lame man, this weakness increases with years. We do not have any statement that his weakness increased, but we do know that since his ankle bones had no strength from birth, the longer he lived, and the more he grew in stature and weight, the more impossible it would be for him to walk. So with us. Age does not bring any strength to do right. On the contrary, the practice of the natural evil that we have only increases the inability to do good. There was no human hope for the man, for he was above forty years old, and had never walked. So the Lord takes us and helps us when there is no help in man. {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 420.2}

“And his name through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.” What did it?-The name of Jesus. Can the name of Jesus give power to do what is right, to anyone who trusts it? “There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Faith enables one to do that which he is unable to do otherwise. It is not a substitute for work, but it works. Faith that would not make the man walk would have been of no use to him. He might have sat there by the pool all the day and proclaimed his faith in the name of Jesus, and he might have called upon all to join him in singing, “All hail the power of Jesus’ name;” but that would not have made any converts. But when he rose up and walked, as the result of his faith, it made an impression on all that saw it. They knew that nothing less than the power of God had wrought the great change. So Christ says, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” The fact that God is to be glorified by the good works that men do, is evidence that he is the one who does the works. His is the power, and his must be the glory. Living faith works because it lays hold of the power of God. {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 420.3}

Lastly, note that that which was performed by the power of the name of Jesus, through faith in that name, was not a momentary work. It did not pass away as soon as it took place. The next day Peter said before the council, “Be it known...that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand before you whole.” In the strength of that name he arose and walked, and in the strength of that name he continued to walk. So it is in the spiritual life. Not only are men forgiven through faith in the name of Jesus, but “the just shall *live* by faith.” {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 420.4}

It is faith from the beginning of the Christian life. And that faith is faith in the name of the Lord Jesus. At the beginning of their Christian life they are baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and that name is their safeguard in all time to come; for “the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.” Proverbs 18:10. {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 420.5}

“The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee; send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion.” {SITI May 8, 1893, p. 420.6}

**“The Secret of Reformation” The Signs of the Times, 19, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

When Wycliffe was translating, or was about to translate, the Bible into the English language, he wrote these words:— {SITI May 15, 1893, p. 420.7}

As the faith of the church is contained in the Scriptures, the more these are known in their true meaning the better, and inasmuch as secular men should assuredly understand the faith they profess, that faith should be taught them in whatever language may be best known to them. Forasmuch, also, as the doctrines of our faith are more clearly and exactly expressed in the Scriptures than they may probably be by priests-seeing, if I may so speak, that many priests are but too ignorant of Holy Scripture, while others conceal many parts of it; and as the verbal instructions of priests have many other defects,-the conclusion is abundantly manifest that believers should ascertain for themselves what are the true matters of their faith, by having the Scriptures in a language which they fully understand. For the laws made by prelates are not to be received as matters of faith, nor are we to confide in their public instruction, nor in any of their words, but as they are founded in Holy Writ,-show the Scriptures contain the whole truth. And this translation of them into English should therefore do at least this good, namely, placing priests and bishops above suspicion as to the parts of it which they profess to explain. Other means, act as the friars, prelates, the pope, may all prove defective; and to provide against this. Christ and his apostles evangelized the greater portion of the world, by making known the Scriptures to the people in their own language. To the end, indeed, did the Holy Spirit endow them with the knowledge of tongues. Why, then, should not the living disciples of Christ do in this respect as they did? {SITI May 15, 1893, p. 420.8}

The work of translating the Scriptures into the language of the people has now been almost completed. Since the days of Tyndale it has been an easy matter for anyone to get a copy of the Bible in the English language, and the Book has been translated into almost every language under heaven. Still the work of the Reformation is not complete. It is not enough that the Bible should be furnished in the language of the people; it must be read and studied by the people. It is of little use to have the Bible if the words of man are to be taken as to what it means, instead of reading it for one’s self. To too great an extent at the present day, as in the days of Christ, when the people had the Bible in their own tongue, the fear of God is taught by the commandments of men, rather than by the word of God. So the work of the true teacher is to take the Bible which the people have ready to their hand, and bring them face to face with it. {SITI May 15, 1893, p. 420.9}

To be a follower of the Reformers does not mean to believe just what they believed, and nothing more. To be a worthy follower of the Reformers is to be actuated by the same spirit that moved them. That was loyalty to the word of God. Their principle was that the Bible should settle all questions; that it, and it alone, was the truth. They did not know all that the Bible teaches. No man has ever yet known it all. Sometimes, also, they were mistaken in their views of Scripture, and made the common mistake of teaching what they *thought* instead of what they *knew*. Whether a man is right or wrong; if we follow the man, we shall surely go wrong; for at the best we shall get only partial truth; but if we follow the Scriptures just as they read, we cannot make a mistake. Only they are true followers of the Reformers who have the same loyalty to the word that they had, regardless of what the thought about certain points. {SITI May 15, 1893, p. 420.10}

Let the question which Wycliffe asked be pondered well. Why should not the living disciples of Christ do as the disciples of old did in bringing the Bible to the people, that he may read it without the interpretations of men? When this is done as it should be, there will be a greater reformation than has ever yet been known. {SITI May 15, 1893, p. 420.11}

**“Christ the Bread of Life” The Signs of the Times, 19, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

Jesus had gone over the Sea of Galilee with his disciples, and a great company of people had followed him, because they had seen his power in the healing of disease. After he had finished his instruction for the day, he looked at the great multitude of people who had assembled, and said to Philip, “Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?” This he said to prove Philip, “for he himself knew what he would do.” After the disciples had shown that they did not know what to do, Jesus had the people sit down on the grass. There was a lad present who had with him five barley loaves and two fishes, an amount of food so utterly inadequate to the need of the people that we are not surprised at Peter’s remark, “What are they among so many?” If all had been equally divided among the five thousand men present, there would have been scarcely as much as a crumb apiece. But read what followed:— {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.12}

“And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.” John 6:11-13. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.13}

What a wonderful miracle this was! It is certain that the five loaves with which they began, would not merely have filled twelve baskets; therefore we find that there was a good deal more left after feeding the five thousand than there was when they began, so that in reality the original amount of bread was not drawn upon at all. There was an act of creation performed by Christ, who is the Creator of all things. “In him were all things created.” Creative power resides in Christ. As he took the bread in his hands, it multiplied. Therefore the bread which the people ate that day came from Christ. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.14}

All the miracles of Christ were done that we might believe that he is indeed the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, we might have life through his name. And no miracle that was ever performed shows more clearly than this how we may feed upon him, and receive life thereby. We shall see that this was the lesson that Jesus intended to have us learn from it. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.15}

The next day the people followed Jesus to Capernaum, and there he exhorted them: “Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed.” John 6:27. They rightly understood that this meat that would endure forever consisted of acts of righteousness, and so they asked him what they should do that they might work the works of God. “Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent.” Believing on Christ means appropriating him. Therefore the meat that endures unto everlasting life is righteousness, and that is obtained by believing or appropriating Christ Jesus virtually said to them that he himself was that food. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.16}

With strange forgetfulness of the miracle that Jesus had wrought the day before, the people said: “What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? What dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.” Verses 30, 31. Jesus then proceeded to show them that the bread which the fathers ate in the desert was bread that God himself gave to them, and that he himself was the bread. See verses 32-35. So that the miracle by which they had been fed the day before, was but a repetition of the miracle of giving the manna. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.17}

“For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world.” And then, to leave no possible doubt as to what he meant, Jesus added, “I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” Again: “He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” Verses 47-51. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.18}

Here was a plain statement that just as their fathers had eaten manna in the desert, and they had eaten bread in the desert, and they had eaten bread in the desert the day before, by which physical life had been preserved, so they were to eat of Christ, the living bread, which would give them spiritual life forever. But this was too much for them to believe. “The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” The same question is asked at this day. How is it possible that we can get righteousness and life, even the righteousness of God, and eternal life, just by believing on Christ? Jesus said that it is by eating him. But that only makes it seem more absurd to unbelief. If the Jews had not been so blinded by unbelief, they would have thought how they had eaten bread from Christ the day before, and that would have answered their question. And to-day he who doubts that one may eat of Jesus, and thereby get his life of everlasting righteousness, shows that he does not believe the record of the feeding of the five thousand. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.19}

Jesus did not in any degree modify what he had said, to accommodate their unbelief. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.” John 6:53-58. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.20}

The Jews ate the manna in the wilderness, and if they had seen things by faith, they would at the same time have eaten of Christ, who was signified by that manna. Thus they would have received eternal life. But here they had not faith they were dead. Now the Bread of Life was there in person before them. He had come down from heaven to give himself for the life of the world. Whosoever eat of him shall have eternal life. But though men might eat of the man, and the natural bread that God gives them, without having any faith, no man can eat of the Bread of Life without faith; for it is by faith that Christ is eaten. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.21}

In this there is a lesson for all who come to the table of the Lord. The apostle Paul said, “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ.” 1 Corinthians 10. Men may eat of the bread of the Lord’s Supper without any faith, but in that care they do not eat of Christ. He can be received only by faith. And he may be eaten at any time and all the time, for the eating of the bread of the communion is only to symbolize the continual eating of Christ. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.22}

But Jesus did not leave this matter in doubt. He himself explained the figure which he used. He said: “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.” Suppose that it were possible for the priest to change the bread of the mass into the actual body of Christ, as it is claimed that he does; that would not amount to anything. Suppose that all men should eat of that bread; nay, more, suppose that Christ’s physical body, as he was on the earth, had been divided up, and a piece given to every man, and that all had eaten it; that would have been to no profit. It is not physical meat that endures to everlasting life. The life is spiritual, and only spiritual food does supply it. So it is not worth while to dispute as to whether or not the priest can transform the wafer into the body of Christ, since if he could, he would be doing nothing toward supplying the needs of men. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.23}

Christ is the Word. The Scriptures are from him, and they are life. Their life is the life of God in Christ. Whosoever, therefore eats them eats Christ. We eat them by believing them, and allowing them to work his own righteousness in our life. “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts.” Jeremiah 15:16. {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.24}

Now the question will arise, “How it is possible that we can, by believing the words of Christ, receive righteousness and life?” This is the very question that the Jews asked. No man can tell; we can only know the fact. He cannot so much as tell how the bread that we eat at our tables can become a part of our life. We know that it does so, and that satisfies us. No man was ever yet so foolish as to refuse to eat his breakfast because he could not know how it was going to give him renewed life. He has proved that it does, and that is enough. That daily food comes direct from Christ. It is he that giveth us all things to enjoy. And as men eat the bread that comes from him, and are refreshed, so he wants them to eat of his own body, by means of his words-the bread of everlasting life, that so their soul may be refreshed. This is the word that comes to us all: “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him!” {SITI May 29, 1893, p. 420.25}