**“Studies in Romans. Some Practical Exhortations” The Signs of the Times, 22, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

We have now finished that which might be called the argumentative portion of the Epistle to the Romans. The five chapters which follow are devoted to exhortations to the church. Those in the chapter before us are very simple, but will be much better understood if read in connection with that which immediately precedes. Accordingly, we preface our reading of the twelfth chapter with the last four verses of the eleventh: {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.1}

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto Him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” Romans 11:33-36; 12:1-21. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.2}

**Questions on the Text**

What is the truth concerning the Lord? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.3}

“Of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.4}

What therefore is the reasonable thing for men to do? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.5}

“Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.6}

What will be done for us if we thus yield ourselves? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.7}

“Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.8}

How should men think of themselves? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.9}

“Think soberly.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.10}

What induces soberness of thought? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.11}

“The measure of faith.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.12}

From whom does faith come? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.13}

“God hath dealt... the measure of faith.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.14}

To whom has God dealt the measure of faith? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.15}

“To every man.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.16}

What is the relation of men in Christ? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.17}

“One body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.18}

How should Christians feel towards persecutors? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.19}

“Bless them which persecute you.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.20}

What should be our sympathies? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.21}

“Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.22}

How far is it possible for me to live at peace with all men? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.23}

“As far as lieth in you.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.24}

With what is evil to be overcome? {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.25}

“With good.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.26}

A Logical Conclusion.-The closing verses of the eleventh chapter set forth the infinite, unsearchable power and wisdom of God. Nobody can add anything to him. No one can put God under obligations to Him. No one can give him something for which He should receive something in return. “For of him, and through him, and to him are all things.” “He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.” “In him we live, and move, and have our being.” Acts 17:25, 28. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.27}

This being so, it is but reasonable that all should yield their bodies to him, for him to control. He alone has the wisdom and the power to do it properly. The word “reasonable” is, literally, “logical.” The logical result of acknowledging God’s power and wisdom and love, is to submit to him. He who does not yield to God, virtually denies His existence. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.28}

Exhorting and Comforting.-It is interesting to know that the Greek word rendered “beseech” is from the same root as “the Comforter,” applied to the Holy Spirit. It is the word used in Matthew 5:4, “Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be *comforted*.” It occurs also in 1 Thessalonians 4:18, “Comfort one another with these words.” The following passage contains the word several times, as indicated: “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all *comfort*; who *comforteth* us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to *comfort* them which are in any trouble, by the *comfort* wherewith we ourselves are *comforted* of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our *consolation* also aboundeth by Christ.” 2 Corinthians 1:3-5. The fact that the Greek word for “exhort,” or “beseech,” is identical with that for “comfort,” may give a new force to the exhortations of the Spirit of God. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.29}

There is comfort in the thought that God is all-powerful. Therefore there is comfort in all his exhortations and commandments, since he does not expect us to act in our own strength, but in his. When he utters a command, it is but the statement of what he will do in and for us, if we yield to his power. When he reproves, he is simply showing to us our need, which he can abundantly supply. The Spirit convicts of sin, but is always the Comforter. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.30}

Power and Mercy.—“God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God. Also unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy.” Psalm 62:11, 12. “God is love.” Therefore his power is love, so that when the apostle cites the power and wisdom of God as the reason why we should yield to him, he exhorts us by the mercies of God. Never forget that all the manifestation of God’s power is but the manifestation of his love, and that love is the power by which he works. Jesus Christ, in whom God’s love is revealed (1 John 4:10), is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:24). {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.31}

True Nonconformity.-In England, religious people have often been divided into two classes: Churchmen and Nonconformists. Now every true Christian is a non-conformist, but not in the sense that the word is ordinarily used. “Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds.” When those who call themselves Nonconformists adopt worldly methods, and engage in worldly schemes, then they dishonor the name. “The friendship of the world is enmity with God.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.32}

How to Think of Self.-The exhortation to every man is not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. How highly ought one to think of himself? “Put them in fear, O Lord; that the nations may know themselves to be but men.” Psalm 9:20. “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.” Psalm 146:3. “Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?” Isaiah 2:22. “Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.” Psalm 39:5. “The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.” “The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.” 1 Corinthians 3:19, 20. “What is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” James 4:14. “We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” Isaiah 64:6. “In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.” Philippians 2:3. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.33}

Faith and Humility.-Pride is the enemy of faith. The two can not live together. A man can think soberly and humbly only as the result of the faith that God gives. “Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith.” Habakkuk 2:4. The man who has confidence in his own strength and wisdom, will not depend upon another. Trust in the wisdom and power of God comes only when we recognize and acknowledge our own weakness and ignorance. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 483.34}

Faith a Gift of God.-We read that God hath dealt the measure of faith to every man. Faith-trust in God-comes from a knowledge of his greatness and our littleness; of his strength and wisdom and our weakness and ignorance; of His righteousness and our sinfulness. God tells us these things, so that we may trust in him. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 484.1}

What Faith Is Given.-That faith which God deals to man is indicated in Revelation 14:12: “Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” God does not give faith to the saints only, any more than he gives the commandments to them alone; but the saints *keep the faith*, and others do not. The faith which they *keep* is the faith of Jesus; therefore it is the faith of Jesus that is given to men. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 484.2}

Faith Given to Every Man.-Every man is exhorted to think soberly, because God hath dealt *to every man* the measure of faith. Many people have a notion that they are so constituted that it is impossible for them to believe. That is a grave error. Faith is just as easy, and just as natural, as breathing. It is the common inheritance of all men, and the one thing wherein all are equal. It is as natural for the child of the infidel to believe as it is for the child of the saint. It is only when men build up a barrier of pride about themselves (Psalm 73:6) that they find it difficult to believe. And even then they will believe; for when men disbelieve God, they believe Satan; when they disbelieve the truth, they greedily swallow the most egregious falsehoods. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 484.3}

In What Measure?— We have seen that faith is given to every man. This may be known also by the fact that salvation is offered to every man, and placed within his grasp, and salvation is only by faith. If God had not given faith to every man, he could not have brought salvation within the reach of all. Now the question is, In what measure has God given every man faith? This is really answered in the fact already learned, that the faith which he gives is the faith of Jesus. The faith of Jesus is given in the gift of Jesus himself, and Christ is given in his fullness to every man. He tasted death for every man. Hebrews 2:9. “Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.” Ephesians 4:7. Christ is not divided; therefore to every man is given all of Christ and all of his faith. There is but one measure. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 484.4}

The Body and Its Members.—“There is one body” (Ephesians 4:4), and that is the church, of which Christ is the head (Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18). “We are members of his body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” Ephesians 5:30. There are many members in the body, “so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” As in the human body, so in the body of Christ, “all members have not the same office;” yet they are so joined together, and so mutually dependent, that none can boast over the others. “The eye can not say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.” 1 Corinthians 12:21. So it is in the true church of Christ; there are no divisions and no boastings, and no member seeks to occupy the place or perform the work of another. No member thinks himself independent of the others, and all have an equal care for one another. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 484.5}

Various Gifts.—“All members have not the same office, and all have not the same gifts. “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.... And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.... For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of Spirits; to another divers kind of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.” 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 484.6}

“The Proportion of Faith.” —“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.” As we have seen, there is but “one faith” (Ephesians 4:5), and that is “the faith of Jesus.” Although there are various gifts, there is but one power behind them all. “All these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit.” Therefore, to prophesy or to exercise any other of the gifts “according to the proportion” or measure of faith, is to do it “as of the ability which God giveth.” 1 Peter 4:11. “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 484.7}

“In Honor Preferring One Another.” *—* This can be done only when one is able “in lowliness of mind” to esteem others better than himself. Philippians 2:3. And this can be done only when one knows his own worthlessness. The man who “knows the plague of his own heart” can not think that others are as bad as himself. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who ... made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant.” {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 484.8}

How to Treat Persecutors.-Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not.” To curse does not necessarily always mean to use profane language, to swear. To curse means to speak ill. It is the opposite of bless, which means to speak well of. Sometimes men persecute according to law, and sometimes they persecute without any legal warrant; but whether it is “due process of law” or mob violence, no hard words are to be used against those who do it. On the contrary, they are to be spoken well of. One can not do this without the Spirit of Christ, who prayed for his betrayers and murderers, and who did not venture to bring railing accusation even against the devil. Jude 9. To hold persecutors up to contempt is not according to God’s instruction. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 484.9}

Rejoicing and Weeping.-To rejoice with them that rejoice and to weep with them that weep, is not an easy thing for the natural man. Only the grace of God can work such sympathy in men. It is not so difficult to weep with those who are afflicted, but it is often very difficult to rejoice with those who rejoice. For instance, suppose another has received something which we very much desired, and is rejoicing over his gain; it requires much grace to rejoice with him. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 484.10}

Keeping the Peace.-We are to live peaceably with all men if it be possible. But what is the limit of possibility? Some will say that they tried to keep peace until “forbearance ceased to be a virtue,” and then they paid the troublesome one in his own coin. Many think that this verse exhorts them to hold out as long as they can, and not to take part in any disturbance until they have had great provocation. But this verse says, “as much as lieth *in you*, live peaceably with all men.” That is, there is to be no trouble so far as we are concerned. We can not always keep other people from warring, but we can be at peace ourselves. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee.” Isaiah 26:3. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1. “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.” Colossians 3:15. “And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:7. He who has this abiding peace of God, will never have any trouble with men. E. J. W. {SITI August 6, 1896, p. 484.11}

**“Studies in Romans. Christians and the State” The Signs of the Times, 22, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

We come now to the second of the purely hortatory chapters of Romans, the thirteenth. This chapter contains matter that is of the greatest importance, and which is perhaps the least regarded of any chapter in the book. Without any review we will proceed to read:— {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 498.1}

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience’ sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to wake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.” Romans 13. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 498.2}

In studying this chapter it is necessary to remember that the Epistle is addressed to professed followers of the Lord. “Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will,” etc. Romans 2:17, 18. And again, “Know ye not, brethren (for I speak to them that know the law).” etc. Romans 7:1. The last part of the chapter also shows the same thing. It is a mistake, therefore, to suppose that this chapter was designed to set forth the duties of earthly rulers, or as a treatise on civil government, or on the relation that the state should occupy to the church. Since it is addressed to professed Christians, it is evident that its object is simply to tell them how they ought to behave towards the governments under which they live. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 498.3}

All Power from God.—“God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.” Psalm 62:11. “There is no power but of God.” This is absolutely true, without any exception. The Roman power, even in the days of the infamous and brutal Nero, was as much derived from God as was the Jewish power in the days of David. When Pilate told Christ that he had power to crucify him or to let him go, Christ replied, “Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.” John 19:11. This fact does not, however, prove that the acts of that power were right, or that God sanctioned them. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 498.4}

This will be the more apparent if we take the cases of individuals. All human power comes from God. It is as true of the heathen as of Christians, that “in Him we live, and move, and have our being;” “for we are also His offspring.” Acts 17:28. It can as truly be said of every individual as of governments, that they are ordained, or appointed, of God. He has a plan for every one’s life. But that does not make God responsible for all their actions, because they are free to do as they choose, and they rebel against God’s plan, and pervert his gifts. The power with which the scoffer blasphemes God is as much from God as is the power with which the Christian serves him. Yet no one can suppose that God approves of blasphemy. Even so we are not to suppose that he necessarily approves the acts of governments, simply because the powers that be are ordained of him. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 498.5}

“Ordained.” —Let no one entertain the idea that this word necessarily implies the imparting of some spiritual power. It means nothing more than appointed or ordered, which we find in the margin. The Greek word from which it is rendered is found in Acts 28:23, where we read that the Jews in Rome appointed a day for Paul to tell them about the Gospel. It could as well be said that they “ordained” a day for him. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 498.6}

God over All.—“The higher powers” are not above the Most High. “Wisdom and might are His; and He changeth the times and the seasons; He removeth kings, and setteth up kings.” Daniel 2:20, 21. He set Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, over all the kingdoms of earth (see Jeremiah 17:5-8; Daniel 2:37, 38); but when Nebuchadnezzar arrogated to himself divine power, he was driven out among the beasts, that he might know that “the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Daniel 4:32). {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 498.7}

Resisting God.-Since there is no power but of God, ‘he that resisteth the power withstandeth the ordinance of God; and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment.” This is a warning against rebellion and insurrection. It is God who removes kings as well as sets them up. Therefore whoever presumes to remove a king is assuming God’s prerogative. It is as though he knew better than God when the government should be altered. Unless those who rise up against any earthly government can show a direct revelation to them from heaven appointing them to that work, they are setting themselves against God, by seeking to overthrow his order. They are putting themselves ahead of God. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 498.8}

Resisting or Overthrowing.-To resist the civil authority is in the same line as seeking to overthrow it. He who opposes a power with force would overthrow it if the contest were continued and he had the power. This the followers of Christ are strictly forbidden to do. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 499.1}

Christ’s Example.-Christ suffered, “leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, He threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” 1 Peter 2:21-23. It is worth while to remember that Christ was condemned on a political charge, and for political reasons, yet he made no resistance, although He showed that He had power to do so. See John 18:5-11; Matthew 26:51-53. It may be said that Christ knew that his hour had come. True; but he did not resist at previous times. He continually committed himself into the hands of the Father. That is an example for his followers. If they are submissive in God’s hands, they can suffer no indignity nor oppression that God does not appoint or allow; no injury can be done them before their hour comes. It is easier to profess faith in Christ than to show real faith by following his example. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 499.2}

Another Striking Example.-Saul had been anointed king of Israel by command of God; but had afterwards been rejected because of his reckless course. Then David was anointed king in his stead. Saul was jealous of David’s preferment, and sought his life. David did not resist, but fled. More than once Saul was within David’s power, but David would not lift up a hand against him. If there is any excuse for resisting a ruler, David had it. In the first place, if he had done so, it would have been only in self-defense; and, in the second place, he had already been anointed king in Saul’s stead. Yet when urged even to consent to allow another to kill Saul, David said: “Destroy him not; for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord’s anointed, and be guiltless? ... As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish. The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord’s anointed.” 1 Samuel 26:9-11. And yet Saul was a wicked man, who had cast off allegiance to God, and was not fit to rule. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 499.3}

Subject to God.-God’s word admonishes us to be subject to the powers that be, but it never countenances disobedience to God. God has never ordained any power to be above himself. It is the height of folly for us to argue from this chapter that it is the duty of Christians to obey human laws when they conflict with the law of God. God does not grant indulgence to sin; much less does he command us to sin. We are not to be subject to the powers that be instead of to God, but because we are subject to God. “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Colossians 3:17. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 499.4}

Subjection and Obedience.-Ordinarily subjection implies obedience. When we read that Jesus was subject to his parents, we are sure that he was obedient to them. So when we are exhorted to be subject to the powers that be, the natural conclusion is that we are to be obedient to the laws. But it must never be forgotten that God is above all; that both individual and national power comes from him; and that he has a right to the undivided service of every soul. We are to obey God all the time, and to be subject to human power as well, but always so that it does not involve disobedience to God. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 499.5}

Cannot Serve Two Masters.—“No man can serve two masters.... Ye can not serve God and mammon.” The reason is that God and mammon are opposite in their demands. Now everybody knows that there have often been human laws that conflicted with God’s commandments. There was once a law in America in the days of slavery requiring every man to do all in his power to return fugitive slaves to their masters. But God’s word said, “Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee.” Deuteronomy 23:15. In that case it was impossible to obey the law of the land without disobeying God; and obedience to God made disobedience to the human law absolutely necessary. Men had to make their choice as to whom they would obey. The Christian can not hesitate a moment in his choice. The law that contradicts God’s law is nothing. “There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord.” Proverbs 21:30. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 499.6}

“Every Ordinance of Man.” —“Some reader may quote 1 Peter 2:13 as opposed to this. It says, “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake.” Others may say that we are to submit to every ordinance except when it is opposed to God’s law. No exception, however, is implied, nor is any necessary. Neither does the text teach obedience to human laws that contradict God’s law. The error arises from a misapprehension of the word “ordinance.” It is supposed that this word means “law,” but a careful reading will show anybody that this supposition is a mistake. Let us read the thirteenth and fourteenth verses carefully: “Submit yourselves to every ordinance [Greek, *creation*] of man for the Lord’s sake.” Well, what are these ordinances or creations to which we are to be subject? It makes no difference; to all, “whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him.” It is very clear that the text says nothing whatever about laws, but only about rulers. The exhortation is precisely the same as that in the thirteenth of Romans. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 499.7}

Submissive yet Disobedient.-Let the reader follow on in the chapter last quoted from, and he will see that the submission enjoined does not involve obedience to wicked laws. We are exhorted: “Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.” We are to be subject to rightful authority, whether the exerciser of that authority be good and gentle, or froward. Then come the words, “For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.” 1 Peter 2:17-19. Now a man could not for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully, unless conscience toward God had compelled him to disobey some command laid upon him. This statement, immediately following the exhortation to be submissive, plainly shows that disobedience is contemplated as a probability when those in authority are “froward.” This is emphasized by the reference to Christ, who suffered wrongfully, yet made no resistance. “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.” Isaiah 53:7. He was condemned for his loyalty to the truth, which he would not compromise in the least, and yet he was submissive to the authority of the rulers. The apostle says that in this he left us an example, that we should follow in his steps. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 499.8}

Christians and Civil Government.—“For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.” Philippians 3:20. Those who through Christ have access by one Spirit unto the Father “are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” Ephesians 2:19. Let every man concern himself with the affairs of his own country, and not with those of another. For an American to come to England and presume to lecture Parliament for the way in which it conducts the business of Government, or for an Englishman to go to America and distinguish himself by his advice to the authorities, would be the height of impertinence. But if they should begin actively to interfere in the conduct of public affairs, or should stand for office, they would speedily be shown that they had no business there. Let them become naturalized, and then they may speak and act as much as they please; but then they must hold their peace if they return to the country to which they once owned allegiance. No man can be active in the affairs of two governments at the same time. This applies to the government of heaven as related to earthly governments, as well as to different countries on earth. The one who is a citizen of the heavenly country has no business to meddle with the affairs of earthly governments. He must leave that business to those who acknowledge this earth to be their home. If earthly rulers think to regulate the affairs pertaining to the kingdom of God, they are guilty of gross presumption, to say the least. But if they may not of right presume to regulate the affairs of the kingdom of heaven, much less may the citizens of heaven interfere in the affairs of earthly kingdoms. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 499.9}

Making Earth Heaven.-Many Christians and ministers of the gospel seek to justify their dealing in politics by saying that it is their duty to make this earth the kingdom of heaven. In a recent campaign we have heard much about “the regeneration of London,” and “making London the city of God.” Such language shows a grave misapprehension of what the gospel is. “It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” Romans 1:16. Regeneration is accomplished only by the Holy Spirit working upon individual hearts, and can not be controlled by men. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of Christ, but only “the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” Revelation 11:15; Isaiah 9:7. There will be a new earth, in which only righteousness will dwell, but it will be only after the coming of the day of the Lord, in which the elements shall melt, and ungodly men shall be burned up. 2 Peter 3:10-13. It will not be brought about by political action, even though ministers of the Gospel be the politicians. The minister of the Gospel has but one commission, namely, “Preach the word.” In no other way in the world can men be made better. Therefore the minister who turns his attention to politics is denying his calling. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 500.1}

Keeping the Peace.-We must needs be subject to earthly governments, for conscience’ sake; and for this cause also we must pay tribute and perform every duty of that nature that is laid upon us. Taxes may be heavy, and even unjust, but that does not warrant us in rebelling. The apostle James speaks to rich men who oppress the poor, and his language applies as well when they are in public office as when in private life. He says: “Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.” James 5:5, 6. Mark this, the just do not resist. Why not? Because of the injunction: “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” Romans 12:18, 19. As subjects of the King of peace, and citizens of His kingdom, they are bound to live peaceably with all men. Hence they can not fight even in self-defense. In this, Christ the Prince of peace is their example. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 500.2}

To Whom a Terror.-Only the evil workers are afraid of rulers. Well-doers have no fear. This is not because all rulers are good; for we know that many are not. “The broad empire of Rome filled the world,” and the one who ruled it when Paul wrote to the Romans was the most vile and cruel of all the monsters who governed it. Nero put men to death for the mere pleasure of killing them. Well might he strike terror to the hearts of men; yet the Christians could be calm, because their trust was in God. “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid.” Isaiah 12:2. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 500.3}

The Whole Duty of Man.—“Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.” “Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” “Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.” 1 John 4:7. “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.” 1 John 5:3. To fear God and keep His commandments is the whole duty of man. Ecclesiastes 12:13. Therefore, since he who loves his neighbor from the heart must also love God, and love is the keeping of his commandments, it is evident that the apostle has set forth in this exhortation the whole duty of man. He who heeds this exhortation can never do anything for which earthly governments can justly condemn him, even though he be ignorant of their laws. He who fulfils the law of love will never come in conflict with the powers that be. If they oppress him, they are fighting not against him but against the King whom he serves. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 500.4}

For Christians, Not for the Powers.-Some have supposed that verses 8-10 define the limit of civil authority, and show that men may legislate concerning “the second table of the law,” but concerning no other portion of the law of God. Two things kept in mind will show the fallacy of this. (1) The epistle is not addressed to rulers, but to individual Christians, as a guide for their private conduct. If the duty of rulers were here laid down, they, and not the brethren, would have been addressed. (2) “The law is spiritual,” and consequently none of it is within the power of human legislation. Take the commandment, “Thou shalt not covet;” no human power could enforce that, or tell if it was violated. But that commandment is no more spiritual than the other nine. The language is addressed to the brethren, and the sum of it is this. Live in love, and you will wrong no man, and need have no fear of any rulers. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 500.5}

The End Approaches.-The remainder of the chapter is devoted to exhortations that need no comment. Their special force is derived from the fact that “the end of all things is at hand.” Therefore we should “be sober, and watch unto prayer.” Although living in the night, when darkness covers the earth (Isaiah 60:2), Christians are children of the light and of the day, leaving off works of darkness. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 500.6}

Clothed with Christ.-Those who put on the Lord Jesus Christ will not themselves be seen. Christ alone will appear. To make provision for the lusts of the flesh is most unnecessary, since the flesh ever seeks to have its lusts gratified. The Christian has need rather to take heed that it does not assert its own power, and assume control. Only in Christ can the flesh be subdued. He who is crucified with Christ, can say, “I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20. And in that case he will conduct himself towards rulers and private persons just as Christ did, “because as he is, so are we in this world.” E. J. W. {SITI August 13, 1896, p. 500.7}

**“Studies in Romans. God the Only Judge” The Signs of the Times, 22, 33.**

E. J. Waggoner

Since the fourteenth chapter consists wholly of practical instruction in Christian living, and has no direct dependence upon the exhortations that have preceded it, we need not now take time to review the previous chapters, but will proceed at once with the text. Let it not be forgotten that this chapter, as well as those which precede, is addressed to the church, and not to those who do not profess to serve the Lord. In the sixth verse it is plainly shown that all who are spoken of in this chapter are those who acknowledge God as their Lord. The chapter therefore tells how we should regard one another as {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.1}

**Servants of One Common Master**

“Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth; for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way.” Romans 14:1-12. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.2}

**Questions on the Text**

Who are we not to shut away from out company? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.3}

“Him that is weak in the faith receive ye.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.4}

But how are we not to receive him? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.5}

“Not to doubtful disputations.” Or, as indicated in the margin, and rendered in some versions, “Not to judge his thoughts.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.6}

What illustration of differences of opinions does the apostle give? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.7}

“One believeth that he may eat all things, and other, who is weak, eateth herbs.” “One man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.8}

In what state should every man be? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.9}

“Let each man be fully assured in his own mind.” R.V. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.10}

How are those who differ in opinion not to regard each other? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.11}

“Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.12}

Why not? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.13}

“For God hath received him.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.14}

What is that man doing who judges another man? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.15}

He is judging “another man’s servant.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.16}

To whom is the servant responsible? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.17}

“To his own master he standeth or falleth.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.18}

But will he really fall, if he is indeed a servant of God? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.19}

“He shall be holden up.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.20}

Why? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.21}

“For God is able to make him stand.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.22}

What is the lesson that we are to learn in all this? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.23}

“None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.24}

To whom do we live and die? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.25}

“Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.26}

Whose, then, are we under all circumstances? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.27}

“Whose, then, are we under all circumstances? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.28}

“Whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.29}

For what purpose did Christ die and rise again? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.30}

“That he might be Lord both of the dead and living.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.31}

Why should we not judge or set at naught our brother? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.32}

“For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.33}

What proof is cited for this? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.34}

“It is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.35}

What, then, must every one of us do? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.36}

“Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.37}

Since God is to judge us all, what reasonable exhortation is given? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.38}

“Let us not therefore judge one another anymore.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.39}

What should we rather judge? {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.40}

“That no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way.” {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.41}

The School of Christ. —The church of Christ is not composed of perfect men, but of those who are seeking perfection. He is the perfect One, and he sends out the invitation: “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me.” Matthew 11:28, 29. Having called all to come to him, he says, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” John 6:37. As one has said, “God reaches for the hand of faith in man to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that man may attain to perfection of character.” The faith may be very weak, but God does not reject him on that account. Paul thanked God that the faith of the Thessalonian brethren grew exceedingly (2 Thessalonians 1:3), which shows that they did not have perfect faith at the first. It is true that God is so good that every person ought to trust him fully; but just because he is so good, he is very patient and forbearing with those who are not well acquainted with him, and he does not turn away from them because they are doubtful. It is this very goodness and forbearance of God that develops perfect faith. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.42}

The Pupils Not Masters. —It is not for the pupils to say who shall attend school. It is true that in this world there are schools that are exclusive, in which only a certain set of pupils are allowed. If one inferior in wealth and standing in society should seek to enter, there would be at once an uproar. The students themselves would make so strong a protest against the entrance of the newcomer, that the masters would feel obliged not to receive him. But such schools are not the schools of Christ. “There is no respect of persons with God.” He invites the poor and needy, and the weak. It is he, and not the pupils, that decides who shall be admitted. He says, “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely,” and he asks all who hear to extend the invitation. The only qualification necessary for entering the school of Christ is willingness to learn of him. If any man is willing to do his will, God will receive him and teach him. John 7:17. Whoever sets up any other standard, sets himself above God. No man has any right to reject one whom God receives. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.43}

Master and Servant. —Christ said to his disciples: “Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master; and all ye are brethren.” “Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ.” Matthew 23:8, 10. It is the master who sets the task for each pupil or servant. It is to the master that the servant looks for his reward. Therefore it is the master alone who has the right to give orders, and to pronounce judgment if there is failure. “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant?” If you have not the power to reward his success, you have not the right to judge his failures. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.44}

“God Is the Judge.” —“He putteth down one, and setteth up another.” Psalm 75:7. “For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.” Isaiah 33:22. “There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; who art thou that judgest another?” James 4:12. The power to save and to destroy determines the right to judge. To condemn when one has not the power to carry the judgment into effect, is but a farce. Such an one makes himself ridiculous, to say the least. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.45}

The Spirit of the Papacy. —The apostle Paul describes the apostasy as the revelation of “that man of sin,” “the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God,” or, “setting himself forth as God.” 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4. In Daniel 7:25 the same power is described as speaking great words against the Most High, and thinking to change times and laws. To set one’s self up against or above the law of God, is the strongest possible opposition to God, and the most presumptuous usurpation of his power. The end of the power that thus exalts itself is this: to be consumed by the Spirit of Christ, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:8. Now read in James 4:11: “He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.’ That tells us that whoever speaks evil of his brother, or judges or sets at naught his brother, is speaking against the law of God, and sitting in judgment upon it. In other words, he is putting himself in the place and doing the work of “that man of sin.” What else can result, but that he receive the reward of the man of sin? Surely there is enough in this thought to give us all pause. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.46}

All Subjects of Judgment. —“For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” In this statement there is no exception, for it is written, “As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” This being the case, it is the strongest reason why we should not judge and condemn one another. Verse 10 gives the fact that we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ as the reason why we should not judge nor despise a brother. “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” Notice this, that each one is to give account of *himself*, and not of somebody else, to God. In standing before the judgment seat of Christ, we are giving account to God, because Christ is the representative of Divinity in the judgment, as well as in all things. “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.” John 5:22, 23. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.47}

The Time of Judgment. —One reason why we should not judge, is that God is the judge. Another is, that “he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained.” Acts 17:31. The Father himself judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son. But even the Son does not sit in judgment now; for he says, “If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.” John 12:47. Therefore, he who presumes to sit in judgment now, not only usurps the place of God, but gets ahead of him. There will be a time when judgment will be committed to the saints of the Most High, but it will be only when the saints possess the kingdom. Daniel 7:22. And those to whom judgment is committed will all be *saints*. 1 Corinthians 6:2. None are to judge, except those who are without sin. The man who judges, therefore, declares himself to be without sin. But God is the only one whose testimony in this respect is of any worth; “For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.” 2 Corinthians 10:18. “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come.” 1 Corinthians 4:5. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.48}

The Word of Judgment. —But altho even Christ does not yet judge, he speaks the word by which men are to be judged, and that is the word of God. He says, “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.” John 12:48, 49. Altho Christ did not condemn anybody while he was on earth, the word that he spoke often caused those who heard it to be convicted in their own hearts, and self-condemned. “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” John 3:17-19. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.49}

Truth and Condemnation. —From the words of Christ, which we have quoted in the paragraph, we clearly see that there is a difference between condemning men and speaking the truth. Christ was not sent into the world to condemn the world; but he was sent into the world to bear witness to the truth. John 18:37. He did not condemn anybody, yet he declared the truth. So his followers are not to condemn anybody; yet none are his followers except those who speak the truth. If any are not doing the truth, the word of truth will enlighten them as to their acts. If they then persist in error, the word of truth testifies against them. But the one who speaks that word utters no condemnation. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.50}

Knowledge of Right and Wrong. —In this manner it by no means follows that a person in order not to condemn, must not explain the knowledge of right and wrong, which God has given him. If he did not, he could not be a witness for the truth. Neither could he do the truth. God’s word is truth (John 17:17); therefore the followers of Christ must both by words and actions speak the word of God. That word points out the difference between truth and error. It tells what things ought to be done, and what should not be done. By that word one may, and ought to declare of certain things, “They are sinful.” But in so saying, he utters no decision concerning any person. In short, the word of God condemns some now and always, but it does not at all condemn sinners, until the last day. Certainly all can see this clear distinction, and not know what they should do and what they should not do, in order to be in harmony with God’s word. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.51}

The Law and the Testimony. —“To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20. That is the testimony which we are always to give, let be according to the law of God. “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.” 1 Peter 4:11. Therefore, while we are not at liberty to condemn, we are at the same time not at liberty to disregard the word of God. We are by no means to assume that it makes no difference what we do, nor are we to give other people the idea that it is of no importance whether they keep the law of God or not. That form of charity which consists in giving away the word of God, or rather, in throwing it away, so as not to say anything contrary to anybody’s ideas of prejudices, is a form of charity that finds no warrant in the Bible. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 515.52}

Personal Questions. —Sometimes a person will ask concerning some duty pointed out by the law of God, “Ought I to do that?” The one questioned can only reply, “You ought to obey the Lord, now when you know what the Lord says, why do you ask me if you shall obey? I can not absolve you from obeying God, and if you do obey him, you ought to do it because he says so, and not because a man tells you to.” Again, a man sometimes asks, “Do you think that I shall be condemned if I do not keep the Sabbath?” We can only say, “I am not the judge. I have nothing to do with condemnation. You know what the Lord commands, decide for yourself whether or not you can reject his word and be justified.” The word of God is the sole guide, the sole standard of authority. Men must be brought face to face with it, and then left there alone with it. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 516.1}

The Law Not Disparaged. —There are many people who seem to be quite familiar with the words of the first part of the fourteenth of Romans, who evidently very seldom read any other part of the epistle. That is, they know that the apostle Paul wrote, “One man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” But they are so unfamiliar with the rest of the epistle that they suppose that this statement does away with the law of the Sabbath. What evidence have we that these words do not in the least degree intimate that the law of God, which includes the fourth commandment, is a matter of indifference? Note the following points, and you will readily see. First, the apostle says in this same chapter that “we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” Second, he says also in the first part of the epistle, that “as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law,” “in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.” Romans 2:12, 16. When the apostle says that we are all to stand at the judgment seat of Christ, and that the law of God is to be the standard of that judgment, it is very evident that he never intends to be understood as saying that it is a matter of no importance whether or not we keep that law. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 516.2}

The Law and the Sabbath. —The fourth commandment of the law by which all men are to be judged, reads thus: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work; ... for 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.” Exodus 20:8-11. Of this law Jesus said: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” Matthew 5:17, 18. The Sabbath therefore stands in the law just the same as when it was spoken from Sinai; and the law in which it stands is the law by which men are to be judged at the last day. Therefore it can not be a matter of indifference whether the Sabbath is kept or not; and it must be that the Sabbath, with the rest of the law, is to be proclaimed to all men, in order that they may be prepared for the judgment. This being the case, we very well know that in the fourteenth chapter of Romans the apostle Paul does not convey the least shadow of an idea that the keeping of the Sabbath is a matter of indifference. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 516.3}

“Every Day.” —Some one will of course interpose that the apostle says “every day,” and that therefore he must necessarily include the Sabbath among things indifferent. Not so fast. In the sixteenth of Exodus we read that the people were told that they were to go out and gather a certain portion of manna “every day;” and yet in the same chapter we are told that they should find none at all on the seventh day. We are not to try to catch the Lord in his own words. When he says that a certain work is to be done every day, we are to know that he excepts, as a matter of course, those days on which he himself has said that work may not be done. When a man says that his children go to school every day, he means of course that they go very school day, and not that they go when there is no school. So when the apostle Paul, writing by inspiration of God, seems to imply that there are certain days which may be regarded or not, as one may choose, we must know that he does not by any means design to convey the idea that the holy Sabbath of the Lord, which was commanded to all men by his own voice, is among those indifferent days. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 516.4}

“Fully Persuaded.” —“Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” So far as this statement is concerned, it makes no difference if it is applied to the Sabbath of the Lord. God desires willing, intelligent service. The man who professes to keep the Sabbath of the Lord, and yet is not sure that it is the Sabbath, is not keeping it at all. The law of God is not to be regarded simply as a thing to dodge behind in order to escape the wrath of God. The man who is not sure about the law, but who thinks that he will keep it so as to be on the safe side in the judgment, if it should chance to be the standard in that judgment, is not serving the Lord, but himself. Let a man be fully persuaded in his own mind that “the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good,” and then let him keep it unto the Lord. If he does not keep it because he knows it to be right, his apparent service is but mockery and sin. E. J. W. {SITI August 20, 1896, p. 516.5}

**“Studies in Romans. Living for Others” The Signs of the Times, 22, 34.**

E. J. Waggoner

In our study last week we learned that the members of the church of Christ are not judges one of another, but fellow-servants of one common Lord. We are not taught that it is a matter of indifference whether or not we keep the commandments of God-quite the contrary, since we are all to appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and be judged by them-but we are taught that in those things concerning which the law of God does not speak particularly, one man’s ways are as good as another’s. We learned even further that even one who may be faulty with respect to an express commandment, is not to be dealt with harshly, and condemned. Such a course can not help one, and, besides, we have no right to do so, since we are but servants. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.1}

We now come to the study of the continuation of the same subject, in Romans 14:14-23:— {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.2}

“I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then your good be evil spoken of; for the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offense. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.3}

In order to save time and space we will omit the question on the text, leaving each reader to question it for himself. Study each statement carefully, and consider its connection, as well as the general subject, and what is stated elsewhere in the Bible concerning the same thing. As many errors arise from careless reading of the Bible, and from hasty conclusions from detached statements, as from willful perversion of the word. Possibly many more are the result of lack of proper thought than of deliberate willfulness. Let us therefore always take heed how we read. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.4}

**Clean and Unclean**

The apostle says, “I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.” If we consider well the subject under consideration, we shall not wrest this scripture from its connection. The thing presented from the beginning of the chapter is the case of a man with so little real knowledge of Christ that he thinks righteousness is to be obtained by the eating of certain kinds of food, or by not eating certain things. The idea clearly conveyed by the entire chapter is that it is by faith, and not by eating and drinking, that we are saved. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.5}

A little consideration of the question of clean and unclean food will help us much. There is a strange idea prevalent, to the effect that things that were at one time unfit for food are perfectly wholesome now. Many people seem to think that even unclean beasts are made clean by the Gospel. They forget that Christ purifies men, not beasts and reptiles. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.6}

There were plants that were poisonous in the days of Moses, and those same plants are poisonous now. The very people who seem to think that the Gospel makes everything fit to eat, would be as much disgusted at the thought of eating cats, dogs, caterpillars, spiders, flies, etc., as any Jew would have been in the days of Moses. Instead of finding that a knowledge of Christ reconciles one to such a diet, we find, on the contrary, that it is only the most degraded savages who make use of them for food, and such a diet is both a sign and cause of degradation. Enlightenment brings carefulness in the selection of food. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.7}

Now there is no one who can imagine the apostle Paul or any other person of good sense and refinement eating everything that he could possibly find on earth. Although most people think themselves wiser than God in the matter of eating and drinking, there are, as there always have been, certain things universally held to be unfit for food. Therefore when the apostle says that nothing is unclean of itself, he evidently confines his remark to those things which God has provided for man’s eating. There are people whose conscience is so poorly instructed that they fear to eat even of things which God has given to be eaten; just as there are some who forbid the eating of “food which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving.” 1 Timothy 4:3. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.8}

So when the apostle says, “One believeth that he may eat all things,” it is evident that the “all things” does not include filth. The idea evidently is that one believes that he may eat everything that is fit to be eaten. But another, having for instance the thought that some of those things may have been devoted to an idol, fears to eat of them lest he should thereby become an idolater. The eighth chapter of 1 Corinthians makes this whole subject plain, as it runs parallel with the fourteenth of Romans. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.9}

This throws light also upon the subject of days. Since the apostle evidently confines his remarks concerning food to that which it is allowable to eat, it is more clear that those days which may be considered as all alike are those days only which God has not sanctified to himself. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.10}

**The Nature of the Kingdom**

“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” Over that kingdom Christ has been set as King, for God has said, “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.” Psalm 2:6. Now read further the words of the Father to the Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things: “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” Hebrews 1:8, 9. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.11}

A scepter is the symbol of power. Christ’s scepter is a scepter of righteousness; therefore the power of his kingdom is righteousness. He rules by righteousness. His life on earth was a perfect manifestation of righteousness, so that he rules his kingdom by the power of his life. All those who own his life are subjects of his kingdom. No other thing but the life of Christ is the badge of citizenship in the kingdom of Christ. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.12}

But with what was Christ anointed King? The text last read says that it was with “the oil of gladness.” Then gladness, or joy, is a necessary part of the kingdom of Christ. It is a kingdom of joy, as well as of righteousness. Therefore it is that every subject of that kingdom must be filled with joy. “A gloomy Christian” is as much a contradiction of terms as “a cold sun.” The sun is for the purpose of shedding the warmth of which it is composed; so the Christian is for the purpose of diffusing the peace and joy which is a part of his nature. The Christian is not joyful simply because he thinks that he ought to be, but because he has been translated into the kingdom of joy. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.13}

“He that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” He who in what things serves Christ? Why, he who serves Christ in righteousness, and peace, and joy. Or, as some translations have it, “He that thus serves Christ.” God accepts such service, and men approve. Not only do Christians approve such service, but unbelievers are constrained to approve. The enemies of Daniel were forced to bear witness to the uprightness of his life, when they said that they could find nothing against him except in the law of his God. But that very statement was an approval of the law of his God, obedience to which made him the faithful man that he was. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.14}

**Unselfishness**

Peace is a characteristic of the kingdom. Therefore those who are in the kingdom must follow the things which make for peace. But selfishness never causes peace. On the contrary, selfishness is always the cause of war, and inevitably produces war if it is persisted in. Therefore the subject of the kingdom must always be ready to sacrifice his own desires and ideas in behalf of others. The unselfish person will give up his own ways whenever they interfere with the peace of another. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.15}

But do not forget that the kingdom of God is righteousness as well as peace. Righteousness is obedience to the law of God; for “all unrighteousness is sin” (1 John 5:17), and “sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). Therefore, although by the laws of the kingdom one must necessarily up his own wishes in order not to interfere with the feelings of others, by those same laws he is precluded from giving up any of the commandments of God. Obedience to the law of God is that which makes for peace, for we read: “Great peace have they which love thy law.” Psalm 119:165. “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.” Isaiah 48:18. Therefore he who is so “charitable” as to give up any portion of the law of God because some people are displeased with it, is not following the things which make for peace. On the contrary, he is rebelling against the kingdom of Christ. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 531.16}

This again shows us that the Sabbath of the Lord is not under consideration, as one of the things which are to be held as matters of mere personal opinion. The Christian has no option with regard to that. He must keep it. It is not one of the days which the subject of the kingdom may disregard if he wishes. It is one of the things that are obligatory. But there are things which one has the right to do if he wishes, but which he is not obliged to do. For instance, a man has the right to eat his food with the fingers, if he wishes to; but if that annoys his companion, the law of Christ requires him not to do so. And thus it appears that the law of Christ alone, will, if carefully heeded, make a man perfectly courteous. The true Christian is a gentleman in the best sense of that word. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 532.1}

There are many things that are allowable, which some people with faith that is weak, because it is uninstructed, think to be wrong. Christian courtesy, as laid down in the fourteenth chapter of Romans, requires that the better-instructed person should regard the scruples of his weaker brother. To roughly ignore those scruples, although they may be destitute of reason, is not the way to help that brother into a wider liberty. On the contrary, it is the way to discourage him. “It is good neither to eat flesh, not to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.” {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 532.2}

Thus it becomes evident that the fourteenth chapter of Romans is simply a lesson in Christian courtesy and helpfulness instead of teaching that the Sabbath, or anything else that pertains to the commandments of God, may be disregarded at pleasure. Consideration is to be shown for “him that is weak in the faith;” but the one who is offended by the keeping of the commandments of God, has no faith at all. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 532.3}

**The Limitations of Conscience**

“Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God.” Faith and conscience pertain to single individuals. No man can have faith for another. No man can have faith enough to serve for two. The teaching of the Roman Church is that certain ones have had more faith than they needed, and have been more righteous than was necessary, so that they can divide with other people; but the Bible teaches that it is impossible for any man to have faith than will serve to save himself. Therefore, no matter how well one man’s faith may be instructed, no other man can be judged by it. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 532.4}

We hear a great deal in these days about the public conscience. We are often told that the conscience of one man is outraged by the course of another. But it is with conscience as with faith, no man can have enough for two. The man who thinks that his conscience will serve for himself and for somebody else, has mistaken selfish obstinacy for conscience. It is this mistaken idea of conscience that has led to all the horrible persecutions that have ever been perpetrated in the name of religion. Let Christians all understand that conscience is between themselves and God alone. They are not at liberty to impose even their freedom of conscience upon another; but by the laws of the kingdom of Christ, they are obliged even to refrain at times from exercising their own freedom, out of consideration for others. That is to say, the man who can walk fast, is to help along his weak brother, who is going the same way, but more slowly. But he is not to turn around to please somebody who is walking the other way. E. J. W. {SITI August 27, 1896, p. 532.5}