**“Enforcing the Law of God” The Signs of the Times, 23, 1.**

E. J. Waggoner

“For we know that the law is spiritual.” Romans 7:14. Then there can be no fulfilling of the law save in the Spirit. “God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.” Sometimes people talk about keeping the spirit of the law without the letter, but there is nothing in the Bible about keeping the spirit without the letter. By that expression men mean that they will keep what they think the law means, regardless of what it says. But God knows that the thoughts of man are vain. We are to forsake our own thoughts, as well as our own way. “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8, 9. God is Spirit; therefore they that worship Him must do so in the Spirit which He supply. He provides the means, and does not ask us to worship Him in our spirit, or in our conception of His law. {SITI January 7, 1897, p. 2.1}

We are not to worship God as we think Him to be, but as He is. And no one, as stated in the text just quoted, can comprehend God, or define the bounds and limits of His will. Then no man can lay down a rule for another, or even for himself. Here is the unlimited word. No man can put a limit on the word of God, or say of any text that he has fathomed its depth, and that he has all the truth there is in it. No; the word is spiritual, and no man can fathom the depth of the mind of the Holy Spirit. For this reason no man, and nobody of men, is at liberty to put any construction on the word of God, or to change it, or to hold or teach that it means anything different from exactly what it says. {SITI January 7, 1897, p. 2.2}

The knowledge of this shuts out everything like religious coercion, persecution, or the laying down of rules for people to follow; for true worship must be rendered in the Spirit which God alone gives. The word must be taken, not in our own spirit, but in the Spirit of God, and that must lead us into larger and larger ideas, and worked in us that which we do not know ourselves. Men have secret faults of which they are utterly unconscious. Not only so, but no man knows the depth of any sin which is brought to his attention, or the fullness of any command which is in joined upon him. It is plain, therefore, that no man can measure his own righteousness, nor his own sin. He can simply know that he is a sinner, and that the righteousness of God is given to him. The more of the Lord he knows, the greater sinner he will realize himself to be. Therefore no man or body of men, whether in church or state, can lay down rules by which a man must live; because the field of God’s requirements is as unbounded as His own life, and must therefore ever keep increasing to our vision; and though men filled the world with books in the attempt to define everything, there still would be something omitted. The Spirit of God must work its own life in every man. This takes the matter out of the realm of civil government entirely. No human authority whatever can impose the Spirit upon any man, or define the mind of the Spirit. The law of God, which is His righteousness, is the one thing which men are to seek. Christ said, “I know that His commandment is life everlasting.” John 12:50. We also are to know the same thing. The law itself is spiritual; it is life everlasting. But life is not a figment, a fancy; it is real, and wherever there is life there must be something living. When we read the commandment is life everlasting, it does not mean that the written characters are life. They simply declare the fact. Everlasting life is in Jesus Christ. “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” John 5:26. He is the fountain of life. Psalm 36:9; Jeremiah 2:13. {SITI January 7, 1897, p. 2.3}

The commandment or law of God is everlasting life because it is His own life. Then is the life of the Spirit of God; and putting the Spirit of God into the hearts of men puts the life of God there. It is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ, it gives freedom and peace with God. “The Spirit is life, because of righteousness;” and “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” Romans 8:1, 2, 9, 10. Nothing less than the life of Christ is the law of God; and anything contrary to the life of Christ is condemned. Then we can leave the *right* of any body of men to enforce the law of God entirely outside of the question. It is merely a question of *power*. Has it the power to enforce the law of God? Has any government on earth power to take the life of God and put it into the hearts of its subjects? Certainly not. {SITI January 7, 1897, p. 2.4}

Then when men do make religious laws, and in force religion upon people, it is certain that they are not enforcing the religion of Christ. Therefore when they do that, those who are loyal to Christ can have no complicity with it whatever. It is paganism, no matter what form of truth there may be. It is but the former without the power or life. If such enforcement is put in the very terms of the Bible, it is only the more thoroughly pagan; for it is paganism trying to palm itself off as Christianity. {SITI January 7, 1897, p. 2.5}

The attempt to enforce the ten commandments, even just as they read, would be the greatest dishonor men could offer to the Lord. It would be saying that the law of God is no better than any man may be of himself. It is the same as saying that a man is all right if he keeps the law so that no man can find fault with him. But the man he merely refrains from the outward violations of the law may be worse than the man who utterly disregard it, and knows he is guilty. In the latter case the man has nothing more in to trust, while in the other, the man is building himself up in his own righteousness, and things that he is all right as long as he keeps a letter so far as men can discern. {SITI January 7, 1897, p. 2.6}

But the law is spiritual, and only the power of the Spirit can work righteousness in an individual. The recognition of civil government as having anything to do with the law of God, is directly opposed to the idea of justification by faith. To lay down a rule or law requiring obedience to the law of God, with a penalty for disobedience, is to say to a man, “You could keep it if you would try; but you will not try, and so we will compel you to do it.” This is putting man on and equality with God. Anything less than the life of God is sin, and therefore for any power to attempt to enforce any of the precepts of Christ is simply an attempt to compel people to sin, and to hold them in sin. {SITI January 7, 1897, p. 2.7}

**“Letter and Spirit” The Signs of the Times, 23, 2.**

E. J. Waggoner

“But now we are delivered from the law, being dead to that wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” Romans 7:6, margin. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.8}

What is the thing in which we were held, and to which we are now dead?—The seventh chapter of Romans is but an expansion of the sixth chapter, where we read that we are “dead to sin” (verse 2), and that “he that is dead is freed from sin” (verse 7). “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Verse 11. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.9}

We are dead unto the sin which held us, because sin also is dead by Christ. “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” Romans 6:6. And so “we are delivered from the law.” It had been transgressed, and therefore it demanded our death; “for the wages of sin is death.” Romans 6:23. But now that we are dead, it pursues us no further; it has executed the penalty on us, in Christ. “The law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth.” When he is dead, there is nothing more that it can do to him. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.10}

“I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Galatians 2:20. That is a good reason why the vengeance of the law no longer pursues us. The man who committed the sin is dead, and the man who now lives is a “new man,” walking “in newness of life.” The old life was a life of sin; the “new man” is after God “created in righteousness and true holiness.” Ephesians 4:22-24. Since “the new man has not transgressed the law, he is as a matter of course free. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.11}

But the law is not dead. It is as much alive as it ever was. The new man is free from it simply because he is walking in harmony with it. The new man is under as much obligation to keep the law as the old man was; the difference between them is that the new man does his duty, while the old man did not, and could not. The old man was “not subject to the law of God,” being opposed to the Holy Spirit. The new man is alive through Christ, who died “that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:4. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.12}

“If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” Galatians 5:18. But the verse last quoted tells us that “the righteousness of the law is fulfilled” in those who walk after the Spirit. Therefore we are taught most plainly that the only ones who are “not under the law” are those in whom the righteousness of the law is fulfilled. The transgressors of the law are the only ones who are “under the law.” Those who are “delivered from the law” are the ones who are keeping it “in spirit and in truth.” {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.13}

This is shown in the statement that we are delivered from the law, in order “that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” We still serve, but as free men, and not as slaves. It is a spiritual service, that is, a real service; for only that which is spiritual is real. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.14}

“For we know that the law is spiritual.” Romans 7:14. It follows, therefore, that when we were serving in oldness of the letter, we were not really keeping the law; for since the law is spiritual, it necessarily requires spiritual service. So it is only when we are delivered from the law that we keep it. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.15}

**Unlike Human Law**

The common opinion in regard to the letter and the spirit of the law, is most erroneous. The error arises from supposing that the law of God is similar to human laws. It is quite common to speak of the *spirit* of a law made by man, when all that is meant is the *intent* of the law. Thus: No human law is perfect; its framers can not possibly foresee all the circumstances that may arise to be judged by it. Then, too, the language of the law may be obscure. So the judge often finds it necessary to decide what was the intent of the lawmakers. A man might be technically or literally a violator of a law, while still acting fully in harmony with the intent of its framers. This is what is meant by the mistaken use of the term “letter and spirit,” as applied to human laws. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.16}

Now the great difference between the nature of human laws and the divine law is that there is no spirit to the former, while the latter is wholly spiritual. Spirit is life; but there is no life in human laws. They can not give life. No man can get anything more out of a human law than he puts into it. If men ignore any human law, then it is said to be “a dead letter.” But it has no more life in itself when it is obeyed than when it is disregarded; the life is in the people, who make their acts conform to the words of the law. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.17}

The law of God is wholly different. It is alive whether people regard it or not. It is alive because it is spiritual. The man who serves in “the oldness of the letter” does not really serve at all, because, no matter how good his purpose, or how strong his endeavors, to keep the law, he is simply reproducing himself, and not the law. In trying to do what the law tells him to do, he is merely doing what his own nature allows him to do. While in a carnal state, he is “not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Romans 8:7. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.18}

**“The Law Is Life”**

But “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:2) gives freedom from this bondage, so that “the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us.” The real law is the life of God in Christ, and that gives life. What is termed “the letter” of the law of God is the verbal statement of the law. This is not the law itself, but only the *form* of it, as the apostle said the Jews had “the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.” Romans 2:20. The verbal statement of the law bears the same relation to the law itself that the photograph of a man has to the man himself. It is but the shadow. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.19}

A shadow is the exact image of the substance. The words of the divine law, being “the *form* of knowledge and of the truth,” might be compared to a statue, rather than to a photograph. It has the form and features, and differs from the reality only in having no life. So when we speak of the spirit of God’s law, we mean the law itself, and not merely the intent of the law. The intent of the law may be learned from the words, since God is not subject to human limitations, but knows what is needed, and can say just what he means. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 2.20}

From the words of the law of God we may know exactly what we should do, for it is a perfect form. But it is only in Christ that we find the living substance. The law in Christ is not only living, but it gives life. It performs itself in those who submit to it, because it is God’s own life. It is not less than the letter; it is not something different from the letter; but it is simply the living thing which the letter perfectly describes. E. J. W. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 3.1}

**“Whom Shall We Hear?” The Signs of the Times, 23, 2.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall life.” John 5:24, 25. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 3.2}

The voice which we are to hear is always the voice of the Son of God. Only that voice will give life; only they that hear that voice shall live. If man speaks, he is to be but the mouthpiece; the voice is to be God’s. “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.” 1 Peter 4:11. If any one speaks with his own voice, him we are not to hear. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 3.3}

Some of the Samaritans believed on Christ because of what was told them by the woman whom Christ met at the well. But “many more believed because of his own word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.” Their faith rested on the true foundation,—Christ’s word. No belief that does not rest on this will be enduring. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 3.4}

When many of Christ’s disciples turned from him because they could not receive his sayings, and Jesus had asked the twelve if they also would go away, Peter said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” There was none other than Christ who had the words of eternal life; there is none other now. And those who hear his words, believe and *are* *sure* that he is the Son of God. They have a knowledge that is possessed by none others. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 3.5}

Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” John 10:27. When the true Shepherd “putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee form him; for they know not the voice of strangers.” Verses 4, 5. The true Shepherd “calleth his own sheep by name.” This is how they know his voice. He speaks directly to them, to each one individually, and they know it. This is how we know the voice of the Son of God. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 3.6}

And for that voice, and that only, we are to listen. Many voices are crying, many saying, “Lo here!” and “Lo there!” but the Shepherd’s voice is different from them all. That is the voice of One whom, when we hear it, we know to be acquainted with us,—with our past lives, and the motives and thoughts and perplexities of our individual hearts. He knows us by name; and if we will hear his voice, he will make known unto us his name. And “his name, through faith in his name,” shall make us whole, as it did the cripple at the beautiful gate of the temple. Acts 3:16. E. J. W. {SITI January 14, 1897, p. 3.7}

 **“Power and Freedom” The Signs of the Times, 23, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

Power belongs to the Lord alone. It is not safe to trust men with power. When men have power and use it they always become tyrants. The Lord has all power, and in the thought of that is the most wonderful revelation of love, and kindness, and long-suffering, and freedom. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 33.1}

With absolutely all power, with the hearts of men in his hands, the Creator of men, living in the flesh and giving his life to us, so that we live upon his life, has never exercised his power over against our wills. Such is the Lord. Then no one who knows the Lord, and who yields to him and his power, will have anything of arbitrariness; there will be nothing savoring of force or compulsion in him. No man who knows the power of God, which is love, will try to compel others to agree with him; and of course no body of men who know the Lord will do so. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 33.2}

It is the Lord’s power that is to work in men. That power we see in all the visible creation. There is a mighty power there, as vegetation; but no arbitrariness. That power will work its way out wherever there is an opening; but it works in quietness. That power has dwelt in us, yet never has been exercised against our will. Can we conceive of any freedom greater than that? It is the freedom the Lord has guaranteed to men, and he himself will maintain it. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 33.3}

The very fact that the Lord has never compelled us to do anything, should show us that his will is not something against man. The Lord has revealed his will to us that we may choose it. His will is life and righteousness. When we choose that his will shall be done in us, then he will do it; for he has all power to work it. He “worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” And when we give him the privilege, yielding our way to his way, our judgment to his judgment, although he works in us, yet we are still free. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 33.4}

This is religious liberty, the liberty that is to be proclaimed to men. There are many who profess to know the Lord, who are zealous and sincere, who yet do not know the Lord, because they think he is pleased to have them dictate as to how people shall serve him. The only way this can be counteracted, as far as it ever will be, is to proclaim the Lord, and the freedom of the Lord, to everybody. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 33.5}

Those only can proclaim the freedom of the Lord, who knows it. when we recognize the fact that the Lord has been with us all the years, and yet waiting, having all power, and yet refusing to use one particle of it against our will, we shall know what it is that the Lord wants to be proclaimed to men. And this message will be proclaimed in love, for that is the power of the Lord. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 33.6}

It is his power alone that is to be manifested. We stand where Christ stood: “I can of mine own self do nothing.” We can say: “His power is dwelling in me, because I am willing it shall. I am zealous of good works. I know his power is sufficient to work them. It have tried to manufacture them, and could not; now I yield to him, that he may work in me that which is good through Christ Jesus.” {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 33.7}

Then it is his power working in us mightily, and that power will work only that which is persuasive and gentle. There will be no compulsion of others, and the man who knows the Lord will always be a free man. “With freedom hath the Lord made us free.” The Gospel proclaims liberty to the captive; let us exercise it, and enjoy it. E. J. W. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 33.8}

**“The Greatness of His Gentleness” The Signs of the Times, 23, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the words of Hosea of the Lord says, “I will be as the dew unto Israel.” The figure conveys the idea of gentleness, refreshing, and strength. Fresh every evening, the dew what’s the fields, and gives the real fighting and strength which vegetation needs for the growth it must make with each day’s sun. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 35.1}

Thus it is with grace, and the mercies of the Lord. “They are new every morning.” There must be daily growth, and every day we must have the refreshing and reviving from the Lord. He reveals Himself to the bleeding heart as gently and noiselessly as the dew distills upon the blade of grass; but there is strength in His mercies, that fortifies the soul in distress of sin, and in the heat, “when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.” {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 35.2}

There is so much lost to many because they’re not content to rest daily and the Lord, and drinking and of His quiet presence. When Job, in his time of affliction, spoke of the days of his strength, when he was eyes to the blind, and feet to blame, and the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, he said: “My root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch. My glory was fresh in me.” Chapter 29:19, 20. The message to every believer is, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.” This glory seen upon the Christian, as fresh and glistening as a dew-bespangled meadow in the morning sun, is the testimony of the Christian life. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 35.3}

The Lord often uses the figure of the dew and the rain to describe the nature of His word,—the word by which we are born again, and grow, and are sanctified. He says by Moses: “My doctrine shall drop is the rain, My speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass.” Deuteronomy 32:2. “For as the rain cometh down... so shall My word be.” Isaiah 55:10, 11. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 35.4}

It is a divinely appropriate simile. Faraday showed that there is stored in a dew drop sufficient electric force to rend a rock. Each drop of dew or rain is bringing life and power into vegetation; and thus the force that would shatter the rock, if pent up, is working itself out in perishing delicate tissues, and caring the water of life to all animate creation. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 35.5}

So it is God’s word. “No word from God shall be void of power,” said the angel to marry; and the Lord says, “Is not My word... like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?” The power of the word is the almighty power of God. And there is in it the same combination of power and gentleness, carried to an infinite degree. All the power is for the faint and the weary, and the word comes as a still small voice to the soul. In the heart of the believer it becomes a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. It is everlasting strength, and everlasting consolation. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 35.6}

This mingling of gentleness and strength that is in the word, reproduces itself in those who take the word in its fullness. “I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.” Hosea 14:5. The glory of the Lord is risen upon the believer, and he will reflect the beauty and the grace of Jesus’ character. In His meekness and humility, and Divine beauty of soul, He was “the Lily of the valley;” and to those who take Him He brings the same life that He lived. They are made partakers of the Divine nature. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 35.7}

Then there is the infinite strength of His character, which He also shares with those who are His. The life, for beauty, it is as the lily, but for the strength, it casts forth its roots as the cedars of Lebanon. It is rooted and grounded in love, rooted and built up in Him. The firmness and constancy of the character that is rooted in the word cannot be shaken though all the world is removed. It is a rare combination, this blending of consummate gentleness and grace with unflinching firmness and unyielding strength. It can only come as the gift of God. {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 35.8}

The Lord works this in the believer; for it is His own way of dealing with His children. His Providences may appear otherwise to the natural heart and eyes, but in the end every soul that is subdued wholly to God will recognize His infinite tenderness in all His ways. David was a rough and stirring school of instruction, but in the end he was able to say, “Thy gentleness hath made me great.” {SITI January 21, 1897, p. 35.9}

**“The Nature of God’s Commandment” The Signs of the Times, 23, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, can not love God whom he hath not seen. And this commandment have we from him. That he who loveth God love his brother also.” 1 John 4:20, 21, R.V. A little consideration of the commandments God. Let us first ask a few questions about it. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.1}

Does the text teach that whoever loves God is thereby laid under obligations to love his brother also? that if a man loves God and does not love his brother also, he will be punished for violation of law? Manifestly not, from the very statement of the text, that a man can not love God without loving his brother. “He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen.” Since a man can not love God if he does not also have love for his brother, or neighbor, it is evident that the text does not mean that there is a special law enacted for those who love God, requiring them to love their brethren. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.2}

Love comes from God. “Every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” Therefore whoever loves God must of necessity love his brother also. He must love all men, for God’s love is without respect of persons. And this shows that men can not, as is now quite commonly thought, learn to love God by first loving their fellow-men. Love to God is first. Jesus said: “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Mark 12:29-31. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.3}

No man can love his neighbor unless he loves God, because love is of God; and nobody can love God without loving his brother. Love is one. It can not be forced, for the use of force is sure death to love. It must flow spontaneously. Yet we have the statement, “This commandment have we from him. That he who loveth God love his brother also.” The thing therefore that we are to learn from this is that the commandment of God is something far different from the commandments of men. Human laws are wholly a matter of force; but God’s commandment is that we should love one another, and that can not be a matter of force. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.4}

The law of God is love. “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3. “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Galatians 5:14. “Owe no man any thing, 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.” Romans 13:8, 10. When God spoke his law, it was because “he loved the people.” Deuteronomy 33:2, 3. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.5}

It is clear from these scriptures that the law of God is love, even the love of God. But God himself is love. He does not merely have love, but love is the very life of God. Therefore the law of God is his life. And this brings us to the words of Jesus: “For I spake not from myself; but the Father which sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life eternal.” John 12:49, 50, R.V. The commandment of God is life eternal, and to know God is life eternal (John 17:3), showing that the commandment of God is his own life. We know one only as we know his life. So we know God only by knowing his life, and his life is eternal life; but his commandment is life eternal, because his commandment is his life. In other words, the life of God is the law for man. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.6}

“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” John 1:18. God set forth his Son, in whom was his own life, in order that we might know what the law is. In Christ we have the real, living law. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.7}

We read that out of the heart are the issues of life. Now Christ said of himself, “Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:7, 8. Therefore the life which issued from Christ was the law of God; and as he lived by the Father (John 6:57), we see again that the law of God is his life. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.8}

In Christ “all fullness” dwells, even “all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” The apostle Paul wrote thus of his prayer: “I bow knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.” Ephesians 3:14-19. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.9}

This is an inspired prayer, and therefore we know that it is the will of God that its requests should be granted. If we but allow Christ to dwell in our hearts, he will bring in all his own fullness which is all the fullness of God. Then from our hearts will issue the same life that issued from the heart of Christ on earth, even the life of God. And so we shall find that this commandment is not grievous, because it is not an arbitrary requirement laid on us, but our very life. It is not something which we are to do by our own strength, but which, if we allow it, will work itself out in us. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.10}

How will this life be manifested in us? Just as it was in Christ when he was on earth; for he is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. When tempted to idolatry, he replied, “It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” Matthew 4:10. Therefore the one in whom is the life of Christ, can not be an idolater. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.11}

When the parents of Jesus found him in the temple, asking and answering the questions of the doctors, he was not impatient of control, although he was so wonderfully wise, far exceeding them in respect; but “he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them.” Luke 2:51. Therefore the one in whom is the real law of God, in the form of the life of Christ, will honor his father and his mother, as required by the fifth commandment; and he will not find it burdensome to do so. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 50.12}

Jesus said, “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” John 18:37. He “did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” 1 Peter 2:22. Therefore those in whom he dwells will not only tell the truth, but they will love the truth. They will love the truth so much that they will never seek to parry its force, nor to evade any portion of the truth of God’s word. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 51.1}

The tenth commandment says, “Thou shalt not covet.” So far was Christ from coveting, that he freely gave up everything that was his own. And so those in whom he dwells will not find it a grievous matter to be content with such things as they have. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 51.2}

Christ kept the Sabbath, even the seventh day of the week, and no other. His life was God’s life, and the life of God is the law for men; therefore those who live solely by him will also keep the Sabbath day. They will not consider this a burdensome thing, but will delight in it, even as Christ delighted to do the will of God. Those who delight in the Sabbath, also delight themselves in the Lord (Isaiah 38:13, 14), thus showing again that the law of God, including the fourth commandment, is the life of God. To delight in the law is to delight in the life of the Lord. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 51.3}

Let us therefore say to Christ as he stands at the door and knocks, “Come in, thou that comest in the name of the Lord.” Let him come in with all the divine fullness, to live in us his own blessed will. It will be different from anything that we have ever before done, “for my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8, 9. The desire of man is to rise, and here is elevation indeed. The life of God will lift the one who accepts it from earth to heaven. E. J. W. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 51.4}

**“Argument” The Signs of the Times, 23, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

If the Gospel could be propagated by argument, it would be vastly more popular than it now is. If men could be saved by argument and controversy, there would be thousands saved today where there are only tens. But the fact is that it is not argument that is needed, but “holding forth the word of life.” A man always weakens his cause when he consents to debate and strive and argue about it. Strife and debate are so firmly imbedded in human nature that it takes us a long time to learn this. But if we were to stop and think we should see that it is true. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 51.5}

Men do not argue about that of which they are perfectly sure. You would not argue with a man to prove to him that the sun is shining at noon. You point out the fact to him, and if he wishes to see it for himself, he can, and if he does not, you can not help him by argument. You would not debate with a man to convince him that the twenty-six letters of the alphabet are what they are. If he does not know them, you may teach him, but not by a debate. If he does not wish to have you teach him, but wishes to argue the point, you would simply leave him to himself. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 51.6}

And you would not be at all moved by his boast that you dared not debate with him, and that your refusal showed that you did not dare put your belief to the test of argument. You do not simply *believe*, but you *know*, and it is much better to put knowledge to the test of actual use than to the test of argument. To argue the case would indicate a doubt about it in your own mind. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 51.7}

Now what the Gospel wants is not men who are ready to debate, but who know Christ, and who know his word. Such men will teach by their quiet lives, and if any want to learn further, they will be ready to point them to the Word, but they will not lower the standard by arguing with those who do not want to learn. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 51.8}

The man who wants to learn never wants to argue. The man who is anxious to argue a debate, does not want to learn anything from the one with whom he argues, but he wants, by arguing, to fortify himself in the opinions that he already holds. By repeating his arguments he helps to convince himself that they are true; and if he can outtalk his opponent, that proves to him that he is right. Therefore the time spent on him while he is in that condition is wasted. The Christian can afford to let him talk and even rail, knowing that the truth can not be injured. This very confidence begets in the other a desire to know what it is that is so sure that you are not in the least afraid that it will be overthrown by argument. Then is your time to instruct him. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 51.9}

So, then, argumentative ability is not necessarily a part of the outfit of the servant of Christ. For “the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to *teach* [not to argue], patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to acknowledging of the truth.” 2 Timothy 2:24, 25. E. J. W. {SITI January 28, 1897, p. 51.10}