**“One Sure Thing” The Signs of the Times, 23, 39.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the book of Proverbs much is said about surety, and people are more than once warned against going surety, not only for a stranger, but even for a friend. In the eleventh chapter, verse 15, we read, “He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it; and he that hateth suretyship is sure.” In the margin we have in the place of “suretyship,” “those that strike hands.” That is, a man can not be safe unless he refrains from giving his hand as surety for another. {SITI October 7, 1897, p. 2.1}

But read further, and see what is said in the twenty-first verse: “Tho hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished; but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.” Notice that the words “tho” and “join” are in Italic type, indicating that they are not in the Hebrew. The literal Hebrew, as indicated in the margin of the Revised Version, is “hand in hand.” Here, then, we find an instance of giving the hand, or, as rendered, “My hand upon it,” in two translations before me, I read, “One can give his hand for it, that the wicked shall not be unpunished, but the seed of the righteous shall escape.” So sure is it that God will see that justice has its due! Men are often tempted to think, as did David, that the wicked have the best of it, and that in unrighteousness is the most prosperity to be found; but let no one be deceived in this matter. So sure is it that wickedness will be punished, and that the reward of the righteous will not be forgotten, that one may safely give his hand upon it, and be a surety for it. It is the only sure thing in this world. E. J. W. {SITI October 7, 1897, p. 2.2}

**“His Saving Knowledge” The Signs of the Times, 23, 40.**

E. J. Waggoner

“For the Word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” Hebrews 4:12, 13, R.V. {SITI October 14, 1897, p. 2.1}

To the soul that does not know the Lord, this is one of the most terrible texts in the Bible. Since the day when Adam and Eve hid themselves among the trees of the garden, the consciousness of guilt has ever tended to make men afraid of God. The natural inclination of the sinner is to try to hide from God; he can not bear to have his misdeeds laid bare before the eyes of spotless purity. So the words, “all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do,” and, “Thou understandest my thought afar off,” are words that strike terror to the heart of the ungodly. So the natural man tries to forget the fact,—tries to forget his own sins,—foolishly imagining that his ignorance, or forgetfulness, or unbelief, hides the matter from the eyes of God. {SITI October 14, 1897, p. 2.2}

But it is impossible to hide from God, for he is everywhere, filling all space. “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.” Psalm 139:7-10. This being the case, the best thing for men to do is to face the fact, and find the comfort that there is in it, instead of following the devil’s promptings, and endeavoring to hide from him who is love, “the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.” 2 Corinthians 1:3. {SITI October 14, 1897, p. 2.3}

How is it that God knows all things? Is it by searching into the secret things, so that by study he arrives at knowledge that he did not possess before?—Impossible! for that would argue imperfection on his part. We may not seek to understand God’s capacities by a comparison with man. “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.” God himself is everywhere, the direct source of all life. Wherever there is life, wherever there is a created thing to be maintained in existence, there God is, and wherever God is there is all wisdom. {SITI October 14, 1897, p. 2.4}

Notice that the Word of God pierces the joints and marrow, and soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. This is a natural consequence of the fact that “the Word was made flesh.” John 1:14. God in Christ has forever identified himself with humanity. When Adam stood in innocence and uprightness, it was only by the indwelling Word, upon which he wholly depended. When he forgot his dependence, and struck out for himself, and thus fell, God did not forsake him, but descended to the depths with him, that he might lift him out again. So God is “not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being.” Acts 17:27, 28. When men would seek to justify themselves for not obeying the commandments of God, b professing ignorance of them, the Spirit says to them: “Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above); or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead);” for “the Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart.” Romans 10:6-8. Christ, “the wisdom of God,” knows the sins of mankind, because “he *is come* in the flesh.” He bears the sins of the world, because the Lord has laid upon him the iniquities of us all. Isaiah 53:6. He knows them, because nothing can be done that does not touch him; no motion can be made without the power that comes alone form the Word. This is the true “Real Presence.” {SITI October 14, 1897, p. 2.5}

How utterly useless, then, to think of hiding our sins from the Lord! We might as well try to hide from the Lord the knowledge of his own existence. Every one of those sins is stamped upon his being. They pierce his brow, his hands, his feet, even his heart, and press upon him so that “his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” Isaiah 52:14. He must know, for every sin touches is own life. {SITI October 14, 1897, p. 2.6}

And herein is the comfort to us in the thought of God’s knowledge of mankind. “By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.” Isaiah 53:11. He knows our sins, because he experiences their power, and by that knowledge he justifies many. How many?—As many as believe on him, as many as confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Romans 10:9, 13. {SITI October 14, 1897, p. 2.7}

Christ bears the burden of the world’s guilt, and bears it easily. Our sin crushes us, and presses us down to destruction; but he swallows up death in victory. Tho sin crush out his life, yet he rises from the dead with the freshness of eternal life. Whoever knows this, and believes the truth, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, will of course let the burden fall entirely on him who is able to bear it, and will thus be free. {SITI October 14, 1897, p. 2.8}

So when we confess sin to God, we are not telling him any news. We are simply agreeing with his Word. He knew it all before, but he wishes us to be confidential with him. He is a faithful Friend, and will not betray our secrets. On the contrary, he will himself forget our misdeeds, blotting them out of existence, so that even our adversary, the devil, can not find them, to taunt us with them. The only way to hide them from the world, is to tell them to God. {SITI October 14, 1897, p. 2.9}

What a blessing and comfort, then, to know that God knows! “He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.” And he cares too. “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” And, what is more, he is able to carry the burden for us, and give us peace and rest. “Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.” Therefore unto him that is able to keep us from falling, who is “able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,” to him who knows our sins, who pities our weakness, and who is mighty to save by his love and wisdom-to him be glory and praise forever and ever. E. J. W. {SITI October 14, 1897, p. 3.1}

**“How to Love God” The Signs of the Times, 23, 42.**

E. J. Waggoner

“I do not love God, and it does not seem as tho I ever could; how can I learn to love him?” Thus writes an inquiring soul. The only answer is, Get acquainted with God. The trouble with our friend is a lack of acquaintance with God; for “he that loveth not knoweth not God.” 1 John 4:18. “And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.” Psalm 9:10. {SITI October 28, 1897, p. 2.1}

Don’t trouble yourself about “trying to love God.” Love doesn’t come in that way. Love is a spontaneous growth springing from acquaintance with one who is loving and lovable. Get acquainted with God, and you can’t help loving him. The god whom you are *trying* to love, is not the true God. {SITI October 28, 1897, p. 2.2}

“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Romans 5:5), and we are taught (Luke 11:13) that God is more ready to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, than a parent is to give good things to his children. The Spirit has, indeed, been poured out upon all flesh (Acts 2:16, 17), so the gift of love has been bestowed upon us even before we ask it. Air and water, the first essentials to life, and the freest of the gifts of God, are the best representations of the measureless gift of the Spirit, and so of the infinity of God’s gift of everlasting love. {SITI October 28, 1897, p. 2.3}

“But how can I get acquainted with God?” O, that is not difficult! He is “not far from every one of us” (Acts 17:27), and is very accessible, for he invites everybody to come to him. Through Christ all men, of every class and nation, “have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” Ephesians 2:18. Begin to hold conversations with him. Do not be afraid of intruding, or of putting yourself forward; for when you speak to the Lord, you are only replying to the words that he has already spoken to you. If you consider what he has said to you, you will be at no loss to know what to say to him. You can not expect to love one with whom you are not acquainted; but what is more natural than the growth of love between persons who frequently converse together? {SITI October 28, 1897, p. 2.4}

We get acquainted with God also through his works. “The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.” Psalm 33:5. All his works praise him. The evidences of his love and loveliness are stamped upon every leaf and flower; they descend with the rain, and flow with the streams; they shine in the sunbeams, and are diffused in the air. “O, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him;” for unto you who believe “he is precious.” E. J. W. {SITI October 28, 1897, p. 3.1}