**“Editorial. Acceptance with God” The Signs of the Times, 23, 43.**

E. J. Waggoner

Acceptance with God. —Many people hesitate to make a start to serve the Lord, because they fear that God will not accept them; and thousands who have been professed followers of Christ for years are still doubting their acceptance with God. For the benefit of such I write, and I would not bewilder their minds with speculations, but will endeavor to give them the simple assurance of God’s Word. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 1.1}

A Purchased Possession.— “Will the Lord receive me?” I reply by another question, Will a man receive that which he has bought? If you go to the store and make a purchase, will you receive the goods when they are delivered? Of course you will; there is no room for any question about it. The fact that you bought the goods, and paid your money for them, is sufficient proof, not only that you are *willing*, but that you are *anxious*, to receive them. If you did not want them, you would not have bought them. Moreover, the more you paid for them the more anxious you are to receive them. If the price that you paid was great, and you have almost given your life to earn it, then there can be no question but that you will accept the purchase when it is delivered. Your great anxiety is lest there should be some failure to deliver it. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 1.2}

Now let us apply this simple, natural illustration to the case of the sinner coming to Christ. In the first place, he has bought us. “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price.” 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 1.3}

The price that was paid for us was his own blood-his life. Paul said to the elders of Ephesus: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Acts 20:28. “For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation [manner of life] received by tradition from your fathers’ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” 1 Peter 1:18, 19. He “gave himself for us.” Titus 2:14. He “gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.” Galatians 1:4. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 1.4}

He bought not a certain class, but the whole world of sinners. “For God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only-begotten Son.” John 3:16. Jesus said, “The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” John 6:51. “For when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” “God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” Romans 5:6, 8. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 1.5}

The price paid was infinite, therefore we know that he very much desired that which he bought. He had his heart set on obtaining it. He could not be satisfied without it. See Philippians 2:6-8; Hebrews 12:2; Isaiah 53:11. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 1.6}

It Was His Bargain.— “But I am not worthy.” That means that you are not worth the price paid, and therefore you fear to come lest Christ will repudiate the purchase. Now you might have some fear on that score if the bargain were not sealed, and the price were not already paid. If he should refuse to accept you, on the ground that you are not worth the price, he would not only lose you, but also the amount paid. Even tho the goods for which you have paid are not worth what you gave for them, you yourself would not be so foolish as to throw them away. You would rather get some return for your money than get nothing. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 1.7}

But further, you have nothing to do with the question of worth. When Christ was on earth in the interest of the purchase, he “needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man.” John 2:25. He made the purchase with his eyes open, and he knew the exact value of that which he bought. He is not at all disappointed when you come to him and he finds that you are worthless. You have not to worry over the question of worth; if he, with his perfect knowledge of the case, was satisfied to make the bargain, you should be the last one to complain. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 2.1}

For, most wonderful truth of all, he bought you for the very reason that you were not worthy. His practiced eye saw in you great possibilities, and he bought you, not for what you were then or are now worth, but for what he could make of you. He says, “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake.” Isaiah 43:25. We have no righteousness, therefore he bought us, “that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Says Paul: “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the Head of all principality and power.” Colossians 2:9, 10. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 2.2}

How Christ Gets Glory.— Here is the whole process:— {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 2.3}

“We all... were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:3-10. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 2.4}

We are to be “to the praise of the glory of his grace.” This we could not be if we were originally worth all he paid for us. There would in that case be no glory to him in the transaction. He could not, in the ages to come, show in us the riches of his grace. But when he takes us, worth nothing, and at the last presents us faultless before the throne, it will be to his everlasting glory. And then there will not be any to ascribe worthiness to themselves. Throughout eternity, the sanctified hosts will unite in saying to Christ: “Thou art worthy; ... for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests.” “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” Revelation 5:9, 10, 12. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 2.5}

The Doubting “But.”—Surely all doubt as to acceptance with God ought to be set at rest. But it is not. The evil heart of unbelief still suggests doubts. “I believe all this, but—.” There, stop right there; if you believed you wouldn’t say “but.” When people add “but” to the statement that they believe, they really mean, “I believe, but I don’t believe.” But you continued: “Perhaps you are right, but hear me out. What I was going to say is, I believe the Scripture statements that you have quoted, but the Bible says that if we are children of God we shall have the witness of the Spirit, and will have the witness in ourselves; and I don’t feel any such witness, therefore I *can’t* believe that I am Christ’s. I believe his Word, but I haven’t the witness.” I understand your difficulty; let me see if it can not be removed. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 2.6}

As to your being Christ’s, you yourself can settle that. You have seen what he gave for you. Now the question is, Have you delivered yourself to him? If you have, you may be sure that he has accepted you. If you are not his, it is solely because you have refused to deliver to him that which he has bought. You are defrauding him. He says, “All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.” Romans 10:21. He begs you to give him that which he has bought and paid for, yet you refuse, and charge him with not being willing to receive you. But if from the heart you have yielded yourself to him to be his child, you may be assured that he has received you. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 2.7}

In His Word.— Now as to your believing his words, yet doubting if he accepts you, because you don’t feel the witness in your heart, I still insist that you don’t believe. If you did, you would have the witness. Listen to his Word: “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, l because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.” 1 John 5:10. To believe in the Son is simply to believe his Word and the record concerning him. And “*he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself*.” You can’t have the witness until you believe; and as soon as you do believe, you have the witness. How is that?—Because *your belief in God’s Word is the witness*. God says so: “Now *faith is the substance* of things hoped for, *the evidence* of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1. If you should hear God say with an audible voice that you are his child, you would consider that sufficient witness. Well, when God speaks in his Word, it is the same as tho he spoke with an audible voice; and your faith is the evidence that you hear and believe. “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” Romans 8:16. How is the witness given?—By the Word. There the witness is written, and the Holy Spirit brings to our remembrance the words recorded. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 2.8}

Go On unto Perfection. —This assurance does not warrant us in relaxing our diligence and settling down contentedly, as tho we had gained perfection. We must remember that Christ accepts us not for our sake, but for his own sake; not because we are perfect, but that in him we may go on unto perfection. He blesses us, not because we have been so good that we have deserved a blessing, but in order that in the strength of the blessing we may turn away from our iniquities. Acts 3:26. To every one that believes in Christ, the power-right or privilege-is given to become the sons of God. John 1:12, margin. It is by the “exceeding great and precious promises” of God through Christ that we are “made partakers of the divine nature.” 2 Peter 1:4. E. J. W. {SITI November 4, 1897, p. 2.9}

**“Unlettered Learning” The Signs of the Times, 23, 45.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” John 7:15. {SITI November 18, 1897, p. 2.1}

The Greek word here rendered “letters” is the word meaning *writings* or *Scriptures*. A learned man, one well acquainted with books, is commonly called “a man of letters,” or a literary man. Now there are many books, but only one that is so prominent as to be sufficiently designated by the term “the Book,” and that is the Bible; for the word “*Bible*” means simply *book*. So “the writings,” when used in the Bible without qualification, mean the sacred writings, or the Scriptures. The text above quoted should therefore be rendered, as it is in some versions, “How does this man know the Scriptures, never having learned?” {SITI November 18, 1897, p. 2.2}

Like John the Baptist, Jesus never studied in the Jewish schools. John “was in the deserts till the day of is showing unto Israel.” Luke 1:80. So Jesus dwelt at Nazareth, subject to his parents, a humble carpenter, until he came prominently before the people at his baptism. Yet no two teachers ever aroused greater interest among the people, or attracted more attention. People flocked to hear them, and hung on their words. The officers of the law said of Jesus, “Never make spake like this man,” and the people were astonished at his teaching; “for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” {SITI November 18, 1897, p. 2.3}

That Jesus had not studied in the schools of the doctors of the law,—the theological seminaries of that time,—is shown by the questions which the priests and elders put to him as he was teaching in the temple, “By what authority doest thou these things? And who gave thee this authority?” Matthew 21:23. Yet he had wisdom, both in asking and in answering questions, that put to silence all the learned doctors, while his teaching was so simple that “the common people heard him gladly,” because they could understand him; and the ability to put deep things into simple, easily understood language is the mark of the greatest wisdom. {SITI November 18, 1897, p. 2.4}

How did Jesus get this wonderful knowledge?—From the Word of God. All Jewish children were taught the Book of the Law, according to the command of the Lord by Moses: “These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” Deuteronomy 6:6, 7. Many parents of course did this carelessly, and, especially in later times, mingled with their instruction many idle traditions learned from the doctors; but those children who had faithful parents knew the Holy Scriptures from childhood. With the child Jesus this was no routine task, for he says, “I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8. The Holy Scriptures, studied in the humble house in Nazareth, and opened to his understanding by the Spirit of God, were the beginning and the sum of all the wisdom that Jesus had. {SITI November 18, 1897, p. 2.5}

As with Jesus himself, so with those whom he chose to accompany him, and to send forth to preach,—they were men in humble station, not having studied in the theological schools. Their learning was derived from the Scriptures. {SITI November 18, 1897, p. 2.6}

The rulers were astonished at the power and knowledge of these humble fishermen preachers, as they had been with Jesus. We are told that when the rulers “saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13. The word “ignorant” is unfortunate, as applied to the apostles. “Unlearned” they certainly were, according to the fine standards of the schools; but they were not ignorant. Why then do we have such a statement in the sacred record?—In reality we do not, and the occurrence of the word in our English version is an interesting illustration of the very point we are studying. Thus:— {SITI November 18, 1897, p. 2.7}

The two words “ignorant men,” in Acts 4:13, are from one Greek word, *idiotai*, the plural of *idiots*. The reader will at once recognize in this our common word “idiot,” and will at once conclude that the English rendering is much more mild than the Greek text. But wait a moment. The primary and ordinary meaning of this Greek word is, “a *private person*,” one of the common people. But as certain public teachers began to style themselves philosophers, and to claim for themselves a monopoly of wisdom, so that a man must have a recommendation from them-a certificate that he had “been through” the prescribed course-before he could have any standing as a scholar, it came about that all who had not such public recognition were considered ignorant. The fact that our translators adopted this secondary use of the Greek word instead of its real meaning, shows how much they were under the influence of the same spirit. The Danish and Norwegian versions have “laymen” in the place of “ignorant men,” and the German has “men of inferior condition.” {SITI November 18, 1897, p. 2.8}

Here is encouragement, and a lesson. The encouragement is that people in the most humble and despised walks of life may, by devoted study of the Word from a sincere desire that will astonish even the worldly-wise. Deuteronomy 4:5, 6. See also Proverbs 2:1-9. {SITI November 18, 1897, p. 2.9}

The lesson is that in the church of Christ, there are no ranks and degrees-no class distinctions. The church, following in the steps of the schoolmen of heathen times, have made two classes,—clergy and laity,—that is the special, elect class, who have the keys of knowledge, and *the people*, who are to take what the clergy are pleased to dole out to them. But the Scriptures teach us that all in the primitive, true church were *laymen*, that is, they were simple, ordinary people, whose only distinction from others was that which the Holy Spirit gave them. Jesus, himself an ordinary laborer, chose fishermen and sent them forth to preach, and because they were thus sent forth they are called *apostles*. But they were *laymen*, and such they would be called to-day, if they were alive and in England or America. That those who teach the Word should form a special class, distinguished from other people by title, dress, etc., was not only not contemplated by the Lord, but was directly opposed. {SITI November 18, 1897, p. 2.10}

It is true that “there are diversities of gifts,” and all men have not the same work, yet all in the church are brethren, and the greatest among them is he who does the most service. Let, therefore, no one be puffed up in his own mind with the thought that as a preacher he is above others in the church, and let no one be discouraged because his state is lowly. It was Tyndale’s declaration that he would “make the boy that drives the plow in England to know more of the Scriptures than the pope does.” That possibility is now before every plowboy, and he who truly improves it, although his name be unknown outside of his neighborhood, has a place in the church infinitely higher than that of pope. E. J. W. {SITI November 18, 1897, p. 3.1}

**“Editorial. The Voice of the Deep” The Signs of the Times, 23, 46.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Voice of the Deep.— It is impossible that any one who is acquainted to any degree with the Lord should stand by the sea without being reminded of the mighty power of the Creator. Yet many gaze upon the sea day after day with never a thought of its Maker, and even openly defy him. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 721.1}

God’s Power. —To such the Lord says: “Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: Fear ye not me? saith the Lord; will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?” Jeremiah 5:21, 22. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 721.2}

His Faithfulness. —But it is not in order to produce fright that the Lord reminds us of his mighty power, that can set bounds for the sea, so that it can not pass over in its fiercest tumult. No; it is that we may trust him. Perfect faith and love drive fear away. So the power of God over the sea is referred to as evidence of his faithfulness. “O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.” Psalm 89:8, 9. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 721.3}

An example of this faithfulness is given in the description of the storm at sea, when the terrified disciples awakened Jesus and he “rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still.... And there was a great calm.” This was but the manifestation of the original creative power. He who created the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, retains full control over all. In those words, “Peace, be still,” we hear the same voice that said, “Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place.” And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached to us; so we are to learn from God’s power over the sea, which is his because he made it, his power over the waves of strife that surge through human hearts. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 721.4}

Peace in the Heart. —For the angry sea represents the wicked. “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it can not rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.” Christ is our peace. The word which he spoke to the Sea of Galilee that night is the word which he speaks to us. “I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly.” Surely here is comfort for those who have long struggled in vain with fierce passions. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 721.5}

Saving Forever. —Not only is God’s power over the sea a symbol of his power to save men from the tide of sin, but it is also a pledge and surety of their final complete deliverance. It also shows the power with which God is going to clothe the preaching of the Gospel message in the last struggle preceding his second coming. Read the soul-thrilling words of Isaiah 51:9-16. E. J. W. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 721.6}

**“The Great Three-fold Message. God’s Remedy for the Ills of Christendom” The Signs of the Times, 23, 46.**

E. J. Waggoner

It is a sad yet well-known fact that the professed Christian churches are terribly backslidden from God. This no earnest, observant Christian will deny. One testimony on this point will suffice. It is from Dr. Moore, editor of the *Western Christian Advocate* (Methodist Episcopal), of Cincinnati, Ohio, and appeared in that paper in its issue of May 19, 1893. It is headed, “To the Church of Methodists Write.” We can not quote it entire. That which we do not quote is as striking and pointed as that which we do quote. We also apprehend that the Methodist Church will average fairly with the other great Protestant denominations. Dr. Moore says:— {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.1}

The class-books are filled with names of unconverted men and women. Official members may be found in box, dress circle, and parquet of opera and theater. Communicants take in the races, and give and attend card parties and dances. The distinction between inside and outside is so obscure that men smile when asked to unite with the church, and sometimes tell us that they find the best men outside. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.2}

When we go to the masses, it is too often with such ostentatious condescension that self-respect drives them from us. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.3}

And yet we have so spread out, under the inflation of the rich and ungodly, that they are a necessity to us. The enforcement of the unmistakable letter of the discipline for a single year would cut our membership in half, bankrupt our missionary society, close our fashionable churches, paralyze our connectional interests, and leave our pastors and bishops unpaid and in distress. But the fact remains that one of two things must happen,—the discipline must purge the church, or God’s Holy Spirit will seek other organized agencies. The ax is laid at the root of the tree. The call is to repentance. God’s work must be done. If we are in the way, he will remove us. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.4}

**Division—Confusion—Unbelief**

It is a sad and undeniable fact that the great numerous Christian church is hopelessly divided. Human federations may in a way bring them together, but human federation is not divine union. Human compacts or agreements are not bonds of divine life. All that the human can do is to confederate around a human standard called a creed. But God’s method is to unite all in one by the divine indwelling life. Jesus thus expresses it: “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.” John 17:23. Consideration about a human creed is but the worship of an image on paper. Union in and by and through Jesus Christ is the worship and power of the living God. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.5}

It is a sad and undeniable fact that the many divisions in the great professed church and in the several churches are a stumbling-block to worldlings and unbelievers. It is seeking unholy justification for an abnormal condition to say that all this division is unity in diversity, and all are well-organized parts of one great army under the One Leader, when the greater part of the vital strength of the church is absorbed in the very churches themselves, which, instead of growing better, are growing worse, and, instead of being the pastor’s force to second him in aggressive work, are his field of labor. Jesus Christ said that union, not division, was an evidence of his divine mission. Hear him pray: “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” John 17:21. Neither is this union to exist in mere sentiment, but in teaching, in doctrine, in purpose. Thus the Spirit speaks through Paul: “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all *speak the same thing*, and that there be *no divisions* among you; but that ye be *perfectly joined together* in the *same mind* and in the *same judgment*.” 1 Corinthians 1:10. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.6}

It need scarcely be said that the only mind which will thus unite mortal man, with all their limitations of early environment, education, habits, prejudices, and sins, is the mind of Christ. Therefore “let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 2:5. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.7}

**A Whole Christ**

To thus be united to Christ and by the means of Christ’s life to each other, means to accept Christ in the fullest sense. To accept Christ as *a* Saviour, *a* redeemer, *a* way of life, *an* example, or *a* teacher, will not suffice. He declares, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” John 14:6. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.8}

To accept Jesus Christ as *the* Way is to give up all our ways and yield all, willingly (for he will never compel), to his way. “Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh [renounceth] not all that he hath, he can not be my disciple.” Luke 14:33. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.9}

To accept Jesus Christ as *the* Truth, means to accept the Word of God, as God’s message through Christ to this world. For Christ is the Word, the one through whom all the Word was given. John 1:1-3; 1 Corinthians 8:6. It was his power that created all things; it was his Spirit which spake through the prophets. Colossians 1:16; 1 Peter 1:10, 11. He it is who has in all times and ages declared the Father to the children of men, whether as the Angel of the Covenant, the Pillar of Cloud and Fire, the exhaustless Rock-fountain in the desert, the Man Christ Jesus in Judea, the Inspirer of the Holy Writings, or the Sender of the Comforter, his representative. The Holy Word, with its one law and one Gospel, its one Spirit and one object, is the message of God through Jesus Christ to the sons of men. So Christ prays of those whom he would make one, “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth;” for by that Word was he sanctified, “that they also might be sanctified through the truth.” John 17:17-19. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.10}

He therefore who receives Christ, the Truth, will receive his Word in law and Gospel, in precept and promise, with all the heart. No tradition will make void in his heart the commandments of God to render vain his worship. Matthew 15:6, 9. No sophistry of man will be allowed to nail upon the cold, dead, irresponsive arms of a cruel creed the life-giving truths of that Word. He who truly accepts Christ will take the Word of Christ into his heart, and there let its vital principles live and grow, fashioning him day by day like the Master. That Word will be the Christ revealed in writing. And Christ will be that Word revealed in character. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.11}

He who receives Jesus Christ as the Life will not cut off the life which is in Him by the old serpent fable of Eden, “Thou shalt not surely die.” In the light of God’s presence in his Word the humble soul will acknowledge his sinfulness, and thereby his mortality, and look to Jesus Christ alone as the Source of righteousness and eternal life to the believer now, the Bestower of immortality at his coming. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.12}

This acceptance of Christ does not mean that all Christ’s fullness must be seen and realized if we are to become one in him; for that can never be, because he is infinite. But it does mean that the believer is to accept Jesus Christ as he is, as he is revealed in his Word. He must allow no civil magistrate, no mitered priest, no human creed or council, no worldly ambition, no arts of the evil one, to come between his soul and Jesus Christ, and he will leave to prayer, study, experience, and the goodness and wisdom of Christ, to supply the fuller knowledge. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.13}

Thus accepting Jesus Christ made the early apostolic church what it was, united in heart and purpose, in word and doctrine, in worship, in life. “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship;” “and the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; ... and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all.” Thus it was in that early church. How precious to them were the truths and hopes of the resurrection, the second coming of Christ, the atonement in its fullest and strongest sense, the power of the simple Word and Holy Spirit of God in those days! Now these very doctrines are scoffed at and ridiculed and “spirited” away by those high in church councils, with but little or no protest from pulpit or press. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.14}

**God’s Plan Ever the Same**

And God’s plan for saving men has ever been the same. With him “is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” Human nature has always been the same, and the Gospel of God’s grace has ever been effectual to save. Types and symbols and shadows have changed, but the holy law and the divine Saviour have remained the same. “I am the Lord, I change not.” “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.” {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.15}

**Confusion—Babylon**

Departing from God’s way, erecting human standards, following man’s way instead of God’s way, adding to his Word, subtracting from it, have always brought division and hence confusion. The would-be wise men of the land of Shinar, promised themselves a better way when *they* built *themselves* a city and a tower, and sought to make *themselves* a name. They prized their work so highly that they called it, according to the story of their brick books, “Bab-il,” “the gate of God,” or “the gate of heaven;” but God could not serve with their sins. He will not give his glory to another, and he named it what it literally was, Babel, confusion. See Genesis 11:1-9. And so every attempt to improve upon God’s work has resulted in confusion in the work of God, of which confusion “God is not the author.” 1 Corinthians 14:33. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 722.16}

**Modern Babylon**

It was confusion, Babylon, which came into the Christian church even before the death of the apostles, till finally, a few centuries after, the great apocalyptic harlot was developed. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.1}

The Reformers took some mighty strides toward the one standard of God, albeit in different companies, but they still stopped in Babylon, and confusion reigns even to the present. As truly as the great apostate system of the Papacy became Babylon by departing from the truth of God, so truly did Protestantism in the formulation of a multitude of creeds. Not only was confusion brought into the church, but the people of the world seeking for light are confused and driven to unbelief. Just as surely as papal Babylon committed fornication by forsaking her lawful Spouse, Jesus Christ, and uniting with the civil power, just so surely have those Protestant churches committed fornication with the kings of the earth which have done the same thing. And those who have not yet done this, but who are clamoring for civil power to enforce unscriptural dogmas or institutions (Scriptural would be no different), are trimming their ways for unlawful lovers of spiritual fornication. And is not this the condition of the Protestant churches to-day? Said the Rev. Charles Beecher, in a sermon at the dedication of the Second Presbyterian Church in Fort Wayne, Ind., Feb. 22, 1846:— {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.2}

Thus are the ministry of the evangelical Protestant denominations not only formed all the way up under a tremendous pressure of merely human fear, but they live, and move, and breathe in a state of things radically corrupt, and appealing every hour to every baser element of their nature to hush up the truth and bow the knee to the power of apostasy. Was not this the way things went with Rome? Are we not living her life over again? And what do we see just ahead?—Another general council? A world’s convention! Evangelical Alliance and Universal Creed! {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.3}

Since 1846 matters have not grown better, but rather worse. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.4}

**God’s Remedy**

Here is God’s remedy for this confusion among his people; for he certainly so counted them, and sent his message to heal them:— {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.5}

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; *for the hour of his judgment is come*; and worship him *that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters*.” Revelation 14:6, 7. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.6}

The time when this message is due to the church and the world is when the judgment of God is impending. In past centuries we are told of a “judgment to come,” of a day when God *will* judge the world (Acts 17:31; 24:25), but in this message the judgment of God is come; it is already here. It is the adjudication of cases in the heavenly courts, *the accounting worthy* of those who have been faithful, and who will be raised to immortality at Christ’s coming to give reward. (See Luke 20:35; 1 Corinthians 15:52; Revelation 22:11, 12.) {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.7}

“*Fear God*,” says the divine message, “and give glory to *him*.” It implies that the church has given glory to men. Tradition has made void the commandments of God. Cold, dead creeds have displaced the living Word. Elaborate ritual has dispossessed simple worship. The pagan solar holiday is accepted as the Lord’s holy day in the place of the Sabbath of the Lord, one memorial of Him who created the heavens and the earth. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandments.” {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.8}

Reverence of God leads to obedience. “Worship *him*.” Turn from the worship of the false to the true. The highest worship is obedience, or service. “Thou shalt *worship* the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou *serve*,” are the words which Christ made his own, and which God would have the church make her own, and so return from Babylon, confusion, to Jerusalem, unity and peace. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.9}

As the everlasting Gospel brought union in the early church, which came from Pharisee, and Sadducee, and Essene, and publican, so if it had been received when first proclaimed in 1840, and onwards, it would have brought into one all the churches of modern Babylon. God did not condemn them for being in Babylon. He desired to call them out. “We would have healed Babylon,” is what God said, but the sad result is “she is not healed.” Jeremiah 51:9. And so has it been. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.10}

**Babylon Is Fallen**

The churches are worse to-day than when Charles Beecher, and many others, uttered their faithful warnings. Since that time the church has turned wonderfully to the world. She is organizing herself into societies, law and order leagues, unions, and civic federations, for the purpose of enforcing civil law, while the Gospel is scarcely heard by the poorer strata of society. More and more is the church leaving Christ and uniting with the world and the State. She is leaving the living spring and cold snow of Lebanon for human, broken cisterns. She has forsaken her Husband, Christ Jesus, and is committing fornication with the kings of earth. And so the angel sorrowfully declares:— {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.11}

“And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Revelation 14:8. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.12}

And it could not be otherwise. When the Jewish Church turned from the close, yet healing message of John and Jesus, a message which, if received, would have restored, they were ready to reject Christ, their King, and to say, “We have no king but Cæsar.” And so when the modern church rejects God’s healing message of reproof and warning, she will turn to the world and the State, and, under the guise of “Christian Citizenship,” “Patriotism,” or “Americanism,” will denounce as traitors those who reveal by the Word of God the true nature of the Church-and-State dogmas, the children of fornication. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.13}

**The Last Solemn Protest**

What is the church now doing in the direction of the last apostasy?—She is centering her efforts and gathering her forces around the Sunday standard. And what is Sunday?—An institution which as a religious holiday is wholly pagan in origin, which as a weekly worship day is wholly papal, and for which there is no authority save the papal church and tradition. It is a usurper. Its very genius and character arouse a spirit opposed to the Gospel. It has been connected with apostasy and persecution in all ages. It was the mark of apostasy in heathendom; Rome claims it as the mark of her authority, and many of the Protestant churches, as organizations, are conceding Rome’s claim by upholding in the face of law that foster child of the Papacy, and by endeavoring to secure the aid of the Papacy to claim the help of the civil power to enforce the counterfeit as the very test of God and mark of patriotism. Nevertheless it is, in howsoever shining garments dressed, the mark of the beast, opposed to the Sabbath of the Lord, the sign of God’s power to create and sanctify and deliver. Ezekiel 20:12, 20; Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:15. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 723.14}

But, thank God, there are may yet in all these organizations who cleave to the Gospel, who believe in Gospel methods and Gospel means for reforming the world. While mistakingly holding Sunday, they believe in no power save the Spirit to impress hearts, no means save the Word to enforce its claims upon men. These stay the tide, as it were, but do not change the current. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 724.1}

Against this course of Church uniting with the State the Lord offers to each soul the following fearful warning:— {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 724.2}

“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.” Revelation 14:9-11. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 724.3}

**A United Church Once More**

Who will heed the Word of God? Some will. The first message, the healing message, sums up all positive truth of that Word. The second message simply announces the law suit upon the various organizations composing Babylon of rejecting the first. The third brings to each individual soul the message of warning to turn from “the beast” (the great system of Papal Church and State union), from “the image” (the reproduction of that system by Protestant Church and State union), from “the mark” (“the wild solar holiday of all pagan times,” the rival of the Sabbath of the Lord). But out of all these organizations, out of the world, from among the lowest slaves of Satan, from every land and clime, is gathering a company washed by the blood of the Lamb through faith, loyal to God and his law. Thus continues and declares the prophet: “Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 724.4}

They keep therefore *all* the commandments. It could not be said that he who was breaking the first or eighth commandment was a commandment-keeper. Neither could it be so said of him who violates the fourth precept. Of those who endured the persecution of the Dark Ages, not having all the light, it was said, “Here is the *patience* and the *faith* of the saints.” Revelation 13:10. They had patience; they possessed faith. But the class developed by this last threefold message of warning, have an additional characteristic-they “keep the commandments of God.” {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 724.5}

And why not? How could they have an intelligent faith, the faith of Jesus, and do otherwise? His faith led him to keep all God’s commandments. It led his disciples, the early Christians, to follow in his steps. “He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.” 1 John 2:6. Having the same Spirit, having the indwelling Christ, they will do the same works. He kept the seventh-day Sabbath; why should not his people? He knew it for what God designed it, the very rest of God from sin and self. The remnant church will thus know it. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 724.6}

**Christ’s Coming**

The next event in the great drama of the prophets is thus described:— {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 724.7}

“And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.” Revelation 14:14. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 724.8}

It is Christ our Lord coming to reap earth’s harvest, which is rapidly ripening. The same sun which ripens the wheat for the garner, ripens the tares for the fire. The same truth which, received, develops character for the kingdom of God, rejected, develops character for destruction. O soul, accept of Jesus Christ as he is, as he desires to be to you, the Way, the Truth, and the Life! Accept of the everlasting Gospel, and be saved eternally in God’s own way. {SITI November 25, 1897, p. 724.9}

One Sure Thing. —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 November 25, 1897, p. 724.10}

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 November 25, 1897, p. 724.11}