

LIVING BY FAITH

COMPILED FROM THE WRITINGS OF A.T. JONES AND E.J. WAGGONER



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EDITION

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Book Version 3

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1. THE KEEPING POWER

EJ. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (MAY 3, 1894)

A power that is able to save is able also to keep. The apostle speaks of the believers as those "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." 1 Peter 1:5. The faith that does not claim the power of God in the daily stress of sin is not a saving faith. Whenever we fall into sin, it is because for that moment our faith has let go of the Lord, and we are not believing in Him.

For "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God"- whosoever is believing. It is not a thing accomplished once for all time, but a continual process, if only we were but constant in believing. And while believing, the power of God keeps. For we read, "We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but He that is begotten of God keepeth him, and the evil one toucheth him not." 1 John 5:18, R.V.

It is a blessed truth that the one who is believing is shut in by the arms of the Lord, and the evil one cannot touch him. There is refuge, a covert from the storm. Oh, that we might learn to abide in the shelter; for we know well enough by bitter experience that we have not power to keep ourselves-not for one moment.

In a world of sin and wickedness the one who is believing is being kept from the iniquity that surrounds him, that is even in his very flesh ready to spring upon him. When the three Hebrew captives were thrown into the furnace of fire, the fire had no power upon their bodies, "nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them." There was with them in the furnace One who had said, "I will be with thee," and "when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned."

He it is that is pledged to keep the believing one in the midst of the consuming fire of sin. We cannot endure it alone; we always fall, and the fiery darts strike into the soul. The prayer of David must be ours continually, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a constant spirit [margin] within me." Thank God, when our faith has not held Him fast, and we find the enemy has found us and touched us, there is still the promise following the injunction, "sin not." "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." He looses and sets us free again. But He sets us free that we may hold steadfastly by a firmer faith to Him. In the bitterness of sin we are taught our own weakness and worthlessness, and in the sweetness of His forgiveness we are taught His power to save.

2. LIGHT AND LIFE

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (OCTOBER 6, 1892)

One of the characteristics of light is that it may multiply itself indefinitely without diminishing itself in the least. A lighted candle may give light to a million candles, and yet its own light be just as bright. The sun supplies light and heat to this earth, and there is enough for all. Each individual gets as much benefit from the sun now as it was possible for anyone to get when the population of the earth was only half as great as it now is. The sun gives its whole strength to each person, and yet it has much heat and light as though it supplied no one.

Jesus Christ is the Sun of righteousness, and the Light of the world. The light which He gives is His life. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." John 1:4. He says, "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12. His life He gives for the world. All who believe on Him receive His life, and are saved by it. Just as the light of the candle is not diminished although many others are lighted by it, so Christ's life is not diminished though He gives it to many. Each individual may have it all in its fulness.

The light shone in the darkness, and the darkness could not overcome it. His light could not be quenched. Satan could not take His light, because he could not attempt Him to sin. So He could lay down His life, He still had as much left. His life triumph over death. It is infinite life. So He is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by Him. Christ will dwell in His completeness in every one who will let Him. This is the mystery of the Gospel.

3. TRUE FAITH

A.T. JONES – PRESENT TRUTH (JANUARY 12, 1899)

ONE day a centurion came to Jesus, and said to Him: "Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. . . . When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Matt. 8:6-10.

THERE is what Jesus pronounces faith. When we find what that is, we have found faith. To know what that is, is to know what faith is. There can be no doubt about this; for Christ is "the Author . . . of faith," and He says that that which the centurion manifested was "faith;" yes, even "great faith."

WHERE, then, in this, is the faith?—The centurion wanted a certain thing done. He wanted the Lord to do it. But when the Lord said, "I will come" and do it, the centurion checked him, saying, "Speak the word only," and it shall be done.

Now, what did the centurion expect would do the work?—"The word only." Upon what did he depend for the healing of his servant?—Upon "the word only."

And the Lord Jesus say that that is faith.

HERE was a Roman, by Israel despised and shunned as a heathen and held to be hated of God, who had spent his life among heathen influences, with no Bible advantages, yet who had discovered that when the Lord speaks, in that word itself there is power to do what the word says, and who depended on that word to do what it said.

And there were the people of Israel, who all their lives had been in daily connection with the word of the Lord, who prided themselves on being "the people of the Book," and boasted of their knowledge of the Word of God; and yet had not learned that in the word there is power to accomplish what the word says.

ALL this lack on the part of Israel prevailed, too, when that very word in which they boasted said to them plainly, and showed over and over, that such is alone the character of the Word of God; and that word was read in their synagogues every Sabbath day.

That word had all their lives said plainly to them: "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa. 55:10, 11.

NATURE itself held constantly before them the instruction that the earth of itself could produce nothing; that it was the moisture of rain and snow, from heaven, that made it bring forth and bud, and produce fruit.

And the Lord said, "So shall My word be." As the earth of itself can do nothing, so you of yourself can do nothing. And as the moisture of rain and snow from heaven makes the earth bring forth, and bud, and produce fruit, so shall My word make you bring forth the fruit of righteousness to the glory of God. "My word, . . . IT shall accomplish that which I please."

MANY and a time had Israel read this scripture. And year in and year out they had read the Word of God, and had said: I will do what the Word says; I will accomplish that which pleases Him.

And that they might be the more certain that they should do exactly what the word said, that word was separated into parts, and each part drawn out into many fine-spun distinctions. Then they set about diligently to do, carefully and particularly, themselves, each specification of the word, as thus set forth.

TRUE, nowhere in all this did they find any peace, much less any joy. With all their doing, they never found the things done. Always they found themselves far short of having done what the word said,—so far short, too, that it was the despairing cry of Israel that "if but one person could only for one day keep the whole law, and not offend in one point,—nay, if but one person could but keep that one point of the law which affected the due observance of the Sabbath,—then the troubles of Israel would be ended, and the Messiah at last would come." Yet still they slaved on in the treadmill round of their own fruitless doings,—all of works, and none of faith; all of themselves, and none of God; all of their own doing, which was not really doing at all, and none of the word itself doing, which is the only real doing of the word of God.

HOW refreshing it was to the spirit of Jesus, in the midst of this desert waste of Israel, to meet a man, whoever he might be, who had found the word of God indeed; who knew that when the word was spoken, that word itself would accomplish the thing spoken; and who would depend upon "the word only." This was faith. This opened the life to the power of God. And as the consequence, there was accomplished in the life that which pleased God.

"My word, . . . IT [not you] shall accomplish that which I please." "The word of God . . . effectually worketh also in you that believe." 1 Thess. 2:13. To depend upon it to work in you that which is well pleasing in His sight—this is faith. To cultivate this dependence upon the word is to cultivate faith.

4. THE CREATIVE WORD

EJ. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (OCTOBER 20, 1892)

The power of the word of God is best appreciated when we consider the work of creation. In Ps. 33:6-9 we read: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap; He layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast."

From this it is plain to be seen that the entire material of the earth and all that is in it, sprung from the word of God. We cannot comprehend the power of Divinity, but we can see from what is plainly declared, that the word of the Lord is not empty air, but that it is real substance. It is as though the world existed in the word, before it became in the shape in which it now is. When God's word was uttered, then there was the earth and the heavens.

When the word of God names a thing, then that thing named is formed. Whatever is described by the word, exists in that word. Thus it is impossible for God to lie, for His word makes the thing so. So we read in Rom. 4:17 that God "calleth those things that be not as though they were." That is something that can be done by God alone. It is true that men sometimes undertake it, but their word does not make the thing so. When a man speaks of a thing that is not as though it were, there is only one word that can be used to describe his action. It is a lie. But God cannot lie, yet He speaks of those things that be not as though they were. For instance, God speaks of a thing that has no existence. He calls it by name, as though it were well known. The instant that His word goes forth, that instant a thing exists.

Consider well the statement of the Psalmist. "He spake and it was." Not that He spake, and after that it was performed, as a superficial reading of the texts might lead one to think. That idea would not be gained if the translators had not inserted the word "done," in italics. It is true that it was done then, but it was the word of the Lord that did it. The idea would be better conveyed by rendering the passage literally, as we have, "He spake, and it was." As soon as He spake, there everything stood. Whatever God's word says, is, because His word conveys the thing.

This is why in prophecy things are often spoken of as already done. He speaks of those things that be not as though they were already done, not, as is sometimes said, because in His purpose they exist, but because they exist in His word. They are as freely in existence as they can ever be, although they do not yet appear to human sight.

It is for this reason that the word of the Lord is strength and comfort to those who believe in it; for the word which is written in the Bible is the word of God, the same as that which created the heavens and the earth. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." That is, it is, "God breathed." Now remember that "by the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." The breath of God, which has creative energy in it, is that which gives us the precepts and promises of the Bible.

That creative word is the power of the Gospel. For the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth; and the power of God is revealed in the things that are made. See Rom. 1:16, 20. The power of redemption is the power of creation, for redemption is creation. Thus, the Psalmist prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." Ps. 51:10. The apostle Paul says that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." 2 Cor. 5:17.

What is this new creation that is wrought in the Gospel? It is righteousness, for the same apostle exhorted us to "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. 4:24. Righteousness means good works, and therefore the apostle says that "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained (or prepared) that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10.

The word of the Lord is right. He speaks righteousness. So just as He spoke to emptiness and there the earth was, so He speaks to the soul that is destitute of righteousness, and if that word is received, the righteousness of that word is upon that man. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are passed, through the forbearance of God." Rom. 3:23-25. To declare is to speak; and so when God declares His righteousness in Christ for the remission of sins, righteousness is spoken into and upon that man, to take the place of his sins, which are taken away. And it is not simply a passive righteousness that is thus declared upon the man, but a real, active righteousness, for the word of the Lord is alive, and God's righteousness is real and active.

This, in brief, is what the story of creation means to those who believe it. Satan would fain have men think that it is only a poem (as though a poem could not be true), or only a fiction gotten up to amuse people. This is the means which he has taken in these days to undermine the Gospel. If man once looks lightly upon creation, the force of the Gospel is weakened for them. Satan is even content that men should call redemption a greater work than that of creation, for thereby they are not in the least exalting the work of redemption, but depreciating it. Redemption and creation are the same work, and redemption is exalted only as creation is greatly

appreciated. It will occur to some that since this is the case, that which commemorates redemption must also commemorate creation. This is true, but of that we shall speak at another time.

5. WEAKNESS AND POWER

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (OCTOBER 12, 1893)

What is more frail, more weak, and more helpless than a little blade of grass? Yet did you ever notice the marvellous power that it exhibits?

Look at that lifting clod,-a hard, heavy, impenetrable mass of dry clay. What is moving it so slowly and yet so surely out of its way? Not an animal, not even an insect,-only a little blade of young grass! The clod is many times heavier than the grass, and yet it seems to lift it with the utmost ease. You could not cause a tiny grass root to exhibit such power. You might lay the clod upon it ever so carefully, but it would be crushed to the earth with the great weight. This wonder must be accomplished, then, by some power that is not in man, and that is not in the grass itself. The Bible says that it is the power and life of God's word that causes the grass to grow; for "God said, Let the earth bring forth grass: and it was so."

Look at the tiny acorn. How helpless, how worthless! But look again. An unseen life, a marvellous power breaks the hard shell, and pushes little rootlets downward, and tiny branches upward, that grow and grow, turning hindrances aside, climbing over obstacles, and bursting asunder solid rocks. What is the unseen life? What is the marvellous power? The life and power of God's word; for "God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth; and it was so."

Although two of the weakest and most helpless things in existence, yet what miracles of strength the grass and the acorn become when their weakness is united to the power of God's word. In like manner we behold man. Weak? Yes, as weak as the grass and as helpless. "His days are as grass," "and all the glory of man as the flower of grass." His life,-"even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Helpless, utterly helpless in himself, unable to care for himself a single moment, unable to resist the smallest temptation, unable to do one good act.

But look again. An unseen power has taken possession of him, a new life has animated him, and lo, he has "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness was made strong, waxed the valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens!" In that wherein he was weak, now he is strong, where once he would have trembled and fallen, now he stands unmoved like a house built upon a solid rock.

What is this unseen power? What is this new life? It is the life and power of God's word united with man's weakness. It is the life and power of God Himself, for God goes with His word "working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight." "For it is God which worketh you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

Man alone, without the Word in him, is like a house that is built on the sand. There is nothing to hold him up when the floods come and the winds blow. It is utterly impossible for him to withstand the tempest, for he has not strength in himself.

But God is willing to take the most helpless man that ever lived, if he will submit like the grass and the acorn, and work through him in the most marvellous manner by His mighty word. He loves to do it. He has "chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and the base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in His presence."

He says, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock." Then he who receives God's word into his heart and does it, has built upon immovable rock. But Jesus Himself is in the word, and is the Word (see John i. and John vi.), therefore humbly receiving the Word brings Jesus into the heart to work. Hence man's work is to submit and receive, and Jesus the living Word supplies all the power and does all the work through the man, if he will let Him.

It is not enough for a man to become united to another man who is united to Christ. Each man for himself must come to Christ the Word as to a living stone, and build on Him. Then he becomes a living stone, because he partakes of the life of the living Foundation. He and the Foundation grow together until he is a part of the Foundation, and the Foundation is a part of him. Is it any wonder, then, that he has strength, and that he can stand unmoved through all the storms and tempests of life?

Then when we look at the grass and realise our frailty, and our helplessness, let us not become discouraged, but rather let us lift our eyes in thankfulness to heaven and praise that mighty One who can take the weakest and most helpless of His creatures and by His word strengthen him "with all might according to His glorious power."

6. OVERCOMING IN CHRIST

EJ. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (OCTOBER 26, 1893)

To His disciples on one location Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33.

Why should this fact cause us to be of good cheer? Why should we rejoice because some one else has overcome the world, when it must also be overcome by ourselves? The grand truth which answers this question is, that we are not overcomers in ourselves, but overcomers in Christ.

To the Corinthians the apostle writes, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place." 2 Cor. 2:14. How is it that we are always caused to triumph in Christ? It is simply because Christ has triumphed over everything, and in Him victory is ours.

Christ was tempted in all points like as we are, yet was without sin. He has met and overcome every obstacle that can possibly be brought against humanity in the struggle for the life to come. And whenever any of these things, "the world, the flesh, and the devil," meet Him, they meet their Conqueror. The victory has been already won. And therefore in Christ we have the victory; for when we are in Him, the temptations assail Him, and not ourselves. When we hide our weakness in His strength, there is only His strength to fight the battle. He has gained the victory, and the beaten foe can never recover from his defeat so as to hope for victory over Him.

What, then, must we do to overcome? And why is it that we are so often overcome? The obvious answer is that we cannot overcome outside of Christ. What we have to do is to take the victory that has been already won, the victory that has been gained by Him. He overcame for us, that He might bestow His triumph upon us. And we take the victory by faith, for it is by faith that Christ comes into our hearts.

This is what is meant by the apostle John, when he says, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4. By faith we bring Christ into our hearts and lives. Eph. 3:17. And Christ being there, He is there as the Conqueror of all that is to be met and overcome in the Christian warfare.

The glorious truth is thus made manifest, that the victory over every temptation and difficulty is already ours, in Christ. We need not, therefore, come up to the conflict with a faint heart, but with all confidence, knowing that defeat cannot possibly be the outcome, no matter how formidable the foe may make himself appear. The battle is already fought, and Jesus Christ holds out to us the victory. We have simply to take it, and say, "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory throughout our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:57.

7. THE INDWELLING WORD

EJ. WAGGONER – SIGNS OF THE TIMES (JULY 17, 1890)

In the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of Colossians occurs this exhortation: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." This text, rightly understood, solves the problem of Christian living. Let us, therefore, spend a few moments to see how much is involved in it.

That there is a power in the word of God, far above that of any other book, cannot be doubted. The Lord through the prophet Jeremiah rebukes the false prophets, who speak their own words instead of the words of God, and says: "What is the chaff to the wheat?" "Is not my word like as a fire? Saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Jer. 23:28, 29. And the same prophet thus relates his experience when he was reproached because of the word of the Lord: "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." Jer. 20:9.

The word hidden in the heart protects against sin. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Ps. 119:11. And of the righteous we read that the reason why none of his steps slide, is that "the law of his God is in his heart." Ps. 37:31. David also says: "Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." Ps. 17:4. Jesus, also, in his memorable prayer for his disciples, said, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." John 17:17.

The word of the Lord is the seed by which the sinner is born again. We read of the "Father of lights" that "of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." James 1:18. And the Apostle Peter says: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the

brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently; being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." 1 Peter 1:22, 23. So we learn that, while those who are Christ's are born of the Spirit, the word of God is the seed from which they are developed into new creatures in Christ. The word, then, has power to give life. It is itself "quick," that is, alive, and powerful; and the psalmist prays to be quickened, made alive, according to the word, and then says: "This is my comfort in my affliction; for thy word hath quickened me." Ps. 119:25, 50.

This is stated very plainly by Jesus himself in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." This shows that the power of the Spirit of God dwells in the word of God.

With the knowledge that the word of God is the seed by which men are begotten unto a new life, and that the hiding of the word in the heart keeps one from sin, we may easily understand 1 John 3:9: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." How simple! There is in the word that divine energy which can transform the mind, and make a new man, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Of course the word can do this only for those who receive it in simple faith. But the word does not lose any of its power. If the soul thus born again retains that sacred, powerful word by which he was begotten, it will keep him still a new creature. It is as powerful to preserve as it is to create.

Jesus, our great Example, gave us an illustration of this. When tempted on every point by the devil, his sole reply was, "It is written," followed by a text of Scripture that met the case exactly. The Christian who would stand fast must do the same thing. There is no other way. This is an illustration

of David's words, "By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer."

It is this of which we read in Rev. 12:11, where, in speaking of the casting down of the "accuser of our brethren," the heavenly voice says: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." This does not mean, as some have carelessly assumed, the word of their testimony in meeting, but the word of the testimony in which the psalmist found so great delight. They overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of God.

But this cannot be done except by those who have the word of God abiding in them. The Spirit is given to bring truth to remembrance, in time of trial; but that which one has not learned he cannot remember. But if he has hidden the word in his heart, the Spirit will, in the hour of temptation, bring to his remembrance just that portion which will foil the tempter.

Every Christian can testify as to the power of the word at such times. When inclined to congratulate himself on some real or fancied superior attainment, what a powerful check are the words, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. 4:7. Or when harsh and bitter thoughts are struggling within him for control, what power to quell those turbulent emotions lies in the words, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." 1 Cor. 13:4, 5. When provoked almost beyond endurance, how the gentle rebuke, "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men," helps one to be calm. Add to this the many "exceeding great and precious promises" which bring victory to every soul that grasps them by faith. Thousands of

aged Christians can testify to the miraculous power resting in a few simple words of the Scriptures.

Now whence comes this power? The answer is found in the words of Christ: "The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." What spirit are they? The apostle Peter, speaking of the prophets, says that it was the Spirit of Christ that was in them. So, as we said before, the power of the Spirit dwells in the word. Yea, Christ himself dwells in the word, for he is the Word.

Who can understand the mystery of inspiration?-He who can understand the mystery of the incarnation; for both are the same. "The Word was made flesh." We cannot understand how Christ could be all the fullness of the Godhead, and at the same time be in the form of a servant, subject to all the infirmities of mortal flesh. Neither can we understand how the Bible could be written by fallible mortals, exhibiting the peculiarities of each, and yet be the pure, unadulterated word of God. But it is certainly true that the power that was in the Word that was made flesh, is the power that is in the word that the apostles and prophets have written for us.

Now we can begin to appreciate more the power residing in the word. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." Ps. 33:6. Christ, by whom the worlds were made, upholds them "by the word of his power." Heb. 1:3. The power that resides in the words of revelation, is the power that could speak the worlds into existence, and can keep them in their appointed places. Surely, then, it is worth our while to take time to study and meditate upon the word.

It is by so doing that we bring Christ himself into our hearts. In the fifteenth chapter of John, the Lord exhorts us to abide in him, and to allow him to abide in us; and then a few verses later he speaks of our abiding in him, and his word abiding in us. John 15:4, 7. It is by his word that Christ

does abide in the heart; for Paul says that Christ will dwell in the heart by faith (Eph. 3:17); and "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17.

Many people earnestly long for Christ to come and dwell in their hearts, and they imagine that the reason why he does not do so is because they are not good enough, and they vainly set about trying to get so good that he can condescend to come in. They forget that Christ comes into the heart, not because it is free from sin, but in order to free it from sin; and they possibly never realized that Christ is in the word, and that he who will make it a constant companion, and will yield himself to its influence, will have Christ dwelling within. He who has hidden the word in his heart, who meditates in it day and night, and who believes it with the simple faith of childhood,-such a one has Christ dwelling in his heart by faith, and will experience his mighty, creative power.

Is there not something inspiriting in this thought? When we come to God in secret prayer, and the Spirit brings to our remembrance some precious promise or needed reproof, is it not encouraging to know that as we accept them, Christ is coming into the heart with the same power that brought the worlds from nothing? Does it not clothe the word with new dignity? No wonder David could never tire of sounding its praises. May the thought that God is in the word be a fresh incentive to all to gain time and strength for their work by taking from it more time to feed upon the source of divine strength.

8. FAITH AND BREATH

EJ. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (MARCH 22, 1894)

"The just shall live by faith." Rom. 1:17. That means that their whole life will be faith, as the Apostle Paul said, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2:20. Faith, therefore, is not a thing of a moment; the man who believes a thing to-day, and is in doubt about it to-morrow, has not faith. Faith is continuous; it is an everlasting foundation. All men live by breathing. They cannot live by breathing one day, and ceasing to breathe the next day. As soon as they cease to breathe, they cease to live. So it is with faith; when faith ceases, the righteous life ceases. He who exercises faith as often and as long as he breathes, will be righteous as long as he lives.

9. PRESENT SALVATION

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (MAY 18, 1893)

As God inhabits eternity, so that all time is present with Him, so all His promises and blessings for men are in the present tense. There can be no future or past time to Him. This makes Him "a very present help in trouble," for we can live only in the present. We cannot live one moment in the future. We expect things in the future, and have hope of things to come, but the present is all that we can ever have, for when the things hoped for come, they will be present. Indeed, the things which we have reason to hope for in the future, will be only the continuation of the things which we have now. All things are in Christ, and His promise is, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:20.

The apostle Paul blessed God because He "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ Jesus." Eph. 1:3. The promises of God for the future must be present realities to us, if we ever receive any benefit from them. "For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." 2 Cor. 1:20. It is by these "exceeding great and precious promises" that we are "made partakers of the Divine nature." The glories of the world to come will be but the revealing of that which we have now in the personal presence within us of the Lord Jesus Christ. The only hope of glory is Christ in us.

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Heb. 13: 8. The word of God "liveth and abideth for ever." 1 Peter 1: 23. We do not have to deal with a dead word, which was spoken so long ago that there is no more force in it, but with a word which has the same life as though it were just spoken. Indeed it is of benefit to us only when we receive it as spoken directly and personally to us. "When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

1 Thess. 2:13. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable." 2 Tim. 3:16. It is all in the present.

For this reason we can never outgrow the Scriptures. There is not a single text in the Bible that has become obsolete. There is none that the Christian of the longest experience has outgrown, so that he has no need of it. There is none that can be laid aside. The text which brings a man to the Saviour, is the text which is ever needed to keep him there. And this, too, although his mind has expanded, and his spiritual sight has been greatly strengthened; and the reason is that every word of God is of infinite depth, so that as the Christian's mind expands the word means more to him than it did in the beginning. The universe appears much greater to the astronomer than it does to the man who has never looked through a telescope. We look at the stars with the naked eye, and they seem very far off. Then we look at them through a powerful telescope, and, although we can see so much farther with it, the distance to the stars seems to be very much greater than it did with our limited vision. So the more one becomes acquainted with the word of God, the greater does it become. The promises of God, which seemed so exceeding great when they first appeared to us, become much more exceeding great the more we consider them and apply them.

The word of God is a light shining in a dark place. 2 Peter 1: 19. It is the revelation of Christ, who is the Light of the world, therefore it is a lamp. Ps. 119:105; Prov. 6:23. We have all heard of the young sailor who was left in charge of the helm, with instructions to hold the ship's head straight toward a certain star, which was pointed out to him, and who, in a few hours called the captain and said that he wanted another star to steer by, as he had sailed past the first one given him. What was the trouble? He had turned the ship round, and was sailing away from the star. So it is with those who say that they have outgrown certain portions of the Bible. The trouble is that they have turned their backs upon it.

What is the Gospel? "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. 1:16. It is present power applied to the salvation of the one who has present faith. From what does the power of God save men? Jesus is the power of God, and of Him it was said, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." 1 Tim. 1:15. The Gospel is the power of God to save men from sin. But it is present power, for sin is ever present. Its power is applied only while one is believing. "The just shall live by faith." Rom. 1:17. The moment a man ceases to believe, then he is a sinner, just the same as though he had never believed. Yesterday's faith will not answer for to-day, any more than the breathing of the man yesterday will keep him alive to-day.

The message of the Lord to the church in the days immediately preceding His coming is, "Thou sayest I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked." Rev. 3:19. Who is there that has outgrown this text? Not one. The blessing comes to the one who acknowledges the truth of the Lord's charge; for to him the Lord will enter, with a supply for all his need. It is the man who says, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner," that goes down to his house justified.

And it is only as the man continues to utter that prayer, that he is justified. "For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Luke 18:14. The apostle says: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 1 Tim. 1:15. Note that he does not say, "Of whom I was chief;" but "of whom I am chief." And it was when he acknowledged himself to be the chief of sinners, that in him as chief was exhibited the mercy and longsuffering of God.

Some have wondered whether a Christian ought to sing these lines in Wesley's blessed hymn:-

"Just and holy is Thy name,

I am all unrighteousness;

Vile and full of sin I am;

Thou art full of truth and grace."

The man who thinks that he has outgrown those lines is in a pitiable condition, for he is shutting himself off from the source of righteousness.

"There is none good, but one; that is, God." Matt. 19:17. Therefore whatever righteousness is ever exhibited in any soul must be only the righteousness of God. It is only the soul that acknowledges his own sinfulness, that will lay hold on the righteousness of God that is by the faith of Christ. It is only by the obedience of one that many are made righteous. Rom. 5:19. And that one is Christ.

"And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:2. The Christian of forty years' experience is just as much in need of the righteousness which comes through Christ, as is the sinner who is now for the first time coming to the Lord. So we read again, "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." 1 John 1:7, 8. The most that anyone can say is that Christ is without sin, and that Christ has given Himself for us. He is of God "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. 1:30. But note that cleansing is a present process. We may know that the blood of Christ did cleanse us from sin at some time in the past; but that will do us no good. That life is

continually needed, in order that the cleansing may go on continually. We are "saved by His life." Rom. 5:10. For Christ is our life. Col. 3:4.

So it is that "every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." 1 John 4:2, 3. Note again the present tense. It is not enough to confess that Jesus Christ did come in the flesh; that will bring no salvation to anybody. We must confess from positive knowledge, that Jesus is just now come in the flesh, and then we are of God. Christ came in the flesh eighteen hundred years ago, just for the purpose of demonstrating the possibility. That which He did once, He is able to do again. He who denies the possibility of His coming in the flesh of men now, thereby denies the possibility of His having ever come in the flesh.

So our part is with humbleness of mind to confess that we are sinners; that in us is no good thing. If we do not, then the truth is not in us; but if we do, then Christ, who came into the world for the express purpose of saving sinners, will come and take up His abode with us, and then the truth will indeed be in us. Then there will be perfection manifested in the midst of imperfection. There will be completeness in the midst of weakness. For we "are complete in Him." Col. 2:10. He has created all things by the word of His power, and therefore can take men who are but nothing, and can make them "to the praise of the glory of His grace." Eph. 1:6. "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to whom be the glory for every and ever. Amen." Rom. 11:36.

10. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

EJ. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (MARCH 9, 1893)

Someone says:-

"The little boy or girl, at school, looks at the copy in the writing-book, and imitates it, trying to write each following line better. That is the Christian life, and that is all of it."

Not by any means. If it were all of it, there would be no hope for anybody; for the pattern is Jesus Christ, in whom dwelleth "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and no human being could ever successfully copy that life. "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." Isa. 55:8, 9. He who would copy the life of Christ as the schoolboy copies his lesson, and do it successfully, must have power equal to that of God.

If the boy whose hand the master holds and guides in imitating the copy, were used as an illustration of the Christian life, it would be a step nearer the truth; but even that would not be the truth.

That is mechanical. The boy may yield his hand willingly to the master, that it may be guided, but the writing is after all not his own. God does not use men as dead instruments to be operated upon, although men are to yield themselves as instruments of righteousness unto Him.

The Christian life is simply the life of Christ. If the master who sets the copy for the schoolboy, could put all his own skill and power into that boy, so that what he writes will not be merely an imitation of the master's copy, but the master's own writing, and still the free act of the boy, we should have an illustration of the Christian life. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both

to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2:12, 13. "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2:20. "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." 1 John 2:6. And how was it that He walked? Christ Himself said, "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." John 14:10. Christ has set us the copy, but instead of standing off and watching us try to imitate Him, He gladly comes in to our hearts, becoming one with us, so that His life is our life, and His act is ours. This is life-the Christian life.

11. DESPERATELY WICKED

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (DECEMBER 27, 1894)

Quite likely we should be offended and shocked if any of our friends were to tell us that we were desperately wicked persons, or if someone should represent us as such to the public. We know some people who are wicked,-perhaps some of whom we consider desperately wicked; and we have read of such persons in history and in the accounts of crime which fill the columns of the newspapers; and we would not wish to be classed with them. We belong to the "respectable" class of people,-that class who are not just as good as they might be, but who do not do anything very bad. It would certainly be a gross libel to point us out as desperately wicked.

Would it? Let us look up this matter a little. The Lord has said something on the point, and He does not libel people, but tells every one the exact truth. We turn to the book of Jeremiah and read, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Jer. 17:9. Whose heart is it? Ah, there are no particular persons specified in the statement; its application is general; it means your heart and mine. Neither does it say the heart may become deceitful and desperately wicked, but is so. There is no getting around it; the Lord says our hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. No matter about our respectability and standing in society; if the human heart rules within us, we are desperately wicked. And it is only because our hearts are so deceitful that we do not realise the fact. Yes; there is murder there; there is adultery, there is theft, there is blasphemy, there is that dreadful crime which shocked us as we read it in the paper, and which sent a man to the gallows; there is everything of which lawless men are guilty, and which is contrary to the ten commandments. The Lord says so; for He says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7.

To how much of the law of God is the carnal mind not subject? Can it be subject to part of that law, and not subject to the remaining part? Certainly that could not be. The heart must either be subject to the law in its entirety, or not subject to it; and the carnal heart, as the text declares, "is not subject to the law of God." This carnal nature is the nature we get by birth, and this nature we must retain, no matter what our station and occupation among men, until we allow the Lord to transform our hearts by the power of His grace. And therefore every person in whom this natural, or carnal, heart exists is at enmity with every precept of the Divine law. He is not only at enmity with the command which says, "Thou shalt not covet,"-as very respectable persons can be-but he is also not in harmony with those commands which say, "Thou shalt not kill," and "Thou shalt not commit adultery." He may not feel the enmity stirring him up to commit some shocking deed; but nevertheless, it is there.

Do we know, even the best of us, what is in our hearts? How often do circumstances discover there evils of which we do not dream! Let our natures become suddenly ruffled, and words and deeds spring forth which cause us surprise and shame. Men do not start out in life to become murderers or adulterers or embezzlers. Such ones would be horrified if told at the outset to what the developments of later years would bring them. Their nature was the same as ours: yet the evil deeds were there.

There is no use denying what the Lord tells us. If mere "respectability" could decide the question the devil would have the advantage of us, for he is "transformed into an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14), which power we do not possess. None of us can compete with the devil in point of a good appearance. The Lord sees us just as we are, and the sooner we see ourselves as He sees us, the better. When we become convinced that we are really desperately wicked, we shall see the necessity of getting rid of our inherited natures altogether, instead of trying to make them presentable to God by some efforts at patching up. We shall be ready to

accept the new heart and new nature which God gives us on condition of perfect submission to Him, even the nature of Jesus Christ, who dwells in the heart by faith.

We shall see also that the apostle told the truth when he said, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." Rom. 2:1. The germs which developed (and so suddenly) into the evil deeds which we condemn in others, are in our own natural hearts, in the enmity which such hearts have to the law of God. When we have the nature of Christ, we shall be on this point as Michael the Archangel, who against Satan himself would not bring a railing accusation. Jude 9. It is for us to choose between a nature that is desperately wicked, and one that is infinitely good.

12. HEAR AND LIVE

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (APRIL 6, 1893)

With the exception of the fourth and fifth commandments, all of them begin with the words, "Thou shalt not." They are not merely negative, however, for they are all summed up in the two great positive commandments, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Too often these are regarded as mere arbitrary commands, but they are much more than that. There is a power in them that does not pertain to ordinary words. It is the power of the word of God, which is life itself. Christ said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. Being the very Spirit of life, they give life to all who hear them.

Of the life-giving power of the word of the Lord, we have instances in the resurrection of Lazarus and the ruler's daughter. Christ said: "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 live." John 5:25. And then follows the statement that as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself, so that when the hour comes all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17. "With the heart man believeth." So that the hearing of faith puts the words of God in the heart. But Christ dwells in the heart by faith (Eph. 3:17), because His Spirit is in His word; so that the hearing of faith brings the life of Christ into the heart, and that is righteousness.

But this is the putting of the law in the heart; for when Moses exhorted the people to keep the commandments he said, "For this commandment

which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." Deut. 30:11-14.

In the tenth of Romans, just before the apostle's conclusion that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, this passage from Deuteronomy is quoted, and it is shown that the "commandment" refers to Christ, who is the soul and substance of the law. And that this is what Moses meant by the words is shown from Paul's statement that the words of Moses are the language of "the righteousness which is of faith." And further, by the words of Moses himself: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live; that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him; for He is thy life, and the length of thy days." Deut. 30:19, 20.

Life comes through keeping the commandments (Matt. 19:17; Rev. 22:14); but Christ is the life of the law, and He dwells in the heart by faith in His word. Thus the law as the real righteousness of God, and not the mere form, is life, and has power to give life. David said, "This is my comfort in my affliction; for Thy word hath quickened me." Ps. 119:50.

"Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." Deut. 6:4-6. How in the heart? By faith. And how does faith come? by hearing. The idea is that, just as at the last day those who hear the voice of

God will be raised to life, out of their graves, so now those who really hearken to His commandments will receive the life of them.

Accordingly the Lord testified as follows: "Hear, O My people and I will testify unto thee; O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto Me, there shall no strange God be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god." Ps. 81:8, 9.

If the children of Israel had only listened to the Lord continually, He would have assured their salvation. While they were listening to Him, He would have taken upon Himself the responsibility of keeping them free from idolatry and all sin. So when in the law, He says "Thou shalt not," He means not simply to forbid our doing the things spoken of, but also to assure us that we shall not do them if we but hear in faith, recognizing Him in them.

So through the prophet he says, "O that thou hadst hearkened unto My commandments; then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Isa. 48:18. And again He exhorts, "Incline your ear, and come unto Me, hear, and your soul shall live." Isa. 55:3.

This is a comforting assurance. But one thing should not be lost sight of, and that is that the righteousness which comes by the hearing of faith is not a mere passive righteousness. It is the active righteousness of God. And, moreover, it is just that righteousness which is demanded in the ten commandments, without any variation. He who hears must hear the very words of God, and the ten commandments are the words that God spoke with His own voice. He did not say, "The first day is the Sabbath of the Lord," but He did say, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Since God never commanded the observance of the first day of the week, no one can hear those words at His mouth; consequently there can be neither life nor righteousness in such observance.

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God;" "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." But "take heed how ye hear."

13. THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

EJ. WAGGONER – SIGNS OF THE TIMES (APRIL 10, 1893)

"And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed; and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitudes saw it, they marveled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men." Matt. 9:3-8.

One of the most common expressions to be heard among professed Christians when speaking of religious things, is this, "I can understand and believe that God will forgive sin, but it is hard for me to believe that he can keep me from sin." Such a person has yet to learn very much of what is meant by God's forgiving sins. It is true that persons who talk that way do often have a measure of peace in believing that God has forgiven or does forgive their sins, but through failure to grasp the power of forgiveness, they deprive themselves of much blessing that they might enjoy.

Bearing in mind the statement concerning the matters that "these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name," not as simply the miracle before us. The scribes did not believe that Jesus could forgive sin. In order to show that he had power to forgive sins, he healed the palsied man. This miracle was wrought for the express purpose of illustrating the work of forgiving sin, and demonstrating its power. Jesus said to the palsied man, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house," that they

and we might know his power to forgive sin. Therefore the power exhibited in the healing of that man is the power bestowed in the forgiveness of sin.

Note particularly that the effect of the words of Jesus continued after they were spoken. They made a change in the man, and that change was permanent. Even so it must be in the forgiveness of sin. The common idea is that when God forgives sin the change is in himself, and not in the man. It is thought that God finally ceases to hold anything against the one who has sinned. But this is to imply that God had a hardness against the man, which is not the case. God is not a man; he does not cherish enmity, nor harbor a feeling of revenge. It is not because he has a hard feeling in his heart against a sinner that he forgives him, but because the sinner has something in his heart. God is alright,-the man is all wrong, therefore God forgive the man, that he also may be alright.

When Jesus, illustrating the forgiveness of sin, said to the man, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house," the man arose obedient to his voice. The power that was in the words of Jesus, raised him up, and made him well. That power remained in him, and it was in the strength that was given him on removing the palsy that he walked in all the time to come, provided, of course, that he kept the faith. This is illustrated by the Psalmist, when he says: "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." Ps. 40:1, 2.

There is life in the words of God. Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. The word received in faith brings the Spirit and the life of God to the soul. So when the penitent soul hears the words, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee," and receives those words as for living words of the living God, he is a

different man, because a new life has begun in him. It is the power of God's forgiveness, and that alone, that keeps him from sin. If he continues in sin after receiving pardon, it is because he has not grasped the fullness of the blessing that was given him in the forgiveness of his sins.

In the case before us, the man received new life. His palsied condition was simply the wasting away of the natural life. He was partially dead. The words of Christ gave him fresh life. But this new life that was given to his body, and which enabled him to walk was but an illustration, both to him and to the scribes, of the unseen life of God which he had received in the words, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," and which had made him a new creature in Christ.

With this simple and clear illustration before us, we may understand some of the words of the apostle Paul, which otherwise are "hard to be understood." First read Col. 1:12-14: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." See the same statement concerning redemption through Christ's blood, in 1 Peter 1:18, 19; Rev. 5:9.

Mark two points: We have redemption through Christ's blood, and this redemption is the forgiveness of sins. But the blood is the life. See Gen. 9:4; Rev. 17:13, 14. Therefore Col. 1:14 really tells us that we have redemption through Christ's life. But does not the Scripture say that we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son? It does, and that is just what is here taught. Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." Titus 2:14. He "gave himself for our sins." Gal. 1:4. In giving himself, he gives his life. In shedding his blood, he pours out his life. But in giving up his life, he gives it to us. That life is righteousness, even

the perfect righteousness of God, so that when we receive it we are "made the righteousness of God in him." It is the receiving of Christ's life, as we are baptized into his death, that reconciles us to God. It is thus that we "put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," after the image of him that created him." Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10.

Now we may read Rom. 3:23-25, and find that it is not so very difficult: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified [that is, made righteous, or doers of the law] freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission [sending away] of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

All have sinned. The whole life has been sin. Even the thoughts have been evil. Mark 7:21. And to be carnally minded is death. Therefore the life of sin is a living death. If the soul is not freed from this, it will end in eternal death. There is no power in man to get righteousness out of the holy law of God, therefore God in his mercy puts his own righteousness upon all that believe. He makes us righteous as a free gift out of the riches of his grace. He does this by his words, for he declares-speaks-his righteousness into and upon all who have faith in the blood of Christ, in him is God's righteousness, "for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." And this declaring or speaking the righteousness of God upon us, is the remission or taking away of sin. Thus God takes away the sinful life by putting his own righteous life in its place. And this is the power of the forgiveness of sin. It is "the power of an endless life."

This is the beginning of the Christian life. It is receiving the life of God by faith. How is it continued?-Just as it is begun. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Col. 2:6. For "the just

shall live by faith." The secret of living the Christian life is simply that of holding fast the life which, received at the beginning, forgives the sin. God forgives sin by taking it away. He justifies the ungodly by making him godly. He reconciles the rebel sinner to himself by taking away his rebellion, and making him a loyal and law-abiding subject.

"But it is difficult to understand how we can have the life of God as an actual fact; it can't be real, for it is by faith that we have it." So it was by faith that the poor palsied man received new life and strength; but was his strength any the less real? Was it not an actual fact that he received strength? Can't understand it? Of course not, for it is a manifestation of "the love of God that passeth knowledge." But we may believe it, and realize the fact, and then we shall have an eternal life in which to study the wonder of it. Read again and again the story of the healing of the palsied man, and meditate upon it until it is a living reality to you, and then remember that "these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name."

14. EVE DISBELIEVED GOD

A.T. JONES – REVIEW & HERALD (OCTOBER 4, 1898)

IF Eve had believed the word of God, she would never have sinned.

Yea, so long as Eve had believed the word of God, she never could have sinned.

All who will think must agree that this is true.

She had the word of God plainly expressed: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Satan came with his new word, his arguments and persuasions: "Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be like God, knowing good and evil."

If, then, Eve had said: "No; God has said that I must not eat of that tree. He has said that in the day I eat of it I shall die. I believe God. I do not claim to know all about it, but he does know all about it. I will trust him. I will not eat of that tree,"—had she so done, she would never have sinned. And so long as she had so done, she could not have sinned.

Therefore it is everlastingly true that had Eve believed God, she never would have sinned; and so long as she had believed God, she never could have sinned. And Adam the same.

Now that thing is just as true to-day as it was that day; and it is as true of every man and woman to-day as it was of that woman that day.

The person to-day who believes God, will not sin; and so long as he believes God, he can not sin. This principle is eternal, and is as good to-day as it was in the beginning. And Christ in human nature has demonstrated it.

But this calls for really believing God,—not a pretended believing, that apparently accepts one word of the Lord and rejects another; that professes to believe one statement of the word of God, and doubts the next one. That way of doing is not believing God at all.

This also calls for a readiness and diligence, a hungering and thirsting, to know the word of God, that will lead on and on to know all that the Lord has spoken. Of course if any person would rather sin than to search to know and believe the word of God, that he may not sin, there is no power in the universe that can keep him from sinning. But whoever abhors sin, whoever would rather die than to sin,—to him the word of God is precious; to him it is a pleasure, yes, a joy, to study to find all the Lord has spoken; with him there is a hungering and thirsting that will gladly receive the word of God, that he may not sin.

"Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer."

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

"Study to show thyself approved unto God."

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly."

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

And so shall you indeed be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready" now "to be revealed," because it is the last time.

15. ANOTHER MAN

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (JANUARY 25, 1894)

There is something exceedingly comforting in the thought of receiving the power of the Holy Spirit; and no wonder, for the Spirit is the Comforter. But the great comfort of it is shown in the result, as illustrated in one typical case. When Samuel had anointed Saul king over Israel, he said to him:

"Thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy; and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man." 1 Sam. 10:5, 6.

What a wonderfully pleasant thought, that the Spirit turns the one who yields to its presence into another man.

The old man is sinful. We are carnal by nature. We have done many wicked deeds, because sin was our very nature. The memory of those sins have often appalled us, as the knowledge of the sinful nature, whence they came, has often been to us a grief and shame. Past misdeeds which we could not wipe out, had been held up before us by Satan to discourage us, and thus to give him greater power over our sinful nature.

But now the glorious news comes to us that by yielding to the Spirit of God, we may be turned into other persons. That "new man" is "created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. 4:24. It takes the place of "the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." This new man is "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. 3:10); and this renewing takes place "day by day." 2 Cor. 4:16.

We yield, and the transformation is effected. We continue to yield, and renewing continually takes place. And now the devil comes to us again with his old tricks. He presents the long list of sins, but they do not appal us anymore. We can say to him, "You have made a mistake; the man who used to live here, and who committed those sins, is dead, and I have no connection with him, and therefore cannot be called on to settle his accounts." There is no more a "fearful looking for of judgment," for we shall not come into judgment, having passed from death unto life. John 5:24.

The devil tries his old temptations, through the lusts of the flesh, but again he is baffled. He used to have no difficulty in leading us astray, but now he has another man to deal with, and to his astonishment he finds that his purposes fail. There is no condemnation to us, because we walk in the Spirit.

This new man has never sinned, because it is "created in righteousness and true holiness," and kept eternally new. How often we have wished that we might get rid of ourselves. We may. The word comes to us, "Put off the old man, with his deeds," and with the word comes the power to put him off. And the new man cannot sin, because it is the very image of God. So that our part day by day may be to declare from the heart with the Apostle Paul:-

"For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2:19, 20.

16. AS FREE AS A BIRD

EJ. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (JANUARY 10, 1894)

The Lord Jesus Christ began His earthly ministry by reading in the synagogue at Nazareth the following words from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4:18, 19. And then He said to the congregation, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Turning to the place from which Christ read, we find these words: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isa. 61:1.

The Hebrew term which in Isaiah is rendered, "the opening of the prison," has the general signification of "opening," and is applied to the opening of the eyes of the blind, and the ears of the deaf. Accordingly the Saviour gave it this double application, in reading it, so that in Luke we have instead of the one statement, "the opening of the prison to them that are bound" the two statements, "recovering of sight to the blind," and, "to set at liberty them that are bruised."

The whole import of the text therefore is that Christ came to give freedom in every sense of the word. It is charged with the idea of liberty, and that to an extent that few realise. We shall be amply repaid for a few moments closer study of it, and for many hours of meditation upon it afterwards.

The word "liberty," in the statement, in Isa. 61:1, that Christ was anointed "to proclaim liberty to the captives," is from a Hebrew word, the primary

signification of which is "a swallow." This noun is derived from a verb which signifies "to fly in a circle, to wheel in flight," like a bird in the air. From this it is easy to see how the word came to signify "freedom" and "liberty."

We learn, therefore, that the Bible idea of liberty is best represented by the graceful flight of a swallow through the air. We often use the figure, "as free as a bird," and that exactly expresses the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free. Is it not a glorious thing? What a sense of freedom thrills the soul at the very thought of it!

Sin is bondage. Jesus said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, Every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin." John 8:34. Not only is the sinner in bondage, but he is in prison. The Apostle Paul says, "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Gal. 3:22, 23. The word "concluded" means, literally, "shut up together." All sinners are in bondage, shut up together in prison, condemned to hard labour.

The end of sin is death. James 1:15. Consequently the sinner is not only shut up in prison, condemned to hard, unprofitable labour, but he has the fear of death continually before him. It is from this that Christ delivers us. See Heb. 2:14, 15. So we read in Ps. 102:19, 20, "For He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose those that are appointed to death." Christ says, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36.

"Free indeed." With the knowledge already gained from Isa. 61:1, we can easily grasp the fulness of that freedom. Imagine a bird that has been caught, and shut up in a cage. It longs for freedom, but the cruel bars

make that impossible. Someone comes along and opens the door. The bird sees the opening, but has so often been deceived in his attempts to gain his liberty, that he hesitates. He hops down finds that his prison is really open, trembles a moment for very joy at the thought of liberty, then spreads his wings and wheels through the air with such rapture as can be known only by one who has been a captive. "Free indeed." As free as a bird.

This is the liberty wherewith Christ frees the captive of sin. The Psalmist had that experience, for he said "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers, the snare is broken, and we are escaped." Ps. 124:7. And this is the experience of every one who truly and without reserve accepts Christ.

But it is the truth that gives this freedom; for Christ says, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32. He is the truth, and His word is truth. The Psalmist says, "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth." Ps 119:142. And he also says, "I will walk at liberty, for I seek Thy precepts." Ps. 119:45. As we learn from the margin, this is literally, "I will walk in a broad place, for I seek Thy precepts;" and this fits with what we learn in verse 96: "I have seen an end of all perfection; but Thy commandment is exceeding broad." The commandments of God form an exceedingly broad place in which all may walk who seek them. They are the truth, and it is the truth that gives freedom.

"The law is spiritual." Rom. 7:14. That is, the law is the nature of God, for "the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. 3:17. Because the Spirit of the Lord God was in Christ, He could proclaim liberty to the captives of sin. So we read the words of one who had been a captive slave, "sold under sin:" "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the

flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Rom. 8:1, 2.

The law of God was, and is, in the heart of Christ. Ps. 40:8. Out of the heart are the issues of life (Prov. 4:23); therefore the life of Christ is the law of God. When men attempt to keep the law in their own strength, they invariably get into bondage, just as surely as though they wilfully broke it. The only difference is that in the latter case they are willing slaves, while in the former they are unwilling slaves. In Christ alone the perfect righteousness of the law is found, and therefore His life is "the perfect law of liberty," into which we are exhorted continually to look. James 1:25; Heb. 12:2. The law that shuts up to certain death the man who is out of Christ, becomes life and liberty to the man who is in Christ.

We have seen that the "commandment is exceeding broad." How broad?—Just as broad as the life of God. Therefore the liberty, or the "broad place" in which one can walk who seeks the law of God, is the breadth of God's mind, which comprehends the universe. This is "the glorious liberty of the children of God." "His commandments are not grievous," but on the contrary are life and liberty to all who accept them "as the truth is in Jesus." God has not given us the spirit of bondage, but has called us to the liberty which He Himself enjoys; for if we believe His word we are His sons,—heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ."

Only the Spirit of God can give such liberty as this. No man can give it, and no earthly power can take it away. We have seen that no man can get it by his own efforts to keep the law of God. The greatest human efforts can result in nothing but bondage. Therefore when civil governments enact laws requiring men to follow a certain religious custom, they are simply forging fetters for them; because religion by law means a religion of purely human power. It is not the man who tries to do right, that is free, but the

man who actually does right. But no man does the truth, except the one whose works are wrought in him by God Himself.

The liberty which Christ gives is liberty of the soul. It is liberty from the bondage of sin. That, and that alone is real religious liberty. It is found nowhere but in the religion of Jesus Christ. The man who has that liberty is free even in a prison cell. The slave who has it is infinitely more at liberty than his cruel master, even though he be a king. Who is there who does not want liberty that is something more than a name?

And now one more word of encouragement to the slave of sin, who is heart sick because of his bondage, and is discouraged through the failure of repeated attempts to escape. Freedom is yours, if you will but take it. Read again the words of Christ, which are living words to-day:-

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." Isa. 61:1, 2.

What is that?-Liberty has already been proclaimed. Your prison doors are already open, and you have only to believe it, and to walk out, continually believing it. Christ is to-day proclaiming liberty to you, for He has broken the snare, and loosed your bonds. Ps. 116:16. He tells you that He has opened this prison door, so that you may walk at liberty, if you will only walk by faith in Him. It is faith that opens the door to the one who is shut up in sin. Believe His word, declare yourself free in His name, and then by humble faith stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Then will you know the blessedness of the assurance:-

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." Isa. 40:31.

17. JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (MARCH 23, 1893)

"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John 2:1.

Of all the beings who have lived on this earth, Christ alone "did no sin." He is the only one of whom it could be said, "There is no unrighteousness in Him." Ps. 92:15. He Himself without egotism declared Himself to be sinless. And the reason why He could do this, was that He was indeed God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:1, 14. Christ was God manifest in the flesh, so that His name was Emmanuel,—"God with us." Matt. 1:23.

Because "in Him is no sin," "He was manifested to take away our sins." 1 John 3:5. "This is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jer. 33:6. Note that He is our righteousness, and not simply a substitute for righteousness that we have not. Men are not, as a Roman Catholic work charges justification by faith with teaching, "reputed or considered wholly on account of the merits of Christ, without really being so." The Bible teaches that they are actually to be righteous, through the merits of Jesus Christ.

More and more is it getting to be held by professed teachers of Christianity, that there is in man at least as much good as evil, and that the good in men will eventually gain the complete victory over the evil. But the Bible teaches that "There is none righteous, no, not one." Christ, who "knew what was in man," declared that "out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." Mark 7:21, 22. He also declared that "an evil man, out of the

evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil," and that good cannot come from a bad source. Luke 6:43, 45. Therefore it is plain that from man of himself "no good thing" can come. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." Job 14:4.

God does not propose to try to bring goodness out of evil, and He never will call evil good. What He proposes to do is to create a new heart in man, so that good can come from it. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10.

No man can understand how Christ can dwell in a man's heart, so that righteousness will flow from it, instead of sin, any more than we can understand how Christ the Word who was before all things, and who created all things, could come to earth and be born as a man. But as surely as He dwelt in the flesh once, He can do it again, and whosoever confesses that "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God."

"If we walk in the light as He is in the light, . . . the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7. "We walk by faith, and not by sight." By faith we receive Christ, and to those who thus receive Him He gives the right and power to be called the sons of God. John 1:12. Then the exhortation is, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Col. 2:7. This is walking in the light.

As the physical life is sustained by breathing and eating, so the spiritual life is sustained by faith; and as we cannot to-day breathe enough for to-morrow, but must keep breathing all the time, so we cannot to-day have faith for the future, but must continue to have faith, if we would continue to live a spiritual life.

While we thus by faith walk in the light, we are continually receiving a divine life into our souls, for the light is life. And the life continually

received, continually cleanses the soul from sin. The cleansing is an ever-present work, showing an ever-present need. Thus it is that we can never say that we have no sin. It is always only "Jesus Christ the righteous."

It is by the obedience of One that many are made righteous. What a wonder! Only one-Christ-obey, but many are made really righteous. The apostle Paul said: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2:20. So then, if anyone asks a Christian, "Are you without sin?" he can only reply, "Not I, but Christ." "Do you keep the commandments?" "Not I, but Christ." Imperfect and sinful in ourselves, and yet "complete in Him."

With God is the "fountain of life." Ps. 36:9. Christ is the manifestation of God, and so the fountain of life is in Him. "He ever liveth," and so the fountain ever flows. As it is said of the river of life, "everything shall live whither the river cometh" (Eze. 47:9), so of the life of Christ, wherever it comes it cleanses from all defilement. And so, while confessing ourselves to be sinful and helpless, we are constrained to place all dependence in Him who "knew no sin," and are "made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. 5:21.

18. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

A.T. JONES – PRESENT TRUTH (JUNE 21, 1894)

"WHATSOEVER is not of faith is sin." Rom. 14:23.

Faith is of God and not of ourselves (Eph. 2:8); therefore whatsoever is not of God is sin.

Whatsoever is of God is righteousness: faith is the gift of God: and whatsoever is of faith is therefore righteousness, as certainly as that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

Jesus Christ is the Author and Finisher of faith (Heb. 11:2), and the word of God is the channel through which it comes and the means by which it operates. For "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17. Where there is no word of God there can be no faith.

The word of God is the most substantial and most powerful thing in the universe. It is the means by which all things were produced. It carries in itself creative power. For "by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." "For He spake and it was; He commanded and it stood fast." Ps. 33:6, 9. And when this world was thus made, and darkness covered all the face thereof "God said, Let there be light: And there was light."

Thus the word of God is self-fulfilling, and of itself accomplishes the will of God in every one who receives it as it is in truth the word of God. "When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." 1 Thess. 2:13. Thus to receive the word of God; to yield the heart to it that thus it may work in the life; this is genuine belief, this is true faith. This is the faith by which men can be justified, made righteous indeed. For by it the very will of God, as

expressed in His own word, is accomplished in the life by the creative word of Him who has spoken. This is the work of faith. This is the righteousness—the right doing—of God which is by faith. Thus "It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Thus the character, the righteousness, of God is manifested in the life, delivering from the power of sin, to the saving of the soul in righteousness.

This is justification by faith alone. This is justification by faith, without works. For the faith being the gift of God, coming by the word of God, and itself working in man the works of God, needs none of the work of sinful man to make it good and acceptable to God. The faith itself works in man that which is good, and is sufficient of itself to fill all the life with the goodness of God, and needs not the imperfect effort of sinful man to make it meritorious. This faith gives to man good works, instead of being itself dependent upon man for "good works." It is not expressed by "faith and works;" but by "faith which works," "for in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." Gal. 5:6. "Seest thou how faith wrought?" Jas. 3:22. "Remembering without ceasing, you work of faith;" "and the work of faith with power." 1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:11. And, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." John 6:29. This is "the faith of God" which Jesus exhorts us to have (Mark 11:22, margin); which was manifested in him; and which by his grace is a free gift to every soul on earth.

19. THE HEALING TOUCH

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (MARCH 29, 1894)

One of the most striking of the miracles of Jesus is told in the following few words:-

"And it came to pass when He was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy; who seen Jesus, fell on his face, and besought Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me a clean. And He put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him." Luke 5:12, 13.

Leprosy was one of the most loathsome diseases known to the ancients, and the one the most dreaded. The leper was an outcast, compelled to keep away from even his own family. The disease was a slow, progressive death, the victim's members dropping off one after another until death ended his misery.

No other disease more aptly illustrates the defilement of sin; and this man, who was full of leprosy, very closely resembled the description given of the people, by the prophet Isaiah: "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises, and putrefying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." So as we study the miracle of the cleansing of the leper, we may know that we are to learn how we can obey the direction, "Make you clean."

In the first place, the leper had confidence in the power of the Lord to heal him. He said, "Thou canst make me clean." That is a great point. Very few really believe that Jesus Christ can cleanse them from sin. They will admit that He can save from sin in general,-that He can save others,-but they are not convinced that He can save them. Let such learn a lesson from the

power of the Lord. Hear what the prophet Jeremiah said by inspiration of the Holy Spirit:-

"Ah Lord God! behold Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee." Jer. 32:17.

He who brought the heavens and the earth into existence by the power of His word, can do all things. "Our God is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased." Ps. 115:3. "His Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." 2 Peter 1:3. "He is able also to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by Him." Heb. 7:25. Christ has been given "power over all flesh." John 17:2.

So much for His power. Of that the leper was assured; but he was not sure that the Lord was willing to cleanse him. He said, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." We need not have so much hesitancy as that. We know that He can, and He has given us ample assurance of His willingness. Thus we read that Christ "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." Gal. 1:4. It is the will of God that we should be sanctified. 1 Thess. 4:3.

Christ comprises everything. He is "the power of God, and the wisdom of God." 1 Cor. 1:24. All things in heaven and in earth are in Him. Col. 1:16, 17. Therefore the Apostle Paul says: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:32. The willingness of God to cleanse us from sin, is shown in the gift of His only begotten Son for that purpose.

"These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the boldness which we have toward Him, that, if we ask

anything according to His will, He heareth us; and if we know that He heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of Him." 1 John 5:13-15. R.V. So we may "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16), knowing that "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

But the most striking feature of this miracle is the fact that Jesus touched the leper. There was not another person in all the land, who would have come within a yard of him. But Jesus "put forth His hand, and touched him." With that touch the hateful disease vanished.

It is worth noting that in very many cases Jesus touched those whom He healed. When Peter's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, Jesus "touched her hand, and the fever left her." Matt. 8:15. That same evening, "all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them, and healed them." Luke 4:40. In His own country the people were so unbelieving that "He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands on a few sick folk, and healed them." Mark 6:5.

In Matthew we are assured that this healing of the sick was "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases." Matt. 8:17, R.V. We know that healing went from Him to the suffering ones who thronged round Him to touch Him (Luke 6:19); and this Scripture assures us that He received into His own person their diseases, in exchange for His healing power.

Now we have the blessed assurance that although He is "passed into the heavens," He has not lost His sympathy with us, but is still "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." He comes close to us in pity, because "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." In all our sin and

degradation, we may have the inspiring thought that Jesus does not despise us, and is not ashamed to come into the closest companionship with us, in order that He may help us.

The prophet, speaking of God's dealing with ancient Israel, said, "In all their afflictions He was afflicted." Isa. 63:9. Even so it is now. As an eagle bears her young on her wings, so the Lord puts Himself under His people, bearing all our sin and sorrow. He takes it upon Himself, and in Him it is lost, by the same process by which at the last "He will swallow up death in victory."

Christ took upon Himself the curse, in order that the blessing might come upon us. Gal. 3:13, 14. Although Him knew no sin, He was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Cor. 5:21. He suffered the death to which we were doomed, that we might share His life. And this exchange is made when we come into touch with Him, by confessing that "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." How much we lose by holding Jesus off as a stranger, or by regarding faith in Him as a theory. When we know that He identifies Himself with us in our fallen condition, taking upon Himself, and from us, our infirmities, how precious becomes the assurance, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

"The healing of the seamless dress

Is by our beds of pain;

We touch Him in life's throng and press,

And we are whole again.

20. THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (JANUARY 11, 1894)

Just before the Lord ascended to heaven, He said to His disciples, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Acts 1:8.

This promise is to us as well as to those who heard His voice as He uttered it; for every one who knows the Lord is to be a witness for Him, and nothing can be done without the power of the Holy Spirit. God has promised the Spirit to all who desire it; that is, to all who are willing to receive, or to undergo, all that is involved in the receiving of the Spirit.

The marginal reading of the text above quoted is, "Ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you." The question is, How is this power to be received? What are we to expect and pray for? One thing may be definitely answered, and that is that the Spirit will not come to any man in the way which he may have marked out. For the thoughts of God and the power of God are not after the model of man's mind.

When the word of the Lord found Elijah in the wilderness, as he fled from Jezebel, it said to him: "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?" 1 Kings 19:11-13.

But for the express declaration to the contrary, we should have said that the Lord was in the wind and the earthquake. It is natural for man to suppose that nothing less than a hurricane could reveal the power of God; but from the above we learn that God shows his power in more quiet ways. It was a voice, "a still, small voice," that revealed the Lord to Elijah. So it will be with us.

God says to us: "Be still, and know that I am God." Ps. 46:10. It is "in quietness and confidence" that our strength lies; in returning and rest we find salvation. We must be silent before the Lord, or else we shall miss the still, small voice which alone reveals Him to the soul. God can thunder with a terrible voice, but we could not understand that; so He reveals Himself to us in a whisper. That conveys intelligible sound to our understanding, whereas the thunder would only startle and terrify us. So we read, "Lo these are but the outskirts of His ways; but how small a whisper do we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?" Job 26:14.

Jesus was on the sea of Galilee with His disciples, when "there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves." The disciples in their terror appealed to the Master. "And He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." Matt. 7:24; Luke 8:39. Who that reads this ever imagines that Jesus lifted His voice above the roar of the tempest, in order to calm it? We cannot imagine such a thing. Only the weak man, conscious of his weakness, raises his voice in giving commands. The loud tone is used for the purpose of trying to conceal the lack of real power. The man who has authority, and who knows that he has the power to back up his commands, uses a low tone. Jesus always spoke as one that had authority; so that in stilling the tempest we find the same "still, small voice" which Elijah heard.

This still, small voice is the same voice by which the universe was created. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." Ps. 33:6. Was it necessary for God to utter His voice in thunder, in order to bring the worlds into existence? Certainly not; an order from the commander of an army, given in a whisper is just as effective in setting troops in motion as though shouted at the top of his voice. So with the King of the universe; the simple breathing from the Lord was sufficient to create all the worlds. The still, small voice that spoke to Elijah, was the voice that created. And it is the same word of power that now upholds all things (Heb. 1:3), because, as before noted, it is only a small whisper that we hear of Him in all the works,-the "parts of His ways,"-that we know anything about.

Most of the great manifestations of the power of God in the earth, are silent and unseen. We know that the power is there, only by the results. Think of the thousands of millions of tons of water that the sun is constantly lifting up from the earth to the clouds, to send down again in dew and rain. Not a sound is heard throughout all; but man cannot pump a cup full without much noise. The power manifested in plant growth is beyond all human conception, yet there is no sound. A plant may in its growth rend a rock asunder, yet it is all done silently, and unseen. The heavens declare the glory of God, yet they ring no bells, and blow no trumpets. God's work is so mighty that the results speak; advertisement would belittle it.

But the word by which the heavens were made, and by which they are upheld, and by which all the operations of nature are carried on, is the word of the Gospel which is preached unto us. The words of the Lord are Spirit and life. The word of God is living and powerful (Heb. 4:12), and it works effectually in all who believe in it. 1 Thess. 2:13. The Saviour breathed on the disciples, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." John 20:22. It was the same breathing by which the worlds were made, and by which

they are upheld. The power of the Spirit, therefore, is creative power, and that is in the word of the Lord. And so we may know that the power of the Holy Ghost, which Christ promised to His followers, comes only through His word.

God speaks to us in His word. The word of God is the sword of the Spirit. Eph. 6:17. It is the Spirit that reproveth sin (John 16:7, 8), and it does it by the law; for "the law is spiritual" (Rom. 7:14), and "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20. The first thing, therefore, that the Spirit does when it comes, it is to convict of sin. If the reproof is accepted, and the sin is acknowledged, then the Spirit's power is manifested in taking the sin away. It convinces of righteousness. If the reproof is rejected, then of course the Spirit is resisted, and its power will not be given to that person. As the reproofs which the Spirit gives through the word are heeded, the word abides within, and the life is shaped by it. Such an one is then led by the Spirit. As a result of thus heeding reproof, the Spirit is poured out (Prov. 1:23), and of course its power is manifested in those upon whom it is poured.

Thus it will appear that it is utter folly and mockery to pray for the pouring out of the Spirit of God, while we are holding off any reproof, or cherishing any sin pointed out by the word of God. The office of the Spirit is to lead into all truth, and therefore to pray for its outpouring means to yield ourselves without reserve to every commandment of God. If we do this, God will give us His Spirit without measure. It will not be given simply for our pleasure, but it is given that we may be witnesses to the Lord. The pouring out of the Spirit makes known the words of God, so that we may make known to the world those words of power.

But all this will be without boasting or ostentation, although it will be the mightiest manifestation of power ever known among men. The Lord says: "Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; Mine Elect, in whom My soul

delighteth; I have put only My Spirit upon Him; He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench." Isa. 42:1-3. That is the way the Lord works by the Spirit. He shall bring forth judgment unto truth, working with such power that the nations will be amazed, yet with such gentleness that even the reed that is bruised will not be broken, and the wick that is but dimly burning will not be extinguished. It will not be the power of the tempest, but the power of the sunlight and of plant growth.

The power that the Spirit gives, therefore, is the power that works throughout all creation. It is the power of God's word, and is manifested only in those who are fully yielded to that word. God says, "As the snow cometh down, and the rain from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth." Isa. 55:10, 11. The Spirit is also likened to water; it is "poured out" as the rain. See Isa. 44:3. The power of the Spirit in man will therefore be the power that is put in operation when the rain falls on the earth. Who will yield to that blessed influence? "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God." Heb. 6:7. As the earth brings forth fruit, so we are to bring forth righteousness. Isa. 61:11. Therefore "it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you."

21. WHAT THE GOSPEL INCLUDES

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (MAY 31, 1894)

The Gospel of God is not a narrow, circumscribed thing which can be bound off by creeds, as many people seem to think. The Gospel includes everything that pertains to the life of man. By its provisions a man is born again,-created new in Christ. Consequently his life as a Christian knows nothing that is not in touch with that creative power. For this reason the Apostle Paul wrote to his brethren in the church, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10:31. And to the Colossian brethren he wrote, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." Col. 3:17, 23.

The Gospel, therefore, touches our eating and drinking, and every occupation and act of life, be it business or pleasure. It makes every act a spiritual act, done with a view to the glory of God. The Christian life is a spiritual life. It is the life of Christ in human flesh,-in the individual who has put on Christ. And this does not make life a restricted thing, separated from the greater part of the life of the world around us; for all things were created by God, and intended to be used for the benefit and pleasure of man. It separates only from sin. It shows man how to use aright all things that creation affords. It reveals the spiritual aspect of all things, so that in everything God has made or ordained the individual can find Him, and that life and strength and peace which He has to bestow. It obliterates the distinction that men have set up between religion and business, making the service of God the proper business of man, by showing man how to serve God in all his business, and how to find in it all a higher pleasure than any the world has to bestow.

22. THE COMFORTER

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (MARCH 23, 1893)

Before Jesus went back from earth to heaven He promised to to send the Comforter-the Holy Spirit-to abide with His people for ever, as His representative. Since it was by the anointing of the Spirit that He accomplished all His work here on earth (See Isa. 61:1-3), it is evident that the presence of the Spirit is the same as the presence of the Lord. The same instruction, counsel, and works of love that came from Christ, are continued by the Spirit.

In promising the Comforter, Jesus said, "And when He is come, He will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John 16:8. "By law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20. But "the law is spiritual." Rom. 7:14. It is the nature of the Spirit, for the righteousness of the law is the fruit of the Spirit. Therefore there is no conviction of sin in any soul on earth, that is not the working of the Spirit of God.

But while the Spirit convicts of sin it is always a Comforter. It is as a Comforter that it convicts. Few people stop to think of that. Remember that nowhere is it said that the Spirit condemns for sin. There is a difference between conviction and condemnation. Conviction is the revealing of sin. But it depends on the person's course after he has been convinced of sin, whether or not he will be condemned. For "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John 3:19. The mere pointing out to a person that he is a sinner is not condemnation; the condemnation comes from holding to the sin after it is made known.

Let the mind grasp the thought that the same Spirit that convinces of sin also convinces of righteousness. It is always a Comforter. The Spirit does

not lay aside one office while it performs another. It does not leave aside the revealing of righteousness when it convicts of sin, nor does it cease to be a convicer of sin when it reveals righteousness. It does both at the same time, and herein is the comfort to all those who will take it. It convicts of sin because it convicts of righteousness. But let us consider this matter a little, and then meditate upon it.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God-the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. Therefore the righteousness revealed by it is the righteousness of God. Now it is only by looking at righteousness that we can know sin and its sinfulness. The law, by which is the knowledge of sin, is not sin, but is the expression of God's righteousness. A man may look at sin, and if he has never seen anything else he will think it is all right. Even one who knows the right, may lose the knowledge of it by looking at sin, so great is the deceitfulness of sin. So the Spirit must reveal the righteousness of God in His law, before the sinner can know sin as sin. The apostle says, "I had not known sin but by the law." Rom. 7:7. So it is as the revealer of the perfect righteousness of God that the Spirit convicts of sin.

It is evident, therefore, that the closer one comes to God, thus getting a more perfect view of Him, the greater will be his sense of his own imperfections. He gets this knowledge of sin, not by studying himself, but by beholding God. As an illustration, take man in relation to the works of God. When does one ever feel his insignificance so much as when in mid-ocean, or by its side? Its vastness makes him feel his littleness. So when one stands amid the lofty mountains. On such an occasion one does not have to look at himself to realise how small he is. It is while looking up,- beholding the mighty works of God,-that he realises that in comparison he is nothing. The psalmist says, "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained; what is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" Ps. 8:3, 4.

If this is a result of contact with and beholding the works of God, what must be the result when considering the character of God Himself. "The Lord God is a sun." Ps. 84:11. He is greater than all the heavens. "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; Thy judgments are a great deep." Ps. 36:6. As while beholding the visible works of God's hands one feels his own physical insignificance, so in contemplating the righteousness of God, one is made conscious of his own spiritual lack. Now the message of comfort which God sends to His people, especially for the days immediately preceding His coming is this, "Behold your God! See Isa. 11:1-9. That means that as a necessary preparation for His coming, He wants us to know our own lack of righteousness by beholding His righteousness.

Thus far we have been speaking of the knowledge of sin by the righteousness of God. Now mark the comfort that there is in that same conviction of sin. Remember that the sensibility of a lack of righteousness is caused by the revelation of God's righteousness. Also remember that the Spirit, that convinces of both sin and righteousness, is given to men. Christ said, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John 14:16, 17.

What necessarily follows from this? Just this, that whoever accepts the Spirit, which, by its revelation of the righteousness of God, convicts the soul of sin, and allows it to abide with him, thereby gets the righteousness which it brings. The sense of need in itself the promise of supply. It is God who produces a sense of a lack of righteousness, which is conviction for sin. But He does not do this in order to taunt the sinner, and cause him to despair. He does it for the purpose of letting the sinner know that He has that which will abundantly supply all that he lacks. In fact, it is by the very bringing of the supply of righteousness, that the soul knows itself to be

simple. Therefore, whoever will take God exactly at His word need not be under condemnation for a single minute, although always, and ever anew, conscious of his own imperfections. As every new defect is pointed out, he may cry, "O Lord, I thank Thee that Thou hast this new thing to give me, and I take it as freely as Thou dost give it." This is true rejoicing in the Lord.

This is the truth that God was trying to teach ancient Israel, when He spoke His law from Sinai, and is what He has been anxious for us to learn all these years. The law was ordained "in the hands of a Mediator." Gal. 3:19. That is, in the hands of Christ, for He is the "one Mediator between God and man." 1 Tim. 2:5. He is Mediator because He reconciles us to God. Since the enmity consists in the fact that we are not subject to the law of God, the reconciliation consists in the putting of that law in the heart and mind. So Christ is Mediator because He is the medium through which the righteousness of God is conveyed to us.

This was most forcibly illustrated at the giving of the law from Sinai. Some time before the people had been perishing with thirst, and God said to Moses, "Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink." Ex. 16:5, 6. This was done, and the people drank and were revived. But the water which they drank was miraculously given by Christ. In fact it came directly from Him. The apostle Paul says that "they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ." 1 Cor. 10:4. The Rock which the people saw, and which Moses smote, was a symbol of Christ.

But Horeb is another name for Sinai. So that the law of God was spoken from the very same mountain from which God had caused the water to flow, which was even then quenching their thirst. When God came down

upon the mount, it was the very personification of Him and His law. No man could touch it without dying. Yet from it at that same time the water which gave life was flowing. This water, which, as we have seen, came from Christ, is a symbol of the Spirit which is given to all who believe. See John 4:10, 13, 14; 7:37-39. In that event God has given us a great object lesson. Although the law gives the knowledge of sin, and sin is death, the law comes to us in the hands of a Mediator, ministered to us by the Spirit; and "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," makes us free from the law of sin and death. It is thus that the commandment of God is life everlasting.

Is there not the very essence of comfort in this? At the same moment that the knowledge of sin comes to us, righteousness to cover and take away all the sin is revealed. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 5:20. The law, which convicts is spiritual, and the Spirit is the water of life, which is given freely to all who will take it. Could anything surpass the wonderful provisions of the grace of "the God of all comfort, the Father of mercies"? Who will not drink and drink again, and thus continually be filled.

"I HEARD the voice of Jesus say,

Behold, I freely give

The living water; thirsty one

Stoop down, and drink, and live.

I came to Jesus, and I drank

Of that life-giving stream;

My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,

And now I live in Him."

23. PERFECTION YET GROWTH

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (MARCH 1, 1894)

"Ye are complete in Him," is the word to the believer. The difficulty in the minds of many in the way of grasping the completeness of the life of Christ is the fact that the Christian life is progressive. We are to continually grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord; but this to some seems incompatible with being complete in Christ.

When Christ Jesus was on earth as a boy of twelve years He was perfect. But we read that He grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God. Luke 2:52. Complete, yet growing in grace and knowledge; perfect all the time. The plant is perfect at every stage of its growth. We admire the beauty of the plant when the leaves burst forth. It is perfect when the flowers bloom, and perfect when the fruit comes. Yet keeps on growing.

It is not that we are to grow into grace, but grow in grace. We are not to get more and more into grace, but in the grace we are to grow and increase in wisdom, complete in Him. The very statement of this fact implies that we are not complete in ourselves. There is nothing in us, but He is ours, and of His fulness have we all received, and grace over grace. Grace superbounds and fills all.

24. THE LIFE OF THE WORD

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (SEPTEMBER 22, 1892)

The life of the word is the life of God, for it is God breathed, and the breath of God is life. Its life and power are thus attested: "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." Heb. 4:12, Revised Version. The Saviour, also said of the words of God, "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. Let us see what gives the word its life.

The 30th chapter of Deuteronomy follows the account of the curses for disobedience to the law, and the blessings for obedience. In it the people are again admonished to keep the law, and are told what the Lord will do for them, even after they have been disobedient if they will repent. Then Moses continues: "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." Verses 11-14.

Now compare carefully with this passage the words of the apostle Paul in Rom. 10:6-10: "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, 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), But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that 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 with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

The careful reader will readily see that this latter passage is a quotation of the former, with additions in parentheses. These additions are comments made by the Holy Spirit. They tell us just what Moses meant by the word "commandment." Or, rather, since the Holy Spirit itself dictated the language in each case, it, the latter passage it has made more clear what it meant in the first instance. Notice that bringing the commandment down from heaven is shown to be the same as bringing Christ down from above, and that to bring the commandment from the deep is the same as to bring Christ up from the dead.

What is shown by this?-Nothing more nor less than that the commandment, the law, or the entire word of the Lord, is identical with Christ. Do not misunderstand. It is not meant that Christ is nothing more than the letters and words and sentences that we read in the Bible. Far from it. The fact is that whoever reads the Bible, and finds nothing but mere words, such as he may find in any other book, does not find the real word at all. What is meant is that the real word is not a dead letter, but is identical with Christ. Whoever finds the word indeed, finds Christ, and he who does not find Christ in the word, has not found the word of God.

The apostle Paul says that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17. But he says also that Christ dwells in the heart by faith. Eph. 3:17. So faith in the living word of God brings Christ into the heart. He is the life of the word.

This is also shown in the same chapter in which we find the statement made by Christ that the words which he spoke were Spirit and life. In the 35th verse of that chapter, we read, "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life." Again, in the fifty-first verse, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and

the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." And again, "Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." Then in the 63rd verse he added, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." Here we find the plainest declaration that the word of God, received in faith, conveys Christ actually to the soul of man.

In the statement, "the flesh profiteth nothing," we have the Romish "sacrifice of the mass" effectually undermined! Suppose that it were actually possible for the priest to perform the feat of turning the bread of the sacrament into the body of Christ; that would not amount to anything. If Christ himself had divided the actual flesh of His body, while on this earth, into portions large or small, and had given a piece to every man in the world, and each man had eaten his piece, that would not have affected the character of a single man in the world. Christ Himself said that "the flesh profiteth nothing." The only way that any man in the world can eat the flesh of Christ is to believe His word with all His heart. In that way he will receive Christ indeed, and thus it is that "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," for Christ is righteousness. And in this, the only way, any man in the world may eat the flesh of Christ, without the services of a priest or bishop.

This is a meager presentation of the theme, but who can do justice to it? No one can do more than take the simple statements of the Scriptures and meditate on them until the force of the fact begins to dawn on his mind. The fact that Christ is in the real word, that the life of the word is the life of Christ, is a most stupendous one. It is the mystery of the Gospel. When we receive it as a fact, and appropriate it, then we shall know for ourselves the meaning of the words that man shall live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

25. THE WORKS OF THE FLESH

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (FEBRUARY 22, 1894)

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." Gal. 5:19-21. The flesh can do nothing good. Its works are sin, and that only. Even though it tries to do something good, as it often does, the result is the same. The flesh is joined to sin, and there is no way in which the two can be separated. When the one is manifested, the other is manifested also. In life or death, the two must go together.

The flesh works whenever faith is absent. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. 14:23. Where faith is present, God works; where faith is absent, the flesh works. The flesh cannot do the works that God does. This the Saviour declared when the Jews asked Him what they should do in order to work the works of God. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." John 6:29. By faith, we receive Christ, and then the works that are done are done by Him. Consequently they are the works of God.

The great mistake which men make is in thinking that the flesh can do the works of God. The natural mind is so ignorant of what those works are, - the ways and thoughts of man are so far below the ways and thoughts of God - that we have naturally no conception of what righteousness is. Consequently we go about, like the Jews of old, to establish our own righteousness; and in so doing we miss the righteousness of God. We may get something which looks like righteousness to us, but in the Judgment day we shall, if we depend upon that, find ourselves terribly mistaken.

THE FLESH IN BONDAGE

When the flesh tries to do the works of God, there is manifested only bondage. The flesh is in bondage to the law of God, for it is "not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." There can be no harmony between them. The Spirit lusteth against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit (Gal. 5:17), so that "ye cannot do the things that ye would." And this is what reveals the bondage of the flesh,-the inability to do the things that it tries to do, and that God has commanded to be done; the lust of the flesh against them; the utter inability of the flesh to come into harmony with them. When the flesh stops trying to do the works of the law, there comes a sense of freedom, not because the bondage is gone, but because it is not felt. The captive struggling to walk at liberty has a keen sense of the chains that bind him; but when he relinquishes his efforts and sits passively down, the power of the chains is not felt. And if a man were as blind to literal things, he might easily imagine that he was no longer in bondage.

The flesh is chained to sin; and whenever it tries to go in a direction contrary to sin the chains hold it back, and the individual realises a sense of bondage. But if he ceases trying to go contrary to sin, he no longer feels the pulling of the chains. The individual may then, in his blindness, imagine himself at liberty, and rejoice at having as he thinks gotten out of bondage into freedom. But he has no freedom, only the freedom that Satan gives. For Satan holds the chains, and leads his victim captive at his will. So long as he moves where Satan wants him to go, he feels not the restraining force of his bonds. The devil will give his captive rope enough so that he will not be unpleasantly conscious of his captivity. But the moment he tries to leave the path of sin and walk in the paths of God, he finds himself in bondage, and try so hard as he may, he cannot set himself free. He finds himself joined to sin, so that he can only go where sin goes also.

By the law is the knowledge of sin. Without the law, sin is dead. Rom. 3:20; 7:8. The individual is now then conscious of his inability to work the works

of God. But when the commandment comes, sin revives. Rom. 7:9. The bondage of sin makes itself felt. To the flesh, "the law worketh wrath." It "gendereth to bondage." Gal. 4:24. It brings forth bondage, so that it is felt and realised by the individual. "The woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth. . . So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress." Rom. 7:2, 3. The individual who, in the flesh, takes upon him the name of Christ, thus becomes guilty of adultery, which is the first mention of the works of the flesh. For the flesh is the "old man," the first husband of the "woman," and this husband must be dead before she can be lawfully joined to another. Thus the very effect of the flesh to work the works of God becomes only an effort to commit adultery. Whatever the flesh does or tries to do, is of course but a work of the flesh; and they which do such works "shall not" we are told, "inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. 5:21.

SOME ILLUSTRATIONS

Abraham tried at one time to work the works of God through the flesh. God had promised him that he should be the father of many nations, and Abraham was anxious of course that the promise should be fulfilled. But as Sarah his wife was barren, he had no son. So Abraham and Sarah set about working out the fulfilment of the promise. The result was Ishmael, the child "born after the flesh," the "son of the bondwoman." Gal. 4:29, 30. In this Abraham and Sarah showed a lack of faith, for faith would have believed that God could do what He had promised, even under conditions which would seem to make it impossible. And faith being absent, what they did was a work of the flesh, and the result was a son born after the flesh. The flesh, attempting to accomplish the work of God, simply gendered to bondage.

Jacob and Rebekah tried to work out God's promise for Him when they deceived Isaac, and induced him to bestow the blessing intended for the firstborn, upon Jacob; and the result was a life-long separation, with much suffering and deep repentance on the part of Jacob before he was restored to the tranquility of his early years. Moses thought to work out the promise of deliverance for the captive Israelites by his own might, when he "slew the Egyptian, and hid himself in the sand;" but that was not God's way, and he was obliged to flee into the desert while the fulfilment of the promise was delayed forty years. And thus it is with every attempt of the flesh to work out the purposes of God. It falls as far short of that which God intends and requires as the mind of man falls short of the mind of God. The promise is never fulfilled, the work never accomplished, until it comes through faith.

DELIVERANCE THROUGH DEATH

God has given to us "exceeding great and precious promises;" but we can never know their fulfilment through the works of the flesh. "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made;" and only they who are the children of faith are the seed of Abraham. In the flesh, we are bound to the "old man," the carnal nature, which is not, and cannot be, subject to the law of God; and therefore we cannot in the flesh be Christ's. But we can become Christ's by being crucified with Him. We may meet Him and become united with Him at the cross. Gal. 2:20. At the cross the "old man," the first husband, is crucified and put to death, and we can then be "married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Rom. 7:4. The flesh cannot be separated from sin; and therefore, in order that sin may cease, it must die. We are then delivered from the "law of sin and death," the law which bound us to sin while we were in the flesh. "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead [the

law of sin] wherein we were held [because the flesh is dead]; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."
Rom. 4:5, 6.

This is the wonderful change that is wrought in us at the cross. The law does not die, but the flesh dies, the law of sin and death is abolished, the enmity between us and the law dies, the bondage ceases, and we become joined to Christ in faith, and the law becomes to us "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." Then the works of the flesh cease, and we work the works of faith, which bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, and are heirs with Abraham of the promises made to him and to his seed.

26. WHY DID YOU DOUBT?

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (JANUARY 23, 1896)

The Bible sets forth Jesus as "upholding all things by the word of His power." Heb. 1:3.

That word not only has power to uphold, but "is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Acts 20:32.

An instance of the upholding power of Christ's word is given in Matt. 14:25-32. The disciples were on the raging sea, when they were astonished by the appearance of Jesus walking on the water. When Jesus reassured them with, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid," Peter said, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water. And He said unto him, Come."

Peter at once responded to the word "Come," and "walked on the water to go to Jesus." Some might hastily suppose that it was the water that held Peter up; but a little reflection will show that it was not so. It is contrary to nature for water to hold a man up; and, moreover, we read that when Peter "saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me." Jesus caught him, saying, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

If it had been the water that was supporting him, he would not have begun to sink; for the water was just the same where he sunk as it was where he walked. So when we remember the words of Jesus, "Wherefore didst thou doubt?" We know that when Peter walked on the water, it was the word of Jesus that supported him. It was the word "Come" that brought him, and it was only when he distrusted that word that he began to go down.

The same word that held Peter on the top of the water, can hold a man up in the air. Elijah and Elisha were at one time walking along together when Elisha began to rise in the air. Why was it?-Because the Lord had said to Elijah, "Come;" and since the prophet had always obeyed the word of the Lord, he obeyed that one also.

We read that "by faith Enoch was translated." Heb. 11:5. But "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17. So it was the word of the Lord that took Enoch as well as Elijah through the air to meet the Lord. But they were only forerunners of those who, being alive when the Lord descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise, shall be "caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

What is it that will support those favoured ones, and hold them up in the air? The same word that upheld Peter on the water. The Lord will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father." Matt. 25:34. Those who have been accustomed to obey the word of the Lord, will respond at once, and will be taken; while those who have not obeyed every word of the Lord, will not obey that one, and will be left.

Those who have neglected to take the word of the Lord as applying to them personally, will not accept that word, "Come," as applying to them. Only those who recognise that every time the Lord speaks He speaks to them, will be able to take that word to themselves. The waiting ones will be those who have lived on the word of the Lord, so that at the word "Come," they will, as the most natural thing in the world, go to meet the Lord. Happy are they who know the sustaining power of the word, and to take it all to themselves.

27. LIVING FAITH

A.T. JONES – BIBLE ECHO (JANUARY 14, 1895)

THE term "living faith" is strictly proper; because faith indeed is a living thing. The just live by faith, and no man can live by what has no life in it. As we can live only by that which brings life to us, and as we live by faith, it is plain that faith is a living thing.

Again, faith is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8) and He is a living God; Jesus is its Author (Heb. 12:2), and in Him is life—He is the life. In the nature of things, that which comes from such a source must be of itself imbued with life. and as faith does come wholly from Him who only is the living God, from Him who alone is life, and not from ourselves (Eph. 2:8), it is certainly imbued with life, and so brings life to men, by which we may live indeed.

Again, faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17); that word is "the faith word" (Titus 1:9), that is, the word full of faith; and that word is "the word of life." Phil. 2:16. Therefore as the word of God brings faith, and is full of faith; and as that word is the word of life, it is evident that faith is life, is a living this, and brings life from God to whom who exercises it.

What life is it, then, which faith brings to men?—Coming as it does from God, through Jesus Christ who is the "Author of life," the only life with which it is imbued and which it could possibly bring to men is the life of God. The life of God is what men need and what we must have. And it is the life that God wants us to have; for it is written: "Walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God." Eph. 4:17, 18.

Jesus came that men might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he

that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5:11, 12. And Christ is received by faith, and He dwells in the heart by faith. Eph. 3:17. Therefore as the life of God only, eternal life, is in Jesus Christ, and as Christ dwells in the heart by faith, it is as plain as anything can be that faith brings the life of God to him who exercises it.

It is the life of Jesus Himself that is to be made manifest in our bodies: "For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." 2 Cor. 4:11. And the life of Jesus is manifested in us, by Christ himself living in us; for "Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." Gal. 2:20. This is living faith.

Again He says, "I will dwell in them and walk in them;" "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you;" and "because I live, ye shall live also." John 14:18, 19. It is by the Holy Spirit that He dwells in us; for He desires you "to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts." Eph. 3:16, 17. And "at that day"—the day that ye receive the gift of the Holy Ghost—"ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." John 14:20. "And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us." 1 John 3:24. And we "receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal. 3:14.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." We must have the blessing of Abraham in order to receive the promise of the Spirit. The blessing of Abraham is righteousness by faith. See Rom. 4:1-13. Having this, Abraham "received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had." And we, having this, can freely receive the promise of the Spirit circumcising the heart unto holiness and the seal of the righteousness of the faith which we had. Having the blessing of Abraham,

and so being sons of God, God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. Gal. 3:26; 4:4-6. Having the blessing of Abraham, that you may receive the promise of the Spirit through faith, then ask that ye may receive—yea, ask and ye shall receive. For the word of God has promised, and faith cometh by hearing the word of God. Therefore ask in faith, nothing wavering, "for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Such is living faith—the faith that comes from the living God; the faith of which Christ is the Author; the faith which comes by the word of God; the faith which brings life and power from God to men, and which works the works of God in him who exercises it; the faith which receives the Holy Spirit that brings the living presence of Jesus Christ to dwell in the heart and manifest Himself still in mortal flesh. This and this alone is living faith. By this Christians live. This is life itself. This is everything. Without this, everything is simply nothing or worse; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

With such faith as this, that is, with true faith, there never can arise any question as to works; for this faith itself works, and he who has it, necessarily works. It is impossible to have this faith and not have works. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." Gal. 5:6. This faith being a living thing, cannot exist without working. And coming from God, the only works that it can possibly work are the works of God.

Therefore anything that professes to be faith which of itself does not work the salvation of the individual having it, and which then does not work the works of God in him who professes it, is not faith at all, but is a fraud that that individual is passing off upon himself, which brings no grace to the heart, and no power to the life. It is dead, and he is still dead in trespasses and sins, and all his service is only a form without power, and therefore is only a dead formalism.

But on the other hand, the faith which is of God, which comes by the word of God and brings Christ, the living word, to dwell in the heart and shine in the life—this is true faith which through Jesus Christ only lives and works in him who exercises it.

Christ Himself living in us; Christ in you the hope of glory; God with us; God manifest in the flesh now, to-day in our flesh, by the faith of Jesus Christ—this and this only is living faith. For "every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." 1 John 4:2-4.

Therefore, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Jesus said unto them and to us all: "Have the faith of God." Mark 11:22, margin.

28. JUDGING OTHER PEOPLE OR "DISCERNING THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED"

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (AUGUST 30, 1894)

The righteous man is the man in whose heart abides the word of God. And this fact is not apparent through his outward circumstances. If we could look upon the heart as God does, and see with the clearness of His vision, we should be able to discern there either the presence or the absence of faith, and by that and that only we should know to which of the two great classes any particular individual belonged.

Faith being the source of righteousness, its absence, and that alone, is the cause of wickedness. For all men are by nature wicked, having carnal hearts that are "not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." And the same human nature that manifests itself in murders, and drunkenness, and the lowest forms of vice and crime, is the common nature of all men. Only the accident of circumstances prevents its being manifested in all men alike. The highly respectable member of society, who yet knows not God, has nothing to boast of over the man whom society brands as an outcast, for the difference between them is not a difference in nature, but merely in fortune, for which he can take no credit to himself.

When Adam sinned, he acquired a fallen and carnal nature, and only that nature could he bequeath to his children. All his descendants thus acquired his nature, it being transmitted by each parent in turn. And thus all men have received the fallen nature which Adam had, and only variations in the process of transmission, and in the circumstances with which men have been surrounded, have, outside of the grace of God, produced the differences in their life records. But with those who have received the grace of God, there has been a change in nature; and to this,

and not to any variations of fortune, has the success of their lives been due. Even the Apostle Paul testified of itself, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:10; Gal. 6:14.

And therefore it is true that the man who is farthest away from God is he who least feels his need of Divine grace and of a different nature from the one which He has. This is illustrated by the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, who went to the temple to pray. The Pharisee thought that he had a better nature than other men, so he thanked the Lord that He was not as they were; but the publican, feeling his need, exclaimed, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner," and went down to his house justified.

No men are so hopelessly wicked as those who feel satisfied with themselves; and those who are most nearly self-satisfied are not the ones who manifest the greatest weaknesses and are guilty of the most crimes, but those who are able to make their lives conform to the world's standard of morality and respectability.

We may know how we ourselves stand before God, for that is a simple matter of knowing whether or not we believe His word. That word tells us to have all confidence in God and none in ourselves, or in the flesh. If we say amen to this, God by His creative power makes us righteous, and we stand justified in His sight.

We cannot know the standing of others, because we cannot, as God does, look upon their hearts. We could only look upon the outward appearance, which is not an index to the nature of the life within. Therefore the exhortation is given us, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart." 1 Cor. 4:5.

So in Malachi we read of the time when the Lord will make up His jewels, and "will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." This indicates a time when those who do not serve Him will not be spared.

"Then," says He, "shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." Mal. 3:17, 18. That will be the time when judgment is given to the saints of the Most High, and the saints possess the kingdom (Dan. 7:22) at the first

It is not our business now to know the hidden thoughts and motives of men's hearts. Such knowledge would do us much more harm than good. All that concerns us here is to believe God's word for ourselves and sow the seed of His truth beside all waters, passing no place by because it seems to be unfavourable, but having hope for all, through the mercy and grace so abundantly given to all in the Gospel.

29. RIGHTEOUSNESS AND LIFE

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (OCTOBER 6, 1892)

Although the Gospel is a great mystery, yet it is exceedingly simple. A few principles, easily grasped, cover every possible phase of it. Two things only need to be understood, namely, man's need, in God's ability and willingness to supply that need.

In the first place we find that all men are sinners. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Rom. 3:10-12. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Verse 23.

Sin is part of the very being of man; in fact, it may be said to be the man. Christ, who knew what was in man, said, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man." Mark 7:21-23. These evil things come from the heart, not of a few men, or of a certain class of men, but of all men, of mankind. Now we are told that "out of the heart are the issues of life." Prov. 4:22. Therefore we know that these evil things are the very life of men. That means that the life of man by nature is sin.

But sin means death. "For to be carnally minded is death." Rom. 8:6. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12. Thus we see that sin carries death with it. Death springs from sin, for "the sting of death is sin." 1 Cor. 15:56. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1:15. From these texts we learn that in sin death is wrapped up. Through the

mercy of God sin does not immediately work the death of the individual, because the Lord is longsuffering, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9. So He gives men an opportunity to repent. If they do so the sin will be taken away, and of course they will be delivered from death. But if they refuse to repent, and show that they love sin, it works out that which is in it, namely, death. Many other texts might be quoted to show that sin means death, but these are sufficient for the present. Let the reader examine, if he wishes, John 3:36; Deut. 30:15-20, in connection with Deut. 11:26-28; Rom. 5:20, 21; 7:24.

Sin and death are therefore inseparable. Where one is found, there is the other. To save from sin is to save from death. Salvation does not mean simply deliverance from the consequences of sin, but from sin itself. The plan of salvation is not, as some have supposed, a scheme by which people are free to sin as much as they please, in the confidence that a profession of faith will save them from the just desert of their wrong-doing. On the contrary, it is a plan for the utter freeing of the man from sin, so there will be no cause of death. As there can be no death without sin, so there can be no life without righteousness.

But where shall man get righteousness? He cannot get it from himself, for he has nothing but sin in himself. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Rom. 7:18. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Rom. 8:7, 8. Since the whole life is sin, as we have already seen, it is evident that the only way to get goodness is to get another life. That is what the Gospel offers.

While man is evil, God is good. He is not only good, but He is the only one who is good. Listen to the words of the Saviour, to the young man who came running to ask Him, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may have eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but one, that is, God." Mark 10:17, 18. This is absolute. It does not exclude Christ, for Christ is God. John 1:1. "God was in Christ." The life of the Father and of the Son are the same. John 6:57.

There is no goodness apart from God. Goodness is not a sentiment, but a real thing. There can be no goodness apart from actions. It is not floating around in the air like the odour of flowers. As there can be no such thing as sweetness. Apart from something that is sweet, and as there is no such thing as saltiness apart from salt, so there is no such thing as goodness apart from good deeds. All of God's ways are good and right. His ways are briefly yet comprehensively described in His law. "He made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel." Ps. 103:7. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." Ps. 119:1.

As the law of God describes His ways, and all His ways are right, His law is called His righteousness. Thus we read in Isa. 51:6, 7. "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished. Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings." God's law is His righteousness, and His righteousness consists of active deeds; therefore the law of God is the life of God. His life is the standard of righteousness. That which is like His life is right, and everything that differs from His life is wrong.

We are not left in ignorance of what the life of God is, for He has lived it before men, in the person of Jesus Christ. The law of God was in His heart (Ps. 40:8), and out of the heart are the issues of life; therefore the law of God was His life. As Isaac Watts says,

"My blest Redeemer and my Lord,

I read my duty in Thy word;

But in Thy life law appears

Drawn out in living characters."

The Spirit of the Lord was upon Him (Luke 4:18), and "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. 3:17. Therefore the life of God in Christ is "the perfect law of liberty," continuance in which causes a man to be blessed in his deed. James 1:25. No other life has ever been seen in this world, that was free from sin. Men have exhausted themselves and worn out their very life in attempting to live righteous lives, and have invariably failed. Everybody knows himself to be a sinner. There are none who will not acknowledge that they might have done better in some things than they have done; and there are none who have not at some time in their lives said or thought that they were going to do better; and therein they show that they know that they have sinned. Every man's conscience accuses him, even if he has not been instructed in the law of God. See Rom. 2:14, 15.

Since every man's life is sin in itself, and he has but the one life, and righteousness cannot be manufactured out of sin, it is evident that the only way any man can get righteousness is by getting another life. And since the only righteous life ever known is the life of God in Christ, it is plain that the sinner must get the life of Christ. This is nothing more nor less than living the Christian life. The Christian life is the life of Christ.

But let no one think that he can live this life himself. It is evident that we cannot live another life with our old life that we have always lived. In order to live another life, we must have another life. And no one can live the life of another. No man can live the life even of his most intimate friend; for in the first place he cannot successfully imitate the things with which he is acquainted in that friend, and in the second place, he cannot know that other one's inner life. How much less, then, can one live the infinite life of Christ! People sometimes do try to pass themselves off as somebody else, but they are invariably detected in the fraud; so must it be with the one who undertakes to live Christ's life. Thousands of people are trying to live the Christian life, but the cause of their failure is that they are trying to live Christ's life with their own.

What, then, can be done? Is there no possibility of living the Christian life? Yes, there is, but Christ must be allowed to live it. Men must be content to give up their sinful and worthless lives, and count themselves dead—merely nothing. Then if they are indeed dead with Christ, they will also live with Him. Then it will be with them as it was with Paul: "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2:19, 20. When Christ is allowed to live His own life in a man, then, and then only, will that man's life be in harmony with the law of God. Then he will have righteousness, because he has the only life in which there is righteousness.

If any are in doubt as to how the life of Christ may be obtained, let them read the account of His miracles, how He healed the sick and raised the dead. Read how He gave new life to the poor woman whose life was daily ebbing away. Luke 8:43-48. Read how He gave life to Lazarus and the ruler's daughter. Learn that His word is a living word, with power to give life to all who receive it in faith. Learn that the life of Christ is in His word,

so that when the word is heard and believed Christ Himself dwells in the heart by faith. Eph. 3:17. Let these things be living realities, and you will surely have life through His name.

30. LET IT BE

E.J. WAGGONER – SIGNS OF THE TIMES (SEPTEMBER 5, 1895)

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." Eph. 4:31. How many have read these words and have thought, "Oh, that it might be so!" and how earnestly they have tried to put away that evil speaking, together with "the root of bitterness" whence it springs, and have failed, because "the tongue can no man tame, it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." James 3:8.

The same trouble has been found with the similar exhortation, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Col. 4:6. O, yes, if we only could; but how often have we resolved that we would not be betrayed into hasty speech, and have almost immediately been covered with shame because of the foolish things that issued from our mouth "before we thought"!

Again we read the divine exhortation, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Phil. 2:3, 5. And similar to this is the exhortation, "Let brotherly love continue." Heb. 13:1. What a blessed state of mind this must be, and what a heaven there would be on earth if such a state of things only existed, even among those who profess the name of Christ! Yet how many who have set this blessed ideal before themselves, find themselves wondering how it is to be attained!

It is the man who is "carnal, sold under sin," who is obliged to say, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Rom. 7:18. God is just and kind. He is not a tyrant, and he does not set tasks before his people without showing them the way to perform them. He not only shows the way, but supplies the power, the trouble is with our

reading of his commands and exhortations. Let us read one more and see if that does not begin to suggest the way out of the difficulty:-

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Col. 3:15. Surely we cannot control the peace of God. We cannot manufacture it, and put it within our hearts. No, only God can supply peace, and this he has already done. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." John 14:27. "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints." Ps. 85:8. The fact that only God can put his grace into the heart, and cause it to rule there, should indicate to us that it is he who is to fulfill those other exhortations in us.

Once more we read, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Col. 3:16. This, together with the text quoted just before, tells us the whole secret. It is by the word of God that these things are to be done. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zech. 4:6. The word of the Lord, which sets before us these desirable attainments of thought and speech, is the agency by which they are supplied.

What can the word of the Lord do?-Read Ps. 33:6, 9: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." "And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." 1 Peter 1:25. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; and the power of God is seen in creation. Rom. 1:16, 19, 20. Therefore the power by which the commands and exhortations of the Holy Spirit are to be fulfilled in us is the power by which the heavens and the earth were made.

Turn then to the simple story of creation. God said, "Let there be light: and there was light." Gen. 1:3. Again, God said, "Let the waters under the

heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so." Verse 9. Again, God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so." Verse 11. Once more: "God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so." Verses 14, 15. And thus we read throughout the entire story of creation.

The darkness had no power in itself to bring forth light. The waters could not gather themselves together into one place. The earth could not make a mighty exertion, and send forth the trees laden with fruit. Much less could the sun, moon, and stars create themselves. That which was not, could not bring itself into existence. But at the word of God, saying, "Let it be," everything came into being. The words, "Let there be" so and so, carried with them the power of being. The thing required was in the words requiring its production.

Now "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10, margin. And "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:13. We are to remember that the exhortations that we read at first are not the exhortations of a man, but that they are the words of God to us. The same One who in the beginning said, "Let there be light," and, "Let the earth bring forth grass," says to us, "Let all bitterness, and wrath. . . . be put away from you." Just as the first was done, so must the other be accomplished. "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." Isa. 61:11. Therefore when we read the exhortations to let certain evil things be put away from us, and to let certain graces appear,

we are not to regard them as commands for us to put them away, but as the agency by which the task is to be accomplished.

God's power to create is as great now as it ever was. He who in the beginning caused the ground to bring forth fruit, and who made a perfect man of the dust of the ground, can take these earthen vessels and make them "to the praise of the glory of his grace." We are to become so familiar with the fact that God is Creator, that when he says, "Let this be done," we shall at once and continually respond, "Amen; even so, let it be done, Lord Jesus;" and thus the new heart will be created, from which will proceed thoughts and words acceptable in his sight.

31. SAVED BY HIS LIFE

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (OCTOBER 6, 1892)

The death of Christ reconciles the believing sinner to God. Men are by nature the enemies of God, and this enmity consists in lack of subjection to His law. Rom. 8:7. God's law is His life, and His life is peace. Therefore Christ is our Peace, because in Him we are made the righteousness of God, or, in other words, are conformed to the life of God. In laying down His life, Christ gives it to everyone who will accept it. Those who do accept it, so that they can say, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" are reconciled to God, because they have the same life. They have simply made an exchange, giving up their life to Christ, and taking His life instead.

When Christ gives Himself to a man, He gives the whole of His life. Each individual who believes gets the whole of Christ. He gets His life as an infant, as a child, as a youth, and as a mature man. The man who acknowledges that his whole life has been nothing but sin, and who willingly gives it up for Christ's sake, makes a complete exchange, and has Christ's life from infancy up to manhood, in the place of his own. So he must necessarily be counted just before God. He is justified, not because God has consented to ignore his sin because of his faith, but because God has made him a righteous man—a doer of the law—by giving him His own righteous life.

That the forgiveness of sins is by receiving the life of Christ in the place of the sinful life, is shown by the statement concerning Christ, that we "have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Col. 1:14. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul," "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." Lev. 17:11. So we have the redemption through the blood of Christ, are reconciled to God by His, because in His death He gives us His life.

The receiving of that life by faith makes us stand before God as though we had never sin. The law scrutinizes us, and can find nothing wrong, because our old life is gone, and the life that we now have-the life of Christ-has never done anything wrong. But what about the future? As we have been reconciled to God by the death of His Son, so now we are to be saved by that life which He gave us in His death. How are we to retain that life? Just as we received it. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Col. 2:6. How did we receive Him? By faith. Therefore we are to retain His life by faith, "for the just shall live by faith." Faith in Christ supplies spiritual life just as surely as the eating of nourishing food supplies physical life. The Saviour says to us, "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." John 6:54, 55. We eat His flesh, by feeding upon His word (verse 63), for it is written that man shall live "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

"Saved by His life." What will be the nature of that life? It will be without sin, "for in Him is no sin." 1 John 3:5. "Sin is the transgression of the law." Verse 4. Therefore that life will be the righteousness of the law. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever (Heb. 13:8), and so life the He will live in us now will be the same life that He lived when He was upon this earth eighteen hundred years ago. He came here to furnish a complete example to men of the life of God. Whatever He did then He will do now in those who accept Him, and whatever He did not do cannot be done by those who fully receive His life. Let us notice some of the particulars of the conformity of His life to the law of God.

To begin with the tenth commandment, "Thou shall not covet." So far was Jesus from manifesting any trace of covetousness, that He did not even insist on having the things that belonged to Him. He, "being in the form of God, counted it not a thing to be grasped to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant." Phil. 2:6, 7,

marginal reading of Revised Version. Therefore the one in whom Christ dwells will not covet that which is not his, and will not even insist on always having his "rights." Love, which is the filling of the law, "seeketh not her own."

Take the ninth commandment. Nothing more need be said than that He is "the faithful and true witness." Rev. 3:14. He "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." 1 Peter 2:22. Those in whom Christ dwells will speak the truth, and will be characterized by "the love of the truth."

As for the eighth commandment, Christ's fulfilment of that is sufficiently indicated in the reference to the tenth. He who would willingly give up that which was His own would be the farthest from taking that which was another's. His whole life was one of giving. He was rich and became poor that others might be made rich.

Christ could say, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." John 14:29. Therefore there was not the slightest trace of impurity in Him. He knew no sin.

His life was the perfection of the sixth commandment. He said, "For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke 9:56. He "went about doing good." Acts 10:38. He came to abolish death, and to bring life and immortality to light through the Gospel. 2 Tim. 1:10. So He will live a life of love and good will to all men, in the soul of everyone who receives Him. There will be no anger, no strife, no jealousy nor envy, in the life of those whose life is Christ's.

There can be no idolatry in those in whom Christ dwells, for when He was tempted by the devil He resisted him with the words, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Luke 4:8. Instead of having any other gods before the One God, His meat was to do the will of His Father in heaven. John 4:34.

Those in whom Christ lives His own life will reverence the aged, and be obedient to parents. Although Jesus was found by His parents sitting in the temple with the doctors, asking and answering questions, and astonishing the learned men by His wisdom, He did not deem Himself above obedience to parents. "He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them." Luke 2:51.

And what about the fourth commandment? "As His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." Luke 4:16. He recognized the law of the Sabbath, saying, "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." Matt. 12:12. He called Himself the Lord of the Sabbath day, because He made it. Not a Sunday was ever kept by Him. Therefore there is no Sunday-keeping in His life, to give to those who believe in Him. His life can impart only the keeping of the Sabbath day. As He kept the Sabbath when He was on this earth, so He must keep it now in those in whom He lives. For He does not change. He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." When on this earth He lived the same life that He lived in heaven before coming to earth, and He lives the same life now that He did then.

There are multitudes who love the Lord, who do not yet know that the keeping of Sunday is no part of His life, and consequently have not yet submitted themselves to Him in this respect. But as they grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they will learn that the keeping of the Sabbath-the seventh day-is as much a part of the life of Christ as is obedience to parents or telling the truth, and they will let Him live this precept in them also. As we let Christ dwell in us in His fulness we become the sons of God, because it is Christ's life that we live; and the Father will be pleased with us even as He was with His only begotten Son.

32. DON'T FORGET TO EAT

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (FEBRUARY 23, 1893)

"Don't forget to eat! why, I couldn't forget that if I should try," says Ernest, "for I like to do it too well. And then, another thing, my head begins to hurt, and I feel weak and faint if I have to miss but one meal. I can't work, I can't live at all without eating, so I don't think there's much danger of my forgetting to eat."

Yes, but listen a moment. Do you know that you become very much like the food that you eat? If you eat good, nourishing food, you will grow strong and healthy, but if you eat poor, perishing food, you become weak and sickly, and finally perish. Even the best bread and meat and fruit that you can find in the market cannot build you up and make you grow into a perfect man. It may for awhile enable you to live a poor sort of life, but it cannot make even such a life last but for a few short years at most. Then its power is all spent, and your life is all gone.

God says that man cannot live by earthly bread alone, but he must also have Heavenly Bread every day. Earthy bread, like all earthly things, has no life in itself, but soon passes away, and has no life to give us. But the Bread of Life from heaven is so full of life that it can give us life,-even eternal life. If we eat it every day, it will make us grow up perfect, like Jesus so that we shall want to do only pure, good things; and it will also give us strength to do them. You know that common bread cannot do that for us. We try again and again to do right, but cannot.

Well, will God every day rain this Bread down from heaven for us, as He did the manna for the Israelites?

No; for He has already sent it to us, and it is within the reach of every one of us, only we have not really known it.

God says that you will find all the Heavenly Bread that you can possibly need-in your Bible! Those words that you see in your Bible are not the same lifeless words that you read in men's books. Jesus says that they are full of life-of His life. And He says, "I am that bread of life that was sent down from heaven."

Then don't you see that if the life of Jesus is in those words, we can get Jesus, the Bread from heaven, by just feeding on those words? We can feed on them, and make them a part of ourselves, by every day reading them, and believing that it is our heavenly Father speaking to us; by loving them, and believing that Jesus comes with them into our hearts.

And if Jesus is in our hearts, as powerful as when He created the earth and all things, cannot He keep us from sin, strengthen us to say kind words and to do loving acts?

You say, "Why, how can Jesus come into our hearts with His Word? How can we feed on Him by feeding on His Word?"

That is a question that I cannot answer. I do not know how it can be. But we do not need to know how it is done. Jesus says that He will do it, and isn't that enough? We also know that He has done it, and is living every day with those who feed upon His words.

Oh prize your Bible. Love it and read it as no other book. Again I say, Don't forget to eat the Bread of Life every day. You need it much more than your earthly food. Feeding on it once a month will not keep you alive for heaven, any more than eating your earthly food once a month will keep you alive for earth. Then **DON'T FORGET TO EAT!**

33. HAVE FAITH IN GOD

EJ. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (MARCH 8, 1894)

These words were spoken by our Saviour to His disciples when they had expressed their surprise at the sudden withering of the barren fig tree. Mark 11:22. They are no less applicable to each one of us to-day than they were to the little companies who followed Jesus in His walks about Judea. They are the words of eternal life to the sinner sitting in the darkness and shadow of death. They are the sum of all that God, by the various ways in which He communicates with man, speaks to the human soul.

Have you faith in God? Do you know that you have it? Are you certain that you know what faith is? The disciples thought they had faith, but in the time of test and trial they were found wanting. Faith stands every test; but that which is not faith, does not endure the test. If you have faith, you will abide unshaken the storms and temptations of this mortal life; but if that which you think is faith is only a counterfeit of faith, when the storm beats hard your house will be overthrown. It is all-important to know now whether your house is built upon the sand, or on the solid rock.

The solid rock is the word of God; and there is no such thing as faith without this word. The rock is Christ, and Christ is the Word. John 1:1, 14. That word may not seem to you to be solid; nevertheless it is. We are not accustomed to think of words as being substantial like rocks, but this is true of the word of the Lord. That word is as substantial as God Himself. And while the earth and earthly things shall pass away and be no more, the word of the Lord will abide as firm as the eternal throne. By that word they came into existence, and by that word will they be dissolved and vanish away.

Faith is composed of two elements, -belief, and the word of God. Counterfeit faith has only one of these elements; it always lacks the word.

It rests upon something else,-some feeling, or impression, or hope, or desire, or process of reasoning, or upon the word of some man. Faith accepts the word of God, no matter how it reads, without questioning. Pretended faith is often obliged to explain the word away. Genuine faith "worketh by love." Pretended faith either works not at all, or by some motive which has its root in self. What love is, we are told in the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. With these facts in mind, it becomes an easy thing to determine whether you have faith in God or not.

The Saviour said that he who had faith should ask whatsoever he would of God, and it should be given him. He who has faith, will ask according to God's will, and God will always hear such a petition and answer it; for faith always rests upon God's word, which is the expression of His will. And he who asks in faith, will believe that he receives the things he asked for, basing his belief upon the promise of God. He not only believes that he has them, but he does have them, really and literally. So it makes all the difference in the world with an individual, in the truest sense, whether or not he has faith. It is only the blindness and perverseness of the natural mind which makes a person who admits and knows the substantial benefits that come from faith in man, think there is nothing substantial to be derived from faith in God.

34. LIVING BY THE WORD

A.T. JONES – REVIEW & HERALD (NOVEMBER 3, 1896)

"MAN shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Even physically, man cannot live on what has no life in it. Dead air is death to him who breathes it. Dead water or dead food likewise. Whatever we take in the way of food or drink must have in it the element of life, or else we cannot live on it. So also in order that men may live by the word of God, in the nature of things that word has in it the element of life. Therefore this word is called "the word of life."

It being the word of God, and being imbued with life, the life that is in it is necessarily the life of God; and this is eternal life. Therefore it is truly said that the words of the Lord are "the words of eternal life." Whenever the word of God comes to any man, at that very time and in that word, eternal life comes to that man. And when the man refuses to receive the word, he is rejecting eternal life. Jesus himself has said it: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." He "is passed from death unto life."

Jesus used the example of our living by bread as an illustration of our living by the word of God. This thing was not chosen at random. In all the words of the Lord, whatever was brought into them was definitely to teach an all-important lesson. Physically, we do live by bread—using the term "bread" as embracing all proper victuals. But in order that we shall live by bread, it is essential that it be inside of us. And in order to live by the word of God, it is just as essential that it shall be inside of us.

No one supposes that he could live by buying the very best of bread and looking at it occasionally, or by analyzing it, and endeavoring to solve the mysteries of its composition and how it could sustain life. Yet thousands of people really seem to suppose that they can live by the word of God that

way. Many people buy a Bible of eight or ten times the proper size, with a lot of notes of darkening counsels in it, lay it on the center-table, and pride themselves that they "believe the Bible;" and they really seem to think that by this in some mysterious way they will live. But it would be just as sensible and just as beneficial for them to buy a beautifully decorated loaf of several times the usual size, and lay it on the center-table, but not eat any, and then proclaim that they "believe in good living."

Men do not expect to live by bread in any such way as that: and they cannot live by the word of God in any such way. In order to live by bread, everybody knows it must be taken into the mouth, and be properly masticated and prepared for the digestive process, and then by swallowing be committed to the digestive process, that the life that is in it may be conveyed to all parts of the system. So with the word of God; it must be received as it is in truth the word of God; it must be given a place in the heart as the word of life; then it will be found to be indeed the word of life.

In fact, in the Bible, this very idea of living by bread by eating it, is carried over and applied to the word of God. Look at Eze. 2:8 to 3:4, 10: "But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee. And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; and he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them." "Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words

that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears."

Before the prophet could speak the word of God to others, he must find it to be the word of God to himself. Before he could convey it as the word of life to others, he must know it as the word of life to himself. And in order that this should be so to him, he was commanded to eat it, swallow it, and fill himself to the innermost parts with it. He was to hear it and receive it in the heart. And this instruction is to every one who would live by the life of God. Every one who has taken upon him the name of Christ, is directed to "hold forth the word of life;" but it must be life to him in the innermost parts before he can hold it forth as the word of life to others.

This same thought is expressed in another place: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." It is worth noting that this does not say, I did eat the chapters, or, I did eat the verses, or even, I did eat the subjects. No. It says, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them"—the words. Here is where thousands miss the real benefit of the word of God. They try to grasp too much at once, and so really get nothing. Words are nothing to us if we do not get the real thoughts that they are intended to express. And the greater the mind of him who speaks, the deeper are the thoughts that are expressed, even in the simplest words. Now the mind of him who speaks in the Bible is infinite; and the thoughts there expressed in simple words are of eternal depths because they are the revelation of "the eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

With our less than finite minds we are not capable of grasping at once the thoughts conveyed in many of the words of the Bible—we are not capable of comprehending the words of a whole chapter, or even of a whole verse at a time. One word at a time, of the words of God, is as much as our minds are capable of considering with profit. This every one must certainly

admit who believes and receives it as the word of God, expressing the thoughts of his infinite mind in his eternal purpose. Certainly any one who professes to receive the words of the Bible as the word of the eternal God, expressing his thought in his eternal purpose, would have to have a good deal of conceit of his own powers of mind to think himself capable of grasping at once the thought of a number of those words.

"Be not wise in your own conceits." "Be not high-minded." Do not think it too small a thing for you to take one word of God at a time, and consider it carefully, and meditate upon it prayerfully, and receive it into your heart as the word of life to you. Do this, receive it this way, and you will find that word to be to you indeed the word of life, and the constant joy and rejoicing of your heart. Do not think this too slow a process of getting through the Bible, or through some book or chapter of the Bible. In this way you will get through it to infinitely better advantage than to run through it without comprehending it. In this way you get every word, and every word that you get is eternal life to you. For Jesus said that man shall live "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." This shows that there is life in every word, and as certainly as you receive a word of it into your mind and heart, in that word and by that word you have eternal life.

Look again at the words of Jesus: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." How do you live, physically, by bread? Is it by gulping great chunks or whole slices at a time?—You know it is not. And you know that if you should attempt to live by bread in that way, you would not live at all very long. You know that in living by bread, you do so by taking a bite at a time, and a proper bite, too. And knowing this, then did not Jesus, in using this fact as an illustration, and in the dependent expression, "every word of God," intend to teach us that one word of God at a time is the way to live by it, just as one morsel of bread at a time is the way we live by bread? Is not this same lesson also

conveyed in that other scripture, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them"?

"Son of man, . . . eat that I give thee." Eat this word of God. Eat "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Then you will live healthfully and strongly in spiritual and eternal things, just as by eating the best of food, you live healthfully and strongly physically. Eat this bread of heaven as you eat the bread of earth, and you will find it to be to you in the things of heaven just as the other is in the things of earth.

35. PRAYER

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (OCTOBER 5, 1893)

Prayer is the channel of the soul's communion with God. Through it our faith ascends to God, and His blessings descend to us. The prayer of the saints ascend as incense before God. They come actually into His presence. Ps. 95:2; Rev. 5:8; 8:3, 4. Prayer is the index of the soul's spirituality. There is "the prayer of faith," spoken of by James, and there is also the wavering prayer, mentioned by the same writer. There is "the effectual, fervent prayer," which "availeth much," and there is also the cold, formal prayer, which avails nothing. Our prayers show the exact measure of our spirituality.

The effectual prayer takes hold by faith upon the word of God. Faith not only believes that God is, but that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Heb. 11:6. It is offered not formally, but with a sense of need; not doubtingly nor despairingly, but with full confidence that it is heard, and will receive an answer in due time.

The effectual prayer is not argumentative, for it is not the province of man to argue with God. Its statements are not for the purpose of conveying information to God, or of persuading Him to do what He had not intended to do. God cannot be persuaded by man. The arguments and appeals of a finite man cannot change the mind of the Omniscient. The man of faith does not plead with God for any such purpose. He does not want to persuade God to work in man's way, for he believes God's statement that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than man's ways. His prayer is ever, Thy will, not mine, be done.

What then is prayer, and what the purpose for which it is offered? It is the expression of our assent to that which God is willing and waiting to do for us. It is expressing to God our willingness to let Him do for us what He did

wants to. It is not left for us to instruct the Lord in regard to what we need. "Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." He knows what we need much better than we know ourselves. "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." Rom. 8:26.

God knows every need that we have, and is ready and anxious to give us that which will supply them; but He waits for us to realise our need of Him. He cannot consistently with the infinitely wise principles by which He works, bestow upon men spiritual blessings of which they would have no appreciation. He cannot work for man without man's co-operation. The heart must be in a condition to receive an appropriate gift before it can be bestowed. And when it is in that condition, it will feel an earnest longing which will naturally take the form of prayer. And when this longing is felt, when the soul feels an intense desire for the help that God alone can give, when the language of the soul is, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God,"-the effect is to open the channel between God and the soul and let the flood of blessings which was already waiting to descend. And it is the intensity of the desire that determines how wide the door shall be opened.

We need to realise more the great truth that God sees and knows everything that we need and has every provision made for all our wants, before we have even considered those wants ourselves, and that our work is not to determine what must be done to relieve them, but to place ourselves in a position where God can relieve them by the means which He has provided; to conduct ourselves with Him, to know His mind and thus to move according to His plans, and not set about the fruitless task of trying to make Him work for us according to some plans of our own.

36. BEING JUSTIFIED

E.J. WAGGONER – SIGNS OF THE TIMES (MAY 1, 1893)

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

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

Being justified by faith, then, is simply being made a doer of the law by faith. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight." Rom. 3:20. The reason for this is given in the previous verses. It is because there is none that doeth good. "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Verse 12. Not only have all sinned, but "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. So there is a double reason why a man cannot be justified by the law. In the first place, since he has sinned, it is impossible that any amount of subsequent obedience could make up for that sin. The fact that a man does not steal anything to-day, does not in the least do away with the fact that he stole something yesterday; nor does it lessen his guilt. The law will

condemn a man for a theft committed last year, even though he may have refrained from stealing ever since. This is so obvious that it does not need any further illustration or argument.

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

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

How is the man justified, or made righteous?-"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. 3:24.

Remember that to justify means to make one a doer of the law, and then read the passage again: "Being made a doer of the law freely, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." The redemption that is in Christ Jesus is the worthiness or the purchasing power of Christ. He gives himself to the sinner; his righteousness is given to the one who has sinned, and who believes. That does not mean that Christ's righteousness which he did eighteen hundred years ago is laid up for the sinner, to be simply credited to his account, but it means that his present, active righteousness is given to that man. Christ comes to live in that man who believes, for he dwells in the heart by faith. So the man who was a sinner is transformed into a new man, having the very righteousness of God.

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

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

37. SABBATH MIRACLES

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (SEPTEMBER 19, 1895)

The reason why we have the record of so many of the miracles of Jesus, is thus given: "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." John 20:30, 31.

In the teaching of Jesus and the apostles we are told the way of life; but in the miracles which God wrought by them we have visible manifestations of the reality of the life, and of its power. There is not a spiritual truth set forth in the Epistles, that does not find an illustration in some of the miracles performed in the bodies of men.

God gave to Jesus "power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life" to all who come to Him. By the power which He had to deliver the bodies of men from disease, He showed power to release their souls from sin. "For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then He saith to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitude saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men." Matt. 9:5-8.

Some of the most striking of the miracles of Jesus were done on the Sabbath day, and to a few of these we wish to call special attention. First we read the story of the healing of

THE MAN WITH A WITHERED HAND

"And it came to pass also on another Sabbath, that He entered into the synagogue and taught; and there was a man whose right hand was

withered. And the scribes and Pharisees watched Him, whether He would heal on the Sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against Him. But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it? And looking round about upon them all, He said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so; and his hand was restored whole as the other." Luke 6:6-10.

The right hand is one of the most necessary parts of the body, especially to the labouring man. Very difficult indeed would be to work with the right hand hanging useless at the side, and many kinds of work would be impossible. What Jesus did was to give that man power to work. The man stretched forth his hand in faith, and was made strong to work, thus illustrating the words of Jesus, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." John 6:29.

THE MAN BLIND FROM BIRTH

"And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing." "And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes." John 9:1-7, 14.

By this miracle Christ gave a visible proof of the fact that He is the light of the world. The blind beggar listened to the words of Christ, and so received his sight. From this we may know the truthfulness of Christ's assertion: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12. When the blind man's eyes were opened he was able to see the light of the sun, but nevertheless Christ was his light, showing that the light which the sun in the firmament sheds upon the earth is only the light which it has received from the Sun of Righteousness.

We cannot see Christ, and it is impossible for our minds to comprehend how His life can be given to us, so that we may have eternal life and righteousness; but we do know the fact that the sun gives light to the earth, and that in its light there is life; and since in the miracles of giving sight to the blind we have the evidence that this light and life come from Christ, we may in like manner know the fact that He can impart to us His life of righteousness. It is just as easy to believe in Christ as the Saviour from sin and death, as it is to believe in the sun as the cause of life and fruitfulness to the earth.

Sin is darkness. The hearts of men became darkened when they did not glorify God as God. Rom. 1:21. They had "the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God." Eph. 4:18. Christ gives the light of life, so that just as He gave sight to the blind, He takes away the darkness of sin from all who accept Him in truth.

HEALING THE INFIRM WOMAN

"And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And He laid His hands on her; and immediately

she was made straight, and glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work; in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day. The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day? And when He had said these things, all His adversaries were ashamed; and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him." Luke 13:10-17.

This woman had been bound by Satan. The loosing of her, therefore, was a striking illustration of Christ power to free from sin; for "whosoever committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin" (John 8:34), and "is of the devil" (1 John 3:8); and "of whom a man is overcome, of the same is He brought in bondage." 2 Peter 2:19.

The woman could not lift herself up. So every sinner may truly say, "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up." Ps. 40:12. But the same sinner, seeing the power of Christ on the infirm woman, may also say, "Thou, Lord, art a shield for me, my glory, and the lifter up of mine head." Ps. 3:3.

The woman "had a spirit of infirmity." Christ had compassion on her and healed her. So we may know that "we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb. 4:15), and we may also know that His sympathy is of a practical kind. In this miracle and the one preceding, we have a blessed illustration of the power that is in Christ to open the eyes of men, "and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan and to God."

THE IMPOTENT MAN HEALED

"After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered. . . . And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, He saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked; and on the same day was the Sabbath. . . . And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." John 5:1-17.

The man had no strength. Moreover, it was sin that had reduced him to that condition, as we learn from Christ's words to him, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." Verse 14. This is a practical lesson for us, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Rom. 5:6. We have no power, but He is able to strengthen us with might by His Spirit.

WHY DONE ON THE SABBATH?

It will be observed that the fact that these miracles were done on the Sabbath is specially noted. Take notice also that in none of them was the need so urgent that the healing might not have been deferred another day. The blind man could have waited another day without special inconvenience. The man who lay by the pool was not in such imminent danger that he must necessarily be healed immediately. So also in the other cases, their infirmities were not immediately endangering their lives.

Besides, none of them were expecting to be healed, so that they would not have suffered any disappointment if Jesus had said nothing to them until the Sabbath was past.

But Jesus did not delay an hour. Moreover He healed them on the Sabbath day, knowing full well that it would offend the Pharisees, and increase their hatred for Him. These things show that He had a special object in doing these miracles on the Sabbath day, and that the Holy Spirit had a purpose in calling our attention specially to the day in which they were performed. What was that object?

The answer is easy. We may dismiss at once the supposition that Jesus acted in a spirit of bravado, to show His contempt for the Pharisees, or that He would unnecessarily stir up their hatred towards Him. The miracles were done for the same purpose that they were recorded, "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name."

Neither did Jesus do these miracles out of disrespect to the Sabbath day, for He kept all the commandments. Some have the mistaken idea that Jesus did them to show that the Sabbath may be broken in case of necessity. But Jesus did not break the Sabbath, although the Jews falsely accused Him of so doing. It is never necessary to break the Sabbath, but Jesus Himself said, "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." Matt. 12:12.

We learn therefore that Jesus, instead of breaking the Sabbath, as the blind Pharisees suppose, was showing its true meaning. True, He worked upon it, but how?-It was by His Word. Ever since the creation of the world, when the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their host, and "God did rest the seventh day from all His works," He has still continued to work by the Word of His power, which upholds all things.

God gave the Sabbath that we might know that He is the God that sanctifies us. Eze. 20:12. So in performing those miracles on the Sabbath day, Jesus were showing that the Sabbath is to free man from bondage, and not to be a bondage to them. It commemorates creative power, by which all who believe are made new creatures in Christ. "For we which have believed do enter into rest," even God's rest.

God rested when He had finished His work. He rested upon His Word of power. So we find rest through work,-not our work but God's work. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." John 6:29. But believing, as we have seen, gives us rest. The work of God gives us rest from sin, for we triumph in the work of His hands. Ps. 92:4.

So by these miracles Christ teaches us that the Sabbath, even the day which the Jews held as the Sabbath, but which they did not keep according to God's commandment, is the crowning glory of the Gospel. Kept as God has given it to us, it enables us to see Christ as both Redeemer and Creator,-as Redeemer because He is Creator. The Sabbath of the Lord-the memorial of creation-reminds us of the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth. It reveals to us, as nothing else can, Christ as the anointed by the Holy Spirit "to preach the Gospel to the poor;" "to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4:18, 19.

38. LIFE IN CHRIST

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (JULY 28, 1892)

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Many act and talk as if Christ was dead, and irrecoverably dead. Yes, He died; but He rose again, and lives forevermore. Christ is not in Joseph's new tomb. We have a risen Saviour. What does the death of Christ do for us?-Reconciles us to God. He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Now mark! It is the death of Christ that brings us to God; what is it that keeps us there?-It is the life of Christ. We are saved by His life. Now hold these words in your minds: "Being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

Why was the life of Christ given? "God so loved the world, that he gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Then Christ gave His life that we might have life. Where is that life? And where can we get it? In John 1:4 we read, "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." He alone has life, and He gives that life to as many as will accept it. John 17:2. Then Christ has the life, and He is the only one who has it, and He is willing to give it to us. Now what is that life? Verse 3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." Has a person who knows Christ eternal life?-That is what the Word of God says.

Again He says in John 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." These are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. How do we know that we have this life? This is an important question. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

Says one, "We know that we will get eternal life by and by." Yes, that is true, but there is something better than that; we get it now. This is not a mere theory, it is the word of God. Let me illustrate: Here are two men-brothers-to all appearances they are alike. But one is a Christian, and the other is not. Now the one that is a Christian, although there is nothing in his external appearance to indicate it, has a life that the other has not. He has passed from death-the state in which the other one is-to life. He has something that the other has not got, and that something is eternal life. The words, "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him," would mean nothing if nobody else had eternal life abiding in Him.

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son." 1 John 5:10. God cannot lie, and so when we say that the words of God are not so, we make liars of ourselves. Now, according to this scripture, we make God a liar, if we believe not the record that God gave of His Son. What, then, must we believe in order to clear ourselves of that charge,-of not believing this record and thus making God a liar? The next verse explains it: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."

We are to believe that God has given to us eternal life in Christ. As long as we have the Son of God, we have eternal life. By our faith in the word of God we bring Christ into our hearts.

When Jesus went to Bethany, He said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life." We have already read about passing from death unto life; how was that done?-Only by a resurrection. In Christ we have a resurrection to a new life. Note the following: Paul prays that he may know Him and the "power of His resurrection." What is the power of that resurrection? In Eph. 2:4, 5, 6, and 7 we read: "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 [made us alive] together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)."

Notice, He hath done this, and He "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We were dead, we are quickened, and we are raised up to sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. We must have, and we can have, the life of Christ to-day; for when He comes, He will change our vile bodies by the same power by which He has changed our hearts. The heart must be changed now. It cannot be changed except by the life of Christ coming in and abiding in it. But when Christ is in the heart, we can live the life of Christ, and then when He comes, the glory will be revealed. He was Christ when He was here upon earth, although He did not have a retinue of angels and glory visible about Him. He was Christ when He was the Man of Sorrows. Then, when He ascended, the glory was revealed. So with us. Christ must dwell in our hearts now, and when He comes and changes these bodies, then the glory will be revealed.

In Heb. 5:2 we learn that the work of the high priest was to be one of compassion. "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him [Christ] to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Heb. 2:17. What is done by the compassion of Christ?-Strength is given to us. What benefit is the compassion of Christ to us?-He knows the strength we need. He knows what we need, when we need it, and how we need it. So the work of Christ as priest is for one thing-to deliver us from sin. What is the power of Christ's priesthood?-He is made priest, "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." That is the power by which Christ delivers you and me from sin this day, and this hour, and every moment that we believe in Him.

No one could take life away from Christ. The wicked had no power to kill him. He laid his life down. But God raised Him up, "having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." He had power in His life that defied death. He laid down, and took death upon Himself, that He might show His power over death. He defied death, He entered right into the realms of death-the grave-to show that He had power over it. Christ laid down His life; and when the time came for Him to do so, He took it up again. Why was it that death could not hold Him?- Because He was sinless. Sin had spent all its force on Him, and had not marred Him in the least. It had not made a single blot upon His character. His was a sinless life, and therefore the grave could have no power over Him. It is that same life which we have when we believe on the Son of God. Give your sins to the Lord, and take that sinless life in their place.

The life of Christ is divine power. In the time of temptation the victory is won beforehand. When Christ is abiding in us, we are justified by faith, and we have His life abiding in us. But in that life He gained the victory over all sin, so the victory is ours before the temptation comes. When Satan comes with his temptation, He has no power, for we have the life of Christ, and that in us wards Him off every time. Oh, the glory of the thought, that there is life in Christ, and that we may have it!

The just shall live by faith, because Christ lives in them. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

39. WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (JANUARY 28, 1892)

This question is answered in a few words by the apostle Paul, in Rom. 1:16, 17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; . . . for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." But, although the question is answered in so few words, the answer comprehends so much that it will take all eternity to unfold the depth of its meaning.

The above text sets forth two points for our consideration: 1. Salvation from sin; and 2. The power of God exerted to accomplish that salvation. We will briefly consider them in order.

The apostle says that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, because therein the righteousness of God is revealed. This shows that it is the revelation of the righteousness of God, that brings salvation. That salvation has reference solely to sin, is shown in the fact that it is the revelation of the righteousness of God that saves. Now, since unrighteousness is sin (1 John 5:17), and sin is the transgression of a law (1 John 3:14), it is evident that righteousness is obedience to the law of God. The following texts also show it: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." 1 Tim. 1:15.

Since sin is the transgression of a law, it is evident that to save one from sin, or from the transgression of a law, is the same thing as making and keeping him obedient to law. Therefore the gospel is the revelation of the power of God to work righteousness in man-to manifest righteousness in their lives. The gospel, therefore, proclaims God's perfect law, and

contemplates nothing less than perfect obedience to it. Let it not be overlooked that it requires no less a power than the power of God, to exhibit righteous acts in the lives of men. Man's power is wholly inadequate. This is easily seen when we recognise what the righteousness is, that is to be revealed in the life. The text says that it is "the righteousness of God." The righteousness of God is set forth in His law. Isa. 51:6, 7. Now who can do the righteousness of God? That is, who can do acts that are righteous as those that God does?-Evidently only God Himself. The law of God sets forth God's way. Ps. 119:1, 2. But the Lord says, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Isa. 4:9. Therefore man's effort to keep the commandments of God must fall as far short as the earth is lower than the heavens.

Man is fallen; the work of the gospel is to raise him to a place at the right hand of God. But can man lift himself from earth to heaven? A man can as easily raise himself from the ground to the sun, by placing his hands under the soles of his feet and lifting, as he can raise himself by his own actions to the height of the requirement of God's commandments. Everyone knows that when a man tries to lift himself by placing his hands under his feet, he is only holding himself down, and that the harder he lifts, the more he presses downward. So with all of a man's efforts to make himself what God's law demands. He is only adding to his guilt, for "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Isa. 64:6. That which man does himself is from self; that is, it is selfishness; and selfishness has no place in the plan of salvation. That which is of self is of Satan; it is wholly evil. See Mark 7:21-23. The gospel proposes to save man from himself; therefore the man who proposes to do either wholly or in part by himself the work that God requires, proposes to do the best he can to thwart God's plan. Many do this ignorantly, but the result is the same. It was because the Jews were ignorant of God's righteousness that they went about to establish their

own righteousness. Rom. 10:1-3. Whoever realises the infinite depth and height and breadth of the character of God, which is summed up in His law, will readily see that nothing short of the power of God can produce that character in man. Only God Himself can do the works of God. For a man to assume that he himself is able to do God's righteous works, is to make himself equal with God; and that is the very "mystery of iniquity" itself.

The work of the gospel, then, is to put God's righteous works in the place of man's unrighteousness. It is to work in man the works of God, and to cause him to think the thoughts of God. It is to save him from all unrighteousness, to deliver him from "this present evil world," to redeem him from all iniquity; that is the result; by what means is it to be accomplished?-By the power of God. We must know, then, what that power is, and how it is applied.

Immediately following the statement that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, the apostle tells us how we may know the power. "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." Rom. 1:20. That is, God's power is seen in the things that He has made. Creation reveals the power of God, for His power is creative power. The fact that God creates is that which distinguishes Him as the one true God. The psalmist says: "For the Lord Jehovah is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols [nothing]: but the Lord made the heavens." Ps. 96:4, 5.

Again we read: "But the Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting king; at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation. Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens. He hath made the earth by His

power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion. When He uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures." Jer. 10:10-13.

Ps. 33:6, 9, tells us how the Lord made the heavens and the earth: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." "For He spake, and it was; He commanded, and it stood fast." It was made by His word. When God speaks, the very thing itself exists in the words which describe or name the thing. Thus it is that He "calleth those things which be not as though they were." Rom. 4:17. If man should call a thing that is not as though it were, it would be a lie; but not so when God so speaks, for His very word causes it to be. When He speaks the word, there the thing is. "He spake, and it was."

The same word that creates also upholds. In Heb. 1:3 we read that Christ, who created all things, upholds all things "by the word of His power." Also the apostle Peter tells us that "there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted of water and amidst [through, margin,] water, by the word of God; by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished; but the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men." 2 Pet. 3:5-7, Revised Version. The creative power of the word of God is seen in the preservation of the earth and the heavenly bodies, and in the growth of all plants. To the same effect are the words of the Lord by the prophet Isaiah: "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth." Isa. 40:25, 26.

The reason why this is so is found in the fact that the word of God is living; being the breath of God, it has the incorruptible nature of God, so that its power never diminishes. The fortieth chapter of Isaiah is wholly devoted to showing the power of God, a sample of which we have just quoted. The word by which all these things are upheld is those spoken of in verses 7, 8: "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever." The apostle Peter quotes these words, and adds: "This is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." 1 Pet. 1:25.

Thus we are brought around again to the statement that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. But the power of God is shown in creating and upholding the earth; therefore the gospel is the creative power of God exercise for the salvation of man from sin. So the apostle says: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God." 2 Cor. 5:17, 18. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus under good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. The work of redemption is the work of producing a new creation-new men, new heavens, and new earth-by the same word that created all things in the beginning.

What greater encouragement can God give us than this, namely, that the power that works in us that which is well-pleasing in the sight of the Lord, is the power that made the heavens and the earth, and which upholds them! Need there be any discouragement? To carry out this thought, as set forth in the Scriptures, would require a volume; but we will read a few texts that will set us on the track of contemplating God's power in creation, and rejoicing in it.

The psalmist says: "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God. Also unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy." Ps. 62:11, 12. Here we see the mercy of God coupled with His power. Now read through the whole of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, and as you read the description of God's wonderful power, bear in mind the first verse: "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God." And then at the close read: "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." By what power?-By the power that created the earth from nothing, and which preserves it. What is the comfort of God's people?-It is the knowledge that their God is mighty in power, even to creating and upholding the universe.

Read also Col. 1:9-18, and note how redemption and the creation of all the universe are linked together. We have redemption through the blood of Christ, because "by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.

And He is the head of the body, the church." Surely the church ought to be strong, when it is connected with so powerful a head. It is only as men through unbelief become disconnected with the head, that they are weak.

Verse 11, of the passage referred to, reads thus: "Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness." In the revision this is more literally rendered thus: "Strengthened [margin, made powerful] with all power, according to the might of His glory." Now read Ps. 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork." That is, the heavens

declare the power of the glory of God, by which we are strengthened in the conflict with sin and Satan.

Now turn to Ps. 111:2-4, and read: "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work is honourable and glorious; and His righteousness endureth for ever. He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion." Yes, the Lord is gracious and compassionate according to the power exhibited in the works of His hands. "He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about." And that mercy is equal to the power that made the heavens and the earth. Yea, it is that power; for God Himself, the mighty God, is love.

But what shall we say more? Time would fail us to recount the power and the mercy of God. When we meditate on the law of God, as we are exhorted to do day and night, and find therein such wondrous things that our soul faints at the thought that all that righteousness must be exhibited in our lives, let us also lift up our eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath, and then with rejoicing say: "Our help is in the name of Lord, who made heaven and earth." Ps. 124:8. Yea, let all who suffer according to the will of God, "commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator." 1 Pet. 4:19. Remember that He who upholds all things by the word of His power, is "able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory, with exceeding joy." Jude 24.

"Beneath His watchful eye
His saints securely dwell;
That hand which bears all nature up
Shall guard His children well."

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Eph. 3:20, 21. Surely, happy is that people, whose God is Jehovah."

40. PRESENT TENSE RELIGION

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (FEBRUARY 1, 1894)

"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2:20. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God." "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith." 1 John 3:9; v. 4.

From these and many other texts that might be cited it is evident that the Christian religion is a religion of the present tense. In the Christian life, nothing counts for anything except that which is present. Whatever has been in the past is valuable only for its present influence and effect; and the same is true of that which is to come.

To be born of God is to receive our life from Him, just as we receive life through birth from our earthly parents. But the new birth is a continuous process, and thus something that is ever present. It is the life from the Vine coming into us, the branches. John 15:1. Thus it is a continuous flow of life from God into us. "I am the Vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." John 15:5.

If religion were a thing of the past tense, we would be turning our eyes backward instead of forward; and if it belonged to the future tense, we would be always waiting for the appointed time. In either case there would be no growth. This is the great trouble with many who profess to be Christian; they look always either to the past or to the future. If to the past, they measure the possibilities of the Christian life by some past experience; or, having had some genuine experience in the past, they

think it could not have been genuine because they afterwards fail; and then they become discouraged. And if to the future, they wait for a time that never comes, since they can only live in the present.

Christianity in the present tense takes a person just where it finds him; and therefore none need wait or be discouraged. The Lord purposes to save men,-all men in the world who will let Him do it-and He cannot do this except by taking them just where there are, and just where they are at each succeeding moment of their lives. And therefore His purpose is to take you just where you are, not only now, but at each moment which will become "now" as soon as you reach it. If He cannot save men in this way, He cannot save them at all. But He has assured us that He is able to save all, to the very uttermost, that will look unto Him.

And therefore the only thing to do is simply to look to Him now and believe now, without reference to the past failures or future hopes. The only starting point in the Christian life is "now;" the only point attainable is "now." To live now is not to wish or resolve or anticipate now, but to believe and take. It is looking to Christ now. It is when we forget to live in the present moment by looking at that moment to Jesus Christ for grace and strength,-by taking Him at the present moment as God's gift to us-that we fail.

41. A NEW CREATION

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (FEBRUARY 9, 1893)

Several weeks have passed since the article appeared, showing that true Sabbath keeping means rest in the Lord,-depending upon Him as the Creator, who is able to create a man a new creature in Christ Jesus. The thought is worthy of further consideration. Let us recall a few plain statements of Scripture.

God has made His wonderful works to be remembered. Ps. 111:4.

He wants men to remember His wonderful works, in order that they may know His power, because His power is known by His works. Rom. 1:20.

It is necessary for man to know the power of God, in order that they may be saved, because the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth. Rom. 1:16. It is by the power of God, through faith, that men are kept. 1 Peter 1:5.

The Sabbath is a memorial that God has given of His wonderful works.

"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." Gen. 2:3. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20:10, 11.

Since the Sabbath is the memorial of the wonderful works of God, and God is known by His works, it follows that the Sabbath gives the knowledge of God. And so He says: "And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign

between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God." Eze. 20:20.

But to know God indeed is to know Him as He is. It is to know that He is love (1 John 4:16), that He is of great compassion (Lam. 3:22), that He is merciful (Ps. 103:8, 11, 17), that He delights in mercy (Micah 7:18), that He takes no pleasure in the death of any (Eze. 33:11), that He has interposed Himself for the salvation of men (Heb. 6:13-20) and that He is able to do all that He has promised. Rom. 4:21; Eph. 3:20. In short, to know God is to know Jesus Christ, "for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9), and God is manifested only in Christ. John 1:18. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Cor. 5:19.

Christ is the power of God. 1 Cor. 1:24. Therefore the works of God, by which the power of God is known, make Christ known to us. This is evident enough, because "by Him were all things created." Col. 1:16. "All things were made by Him." John 1:3. And since the Sabbath is the memorial of creation, it is the memorial of the power of Christ. But Christ is the Saviour of men. "He was manifested to take away our sins." 1 John 3:5. Therefore the Sabbath is for the purpose of letting men know the power of Christ to save them from sin. This also we plainly read: "Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Eze. 20:12.

When God had finished the six days of creation, He "saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good." Gen. 1:31. This look included man. "The Lord made man upright." Eccl. 7:29. Therefore as the Sabbath is the memorial of creation, it is the memorial of a perfect creation. It shows the power of God to create a perfect earth, and perfect men to dwell upon it.

Now read Isaiah 45:16-19: "They shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting

salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it. He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord; and there is none else. I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth; I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye Me in vain; I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right."

Notice carefully what this text says. The makers of idols shall be ashamed and confounded, but Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. And what is the proof of this? Why, the Lord made the earth to be inhabited; He made it not in vain. If it were not inhabited, it would have been made in vain. But He showed in the beginning what kind of people He designed to inhabit the earth. He made the earth to be inhabited by perfect beings. Now since He made it not in vain, it is going to be inhabited by just the kind of people that He made to inhabit it in the beginning. He is going to save people out of this earth, making them perfect, to inhabit the earth for ever, which He will also make new for their habitation. See Rev. 21:1, 5; 22:1-5; 2 Peter 3:13.

The Sabbath therefore, is both a memorial and a pledge. It is a sign that God made everything perfect in the beginning, and it is a pledge that He will yet restore all things as in the beginning. He is to have a new earth. What does that mean? It means that the earth is to be restored to the condition that it was in when it was first created. It was then a new earth, and God is going to make it new again. But it is going to be inhabited, for the Lord made it not in vain. And it will be inhabited by perfect men, for such God made in the beginning. In the new earth only righteousness will dwell.

As the Sabbath reminds men of the fact that God by His power made the earth, and man upon it, so that all were very good, it also makes Him

known to us as the One who will by the same power make the earth new, and create men new creatures in Christ to dwell on it. So the Sabbath is the seal of a perfect creation, both in the beginning, and at the last. The keeping of the Sabbath means perfect submission to the will of God, so that it may be done on the earth as it is done in heaven. It means to give the Lord His way with us, so that He can make us to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. Eph 1:5, 6.

The Sabbath is God's rest. It is the rest into which God entered when He ceased from His work, and left His word to uphold that which it had brought into existence. That rest He gave to man in Eden. That same rest He gives now to all who will accept Him. It is the rest in which we are to be saved, as the Lord says, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." Isa. 30:15. It is rest upon the power which made the heavens and the earth, and which still upholds them. It is the rest which in the beginning was connected with the new earth, and so the possession of that rest is the assurance of rest in the earth when it is again made new. And so it is fitting that when the earth is made new, the Sabbath should be observed by all flesh. See Isa. 66:22, 23.

If the Lord will, we shall in the next paper consider this matter further, under the heading of "The Rest that Remains."

42. A LESSON FROM REAL LIFE

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (MAY 31, 1894)

"Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:1.

"Therefore by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Verses 18, 19.

"The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." 1 Cor. 4:20. The promises of the gift of the Gospel are not matters of mere theory, but a fact. And in order to show us the reality of the power, Jesus Christ came to earth and demonstrated it in such a way that all can comprehend it. In the life of Christ we shall find every Gospel truth illustrated. Let us see something of how the above text worked in real life.

A woman whose life had been slowly and steadily wasting away for many years, and who had spent all her living in a vain attempt to recover her health, and was only made to suffer the more from the experiments of many physicians, heard of the great Physician, and went to Him. She was tempted, and the multitude of people pressed about Jesus so closely that she could scarcely approach Him; but "she said within herself, If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole." Her faith was rewarded, for as she touched the border of His garment, immediately she was fully healed.

Although Jesus was crowded and jostled by the people, He instantly detected that gentle touch. That touch was different from every other, because it was the touch of faith, and drew power from the person of Jesus. When the disciples wondered that in the midst of such a crowd He should ask, "Who touched Me?" He said, "Some one did touch Me; for I

perceived that power had gone forth from Me." That power was the power of His life: for it supplied the woman's need, and what she wanted was life.

Here we have something that our mind can lay hold of, and our senses can appreciate. A real thing was done. Something real went from Jesus into the woman. It was not imagination; it was not a figure of speech; but it was an actual fact that the woman was healed. She had the life that she before lacked, and that life came from Jesus. We can never know what life is,-only its Author can understand it,-but we do know the need of it, even of the righteous life of Christ; and here we to see how it is obtained.

For the words of Jesus to that poor woman show that she was healed in the same way and by the same means by which we are justified and have peace with God. He said unto her, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." Luke 8:48. If we should apply the words of the Apostle Paul to her particular experience, we might read, "Therefore being made whole in body by faith, she had peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Perhaps this may enable someone to grasp more fully the reality of the righteousness which comes by faith of Jesus Christ.

Nothing is said about forgiveness of sins in this instance, but we may be sure from other instances that such faith as the poor woman had brought healing of soul as well as the body. But no one need have a doubt as to whether this is really parallel to Rom. 5:1, and an illustration of the truth there stated, for we find the same words used with express reference to sins. In the preceding chapter (Luke vii.) we are told of the sinful woman who anointed the feet of Jesus, after her tears of repentance had washed them. Jesus did not repel her, but said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven." And then followed words almost identical with those with which He dismissed the poor woman of whom we have been reading. To the woman who was

well in body, but morally diseased with sin, Jesus said, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Luke 7:50. Compare Luke 8:48.

This proves beyond all possibility of doubt that the same thing is done in the forgiveness of sins that was done in healing the woman with the issue of blood. The method is the same, and the results are the same. Therefore as we know that something real was done for the diseased woman, so we may be sure that something real is done for the repentant sinner. Just as something real, although invisible, went from Jesus into the person of the diseased woman, making her perfectly well and strong, even so we are to know that something real comes from Christ into the person of the repentant sinner, making him whole, and free from sin.

That something is nothing less than the actual life of Christ. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Verse 7. The blood is the life; and so it is the life of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from sin. This is what we read in Rom. 5:10, in continuance of the statement that being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

Many think that the forgiveness of sins by the imputed righteousness of Christ, is something that exists only in the mind of God. Of course they acknowledge its reality, yet at the same time they do not realise it. There is always something unreal about it in their minds. The trouble is that they fail to grasp and to make real the living connection between Christ and them. There is between the true disciple and Christ a connection as real as that between the vine branch and the parent stock. The forgiveness of sins is too often thought to be illustrated by the payment of a poor man's debt

by a rich friend. If a rich man pays the debt of a poor man, then the shopkeeper credits the poor man with the sum, and the record on the books shows that the debt is cancelled. Of course the poor man is benefited, but he does not actually receive anything that will keep him in future. But it is different when God for Christ's sake forgives his sins.

Christ "gave Himself for our sins." Gal. 1:4. His life is given to be manifest in our mortal flesh. 2 Cor. 4:11. Just as the sap flows through the vine to the farthest branches, and just as the life of Christ went into the poor, diseased woman, to make her perfectly well, so the sinless, endless, inexhaustible life of Christ flows into those who have faith in Him, to cleanse them from sin, and to make them walk in newness of life.

His life on earth was one of obedience to the commandments of God. John 15:10. The law of God was in His heart (Ps. 40:8) so that His very life was the fulness of the law. He fulfilled the righteousness of the law. Matt. 5:17. That is, the fulness, the perfection of the law, appeared in His life. And it is by this life that we are saved. It is not that we are accounted righteous because Jesus of Nazareth was righteous eighteen hundred years ago, but because "He ever liveth," "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," to save by the power of His endless life, all that come to Him.

Jesus fulfilled the righteousness of the law, in order "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:4. The Revised Version reads, "That the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us," and gives "requirement" in the margin, as an alternative. The idea is, therefore, that Christ kept the law, in order that its utmost requirement might be fulfilled in us. Not by us, but in us: for whereas we have no power to do even what we know to be right, Christ dwelling in us does the right by His own power through all our members when we yield them to Him. This He does for all who trust

Him. And thus it is that "by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

We may thus note two things. First, how we are made partakers of Christ's life, and second what the nature of that life is, and what it will be in us. The miraculous healing of the poor woman shows us the first. The second we learn by reading the ten commandments, and by studying the life of Christ. All that was in His life when He was on earth, is in it now, and that is what He gives to us. And that which was not in His life cannot possibly be given to us in it. Everything that is not in His life is sin, and Christ is not the minister of sin.

43. MAKING MISTAKES

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (FEBRUARY 8, 1894)

The fact that God dwells in an individual, as He does in every one that believes on the name of Jesus, does not preclude that individual from exhibiting the limitations of humanity. It keeps him from sin, but not from all the mistakes that arise from the limitations of human vision and judgment. The mystery of godliness is God in man,-God manifested in the life of righteousness and man manifested in the frailties of the flesh. The one contrasts with the other, and by the very contrast it is manifest that the life is not of man, but of God; and that to Him alone belongs the glory.

44. CREATION AND REDEMPTION

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (DECEMBER 15, 1892)

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Gen. 1:1. In this brief sentence we have the whole of the truth of the Gospel summed up. He who reads aright, may derive a world of comfort from it.

In the first place, let us consider who it was that created the heaven and earth. "God created." But Christ is God, the brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of His person. Heb. 1:3. He Himself said, "I and My Father are one." John 10:30. He it was who, representing the Father, created the heaven and the earth. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." John 1:1-3. And again we read of Christ, "by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." Col. 1:16, 17.

The Father Himself addresses the Son as God, and as Creator. The first chapter of Hebrews says that God has not at any time said to any of the angels, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee;" "but unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom." And He has also said to the Son, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands." Heb. 1:5, 8, 10. So we are well assured that when we read in the first chapter of Genesis, that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," it refers to God in Christ.

Creative power is the distinguishing mark of Divinity. The Spirit of the Lord through the prophet Jeremiah describes the vanity of idols, and then continues: "But the Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King; at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation. Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion." Jer. 10:10-12. The earth was made by His power, and established by His wisdom. But Christ is "The power of God, and the wisdom of God." So here again we find Christ inseparably connected with creation as the Creator. Only as we acknowledge and worship Christ as the Creator, do we acknowledge His Divinity.

Christ is Redeemer by virtue of His power as Creator. We read that "we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins," because that "by Him were all things created." Col. 1:14, 16. If He were not Creator, He could not be Redeemer. This means simply that redemptive power and creative power are the same. To redeem is to create. This is shown in the statement of the apostle that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, which statement is immediately followed by another to the effect that the power of God is seen by means of the things that have been made. Rom. 1:16, 20. When we consider the works of creation, and think of the power manifested in them, we are contemplating the power of redemption.

There has been a great deal of idle speculation as to which is greater; redemption or creation. Many have thought that redemption is a greater work than creation. Such speculation is idle, because only infinite power could perform either work, and infinite power cannot be measured by human minds. But while we cannot measure the power, we can easily settle the question about which is greater, because the Scriptures give us

the information. Neither is greater than the other, for both are the same. Redemption is creation. Redemption is the same power that was put forth in the beginning to create the world and all that is in it, now put forth to save man and the earth from the curse of sin.

The Scriptures are very clear on this point. The psalmist prayed, "Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit in me." Ps. 2:10. The apostle says that "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," or a new creation. 2 Cor. 5:17. And again we read: "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." Eph. 2:8-10.

Compared with God, "Man is less than nothing, and vanity." In him "dwelleth no good thing." But the same power that in the beginning made the earth from nothing, can take everyone who is willing, and make of him that which is "to the praise of the glory of His grace."

45. THE LAW AND THE LIFE

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (JANUARY 26, 1893)

We have already seen that the keeping of the commandments of God is summed up in one word, namely, love. But love is of God, "For God is love." Notice that the text does not say that God has love, but that God is love. Love is the nature of God; it is His very life. Therefore it is plain that the keeping of the commandments of God is partaking of the nature of God. This is a point which cannot be too often repeated, and so although we have often presented it, we shall again set forth some Scriptures upon it.

When the young man came to Christ, saying, "Good Master," the Saviour said to him, "Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but one, that is, God." In this Christ was not rebuking him for calling Him good, because He was good. He "knew no sin." To the Jews He said, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" John 8:46. And again He said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." John 14:30. He knew that He was good, and He could not deny that without denying Himself, and that He would not do it. But in putting that question, and making that statement to the young man, He showed that He Himself was God. He and the Father are one, and God alone is good.

As contrasted with God, man is only evil. "There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Rom. 3:10-12. "Out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man." Mark 7:21-23.

As is the heart, so is the man. "An evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil." Luke 7:45. Therefore since the heart of man,-not of one man merely, nor of a certain class of men,-but the heart of all mankind, is evil, only evil can be done by any man when left to himself. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. 5:17. And this is spoken especially of those who desire to do that which is right.

This evil in the heart of man is opposition to the law of God. Thus we read, "to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Rom. 8:6-8.

Nevertheless God tells men to keep His commandments. And since it is impossible for the nature of man to keep them, and goodness presides in God alone, it follows that in order to keep the commandments one must have the nature of God. Christ is the revelation of God. No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him. Matt. 11:27. In Christ's life there was perfect goodness, because His life was the life of God. God is good. His life is goodness itself. Goodness constitutes His life. Goodness is not an abstract thing, but it must always be manifested in action. But action is life. Therefore since there is none good but God, it follows that whosoever keeps the commandments of God must do so by having His life in them.

That this is the only way that the righteousness of the law can be manifested in man, is shown by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Galatians. Said He: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. I do

not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Gal. 2:20, 21. Righteousness comes only by the life of God in Christ. So it is that "by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Rom. 5:19. In all the host of the redeemed in the kingdom of heaven, there will be the manifestation of the righteousness of Christ, and of His righteousness alone. It is not simply that Christ obeyed the law eighteen hundred years ago, when He was on earth, but that He obeys the law now, the same as He did then; for He is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever; and so when He comes to dwell in the hearts of men who believe in Him, He lives the same life of obedience in them that He did when He was here to die for man. To know this as a practical fact, is to acknowledge that Christ is come in the flesh.

It is because the law of God is the life of God, and that is love, that the Saviour gave this instruction: "I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans the same?" Matt. 5:44-47.

The greatest manifestation of merely human love is to do good to those who do us good. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8. Man loves his friends, sometimes; but God loves His enemies. That is love itself, because it does not grow out of what He has received from the object of love. The Saviour knew that love such as that was not possible to a human nature, and so He added these words, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48. That is, we are to have

the perfection of God. Not that we are to become gods, but that we are to allow His life to be manifested in us, and so we shall have His perfection. The goodness will all be of God, but will be counted ours, because we yield ourselves to it, that He may live it in us.

This thought lifts the law of God above the level of mere force, and glorifies it. We "know that His commandment is life everlasting." John 12:50. The ten commandments are not arbitrary rules laid down by the Almighty, for the government of mankind. They are not precepts that exist merely in writing, which the subjects are to read, and then do their best to keep; not like the laws of earthly governments, in the keeping of which the subject receives no help from the lawgivers. God has not given to man a law as hard as the stone on which it was traced at Sinai, and then left them to do the best that they can with it, His only concern being to punish them if they come short. Far different. The law written on tables of stone is but the statement in words of the living righteousness of the living God, which He in love gives to all who will receive it. It is the condition of life, simply because all life comes from God; and since all who live for ever must have His life, it is inevitable that they must have His righteousness. But God has not left them to secure this righteousness by themselves. He well knew that such a thing would be impossible.

So He gave Himself, pouring out His own life on the cross, in order that man might have it. So the law of God is the life of God,-gracious, loving, and merciful.

Only one thought more need be noted here, and that is, that nothing less than the life of God will meet the demands of the law. Whoever comes short of the glory of God, which is His goodness, is a sinner,-a transgressors of the law. The righteousness of God, which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, is the only thing to which the law will witness that it is perfect. Anything less than that will be condemned by the law; for

"whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. 14:33. There is no injustice in God's maintaining this high standard for man, since He gives Himself, with all the righteousness of His life, to everyone who will take it. He gives His life freely. All man has to do is to submit himself to the righteousness of God.

A mere form of godliness will avail nothing. No amount of mere outward conformity to the law will be accepted as the keeping of the law. There is but one God, and so there is but one life of God. He will not acknowledge any rival gods, and He cannot be deceived by a righteousness which is only a counterfeit of His life. Any amount of professed conformity to the law of God, which does not come from the life of God in the soul, is nothing but sin. Let it not be forgotten, their righteousness,-the keeping of the commandments of God,-is only by the faith of Jesus Christ, and that whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

46. WEAKNESS AND STRENGTH

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (NOVEMBER 1, 1894)

When men are strong then they are also weak; and they are weak in the very point wherein lies their strength. Were this not so, they would have something of their own wherein to glory. Men are very apt to pride themselves on their "strong points;" but such points are strong only in comparison with other points in their own character which are weaker. Compared with the power of the forces of evil, men have no strength, but can manifest only varying degrees of weakness.

It is upon these "strong points" that men make their greatest moral failures. Peter's strong point was his boldness; but behold him cowering in the judgment hall, afraid to confess his Lord! Solomon was the wisest man on the earth; but what more pitiable exhibition of folly could there be than the king of Israel surrounded by seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, hearkening to their counsel and leading the people of God into a idolatry! Moses' strong point was his meekness; but we find him at Meribah saying to the multitude, "Hear now, ye rebels; must we bring you water out of this rock?"

Men naturally trust in their "strong" points, and every man is weak when he trusts in himself. We speak about "guarding our weak points;" but our strong points need guarding just as much. Our weak points include our strong ones. We have nothing but weak points. Whatever point it is that we trust in, that point especially is weak. And we are not guarding the weak points unless we are guarding every point. But we must remember that it is not our resolutions, our will, or our vigilance that guards us, but our faith. "The shield of faith" is what quenches the fiery darts of the wicked. Eph. 6:16. The armour that is prepared for us is not of human manufacture, but is such as God Himself has made in His own wisdom, and endowed with His own strength.

But we need not be discouraged because we find ourselves weak where we had fancied ourselves strong, for our dependence is not self, but God; and depending on Him, we are strong where we are weak. This was the experience of Paul, as he wrote to the Corinthians. 2 Cor. 12:10. We only need to unite our weakness to God's strength. Then, like the apostle, we can "take pleasure in infirmities, and reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake."

God has to reveal to every man his weakness before He can save him. The devil, on the other hand, leads men to think themselves strong in order that, by trusting in themselves, they may fall and be ruined. When we feel strong, the admonition is, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. 10:12. But when we feel weak, too weak to do anything of ourselves, we are in a position to gain the victory. The danger is that we will not feel weak enough; for men in their weakest moments have strength enough to resist the Holy Spirit and prevent God from working in them. If we are weak enough to yield entirely to the Lord, we then, for those purposes for which we need strength, become as strong as the Lord Himself.

47. CHRISTIAN GROWTH

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (NOVEMBER 30, 1893)

Growth is the process of development by which that which is immature advances toward a state of perfection. Growth is as much a possibility and a necessity of spiritual life as a physical life. The spiritual life begins with a birth,-the "new birth." The individual is then a babe in Christ. Were he always to remain a babe he could not become a soldier of the cross, enduring hardness in the service of his Master. He could not partake of the strong meat which, with the more simple "milk of the word," is provided in the Gospel of Christ. From the condition of a babe, he must pass to that of the full stature of manhood in Christ; and this can only be done by growth.

What are the essentials to growth? Almost anyone can tell what is necessary to the growth of a plant, but scarcely anyone seems to understand what is necessary to development as a Christian. Yet it needs no greater effort to know what is necessary in the one case than in the other. A Christian is but a plant in the garden of the Lord; and spiritual plants, like any other plants, need plenty of water, good soil, and sunlight.

All these the Lord has provided for His garden, and it only remains for His plants to assimilate what they find. But there is a strange perversity about these plants of the human kind, that is not seen in the physical world. The Lord to the prophet Jeremiah complains of His people of old that though He had planted them "a noble vine, wholly a right seed," yet they had "turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine;" and thus it is with many now who have enjoyed like privileges. There is no fault in the provision that God has made; but there is an evil principle which finds its way into the plant and perverts its nature, causing degeneracy and ultimate loss of all that is noble and good.

It is the nature of a plant to turn towards the sun; but in God's spiritual garden are seen some plants that try to grow in another way. There are some that try to grow by something inherent in themselves. Of course, no growth can be attained in this way. Imagine a plant trying to make itself grow, exerting itself,-if it could be capable of exertion-to become higher and stronger and to strike its roots more deeply into the soil! The idea is absurd; yet this is what many people think they must do in order to grow as Christians. But Christ said, "which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?" Luke 12:25. Who would think of exerting himself in order to grow physically? It is true that exercise influences growth, but it is not the cause of growth, nor is there anything that man can do to cause it. The principle of development is in every human organisation by nature, and asserts itself as a principle of all living beings; and all that man can do is to secure those conditions within which this principle can operate to the best good of the individual. So it is in the spiritual world. The principle of growth is implanted by God at the new birth, and only needs right conditions to cause the babe in Christ to grow up to the full stature of Christian manhood. Man can interfere with this principle, and repress it, but he cannot create it. But the devil, who understands all this, continually sets men to work to try to make themselves grow by exertion. He would have men think that by taking thought and doing a large amount of good works they can add a cubit to their stature in Christ. And men try this plan, as they have been doing for ages in the past, and keep trying it until they find that it does not work. They find that after years of such efforts, they are not any stronger Christians than they were at the start, nor reach higher up into the spiritual atmosphere of heaven. Then they become discouraged, and the devil, who knew what the result would be, comes and tempts them, and finds them ready to fall an easy prey to his devices. But there is no impossibility in the way of Christian growth. The difficulty was, they did not understand the nature of that growth. They did not

know the conditions under which alone it could take place. They were not instructed by that which God has revealed in His word and in nature. A plant grows and reaches up and becomes stronger without any exertion on its own part. It simply looks to the sun. It feels the vivifying influence of its rays, and reaches up toward the source from which they come. The whole process is simply an effort to get nearer to the source of its life. In the soil it finds water and the various elements that enter into its composition as a plant, and the principle of assimilation within it, which it has so long as it looks at the sun, draws up the substances through the roots and into the stem and leaves. The plant simply lets the process go on according to this law of assimilation which its Creator gave it.

So it must be with the plants in the heavenly garden. They cannot grow by looking at themselves; they cannot grow by looking at other plants around them. They must look at the sun. Neither must they exert themselves to assimilate that which is necessary to build them up and make them strong, but simply let the process of assimilation go on according to the "law of the Spirit of life" that has been put within them. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," is the exhortation that is given us. It will be in us if we will let it. All God wants of any person is to let Him work in him.

Man is continually doing something to hinder God's work. He is continually putting self in God's way. He refuses to submit his will to God's will. And this is all the difficulty about living the Christian life. It is not a difficulty of performing works, but the difficulty of making the right choice, of yielding to God and not to self, of looking to Christ and not to something else, and of letting His mind and His spirit be in us. He is our Sun, the "Sun of Righteousness." Mal. 4:3. If we will look steadfastly at Him as the plant does at the sun that shines in the heavens, if we will make it our constant effort to turn toward Him as the plant does to the source of its life, and to reach up more and more toward the brightness of His face, we shall

experience no difficulty in obtaining the full measure of growth that we desire.

But we need not expect to realise the fact that we are growing, any more than we can realise that we are growing physically by trying to note changes in our stature from day to day. If the plant should turn its head away from the sun to look at itself and see how fast it was growing, it would soon cease to grow; and just so with the Christian. When he tries to see himself growing spiritually he is taking one of the most effective means to stop his growth entirely.

There is no cause for discouragement therefore in the fact we do not at any time realise this process of growth. It is taking place just as truly as it takes place in the physical world, and we need not make the outcome a matter of anxious concern. The outcome will be that which the Apostle Paul describes in his letter to the Ephesians, for whom he prayed that they might be strengthened by the inward presence of the Spirit, "that ye, been rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the length and breadth 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." Eph. 3:19.

We are not told to grow in the knowledge of self or the knowledge of our sinfulness or that of our neighbours, but "in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. 3:18. We cannot know His grace and all His attributes unless we see them; and we cannot see them unless we look to Him.

48. THE JUDGEMENT

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (JUNE 18, 1896)

Felix, himself Paul's judge, trembled as the apostle preached to him of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Just for a moment the doctrine of the judgment was pressed so closely home to his calloused senses that he trembled as he thought of appearing himself before the Judge of all.

One may take a live coal from the fire and by handling it lightly, toss it from hand to hand without scorching the fingers. But let it be firmly grasped and it burns its way into the flesh. Multitudes hold the doctrine of the judgment so lightly that it has little effect upon the daily life. In a general way they believe in a day of reckoning, but it is not held firmly enough to burn its way into the heart and life.

Men readily comprehend the truth that the world will be judged. They may even feel the satisfaction which the Psalmist expressed when he saw that evil would not always triumph, and that workers of iniquity would not be able to corrupt judgment in the day of God. But our thoughts must bring the matter nearer to ourselves than that.

"Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Not the world in general, merely, and not solely the wicked who have lived in wantonness, but "every one of us." Not as churches, or as families, but singly and alone each one meets the account. The accounts are kept in heaven's books. What men will say often makes a great difference in this world. People fear to follow the Lord because of the reproach of Christ. But of what value is the record that the world may write when the books of heaven are recording the story of each life?

Three things make up our lives-deeds, words, thoughts

1. Our Deeds.-God "will render to every man according to his deeds." Rom. 2:6. None need deceive themselves by a fair profession. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous." The apostle writes of those who "profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him." Titus 1:16. Not the profession, but the deed determines the destiny of man.

2. Our Words.-"But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Matt. 12:36. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Therefore it is fair that the life should be judged by the words. Foolish frivolity in the heart will manifest itself in lightness of speech. Vanity within flows forth in "great swelling words of vanity." Hatred of God's law and lawlessness within the heart will lead to words against the Divine standard of righteousness. When one realises that even the chance and idle words-much more the words uttered with determination and forethought-are recorded, he may well pray the Psalmist's prayer: "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips."

3. Our Thoughts.-The deeds and the words are seen and heard of men, and may be controlled so that the true condition of the heart is not always manifest. But the judgment will not be according to the world's standards. "He said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." Luke 16:15. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Heb. 4:12, 13.

The law of God is spiritual, and by it every secret sin will be revealed. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12:13, 14.

The whole aim of the Gospel is to teach men how the righteousness of that holy and perfect law may be fulfilled in men, -by Jesus Christ the righteous One. The judgment will reveal all the works of self, and blessed is that man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered in that day. Since it is the law of God that is to be the standard of judgment, it is not strange that Satan should seek to lead men to despise the law, and to continue in sin. Lawlessness is a special mark of the last days in prophecy. In the same last days, when the "hour of His judgment is come" (Rev. 14:6, 7), none need be surprised that the message of the Gospel is in a special sense a call to loyalty and obedience. Men face to face with the judgment cannot afford to treat with contempt the law which places all under sin. Now, when not only in the professedly godless world men are rushing on in sin, but when even in the pulpits and the religious world the law of God is being treated as an outward thing, the time has come that the Gospel calls in a "loud voice," "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come."

49. THE FINAL CLEANSING

E.J. WAGGONER – PRESENT TRUTH (FEBRUARY 27, 1896)

As before the close of His earthly ministry the Lord cleansed the temple, so before He closes His heavenly ministry and comes to take His own He cleanses His temple, the church, that it may meet Him without guile at His coming. A few Scriptures show this.

"But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap; and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Mal. 3:2, 3.

The falling away and the great apostasy have left traces which the Lord must purge away. The eighteenth of Revelation shows the desperate condition of the religious world just before the Lord comes, and the call from God is, "Come out of her, My people." It is a call to reformation of life, to forsake sin and self and to take the salvation of God.

It is by the Word that the sinner is cleansed (John 15:3) and that the Gospel is preached (1 Pet. 1:25), and in Rev. 14:6-14 the Lord has given an outline of the message which is to go to every creature with the power to cleanse all who would be living stones in the living temple of God. It is the work in which every believer should now be engaged, for the day of the Lord is surely at hand and His Word is to be set before the people to prepare them to abide the day of His coming.

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Joel 2:1. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord."

1 CORINTHIANS 13

APOSTLE PAUL

¹ Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I have become *as* sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. ² And though I have prophecies, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so as to move mountains, and do not have charity, I am nothing. ³ And though I give out all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, I am profited nothing. ⁴ Charity has patience, is kind; charity is not envious, is not vain, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave indecently, does not seek her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil. ⁶ Charity does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth, ⁷ quietly covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Charity never fails. But if *there are* prophecies, they will be abolished; if tongues, they shall cease; if knowledge, it will be abolished. ⁹ For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. ¹⁰ But when the perfect thing comes, then that which is in part will be caused to cease. ¹¹ When I was an infant, I spoke as an infant, I thought as an infant, I reasoned as an infant. But when I became a man, I did away with the things of an infant. ¹² For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall fully know even as I also am fully known. ¹³ And now faith, hope, charity, these three remain; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

“He answered and said, It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of *the* mouth of God.”

Matthew 4:4