

GLAD TIDINGS

“I will make you fishers of men”

*His Commandment
Is Life Everlasting*

(See Page 25)



Exodus 20:1-17

- I Thou shalt have no other gods before me
- II Thou shalt not make any graven images
- III Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
- IV Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy

- V Honor thy father and mother
- VI Thou shalt not kill
- VII Thou shalt not commit adultery
- VIII Thou shalt not steal
- IX Thou shalt not bear false witness
- X Thou shalt not covet

God's Dynamite

One evening in the spring, as I was taking a walk in a side street of a country village, I noticed certain little crater-like upheavals in the hard concrete pavement. Stooping down to examine them more closely, I saw that they were caused by little tufts of grass that had forced their way through. The pavement was very hard, and there were no crevices in it, through which the grass could get a start, but the tender blades had come through what was almost solid stone. What a marvel was this! If men had wished to break up the pavement, they would have been obliged to give many heavy blows with huge hammers; but in obedience to God's Word, the grass made its way through without a sound, and unnoticed

by anybody. That same Word says to us, "Be ye holy, as I am holy," and the commandment has as much power in the one case as in the other. Why then are not all holy who wish to be? Simply because they do not receive the commandment in the same way that the grass of the field does. When God makes known His commandment they at once think that they must put it into action, and thereby they prevent its action in them. The grass of the field, on the contrary, does not flatter itself that it has strength. It is content to be simply grass, and so it grows in obedience to the Word, because that self-fulfilling Word has free course in it. Obedience to God's commandments does not consist

in our working them, but in allowing them to work us. God's everlasting power and Divinity are just as ready to manifest themselves in us for all that God wishes us to be, as they are in the grass of the field, when we will give God the glory, and will not assume that we are God, and that the power comes from us. God, and not we, is to be glorified in our fruit-bearing. This is the message, "Fear God, and give glory to Him." ✧

[From *The Present Truth*,
October 13, 1898.]

We would like to hear from you ...

We receive many letters and e-mails from people all around the world who are reading this magazine, and sharing many of the articles with others. Have you also been enjoying the ***Glad Tidings?*** We welcome your comments and suggestions. If you have been blessed by a particular article or publication, we would be happy to receive an e-mail from you. Perhaps we have raised a question in your mind—share that also. Your input is greatly appreciated. E-mail us at: info@gtpublishers.org.



School of Evangelism

On-site Course

To meet the growing need for Glad Tidings evangelistic opportunities, two aspects of the Glad Tidings School of Evangelism are currently under development. The purpose of this "school" is to better prepare people to either assist or lead out in local church evangelism. The first aspect is an on-site course for lay evangelists and Bible counselors. You may choose your field of interest.

The on-site program is being developed by Jerry Finneman, Will Pergerson, Ricky Kearns, Donn LaTour, Kelly Kinsley and others. Battle Creek and Berrien Springs are the two locations under consideration. Evangelist Will Pergerson, Ricky Kearns, and Jerry Finneman will comprise part of the faculty. If you are interested in the on-site course contact Jerry Finneman (jerryfinneman@sierratel.net) or Will Pergerson (pastorperg@aol.com).

Internet Course

For those who cannot attend the on-site school, an interactive internet school of evangelism will soon be available on the Glad Tidings Evangelism website (www.gtpublishers.org). The internet school will offer similar courses as the on-site program along with assignments for community surveys, health programs, intercessory prayer, Bible studies and other pre-work activities. Included will be involvement in one or more evangelistic or small group outreach series.

Each student will have a mentor who is an experienced evangelist/pastor, or Bible counselor such as Bill Brace, Dan Binder, Robert Wieland, John Peters, Sandra Silva, and others.

Evangelists and Bible Counselors Needed

Three churches have invited Glad Tidings to conduct and or support evangelistic series this year alone. Ann Anderson, an experienced Bible Counselor in the Northwest, Pastor Bernardo in the Midwest, and Jane Sirignano in the Northeast have made inquiries. If you are interested in participating and have experience, or desire training, contact Lloyd Knecht (llknech@aol.com). ✧

—Lloyd Knecht
Director of Evangelism

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The purpose of this newsletter is to share the good news of Jesus Christ as the foundation of effective personal and public evangelism to the world, to encourage the use of and share more effective methods and resources.

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The

Three Essentials

The word *evangelism* derives its name from the Greek word *euangelion*, which means gospel or good news. The first time this Greek word is used in the New Testament is found in Luke 2:10. It was spoken by the angel to the frightened shepherds of Bethlehem on Christmas night: *Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings (euangelion) of great joy which will be to all people.*

This good news is that in the earthly mission of Jesus Christ—His birth, life, death and resurrection—God has obtained salvation, full and complete, for the entire human race. That is to say, mankind has already been *justified unto life and reconciled to God* in Jesus Christ and Him crucified (Romans 5:18; 2 Corinthians 5:19). The evidence of this salvation is the probationary life all men experience today. This salvation is made effective individually by faith.

Having finished His earthly mission, and before returning to heaven, Jesus commissioned His disciples to go into all the world and proclaim this incredible good news to everyone. Those who believe and are baptized will be saved (Mark 16:15, 16).

However, Jesus knew that in their own strength His disciples were incapable of fulfilling this mission. He therefore advised them, *“tarry (wait) in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with the power from on high”* (Luke 24:49). This power would come upon them when the Holy Spirit would descend on them at Pentecost: *“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth”* (Acts 1:8).

The question is, what were they to witness to the world? The answer is found in the gospel of John. Referring to the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said to His disciples: *“And when He (Holy Spirit) has come, He will convince the world of sin, and of*

righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:8). Having made this statement, Jesus then went on to explain what He meant by *sin, righteousness and judgment* in verses 9 to 11. *“Of sin, because they do not believe in Me (verse 9); of righteousness, because I go to my Father and you see Me no more (verse 10); of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged”* (verse 11). These are the three essentials of all true evangelism.

Speaking of our day, Jesus predicted that before He returns to take believers to heaven, *“this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come”* (Matthew 24:14). The word *witness* in this text is a legal term. Man’s response to the gospel will decide his eternal destiny. When the incredible good news of the gospel of the kingdom is proclaimed into all the world for a witness, and men and women are convicted by the Holy Spirit, it will become inexcusable for anyone to be lost. The end can then come.

Of true Evangelism

This is the great commission God has entrusted to the last generation of Christians in their global mission to restore and proclaim to the world the full truth of the gospel, the truth as it is in Christ, the everlasting gospel of Revelation 14. For the Holy Spirit to convict the world of the three essentials through our witnessing, we must fully understand what Jesus meant by *sin*, *righteousness* and *judgment*. This is what we will now consider.

The Holy Spirit will “convict the world of sin”

The first thing we notice is that Jesus used the word *sin* in the singular and not in the plural. Yet according to Scripture, both Old and New Testament, there are at least seven categories of sin that violate the law of God. They are:

1. A deliberate act against the law of God (1 John 3:4—*transgression* according to KJV, or *lawlessness* according to the Greek).

2. A mental consent to a temptation, even though the act is not committed; the sin of *coveting* (Romans 7:7-11).

3. Neglect of known duties or opportunities (James 4:17).

4. Doing the wrong thing out of ignorance (Leviticus 5:17-19).

5. Doing good works or keeping the law of God for the wrong reason or motive (Matthew 7:22, 23; Isaiah 64:6).

6. Our sinful natures which we inherited from Adam (Psalm 51:5; 58:3; Romans 5:19).

7. A law, principle or constant force dwelling in our fallen natures, which makes us slaves to sin (Romans 3:9-20; 7:14-24).

To which of these seven categories of sin was Jesus referring? The answer is none of them. The reason being that Jesus has already redeemed humanity from every sin committed by mankind against the law of God (Matthew 5:17; Romans 10:4). However, there is one sin for which Jesus did not die. It is the sin of *unbelief*—the deliberate, persistent and

ultimate rejection of the gift of salvation in Jesus Christ (John 3:18; Mark 16:15, 16). Jesus compared it to the sin against the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:30-32). This is the sin Jesus was referring to in John 16:9, “*of sin, because they do not believe in Me.*”

God does not blame mankind for being sinners, since we are sinners by nature and slaves to it. But when the Holy Spirit convinces men that their only hope of salvation is in Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and they spurn this gift repeatedly, they are committing the unpardonable sin. God is left with no alternative but to give them what they have ultimately chosen, which is death (Matthew 25:31-33, 41). This sin of *unbelief* is the only sin causing anyone to be kept out of heaven (Hebrews 2:1-4; 10:26-29, 35-39). This is the root of all sin, which is selfishness—believing in self rather than the only one who can save us from self.

***“Of righteousness,
because I go to my Father
and you see Me no more”***

What has Christ’s righteousness to do with Him going to the Father? Keep in mind that it was the Father who sent His Son into the world, not to condemn it, *but that the world through Him might be saved* (John 3:17; see also Galatians 4:4, 5). We humans need breaks and vacations from our work, but when God begins a work He does not rest until His work is finished. Take the Sabbath, for example (Genesis 2:1-3).

The work of our redemption took Christ some thirty-three years. During that time He had no vacations or furloughs. Not until Christ finished His earthly mission could He return to His Father. Speaking in the context of the cross, this is what Jesus said to His Father in prayer: *“I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work You have given Me to do”* (John 17:4). That finished work took place at the cross when He cried out, *“It is finished”* (John 19:30). Until then He could not return to the Father.

That is why Christ said to Mary in the garden, after His resurrection: *“Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, I am ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.”* (John 20:17). It is only after Christ got the green light from the Father that He could come to the disciples and give this commission: *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and lo, I am*

with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:19, 20). Having given this commission to His disciples, Christ ascended into heaven, to be seen no more until His second advent (John 16:28).

Thus, Christ going to the Father means that His earthly mission to redeem mankind was perfect and finished, to which mankind can add nothing. In other words, Christ had obtained a righteousness that fully qualifies mankind for heaven now and in the judgment. Our part from beginning to end is to receive Him by faith with grateful hearts, full of appreciation (John 3:16; Romans 1:16, 17). This is what makes it inexcusable for anyone to be lost.

***“Of judgment because
the ruler of this world is judged”***

To understand what Christ meant by *“the ruler of this world (Satan) is judged,”* we need to understand what happened at the Fall. After creating mankind in Adam (the word *Adam* in Hebrew means mankind), God gave them dominion over all of creation (Genesis 1:26). However, when our first parents sinned, they handed this dominion to Satan and he became the ruler of this world. This is how Satan himself declared it to Christ in the second temptation of the wilderness. Having shown Him *“all the kingdoms of the world,”* he said: *“All this authority I will give You, and their glory, for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish”* (Luke 4:5, 6).

Jesus never challenged this claim of Satan. In fact, on more than one occasion Jesus referred to Satan as the ruler or prince of this world (e.g. John 14:30). However, part of Christ’s earthly mission and the good news of the gospel was to deliver mankind

from the dominion of Satan and establish His own kingdom on earth (see Matthew 3:1, 2). This mission was fulfilled on the cross. This is how Jesus himself expressed it in John 12:31: *“Now (meaning at the cross, verse 33) is the judgment of this world, now the ruler of this world (Satan) will be cast out.”*

Through the cross of Christ mankind has been bought back (the meaning of redemption) by the blood of the Lamb (1 Peter 1:18, 19). This is what has opened the door for every human being to change by faith their spiritual status from heirs of this world under Satan to heirs of the kingdom of heaven under Christ (1 John 5:19). This is the difference between believers and unbelievers (1 John 5:11, 12).

Consequently, before the end can come the world must be convicted of the fact that if they deliberately and ultimately reject the gift of salvation in Christ, the result will be the verdict of condemnation unto death in the judgment. God, who has created mankind with freedom of choice, will have no other option but to include the unbelievers in the lake of fire, which He has prepared only for Satan and his angels (Matthew 25:41).

Since soul winning is the work of the Holy Spirit, while our part is witnessing, it is extremely important that we cooperate with the Holy Spirit in presenting these three essentials of the gospel message in our evangelistic sermons as a witness to God’s goodness and love revealed in the gospel. ✧

[**Note:** All Scripture has been taken from the *New King James Version* (NKJV).]

Under Law Or Under Grace ?

... To be under the law means to be a slave concerned for one's own security, out of our fear of being lost in the darkness and emptiness of hell. This is still a form of selfishness, although a highly refined one, to be sure. One can't blame the misinformed Yale professor who mocks Christianity by saying it is only "just another form of giving up the present for some goal."—Charles Reich, *The Greening of America* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 301. All egocentric motivation is what Paul meant by his phrase, "under the law." It is being under the constraint imposed by a fear of the punishment that the law can inflict, for "the law worketh wrath." Romans 4:15. Many evangelicals frankly admit that the only motivation they know that can work is that of fear of this "wrath." An example is an African Evangelical theologian who says that "only the presupposition of eternal torment in fire ... will keep the fervor of evangelism burning."—Byang H. Cato, *Theological Pitfalls in Africa*, (Kismu, Kenya: Evangel Publishing

House, 1975), p. 149. This is an admission of gospel bankruptcy.

But to be under grace is to sense the constraint of a new motivation, a sense of soul-consuming gratitude for redemption, an awesome appreciation of a love that has infinite dimensions of length, breadth, depth, and height, measured by the arms of Christ's cross.

Obedience, loyalty, purity, devotion—these are not goals we work toward; they are gifts we discover in our response to His open arms of love and forgiveness. "Sin *shall not* have dominion over you." In this new captivity to grace we discover freedom at last.

We want to nudge Paul to move over so we can kneel down beside him: "God forbid that I should boast of anything but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world is crucified to me and I to the world." Galatians 6:14, NEB. ...

[From *Gold Tried in the Fire*, pp. 94-95.]



Gold Tried in the Fire, by Robert J. Wieland.

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Introduction

Ellder Waggoner wrote of the power of salvation and the power of creation as one and the same. It takes nothing less than creative energy to save and to change us. Because the Sabbath is the memorial of God's creative power, it is likewise the sign of His saving power. This, of course, involves the cross. The power of the cross is creative. This power re-creates all who believe. The Sabbath points to God's perfect work of creation and of redemption.

Redemption involves righteousness by faith and so the Sabbath is God's everlasting memorial of this faith righteousness. Only those who have faith in Christ can keep the Sabbath. Those who respond to God's grace enter into His Sabbath which is His special rest. They rest in Christ who is their rest from sin and its consequences (Matt. 11:28). To keep the Sabbath, then, is delighting oneself in the Lord (Isa. 58:13-14).

Waggoner wrote this article in such a way as to unite the purpose of the gospel, and of creation and of the Sabbath as the same—that we should be remade into the perfect condition from which we fell. Not only us, but all of God's work on earth shall be re-created with the Sabbath as the memorial of His glorious and perfect work.

—*The Editors*



God's Rest

God's Saving Power In the Things That Are Made

Gen. 1:31; 2:1-3: "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. 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."

Ex. 20:8-11: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work; 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."

Rev. 14:6, 7: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice,

Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His Judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water."

Eze. 20:19, 20: "I am the Lord your God: walk in My statutes, and keep My judgments, and do them: 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. 20:12: "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."

Isa. 40:9: "Behold your God!"

Matt. 11:28: "Come unto Me, all that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Ex. 33:14: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

Psalm 31:19: "O how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men."

Eph. 2:8-10: "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and

that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them."

2 Cor. 5:17: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ["there is a new creation," R.V.]; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God."

Col. 1:12-16: "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; who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; for by Him [in 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."

John 19:28-30: "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were not accomplished, that the Scripture

(Continued on page 10)

God's Rest

(Continued from page 9)

might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. ... When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished; and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost."

John 6:29: "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent."

Heb. 3:7-12, 19: "Wherefore, even as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye shall hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, like as in the day of temptation in the wilderness, wherewith your fathers tempted Me by proving Me, and saw My works forty years. Wherefore I was displeased with this generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; but they did not know My ways; as I swear in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest. Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God." "We see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief."

Heb. 4:1-5, 9, 10: "Let us fear, therefore, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good tidings preached unto us, even as also they; but the word of hearing did not profit them, because they were not united by faith with them that heard. For we which have believed do enter into that rest; even as He hath said, As I swear in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He hath said somewhere of the

seventh day on this wise, and God rested on the seventh day from all His works; and in this place again, They shall not enter into My rest." "There remaineth therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest hath himself also rested from his works, as God did from His."

Rest follows labour; but the labour must be finished, or else there can be no real rest. Moreover, the work must be well done, so that it is perfect and complete, or else the rest will not be perfect. When God had worked six days in creating the heavens and the earth, and all things in them, He rested on the seventh day, because His work was done, and was well done. Everything was perfect.

The Sabbath is the sign that He is God, for only God could do perfect work; and the fact that God rested, shows that His work was perfect. "His work is honourable and glorious; and His righteousness endureth for ever. He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered." Literally, "He hath made a memorial for His wonderful works" (Psalm 111:3, 4).

How is the Sabbath a memorial of God's creative power, and thus a sign that He is God? Thus: Just as one rests only after work is done, and finds the joy and satisfaction of rest in the contemplation of the work well done, the Sabbath is the constant reminder of the fact that God's works are perfect; it continually reminds us that He created all things, and, most of all, that He *finished* His work. In the best and fullest sense of the word, His work was finished: it was

complete and perfect. Creation was a finished piece of work. Otherwise there could have been no perfect rest following. The Sabbath is therefore the sign or mark of perfection.

When we look abroad upon the earth now, we do not see all things perfect. The curse has marred the works of God's hands. Man, creation's lord, has fallen, and his dominion has suffered with him. The Sabbath, however, remains. There *remaineth* a rest for the people of God. That is still left. But it is a sign of perfection. It is the proof that God's creation was made perfect. It is the proof that He is a great God and does great things. Therefore since God makes nothing in vain, and whatsoever He does shall be for ever, the Sabbath is the pledge that everything, man included, shall be made new again. It is therefore the evidence of the sanctifying power of God.

The everlasting Gospel calls upon men to "worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." That is what the Sabbath does. Therefore it follows that the Sabbath is the fullness of the everlasting Gospel. It is the seal of perfection. It marks a new creation complete and perfect.

This new creation is effected through the cross. "If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation." The Messiah is the one who restores all things, and it is by the power of His cross that He does it. The power of the cross is the power that created the heavens and earth in the beginning; for the preaching of the cross is the power of God

(1 Cor. 1:18), and the power of God is seen in the things that are made (Rom. 1:20). So when Jesus was about to yield up His life on the cross, He cried, "It is finished." In Him, therefore, that is, through His cross, the works of God, which were finished from the foundation of the world, are ours when we believe. The rest which Christ gives those who come to Him, is the rest that comes from works finished and perfect. The Sabbath teaches us that Christ's power to save is the same as the power that made all things perfect in the beginning.



"All things that pertain to life and godliness" are given us by "His Divine power." The good works in which God wishes us to walk are already prepared for us. God himself has wrought them for us, and laid them up for us. We find them in Christ. In Him the works of God are manifest, and they are ours by faith. By faith we receive Christ, and receiving Him we have the finished works of God. But when we have the finished works of God, it is evident that we have God's rest. The true keeping of God's Sabbath, therefore, instead of being an attempt to get righteousness by works, is the acceptance of righteousness by faith. It means simply trusting in the Lord for everything; letting Him be the One who both wills and works in us.



This is why those who do not have faith in Christ cannot keep the Sabbath. Only by faith do we enter into God's rest. Without perfect faith there can be no Sabbath keeping, because only by faith do we receive the perfect work of God in Christ.



How plain the Sabbath of the Lord makes the fact that there can be no such thing as a man making himself righteous by his own works. For instance, a man who does not know this fact, is striving to make himself righteous. Righteousness is right doing, and the righteousness that is required is the righteousness of God. Therefore only God's doing, God's work, can be counted righteous. So the man is trying to do God's work. We say to him, "My dear friend, you are working for nothing. How foolish of you to be trying to do a work that is already finished. The works are finished from the foundation of the world; and the proof of it is found in the fact that God rested the seventh day from all His works. Moreover, the work is that which only God could do, and that is why He has finished it. Leave off your own work, accept God's finished work, and thus be at rest." In the Sabbath of the Lord we find the fullness of the fact that "to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:5).

The word "Sabbath" means "rest." Indeed it is the Hebrew word for rest. The seventh day is the rest of the Lord. God's presence alone gives rest, and that is why the Lord calls us to come to Him to find rest. Now as the seventh day is God's rest, God's Sabbath, it follows that in it we find the "Real Presence." Not of course in the formal, outward cessation of labour on that day, but in the perfect trust in the righteousness of God, of which the rest from physical work on the seventh day of the week is a sign. God's perfect works are found only in Christ, for in Him were all things created, and in Him all things exist. Therefore

we must have the real presence of the Lord, in order to have the perfect work of God. But when we have the real presence of Christ, bringing the perfect work into our lives, then we have God's perfect rest, which comes from perfect works finished. So the true Sabbath of the Lord is His real presence with us. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, ... then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord" (Isa. 58:13,14). ✧

[*The Present Truth*, Vol. 14, No. 49, December 8, 1898, pp. 774 - 775, 777.]

The work of Sabbath reform to be accomplished in the last days is foretold in the prophecy of Isaiah:
"Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice; for My salvation is near to come, and My righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil." "The sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, everyone that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant; even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer."
Isaiah 56:1, 2, 6, 7.

(*The Great Controversy*, p. 451)

Redeemed From the Law of Sin

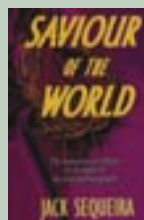
In Romans 8, Paul has some wonderful, encouraging good news for us, who long for victory over our sinful flesh. He assures us that victory over the power of sin is possible and that the source of that victory is none other than “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (verse 2). Paul expounds this glorious truth of victory over the sinful flesh in the first half of chapter 8. He says that *in Christ* we have salvation full and complete. Just as we once came to Him for forgiveness and justification, so also we must now come to Him for power to overcome the flesh and for grace to live the sanctified life. “I can do all things,” Paul says, “through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13). “Not I, but Christ” is the gospel formula for experiencing both justification as well as sanctification. ...

All through His earthly life, two forces struggled within Christ’s humanity, trying to dominate Him—the law of the Spirit of life versus the law of sin and death. Please notice, both of these forces are described as a *law*, that is, a constant force or principle. And the good news is that in Christ’s humanity, the law of the Spirit of life defeated and overcame the law of sin and death—and finally condemned it on the cross! This proves that the power of the Holy Spirit is far superior than all the power that the devil can muster through the sinful flesh. This is a vital part of the incredible good news of the gospel that is often ignored.

Those who insist that we cannot totally overcome the sinful flesh—even by the power of the indwelling Spirit—are not only undermining God’s power, they have also failed to understand the full implication of what Paul says in Romans 1:16, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, because it is the *power of God to salvation* for everyone who believes” (emphasis supplied).

The secret of victory for the Christian is stated in this fact: “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2). Every believer is conscious of an inner influence or impulse moving him or her to do wrong. This is the law of sin which produces death, because death is always the consequence of sin (see Romans 6:23). But in the believer this law of sin is to be replaced by a new, vitalizing force, “the law of the Spirit” (verse 2), which gives spiritual life (see Romans 8:11). In other words, the indwelling Holy Spirit moves us constantly to do the right. But more than that, the Spirit actually provides the power and strength we need to do it! He is not only an influence; He is a positive force, enabling us to live righteously. ✧

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Creation or Evolution Which?



I am going to speak this afternoon on the Subject of Evolution. I want you to pay close attention, and find out for yourselves whether or not you are evolutionists. First of all, I will read to you what evolution is; then as we follow along, you can see whether or not you are an evolutionist. These statements are all copied from a treatise on evolution, written by one of the chief evolutionists; therefore they are all correct, so far as they go, as definitions:

“Evolution is the theory that represents the course of the world as a gradual transition from the indeterminate to the determinate, from the uniform to the varied, and which assumes the cause of these processes to be immanent in the world itself that is to be thus transformed.”

“Evolution is thus almost synonymous with progress. It is a transition from the lower to the higher, from the worse to the better. Thus progress points to an increased value in existence, as judged by our feelings.”

Now notice the particular points in these three sentences: evolution represents the course of the world as a gradual transition from the lower to the higher, from the worse to the better; and assumes that this process is immanent in the world itself thus to be transformed. That is to say, the thing gets better of itself; and that which causes it to get better is *itself*. And this progress marks “an increased value in existence, as judged by our feelings.” That is to say, you know you are better, because you feel better. You know there has been progress, because you feel it. Your feelings regulate your standing. Your knowledge of your

feelings regulates your progress from worse to better.

Now in this matter of progress from worse to better, have *your* feelings anything to do with it? If they have, what are you? Every one here this afternoon who measures his progress, the value of his experience, by his *feelings*, is an evolutionist: I care not if he has been a Seventh-day Adventist for forty years, he is an evolutionist just the same. And all his Christianity, all his religion, is a mere profession without the fact, simply a form without the power.

Now I read what evolution is, in another way; so that you can see that it is infidelity. Then, if you find yourself an evolutionist, you know at once that you are an infidel: “The hypothesis of evolution aims at answering a number

of questions respecting *the beginning, or genesis, of things.*” It “helps to restore the ancient sentiment toward nature as our parent, *and the source of our life.*”

One of the branches of this sort of science, that has done most toward the establishment of the doctrine of evolution, is the new science of geology, which has instituted the conception of vast and unimaginable periods of time in the past history of our globe. These vast and unimaginable periods, as another one of the chief writers on this subject—the author of it indeed—says, “is the indispensable basis for understanding man’s origin” in the process of evolution. So that the progress that has been made, has been through countless ages. Yet this progress has not been steady and straight forward from its inception until its present condition. It has been through many ups and downs. There have been many times of great beauty and symmetry; then there would come a cataclysm, or an eruption, and all would go to pieces, as it were. Again the process would start from that condition of things, and build up again. Many, many times this process has been gone through; and that is the process of evolution—the transition from the lower to a higher, from the worse to the better.

Now, what has been the process of your progress from the worse to the better? Has it been through “many ups and downs”? Has your acquiring of the power to do the good—the good works which are of God—been through a long process of ups and downs from the time of your first profession of Christianity until now? Has it appeared sometimes that you had apparently made great progress, that you were doing well, and that everything was nice and pleasant; and then, without a moment’s warning there would come a

cataclysm, or an eruption, and all be spoiled? Nevertheless, in spite of all the ups and downs, you start in for another effort: and so through this process, long-continued, you have come to where you are today; and in “looking back” over it all, you can mark some progress, you *think*, as *judged by your feelings*—is that your experience? Is that the way *you* have made progress?

In other words, are you an evolutionist? Don’t dodge; confess the honest truth; for I want to get you out of evolutionism this afternoon. There is a way to get out of it: and every one who came into this house an evolutionist can go out a Christian. So if, when I am describing an evolutionist, so plainly that you see yourself, just say so—admit that it is yourself, and then follow along the steps that God will give you, and that will bring you out of it all. But I say plainly to you that, if that which I have described has been your experience, if that has been the kind of progress that you have made in your Christian life, then you are an evolutionist, whether you admit it or not. The best way, however, is to admit it, then quit it, and be a Christian.

Another phase of it: “Evolution, so far as it goes, looks upon matter as eternal.” And “by assuming” this, “the notion of *creation* is eliminated from those regions of existence to which it is applied.” Now if you look to yourself for the principle which would assure that progress that must be made in you as certainly as ever you reach the kingdom of God; if you suppose that that is immanent in yourself, and that if you could get it rightly to work, and superintend it properly when it had been thus got to work, it would come out all right—if thus you have been expecting, watching, and marking your progress, you are an evolutionist. For I read further what evolution is: “It is clear that the doctrine of evolution is directly

antagonistic to that of creation. ... The idea of evolution, as applied to the formation of the world as a whole, is opposed to that of a direct creative volition.”

That is evolution, as defined by those who made it—that the world came, and all there is of it, of itself; and that the principle that has brought it to the condition in which it is, is immanent in itself, and is adequate to produce all that is. This being so, in the nature of things “evolution is directly antagonistic to creation.”

Now as to the world and all there is of it, you do not believe that it all came of itself. You know that you are not an evolutionist as to that; because you believe that God created all things. Every one of you here this afternoon would say that you believe that God *created* all things—the world and all there is in it. Evolution does not admit that: it has no place for creation.

There is, however, another phase of evolution that professedly is not absolutely antagonistic to creation. Those who made this evolution that I have read to you did not pretend to be anything but infidels—men without faith—for an infidel simply is a man without faith. Even though a person pretends to have faith, and does not actually have it, he is an infidel. Of course the word “infidel” is more narrowly confined than that nowadays. The men who made this evolution that I have read to you were that kind of men; but when they spread that kind of doctrine abroad, there were a great number of people who professed to be Christians, who professed to be men of faith, who professed to believe the word of God, which teaches creation. These men, not knowing the word of God for themselves, not knowing it to be the word of God, but their faith being a mere form of faith without the power these men, I say, being charmed with this

new thing that had sprung up, and wanting to be popular along with the new science, and really not wanting to forsake altogether the word of God and the ways of faith, were not ready to say that they could get along without God, without creation somewhere, so they formed a sort of evolution with the Creator in it. That phase of it is called theistic evolution—that is, *God started the thing*, whenever that was; but since that, it has been going on of itself. He started it, and after that it was able of itself to accomplish all that has been done. This, however, is but a makeshift, a contrivance to save appearances—and is plainly declared by the true evolutionists to be but “a phase of transition from the creational to the evolutionary hypothesis.” It is evolution only; because there is no halfway ground between creation and evolution.

Whether *you* are one of this kind or not, there are many of them, even among Seventh-day Adventists—not so many as there used to be, thank the Lord!—who believe that we must have God forgive our sins, and so *start* us on the way all right; but after that we are to work out *our own* salvation with fear and trembling. Accordingly, they do fear, and they do tremble, all the time; but they do not work out any salvation, because they do not have God constantly working *in them*, “both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:12, 13).

Now in Heb. 11:3 it is recorded that it is through faith that we understand that the worlds were *framed*—put together, arranged, built—“*by the word of God*: so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” The earth which we have was not made of rocks; men were not made of monkeys, apes, and “the missing link;” and apes and monkeys and “the missing link” were not made of tadpoles; and tadpoles were not made of protoplasm originally away

back at the beginning. No! “The worlds were framed by *the word of God*, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”

Now why is it that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear? Simply because the things of which these are made did not appear. And the reason those things did not appear is because they *were not* at all. They did not exist. The worlds were framed by the word of God; and the word of God is of that quality, it has that property about it, which, when the word is spoken, not only causes the *thing* to be, but causes to exist the material out of which the thing is made, and of which the thing consists.

You know also the other scripture, that “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” (Ps. 33:6-9). Upon this I will ask you a question: How long after He spoke, before the things were? How much time passed, after He spoke, before the thing was? [Voice: “no time.”] Not a week? No. Not six long periods of time? No. Evolution, even that which recognizes a Creator, holds that indefinite countless ages, or “six long, indefinite periods of time,” passed in the formation of the things which are seen, *after He spoke*. But that is evolution, not creation: evolution is by long processes. Creation is by the word spoken.

When God, by speaking the word, had created the world, ... for this one He said, “Let there be light.” Now how much time passed between the words, “Let there be light,” and the time when the light came? I want you to understand this matter aright, so that you can find out whether you are an evolutionist or a creationist. Let me ask this again. Were there not six long periods of time between the time when the word was spoken and

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the accomplishment of the fact? You say No. Was it not a week? No. Not a day? No. Not an hour? No. Not a minute? No. Nor even a second? No, indeed. There was not a second between the time when God said, “Let there be light,” and the existence of the light. [Voice: “Just as soon as the word was spoken, the light was.”] Yes, that is the way it was. I go over it thus minutely, so as to get it firmly fixed in your mind, for fear you will let it go presently, when I ask you something further. Now is it settled that when God said, “Let there be light,” there was not a second of time between that and the shining of the light? [Voice: “Yes.”] All right. Then the man who allows that any time at all passed between God’s speaking and the appearing of the thing, is an evolutionist. If he makes it countless ages upon countless ages, he is simply more of an evolutionist than the one who thinks it took a day; he is the same thing, but more of it.

Next, God said, “Let there be a firmament.” And what then?—It was so. Then from the time that God spoke, “Let there be a firmament. ... and let it divide the waters from the waters,” how long before a firmament was there? Was that done instantly? Yes. Then the man who holds that there was an indef-

inite, a very long, period of time between the speaking of the word and the existence of the fact—what is he? An evolutionist. If he allows that there was a day, or an hour, or a minute, between the speaking of the word, and the existence of the thing itself, that man does not recognize creation.

When the Lord said, “Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear;” also when he said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit, . . . it was so.” Then God set two great lights in the heavens, and made the stars also; and when He spoke the word, “it was so.” He said, “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, the fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament;” and it was so. When God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, the beast of the earth after his kind,” it was so. When He spoke, it was always so. That is creation.

You see, then, that it is perfectly logical, and reasonable enough, too, for the evolutionists to set aside the word of God, and have no faith in it; for evolution itself is antagonistic to creation. When evolution is antagonistic to creation, and creation is by the word of God, then evolution is antagonistic to the word of God. Of course the genuine, or original, sound evolutionist did not have any place for that word, nor for the half-and-half evolutionists—those who bring in creation and the word of God to start things. It takes so long a time, such indefinite and indeterminate ages, for evolution to accomplish anything, that it does away with creation.

The genuine evolutionist recognizes that creation must be immediate; but he does not believe in immediate action, and therefore does not believe in creation.

Do not forget that creation is immediate, or else it is not creation: if not immediate, it is evolution. So touching again the creation at the beginning, when God speaks, there is in His word the creative energy to produce the thing which that word pronounces. That is creation; and that word of God is the same yesterday, and today, and forever; it lives and abides forever; it has everlasting life in it. The word of God is a living thing. The life that is in it is the life of God—eternal life. Therefore it is the word of eternal life, as the Lord Jesus said; and in the nature of things it abides and remains forever. Forever it is the word of God; forever it has creative energy in it.

So when Jesus was here, He said, “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” The words that Jesus spoke are the words of God. They are imbued with the life of God. They are eternal life, they abide forever; and in them is the creative energy to produce the thing spoken.

This is illustrated by many incidents in the life of Christ, as narrated in the New Testament. I do not need to cite them all; but I will refer to one or two, so you can get hold of this principle. You remember that after the sermon on the mount, Jesus came down, and there met him a centurion, saying, “My servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.” The centurion said: “I am not worthy that Thou shouldst

come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.” Jesus turned to those standing about, and said, “I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.”

Israel had the Bible; they knew the word of God. They boasted of being the people of the Book, the people of God. They read it; they preached in their synagogues,



“My word . . . shall accomplish that which I please.” They said, when they read that word: That is all right; the thing ought to be done. We see the necessity of it, and will do it. We will accomplish what it says. Then they did their best to accomplish it. It took them a long while, so long indeed, that they *never* did it. Their real doing of the word was so far

away that the greatest of them were led to exclaim, "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." So, though they started in to do what the word said,

looked to themselves for the process which would bring themselves to the point where that word and themselves would agree. What were they? Are you afraid to say, for fear you have been there yourself? Do not be afraid to say that they were evolutionists, for that is what they were, and that is what a good many of you are. Their course was antagonistic to creation; there was no creation

about it. They were not made new creatures, no new life was formed within them; the thing was not accomplished by the power of God; it was all of themselves; and so far were they from believing in creation that they rejected the Creator, and crucified Him out of the world. That is what evolution always does; for do not forget that evolution is directly antagonistic to creation."

Now these were the people upon whom Jesus looked when He made this statement about faith in Israel. Here was a man who was a Roman, who had grown up among the people who were Jews, and who set at

perfectly well that the man had his mind upon the power of His word to do that thing; and He replied, Very well, I will come and heal your servant. O no, my Lord, You do not need to *come*. You see this man was testing the matter, to see whether or not there was any power in the word. Therefore he said, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." Jesus replied, "As thou hast believed, *so be it* done unto thee. And his servant was healed." When that word went forth, "*so be it* done unto thee," how long before the man was healed? Twenty years? No. Didn't he have to go through many ups and downs before he was certainly healed? Honest, now? No, no! When the word was spoken, the word did the thing that was spoken; and it did it *at once*.

Another day Jesus was walking along, and a leper some distance from Him saw and recognized Him. He, too, had got hold of the blessed truth of the creative energy of the word of God. He said to Jesus, "If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." Jesus stopped, and said, "I will; be thou clean. And as soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed" (Mark 1:41, 42). We are not allowed to put a moment of time between the speaking of the word and the accomplished fact: "*immediately*" the leper was cleansed.

Now you see that the word of God at the beginning of creation had in it the creative energy to produce that thing which the word pronounced. You see that when Jesus came into the world to show men the way of life, to save them from their sins, He demonstrated, over and over again, here and there and everywhere, to all people and for all time, that that same word of God has that same creative energy in it yet, so that when that word is spoken, the creative energy is there to produce the thing.



it took them so long that they never got to it. What were they?

There was the word of God, which said, "*It shall accomplish that which I please.*" It was spoken thus of the creative power. And though they professed to recognize the creative energy of the word of God, yet in their own lives they left that all out, and said, *We will do it.* They

naught the teachings of Jesus. That centurion had been around where Jesus was, had seen Him talking, had heard His words and had seen the effect of them, until he himself said, Whatever that Man speaks is so: when He says a thing, it is done. Now I am going to have the advantage of it. So he went to Jesus, and said what is written. Jesus knew

Now are you an evolutionist, or are you a creationist? That word speaks to you. You have read it. You profess to believe it. You believe in creation, as against the other evolutionists; now will you believe in creation, as against yourself? Will you put yourself upon that platform today where you will allow nothing to come between you and the creative energy of that word—no period of time whatever?

Jesus said to a certain person, “Thy sins are forgiven.” How long before it was so? There was no length of time whatever between the word “forgiven” and the thing. That same word, “Thy sins are forgiven,” is spoken to you today. Why do you let any time pass between this word, which is spoken to you, and the accomplishment of the thing? You said a while ago, that anybody who let a minute, or even a second, pass between the speaking of the word of God and the production of the thing, is an evolutionist. Very good; that is so. Stick to it. Now I ask you, Why is it that when He speaks forgiveness to you, you let whole days pass before forgiveness gets to you, before it is true in you? You said the other man is an evolutionist. What are you, I want to know? Are you going to stop being evolutionists and become creationists?

This day will be one of special importance to many here, because it is a time when many will decide this question one way or the other. If you go out of this house an evolutionist, you are in danger. It is to you a matter of life or death just now. You said that evolution is infidelity, and that is so; therefore if you go out of this house an evolutionist, where do you stand? What is your choice? And if you go out of this house without the forgiveness of sins, you are an evolutionist, because you allow time to pass between the speaking of the word and the accomplishment of the fact.

From what I have read, you

see that whoever lets any time pass between the word spoken and the thing done, is an evolutionist. The word of God to you is, Man, “thy sins are forgiven thee.” Woman, “thy sins are forgiven thee.” [Eider Corliss: “Didn’t it say, Thy Sins shall be forgiven?”] No, Sir: “thy Sins *are* forgiven thee,”—present tense, with an emphasis—“Thy sins *are* forgiven.” I thank God this is so, because the creative energy is in that word “forgiven” to take away all sin, and create the man a new creature. I believe in creation. Do you? Do you believe in the creative energy that is in the word “forgiven” spoken to you? Or are you an evolutionist, and do you say, I cannot see how that can be, because I am so bad? I have been trying to do right, but I have made many failures: I have had many ups and downs, and have been down a good many more times than up. If that is what you say, you are all evolutionist; for that is evolution.

Many people have been longing and longing for a clean heart. They say: “I believe in the forgiveness of sin and all that, and I would take it all, if I was sure that I could hold out; but there is so much evil in my heart, and so many things to overcome, that I do not have any confidence.” But there stands the word, “*Create* in me a clean heart.” A clean heart comes by *creation*, and by no other means; and that creation is wrought by the word of God. For he says, “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.” Are you a creationist now, or are you an evolutionist? Will you go out of this house with an evil heart, or with a new heart, created by the word of God, which has in it creative energy to produce a new heart? It speaks to you a new heart. To every one it speaks just that way; and if you allow a moment to pass between the speaking of the word and the new heart, you are an evolutionist. When you allow any time to pass

between the word spoken and the fulfillment of that thing in your experience, then you are an evolutionist.

There are those in this house who have said: Yes, I want it, I am going to have it, I believe the word will accomplish it; but they have lengthened out the time until the next meeting, and on and on, passing over years; and so they are just this much evolutionists. “While so many are hovering about the mystery of faith and godliness, they could have solved the matter by proclaiming [speaking abroad, telling it out], ‘I know that Jesus Christ is my portion forever.’ “ The power to produce this is in the word of God; and when this is accepted, the creative energy is there producing the thing that is spoken. So you can settle the whole matter of the mystery of faith and godliness by proclaiming that you know that Christ is your portion forever.

There *is* a mystery in how God can be manifest in such sinful flesh as yours. But, mind you, the question is not now about the *mystery*; the question is, Is there such a thing as *creation*? Is there such a thing as a Creator, who can *create* in you a clean heart? Or is the whole thing simply evolution? Just now, and among Seventh-day Adventists, the question from this day until the end of the world must be, Do you believe in the Creator? And when you believe in the Creator, how is it that He creates? Of course you say, it is by the word of God. Very good. Now, does He create things for you by His word? Are *you* a creationist for the other evolutionists, and then an evolutionist for the other creationists? How is it?

Another thing. The word says, “Be *ye* clean.” He said, back yonder, “Let there be light: and there was light.” He said to the leper, “Be thou clean;” and “immediately” he was clean. He says now to you, “Be *ye* clean,”

and what now? Every one of you—what do you say? [Voice: “It is so.”] Then for your soul’s sake put yourself upon that creative word. Recognize the creative energy in the word of God which comes to you in the Bible; for this word of God in the Bible is the same here to you today that it was when it spoke into space the worlds on high, and brought light out of darkness, and cleansing to the leper. That word spoken to you today, if received, creates you new in Christ Jesus; that word, spoken into the dark waste and void space of your heart, if received, produces there the light of God; that word spoken today to you, afflicted with the leprosy of sin, if received, immediately cleanses you. Let it. Let it.

How shall I be clean?—By the creative energy of that word, “*Be ye clean.*” Therefore it is written, “Now *ye are* clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3). Are you? Will you from this moment be a creationist? Or will you go on being an evolutionist?

See what a blessed thing this is. When you read the word, receive the word, and think upon the word, what is it to you all the time? O, it is creation! The creative energy is in you producing the things which the word speaks; and you are living in the very presence of the power of creation. Creation is going on in your life. God is creating, in you, righteousness, holiness, truth, faithfulness—every good and gracious thing.

And when this is so, your Sabbath-keeping will amount to something, because the Sabbath is a memorial of creation—the sign that he who observes it knows the Creator, and is acquainted with the process of creation. But as certainly as you are an evolutionist, your Sabbath-keeping is a fraud.

Unless you recognize the word of God day by day as a creative energy in your life, your Sabbath-

keeping is a fraud; because the Sabbath is a memorial of creation. It is “a sign between me and you, that [by which] ye may *know* that I am the Lord your God,” the Creator of all things.

In the second chapter of Ephesians, eighth to tenth verses, 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.”

You need not expect to get any good works out of yourself. You have been trying. The evolutionist tries, and is always *trying*, without accomplishing it. Why go about trying to do good works, when you know you fail? Listen: there will never be any good thing in you, of any kind whatever, from now till the world’s end, except it is *created there by the Creator Himself, by His word*, which has in it the creative energy. Do not forget that. Do you want to walk in good works when you go out of this house? It can be done only by being created in Jesus Christ unto those good works. Stop *trying*. Look to the Creator, and receive His creative word. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly;” *then* those good works will appear; you will be a Christian. Then, because you live with the Creator, and are in the presence of the creative energy, you will have that pleasant, quiet peace, and genuine strength and building up, that belong to a Christian.

When He tells you that “we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them,” then recognize the Creator—recognize only the good works that are *created* in you, paying no attention whatever to any work that is not

created there, because there is nothing good but what is created by the Lord.

Now you are created new in Christ Jesus. He says so. Thank Him that it is so. What! Will you be an evolutionist on that verse? That is the present tense, “We *are* His workmanship,” we *are* created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Are you? The word is spoken. It is the creative word. How much time are you going to allow between that word of God, and your being created new? Of the creation in the beginning, you said that any man who allows even a minute to pass between the *word* and the *thing*, is an evolutionist. What are you now as to this word of God, which creates men in Christ Jesus unto good works? Are *you* an evolutionist *here*? Come, let us all be creationists.

Do you not see that *in this way* it will not require a long, tedious, wearing process to be made ready to meet the Lord in glory? So many people are looking at themselves. They know that, in the nature of things it must take them an exceedingly long time to get fully ready to meet Him. If it is done by evolution, it will *never* be done. But when it is done by creation, it will be both surely and quickly done. That word I have before referred to is the word every one here may take to himself: “While so many are hovering about the mystery of faith and godliness, they could solve the matter by proclaiming abroad [by telling it out,] ‘Jesus Christ is my portion forever.’”

Do you see how much we have been evolutionists? Shall we quit? Come now, let us be creationists, and be done with it. Let us be Sabbath-keepers truly. Let us believe the Lord. He speaks forgiveness. He speaks a clean heart. He speaks holiness. He creates it. Let Him create it in you. Stop being an evolutionist, and let that creative word work for you, let that creative energy work in you,

that which the word pronounces; and before you leave this house, God can get you ready to meet Him. Indeed, in that very thing you do meet Him. And when you have thus met Him, and do thus meet Him every day, are you not then ready to meet Him? Do you believe that? You believe He made *the worlds* when He spoke, that *light* came by His word when He spoke, and that the *leper* was “immediately” cleansed when He spoke; but with *yourself* you think considerable time must elapse between the time when the word is spoken and the fact is accomplished. O, why will you be an evolutionist? Creation, *creation—that* is the thing.

You and I are to call people to the supper; we are to say to all people, “Come; for all things are now ready.” How can I call to a man that all things are now ready, when I myself am not ready? It is a falsehood to start with. My words will not reach him: they are but an empty sound. But O, when there is in that call the creative energy of the word that has made us ready, that has cleansed us from sin, that has created us unto good works, that holds us as the sun is held in the course which God has marked out—*then* when we go

forth, and say to the world lying in wickedness, “Come; for all things are now ready,” *they will hear*. They will hear in the call the tones of the voice of the Good Shepherd, and will be cheered to come to him for creative energy for themselves, to make them new creatures, and prepare them for the supper to which they have been called.

This is where we are in this world’s history. God’s mark is being set upon the people. But remember, He will never set His mark upon one who is not cleansed from every defilement. God will not set His seal to something that is not true, that is not good. Would you ask Him to set His seal to righteousness that is altogether unrighteousness? You would not have the face to do that. You know that He is too righteous to do such a thing. Then *He* must cleanse you, so that He can put His seal to His own work. He cannot put His seal to *your* work. His seal belongs only to a document which He Himself has approved. Let Him write His character upon your heart, and then He can set His seal there; He can write His seal of approval upon your heart, only when His creative word has accomplished its

purpose *in* your heart.

You can see in what a Presence we are; you can see in a measure how long it would take half to exhaust such a subject as this. But, brethren, when we do stop, let us stop in the presence of *creation*. Let us be no more evolutionists. Let not a moment pass between the word of God spoken *to* you, and the accomplishment of the thing *in* you. Thus, living in the presence of creation, walking with the Creator; upheld by creative power, inspired by the creative energy—why, with a people such as that, God can move the world in a little while.

If at the beginning you thought this was a queer subject for such an occasion as today [it was the closing service of the week of prayer] you can now see that it is a strictly present truth. There are only the two ways. There is no halfway ground. Every man and woman in the world is either a creationist or an evolutionist. Evolution is infidelity. It is death. Creation is Christianity. It is life. Choose Creation, Christianity, and Life, that you may live. Let us be creationists only, and creationists forever. And let all the people say, Amen. ✧

[From *Lessons on Faith*, pp. 42-58.]

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Psalm 51:10

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Adapted from "Portraits of God" radio program

What Has Christ Been Up to For 2000 Years?

I want to invite you to think about something very important that, surprisingly, doesn't get a lot of attention in Christian conversation. What has Christ been doing for the last 2000 years since His resurrection and ascension to heaven? Jesus Christ physically left planet earth 2000 years ago and must have been doing *something* for all this time. But, *what* has He been doing?

Most of Christianity has only a vague notion of what Jesus has been up to since He returned to heaven. Common understanding usually stops with verses such as Heb. 12:2:

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is *set down at the right hand of the throne of God (emphasis supplied)*.

So we say Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God the Father, but what is He doing there?

Just sitting? For 2000 years? Is He busily preoccupied with the mansion construction business?

WHAT HAS HE
"NOT" BEEN UP TO?

Right off the bat, it's vitally important that we clarify exactly what Jesus has *not* been doing for 2000 years. Sometimes an absence of knowledge is better than inaccurate knowledge, and that's certainly the case when it comes to understanding the activities of Jesus for the last 2000 years.

Many Christians have the understanding that Jesus has been pleading with the Father to forgive believers, to accept believers, and to allow believers to come to heaven. Jesus' role is basically seen as trying to convince a reluctant God, the Father, to accept us sinners, which God will usually do because Jesus can be quite persuasive with His unenthusiastic Father. We say things like, "Jesus has been '*pleading* His blood' with the Father." Or, "Jesus has been

'*interceding* on our behalf' with the Father."

The whole idea that Jesus has to *plead* with the Father, and that because of Jesus' blood, God the Father has been *made willing* to accept us into heaven, is not accurate and paints the Father in a very severe, unmerciful, and unloving light. That understanding ignores a statement Jesus made at the close of His life where He explicitly says He will *not* be pleading with the Father on our behalf, because it is unnecessary. Why is it unnecessary to plead with the Father? It is unnecessary because the Father already loves us.

I have told you these things in parables (veiled language, allegories, dark sayings); (but) the hour is coming when I shall no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but I will tell you about the Father in plain words. At that time you will ask (pray) in My Name; and I say to you that I will not ask the
(Continued on next page)

UP TO

(Continued from page 21)

Father on your behalf [for it will be unnecessary]. Because the Father Himself loves you (Jn. 16: 25-27).

Notice carefully in this passage what Jesus says He will *not* be doing. And remember, He has just told us that He is going to speak plainly about the Father, without symbols or parables or any confusing language. Jesus says that He will not be praying, interceding, or asking for things on our behalf with the Father. Does that scare you? Are you worried that you are losing Jesus as your protector who is needed to pacify an angry God?

Notice the reason that Jesus says He won't be praying to the Father for us, or won't be interceding to change the Father's attitude or feelings towards us. Some of the most profound words in all of literature are: "The Father Himself loves you." So simple, yet so vital. *God loves us just as much as Jesus*. If that is true, then why would we need *anyone* to convince God to save us when God is the one who wants to save us more than even *we* want to be saved?

IS THE GODHEAD DIVIDED?

The other big problem with the idea that God needs to be *pleaded* with in order to accept us and love us as much as Jesus does is that it splits up the Godhead. In that understanding, the three members of the Godhead aren't as equally loving, forgiving, just, and merciful; the Godhead is broken up in their attitudes and actions regarding us.

There are two verses that bring clarity to the point that God

and His Son are equally forgiving, equally merciful, and equally loving toward us. Jn. 14: 8-10:

Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? *He who has seen Me has seen the Father*; how can you say, 'Show us the Father?' Do you not believe that *I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His work (emphasis supplied).*"

There was no difference between the thoughts, feelings, or attitudes of God the Father and God the Son 2000 years ago, and there is no difference in their thoughts, feelings, or attitudes today. That is what Jesus was attempting to clarify for the disciples: "If you observe how *I* act and feel, you will know how *God* acts and feels."

Isa. 9:6 clearly refers to Jesus:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

It was Jesus who was the child or Son who was born to the human family, unto "*us*." But notice the other names used to refer to Jesus: "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father." Isaiah was not saying that Jesus and

God the Father were [or are] the same being or person. But Isaiah clarified, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that the one who would be born to "*us*," would be of the same character, mind, attitude, and feeling towards us as God the Father.

While the Father and the Son have different identities and are "individuals," they have the same thoughts and feelings and character. There is no difference. If you have spoken to Jesus, it's as if you have spoken to God. There's no need for Jesus to spend the last 2000 years *pleading* with God on our behalf because God, the Father is already on our side!

There are several verses that tell us that both the Father and the Holy Spirit, and all three members of the Godhead, are "interceding" or working in our behalf.

What shall we then say to these things? If God [be] for us (*Who* is for us???), who [can be] against us? 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. 8:31, 32)?

Here, as in the verses we have read earlier, it is clear that God is on our side. There is no need for Jesus to *convince* God on our behalf because God the Father Himself is on our side.

How about the Holy Spirit? Maybe He is the reluctant member of the Godhead and therefore *He* needs to be convinced by Jesus, or maybe Jesus needs to intercede on our behalf with the Holy Spirit?

Likewise the Holy Spirit also helps with our

infirmities: Because we don't even know what we should pray for, or how we should pray. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words (Rom. 8:26).

It is the same chapter but different verse. Here the Holy Spirit is portrayed as the One interceding on our behalf. Clearly, if He is making intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered, then Jesus would not have been spending the last 2000 years interceding for us with the Holy Spirit.

WELL THEN, WHAT HAS HE BEEN UP TO?

Since we've shared what Jesus has *not* been doing for 2000 years, now we need to share what He *has* been doing. The Bible does portray Jesus as interceding on our behalf, but never to convince the Father or the Holy Spirit to accept us or forgive us or love us more. They already do that just as much as Jesus does. But look at a couple of verses that portray Jesus as our Mediator or Intercessor:

Consequently He is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them (Heb. 7:25).

Who is He who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us (Rom. 8:34).

Jesus is clearly portrayed in

Scripture as an Intercessor, but He is clearly not interceding for us in order to change the heart or mind of the Father. What then would He be interceding for, or with whom would He be interceding?

There are several very important Old Testament stories that shed light on the intercession of Jesus. One of them is found in Zech. 3: 1-5:

Then (the angel) showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and *Satan standing at his right side to accuse him.* The LORD said to Satan, "*The LORD rebuke you, Satan!* The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebukes you! Is not this man (like) a burning stick snatched from the fire?" Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you." Then I said, "Put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the LORD stood by.

So here we have pictured for us a window into heaven where Joshua the high priest is being accused by Satan. As with all of us, Satan has clear accusations with which to accuse, because we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Satan doesn't have to lie and make things up to accuse us before heaven. He just honestly states all that we

have done as selfish, fallen human beings.

So we see that we *do* need someone to respond to accusations on our behalf against the accuser and adversary, Satan. But, notice that the Lord doesn't stop with the rebuke of Satan, or with the acknowledgement that Joshua has been saved from death just like a brand plucked from the fire. The story goes on to reveal that the Angel of the Lord actually changes the garments of Joshua, which symbolizes a change of heart, mind, and character in Joshua.

Many times we feel that all we want is salvation *in* our sin, but not a reclaiming *from* sin. Here, in this story, we see that part of Christ's intercession on our behalf, part of what Jesus has been up to for the last 2000 years, is rebuking Satan's claims to our life and to our destiny, *but also*, Jesus has been working to bring about a change of heart, mind, and character in our lives from a life of *selfishness* to one of *selflessness*, just like His.

Another story that brings out how the members of the Godhead are all working on our behalf in response to the accusations of Satan is in the story of Job 1: 6-12:

One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them. The LORD said to Satan, Where have you come from? Satan answered the LORD, From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it. Then the LORD said to Satan, Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is

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Introduction

The Ten Commandments are much in discussion today. Throughout the world thoughtful people recognize the devastating effects that have resulted from setting aside the Word of God. Thus it is only natural to desire and work for the restoration of the character of God in His people and in society. Can the Ten Commandments accomplish this work? Some seem to think so.

A grass-roots movement is currently underway in our own country to restore the Ten Commandments to the public consciousness through posting and proclamation in the public square and in the official public functions of the government of the United States of America. The web site of this movement, www.tencommandmentsday.com, proclaims a national day on which we “can come together and celebrate God’s eternal moral law.” The first of these annual celebrations is planned for May 7, 2006. The sponsors go on to explain why they believe such a day is needed:

“Recent court rulings have threatened the very fabric and foundation of our culture and faith. The Ten Commandments, which have served as the moral foundation and anchor of our great country, are systematically being removed from public places. Public displays of the Ten Commandments have been a powerful visual testimony to the fact that the United States of America is ‘one nation under God.’ Their removal from public places shows that those with a secular humanist agenda are intent on destroying the moral heritage of our nation.

“Those who care about traditional values cannot passively sit by and watch the removal of the very principles that made this country great. The Ten Commandments are the heart of all moral code and must be restored to the heart of our society.”

We can certainly agree that the moral fabric and heritage of our nation are being destroyed. But what is the solution? Can posting an external copy of the Ten Commandments, calling everyone to pay attention to them on one particular day, and requiring that the moral principles which they embody be enforced by civil authority effect the change that we so desperately need?



In this article, E. J. Waggoner speaks clearly and forcefully to the issue. Only the Word of God, received by faith, can accomplish the renewal that we each individually need and bring that power which will effectively change society for the better.

—The Editors

His Commandment Is Life Everlasting

God's Saving Power In the Things That Are Made

Gen. 1:3: "God said, Let there be light; and there was light."

Gen. 1:6, 7: "God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. ... And it was so."

Gen. 1:9: "God said, Let the waters under the firmament be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so."

Gen. 1:11: "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."

Gen. 1:24: "God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so."

Psalms 147:15-18: "He sendeth forth His commandment upon earth; His Word runneth very swiftly. He giveth snow like wool; He scattereth the hoar frost like ashes. He casteth forth His icelike morsels; who can stand before His cold? He sendeth out His Word, and melteth them; He causeth His wind to blow, and the waters flow."

Psalms 148:8: "Fire and hail; snow, and vapours, stormy wind fulfilling His Word."

Job. 37:6: "For He saith to the snow,

Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of His strength."

The Lord has also said:

Matt. 5:37: "Let your communication be, Yea, yea, Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

Eph. 4:28: "Let him that stole, steal no more."

Eph. 4:29: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

Eph. 4:31, 32: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Phil. 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

Col. 3:15: "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."

Col. 3:16: "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."

1 Peter 3:10, 11: "He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile. Let

him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it."

Rom. 12:9: "Let love be without dissimulation."

John 12:50: "I know that His commandment is life everlasting."

Psalms 85:8: "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints."

Isa. 55:3: "Incline your ear, and come unto Me; hear, and your soul shall live."

Dan. 10:16-19: "Then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my Lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me One like the appearance of a man, and He strengthened me, and said, O man greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when He had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my Lord speak; for Thou hast strengthened me."

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His Commandments

(Continued from page 25)

Note from these texts that whatever God says is so. This does not mean merely that He tells the truth, but that whatever He says ought to be, comes to pass. He “callesth those things that be not as though they were” (Rom. 4:17), because the very calling of their names brings them into existence. His Word creates. When God wanted the earth and the things that are on it to come into being, He simply said, Let them exist, and immediately they were.

Therefore if anyone wishes to learn the way of life and righteousness, “Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee, and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee, or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this” (Job. 12:7-9)? What will these teach us?—They will teach us that if we hear what God the Lord speaks, we shall have life and peace.

There is life in simply hearing the Word of the Lord. “Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. ... Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth” (John 5:24-29). Read the story of Lazarus, of the daughter of Jairus, and of the son of the widow of Nain, to see the lifegiving power that there is in the Word of the Lord. Now “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 20:31).

When the prophet Daniel had a vision from God he lost all strength, and even his breath left his body. Then the Lord spoke to him, and said, “Be strong, yea, be strong,” and immediately he was strengthened. That same Word says to us, “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might” (Eph. 6:10). “Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 2:1). “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest” (Josh. 1:9). Compare Isa. 41:10-16.

It will be well worthwhile to look up many other places in the Bible where direct commands are given, and whenever one is found, instead of thinking, “What a hard thing to do!,” remember that the word which commands that these things be done is the same word that says to the snow, “Be thou on the earth,” and which commands the rain to fall. It is the same word that in the beginning created all things, and caused the light to shine out of darkness. “This commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off” (Deut. 30:11, R.V.). If we hear the Word of the Lord, not for one moment merely, but continually, it will be as easy for us to do according to the commandments of God as it was for the earth to bring forth grass at His command. The dead do not do anything to make themselves live; they simply hear the voice of the Lord, and live. So our part, when we are dead in trespasses and sins, is to listen continually to what the Lord says, and we shall live and be strong. Remember that God’s Word is always the creative word.

Read Psalm 81:8-10 very carefully. See what a wonderful promise God makes to His people,

that if they will only hearken unto Him there shall be no strange god found among them, and no false god shall be worshipped by them. He will take the idols away. Now read Ex. 20:1-3, and see that this is the same thing. From this learn that all the commandments of God are but “exceeding great and precious promises” of what He will do for us if we will but heed His words.

The Living Word

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).

The Word of God is not simply living, but it gives life. “My soul cleaveth unto the dust; quicken [make alive] Thou me according to Thy Word” (Ps. 119:25). “Thy Word hath quickened me” (Verse 50). “Hear, and your soul shall live” (Isa. 55:3). Jesus says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live” (John 5:24, 25).

God gives to us His Word, in order that we may live; if we but keep the Word, we shall keep the life, for it is “the Word of Life.” When man issues a commandment, the one to whom it is addressed is obliged to supply the force necessary to carry it into execution; but when God gives a commandment, the commandment is itself the living force that will work effectually in those who receive it. “His commandment is life everlasting.” This is why it is that if we would

enter into life, we must keep the commandments. Only in keeping the commandments of God have we life, for they are life. We keep them by faith, and they supply the life and righteousness.

The story of creation is given to show us the reality of these things. There we see the word in action. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made;" "He commanded, and it stood fast." When He spoke, it was. The earth did not have to go about to make itself, when God spoke; but when He spoke, it existed. The darkness did not have to exert itself to produce light; but God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and it was so. The earth was without form, and void. God desired order, but He did not expect the earth to put itself in order. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." "And God said, Let there be light; and there was light."

That same Word spake to us. The Gospel is the power that creates, for "if any man be in Christ, there is a new creation." "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). The Word says to us, "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). If we receive that Word, the Spirit will fill us, and will bring order out of the chaos of our minds and hearts.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:1, 4). "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Therefore the same Word which in the beginning caused the light to shine out of darkness, says to us, "Arise, shine; for thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (Isa. 60:1). If we will hear that Word, we shall as surely be "light in the Lord" as the

light in the beginning shone when God said, "Let there be light."

"God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit;" "and it was so." There was no struggle on the part of the earth to perform the commandment of the Lord; only the reception of the Word of Life, which works effectually wherever it finds an opening for it. Now "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).

"And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" (Ex. 20:1-3). Now how did God suppose that we were to keep that commandment? Israel of old made the mistake of supposing that they themselves must furnish the power to do it, and they did not attain to the righteousness of the law. But God did not expect anything of the kind. Hear what He says, repeating almost the words that are in Ex. 20:1-3. "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. I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt; open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it" (Psalm 81:8-10). There was to be no straining to manufacture power which they did not have, but a simple yielding to the self-acting Word. Let the people but hear, and continue to hear, the Word of the Lord, and He will take the responsibility upon Himself of seeing that strange gods are kept from among them.

The first commandment includes all the ten. The tenth commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," is only another precept

against idolatry, for covetousness is idolatry (Col. 3:5). The law ends just where it begins, and is as a whole but an exhortation to love God. But love is of God, and He sheds His love abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit. So instead of expecting us to do what the flesh cannot possibly do, God simply asks us to submit to His love, to submit to His righteousness. "His commandments are not grievous," but they are love.

Thus we see that the commandments of God are in reality promises of what He will do for us, or rather, statements of what He has already laid up for us ready to our hand. His grace supplies all that His justice demands. He never asks anything of us that He has not first given to us. "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them." How precious is the thought that no matter what God requires us to be, no matter what He tells us to be or do, the very same Word that makes known to us the requirement supplies the thing required. Let us read all the commandments of God in the light of the first chapter of Genesis, and life will assume a new phase. Then the greater the commandment, the greater will be our thanksgiving for what the Lord has done for us; and even in the midst of the thunders of Sinai we can say, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." ✧

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And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.
(1 John 3:24)

God's Unchangeable Law

Throughout the ages God's law will endure. In His Sermon on the Mount

Christ said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5: 17, 18).

[In essence Jesus was saying], "I have not come to destroy the law, but to show its immutability, and the holiness of its claims. God could not change His law to meet man in his fallen condition. By suffering the penalty of transgression, I will redeem the race. I have become man's Substitute and Surety. I have taken human nature, and have come to this earth to pass over the ground where Adam stumbled and fell. In humanity I will bear the test and proving of God.

"Satan has declared that man cannot keep the law. I will show that his statement is false, that man *can* keep the law. I

have come to remove deception from the minds of men, to make plain that which Satan is trying to make obscure. I have come to *establish* the law that Satan is seeking to make void, to show how far-reaching are the principles of this law. I have come to strip from it the burdensome exactions with which man has loaded it down. I have come to show its length and breadth, its dignity and nobility. I will open before men the purity and spirituality of God's commandments. Not to introduce a new law have I come, but to establish the law which to all eternity will be the standard of obedience."

For the benefit of future generations, Christ made plain the meaning of the precepts of God's law. Himself the author of this law, He proclaimed its immutability, declaring that while God's throne remained, *His law would also remain. Not the least part of it would ever be annulled.* "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." In these positive terms Christ declares

the immutability of the law. His words leave no room for doubt or evasion.

Some claim that the commandments are not binding on those who are led by the Spirit. "What spirit?" we inquire. Certainly not the Spirit of Christ; for He declared, "I came not to destroy the law." "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments," He said, "and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:19). He is a rebel against God's government. He is sinning himself, and is leading others in the path of disobedience. "He shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven." For him there will be no place in God's kingdom. He is a transgressor of God's law, and into the holy city no transgressors are admitted.

"But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

God has given us a test by which all may be tried. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word,

it is because there is no light in them” (Isa. 8:30).

In the clear light of the Word of God, we may read plainly the meaning of sin. John declares that sin is “the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). Paul tells us that he had not known sin but by the law; when the commandment came home to his conscience, he saw sin in its true character, and he died to sin to live unto Christ.

Those who belittle the claims of the law are warring against Jehovah. Unless they repent, they will be dealt with as were the inhabitants of the old world. Those who array themselves against the law, array themselves against Christ, giving the lie to His positive declarations. They betray the Son of man while professing to exalt the gospel.

Cannot men see that to belittle the law of God is to reproach Christ? Why did He come to this world to suffer and die if the law is not binding on men and women? Who could have spoken more plainly than He did regarding the immutability of the law? He came to bring light and immortality to light by exalting the law and making it honorable. *Where can be found those who preach the binding claims of God’s law more plainly and decidedly than did Christ when He was upon the earth?*

False teachers are trying to lead men *away* from obedience to the law of God. Let all beware of whose voice they heed. God is calling His people *into* the path of His commandments.

Those who claim to be light-bearers, and yet take sides with Satan in putting human laws in the place of God’s law, are the most dangerous of all rebels against God’s government. They are Satan’s most useful agents in leading souls into darkness. In



their deception they carry with them a multitude of souls.

There are those who hold up the difference between the law and the gospel. But between the law and the gospel there is no contradiction, but the closest union. They are in perfect harmony. One does not supersede the other. The law points to the gospel, while the gospel reflects its glory on the law and on the whole Jewish economy, revealing Christ in every offering. The animals daily slain at the tabernacle—the victims of sin—pointed to the Lamb of God, who was to be slain for the sin of the world, not to save sinners *in* their sin, but *from* sin, and to lead them to loyalty to God’s law.

One who has authority has borne testimony regarding the law of God. It is the word of Him who spake as never man spake. Throughout the universe His word is law. It is the end of all controversy in heaven and earth.

Let God be true, and every man a liar.

From everyone God demands perfect obedience. Of himself, man cannot obey God’s law. Never could he have paid the debt incurred by transgression. The Redeemer came to the world to bring man power to obey. He came in human nature that He might know the temptations and trials to which man is subjected. He who accepts Christ as a personal Saviour *will* receive divine aid in the struggle against sin. Through the merits of the Saviour he *will* become an obedient subject of God’s kingdom. In the strength of Christ he *will* overcome every temptation of the enemy. ... [*Emphasis supplied*]. ✧

—*Manuscript 51*, 1902.

[Vol. 18 *Manuscript Releases*, pp. 133-136.]

UP TO

(Continued from page 23)

blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. Does Job fear God for nothing?, Satan replied. Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face. The LORD said to Satan, Very well, then, everything he has is in *your* hands, *but* on the man himself do not lay a finger.

Notice how Satan is taking the side of accusation, and although God commends us (i.e. Job), God still allows Satan to test us. But *God places limitations* on Satan's opportunity to test us. This is again part of what Jesus has been doing for the last 2000 years. Satan accuses us and God defends us, but God *does* allow us to experience difficult life circumstances, some of which Satan causes directly.

Notice, that as you read through the story of Job, God is there in the end to pick Job back up and restore all that was lost. *That* is what Jesus has been and is doing for 2000 years. *Defending us and limiting what Satan can do to harass and tempt us.*

It's important for us to appreciate that *the story of Job was not a one-time occurrence*, but is a story that is repeated time after time in the lives of God's followers throughout history—including today, as Satan accuses, and Jesus and God defend, all the while limiting Satan.

THE MINISTERING SPIRITS

There's one other fascinating aspect of Jesus' intercessory ministry that we need to examine. The passage that we just read mentioned that Satan's accusations took place in the presence of a meeting that God was having with angels—with His heavenly helpers as it were.

The word "*angel*" in the Greek merely means "*messenger*." So God has a heaven full of *messengers, that are intelligent, rational, and emotional beings just like we are who assist God in His battle against evil in this universe.*

Are they (the angels) not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those of us who will inherit salvation (Heb. 1:14)?

Here the author of Hebrews calls our attention to the work of angels and calls them "ministering spirits." These are beings who happily, freely, and intelligently do the will of God in ministering to all those of us here on planet earth who desire salvation.

These "good" angels are opposed in their work by "bad" angels who rebelled against God in heaven because of the deceptions of Lucifer (now Satan, the adversary). Notice how this conflict is brought out in Dan. 10, where the angel Gabriel is opposed by the forces of darkness, as Gabriel attempts to influence Cyrus the Mede to let the Jewish people return to Jerusalem:

And [the angel] said to me, O Daniel, you greatly beloved man, understand the words that I speak to you and stand upright, for *to you I am now sent.*

And while he was saying this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind and heart to understand and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come as a consequence of, and in response to, your words. But the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me for twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief [of the celestial] princes, came to help me, for I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to make you understand what is to befall your people in the latter days, for the vision is for [many] days yet to come (Dan. 10:11-14).

Notice how Daniel was praying for 21 days about the understanding of the vision that related to the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. The angel was "sent" by Jesus on day number one to assist Daniel, but this angel was opposed in his work of reaching Daniel by the "spirit prince" (fallen angel) of the kingdom of Persia. So it appeared from Daniel's perspective that his prayer was not answered until day number twenty-one. So part of Jesus' ministry is to *send forth* these *ministering spirits* to assist and enlighten us in our battles against evil.

For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness

who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms (Eph. 6:12).

Chapter 1 in the book of Ezekiel portrays the movements of these angels or *ministering spirits* as lightning. They are portrayed as going back and forth from the throne of God to the earth; their movement is described as lightning by the prophet Ezekiel in his vision. John the Revelator also describes lightning as proceeding from the throne of God.

CONCLUSION

I hope that the picture you are beginning to have is that God has a very organized universe that follows a very orderly pattern, with clear lines of authority and communication. Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, is in heaven responding to and defending us against the accusations of Satan. He is also in the process of the work of sending the angels of heaven, the *ministering spirits*, out to all parts of the earth to limit Satan's power, to protect us, and most importantly, to work on our hearts and minds to bring us into closer fellowship with Him.

This is the "intercession" of Christ. Nowhere in Scripture is Jesus portrayed as trying to convince the Father to love or accept us, because the Father already does. The whole

Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—as well as the angels of heaven, are working in concert to save as many people as possible from Satan's clutches and from the sins that enslave them. There is literally a universe of concerned beings working for our salvation, and Jesus Christ is at the center of that work organizing, sending angels out, defending us, and all the while working on our hearts and the hearts of unbelievers.

Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth (Rev. 5:6).

Clearly the activity in this verse is referring to Christ, the Lamb. Notice that He has two characteristics. He has, symbolically, seven horns and seven eyes. In the Bible, horns are symbolic of power and eyes are symbolic of perception. Jesus is figuratively portrayed as having seven of each of these. In the Bible the number seven is representative of completion or perfection. So what is being portrayed is Jesus in heaven as the Lamb of God having perfect and complete power as well as perfect and complete perception

of all that is occurring here on planet earth.

Thus, Jesus is in heaven as the cosmic orchestra leader, as it were, directing the millions of angels in their ministry to us here on earth. He has complete knowledge of all that goes on here on earth as well as complete power to act in any circumstance, as long as we give Him permission and opportunity to act in our lives. As the cosmic defender of freedom, He will not interfere in our lives unless we request His input, *but as soon as we do*, He dispatches as many angels as needed to assist us.

I want to encourage you, dear reader, to work in harmony with what Christ desires to do from heaven. May our prayers and ministry here on earth be of such a nature as to assist Jesus in His ministry of the last 2000 years, so that He can finally conclude His work and return to take us home with Him. ✧

[Scripture references are from the *New Living Translation*, *Amplified*, *New International Version*, and *New King James Version* Bibles.]

The prayer that does not succeed in modulating our wishes, in changing the passionate desire into still submission, the anxious, tumultuous expectation into quiet surrender, is not true prayer. The life is most holy in which there is least of petition and desire and most of waiting upon God; that in which petition often passes into thanksgiving. Pray till prayer makes you forget your own wishes and leaves or merges it into God's will. The divine wisdom has given us prayer, not as a means to obtain things on earth, but as a means whereby we learn to do without them. Not as a means to escape evil, but as a means whereby we become strong to meet it.

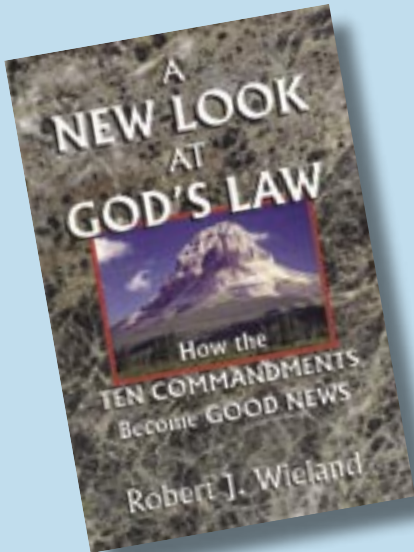
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