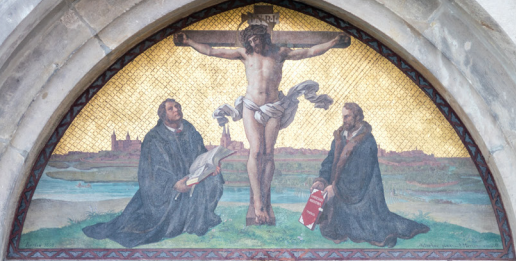
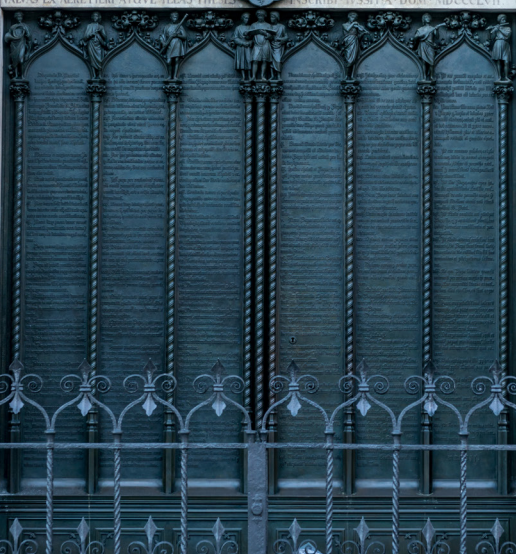


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Justification by Faith and Liberty of Conscience from the Reformation to the 3rd Angel's Message

1888 MESSAGE STUDY
COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER
December 2017

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1888

MESSAGE STUDY
COMMITTEE



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The gospel of Jesus Christ is the central truth of the Bible and the most effective means of winning souls for Christ. This newsletter is designed to provide resources that will aid in sharing the Good News through personal and public evangelism.

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Reformation: Interrupted

Seventh-day Adventists. We go to church on the seventh day of the week. We believe in the soon coming of Jesus. That's our name – can't escape those two doctrines.

As the rolling stone of time moves forward, thoughtful people among us sincerely ask the question, "what could 'soon' possibly mean" if we are still proclaiming 'soon' for over 150 years. We recently celebrated the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's 95 theses posted on the door of the church in Wittenberg Germany – 500 years!

It would seem impossible that God would have wanted time to last so long, if it was entirely in His purview to bring this suffering to an end. There are only two possibilities. Either time has gone on because He hasn't done something, or time has gone on because there are necessary conditions down here that need to occur before God can finally close the great controversy in a way that puts the universe on an eternal basis of security.

Too commonly the reason for the delay is summed up in the statement that we haven't "finished the work", and the work is defined as "going in to all the world and preaching the gospel." (Matthew 24:14). Jesus said that after preaching the gospel in all the world, then the end will come. So the thought would be that **as soon as the whole world has HEARD the gospel, then Jesus will come. "Soon" will finally be now.**

It's interesting to note that Jesus says in Matthew 24:14 that this gospel will be preached in all the world "as a witness", not merely "by" witnessing. Is it possible that the old axiom, "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one", is actually true? Is it possible that what Jesus was referring to in Matthew 24:14 wasn't merely message propagation – although it does include that – but that Jesus was primarily talking about message MATURATION – both in terms of the advent message's content and the message's revelation in our experience?

If the only goal we need to be focusing on is message propagation, then our primary concern will be distribution to blanket the world. Then as soon as all have heard our current message, then the end will come. However, if we look back in history, we see that the early church actually did accomplish the distribution of the message to all the world!! And Jesus still didn't return! Notice Col. 1:23 – "the gospel was preached . . . to every creature (person) under heaven". Wait Paul – do you mean to say that in the first

century the gospel commission had been finished? Well, that's only true if we understand the gospel commission to be message propagation. Also from Paul in Romans 10:17-18, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: "Their sound has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world." Paul is saying that the preaching of the gospel had gone to the ends of the world. Message propagation – finished!

But – Jesus didn't return!

Ellen White echoes these verses from the Bible that we've just read, "The commission that Christ gave to the disciples, they fulfilled. . . . By the co-operation of the divine Spirit, the apostles did a work that shook the world. To every nation was the gospel carried in a single generation." {AA 593.2}. And also, "Christ ascended to heaven and sent His Holy Spirit to give power to the work of His disciples. Thousands were converted in a day. In a single generation the gospel was carried to every nation under heaven." {8T 26.3}.

So we must ask, if the early church carried the gospel to every nation in the first century after Christ, why didn't He return? And, if we carry the gospel to every nation in this generation, can we be assured that He will return? What if merely message propagation isn't sufficient to end the ongoing history of this house of pain?

Ellen White goes on in the quote above from 8T to give us the answer to why Jesus didn't return in the first century – and I would add – why He still hasn't returned. "But little by little a change came. The church lost her first love. She became selfish and ease-loving. The spirit of worldliness was cherished. The enemy cast his spell upon those to whom God had given light for a world in darkness, light which should have shone forth in good works. The world was robbed of the blessings that God desired men to receive." {8T 26.3}.

Wow. They "finished" the gospel commission in terms of message propagation or distribution, BUT, they left their first love. The first church of Revelation – Ephesus – has this claim to fame, "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love."



(Rev. 2:4). **They left Jesus out of their message distribution!**

Is it possible that we may have done the same thing? Is it possible that we've been so busy with message distribution that we've left Jesus out of the message and out of our first love? Is it possible that we've been so busy telling people which day is the true Sabbath, and when you die you're unconscious, and there's a judgment coming, and be careful what you eat, and there is a day-year principle, etc., that we've left our first love?

If that's true, then Satan might be less concerned about how many people we baptize, as long as we and they don't have a first love experience with Jesus! Satan might be saying, "sure, go ahead and baptize the whole world as Seventh-day Adventists, as long as you're not in love with Jesus". Satan would be fine with doctrinal fidelity, evangelistic sermons and publications, healthy lifestyle – as long as none of that leads to us falling in love with Jesus.

The primary purpose of the 1888 message is to move us to fall in love with Jesus. All the doctrinal points that we hold as SDAs obtain their value and power only as they function as windows on to God's love for us and as influences to move us to respond to Him in kind. Sometimes in Sabbath School classes I'll hear the false dichotomy of, "we don't need all this doctrine, we just need to love each other and Jesus". Unfortunately, what is missing from that understanding is the reality that all of the doctrines are intended to be openings or avenues into seeing and experiencing the changeless of love of God for us. It's not Jesus OR doctrine. It's Jesus IN our doctrine(s).

So in 1888, the Lord in His great mercy sent us a most precious message. The purpose of this message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Savior (Jesus), whose sacrifice was efficacious for the whole world – believer and unbeliever alike. Notice just a few of the phrases that Ellen White applied to the 1888 message, and see if you don't see a pattern of her identifying the 1888 message as an attempt by God to move us to fall in love with Him in the person of His Son?

- "Saviour who was not afar off, but nigh at hand"
- "the simple story of the cross"
- "the Lord was very precious"
- "beheld Christ"
- "the matchless love of Jesus"

- “His excellencies”
- “the delights in Jesus”
- “the paternal love and care of God for his children”

And this is but a small sampling of her many heartfelt statements calling our attention to what God was trying to do.

With the early Christian church, the Lord wanted to “finish the work”. He accomplished the message propagation part, but sadly they left their first love in the process. God had to wait hundreds of years for the right people and circumstances to again occur when He could start a reformation – The Reformation – in Christianity.

Through successive generations, and individuals, and churches, God continued to move forward the progress of truth. He was taking each person, group, and church as far and as fast as they were willing and able to go. Finally, He came to His last church. The Seventh-day Adventist movement is to be the final movement in earthly history. We were busy recovering much truth that had been buried beneath the rubble of error. God was opening our minds to so many truths. We were busy with evangelism and publishing and educating – all vital works to be done. But all to be done in the picture frame of the attracting, moving, profound love of God for us.

In 1888, God desired to continue the reformation movement that had started hundreds of years before with Wycliffe, Tyndale, Luther, Bunyan, etc. God called two young, energetic, sincere men – A.T. Jones and E.J. Waggoner. Not perfect men, but truly God’s men. They were met as all reformers have been met. The Reformation was interrupted – again.

As you and I have an opportunity to review salvation history, may we remember that it is the goodness of God that leads to repentance (Rom. 2:4) – and thus it is the goodness of God that leads to revival and reformation also. May we look carefully at our lives as individuals, as churches, and as a denomination, and confirm that we have not left our first love. May God help us to see ourselves as He sees us. And may we receive strength from Him to accept the remedy He earnestly offers to us – Rev. 3:18-21.

Robert Hunsaker, 1888 MSC President

Book Review by E. J. Waggoner in *The Present Truth*, Vol. 11, No. 15, April 11, 1895

Persecution and Tolerance, Being the Hulsean Lectures preached before the University of Cambridge in 1893-4, by the Bishop of Peterborough, Dr. Creighton. Longmans, Green, & Co.¹

This book is not an apology for the persecutions which blacken the record of the professed church since the days when earthly power was accepted by it. It rather shows how utterly contrary to the spirit and teaching of the Master was the desire for such power, and consequently how antichristian was the exercise of it.

In the first place, it must be remembered that the idea of enforcing uniformity of worship for the supposed good of society and the State comes from Paganism.

It was a matter of political expediency that men should at least profess to hold the same religious opinions. The language of Plato did not materially differ from that of the Inquisitor: "Let this then be the law: No one shall possess shrines of the gods in private houses, and he who is bound to possess them, and perform any sacred rites not publicly authorised, shall be

informed against to the guardians of the law; and let them issue orders that he shall carry his private rites to the public temples, and if he do not obey, let them inflict a penalty until he complies. And if a person be proven guilty of impiety, not merely from childish levity, but such as grown-up men may be guilty of, let him be punished with death."

Similar principles were put in operation in the Roman Empire, and as the teachers of the Gospel went out into the empire preaching the doctrine of the Cross, they were persecuted as disturbers of the social order.

The Gospel, teaching that every man must give account of themselves before God, denied the pagan principle that the individual must allow the authorities of the State to be conscience for him. Soon after apostolic days came the "falling away" from the principles of the Gospel in the church, and when the rulers of the church compromised with an assimilated Paganism, they succeeded to the evil principle of enforced uniformity.

The origin of the spirit of persecution is well stated in these words: *It comes from the universal sense of inconvenience, when we do not*

at once get our own way. Then follows impatience, irritation, and resentment.

Then reason is called in to help passion, and clothe the feelings with the semblance of deliberate action founded on policy and expediency. The love of power comes next, suggesting the future good to be obtained from a prompt display of resoluteness. Power supplies its own justification; for would it be there if it were not meant to be used?

And who can blame it when it has succeeded? Then comes "that last infirmity of noble minds," the hope for fame, the gratification that

attends success, the proud consciousness of having cleared a difficulty out of the way. All this is so natural, and yet so wrong. It is wrong, of course, for it is the devil's own way of working. It is the spirit that exists in every heart were self exists. The life of Jesus Christ working within is the only power that can keep the natural man down, and so **it is a fact that the spirit of persecution is in the hearts of all men who are not in Christ, and only awaits an occasion to break forth.** As the Papacy

it is a fact that the spirit of persecution is in the hearts of all men who are not in Christ, and only awaits an occasion to break forth.

was founded on the principle of self-exaltation, it was prepared to manifest the Spirit of intolerance to the highest degree. Yet it was not without protest that some church leaders saw the principle carried out to its logical extremes at first, and then, also, not without the argument that always comes in to excuse religious persecution, the plea that the good of society demands it. Dr. Creighton says:

Uniformity of religious belief

was ruled by the State to be necessary, and was enforced accordingly. This was contradictory to the spirit of the church, and was long felt to be so. Yet the church gave way to the

supposed necessities of its new position. Paganism was forbidden; heretics were reduced to obedience by the strong arm of the law. When the penalty of death was first inflicted for erroneous opinions, the Christian conscience was profoundly shocked.

But when a wrong principle is espoused the natural man soon gets accustomed to its most rigorous application.

The protest was soon forgotten by those who lived near the time; by the middle of the next

century, Leo the Great accepted as a duty the suppression of heresy, and raised no objection to legislation which treated heresy as a crime against civil society, and declared it punishable with death. Thus the Divine law and the human law were put on the same footing, and the truth of God was no longer to be borne in upon the consciences of man by gentle pleading, but to be enforced as part of the necessary framework of social order.

With the history that followed all are more or less familiar. The church and the world were hand in hand. It was not called religious perse-

cution. The church delivered the heretic to the civil power and he was punished as a destroyer of order. Or the church succeeded in getting her ecclesiastical institutions adopted as part of the common law, and then the State was bound to maintain the institutions of the church in order to maintain its laws. When the civil power for political or social reasons wished to engage in the suppression of the rights of a people, the church lent her sanction to the secular policy, and pronounced the crusade

justifiable on religious grounds as well.

When the Scriptures began to be opened in the beginning of Reformation days, the light of the Gospel of liberty began again to be seen. Yet, as we have seen, the spirit of Rome is but the spirit of human nature and the devil, and so the evolution of the work of reformation has presented strange inconsis-

tencies; and yet perhaps not strange when we remember the gross darkness which the long rule of the Papacy had cast over the earth. Luther denounced the use of

force in matters of conscience, and declared that the Word of God alone must contend. But in later years he forgot the principle. "Luther had his reward; his movement fell into the hands of secular princes, who were authorized by theologians to decide controversies among preachers, and put down dissensions by the secular arm." And thus the Reformation in Germany has stood still where Luther left it, and Rome has long been winning back its hold upon the Fatherland. Calvin delivered

all the history of intolerance since the apostasy in the early centuries shows that it has been "the church" that has led in persecution.

Servetus to the death, and the once gentle and mild Melancthon congratulated him on getting the “blasphemer” put to death. The Reformers were not able all at once to throw off the blindness with which the Papacy had smitten in the eyes of all peoples.

Dr. Creighton shows that the modern idea of toleration rests not so much upon the recognition of the principles of the Gospel, as upon the demands of political and social expediency. Such a basis cannot secure lasting results. It is often said that in this enlightened age the intolerance of past ages could never manifest itself. All history shows that this is a delusion. The Bishop says of tolerance:

It was not won by enlightenment, and it cannot be maintained merely by a trust in enlightenment. Christianity was converted into the basis for social order, and men were bidden to accept it for the maintenance of that order. Opinions which are judged necessary for social organisation tend to be exacting in their demands for entire allegiance. They advance at first by persuasion; then their upholders chafe at the slowness of progress. Why not quicken advance by compulsion? Why not reduce obstinacy by force? The temptation is always present; the spirit of persecution is ever

ready to reassert itself unless it be checked by some controlling sense of duty.

But when men throw off the restraints of the Lord and are fighting against His Word and truth, the sense of duty is thrown utterly to the winds. Dr. Creighton closes the volume with a warning which is doubly significant in these times when signs are abounding showing that the old methods of securing uniformity are to be revived on the same old plea of maintaining social order.

Meanwhile I do not know that the tolerance which is now praised by the world is very firmly established. It rests at present mainly on an equilibrium of forces which might easily be upset. There is always a temptation to the possessors of power—be they individual, or an institution, or a class—to use it selfishly or harshly. Liberty is a tender plant and needs jealous watching. It is always unsafe in the world, and is only secure under the guardianship of the Church; for the Church possesses the knowledge of man’s eternal destiny—which alone can justify his claim to freedom.

But all the history of intolerance since the apostasy in the early centuries shows that it has been “the church” that has led in persecution. Not indeed the church of Jesus

Christ, which is composed of all who have the life of Jesus manifested in the flesh, but those ecclesiastical organizations which have sought the favor and power of the world, and have made a virtue of “tolerance,”—these have always been led into using their power to cast down the truth and to silence dissent.

The very use of the term “tolerance” in this interesting volume shows the frailty of the foundation on which the popular idea of religious liberty rests. The wickedness of intolerance is shown, but it is assumed that tolerance is a virtue. The word tolerance may often be incorrectly used by those who would repudiate that which their language signifies. But the idea that tolerance is a virtue must of necessity rest on the assumption that the person who dissents from another’s use has committed an offence against him, requiring the exercise of tolerance. Thus in matters of religion the one who “tolerates” assumes a lordship over the other’s mind and conscience. In other words, he puts himself in the place of God, the very species of self-exaltation which characterizes the Papacy. Tolerance and persecution are very closely allied. Tolerance is far from being a recognition of that perfect liberty of conscience

which God grants to every man during earthly probation, and which He Himself will not invade. John 12:47, 48.

And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

¹The Hulsean Lectures were established from an endowment made by John Hulse to Cambridge University in 1790. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hulsean_Lectures (accessed 10/28/17). For the 140-page book containing this lecture, see a 1906 printing of it at this link: <https://books.google.com/books?id=twgRAAAAYAAJ> (accessed 10/18/17).

An Epilogue on the “Gospel of Liberty”

Waggoner’s review of this book covers a brief tracing of persecution through history. Mention is made of the Reformation’s beginning recovery of “the light of the Gospel of liberty” and the importance of “the principles of the Gospel.” However, the review does not elaborate these, and ends with showing simply that “toleration” falls far short of true liberty of

conscience.

The Gospel light and principles mentioned in passing are seen especially in the connections the Bible makes between justification by faith and liberty of conscience. The passages that explicitly tie the justifying faith of Jesus to the true concept of liberty both received and given are some key texts using the adjective “free”, and its derivatives, the verb “make free” and the noun “liberty” (or “freedom”). These are found in

John 8, Romans 6 and 8,

2 Corinthians
3, Galatians 5,
James 1 and 2,
1 Peter 2, and
2 Peter 2.

The text Waggoner left us with will direct us into these passages. Jesus’

words, “I judge no man” (John 12:47) are an echo of John 8:15. There He said in contrast, “Ye judge after the flesh.” The context is the story of the woman caught in sin, and the spirit of accusation of her, John 8:10, and of Jesus, John 8:6, that desired both dead. This attitude flowed from the fallen human nature (“flesh”), which lives for self and ends in taking life, not giving life.

Jesus traced this anti-gospel principle to its origin, the devil

(John 8:44), and its ultimate demonstration of intolerance and persecution, killing Jesus (John 8:37, 40; compare 8:59). In contrast, the spirit of Jesus justifies (“neither do I condemn you”), separates from sin (“go and sin no more” John 8:11; compare 21, 24, 34), and gives life (“have the light of life” John 8:12). That is the source and expression of true liberty—freedom from sin and its condemnation (John 8:32, 34-36). Paul reaffirms this freedom from sin (Romans 6:18, 22; 8:2), and connects it to justification from

*And if any man hear
My words, and believe
not, I judge him not: for
I came not to judge the
world, but to save the
world.*

sin (6:7). This justification flows from the cross and resurrection, bringing life to all (Romans 4:25; 5:18). The liberty is that which the Spirit brings in the new covenant (2 Corinthians 3:17).

This is the freedom

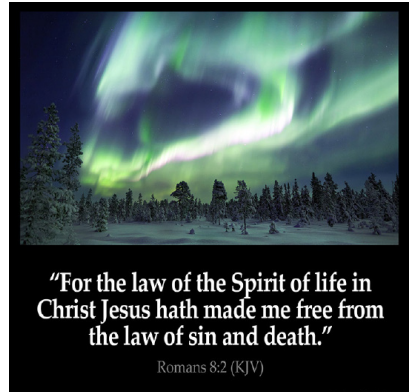
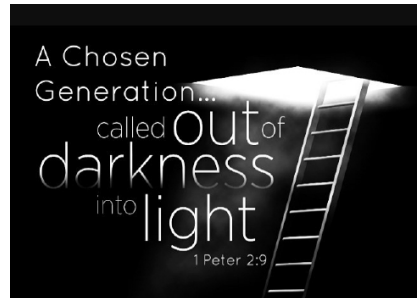
of justification by faith, in which we are to stand (Galatians 5:1), in contrast to (and not complicit with) the flesh (Galatians 5:13; compare Peter in 1 Peter 2:16, and 2 Peter 2:19).

This liberty of conscience given by the genuine Spirit in justification “by faith of Jesus” (Galatians 2:16), is shared with others, as Jesus instructed His disciples, “Freely ye have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8). This is the true and only basis of religious liberty. Paul explicitly warned

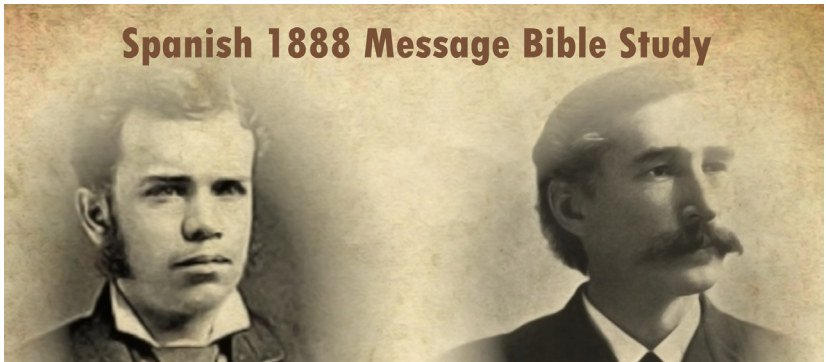
that the flesh of the old covenant is the persecuting spirit (Galatians 4:29).

In summary, Jesus' liberty from sin is also freedom from the condemnation of sinners. In contrast, the spirit of accusation and condemnation is at the root of persecution. The mission of Jesus was to condemn "sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3), but to justify the sinner, the result of which is the separation from sin. This is the gospel of justification (Galatians 3:8). The conscience is freed, and in turn we grant that freedom to other consciences. This freedom is from sin, bringing us into harmony with the law of love, the law of liberty (James 1:25, 2:12).

Submitted by Fred Bischoff



Spanish 1888 Message Bible Study



Join this bible study in person at: 8784 Valley View Dr, Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Join online at: <https://zoom.us/j/3331235555>

Thursdays at 6:30 P.M. EST

More information at: 269-222-0450

E. J. Waggoner

Alonzo T. Jones

1888 Message Bible Study Groups

We would like to publish a list of groups who are actively studying the 1888 Message around the world. Many are seeking to study this most precious message with a group of believers. You can help in this endeavor by informing John and Barbara Falconbridge of your group. They can be reached in the following ways:

Mail: P. O. Box 642, Edmore, MI 48829

Phone: (989) 427-3418

E-mail: bobbie1025@gmail.com

If you have a study group, we would **LOVE** to list it in the next newsletter. Please **CONTACT** John and Barbara and give them as much information as possible. When inquiries are received regarding where and when groups meet, the details will be shared.

CURRENT BIBLE STUDY GROUPS

1. John & Barbara Falconbridge - MICHIGAN
2 pm EST 2nd & 4th Sabbath
bobbie1025@gmail.com / 989-427-3418
2. Mike Schwirzer - FLORIDA
4:30 pm EST Sabbath
mszr1@verizon.net / 267-625-6269
3. Juanita Staten - MICHIGAN
6:30 pm EST Wednesday
1888manager@1888msc.org / 269-473-1888
4. Pastor Stirling Berry - CALIFORNIA
4 pm PST Sabbath
s63b82@yahoo.com / 909-964-8970
5. Marshall Grant - NEW JERSEY
Seeking those who want to study together.
naturetestifies@outlook.com / 908-672-5533
6. Jackie Brennecke - VIRGINIA
Willing to give Bible study upon request.
804-909-4538

KIDS CORNER

Missionary to the World

Patti Guthrie

Two thousand years have passed since Jesus lived on this earth and walked up and down the dusty streets of his hometown of Nazareth. Jesus was a Jew, which means He was a descendent of Abraham. The Old Testament is the story of Jesus's family. Every person and nation listed in the Old Testament is there because they interacted with the family of Jesus in some way.

Many Old Testament prophecies described Jesus' life mission and work. The prophet Isaiah foretold

that Jesus would be like a lamb led to the slaughter who would not resist the insults heaped upon Him. He would be beaten and spit upon. He would make no effort to save Himself.

The Old Testament scriptures taught all this and more.

Sadly, the Jewish people did not accept Jesus as the Messiah. They ignored the prophecies concerning

His death, expecting instead that He would come as a mighty ruler to overthrow the Roman power.

Forty years after Jesus' death on the cross, the city of Jerusalem with its beautiful temple was destroyed by the Roman army. With the Jewish capital destroyed and no place to go, the Jews that survived this terrible ordeal scattered all over the earth.

Many continued to look for the Messiah, not recognizing that they had crucified the Savior of the world.

As a people, the Jews rejected Jesus.

But there are many Jews who have come to know Jesus

and have given their hearts to Him. Such was the case with Dr. Joseph Wolff, who was born in 1795, shortly after the United States had become a nation. Joseph's story is told in the book *The Great Controversy*, an adaptation of which follows.

Joseph was born in a Jewish family in Germany. His father was a Jewish rabbi. While very young Joseph became convinced in his



heart that the Christian religion was true. He was always interested to listen to the conversations that took place in his home as faithful Jews often assembled to tell of their hope in the coming Messiah and the restoration of Israel. One day, Joseph heard someone mention the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

Joseph inquired, "Who was Jesus?"

"A Jew of the greatest talent," was the reply; "but as He pretended to be the Messiah, the Jews sentenced Him to death."

"Why?" young Joseph wanted to know. "Why was Jerusalem destroyed? Why are we in captivity?"

"Alas, alas!" answered his father, "because the Jews murdered the prophets."

Joseph thought, "Perhaps Jesus was also a prophet, and the Jews killed Him when He was innocent."

So strong was this feeling that Joseph often would linger outside the door of the Christian church to hear the preaching even though forbidden to enter the church.

One day an old man said kindly to Joseph: "Dear boy, I will tell you who the real Messiah was: He was Jesus of Nazareth, whom your ancestors have crucified, as they did the prophets of old. Go home and read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and you will be convinced that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

Joseph did just as the man suggested. As he opened the scripture, the words of truth spoke to his

heart. Yet his father forbade him to ever refer to the subject again. By age 11 Joseph left his father's house to get an education. He went from place to place until finally he was led to accept the Catholic faith. He purposed in his heart to become a missionary to his own people.

Eventually his travels took him to England where he converted to the Church of England. Later, Joseph Wolff became an avid student of prophecy, not only of the prophecies concerning Christ's first advent, but also of Christ's soon-coming second advent and the judgment to come.

Joseph traveled from continent to continent, enduring great trials and persecution, but he remained a courageous preacher. He proclaimed Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah, and he pointed all to look to Jesus, the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Joseph died in 1862, having spent his life telling others of Jesus and His love.

Does the love of Jesus burn in your heart? Would you like to be a missionary and share the good news of His soon coming and the judgment? God has a special purpose for your life.

While you are young is the very best time to give your heart to Jesus. He is coming soon, and He wants the world to know.

Submitted by Patti Guthrie

Are There Any Protestants?

An address delivered and a pamphlet written by
Alonzo T. Jones in Battle Creek, Michigan

[Note: The following is the substantial part of a pamphlet prepared by A. T. Jones after a "Meeting of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America" where this organization representing thirty Protestant denominations "intentionally and expressly repudiated the word 'Protestant,' " just as some men, today, have publicly declared that "The Protest is Over" which is a call to Protestants to return to Rome. Jones goes into the history of the term "Protestant" from the officially called meetings in the cities of Worms (1521) and Spires (in 1526 and 1529) that dealt with Protestants. It was in reaction to the decree of 1529 against liberty of conscience that the evangelical Princes in favor of the Reformation mounted a strong protest. It is from their stand that the term Protestant was coined to characterize Protestantism. This history is very appropriate for our day, especially in this year of the 500th year of the Protestant Reformation where there is a strong desire on the part of those who want to rewrite the history of the Reformation in order to become one in spirit with the papacy. Due to the limitation of space in this Newsletter the last three pages of the pamphlet are not included here. For those who desire to read the entire pamphlet you can go to

the Ellen White CD Rom under Pioneer Authors, Jones, Alonzo Trevier, "Are There Any Protestants?" or you can go on-line to the White Estate's Website and read it there. What is retained here is the history of the term Protestant.]

ARE THERE ANY PROTESTANTS

In Chicago, Ill., December 5, 1912, an assembly of three hundred and nineteen clerical delegates from thirty professedly Protestant denominations intentionally and expressly repudiated the word "Protestant."

That is an occurrence of such importance as to demand the serious attention of all: especially all the people of the United States. It is my purpose tonight to make as plain as possible both the fact and the meaning of it.

The meeting by which this thing was done was the "Second Quadrennial Meeting of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America" which was held in the Hotel LaSalle, Chicago, Ill., December 4-9, 1912.

This "Federal Council" is composed of thirty or more denominations, having a total membership of "more than seventeen millions." It was originally organized by five hundred delegates from twenty denominations, who met for the

purpose in Carnegie Hall, New York City, November 15-21, 1905.

In its original organization this "Federal Council of Churches" was expressly and distinctly Protestant. In the call under which the convention met in New York City the object of the proposed meeting was distinctly stated to be "to secure an effective organization of the various Protestant communions of this country"; and "to form a bond of union that will enable Protestant to present a solid front," etc. And now without any pressure from without, and without any issue or crisis to demand it, but spontaneously and voluntarily that professedly Protestant organization openly and expressly repudiates the word "Protestant"!

And this occurred in the very first business meeting of the Council, and in dealing with the very first "Report" that was made to the Council: that is, at the first possible opportunity.

The occasion of it was this: The "Executive Committee" presented its report. In that report the committee expressed the "earnest hope that the Second Federal Council will make yet more clear certain fundamental facts as to the churches of the country, through their federation." And the first of these was "The fact of the substantial unity of the Christian and Protestant Churches of the nation."

No sooner was opened the discussion of the report, than that word "Protestant" was challenged as if it were a mortal enemy. "Why emphasize a word that is not a

uniting but a dividing word? a word that recalls a most unhappy and trying experience," said one. "By using this word, you make it more difficult for many of your Christian brethren to work with you," said another. Discussion was soon cut off by a motion to resubmit the report to the committee for revision eliminating the word "Protestant." And this was so done as to express the "earnest hope" for the "fellowship of Catholic unity." Then the report was promptly and unanimously adopted, and with applause.

ORIGIN OF "PROTESTANT"

Now what is the meaning of such a transaction as that? What is the meaning of the word "Protestant"? How came it into the world? How came these people to bear it as a religious distinction? And since it should now be repudiated, was their bearing of it a mistake from the beginning? And if not a mistake from the beginning, and in the beginning, then when did it become such a mistake that it should be so incontinently repudiated?

The word "Protestant" as expressing a religious distinction, the word "Protestant" with a capital P, the word "Protestant" as dealt with by the Chicago Council of the Federated Churches, came into the world with the word "Protest" that was used in the Protest that was made at the Diet of Spires in Germany, April 19, 1529.

That Protest was made against the arbitrary, unjust, and persecuting, procedure of the papacy in that

Diet. This procedure in the Diet of Spires of 1529, swept away the religious liberty agreed upon and established in the Diet of Spires of 1526. This religious liberty guaranteed by the Diet of Spires of 1526, was the result of a deadlock in that Diet over the enforcement, by all the power of the then papacy, of the Edict of Worms that had been issued in 1521 commanding the destruction of Martin Luther, his adherents, his writings and all who printed or circulated his writings, or who on their own part should print or circulate the like.

Thus it will be seen that the Protest in which originated the word "Protestant" was against the effort of the papacy to destroy the Reformation, and was in behalf of the Reformation and its principles. And now for anybody to repudiate the word "Protestant," is to repudiate the Protest. To repudiate the Protest, is to repudiate as unworthy the cause in behalf of which the Protest was made. And that cause was the Reformation. Therefore, to repudiate the word "Protestant" is nothing less and nothing else than to repudiate the Reformation. And the Federal Council of Churches at Chicago, December 5, 1912, did unanimously repudiate the word "Protestant."

EDICT OF WORMS

And that all may see for themselves that just such is unquestionably the meaning of that action taken, let us consider directly the facts, documents, and dates, in which rests the unquestionable truth of the case.

In 1521 the Diet of Worms condemned Luther and the Reformation. There immediately followed, the "Edict of Worms" that is the key to the Protest in which originated [2] the word "Protestant." This Edict was issued by the Emperor Charles V. "the ablest and most powerful monarch of the sixteenth century." After denouncing Luther personally in sweeping terms, the imperial edict says:

"We have therefore sent this Luther from before our face, that all pious and sensible men may regard him as a fool, or a man possessed of the devil; and we expect that after the expiry of his safe-conduct, effectual means will be taken to arrest his furious rage.

"Wherefore, under pain of incurring the punishment due to the crime of treason, we forbid you to lodge the said Luther as soon as the fatal term shall be expired, to conceal him, give him meat or drink, and lend him, by word or deed, publicly or secretly, any kind of assistance. We enjoin you, moreover, to seize him, or cause him to be seized, wherever you find him, and bring him to us without any delay, or to keep him in all safety until you hear from us how you are to act with regard to him, and till you receive the recompense due to your exertions in so holy a work.

"As to his adherents, you will seize them, suppress them, and confiscate their goods.

"As to his writings, if the best food becomes the terror of all mankind as soon as a drop of poison is mixed with it, how much more

ought these books, which contain a deadly poison to the soul, to be not only rejected, but also annihilated! You will therefore burn them, or in some other way destroy them entirely.

“As to authors, poets, printers, painters, sellers or buyers of placards, writings or paintings, against the pope or the church, you will lay hold of their persons and their goods, and treat them according to your good pleasure.

“And if any one, whatever be his dignity, shall dare to act in contradiction to the decree of our imperial majesty, we ordain that he shall be placed under the ban of the empire.

“Let every one conform hereto.”

And that the emperor meant every word of that edict, and that it should be enforced in full of all that it said, is made plain in the following sentences which he wrote with his own hand:

“Sprung from the Christian emperors of Germany, from the Catholic kings of Spain, the archduke of Austria, and the dukes of Burgundy, who are all illustrious as defenders of the Roman faith, it is my firm purpose to follow the example of my ancestors. A single monk, led astray by his own folly, sets himself up in opposition to the faith of Christendom! I will sacrifice my dominions, my power, my friends, my treasure, my blood, my mind, and my life, to stay this impiety.”

There was practically a universal league of all the Catholic States

under the direction of the emperor and the Pope to enforce everywhere the Edict of Worms. This of necessity caused that the Princes who had received the Gospel should form an alliance mutually to support each other against the enforcement of the Edict of Worms in their dominions; and to give free course to the Gospel there. The document which these evangelical Princes signed reads as follows:

“God Almighty having, in His ineffable mercy caused His holy and eternal Word, the food of our souls and our greatest treasure here below, to appear again amongst men; and powerful maneuvers having been employed on the part of the clergy and their adherents to annihilate and extirpate it; we being firmly assured that He who has sent it to glorify His name upon the earth is able to maintain it, engage to preserve this holy Word to our people: and for this end to employ our goods, our lives, our States, our subjects, all that we possess—confiding not in our armies, but solely in the omnipotence of the Lord, whose instruments we desire to be.”

THE DIET OF SPIRES

There were eleven powerful princes who signed this document. This step effectually suspended the enforcement of the Edict of Worms; and thus matters stood at the assembling of the Diet of Spires, June 25, 1526. The emperor's instruction to the Diet ordered that “the church-customs should be maintained entire”; and

called upon the Diet to “punish those who refused to carry out the Edict of Worms.” Against the emperor’s instructions the evangelical Princes stood firmly for the Reformation; and their calm firmness encouraged the Princes who were willing to be neutral, to oppose the enforcement of the Edict of Worms in their States.

August 1, a general committee of the Diet reported the necessity of a reform of church abuses. No such thing as this was wanted by the papacy, and to counteract the report the church party brought forth a decree of the emperor commanding the enforcement of the Edict of Worms. The evangelical Princes broke the force of this move by citing the facts that this decree had been issued away back in the month of March, four months before this present Diet had met; that since that time the emperor and the pope had fallen out and were now at war; and that in this time the emperor had written to his brother saying, “Let us suspend the Edict of Worms.” This brought the Diet [of Spires] to a deadlock; and the way out was an agreement that there should be religious liberty: “Let every man do as he thinks fit, until a national free council shall be convoked: within a year”—from August 17, the date of the agreement.

The expected council was not called within the year suggested, nor at all. This allowed the religious liberty established by the Diet to prevail with no check or limitation.

The Second Diet of Spires met February 21, 1529. By this time the emperor and the pope were at one again, and unitedly were determined to destroy the Reformation; by sanction of the vote of the Diet if possible; and failing this, then by all the power of the empire. Accordingly in the Diet, March 15, the imperial commissioners announced that the emperor “by virtue of his supreme power” had annulled the resolution of religious liberty adopted by the Diet of Spires, August 17, 1526. This action of the emperor was wholly arbitrary. But as it was a part of the settled program, the papal party proceeded as if it were fully and formally legal; and the resolution of religious liberty being thus out of the way, they now demanded that the Diet order the full enforcement of the Edict of Worms. The evangelical Princes insisted on the maintenance of the resolution of religious liberty, of the Diet of 1526. In this they were wholly in the right, as well as wholly within their rights. For this was a decision of the Diet, regularly made; while the emperor’s annulment of it was wholly irregular and arbitrary.

THE PROTEST

April 7, 1529, the papal party secured a majority vote in the Diet for a resolution providing that: In all places where the Edict of Worms could not be enforced, there should be no new reform; the reformers should not touch any controverted point; they should not oppose any celebration of the

mass; they should not permit any Catholic to embrace the doctrines of Luther; they should acknowledge the episcopal jurisdiction of the Catholic church; and should not tolerate any Anabaptists nor any Sacramentarians.

This on its face was a proposal for the positive smothering of the Reformation; for it stopped every activity of the reformers, and gave full scope to every activity of the Catholics. The evangelical Princes contended that "This Diet is incompetent to do more than to preserve the religious liberty agreed upon in the former Diet, until the council shall meet according to the original agreement. Therefore we reject this decree. We reject it also because, in matters of faith the majority have no power."

The evangelicals were then ordered to submit to the majority. They [3] retired, according to custom, to deliberate. In their absence the imperial commissioners adjourned the meeting, declaring, "All is over. It is a settled affair. Submission is all that remains." When the evangelicals returned from their deliberation, to present their answer, and found the meeting adjourned, and the whole matter decided against them, and all in their absence, then, from this arbitrary and unjust course, those true Princes decided to "appeal to the Word of God, and from the Emperor Charles V to Jesus Christ the King of kings and Lord of lords." And the statement of this appeal formed the Protest that put the word "Protestant" in the world,

and gave to the Reformation the name and title of Protestant.

They said that they could not consent to the action and course of the majority in the Diet, "because it concerns the glory of God and the salvation of our souls, and that in such matters we ought to have regard, above all, to the commandment of God, who is King of kings and Lord of lords; each of us rendering Him account for himself, without caring the least in the world about majority or minority."

Also they said, "What! we ratify this edict! We assert that when Almighty God calls a man cannot, however, receive the knowledge of God! . . . For this reason we reject the yoke that is imposed upon us."

"Moreover, the new edict declaring the ministers shall preach the Gospel, explaining it according to the writings accepted by the holy Christian church; we think that, for this regulation to have any value, we should first agree on what is meant by the true and holy church. Now, seeing that there is great diversity of opinion in this respect; that there is no sure doctrine but such as is conformable to the word of God; we are resolved, with the grace of God, to maintain the pure and exclusive preaching of His holy word, such as it is contained in the biblical books of the old and new testament, without adding anything thereto that may be contrary to it.

"This Word is the only truth; it is the sure rule of all doctrine, and of all life, and can never fail or deceive us. He who builds on this

foundation shall stand against all the human vanities that are set up against it shall fall before the face of God.

“For these reasons, most dear lords, uncles, cousins, and friends, we earnestly entreat you to weigh carefully our grievances and our motives. If you do not yield to our request we PROTEST by these presents, before God, our only Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Savior, and who will one day be our Judge, as well as before all men and all creatures that we, for us and for our people, neither consent nor adhere in any manner whatsoever to the proposed decree, in anything that is contrary to God, to His holy word, to our right conscience, to the salvation of our souls, and to the last decree of Spires.”

Thus, in the presence of the Diet, “spoke out those courageous men whom Christendom will henceforth denominate ‘the Protestants.’ And that is the origin of the word “Protestant.” That is the true story of the word “Protestant,” as dealt with and repudiated [in Chicago] by the federal councils of churches, thirty denominations, “a membership of more than seventeen millions!”

The greatest gift that God could bestow upon men was bestowed in the gift of his beloved Son. The apostle says, “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” There was nothing held in reserve. No second probation will ever be provided. If the unspeakable

gift of God does not lead man to repentance, there is nothing that ever will move his heart. There is no power held in reserve to act upon his mind, and arouse his sensibilities. The whole character of God was revealed in his Son, the whole range of the possibilities of heaven is displayed for the acceptance of man in the Son of the Infinite One. The way for man’s return to God and heaven has no barriers. The matchless depths of the Saviour’s love have been demonstrated; and if this manifestation of God’s love for the children of men does not prevail to draw men to himself, there is nothing that ever will.

Those who will be saved in the kingdom of God will be those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The image of Christ will be perfected in every soul who accepts the gift of his grace, and those who are perfected through his grace, will stand before God equal in elevation, in power and purity, to the angels, and will be honored with them before the eternal throne. The angels of heaven will love those whom Christ has loved, and has bought with his own precious blood.

The attention of all the inhabitants of all worlds will be directed to the cross of Christ, around which will cluster the exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The imagination becomes exhausted in its stretch to comprehend the wonderful work of redemption. The plan of salvation is too high to be fully reached by human thought.

It is too grand to be fully embraced by finite comprehension. The apostle says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Can we wonder that Heaven is amazed because men act as though the gift of God were valueless? What will be the eternal loss of those who reject so great a salvation, offered freely through the merits of God's only-begotten and well-beloved Son!

{Ellen White, Signs of the Times, December 30, 1889 par. 6-8}

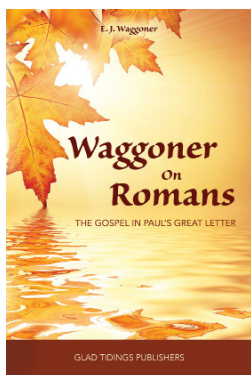
Meeting and Mastering Difficulties

Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away. Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Isaiah 41:9, 10.

Some workers who are depreciated by human wisdom are by God highly exalted. God will raise up men to do a certain work, and as they advance step by step, they will learn of the great I AM. As His work unfolds, they still move forward, under His leadership, performing that which He has placed in their hands. Another man, with supposed superior abilities, may come in, and looking upon the work of these men, may think that they should be replaced by wiser men. To his imagination, their work may look all tangled and spoiled, when the Lord is leading step by step. He would advocate that a change be made. He would try to make the workers see that they are making a great mistake in trying to carry on their work. But God sees not as man sees. The workers whom He is leading may at times be in great perplexity. It is His plan that many difficulties shall be met and mastered. He inspires the workers with the determination to make every apparent failure prove a success. They are determined to walk in the light that is shining on their pathway, and although they encounter many obstacles, yet they declare, "I will not fail or be discouraged." Often men pray and weep because of the perplexities and obstacles that confront them. But it is God's purpose for them to meet perplexities and obstacles, and if they will hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end, determined to carry forward the work of the Lord, He will make their way clear. Success will come to them as they perseveringly struggle against apparently insurmountable difficulties; and with success will come the greatest joy. God is preparing humble, contrite men to be valuable workers. He is giving them an experience that human wisdom cannot explain. He works upon minds by His own wisdom. Supposed mistakes are permitted to appear, that in unexpected ways (which human wisdom cannot comprehend) great glory may come to God. He is accomplishing His work in His own way. He consults His own purposes, not man's theories. The power with which He works through any man is proportionate to the man's earnestness and sincerity. In all that He does, He seeks the highest good of those who are laborers together with Him.

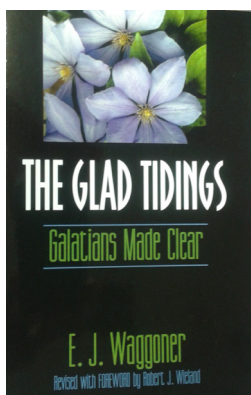
—Letter 162, April 12, 1903, to a conference executive.

PRODUCTS



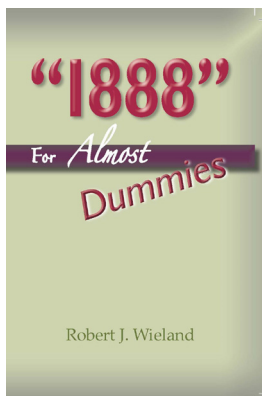
Waggoner on Romans E. J. Waggoner

This book from one of the 1888 messengers is unique in that it was never before published in book form. Originally appearing in *Signs of the Times*, this verse-by-verse study of Romans was printed in a series of articles from October 1895 through September 1896. Waggoner challenged the legalistic thinking of his revered elders in the ministry. This is the companion book to *The Glad Tidings* which is his verse-by-verse study of Galatians. Sixteen chapters, 260 pages. \$9.95



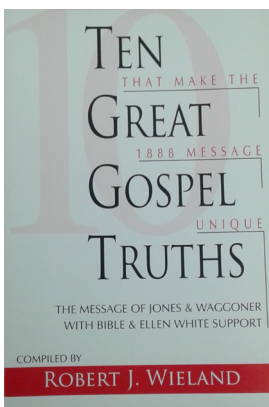
Glad Tidings E. J. Waggoner

This message, in a verse-by-verse study of Galatians, rocked the church to its foundation. Ellen White said, "Dr. Waggoner has spoken to us in a straight forward manner. There is precious light in what he has said." His vision of the stupendous reality of the cross of Christ is relevant present truth. This book sparked the current revival of interest in the 1888 message. Originally published in 1900, this is the revised edition as published in 1972. Six chapters, 144 pages. \$9.95



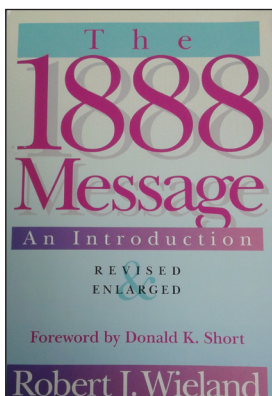
1888 For Almost Dummies Robert J. Wieland

There's tremendous meaning buried in "1888." And the One Who keeps bringing it up is the Holy Spirit. It marks the beginning of the world's second Pentecost, and people everywhere are at last beginning to ferret out the story. *"1888" For Almost Dummies* tells in a simple way, and in as few words as possible, what happened and what the message still is today. Ten chapters, 126 pages. \$9.95



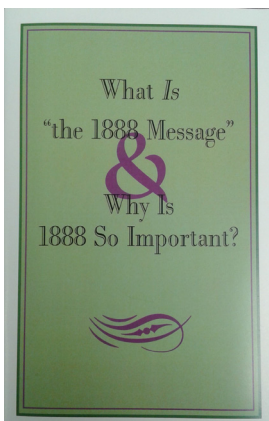
Ten Great Gospel Truths Robert J. Wieland

In capsule form, here are distilled the essential elements of the message which prompted Ellen White when she first heard it to say, “every fiber of my heart said, Amen.” Brought together in this book are, the Bible insights, Jones and Waggoner contributions and the Ellen White “Amens.” Clearly answers the most often asked question, “What was the 1888 message?” Excellent for group studies. 10 Chapters, 42 pages. \$9.95



The 1888 Message: An Introduction Robert J. Wieland

A book to fill an empty place in Adventist thinking. Much has been published by the official Adventist press about “1888,” but this book highlights the most essential elements of the 1888 message. The 1888 messengers are allowed to speak their own words, in ample context. Ellen White said that this message, astonishingly, was “the beginning” of the loud cry and the latter rain. The author demonstrates that the message of 1888 is not merely a “doctrine,” but a living, vital experience based on doctrine, with relevance in today’s world. The reader will find hope and encouragement that will enable the final generation to be “saints” who “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12). Sixteen chapters. 192 pages. \$9.95.



What Is The 1888 Message & Why Is 1888 So Important?

This little book may help you get hold of some solid, rock-bottom information. What is written here has already helped many to resolve the widespread confusion. It has strengthened their confidence in God’s leading of the church. Now they have learned a more meaningful hope for the final triumph of the gospel. Yes, in *this* generation. 22 pages. \$2.95

The Protestant Reformation and Unintended Consequences

“...my conscience is captive to the Word of God.”

October, 31, 2017 was the 500th year anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Martin Luther (1483–1546) was the key figure in the Reformation. He not only was the key figure in that Movement, he is one of the most significant figures in Western history. Over the course of his life, he was a monk, a priest, a university professor of biblical literature, a Reformer, a husband, and a father.

Luther is most noted for his 95 Theses (October 31, 1517), in which he argued that indulgences are not acts of penance which can replace true repentance. Luther did not intend to start another church. In tacking his Theses on the door of the Wittenberg church, he was simply announcing to scholars that he wanted to have a discussion about indulgences. He believed salvation could not be sold as announced by Johann Tetzel, papal salesman of indulgences and salvation.

Pope Leo X is the person responsible for the sale of indulgences at that time. He pushed the selling of indulgences in order to fund major renovation work on St Peter’s Basilica in Rome. Essentially, those willing to pay for an indulgence would be absolved of their sins in the eyes of the Church and, by extension, God – while the Church ensured a steady source of additional income for itself.

Tetzel was exceptionally good at selling indulgences, and his claims for the effect of indulgences were exceptionally extreme and superstitious. He is famous for the jingle:

**“As soon as the gold in the casket rings;
the rescued soul to heaven springs.”**

[So wie das Geld im Kasten klinget; die Seele aus dem

Fegfeuer springt]

This of course was in reference to the false doctrine of Purgatory which was and is believed to be a place of torment for temporal punishment for the forgiven sins of those who died in the Catholic faith. These were sins forgiven by priests in the confessional. Temporal Purgatorial punishment was and is believed in as an addition to what Jesus suffered and died.

Tetzel fed on the superstitious fears of the people. It was very easy to convince people who believed that their dear mother, wife, or beloved child were that very moment tortured in the flames in Purgatory. He pressed these people with emotional appeals to motivate them to pay money to release love ones from their torment.

Tetzel was able to produce much anxiety and stress in the minds and hearts of survivors of those who died and who were supposedly locked up and tormented in Purgatory. Accordingly, if family members paid sums of money, then the suffering of the dead would be shortened and finally released and admitted into heaven where they in turn could influence heaven to have mercy on those who paid the money.

It was reported on an occasion that when Tetzel was asked if an indulgence could be purchased for future sin, Tetzel replied “Yes.” So the story goes, that Tetzel was later beaten and robbed by the buyer, who said the act was the future sin in question.

As can be seen from Tetzel’s rhyming ditty above in which he put forth the notion that repentance was unnecessary on the part of the indulgence buyer to obtain the benefit of the indulgence. To Martin Luther this was ludicrous.

To this day, even the Roman Catholic Church condemns Tetzel’s extreme claims. Nevertheless, the Catholic Encyclopedia still supports indulgences as Christian doctrine which is stunning.

Later, Luther, because of the of the biblical teaching of justification by faith in Christ alone, soundly denounced the false doctrine of Purgatory. Edward Fudge wrote: **“Luther ... rejected the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory ... because purgatory clearly contradicted the doctrine of**

justification that [he] had discovered in the Bible.”¹

Before Luther learned the clear understanding of teaching of justification by faith alone he did believe in the torments of Purgatory. He came to an understanding and an experience of justification by faith over an extended period of time by which he rejected the doctrine of Purgatory.

Three times Luther heard, in his mind, Habakkuk 2:4 – “the just shall live by faith.” The first time was in Wittenberg. The next time was later while traveling toward Rome to see and to experience what he would find in that “holy” city. Upon arriving in Bologna, Italy, Luther became seriously ill. He thought he was about to die and cried out to God to prevent his dying in Italy. He wanted to die in his home country of Germany. He heard the statement from Habakkuk a second time and shortly thereafter he was healed and then continued his journey to Rome.²

God knew that it was good for Luther to go to Rome to see its corruption. This is how it came about. Luther was chosen by his Augustinian order to represent them on a mission to Rome several years after his ordination. As he journeyed he became excited upon seeing Rome in the distance. When he reached the city he saluted it saying, “Hail, Holy Rome!” But the more he saw of Rome and the actual situation there, the more disillusioned he became. He was especially disappointed with the low level of morality among the priests. That which he assumed to be holy, was nearly totally debased. He listened to priests laughing and cursing while performing the liturgy of the mass in the dead Latin language. Some of the priests chided Luther for his conscientious ways.

But Luther was determined to get whatever blessings he could in Rome, both for himself and for family. He performed rites and ceremonies to gain indulgences in order to get his grandparents out of Purgatory. He said that he even “wished his parents were dead that he might deliver them out of purgatory by reading mass in the holy (?) city.”³

Finally Luther went to the place called Pilate’s staircase where Jesus walked when taken by armed guards to be tried by

Pilate. The claim is that the staircase was moved miraculously from Jerusalem to Rome. So Luther went there to perform another religious rite. This rite was performed by climbing the stairs on his knees and kissing plates supposedly representing Christ and/or the cross. (This rite is still performed there today. I have been there and have witnessed people climbing those stairs on their knees.)

In the Library of Rudolstadt, Germany, there is a manuscript written by Luther's youngest son where he recorded what his father told him and others about his experience on that staircase in Rome: "As he repeated his prayers on the Lateran staircase, the words of the prophet Habakkuk came suddenly to his mind: 'The just shall live by faith.' Thereupon he ceased his prayers, returned to Wittenberg, and took this as the chief foundation of all his doctrine."⁴

Later Luther reflecting on what Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans – "Before those words broke upon my mind I hated God and was angry with him because not content with frightening us sinners by the law and by the miseries of life, he still further increased our torture by the gospel. But when, by the Spirit of God,

I understood those words – 'The just shall live by faith!' – then I felt born again like a new man; I entered through the open doors into the very Paradise of God."⁵

The message of justification by faith alone, because of the authority of Scripture, became foundational to the Protestant Reformation. Luther recognized that this doctrine was what brought the papacy down from its lofty position of authority in both church and state.

Though Luther appreciated the protests made by Wycliffe and Hus, "he recognized his own efforts as qualitatively different. 'They attacked the life,' he said. 'I attack the doctrine.'"⁶ Luther saw the issue clearly. The primary issue was not reforming bad behavior, which needed to be changed, but it was to have the correct doctrine of justification by faith truly believed in heart and mind: "Others before me have contested practice. But to contest doctrine, that is to grab the goose by the neck!"⁷

Luther was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church on January 3, 1521. While the emperor, Charles V, should then have arrested and executed Luther, the intervention of Luther's prince, Elector Frederick III the Wise of Saxony, led to the decision that Luther would appear for a hearing at the Diet (a formal meeting) under the emperor's safe-conduct. It was April 17, 1521, when Luther went before the Diet at Worms, Germany. The second day of his trial, before the assembled priests and princes, Luther again refused to repudiate his works unless convinced of error by Scripture or by reason. **Charles and the church leaders would only accept an ironclad recantation. What they got was Luther's "Here I stand; I can do no other. God help me."** He stated that his conscience was bound by the Word of God.

Reformation scholar Heiko Oberman renders Luther's speech like this:

Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures or by evident reason – for I can believe neither pope nor councils alone, as it is clear that they have erred repeatedly and contradicted themselves – I consider myself convicted by the testimony of Holy Scripture, which is my basis; my conscience is captive to the Word of God. Thus I cannot and will not recant, because acting against one's conscience is neither safe nor sound. God help me. Amen.⁸

Needless to say, disorder broke out at the conclusion of Luther's refusal to recant, and the emperor hastily dismissed the Diet for the day. Luther was declared a heretic and an outlaw and was to be killed on sight after the Emperor's safe conduct decree came to an end. Luther was kidnapped by sympathetic princes and thus escaped the jaws of death. He was taken to Wartburg castle and there he translated the Bible into the German language which has greatly influenced both church and society.

The Reformation message has spawned movements and sparked controversy throughout the centuries. Wars have been fought both to defend and to destroy it. It began theological and political revolutions in Europe and in America. Let's consider

some of the unintended consequences.

Luther correctly proclaimed justification by faith in Christ along with liberty of conscience. He taught that liberty of conscience is the most important part of faith: “**Let there be no compulsion. I have been laboring for liberty of conscience. Liberty is the very essence of faith**” as recorded by historian Merle D'Aubigne.⁹ Mrs. White quoted Luther four times, by way of D'Aubigne, regarding faith and liberty of conscience.¹⁰

Liberty of conscience is the first consequence of justification by faith. It is the intended consequence. The conscience is set free when a person responds to Christ as Lord and Savior. There were unintended consequences that have lasted to this very day. These can be seen in the separation between church and state, religious and civil liberties, free markets and economies and constitutional governments.

In nations such as Spain and France that fought fiercely the teaching of justification by faith in Christ alone the results are there to see. These nations tortured and killed their law-abiding citizens because they believed the biblical doctrine of justification.

The consequence was the emptying from those nations their citizens who were the backbone of leadership and economy. Both nations attempted to destroy the Protestant Reformation. Both failed. Both passed from the scene as the leading nations of the world. The tiny Dutch Republic became the leading shipping magnate of the world. Later as England embraced the Reformation she grew in stature and became the leading nation of the world. During the lifetime of Queen Elisabeth, because she was Protestant, many attempts were made to assassinate her, but every attempt failed.

Spanish monarch, Philip II, under papal influence set out to conquer England by his mighty Spanish Armada. However, nearly the entire fleet was destroyed by the mighty hand of God. Phillip as a devout Catholic felt it was his duty to pope and country to invade and conquer England in order to convert the nation back to the Church of Rome. This was in 1588. Instead of victory, Spain deteriorated as a leading nation. However, he

papacy continued to try to destroy Protestantism in England as well as other nations. The Jesuits were the storm troopers chosen to do so.

In 1604 English King James I commissioned the translation of the Protestant Bible. It was completed in 1611 with the king's name attached to it. It is known today as the King James Bible. In 1605, there was a plot to blow up the English Parliament while the political leaders were in session. The goal of the assassins was their determination to maim and to kill as many Protestant leaders as possible including the king and his family. Had this plot occurred there would not be a 1611 English Protestant Bible. This vicious plan was attempted by Jesuit priests and their sympathizers. But they failed.

This plan of destruction is called the Gunpowder Treason Plot and the Jesuit Treason plot. Guy Fawkes, an explosive expert, was a member of a group of English Catholics who planned the Gunpowder Plot. This is what happened. These would-be assassins leased a storage room under The House of Lords. Fawkes was placed in charge of the gunpowder which they stockpiled there. However, prompted by an anonymous letter, authorities of Parliament searched Westminster Palace during the early hours of November 5, 1605 and found Fawkes guarding 36 barrels of gunpowder—enough to reduce the House of Lords to rubble. He later confessed and was executed for his high crime against England.

On January 15, 1606, Jesuit priests Garnet, Gerard, and Greenway (Tesimond) were declared as fugitives from justice. Tesimond and Gerard managed to escape England and live out their days in other places. Other Jesuits were found and arrested. Jesuit Humphrey Littleton was found guilty and was condemned to death, but in exchange for his life he told the authorities where to find Garnet. This Jesuit was soon captured, tried, found guilty and executed.

We must not leave out the establishment of the United States as an unintended consequence of the Protestant Reformation. This country was established on Protestant principles, namely

separation of church and state, religious and civil liberties, free markets and economics and a constitutional representative government of, by and for the people. The Constitution is the application of the Declaration of Independence. In this noble document, the founding document of this nation, God is testified to the Creator of all men. The second paragraph is explicit:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

We will close with the relationship of the three mentioned “certain unalienable Rights ... Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” in justification by faith. Happiness is a pursuit. Before this pursuit occurs, there must first be life. And before life there must be justification. This is spelled out in Romans 5, especially verse 18. **Because of Christ’s righteous life sacrificed on Calvary “the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.” Life is the result of justification.**

Because of this foundational doctrine both for this nation and for the continuing Reformation, the Third Angel’s Message, which is “justification by faith”¹¹ has been free to grow and to expand its influence throughout the nation and the world. This is the only nation in which it could prosper as it has. Our Church was established here, by God, because of the “unalienable rights” from Himself and embodied in the Declaration and in the Constitution.

In closing here is a reminder for us, in principle, from Edward Fudge’s charge to evangelicals regarding the

Reformation of which we are called to finish through God's grace alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone:

[T]oday's evangelicals sometimes take pride in the ecclesia reformata (“the church re-formed”), while overlooking the rest of the slogan that says semper reformanda (“always reforming”). The Reformers were busy men who had to battle on many fronts. But they were not immortal—and they died with some work still unfinished.¹²

We now are in the finishing time with the “work still unfinished.” Submitted by Jerry Finneman

Notes

¹Fudge, E. W. (2011). *The Fire That Consumes: A Biblical and Historical Study of the Doctrine of Final Punishment* (Third Edition, p. 13). Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.

²Merle D'Aubigne, *History of the Reformation, in one volume* (1872), p. 54.

³George Henry Trabert, *Church History for the People*, p. 196.

⁴D. A. Carson, Timothy J. Keller, *The Gospel as Center*, p. 165.

⁵*Exploring Psalms: An Expository Commentary, Volume 1*, p. 151.

⁶*Martin Luther—The Early Years: Christian History, Issue 34*.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸Heiko Oberman, *Man Between God and the Devil* (English edition Yale, 1989), p. 39.

⁹Merle D'Aubigne, *History of the Reformation*, b. 9, ch. 8.

¹⁰See: *The Signs of the Times*, October 25, 1883; *The Spirit of Prophecy, vol 4*, (1884), p. 148; *The Great Controversy* (1888), p. 189; *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 189.

¹¹*Review and Herald*, April 1, 1890.

¹²Fudge, E. W. (2011). *The Fire That Consumes: A Biblical and Historical Study of the Doctrine of Final Punishment* (Third Edition, p. 13). Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.

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1 Peter 1:12
1 Corinthians 4:9

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