

## **BEHOLD MY GOD**

This article presents only comments and statements made by the Seventh-day Adventist pioneers on the complete holiness of the character of God.

The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a REVELATION OF GOD'S CHARACTER OF LOVE.. {Ellen White, COL 415.5}

Let us not add to or take from that fact.

### THE CROSS IS A REVELATION OF GOD'S CHARACTER OF LOVE

Jesus placed the cross in line with the light coming from heaven, for it is there that it shall catch the eye of man. The cross is in direct line with the shining of the divine countenances, so that by beholding the cross men may see and know God and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. In beholding God we behold the One who poured out His soul unto death. In beholding the cross the view is extended to God, and His hatred of sin is discerned. But while we behold in the cross God's hatred of sin, we also behold His love for sinners, which is stronger than death. To the world the cross is the incontrovertible argument that God is truth and light and love. {OHC 45.5}

Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him. But man was deceived; his mind was darkened by Satan's sophistry. The height and depth of the love of God he did not know. For him there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God. {DA 761.5}

Through Jesus, God's mercy was manifested to men; but mercy does not set aside justice. The law reveals the attributes of God's character, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. God did not change His law, but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for man's redemption. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Cor. 5:19. {DA 762.1}

A.T.Jones GCB93

"Brethren, we are in the time, and we shall be in it from this time to the end of the world, when we may be brought at any hour or any day to a place where if we wait to reason, we are lost. We will take the wrong side, just as certainly as we wait to reason, we will take the wrong side. We can discern it only by that heavenly eyesalve by which "Ye shall know the truth," and as soon as the thing is suggested you can see the way all before you. We will be in places where the cause of God will hang upon what you or I shall say, and advantages that the enemy may have over us, will depend upon what you or I say. And in these times which are all the time, if you and I do not see and have the heavenly Spirit to give us the right word to say, we shall say the wrong word, and it will throw every one of our brethren on the defensive, and every soul of us will be at a disadvantage, because the enemy is getting to that place where he is scrutinizing every position we take.

The enemy is now watching every position we take, for the sole purpose of perverting it and to put us at a disadvantage. You and I need something more than human wisdom or our own reason to know how to take the right position. We will be in places

where the honor of the cause will depend upon us. Questions will be asked that you never heard in your life before. Before a committee, legislature, or something of that kind--in some place where God has called us and given us an opportunity to spread the light and the truth--a question may be asked that you never heard in your life. You will have to know at that instant what answer to make, you will not have time to think or reason about it. Questions will be asked which, if you take time, and pause to reason about it, the probabilities are that the reasonableness of the thing would appear directly the opposite to what the Spirit of God would say about it, because His ways are not our ways”.

Our God A Consuming Fire (A.T.Jones)                      “When Paul and Barnabas were in Antioch, and the Jews contradicted and blasphemed against those things which were spoken by Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles, these men of God waxed bold, and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Acts 13:46. Mark; it was not said, We judge you unworthy of eternal life. No; you "judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life." Every man who meets destruction passes upon himself the judgment of that destruction.”

All along the path that leads to death there are pains and penalties, there are sorrows and disappointments, there are warnings from God's messengers not to go on, and God will make it hard for the heedless and the headstrong to destroy themselves. All the way up the steep path leading to eternal life are wellsprings of joy to refresh the weary. The true, strong joy of the soul begins when Christ is formed within, the hope of glory. If you now choose the path where God leads, and go forward where the voice of duty calls, the difficulties which Satan has magnified before you will disappear. {2SM 169.1}

“Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6:7. God destroys no man. Every man who is destroyed will destroy himself. When a man stifles the admonitions of conscience, he sows the seeds of unbelief and these produce a sure harvest.... {OHC 26.4}

"They would none of my counsel, they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." Prov. 1:30-33. {OHC 26.5}

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What Pharaoh has done, will be done again and again by men until the close of probation. God destroys no man; but when a man stifles conviction, when he turns from evidence, he is sowing unbelief, and will reap as he has sown. As it was with Pharaoh, so it will be with him; when clearer light shines upon the truth, he will meet it with increased resistance, and the work of hardening the heart will go on with each rejection of the increasing light of heaven. In simplicity and truth we would speak to the impenitent in regard to the way in which men destroy their own souls. You are not to say that God is to blame, that he has made a decree against you. No, he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, and to the haven of eternal bliss. No soul is ever finally deserted of God, given up to his own ways, so long as there is any hope of his salvation. God follows men with appeals and warnings and assurances of compassion, until further opportunities and privileges would be wholly in vain. The responsibility rests upon the

sinner. God destroys no man; but after a time the wicked are given up to the destruction they have wrought for themselves.

#### OUR GOD A CONSUMING FIRE (ATJones)

All the Scripture is founded upon this thought,-- that it is not against the person, but against the thing to which the person has fastened himself, that the wrath of God comes. Then as the Lord executes vengeance primarily only against sin, as his wrath is only against ungodliness and unrighteousness, and he has done everything he could to get the people to separate from sin, then in that burning day when he comes, and reveals himself to the world, and the world sees him as he is, it will still be only sin against which he will execute vengeance.

What more could God do than he did do to take away sin? He gave his only begotten Son; Christ gave himself, that whosoever would believe on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. He pledges himself to every soul who will believe, that he shall not perish. The word does not read, as too often it is misread, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life. No such thing. The next verse has the "might" in it: "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." It may be, too. When God gave his Son, in that gift he established the eternal possibility that every soul in this world might be saved. But there is where the "might" is. There is where the "maybe" is. Because, whether any one is saved, depends upon what he chooses. The Lord will not save us in spite of ourselves. He has made it possible, in the gift of Christ, for every one of us to be saved. It depends upon us whether we choose the salvation that he has given; whether we will take the cross, and adopt the means, that will make it certain to us.

Destruction of sin is the only way of salvation. His name shall be called "Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." So when I accept his offer, as certainly as I believe in Jesus I shall not perish. And in that, I accept the provision that I will let sin go. I agree that I am willing to be separated from the sin, and that I will separate from sin. Listen: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed." Then the object of the cross of Christ is the destruction of sin. Never miss that thought. Hold fast to it forever: the cross of Jesus Christ-- the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the object of it-- is the destruction of sin. Thank the Lord, that object will be accomplished. Now let us read the whole verse: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. 6:6. Not only is there destruction of sin, but freedom from the service of sin. "For sin shall not have dominion over you." Verse 14. Let us follow that thought briefly right through the chapter. There is in it a whole world of Christian victory and joy. Not prepared for you. God in that day,-- the Lord Jesus Christ in that hour,-- when that word shall be spoken, will be just as sorrowful as he was in the hour of the cross. He will be just as sorry that these have to go into that place, which was not prepared for them, as he was in the hour of the cross. It is not his pleasure that any should be there. They are there because of that sin to which they have inseparably joined themselves. And that being their irrevocable choice, they simply have the opportunity now of receiving indeed, and to the full, that which they have chosen. They always had their choice; they made their choice; they stuck to their choice: and when they receive the consequences of their choice, indeed there is no room for complaint. God has done all that he could do, but they would not have it.

So, though it is a fact that the Lord does not desire any of this to come upon any

man, yet, as "God is a consuming fire," that is the way that he must come. Being a consuming fire, and coming as he is, he comes in flaming fire to visit upon wickedness that which is due; and whoever is joined with the wickedness has to go the same way.

It is his own choice to reject eternal life; and in rejecting that, he chooses death. Then when that death comes to him, which he has chosen-- who brought him to it? Who counted him worthy of death? Who judged him? Who sentenced him to death?-- Only himself. Nobody else is concerned in it at all. God did all that he could: he set eternal life before him; he surrounded him with every possible inducement, and every persuasion, to receive it; he made it attractive to him; it was adorned, decorated, made as beautiful as God's truth itself could be made, and his own heart approved of it; the Spirit of God said to him, "That is the right thing, that is the truth:" but he "had pleasure in unrighteousness." He rejected the word, and in rejecting the word of eternal life, he rejected eternal life; and in that he chose eternal death. And when he receives eternal death, it is only what he chose. He himself is the only one who counted himself worthy of it.

But when one has chosen Christ, and believes in him, there is no "maybe" about it any more. It shall be, then. Then the verse comes in where the shall is, and reads: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not [not, "might not"] perish, but have everlasting life." Believing in Jesus Christ takes away all the "maybe" that there ever was in it, and makes it an eternal shall be. So, then, to every soul who believes in Jesus, God says, I pledge myself that you "shall not perish." To every soul in this world, wicked as he may be, God's message is that he has made the provision, he has established the thing, and so firmly fixed it that just as certainly as a soul believes in Jesus Christ, that soul "shall not perish." That is a good offer. It is infinitely fair, and infinitely generous. It is as fair and generous as is God.

{DA 764.1}

This is not an act of arbitrary power on the part of God. The rejecters of His mercy reap that which they have sown. God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the service of sin, he separates from God, and thus cuts himself off from life. He is "alienated from the life of God." Christ says, "All they that hate Me love death." Eph. 4:18; Prov. 8:36. God gives them existence for a time that they may develop their character and reveal their principles. This accomplished, they receive the results of their own choice. By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love will destroy them.

At the beginning of the great controversy, the angels did not understand this. Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their sin, they would have perished; but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the inevitable result of sin. A doubt of God's goodness would have remained in their minds as evil seed, to produce its deadly fruit of sin and woe. {DA 764.2}

But not so when the great controversy shall be ended. Then, the plan of redemption having been completed, the character of God is revealed to all created intelligences. The precepts of His law are seen to be perfect and immutable. Then sin has made manifest its nature, Satan his character. Then the extermination of sin will vindicate God's love and establish His honor before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. {DA 764.3}

J.N.Andrews.

That death came into the world by sin; that it is the last enemy; that Satan has had the power of it; and that death and Satan shall both be destroyed in the lake of fire. Rom.

5:12; 1 Cor. 15:26; Heb. 2:14; Rev. 20.

W. Miller (Visions of Ezekiel)

Unbelief, that worst of all sins, that final, soul-destroying sin, which makes man an infidel, and sinks him down to dwell in endless woe, where hope and joy, and every grace that gives to life a blessing, are gone, forever gone - which distrusts the word of God given for the soul's salvation; discards the promises, although supported by the oath of God; and hinders the work of God, though Christ himself be engaged in it; - what shall we say of this climax of all sins?

Christ himself could not do many mighty works in his own country, and among his own kin, because of their unbelief. Unbelief caused the destruction of the Israelites in the wilderness; they did not rely on the word of God, his promises they rejected, his precepts despised, his providence disregarded, and murmured against his government; therefore they were consumed in the wilderness. Unbelief will eventually prove the condemnation of the wicked. For the unbelieving, says John, shall have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death. This then, of all the evils of the human heart, brings most destructive consequences. For all that Christ has done for the salvation of sinful man cannot save an unbeliever, and all that God has done, by sending his Son, and revealing his will, his word, his grace, and proving the truth thereof by a cloud of incontestable witnesses, showing man his fallen state, his need of salvation, the certainty of condemnation, placing before him the highest motives to happiness and glory, presenting the most deplorable condition of the finally impenitent, exciting the rational mind to virtue and holiness by the promise of great and lasting rewards, threatening the incorrigible with just and heavy judgments here, and in the world to come eternal banishment from all good; - all this will not effect his salvation; the unbeliever is an unbeliever still. Nothing, no motives, no threatenings, no rewards can move him. He remains unchanged. Yet there is one way and one only by which the unbelieving heart can be changed. And blessed be the name of God, he alone was able to discover the way and execute the plan. Infinite knowledge could devise, and creative power could do the work. You must be born again - created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

E.J.Waggoner. ( Study No.16 – 1891)

Mark it, the first angel proclaims the everlasting gospel; the second proclaims the fall of everyone who does not obey that gospel; and the third proclaims the punishment that will follow that fall and come upon those who do not obey. So the third is all in the first--the everlasting gospel. Yes, that everlasting gospel carries with it all truth. It is the power of God. That everlasting gospel, remember, is summed up in one thing--Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and of course risen again. We have nothing else in this world to proclaim to the people, whether we be preachers, Bible workers, colporteurs, or canvassers, or simply people who in the humble sphere of their own home let the light shine. All that any of us can carry to the world is Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Says one, That is taking an extreme view; are we going to throw away all the doctrines we have preached--the state of the dead, the Sabbath, and the law, and the punishment of the wicked? Throw them away? No, by no means. Preach them in season and out of season, but, nevertheless, preach nothing but Christ Jesus and Him crucified. For if you preach those things without preaching Christ and Him crucified, they are shorn of their power, for Paul says that Christ sent him to preach the gospel, not with words of man's wisdom, lest the preaching of the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. The preaching of the cross and that alone is the power of God. I say again, the gospel is the power of God and the cross is the center of the gospel. "God forbid that I should glory,

save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Galatians 6:14. To Paul there was nothing else worthy of glorying in, save the cross of Jesus Christ his Lord.

He brought redemption to every soul who is under the law. But in order perfectly to bring that redemption to men under the law, He Himself must come to men, just where they are and as they are, under the law.

A.T.Jones "MADE UNDER THE LAW" And this He did, for he was "made under the law;" He was made "guilty;" He was made condemned by the law; He was "made" as guilty as any man is guilty who is under the law. He was "made" under condemnation as fully as any man is under condemnation because of his violation of the law. He was "made" under the curse as completely as any man in the world has ever been or ever can be under the curse. For it is written: "He that is hanged ["on a tree"] is accursed of God." Deut. 21:23.

The Hebrew makes this stronger still, for the literal translation is: "He that hangeth on a tree is the curse of God." And this is exactly the strength of the fact respecting Christ, for it is written that He was "made a curse." Thus, when He was made under the law, He was made ALL THAT IT MEANS to be under the law. He was made guilty; He was made condemned; He was made a curse.

But bear in mind forever that all this He "was made." He was none of this of Himself, of native fault, but all of it he "was made." And He was made it all for us: for us who are under the law; for us who are under condemnation because of transgression of the law; for us who are under the curse because of swearing and lying and killing and stealing and committing adultery and all the other infractions of the roll of God's law that goeth with us and that remaineth in our house.

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all [men] unto me.

The objective truth of the gospel, which includes the death that Christ died, has the drawing power. Take that truth away and the cross is robbed of that drawing power.

John 12:33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

John 12:34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

John 18:31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

The Jews wanted Christ put on the cross because they knew it meant, that Christ would be accursed of God. Our Brother bore "the curse" as us. He went into the very prison-house of death

John 18:32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

Christ died "the death" that the law demanded. We "sleep" awaiting the resurrection because Christ died that death. Sin killed the Son of God.

John 21:19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

Deuteronomy 21:22 And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree:

Deuteronomy 21:23 His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged [is] accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee [for] an inheritance.

The Sting of Sin.

#### EJW GTO 03 REDEEMED FROM THE CURSE

That death is the curse is evident from the last part of verse 13, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Christ was made a curse for us, in that He hung on a tree, that is, was crucified. But sin is the cause of death. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom.5:12. "The sting of death is sin." 1Cor.15:56. So we have the substance of verse 10 thus, that those who do not continue in the things written in the law are dead. That is, disobedience is death. And this is what the Scripture says: "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Sin contains death, and men out of Christ are "dead in trespasses and sins." It matters not that they walk about seemingly full of life, the words of Christ are, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." John 6:53. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." 1Tim.5:6. It is a living death--a body of death--that is endured. Rom.7:24. Sin is the transgression of the law; the wages of sin is death. The curse, therefore, is the death that is carried about concealed even in the most attractive sin. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

Redemption from the Curse. (E.J.Waggoner)

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." Let us stop right here and contemplate this fact, leaving the way of redemption for later consideration. We need to consider the statement very carefully, for some who read it straightway rush off frantically exclaiming, "We don't need to keep the law, because Christ has redeemed us from the curse of it," as though the text said that Christ redeemed us from the curse of obedience. Such read the Scriptures to no profit. The curse, as we have seen it, is disobedience. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Therefore, Christ has redeemed us from disobedience to the law. God sent forth His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." Rom.8:4.

Some one may lightly say, "Then we are all right; whatever we do is right so far as the law is concerned, since we are redeemed." It is true that all are redeemed, but not all have accepted redemption. Many say of Christ, "We will not have this Man to reign over us," and thrust the blessing of God from them. But redemption is for all; all have been purchased with the precious blood--the life--of Christ, and all may be, if they will, free from sin and death. By that blood we are redeemed from our "vain manner of life." 1Pet.1:18, R.V.

Stop and think what this means; let the full force of the announcement impress itself upon your consciousness. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law,"--from not continuing in all its righteous requirements. We need not sin any more. He has snapped asunder the cords of sin that bound us, so that we have but to accept His salvation in order to be free from every besetting sin. It is not necessary for us any longer to spend our lives in earnest longings for a better life, and in vain regrets for desires unrealized. Christ raises no false hopes, but He comes to the captives of sin, and cries to them, "Liberty! Your prison doors are open. Go forth." What more can be said? Christ has gained the complete victory over "this present evil world," over "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," and our faith in Him makes His victory ours. We have but to accept it.

#### Christ Made a Curse for Us.

That "Christ died for the ungodly" is evident to all who read the Bible. He "was delivered for our offenses." Rom.4:25. The Innocent suffered for the guilty; the Just for the unjust. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Is.53:5,6. But death came by sin. Death is the curse that has passed upon all men, simply because "all have sinned." So, as Christ was "made a curse for us," it follows that Christ was "made to be sin on our behalf." 2Cor.5:21, R.V. He bore "our sins in His own body" up to the tree. 1Pet.2:24, margin. Note that our sins were "in His body." It was no superficial work that He undertook. The sins were not merely figuratively laid on Him, but they were actually in Him. He was made a curse for us, made to be sin for us, and consequently suffered death for us.

To some this truth seems repugnant; to the Greeks it is foolishness, and to the Jews a stumbling-block, but "to us who are saved, it is the power of God." For bear in mind that it was our sins that He bore in His own body--not His own sins. The same scripture that tells us that He was made to be sin for us, assures us that He "knew no sin." The same text that tells us that He carried our sins "in His own body," is careful to let us know that He "did no sin." The fact that He could carry our sin about with Him, and in Him, being actually made to be sin for us, and yet not do any sin, is to His everlasting glory and our eternal salvation from sin. All the sins of all men were on Him, yet no person ever discovered the trace of sin upon Him. No sin was ever manifested in His life, although He took all sin upon Himself. He received it and swallowed it up by the power of the endless life in which He swallows up death. He can bear sin, and yet be untainted by it. It is by this marvelous life that He redeems us. He gives us His life, so that we may be freed from every taint of the sin that is in our flesh.

Christ, "in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death," "was heard in that He feared." Heb.5:7. But He died! Yes; but no one took His life from Him; He laid it down, that He might take it again. John 10:17,18. The pangs of death were loosed, "because it was not possible that He should be holden of it." Acts 2:24. Why was it not possible for death to hold Him, even though He voluntarily put Himself in its power?--Because He "knew no sin;" He took sin upon Himself, but was saved from its power. He was "in all things" "made like unto His brethren," "in all points tempted like as we are" (Heb.2:17; 4:15), and since He could of Himself do nothing (John 5:30), He prayed to the

Father to keep Him from being overcome and thereby falling under the power of death. And He was heard. In His case these words were fulfilled: "The Lord God will help Me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth Me; who will contend with Me?" Is.50:7,8.

Whose sin was it that thus oppressed Him, and from which He was delivered?--Not His own, for He had none. It was your sin and mine. Our sins have already been overcome--vanquished. We have to fight only with an already defeated foe. When you come to God "in the name of Jesus," having surrendered yourself to His death and life, so that you do not bear His name in vain, because Christ liveth in you, you have only to remember that every sin was on Him, and is still on Him, and that He is the conqueror, and straightway you will say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of His knowledge by us in every place." 2Cor.2:14.

### The Revelation of the Cross.

In Gal.3:13 we are brought back to the subject presented in Gal.2:20 and 3:1,--the ever-present cross. The subject is inexhaustible, but the following few facts may serve to open it up to our minds:--

1. The redemption from sin and death is accomplished through the cross. Gal.3:13.

2. The Gospel is all contained in the cross; for the Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom.1:16), and "unto us which are saved" the cross of Christ "is the power of God" (1Cor.1:18).

3. Christ is revealed to fallen men only as the Crucified and risen One. There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby salvation may be obtained (Acts 4:12), and, therefore, it is all that God sets forth before men, since He does not wish to confuse them. "Christ and Him crucified," is all that Paul wished to know; it is all that any man needs to know. Thus the one thing that men need is salvation; if they get that, they get all things; but salvation is found only in the cross of Christ; therefore, God puts before the eyes of men nothing else: He gives them just what they need. Jesus Christ is by God set forth openly crucified before the eyes of every man, so that there is no excuse for any to be lost, or to continue in sin.

4. Christ is set forth before men only as the crucified Redeemer; and since that from which men need to be saved is the curse, He is set forth as bearing the curse. Wherever there is any curse, there is Christ bearing it. We have already seen that Christ bore, and still bears, our curse, in that He bears our sin. He also bears the curse of the earth itself, for He bore the crown of thorns, and the curse pronounced on the earth was, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth." Gen.3:18. So the whole creation, which now groans under the curse, has been redeemed through the cross of Christ. Rom.8:19-23.

5. It is only on the cross that Christ bears the curse, for His being made a curse for us was indicated by His hanging on the cross. The cross is the symbol of the curse, but also of deliverance from the curse, since it is the cross of Christ, the Conqueror and Deliverer. The very curse itself, therefore, presents the cross, and proclaims our

deliverance.

6. Where is the curse? Ah, where is it not? The blindest can see it, if he will but acknowledge the evidence of his own senses. Imperfection is a curse, yea, that is the curse; and imperfection is on everything connected with this earth. Man is imperfect, and even the finest plant that grows from the earth is not as perfect as it might be. There is nothing that meets the eye that does not show the possibility of improvement, even if our untrained eyes can not see the absolute necessity of it. When God made the earth, everything was "very good," or, as the Hebrew idiom has it, "good exceedingly." God Himself could see no chance, no possibility, for improvement. But now it is different. The gardener spends his thought and labor trying to improve the fruits and flowers under his care. And since the best that the earth produces reveals the curse, what need be said of the gnarled, stunted growths, the withered and blasted buds and leaves and fruits, and the noxious, poisonous weeds? Everywhere "hath the curse devoured the earth." Is.24:6.

7. What, then, is the conclusion of the whole matter? Is it discouragement? Nay; "for God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." 1Thess.5:9. Although the curse is visible everywhere,--

"Change and decay in all around I see,"--  
yet things live, and men live. But the curse is death, and no man and no thing in creation can bear death and still live. Death kills. But Christ is He that liveth, and was dead, and is alive forevermore. Rev.1:18. He alone can bear the curse--death--and still live. Therefore, the fact that there is life on the earth and in man, in spite of the curse, is proof that the cross of Christ is everywhere. Every blade of grass, every leaf of the forest, every shrub and tree, every flower and fruit, even the bread that we eat, is stamped with the cross of Christ. In our own bodies is Christ crucified. Everywhere is that cross; and as the preaching of the cross is the power of God, which is the Gospel, so it is that the everlasting power of God is revealed in all things that He has made. That is "the power that worketh in us." Eph.3:20. Rom.1:16-20, compared with 1Cor.1:17,18, amounts to a plain declaration that the cross of Christ is seen in all the things that God has made--even in our own bodies.

Courage from Despair.

"Innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me." Ps.40:12. But not only may we with confidence cry unto God out of the depths, but God in His infinite mercy has so ordered it that the very depths themselves are a source of confidence. The fact that we are in the depths of sin, and yet live, is proof that God Himself, in the person of Christ on the cross, is present with us to deliver us. So everything, even the curse, for everything is under the curse, preaches the Gospel. Our own weakness and sinfulness, instead of being a cause of discouragement, are, if we believe the Lord, a pledge of redemption. Out of weakness we are made strong. "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." Rom.8:37. Truly, God has not left Himself without witness among men. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." 1Joh.5:10.

## The Blessing from the Curse.

Christ bore the curse, in order that the blessing might come to us. He bears the curse now, being crucified before us, and in us, and we with Him, that we may continually experience the blessing. Death to Him is life to us. If we willingly bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, the life also of Jesus will be manifested in our mortal flesh. 2Cor.4:10,11. He was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. 2Cor.5:21. What is the blessing that we receive through the curse that He bears? It is the blessing of salvation from sin; for as the curse is the transgression of the law (Gal.3:10), the blessing consists in turning away every one of us from our iniquities (Acts 3:26). Christ suffered the curse, even sin and death, "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ." And what is the blessing of Abraham? The writer of this Epistle, having stated that Abraham was made righteous by faith, adds: "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Rom.4:6-8. And then he shows that this blessing comes on the Gentiles as well as on the Jews who believe, because Abraham received it when he was uncircumcised, "that he might be the father of all them that believe." The blessing is freedom from sin, even as the curse is the doing of sin; and as the curse reveals the cross, so we find that the very curse is by the Lord made to proclaim the blessing. The fact that we live, although we are sinners, is the assurance that deliverance from the sin is ours. "While there's life there's hope," says the adage. Yes, because the Life is our hope. Thank God for the blessed hope! The blessing has come upon all men; for "as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom.5:18. God, who is "no respecter of persons," "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Eph.1:3. It is ours to keep. If any one has not this blessing, it is because he has not recognized the gift, or has deliberately thrown it away.

## A Finished Work.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law,"--from sin and death. This He has done by "being made a curse for us," and so we are freed from all necessity of sinning. Sin can have no dominion over us if we accept Christ in truth, and without reserve. This was just as much a present truth in the days of Abraham, Moses, David, and Isaiah, as it is to-day. More than seven hundred years before the cross was raised on Calvary, Isaiah, who testified of the things which he understood, because his own sin had been purged by a live coal from God's altar, said: "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. . . . The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Is.53:4-6. "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins; return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee." Is.44:22. Long before Isaiah's time, David wrote: "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." Ps.103:10,12.

"We which have believed do enter into rest," because "the works were finished from the foundation of the world." Heb.4:3. The blessing that we received is "the blessing

of Abraham." We have no other foundation than that of the apostles and prophets. Eph.2:20. It is a full and complete salvation that God has provided; it awaits us as we come into the world; and we do not relieve God of any burden by rejecting it, nor do we add to His labor by accepting it.

W.W.Prescott. GCB.

And "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Upon this foundation principle, that I, Jesus of Nazareth, am the Son of the living God, and that in me is united this principle that divinity dwells in humanity, upon that eternal and everlasting principle, I will establish my church, and the gates of hell, or the gates of death, shall not prevail against it, and they did not prevail against it; they did not prevail against it in him; they will not prevail against it in his followers, because he could not be holden of death. The sting of death is sin, and there being no sin in him, although he was treated like a sinner, yet there being no sin in him, the grave could not prevail against him, and he came forth from the grave, and it is worthy of note further in this connection, that he says, "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

W.W.Prescott. GCB. By sin, the kingdom of heaven was utterly and entirely shut against man, and mankind was shut away from God entirely, and he was as it were cast out of heaven and the door shut and he locked out, and the devil's plan was that, knowing that death would come as the result of sin, he should be shut up and locked up in death. But Jesus Christ came down from heaven, and coming down to take humanity, he brought with him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and he delivered those keys into the hands of humanity once more; he opened the way again into the kingdom of heaven for humanity. He went right into the very prison-house of death, right into the devil's stronghold, and when he came out, he took the keys with him, and as the scripture says in Revelation the first chapter, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death." And he went back to heaven and he took those keys back with him, but he left the keys of the kingdom of heaven here upon earth, and so he came down to exchange keys, and to put into the hands of humanity once more the power to be sons of God; and when he came, he took out of the hands of the devil the power to shut humanity away from the kingdom of heaven. That is what Jesus Christ has done in coming to this world.

E.J.Waggoner - EC - The Veil and the Shadow.

Life and Immortality brought to Light.

"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead," because the second man Adam is a quickening Spirit,<sup>1</sup> being "the resurrection and the life." Therefore in Christ death was abolished, and life and immortality were brought to light in the Gospel, the very day that Adam sinned. If it had not been so, Adam would have died that very day. Abraham and Sarah proved in their own bodies that Christ had abolished death, for they both experienced the power of the resurrection, rejoicing to see Christ's day. Long before their day, Enoch's translation without seeing death had proved

that its power was broken; and his translation was due to his faith in Christ. Much more, then, was "the Gospel dispensation" in full glory as far down in the history of the world as Sinai. Whatever other dispensation than the Gospel dispensation any people have ever shared, has been solely because of their hardness and impenitent heart, which despised the riches of God's goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, and treasured up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath. While unbelievers are under the old covenant, believers are at the same time in the new; for "if any man be in Christ, there is a new creation; old things have passed away: behold all things have become new. Gal. iii. 19. -11 Cor. xv. 21, 45.

### The Law in the Gospel, and the Gospel in the Law.

So even at Sinai the ministration of death was done away in Christ. The law was "in the hand of a Mediator,"<sup>2</sup> so that it was life to all who received it in Him. Death, which comes by sin, and the strength of which is the law, was abolished, and life put in its place to every one that believeth, no matter how many or how few they were.

But let no one forget that as the Gospel was in full glory at Sinai, even so the law just as given at Sinai, is always present in the Gospel. If the law on the lifeless tables of stone was but a shadow, it was nevertheless an exact shadow, of the living law on the living stone, Christ Jesus. God would have all men know, wherever His voice is heard, that the righteousness which Christ's obedience imparts to the believer is the righteousness that is described in the law spoken from Sinai. Not one letter can be altered. It is an exact photograph of the character of God in Christ. A photograph is but a shadow, it is true; but if the light is clear it is an exact representation of some substance. In this case the light was "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God,"<sup>(1)</sup> so that we may know the ten commandments to be the literal and exact form of God's righteousness. They describe to us just what the Holy Spirit will print in living letters of light upon the fleshy tables of our hearts if they are but sensitised by living faith. (1) 2 Cor. iv. 4.

### STUDY OF EDUCATION

By E. J. Waggoner, Tuesday, April 7, 8:00 A. M.

Take, for instance, Deut. 4:5, 6. Moses said, "Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."

It is not any mere "piety," as it is called in the worst sense of the term, --it is not any mere sentiment, --that you get in understanding the Bible, and taking the precepts of the Bible; but it is such wisdom as the nations of the world will recognize as wisdom. The Lord said that if His people kept His precepts, --and that means the whole Word, --the nations of the whole world would say, "This great nation is a wise and understanding people."

"The Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." You have the demonstration of that in the case of Solomon. He got his wisdom from the Lord, and kings sent ambassadors, and came themselves, from the ends of the earth, to hear the wisdom that Solomon got from the Lord.

But do not think that Solomon lay down to sleep one night, and dreamed, and woke up in the morning a wise man. Wisdom does not come that way. The verses in

Proverbs that I just read to you tell you how he got it. He cried for it; he inclined his ear for it; he searched for it as men search for silver and gold. You know how men search for silver and gold. They dig for it; they lie awake nights to plan how to get it. That is the one thing they are after, and they get it. Now the Lord says, whosoever will search for wisdom the same way, he shall know it, and he shall know every right way; he will know the right thing; he will not make mistakes.

The first Psalm tells us that the man who meditates on the law of God day and night, and who delights in it, shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water. I wish you would all go into the gardening business, even in your houses, where you can watch the plant growing, and see how it grows by the water. You can do it. You will be surprised how much education you can get out of seeing a single plant grow. Take some beans, some peas, some wheat, or some Indian corn, and put it in a moist place where it is reasonably warm. In two or three days it will sprout. Then take a glass jar or a tumblerful of water and tie over the top of it a little thin cloth, like cheese-cloth, that is not too tight in its meshes, and lay the seeds on that, and then keep it moist. Through the scent of water that is below it, it will grow. It will send its stock upward, and its roots downward. It is really wonderful to see the intelligence displayed, to see how methodically and how regularly that plant goes about its business of growing. You may find--you certainly will, if you have a lot of seeds together--that in some of the seeds the root end of the sprout will be uppermost, and the stalk will be below, so that it must go down; and yet the root, that must supply the stalk with nourishment, and which can get it only in liquid form, will turn, and will invariably go downward to find the water; and the stalk will turn and go upward.

And then, if you should have it in soil, and let it be in dry soil, and the moisture is upon one side only, you will find that those rootlets will make no mistake. They do not make any experiments, either; but, just as true and as certain as the needle will point to the pole, they will go directly to where the water is, and they will not go over the other way.

When we get this in mind, then we read the first Psalm. He that meditates on the law of God day and night "shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." That is, he will not be making experiments, and he will not be making mistakes. There is instruction in the Bible that will direct the man in the right way every time.

Now the reason men do not believe this (and most do not) is that we have not enough knowledge of the Bible; we have not done that thing enough yet to demonstrate it. But if we believe it, we shall find that it is so, just to the extent that we become familiar with the Scriptures--not merely technically, not merely with the head, but with the whole being.

I will take another scripture: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" or take another still; you have it in the last verse of the twenty-eighth of Job: "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." In the Psalms is another: "A good understanding have all they that keep His commandments." That agrees exactly with what we read in Deuteronomy, --that the keeping and doing of God's statutes and judgments "is your wisdom and your understanding." With this connect another scripture, found in the one hundred and thirtieth Psalm: "There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared." Now, since the fear of the Lord is wisdom, we find that a knowledge of God, and a knowledge of the Word of God, comes through the forgiveness of sins; and that brings us back to our original statement that it is in the cross of Christ that we get knowledge. The cross of Christ is to be the science and the song of the redeemed now and throughout eternity.

Let me bring it before your minds, so that you can see that this is reasonable. You can see it yourself, just as plainly as you can see the sunshine to-day. Suppose you take a man who is wise in all the knowledge of the schools of this world, but who does not know

and believe the Lord. He has not the one thing that is needful, but he is "cultured." You take another man who is illiterate. He can barely spell his way through the Bible, but he knows the Lord; he knows Jesus Christ, the Saviour from sin. Now let the Lord come; the one man goes into the pit of corruption; he is cut off just where he is; the other man goes into the kingdom of God, and studies there. And what will he study? What will be the subject of his study in the kingdom of God?

Voices: The science of the cross.

E. J. Waggoner: He will study the cross of Christ. That will be the only thing he will have to teach him to sing and to teach him all knowledge.

A thousand years and a little more will expire, and then those two men will stand on the earth together again. How will they then compare in knowledge? Which of the two will know the more, the man who has had all the wisdom of the schools, or the man who studied only the cross of Christ? Which do you think would stand the best examination?--Surely the man who was accounted ignorant in this world, but who knew the one thing needful. He had the key of knowledge, and then he had a thousand years of free access to all the treasures of knowledge; and you would find that he would stand the best examination, on whatever subject you might question him.

"But then," you will say, "that is too simple a proposition, because this man who was educated in the schools and went to the grave could not have been more than seventy or eighty years old, at the most, and the other man has had a thousand years. It is not a fair comparison at all. Any man ought to be able to learn more in a thousand years than another man could in fifty."

Well, then, suppose you place the two men several thousand years ago, when men lived a thousand years on earth. Let one man for a thousand years attend the worldly schools, studying and acquainting himself with all the knowledge of the schools, but not knowing God. Let the other man, accounted illiterate, know God and salvation by faith so well that the Lord is pleased with him, and takes him to heaven, as He did Enoch. Now one man goes to heaven a reputed ignorant man, and remains there a thousand years, studying only the cross; the other man remains on the earth, studying everything but God. At the end of the thousand years, who will be the better educated man?--Unquestionably the one who has had the better opportunities, the one studying the cross. He has had the wider range. He has had the key of knowledge. He started in the right way, at the beginning, for Christ is the beginning. And the wisdom of that second man will be wisdom that is recognized by the world as sound wisdom. He obtained it through the cross; but the world does not take that into the account. They simply recognize the fact that he has it. Then they will ask, as they did of Christ, "Whence hath this man wisdom?" Where did he get his knowledge? No matter how wise the scribes and Pharisees and doctors of the law were, they found that Christ knew more than they. "How did this Man get wisdom? He never went to our schools. We never had Him enrolled in the school at Jerusalem? How did He learn these things?" Brethren, do you know how He learned them? He meditated on the Word of God day and night, and that is the way He learned them.

ELDER FIFIELD spoke from the text, Jer.17:5-8. The idea many have of Christianity is this: God wants us to deny ourselves of everything here and be miserable in this world, for the sake of being happy by and by. But Satan, on the contrary, wants us to have a good time here, but is not thinking of the future. Never was there a greater libel on my Father. God is the best friend of the human race. He seeks to give us the greatest possible amount of happiness now and evermore, ever wishing to lift us into greater possibilities of joy; while Satan is the greatest enemy of mankind, never lifting the crystal goblet of bliss to the human lips, without dashing it to the ground as soon as a single drop has been tasted. Satan lied about God in the beginning, saying he was arbitrary and unjust and unkind; and all mankind, it would seem, have believed that lie. So far is this from the truth that the inspired Word tells us, "God is love." He is not love and justice, for justice is only an attribute of love. How can he who loves all men with an immortal love be unjust to any? Mercy and grace are only manifestations of love. Even the omniscience of God is the result of his love; because he is all-loving, he can be all-knowing. Hatred cannot know love.

Once infinite Love walked the earth in human form, and they crucified him, because they knew him not. But love seeth and comprehendeth all things. The power of God to make men righteous, is simply the power of his love to win men to love, which flows out in the acts of love. Even the wrath of God spoken of throughout the Bible, is his wrath not against the sinner, but against the sin. He hates the sin, because it is the enemy of the sinner whom he loves. The measure of his love for the sinner is the measure of his wrath against the sin. That wrath will never cease until sin shall be no more. His desire is, however, to save the sinner from his sin, so that he may not perish with it. When he does thus perish, the Lord says, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways."

Thus every attribute of God is simply the attribute of love. And love includes the all in all of our Father. His laws are simply the laws of a kind Father, intended to promote the happiness of his children. They are not arbitrary. It is not that God, sitting up on some high throne, said to mankind, You do thus and so, and I will let you live; but you do otherwise, and I will kill you. God does not kill. He is the Fountain of life. His laws are not so simply because he said so, but even so because they were so. In infinite wisdom he foreknew the underlying principles of happiness and life, and in infinite love he foretold these principles, saying, This way, my child; here is the joy and peace and life forevermore. Don't go that way. That way is misery and death. Every precept of the decalogue, which is the epitome of his law, directly speaks from this principle. He sought to lift man into the worship of one God and Father, that he might unite him into one loving family of brothers and sisters.

No human mind can comprehend God in his greatness, but should ever in humility hold itself in readiness to walk into a larger light. So God prohibits the imaging of him. For an image is but a creed in marble, seeking to make prominent the person, that which is at best but partial and incomplete. God would have all men regard his name with reverence, that that sacred name might have power to help lift men nearer him, and therefore nearer each other. In the Sabbath he established the fact that the only true God was the Creator. All false worship is a departure from the worship of the Creator to the worship of the created. He who worships the Creator only, sees an infinity of beauty which he cannot fathom, in each flower at his feet; and so masked in humility, ever holds himself ready to

know more of the infinity, of him who created not only the flower, but all the countless worlds. The happiest family, other things being equal, is one that loves and honors father and mother most. "Thou shalt not kill," guards the joy of living. "Thou shalt not steal," guards the joy of property honestly earned. "Thou shalt not commit adultery," guards the joy of family relation. "Thou shalt not bear false witness," guards the joy of reputation, also of property and life. "Thou shalt not covet," cuts off the tap-root of sin in the thought, which leads to all transgression. How solicitous our Father is of our utmost possible joy.

The obedience to these principles is happiness and life. It is unthinkable that there could be a time when, or a world where, the disobedience to these principles among intelligent beings, would not constitute misery and death. It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one precept of God's law to change. For the law rests in the infinite love which never changes. This law, when given to man, was not designed to be a dead law, condemning the human heart; but it was a living law, to have the divine, creative power of the gospel in it, to uplift the life - so many divine, creative promises. "Thou shalt have no other God's before me." "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." These are promises to the soul which sees them in the light of the gospel, and through faith in Christ rests on them; they will become the everlasting arms of love to uphold and support him forevermore. God requires us to form characters in harmony with his, not simply because he delights in such a character, but because it is the only possible basis of joy and peace. No soul, at last, will be shut out of the everlasting kingdom of joy, by any gate thrust in his face, but rather by his own incapacity to enter there. His life must be built in harmony with the principles of joy and happiness. He must be born again into these principles, and have them developed in his life; else to him the eternal life of the kingdom of joy is an impossibility.