



CHRIST OUR LIFE

E. J. WAGGONER

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Editor's Note

I HAVE gathered these studies from the *Present Truth* articles written by E. J. Waggoner from 1892 to 1899 for the purpose of putting a laser-like focus on the truth that a Christian is not merely a person with new ideas, but a person with an entirely new life dwelling within the spiritual nature.

This was an issue which I had difficulty understanding when I was a member of the Seventh-day Adventist church in my early 20's. I understood from what I had read and heard that eternal life would be granted to us in the resurrection, and that the Christian life until then was simply some added power through the Holy Spirit, combined with my own effort. But the Spirit could come and go, depending on the relationship I maintained with Christ.

A few years later, when I discovered the writings of E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones,—the “1888 message,” as it is sometimes called,—and especially as I was introduced to the ministry of F. T. Wright, whose message and experience were based on the 1888 message, I began to see how wrong I had been.

Perhaps one of the clearest booklets on this topic, which helped me greatly, is *The Living and the Dead*, by F. T. Wright, which is perfectly in harmony with the articles from Waggoner that I have selected here. Their message is the same, and thank God, it still has the same power!

Frank Zimmerman

1. Life in Christ

Present Truth, July 28, 1892

Romans 5

¹⁰ For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

MANY act and talk as if Christ was dead, and irrecoverably dead. Yes, He died; but He rose again, and lives forevermore. Christ is not in Joseph's new tomb. We have a risen Saviour.

What does the death of Christ do for us? Reconciles us to God;

1 Peter 3

¹⁸ For Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.

Now mark! It is the death of Christ that brings us to God; what is it that keeps us there? It is the life of Christ. We are "saved by His life." Now hold these words in your minds:

"Being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

Why was the life of Christ given?

John 3

¹⁶ God so loved the world, that he gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Then Christ gave His life that we might have life. Where is that life? And where can we get it?

John 1

⁴ In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

He alone has life, and He gives that life to as many as will accept it:

John 17

² As You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

Then Christ has the life, and He is the only one who has it, and He is willing to give it to us. Now what is that life?

³ And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.

Has a person who knows Christ eternal life? That is what the Word of God says. Again He says:

John 3

³⁶ He that believes on the Son has everlasting life.

These are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. How do we know that we have this life? This is an important question.

1 John 3

¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loves not his brother abides in death.

¹⁵ Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

Says one,

“We know that we will get eternal life by and by.”

Yes, that is true, but there is something better than that; we get it now. This is not a mere theory, it is the word of God. Let me illustrate:

Here are two men—brothers—to all appearances they are alike. But one is a Christian, and the other is not. Now the one that is a Christian, although there is nothing in his external appearance to indicate it, has a life that the other has not. He has passed from death—the state in which the other one is—to life. He has something that the other has not got, and that something is eternal life. The words, “No murderer has eternal

life abiding in him,” would mean nothing if nobody else had eternal life abiding in Him.

1 John 5

¹⁰ He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself; he that believes not God has made Him a liar; because he believes not the record that God gave of His Son.

God cannot lie, and so when we say that the words of God are not so, we make liars of ourselves. Now, according to this scripture, we make God a liar, if we believe not the record that God gave of His Son. What, then, must we believe in order to clear ourselves of that charge,—of not believing this record and thus making God a liar? The next verse explains it:

¹¹ And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

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

When Jesus went to Bethany, He said to Martha,

John 11

²⁵ I am the resurrection and the life.

We have already read about passing from death unto life; how was that done? Only by a resurrection. In Christ we have a resurrection to a new life. Note the following:

Philippians 3

¹⁰ That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection...

Paul prays that he may know Him and the “power of His resurrection.” What is the power of that resurrection?

Ephesians 2

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,

⁵ Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us [made us alive] together with Christ (by grace you are saved).

Notice, He has done this, and:

⁶ [He] has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

We were dead, we are quickened, and we are raised up to sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. We must have, and we can have, the life of Christ today; for when He comes, He will change our vile bodies by the same power by which He has changed our hearts.

The heart must be changed now. It cannot be changed except by the life of Christ coming in and abiding in it. But when Christ is in the heart, we can live the life of Christ, and then when He comes, the glory will be revealed.

He was Christ when He was here upon earth, although He did not have a retinue of angels and glory visible about Him. He was Christ when He was the Man of Sorrows. Then, when He ascended, the glory was revealed. So with us. Christ must dwell in our hearts now, and when He comes and changes these bodies, then the glory will be revealed.

In *Hebrews* 5:2 we learn that the work of the high priest was to be one of compassion:

Hebrews 5

² Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

Hebrews 2

¹⁷ Wherefore in all things it behoved Him [Christ] to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

¹⁸ For in that He Himself has suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.

What is done by the compassion of Christ? Strength is given to us. What benefit is the compassion of Christ to us? He knows the strength we need. He knows what we need, when we need it, and how we need it. So the work of Christ as priest is for one thing—to deliver us from sin.

What is the power of Christ's priesthood? He is made priest,

Hebrews 7

¹⁶ ...not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

That is the power by which Christ delivers you and me from sin this day, and this hour, and every moment that we believe in Him.

No one could take life away from Christ. The wicked had no power to kill him. He laid his life down. But God raised Him up,

Acts 2

²⁴ ...having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that He should be held of it.

He had power in His life that defied death. He laid down, and took death upon Himself, that He might show His power over death. He defied death, He entered right into the realms of death—the grave—to show that He had power over it. Christ laid down His life; and when the time came for Him to do so, He took it up again.

Why was it that death could not hold Him? Because He was sinless. Sin had spent all its force on Him, and had not marred Him in the least. It had not made a single blot upon His character. His was a sinless life, and therefore the grave could have no power over Him.

It is that same life which we have when we believe on the Son of God. Give your sins to the Lord, and take that sinless

life in their place.

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

Oh, the glory of the thought, that there is life in Christ, and that we may have it! The just shall live by faith, because Christ lives in them.

Galatians 2

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

2. The Unconquerable Life

Present Truth, August 25, 1892

John 1 [RV]

⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

⁵ And the light shone in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.

THE marginal rendering, “overcame,” gives us the exact meaning of the text, and conveys a message of great comfort to the believer. Let us see what it is.

Christ is the light of the world:

John 8

¹² Then spoke Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

But His light is His life, as the text quoted states. The whole world was in the darkness of sin. This darkness was due to lack of knowledge of God; as the apostle Paul says that the Gentiles are...

Ephesians 4

¹⁸ ...darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them because of the hardening of their heart.

Satan the ruler of the darkness of this world, had done his utmost to deceive man as to the true character of God. He had made the world believe that God was like a man—cruel, vindictive, and passionate. Even the Jews, the people whom God had chosen to be the bearers of light to the world, had departed from God, and while professedly separate from the heathen, were enveloped in heathen darkness. Then Christ came, and

Matthew 4

¹⁶ The people which sat in darkness sought a great light, and

to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, to them did light spring up.

His name was Emmanuel, God with us.

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁹ God was in Christ.

God refuted the falsehoods of Satan, not by loud arguments, but simply by living His life among men, so that all might see it. He demonstrated the power of the life of God, and the possibility of its being manifested in men.

The life which Christ lived was untainted by sin. Satan exerted all his powerful arts, yet he could not affect that spotless life. Its light always shone with unwavering brilliancy.

Because Satan could not produce the least shadow of sin in the life, he could not bring it within his power, that of the grave. No one could take Christ's life from Him; He voluntarily laid it down. And for the same reason, when He had laid it down, Satan could not prevent Him from taking it up again. Said He:

John 10

¹⁷ Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

¹⁸ No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

To the same intent are the words of the apostle Peter concerning Christ:

Acts 2

²⁴ Whom God has raised up having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that He should be held of it.

Thus was demonstrated the right of the Lord Jesus Christ to be made a high priest...

Hebrews 7

¹⁶ ...after the power of an endless life.

This endless, spotless life Christ gives to all who believe on Him.

John 17

² As you have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as you have given Him.

³ And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.

Christ dwells in the hearts of all those who believe on Him.

Galatians 2

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

Ephesians 3

¹⁶ That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man;

¹⁷ That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith...

Christ, the light of the world, dwelling in the hearts of His followers, constitutes them the light of the world. Their light comes not from themselves, but comes from Christ, who dwells in them. Their life is not from themselves, but it is the life of Christ manifest in their mortal flesh.

2 Corinthians 4

¹¹ For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

This is what it is to live “a Christian life.” This living light comes from God in a never-failing stream. The psalmist exclaims:

Psalm 36

⁹ For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light shall we see light.

Revelation 22

¹ And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

¹⁷ And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that hears, say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

John 4

¹³ Whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again:

¹⁴ But whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

John 6

⁵³ Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

⁵⁴ Whoso eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, has eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

⁵⁵ For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

⁵⁶ He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, dwells in me, and I in him.

⁵⁷ As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eats me, even he shall live by me.

This life of Christ we eat and drink by feasting upon His Word, for He added,

⁶³ It is the Spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.

Christ dwells in His inspired Word, and through it we get His life. This life is given freely to all who will receive it, as we read above; and again we read that Jesus stood and cried, saying,

John 7

³⁷ If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

This life is the Christian's light, and it is that which makes him a light to others. It is his life; and the blessed comfort to him is that no matter how great the darkness to which he has to pass, no darkness has power to put out that light. That light of life is his as long as he exercises faith, and the darkness cannot affect it. But all, therefore, who profess the truth of the Lord, have the confidence that can say,

Micah 7

⁸ Rejoice not against me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.

3. The Life of the Word

Present Truth, September 22, 1892

THE life of the word is the life of God, for it is God-breathed, and the breath of God is life. Its life and power are thus attested:

Hebrews 4 [RV]

¹² For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The Saviour, also said of the words of God,

John 6

⁶³ The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.

Let us see what gives the word its life. The 30th chapter of *Deuteronomy* follows the account of the curses for disobedience to the law, and the blessings for obedience. In it the people are again admonished to keep the law, and are told what the Lord will do for them, even after they have been disobedient if they will repent. Then Moses continues:

Deuteronomy 30

¹¹ For this commandment which I command you this day, it is not hidden from you, neither is it far off.

¹² It is not in heaven, that you should say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

¹³ Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

¹⁴ But the word is very nigh unto you, in your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it.

Now compare carefully with this passage the words of the apostle Paul in:

Romans 10

⁶ But the righteousness which is of faith speaks on this wise, Say not in your heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

⁷ Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

⁸ But what does it say? The word is nigh you, even in your mouth, and in your heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

⁹ That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

¹⁰ For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

The careful reader will readily see that this latter passage is a quotation of the former, with additions in parentheses. These additions are comments made by the Holy Spirit. They tell us just what Moses meant by the word "commandment." Or, rather, since the Holy Spirit itself dictated the language in each case, in the latter passage it has made more clear what it meant in the first instance.

Notice that bringing the commandment down from heaven is shown to be the same as bringing Christ down from above, and that to bring the commandment from the deep is the same as to bring Christ up from the dead.

What is shown by this? Nothing more nor less than that the commandment, the law, or the entire word of the Lord, is identical with Christ.

Do not misunderstand. It is not meant that Christ is nothing more than the letters and words and sentences that we read in the Bible. Far from it. The fact is that whoever reads the Bible, and finds nothing but mere words, such as he may find in any other book, does not find the real word at all.

What is meant is that the real word is not a dead letter, but

is identical with Christ. Whoever finds the word indeed, finds Christ, and he who does not find Christ in the word, has not found the word of God. The apostle Paul says that:

Romans 10

¹⁷ Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

But he says also that Christ dwells in the heart by faith:

Ephesians 3

¹⁷ That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.

So faith in the living word of God brings Christ into the heart. He is the life of the word. This is also shown in the same chapter in which we find the statement made by Christ that the words which he spoke were Spirit and life. We read:

John 6

³⁵ Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life.

Again:

⁵¹ I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

And again:

⁵⁴ Whoso eats my flesh and drinks my blood, has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Then He added:

⁶³ It is the Spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.

Here we find the plainest declaration that the word of God, received in faith, conveys Christ actually to the soul of man.

In the statement, “the flesh profits nothing,” we have the Romish “sacrifice of the mass” effectually undermined! Sup-

pose that it were actually possible for the priest to perform the feat of turning the bread of the sacrament into the body of Christ; that would not amount to anything. If Christ Himself had divided the actual flesh of His body, while on this earth, into portions large or small, and had given a piece to every man in the world, and each man had eaten his piece, that would not have affected the character of a single man in the world. Christ himself said that “the flesh profits nothing.”

The only way that any man in the world can eat the flesh of Christ is to believe His word with all his heart. In that way he will receive Christ indeed, and thus it is that:

Romans 10

¹⁰ With the heart man believes unto righteousness,

–for Christ is righteousness. And in this, the only way, any man in the world may eat the flesh of Christ, without the services of a priest or bishop.

This is a meager presentation of the theme, but who can do justice to it? No one can do more than take the simple statements of the Scriptures and meditate on them until the force of the fact begins to dawn on his mind.

The fact that Christ is in the real word, that the life of the word is the life of Christ, is a most stupendous one. It is the mystery of the gospel.

When we receive it as a fact, and appropriate it, then we shall know for ourselves the meaning of the words that man shall live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. *Deuteronomy* 8:3; *Matthew* 4:4.

4. Saved by His Life

Present Truth, October 6, 1892

THE death of Christ reconciles the believing sinner to God. Men are by nature the enemies of God, and this enmity consists in lack of subjection to His law.

Romans 8

⁷ Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

God's law is His life, and His life is peace. Therefore Christ is our Peace, because in Him we are made the righteousness of God, or, in other words, are conformed to the life of God.

In laying down His life, Christ gives it to everyone who will accept it. Those who do accept it, so that they can say, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me" (*Galatians 2:20*), are reconciled to God, because they have the same life. They have simply made an exchange, giving up their life to Christ, and taking His life instead.

When Christ gives Himself to a man, He gives the whole of His life. Each individual who believes gets the whole of Christ. He gets His life as an infant, as a child, as a youth, and as a mature man. The man who acknowledges that his whole life has been nothing but sin, and who willingly gives it up for Christ's sake, makes a complete exchange, and has Christ's life from infancy up to manhood, in the place of his own.

So he must necessarily be counted just before God. He is justified, not because God has consented to ignore his sin because of his faith, but because God has made him a righteous man—a doer of the law—by giving him His own righteous life.

That the forgiveness of sins is by receiving the life of Christ in the place of the sinful life, is shown by the statement concerning Christ, that:

Colossians 1

¹⁴ [we] have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

Leviticus 17

¹¹ It is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul, for the life of the flesh is in the blood.

So we have redemption through the blood of Christ, and are reconciled to God by His death, because in His death He gives us His life. The receiving of that life by faith makes us stand before God as though we had never sinned. The law scrutinizes us, and can find nothing wrong, because our old life is gone, and the life that we now have—the life of Christ—has never done anything wrong.

But what about the future? As we have been reconciled to God by the death of His Son, so now we are to be saved by that life which He gave us in His death. How are we to retain that life? Just as we received it.

Colossians 2

⁶ As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.

How did we receive Him? By faith. Therefore we are to retain His life by faith,

Galatians 3

¹¹ ...for, The just shall live by faith.

Faith in Christ supplies spiritual life just as surely as the eating of nourishing food supplies physical life. The Saviour says to us,

John 6

⁵⁴ Whoso eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, has eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

⁵⁵ For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

We eat His flesh, by feeding upon His word (verse 63), for it

is written that man shall live...

Deuteronomy 8

³ ...by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

Romans 5

¹⁰ ...much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

“Saved by His life.” What will be the nature of that life? It will be without sin,

1 John 3

⁵ ...for in Him is no sin.

⁴ Sin is the transgression of the law.

Therefore that life will be the righteousness of the law:

Romans 8

⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.

Hebrews 13

⁸ Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.

And so life the He will live in us now will be the same life that He lived when He was upon this earth eighteen hundred years ago. He came here to furnish a complete example to men of the life of God. Whatever He did then He will do now in those who accept Him, and whatever He did not do cannot be done by those who fully receive His life.

Let us notice some of the particulars of the conformity of His life to the law of God.

Tenth Commandment

To begin with the tenth commandment,

Exodus 20

¹⁷ You shall not covet.

So far was Jesus from manifesting any trace of covetous-

ness, that He did not even insist on having the things that belonged to Him.

Philippians 2 [RV, margin]

⁶ [He,] being in the form of God, counted it not a thing to be grasped to be on an equality with God,

⁷ But emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant.

Therefore the one in whom Christ dwells will not covet that which is not his, and will not even insist on always having his “rights.” Love, which is the filling of the law,

1 Corinthians 13

⁵ ...seeks not her own.

Ninth Commandment

Take the ninth commandment.

Exodus 20

¹⁶ You shall not bear false witness.

Nothing more need be said than that:

Revelation 3

¹⁴ [He is] the faithful and true witness.

1 Peter 2

²² [He] did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.

Those in whom Christ dwells will speak the truth, and will be characterized by:

2 Thessalonians 2

¹⁰ ...the love of the truth.

Eighth Commandment

Exodus 20

¹⁵ You shall not steal.

As for the eighth commandment, Christ’s fulfillment of that is sufficiently indicated in the reference to the tenth. He who would willingly give up that which was His own would be the

farthest from taking that which was another's. His whole life was one of giving. He was rich and became poor that others might be made rich.

Seventh Commandment

Exodus 20

¹⁴ You shall not commit adultery.

Christ could say,

John 14

²⁹ The prince of this world comes, and has nothing in me.

Therefore there was not the slightest trace of impurity in Him. He knew no sin.

Sixth Commandment

Exodus 20

¹³ You shall not kill.

His life was the perfection of the sixth commandment. He said,

Luke 9

⁵⁶ For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.

Acts 10

³⁸ [He] went about doing good.

He came to abolish death, and to bring life and immortality to light through the Gospel. *2 Timothy* 1:10. So He will live a life of love and good will to all men, in the soul of everyone who receives Him. There will be no anger, no strife, no jealousy nor envy, in the life of those whose life is Christ's.

First, Second, and Third Commandment

Exodus 20

³ You shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ You shall not make unto yourself any graven image...

⁵ [Nor] bow down yourself to them, nor serve them...

⁷ You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

There can be no idolatry in those in whom Christ dwells, for when He was tempted by the devil He resisted him with the words,

Luke 4

⁸ It is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.

Instead of having any other gods before the One God, His meat was to do the will of His Father in heaven. *John 4:34.*

Fifth Commandment

Exodus 20

¹² Honor your father and your mother...

Those in whom Christ lives His own life will reverence the aged, and be obedient to parents. Although Jesus was found by His parents sitting in the temple with the doctors, asking and answering questions, and astonishing the learned men by His wisdom, He did not deem Himself above obedience to parents.

Luke 2

⁵¹ He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them.

Fourth Commandment

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

And what about the fourth commandment?

Luke 4

¹⁶ As His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

He recognized the law of the Sabbath, saying,

Matthew 12

¹² It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days.

He called Himself the Lord of the Sabbath day, because He made it. Not a Sunday was ever kept by Him. Therefore there is no Sunday-keeping in His life, to give to those who believe in Him. His life can impart only the keeping of the Sabbath day. As He kept the Sabbath when He was on this earth, so He must keep it now in those in whom He lives. For He does not change.

Hebrews 13

⁸ [He is] the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.

When on this earth He lived the same life that He lived in heaven before coming to earth, and He lives the same life now that He did then.

There are multitudes who love the Lord, who do not yet know that the keeping of Sunday is no part of His life, and consequently have not yet submitted themselves to Him in this respect. But as they grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they will learn that the keeping of the Sabbath—the seventh day—is as much a part of the life of Christ as is obedience to parents or telling the truth, and they will let Him live this precept in them also.

As we let Christ dwell in us in His fullness, we become the sons of God, because it is Christ's life that we live; and the Father will be pleased with us even as He was with His only begotten Son.

5. Life from the Word

Present Truth, October 6, 1892

Deuteronomy 8

² And you shall remember all the way which the Lord your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments, or no.

³ And he humbled you, and suffered you to hunger, and fed you with manna, which you knew not, neither did your fathers know; that He might make you know that man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord does man live.

THIS reference shows that there was a special purpose in giving the manna to the children of Israel in the wilderness.

It was, of course, for the purpose of supplying their physical necessities, but that was not all. God could have supplied them with food in some other way. He could have led them through a land where they would have found sustenance; but He purposely led them through the wilderness, in places where they could find neither food nor water, in order that it might appear in the clearest manner that their food came directly from heaven. It was for the purpose of making them realize continually that God was their sole support.

Jesus referred to this after He had performed the miracle of feeding the five thousand with the five loaves and two fishes. The Jews blindly asked for a sign as proof of His ministry, and thought to set Moses up against Christ, as superior to Him, by saying,

John 6

³¹ Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

But Jesus answered them,

³² Verily, verily, I say unto you, It was not Moses that gave you the bread out of heaven; but my Father gives you the true bread out of heaven.

³³ For the bread of God is he which comes down from heaven, and gives life unto the world.

Christ, and not Moses, was the real leader of the children of Israel in the wilderness. He was bringing them out of the bondage of Egypt, not physical namely, but spiritual. He was leading them not to a merely temporal inheritance, but to an eternal inheritance of righteousness.

The keeping of the commandments of God was the sole condition of their everlasting inheritance. But they had no power to do that. Nevertheless, they were not to despair, and say,

Deuteronomy 30

¹² Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it [that is, the commandment] unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

Neither were they to say,

¹³ Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it [the commandments] unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?"

And why? The answer was thus given:

¹⁴ But the word is very nigh unto you, in your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it.

In our comparison of this text with the 10th chapter of *Romans*, in the last article, we found that the commandment here refers to none other than Christ. That is, they could find the commandment only by finding Christ, and He was near at hand. Outside of Christ there is no righteousness, no keeping of the commandments.

Some may think that this fact was not known in the time of Moses, but a careful reading of the 30th chapter of *Deuteronomy* shows that it was exactly what Moses was teaching the

people.

¹⁵ See, I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil;

¹⁶ In that I command you this day to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, that you may live and multiply.

This shows that life is found only in the keeping of the commandments of God.

¹⁹ I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing;

²⁰ Therefore choose life; that you may love the Lord your God, and that you may obey His voice, and that you may cleave unto Him; for He is your life, and the length of your days.

In this the people were plainly given to understand that their finding and keeping the commandments consisted solely in their finding and keeping Christ. With the heart man believes unto righteousness, because Christ dwells in the heart by faith. The life of the word is the life of Christ. We cannot understand how Christ's life is conveyed by the word when it is received in faith. It is the mystery of the incarnation. It is the mystery of God manifest in the flesh:

1 Timothy 3

¹⁶ And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.

But God does not leave His people to try to grasp abstract truth. He cannot explain it to our comprehension, but He illustrates it so that we may be sure of the fact. So for forty years he gave to the Jews a daily object lesson of the truth that He is their life. As they ate the manna which He gave them directly from heaven, so they were to eat of Him.

There was no human agency employed in supplying them with the manna for their physical necessities. So they were to

recognize the fact that no human power could give the righteousness which the law demands. That same lesson serves for us, for it was written for our learning.

We cannot understand how it is that the bread that we eat gives us life and strength. We know the fact, and that is sufficient. Physiologists trace for us the changes that the food undergoes in the process of digestion, but not one of them can tell how it is that bread is changed into bone and muscle. That is the mystery of life, which is within the power and comprehension of God alone. So, although we may not know how it is that God's word can give us life, we may know the fact.

In the raising of Lazarus and the ruler's daughter Christ gave to us instances of the life-giving power of His word. His word, "Lazarus, come forth," brought Lazarus from the grave in the full vigor of health. So at the last day His word will bring all the dead from their graves. The raising of the dead is accomplished by the same life-giving power that God bestows upon men in this world to save them from sin. Sin is death:

Romans 8

⁶ For to be carnally minded is death.

Ephesians 2

¹ And you has He quickened [made alive], who were dead in trespasses and sins.

To disbelieve that God does actually give us His life in Christ, as we accept His word in faith, is equivalent to disbelieving that Christ ever raised the dead, or that He ever will.

But whosoever believes that there was power in the word of Christ to raise Lazarus from the dead, because the word had the very life of Christ Himself in it, may have the same life in himself, by which to keep the commandments of God.

6. Light and Life

Present Truth, October 6, 1892

ONE of the characteristics of light is that it may multiply itself indefinitely without diminishing itself in the least. A lighted candle may give light to a million candles, and yet its own light be just as bright.

The sun supplies light and heat to this earth, and there is enough for all. Each individual gets as much benefit from the sun now as it was possible for anyone to get when the population of the earth was only half as great as it now is. The sun gives its whole strength to each person, and yet it has as much heat and light as though it supplied no one.

Jesus Christ is the Sun of righteousness, and the Light of the world. The light which He gives is His life.

John 1

⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

He says,

John 8

¹² He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

His life He gives for the world. All who believe on Him receive His life, and are saved by it. Just as the light of the candle is not diminished although many others are lighted by it, so Christ's life is not diminished though He gives it to many. Each individual may have it all in its fullness.

The light shone in the darkness, and the darkness could not overcome it. His light could not be quenched. Satan could not take His light, because he could not tempt Him to sin. So He could lay down His life, He still had as much left. His life triumphed over death. It is infinite life.

So He is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by Him. Christ will dwell in His completeness in every one who will let Him. This is the mystery of the Gospel.

7. Christ the Bread of Life

Present Truth, December 1, 1892

JESUS had gone over the Sea of Galilee with His disciples, and a great company of people had followed Him, because they had seen his power in the healing of disease. After He had finished His instruction for the day, He looked at the great multitude of people who had assembled, and said to Philip,

John 6

⁵ Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?

⁶ This he said to prove Philip, for He Himself knew what He would do.

After the disciples had shown that they did not know what to do, Jesus had the people sit down on the grass. There was a lad present who had with him five barley loaves and two fishes, an amount of food so utterly inadequate to the need of the people that we are not surprised at Andrew's remark,

⁹ What are they among so many?

If all had been equally divided among the five thousand men present, there would have been scarcely as much as a crumb apiece. But read what followed:

¹¹ And Jesus took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

¹² When they were filled, He said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

¹³ Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

What a wonderful miracle this was! It is certain that the five loaves with which they began, would not merely have

filled twelve baskets; therefore we find that there was a good deal more left after feeding the five thousand than there was when they began, so that in reality the original amount of bread was not drawn upon at all. There was an act of creation performed by Christ, who is the Creator of all things.

Colossians 1

¹⁶ In Him were all things created.

Creative power resides in Christ. As He took the bread in His hands, it multiplied. Therefore the bread which the people ate that day came from Christ.

All the miracles of Christ were done that we might believe that He is indeed the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, we might have life through His name. And no miracle that was ever performed shows more clearly than this how we may feed upon Him, and receive life thereby. We shall see that this was the lesson that Jesus intended to have us learn from it.

The next day the people followed Jesus to Capernaum, and there He exhorted them:

John 6

²⁷ Labor not for the meat that perishes, but for that meat which endures unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for Him has God the Father sealed.

They rightly understood that this meat that would endure forever consisted of acts of righteousness, and so they asked Him what they should do that they might work the works of God.

²⁹ Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent.

Believing on Christ means appropriating Him. Therefore the meat that endures unto everlasting life is righteousness, and that is obtained by believing or appropriating Christ. Je-

Jesus virtually said to them that He Himself was that food. With strange forgetfulness of the miracle that Jesus had wrought the day before, the people said:

³⁰ What sign do you show then, that we may see, and believe you? What do you work?

³¹ Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Jesus then proceeded to show them that the bread which the fathers ate in the desert was bread that God Himself gave to them, and that He Himself was the bread.

³² Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

³³ For the bread of God is He which comes down from heaven, and gives life unto the world.

³⁴ Then they said unto Him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

³⁵ And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that comes to me shall never hunger; and he that believes on me shall never thirst.

So that the miracle by which they had been fed the day before, was but a repetition of the miracle of giving the manna.

³³ For the bread of God is He which comes down from heaven, and gives life unto the world.

And then, to leave no possible doubt as to what he meant, Jesus added,

³⁵ I am the bread of life: he that comes to me shall never hunger; and he that believes on me shall never thirst.

Again:

⁴⁷ He that believes on me has everlasting life.

⁴⁸ I am that bread of life.

⁴⁹ Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are

dead.

⁵⁰ This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

⁵¹ I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

Here was a plain statement that just as their fathers had eaten manna in the desert, and they had eaten bread in the desert, and they had eaten bread in the desert the day before, by which physical life had been preserved, so they were to eat of Christ, the living bread, which would give them spiritual life forever. But this was too much for them to believe.

⁵² The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

The same question is asked at this day. How is it possible that we can get righteousness and life, even the righteousness of God, and eternal life, just by believing on Christ? Jesus said that it is by eating Him. But that only makes it seem more absurd to unbelief.

If the Jews had not been so blinded by unbelief, they would have thought how they had eaten bread from Christ the day before, and that would have answered their question. And to-day he who doubts that one may eat of Jesus, and thereby get His life of everlasting righteousness, shows that he does not believe the record of the feeding of the five thousand.

Jesus did not in any degree modify what He had said, to accommodate their unbelief.

⁵³ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

⁵⁴ Whoso eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, has eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

⁵⁵ For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

⁵⁶ He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, dwells in me, and I in him.

⁵⁷ As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eats me, even he shall live by me.

⁵⁸ This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eats of this bread shall live for ever.

The Jews ate the manna in the wilderness, and if they had seen things by faith, they would at the same time have eaten of Christ, who was signified by that manna. Thus they would have received eternal life.

Now the Bread of Life was there in person before them. He had come down from heaven to give Himself for the life of the world. Whosoever eats of Him shall have eternal life.

But though men might eat of the manna, and the natural bread that God gives them, without having any faith, no man can eat of the Bread of Life without faith; for it is by faith that Christ is eaten.

In this there is a lesson for all who come to the table of the Lord. The apostle Paul said,

1 Corinthians 10

¹⁶ The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

Men may eat of the bread of the Lord's Supper without any faith, but in that case they do not eat of Christ. He can be received only by faith. And He may be eaten at any time and all the time, for the eating of the bread of the communion is only to symbolize the continual eating of Christ.

But Jesus did not leave this matter in doubt. He himself explained the figure which He used. He said:

John 6

⁶³ It is the Spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing.

Suppose that it were possible for the priest to change the bread of the mass into the actual body of Christ, as it is claimed that he does; that would not amount to anything. Suppose that all men should eat of that bread; nay, more, suppose that Christ's physical body, as he was on the earth, had been divided up, and a piece given to every man, and that all had eaten it; that would have been to no profit. It is not physical meat that endures to everlasting life. The life is spiritual, and only spiritual food does supply it.

So it is not worthwhile to dispute as to whether or not the priest can transform the wafer into the body of Christ, since if he could, he would be doing nothing toward supplying the needs of men.

Christ is the Word. The Scriptures are from Him, and they are life. Their life is the life of God in Christ. Whosoever, therefore eats them, eats Christ. We eat them by believing them, and allowing them to work His own righteousness in our life.

Jeremiah 15

¹⁶ Your words were found, and I did eat them; and Your word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.

Now the question will arise,

“How it is possible that we can, by believing the words of Christ, receive righteousness and life?”

This is the very question that the Jews asked. No man can tell; we can only know the fact. He cannot so much as tell how the bread that we eat at our tables can become a part of our life. We know that it does so, and that satisfies us. No man was ever yet so foolish as to refuse to eat his breakfast be-

cause he could not know how it was going to give him renewed life. He has proved that it does, and that is enough. That daily food comes direct from Christ. It is He that gives us all things to enjoy.

1 Timothy 6

¹⁷ Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

And as men eat the bread that comes from Him, and are refreshed, so He wants them to eat of His own body, by means of His words—the bread of everlasting life, that so their soul may be refreshed. This is the word that comes to us all:

Psalm 34

⁸ Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusts in Him!

8. Christ the Water of Life

Present Truth, December 15, 1892

JESUS, wearied with His journey from Jerusalem, was sitting at noon by the well of Jacob, near the city of Sychar in Samaria, while His disciples were in the city in search of food.

As He sat there a woman of the city came to draw water, and Jesus said to her,

John 4

⁷ Give me to drink.

⁹ Then said the woman of Samaria unto Him, How is it that you, being a Jew, ask drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

¹⁰ Jesus answered and said unto her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give me to drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water.

¹¹ The woman said unto Him, Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then have you that living water?

¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

¹³ Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again;

¹⁴ But whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Truly it is no wonder that the woman said to Jesus,

¹⁵ Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

As yet she did not realize the nature of the water which Jesus promised. But afterwards when she found out just what He meant, she was still as willing to receive of it. What that

water is, which Jesus gives is made very clear by His words on the last day of the feast of the Jews:

John 7

³⁷ In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

³⁸ He that believes on me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly [out of his very being] shall flow rivers of living water.

Here we have the promise of living water, the same as He promised to the woman of Samaria. Here, as there, the water is to be in the very being of the one receiving it. And here we are told that that water of life is the Spirit of God, which is given to every believer in Christ.

Let us now read another statement. The Spirit of God through the apostle Paul said:

Romans 8

⁸ They that are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

¹⁰ And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you.

Here we have a parallel to the statement that the water that Christ gives will be in the believer a well of water springing up into everlasting life. It is life itself, because it is righteousness. The apostle has said that to be spiritually minded is life in peace.

⁶ For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

And we have also read that “the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” This, then, is that birth of the Spirit, which makes one an entirely new man; it makes the sinner a righteous man, a keeper of the law of God.

Romans 7

¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual.

That is, the law is of the nature of the Spirit of God. This is further shown by the fact that those things that are in harmony with the law of God, are the fruit of the Spirit:

Galatians 5

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

So the reception of the Spirit of God makes the sinner another person, with a different nature. It makes him living a different life.

The Spirit is the Spirit of God, and its righteousness is the righteousness of God, and that is expressed in the ten commandments. The Spirit ministers this righteousness to the man, and lives in him. His character is then the character of God, because he is one with God, he has been made a new creature, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

Ephesians 4

²⁴ [He has] put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

This is the beginning of eternal life, for the life of the Spirit of God is eternal, and it is that life which the man now lives. This is the life of Jesus manifest in mortal flesh.

2 Corinthians 4

¹¹ For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

It is of this that the beloved disciple speaks in his epistle, when he says that he who confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is born of God:

1 John 4

² Hereby know you the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God.

God dwells in that man as truly as His life was manifest in Jesus of Nazareth. Not because there is anything in the man himself comparable to Jesus of Nazareth, but because Jesus, who was the fullness of God dwells in him.

¹³ Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

This life is received by faith, and must be retained by faith. So long as a man keeps the faith, so long as he lives the life, for...

Romans 1

¹⁷ ...the just shall live by faith.

He may go to the grave, but nothing can affect his eternal life. That is...

Colossians 3

³ ...hid with Christ in God.

As it was not possible that the grave should hold Jesus,

Acts 2

²⁴ Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be held of it.

—so it is not possible that the grave should hold him. When he breathes his last he is just as sure of eternal life as he ever was. For Jesus said,

John 4

¹⁴ The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of wa-

ter springing up into everlasting life.

And again,

Romans 8

¹¹ If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you.

The power of the life that is given to the man at conversion, raises him from the dead, if he dies in faith. But let us read further as to the nature of this life which may be drank in as water.

9. The Life and the Law

Present Truth, December 15, 1892

Psalm 36

⁹ For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light shall we see light.

John 1

⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

THESE two texts, together with those in the preceding article, show very clearly that Christ is the life of all who receive Him. His life is the life of God. And we have seen that that life is righteousness; and that means that it is of the very nature of the law of God, for it is declared to be the righteousness of God.

A fountain is a place from which water flows freely and constantly. Therefore life may be received from God just as one would drink from a fountain to refresh himself. That this is the way that righteousness is to be obtained, the Scriptures plainly show. Let us trace the figure:

1 Corinthians 10

¹ Moreover, brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

² And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

³ And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

⁴ And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ.

Unmistakable reference is here made to the bringing of water from the rock in the wilderness, that the Israelites might drink. Let us turn to that. We find the record in the 17th chapter of *Exodus*. The people were in the desert, and there was no water. The Lord Himself had brought them there, but they did

not think of that, but concluded that they were about to perish.

Exodus 17

⁵ And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with you of the elders of Israel; and your rod, wherewith you smote the river, take in your hand, and go.

⁶ Behold, I will stand before you there upon the rock in Horeb; and you shall smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

Notice that this rock whence the water came, was in Horeb. Horeb and Sinai are the same, for whereas in *Exodus* the law is said to have been spoken from Sinai, in *Deuteronomy* it is said to have been spoken from Horeb; and in *Malachi* we read,

Malachi 4

⁴ Remember the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

So the water came from the same mountain from which the law was afterward spoken. Moreover, the water was flowing at the very time that the law was spoken. For there was no water in that place except what came from the rock, and if it had ceased flowing as soon as the people had once quenched their thirst, they would soon have been as bad off as they were before.

Now notice well whence the water came. Moses smote the rock, but he did not give the water to the people. Christ stood on the rock; and in *1 Corinthians* 10 we read that the people drank from the Rock which is Christ. The water came in a miraculous manner from Christ Himself. It was the same miracle that was afterwards performed in giving the multitudes bread, as we read in the last paper.

Of the manna we read that it was given that they might

know that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

Deuteronomy 8

3 And He humbled you, and suffered you to hunger, and fed you with manna, which you knew not, neither did your fathers know; that He might make you know that man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord does man live.

So it must have been with the water. It was to teach the people trust in the Lord, not only for temporal blessings, but for spiritual life also.

Now when we remember that Jesus says that He gives the water of life to all who believe in Him, and that this water is the Holy Spirit, which ministers the righteousness of the law of God, we must know that by giving the Israelites water in that miraculously manner, He meant to teach them that just as they drink that water to refresh their physical life, so they might by believing Him, drink of His righteousness.

That this is so is indicated by the words of Jesus in the sermon on the mount:

Matthew 5

⁶ Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

Sinai stands as the embodiment of law.

Romans 3

²⁰ [But] by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified.

This was indicated in the giving of the law. It was given amid thunders and lightnings, and an earthquake. It was death to so much as touch the mount. That indicated that no one could approach the holy law that was spoken therefrom, to obtain righteousness.

Romans 4

¹⁵ The law works wrath.

It has only death to give to the sinner. Yet it was a fact that no one could have life except he had the righteousness of that same law. What hope, then, was there for the people?

Why, this was the lesson that they were to learn from the circumstance, and which we are to learn from the record of it: Although righteousness cannot be obtained from the law, any more than the people could touch the mountain from which it was spoken, yet as they could stand afar off and drink of the water which was flowing from the mountain, so they could drink in the righteousness of the law by receiving Christ, the giver of the water. Happy would it have been for them if they had learned the lesson.

Thus we see that in the very giving of the law, the people were plainly taught that righteousness could not be gained from the law, but only through Christ. The law was ordained in the hands of a Mediator (*Galatians 3:19*), and Christ is the one Mediator between God and man. *1 Timothy 2:5*.

He is not Mediator in the sense that He shields us from the wrath of God, for God does not hate us. He loves sinners. But Christ is Mediator in the sense that through Him the righteousness of God is conveyed to us, so that we may be reconciled to Him. The water flowing from the rock as the law was spoken, was an indication that they could through Christ just as freely drink of the righteousness which the law demanded, and thus have eternal life.

Proverbs 4

²³ Out of the heart are the issues of life.

And the law of God was in the heart of the Lord Jesus.

Psalms 40

⁸ I delight to do Your will, O my God: yea, Your law is within

my heart.

Therefore the life which comes from Him to us is the righteousness of the law. Now see how things in the heavens were pictured out before the faces of the children of Israel, and before our faces, too, if we receive the Bible record as the living word of God.

The law of God is the foundation of the throne of God.

Psalm 89

¹⁴ Justice and judgment are the habitation of Your throne: mercy and truth shall go before Your face.

God dwells between the cherubim.

Psalm 80

¹ Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You that lead Joseph like a flock; You that dwell between the cherubims, shine forth.

In the sanctuary which Moses built, there was an ark, upon the cover of which were two cherubim, and within which, underneath the cherubim was the law of God, the ten commandments. It was between these two cherubim, over the law, that the glory of God appeared, and from there He spoke to the people. See *Exodus 25:10-22*.

Thus the ark was a symbol of the throne of God, showing that the law is literally the basis of it; for the earthly tabernacle was a pattern of things in the heavens. *Hebrews 9:23-24*.

Revelation 22

¹ And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

This river is a real, literal river, yet it is of it that we are to drink even now. For the call is,

Revelation 22

¹⁷ Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him

take the water of life freely.

And Jesus says,

Revelation 21

⁶ I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of water of life freely.

This river of water of life comes direct from the throne of God, and in that throne is the law. Of it we may drink freely. But as it comes from the throne of God, it is as it were charged with the righteousness of that law, so that as we drink it, we drink in the righteousness of God. And as that water is our life, just as earthly water gives fresh life to our fainting bodies, therefore our lives are filled with righteousness.

It was to impress this lesson upon the minds of the children of Israel in the desert that the things took place in connection with Sinai. And it was to impress the same lesson upon our minds that the record of those occurrences was written.

The mountain was the embodiment of law; the law had nothing but terror for them; but the water was flowing from the same mountain; it however came from Christ, from whom the law also came. All this was to teach us that the law which was spoken from Sinai is the standard of righteousness, but that while it is death to us when we come to it ourselves alone, it is life to us when we drink of it as Christ ministers it to us.

And thus may we know that His commandment is life eternal, and that whosoever will, may drink freely of the fountain of life, and thereby be filled with righteousness.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“Behold I freely give
The living water; thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live.”

I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.

10. Christ the Life-Giver

Present Truth, December 20, 1892

THE one object for which the Lord Jesus came to this earth was to bring life to lost mankind.

John 3

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 6

³³ For the bread of God is He which comes down from heaven and gives life unto the world.

And again Jesus said,

John 10

¹⁰ The thief comes not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

“Why,” says one, “I thought that He came to save people from sin.”

So He did. The words of the angel were,

Matthew 1

²¹ You shall call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.

1 Timothy 1

¹⁵ This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

And yet it is true that the sole purpose for which He came was to save people from death. How is this? The apostle tells us:

Romans 5

¹² By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

Sin brought death into the world. It is not merely that death followed in the train of sin, but that sin is itself death.

1 Corinthians 15

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin.

Romans 8

⁶ To be carnally minded is death.

Sin came in with death, because sin always carries death with it. Sin itself is nothing but a “body of death.” Therefore it is that Christ gives life by cleansing from sin. He saves from death by giving life, and so He saves from sin by giving righteousness. And both are one and the same act. For as sin is death, so is righteousness life.

Romans 8

⁶ To be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Christ came to give life, not merely as a consequence of righteousness that men might attain to, but He came to give life in righteousness.

Romans 5

¹⁰ For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

¹⁸ Therefore, 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.

In Christ there is life:

John 1

⁴ In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

He is “our life.” *Colossians* 3:4. Outside of Him there is no life:

1 John 5

¹² He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

Nay, more:

John 3

³⁶ He that believes on the Son has everlasting life; and he that believes not the Son shall not see life.

It seems strange that any who profess to honor the Lord Jesus Christ should, by claiming that men have life in themselves, frustrate the grace of God in giving His Son that they might have life. The origin of the doctrine that men have life in themselves, was in the idea that they can of themselves do acts of righteousness. This is shown by the Bible:

Luke 18

⁹ [The Pharisees] trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.

Their very name signified that they were separate from the rest of the people, because they thought themselves more holy. And of all the Jews it was true that they rested in the law. It was to them that Jesus said,

John 5 [RV]

³⁹ You search the Scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they that bear witness of me;

⁴⁰ And you will not come to me, that you may have life.

And why would they not come to Christ for life? Was it because they did not want life? Not by any means, because they thought that they had it themselves. They thought that they of themselves kept all the commandments of God, and of course if that were true, they had no need of anything from any one else.

Now almost all who profess belief in Christ acknowledge that righteousness can come only from Him. This is true. And why? Simply because the life of Christ is the only life ever lived on this earth that was free from sin. No other righteous life ever appeared on earth, and no other than He ever could

live a life of righteousness.

Moreover, there is no righteousness in the universe except the righteousness of God in Christ. Among all the hosts of the redeemed there will be only one righteousness. It will be the righteousness of one, and not of many, that will be manifested in heaven.

Romans 5

¹⁹ For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

What does this show? Simply this, that the life of Christ will be manifested in everyone who is saved. The life of Jesus manifested in mortal flesh is the mystery of God. Whoever has that life has righteousness; and whoever has righteousness has life.

So it is that they who do not have Christ have no life. The sting of death is in them, and if they die in their sins, there is no hope of life for them. Eternal death will be their portion.

We read that:

2 Timothy 1

¹⁰ [Christ] has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

He who seeks for life elsewhere than in the Gospel, will not find it. As we have seen, this life is manifested in mortal flesh. That is a mystery which we may know but cannot understand.

- It is the life of Christ, the same life which He lived in Judea and Galilee, and the same life which He now lives in heaven.
- It is that life which triumphed over death and the grave.
- It is that life which He could give up, and still retain.

When He lay in the grave, it was impossible that He should be held by death (*Acts 2:24*), because there was no unrighteousness in Him. This life is ours by faith. He who dies having kept the faith, dies in the possession of that life, and it is impossible for the grave to hold Him as it was for it to hold Christ. That life is “hid with Christ in God” (*Colossians 3:3*), and therefore Satan cannot touch it.

Therefore when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall the saints appear with Him in glory. At that time immortality will be conferred:

1 Corinthians 15 [RV]

⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

⁵⁴ But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory.

Then will the life of Christ be manifested in immortal flesh. But that mystery is but the continuation of the present mystery of the Gospel,—the life of Christ manifest in mortal flesh, as a life of righteousness.

11. The Power of the Resurrection

Present Truth, December 29, 1892

FROM the above brief statements of the Scripture, it will be seen that the power by which the dead will be raised incorruptible at the coming of Christ, is identical with the power by which they are converted from sin. Whoever therefore receives the life of God in Christ, as salvation from sin, experiences the power of the resurrection.

Philippians 3

¹⁰ That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death.

This is further shown in the epistle to the *Ephesians*. The prayer of the apostle is that God will give unto us:

Ephesians 1

¹⁷ The spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him;

¹⁸ The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

¹⁹ And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power,

²⁰ Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places.

We are to know the working of the same power that raised Christ from the dead. How this is, we learn from the opening of the next chapter:

Ephesians 2

¹ And you has He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith

He loved us,

⁵ Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, (by grace you are saved;)

⁶ And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

The same thing is stated in:

Colossians 2

¹⁰ And you are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power;

¹¹ In whom also you are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

¹² Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with Him through the faith of the operation [working] of God, who has raised Him from the dead.

¹³ And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has He quickened [made alive] together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses.

The power which thus raises the dead to life, is the word of God, both in the raising of those who are dead in sins, and in the resurrection of the dead at the coming of the Lord. The word of the Lord is alive (*Hebrews 4:12*), it is life itself (*John 6:63*), and it has power to give life. David said,

Psalm 119

⁵⁰ This is my comfort in my affliction; for Your word has quickened me.

And Christ said,

John 5

²⁸ Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice,

²⁹ And shall come forth.

And just before He said,

²⁵ The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.

Note the wonderful power of that word. The dead shall hear it, and shall live as a consequence of hearing it. So instantaneous is its action that its first sound gives life to the dead, so that they hear the voice which wakes them from the dead. And this “word of life” is that which is spoken to every one who believes, and which they are to hold forth in their lives.

The raising of the son of the widow of Nain, and of the daughter of Jairus, are instances of the life-giving power of the word of Christ. To the first Jesus said,

Luke 7

¹⁵ Young man, I say unto you, Arise.

To the other He said,

Luke 8

⁵⁴ Maid, Arise.

In both instances life was instantaneous. The signs were done that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing we might have life through His name. *John 20:31*. They were done that we might see how easily Jesus can raise us from the deadness of sin to the life of righteousness.

But some will say:

“Mine is no ordinary case. I am worse than others, and while I can believe that Jesus might save others who are not so sinful, I think that He cannot save me.”

They forget that sin is death, whether it be great or small, and that to raise one dead person is just the same as to raise another. In every case it is by the giving of His own life. It is no more difficult for the Lord to give His life to a very wicked person than it is to give it to one who has not sinned so greatly. But He has given us proof of this as well.

We have seen how easily Jesus raised the ruler’s daughter

and the son of the widow of Nain. They had been dead but a short time. The ruler's daughter died while Jesus was on the way to heal her and could have been dead but a few moments when He arrived. The breath had but just left the body.

But now look at the case of Lazarus. He had been dead for days, and had begun to decay. Yet it took no more words from the Lord to bring him from the tomb than it did to raise the others. Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth," and instantly Lazarus came forth alive. *John* 11:43-44. So there is no opportunity for one to say that God cannot save any sinner.

Hebrews 7

²⁵ He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him, because He ever lives to make intercession for them.

His life is everlasting and without limit. It is a light, which is not diminished by shining. He can give life to the whole world, and still have as much left as at the first.

The knowledge and the actual appropriation of this is the hope of the resurrection. In that day those who have been dead for thousands of years will hear the voice of the Son of God, and will come forth. But the power that will bring them forth is the very same power that now saves men from the corruption of sin. Thus,

2 Peter 1

³ His Divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

12. A Godly Life

Present Truth, July 13, 1893

Titus 2

¹¹ For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,

¹² Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

GODLINESS is of the character of God. The Scriptures declare it to be:

1 Timothy 4

⁸ ...profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

The character of God cannot be separated from His life. And the life of God is known only in Christ. Christ was good, for:

2 Corinthians 5

²¹ [He] knew no sin.

1 Peter 2

²² [He] did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.

Yet to the young man who came to Him and called Him “Good Master,” He said,

Mark 10

¹⁸ Why do you call me good? none is good save one, even God,

thus showing that He Himself was God. See also *John* 1:1, 14. To Philip, who said to Him,

John 14

⁸ Lord, show us the Father, and it suffices us,

He replied,

⁹ Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known me, Philip? He that has seen me has seen the Father.

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁹ God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.

Of His work He said,

John 14

¹⁰ The Father that dwells in me, He does the works.

His life, therefore, was in the fullest sense a godly life. It is the life of Christ that saves us:

Romans 5

¹⁰ For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Not the simple fact that He once lived on earth, but the fact of His now living in us. He is a present Saviour.

1 John 4

² Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is born of God.

Note well that it does not speak about confessing that Jesus *has* come or *did* come in the flesh, but that He *is* come in the flesh. Through Christ dwelling in the heart by faith, the life also of Jesus is to be manifested in our mortal flesh (2 *Corinthians* 4:11) that so we may be filled with the fullness of God. *Ephesians* 3:17-19.

Christ's life on earth was a life of obedience. Said He,

John 16

¹⁰ I have kept my Father's commandments.

Again,

John 8

⁴⁹ I honor my Father,

and,

⁵⁵ I know Him, and keep His saying.

He was subject to His earthly parents. *Luke* 2:51. He came to save life and not to destroy. *Luke* 10:56. So far was He from taking that which was not His own, or even from coveting, that He gladly gave up His own, and did not think it a prize to be retained. *Philippians* 2:5-7. No guile was in His mouth, for He was the embodiment of truth.

John 18

³⁷ To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.

He also kept the Sabbath day, namely the seventh day of the week, the same day that the Pharisees professed to keep. Although they found fault with Him for His acts of mercy on that day, they well knew that He was not violating the Sabbath, but only disregarding their senseless and wicked traditions.

They were constantly on His track seeking for something of which they might accuse Him to the rulers, yet they found nothing; and when at last He was betrayed into their hands, they had to bribe the false witnesses against Him.

It was His custom to attend service on the Sabbath day. *Luke* 4:16. As for Sunday, the first day of the week, no one has ever yet been found with the hardihood to claim that He ever paid any more attention to it than to any other working day.

Therefore the life of God, which Christ will live in us if we allow Him, will be a life of obedience to the commandments. There will be manifested in it obedience to parents, truthfulness, reverence, unselfishness, gentleness, together with Sabbath-keeping not merely in form, but in fact.

Since there was no Sunday observance in the life of Christ,

it is impossible for Him to put any of it into the lives of His followers. Where that is exhibited in the life, it shows a lack of perfect submission to the life of Christ, although that lack of submission may not be intentional, but may arise from failure to recognize Sabbath-keeping as part of His life.

But some one says,

“The keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath was part of Christ’s life as a Jew, and we are not saved by Christ as a Jew.”

Listen: Jesus Himself said,

John 4

²² Salvation is of the Jews.

His truthfulness, obedience to parents, reverence, gentleness, etc., were also a part of His life as a Jew. Shall we cast them aside? If we do, we shall simply be denying Christ.

Just think what it means to say that we are saved by Christ’s life, but not by His life as a Jew. It charges Christ Jesus with having two different lives, that is, of having two characters; with being changeable. Yet when a man is one thing in one place and another thing in another place, he is lightly esteemed. Even so must Christ be held in light esteem by those who think He lived any differently on earth, saving His poverty, than He did or does live in heaven.

No;

Hebrews 13

⁸ [Jesus Christ is] the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.

The life which He lived on earth was the life of God, and with Him there is...

James 1

¹⁷ ...no variableness neither shadow of turning.

To say that any portion of Christ's earthly life is not necessary for us, is to say that a part of God is of no consequence.

Christ lived on earth to give us a living example of the life of God, so that we may know to what we should submit, that He may live it in us. He left us an example, that we should follow in His steps. *1 Peter 2:21.*

Christ is not divided, and therefore we must take Him as a whole. When we take Him we shall not at first know all that there is in His life. Indeed we shall never be able to fathom the depths of His character. But we have such confidence in Him that we take Him on trust for all that may be revealed to us in Him, as well as for what we see in Him.

Who will make this complete surrender to Him, that He may fill them with the fullness of His life, and at last bring them to enjoy that life in immortality?

13. Our Life

Present Truth, October 12, 1893

Colossians 3

¹ If you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God.

² Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

³ For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

⁴ When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory.

Our life is in Christ, and outside of Him we have no life.

1 John 5

¹² He that has the Son has life, and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

Romans 6

²³ The wages of sin is death.

Death is the loss of life. Adam sinned, and the result was the loss of life to the human family.

Romans 5

¹² By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

But through Christ life is again brought within their reach.
For:

Romans 6

²³ The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5

¹⁸ 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.

By the provisions of the plan of salvation, Adam and his posterity obtained a stay of execution of the judgment which

God's law pronounces against the sinner, with the opportunity, meanwhile, to escape from it altogether. For although all men die in this world, both the righteous and the wicked, that death is not the wages of sin, but only a consequence of the moral nature that man has while upon probation.

Adam was placed upon probation with a different nature, and given access to the tree of life, of which he could eat and live for ever. His prosperity are upon probation with a fallen nature and without access to the tree of life. They are, for the present, without the means of maintaining life, and death is the natural result.

But this death is not taken account of in the reckoning which is finally to be made. The wages of sin is eternal death, and the gift of God is eternal life. The eternal death will be found in the lake of fire.

It was necessary, in order that this reckoning should be made with those placed upon probation, that all men should have a resurrection from the death that comes through Adam. Neither the gift of God nor the wages of sin could be bestowed were men to be left in the graves into which they sink at the close of their earthly lives.

The gift of God comes by accepting Christ, and the wages of sin, by rejecting Him. The sacrifice on the cross of Calvary determines what shall be given to every man—whether the gift of God, or the wages of sin. And therefore by the sacrifice of Christ comes the resurrection of all the dead, both those that awake to life, and those that awake to condemnation.

In the eye of the law, the criminal is dead the moment that sentence has been pronounced upon him, although some time may elapse before the sentence is executed. So the sinner out of Christ is accounted dead by the law of God, although the sentence of death is not immediately executed. He lives and moves here as though there were no wages of sin, and so far

as life is concerned there is no apparent difference between him and one who is righteous. But he is dead. God gives him a space of time to repent; but the judgment for sin is hanging over him, and unless he turns to Christ, there is no possible escape from his doom.

1 John 5

¹² He that has the Son of God has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

The righteous man has the Son of God and therefore has life; for righteousness comes alone through Christ. He seems to have no more life than the wicked and ungodly, but this is a truth that is known by faith and not by sight.

Like the sinner, he lives his allotted space here, and dies, and is laid away in the grave. But now is seen the mystery of the life through Christ; for the hand that is still and cold and lies motionless across the breast, has as strong a hold upon life as when it was animated by warm and flowing blood.

We see no life as we gaze upon the motionless form; and yet it is there. Amid the chill and gloom and shrouds that attend the entrance to the tomb, come again with all their power these words,

“He that has the Son of God has life.”

Death cannot take from us the Son of God.

Psalm 23

⁴ Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me.

Christ has been through the tomb, and robbed it of its dark terrors. When He came, it had an entrance; when He left, it had an entrance and an exit! And now the Christian, as he comes to the dark passage before which earth's journey ends, beholds an opening through it which shows a light beyond.

He enters it with his hand in the hand of Christ. We do not see His hand; but it is there. The Saviour never lets go the hand that is placed in His.

In the purposes of God, His sleeping saints still live. In His purposes those things that be not are counted as though they were. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years one day. *2 Peter 3:8*. He calls Himself:

Acts 3

¹³ ...the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

And Jesus declared that:

Matthew 22

³² God is not the God of the dead but of the living.

Not that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were then alive, for Christ spoke these words to prove a resurrection to come. But God counts them alive; for eternal life is theirs. In His eternal purposes, the lapse of time is not taken into account.

The Christian here is dead, and his life is "hid with Christ in God." *Colossians 3:3*. He lives in the world, but he is not of the world. There is no life in the world but the life of sin; and to that he counts himself dead. By the cross of Christ the world is crucified unto him, and he unto the world. He has life, but it is hid with Christ. It will not be seen or manifested till the day of His appearing.

And this life is obtained through death. Jesus passed through death that He might become the Prince of life to those that believe on Him. And we that believe on Him are crucified with Him. We likewise passed through death. We die to self that we may have life unto God.

Mark 8

³⁵ Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

Let us reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto the world, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ. *Romans 6:11.*

Romans 8

¹⁰ If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you.

Righteousness and life are inseparable, and if the Spirit of righteousness dwell in us, we shall be quickened by that Spirit unto eternal life at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whether we be living or dead, as Christ Himself was quickened from the dead.

Romans 8

¹² Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

¹³ For if you live after the flesh, you shall die; but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

2 Timothy 2

¹¹ It is a faithful saying, For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him:

¹² If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him.

Colossians 3

⁴ [For] when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory.

14. Love and Life from God

Present Truth, December 14, 1893

Original title: Front Page

1 John 3 [RV]

¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He that loves not abides in death.

THIS is much more comprehensive than the rendering, “He that loves not his brother, abides in death.” (KJV) Moreover it is identical with:

1 John 4

⁷ Love is of God,

¹⁹ We love, because He first loved us.

Perfect love is unselfish, and comes from God alone. It appears in man only when the love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit. *Romans 5:5*. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of life:

John 6

⁶³ It is the Spirit that quickens.

Romans 8

² The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Christ symbolized the Spirit as “living water” (*John 7:37, 39*), and also said,

John 4

¹⁴ Whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Romans 8

¹¹ If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you.

Love and life, therefore, come from God, through His Spirit. This is what is indicated by the text first quoted. Love is the evidence of having passed out of death into life. That is, the new life from above, which begins in those who believe on Christ (*John* 3:36) is love, and the beginning of that life in man is the beginning of love. True love and real life are identical.

John 3

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

In giving His Son, God gave Himself:

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁹ God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

It is the death of Christ that reconciles us to God. *Romans* 5:10. Therefore God was in Christ in His death. So the elders are exhorted to...

Acts 20

²⁸ ...feed the church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood.

We cannot understand the mystery of it, but the fact remains that God has given His own life for man; and those who pass from death to life, receive the life of God. Love is but the outflowing of the life of God.

1 John 5

⁴ This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.

Romans 13

¹⁰ Love works no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

We have seen that the life of God is love; and since love is the fulfilling of the law, it is evident that the life of God is the perfect law. So that life, love, and law are identical.

“God was in Christ;” in Him the life of God was fully exhibited, so that in the life of Christ we find the perfection of the law. As the hymn says:

My blest Redeemer, and my Lord,
I read my duty in Your word;
But in Your life the law appears
Drawn out in living characters.

What then necessarily follows from the fact that it is the life of God which comes into believers? Nothing less than that the law comes in with the life, because the life is the law.

What that law of life and love is, we see stated in the ten commandments, which Christ spoke from Sinai, and which He lived out in Judea and Galilee. He kept the Father’s commandments (*John* 15:10), because the law was within His heart:

Psalm 40

⁸ I delight to do Your will, O my God: yes, Your law is within my heart.

But Jesus Christ is:

Hebrews 13

⁸ ...the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.

Therefore when He lives in the heart by faith, He will live as He did when on earth eighteen hundred years ago. There will be no change.

God changes not (*Malachi* 3:6; *James* 1:17); Christ changes not; therefore the law which is but the life of God in Christ, cannot change.

Luke 16

¹⁷ It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

15. Celebrating Christ's Birth

Present Truth, December 28, 1893

MANY people think that it is almost infidelity, or even sacrilege, not to celebrate the birthday of Christ, even though no man has the slightest knowledge of the day or the month when it occurred. They would ask,

“Shall we not devote at least one day in the year to thinking of the miraculous birth of the Saviour?”

We would reply, not one day only, but every day. Let us see how this may be. The birth of Jesus was by the Holy Spirit. The angel said to Mary,

Luke 1

³⁵ The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you; therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God.

By that same Spirit's power Christ dwells in the hearts of all who believe. The Apostle Paul prayed to God for us,

Ephesians 3

¹⁶ That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man,

¹⁷ That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.

That is the only way that we can have real life, for Christ is our life:

Colossians 3

⁴ Christ, who is our life.

Christ in us is the hope of glory:

Colossians 1

²⁷ Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Now the birth of Christ is nothing to anyone in whom His birth is not repeated. Indeed, he in whom Christ's life has not sprung up, does not know of a certainty that He was ever born, and that He was crucified and raised. These things are known only by faith, and faith brings the life of Christ into our mortal bodies. No one can certainly know anything about Christ's birth, if he does not know Christ Himself; and we know Him only by His life.

John 17

³ And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.

1 John 1

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

² (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

³ That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

1 John 5

²⁰ And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

The birth of Christ, therefore, can be known and celebrated only through the new birth. But this is not accomplished once for all. That is to say, the new birth is not an event of one hour or one day, to be ever after looked back upon and celebrated.

1 John 5

¹ Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.

Note that he is born while he is believing. The new birth is complete only as it is continually progressing. To this end are

the words of the Apostle Paul, in:

2 Corinthians 4

¹⁰ Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

¹¹ For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

Here we have Christ formed within, the real life of Christ. Now read,

¹⁶ For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

He in whose heart Christ's life is not daily renewed, cannot celebrate His birth, because he knows nothing about it. The birth of Christ is not a thing of memory, but of present experience. We commemorate it not by observing days, but by putting on the new man,

Colossians 3

¹⁰ ...which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.

16. Reproving the Works of Darkness

Present Truth, December 28, 1893

IN THE home or at business many Christians are brought into association with those who do not honor Christ,—whose ways are a source of pain. At every turn we are reminded that, though not “of the world,” we are yet “in the world,” and surrounded by the darkness of the world. The Lord tells us what should be our relation to all this.

Ephesians 5

¹¹ Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them.

How is this reproof to be given? Is it by telling the wrongdoer of this or that act, and arraying before him its wickedness? Sometimes, when we knew no better, we have tried this way, and have found a warmth of spirit generated which left matters worse than before. In the verse following the one quoted, the Lord shows that this is not the way:

Ephesians 5

¹² For the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of.

Then sins may be reproved without even speaking of them.

¹³ But all things when they are reproved are made manifest by the light.

We reprove the works of darkness by holding forth the light.

John 3

²⁰ For every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

In the light sin is its own condemnation, and as Christ...

John 1

⁹ ...was the true Light which lights every man that comes

into the world,

—every man in sin knows the condemnation. Therefore the Christian is to be simply a light, a reflection of the glory of the life of Christ, and the light will reprove sin, and work with persuasive force to lead the sinner to yield.

It is not by pressing upon associates some form of words, or setting forth even various truths as a matter of doctrine, that we let the light shine. Many who are continually besieging their friends in this way cannot understand why their efforts are so unfruitful. The difficulty is this: the light is life.

John 1

⁴ In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

Only as we have the life can we have the light. But the life of Christ lived in the home or the place of business is the powerful and constant reprover of sin, even though no words are spoken. And the words spoken will not be to press condemnation more heavily upon the one in darkness, but they will flow out from the life within, full of light and helpfulness.

This is the way the Lord treated us. Dead in trespasses and sins he called to us,

Ephesians 5

¹⁴ Awake, you that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon you.

Then in the brightness of His glory self was made manifest. And we who “were once darkness,” became “light in the Lord” (*Ephesians* 5:8), and rejoiced in the life which He gave. Let us then:

⁸ ...walk as children of light:

⁹ (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth),

¹⁰ Proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord.

17. Dying and Living

Present Truth, January 25, 1894

John 12

²⁰ And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

²¹ The same came therefore to Philip,...and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

²² Philip came and told Andrew; and again Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

²³ And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

²⁴ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit.

BY THE reading of these words we are reminded of a similar statement made by the Apostle Paul, in reply to a foolish question about the resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15

³⁵ But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?

³⁶ You fool, that which you sow is not quickened, except it die.

It is said that:

John 12

²⁴ Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die it abides alone, but if it die, it brings forth much fruit.

Is that true? Here is a principle of natural history that is not found in pagan philosophy. It can be found only in the Bible: for it is contrary to the natural supposition. We have been apt, in reading it, to put a sort of mental interpretation upon it. We have thought,

“Of course, it does not really die; for if it should actually die that would be the end of it.”

Thus our carnal understanding takes the heart out of the Scriptures, by explaining them away. But the word says that if the corn of wheat die, it brings forth fruit.

1 Corinthians 15

³⁶ That which you sow is not quickened, except it die.

We know that there is no power in any creature to perpetuate its own existence. Whence then must the life of everything come? We read in *Job* 12:10 that in God's hand is the life, or soul, of every living thing.

Now we have seen it demonstrated that a corn of wheat put in the ground will bring forth much fruit. We have seen hundreds of grains, from one single corn of wheat. This is a fact that all know. Taking the Scriptures as the guide in natural philosophy, we know that death must have preceded the fruit bearing. Did the grain die and then bring itself to life again?

Life is there plainly enough, as shown by the green blade and the ripening ear. And we demonstrate that there is life in it by taking it and eating it. When we are so weak with hunger that we are half dead, and cannot work, we eat of the grain, and our spirits are revived.

There is life there; but that grain had to die before the life came. Where did that life come from? The whole thing is involved in this question. Does the grain come to life? No; because:

1 Corinthians 15

³⁷ That which you sow, you sow not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain;

³⁸ But God gives it a body as it has pleased Him, and to every seed his own body.

The apostle is here speaking of the resurrection. We read that sometime all that are in the graves will stand on the earth

again. They had actually died, and they could not bring themselves to life. What brings them to life? The word of God. They hear the voice of the Son of God.

John 5

²⁸ For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.

The life that will be manifested in those who are now turned to dust is not anything that is in that dust. The life comes from God. The whole process is stated in the 37th chapter of *Ezekiel*, where the Lord speaks, and bone comes to bone, and again He speaks, and flesh and sinews come, and then at His command breath comes into the bodies, and they live.

The resurrection of the body is illustrated by the grain, in the verses read from *1 Corinthians*. This means that the man who dies has no life in him, and no power in him to bring himself to life again. Life will be manifested there, because God puts it into him, just as He puts life into the seed that dies.

In the 1st chapter of *Genesis* we read that God said,

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth grass,...

Here we see that all life comes directly from God. In His word is life and He has given to every seed a body as it has pleased Him. It has troubled many minds to see how God had to do with every little thing in the world, that He was personally concerned with all things; but the joy of life is the recognition of the fact that God is concerned with every little thing, and that His life pervades all things.

Christ said,

Mark 4

²⁶ The kingdom of God is as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

²⁷ ...and the seed should spring and grow up, he knows not how.

²⁸ For the earth brings forth fruit of herself,

—or automatically, as “of herself” signifies. The word of God being in it implies growth, and the growth of the kingdom,—of the Gospel—is just like the growth of a plant. But the plant growth, we have seen, illustrates the resurrection.

Our Life

Is there any difference between the final resurrection life, and the life of Christ in men now? Not a particle; for in order to live with Christ we are to know the power of His resurrection:

Philippians 3

¹⁰ That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection...

We are to pass from death unto life:

1 John 3

¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loves not his brother abides in death.

Every man out of Christ is dead in trespasses and sins. But not every man recognizes this. Before man can partake of the life of Christ, therefore, he must reckon himself dead. And he who will reckon himself dead will live.

2 Timothy 2

¹¹ If we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him.

It is the same life that is given, and as in plant life death must precede the giving of it.

The Glory of God

In the *Psalms* we read:

Psalm 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.

² Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge.

³ There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

⁴ Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

⁵ In them has He set a tabernacle for the sun...

⁶ His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

⁸ The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The immediate source of all the heat and light, and so of all the life, to this earth is the sun.

⁶ There is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

The shaded soil, shut away from the light and heat of the sun is barren. Christ says of Himself,

John 8

¹² I am the Light of the world.

The glory of God is actual, the visible light. Men who have seen that glory in abundant measure, as Paul in the road to Damascus, have been blinded by it. When the Lord comes at the second advent the wicked are destroyed with the brightness of His glory.

2 Thessalonians 2

⁸ And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.

So we read of the New Jerusalem that it has no need of the

sun to shine in it:

Revelation 21

²³ For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

God says of Himself that He is a “Sun and Shield” (*Psalm* 84:11), and Christ is...

Malachi 4

² ...the Sun of Righteousness.

Christ the Light

Going back to the beginning we find that in Christ all things were created, and in Him all things consists. When He made the sun He made it a light-bearer and clothed it with light. But the sun did not originate light. The light came from God before the sun was created. He said,

Genesis 1

³ Let there be light.

And it came from Himself by His word. Then all the light that shines upon the earth comes directly from God. Not simply that He owns the light, but it is of and from Himself. He puts His own light in the sun. There is, of course, only a portion of His glory there—as much as the world can endure.

Psalm 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God.

In the 60th of *Isaiah* the Lord says,

Isaiah 60

¹ Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

The chapter begins in the present condition of the earth, and ends in the new earth. In the beginning darkness covers the earth, and in the end light covers all. The light which He says, “is come” is the same as that in which the nations of

them that are saved shall walk in the New Jerusalem; for,

Revelation 21

²³ ...the glory of God did lighten it.

And the word here in *Isaiah* is, “the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.” His glory is the light that has come. If we will receive it now, it is the same light. But the light of God has always been shining; for God...

John 1

⁹ ...lights every man that comes into the world.

And His light is His life.

⁴ In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

The terms light and life are interchangeable. Light is life. Therefore we get light from the Scriptures only when we get His life.

The Light of Law

In the 19th *Psalms*, which we have quoted, the Psalmist goes right on from talking of the light of the sun and of the firmament to the perfection in the law. But there is no break in the thought.

Proverbs 6

²³ The commandment is a lamp, and the law is light.

Psalms 119

¹³⁰ Your word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Now we have not taken this to mean a real light. We have thought of it as some sort of an effect upon the intellect. But the Bible says “the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light.” Now if we believe and know that the law of God is the light of God, then we must know that the law of God is an actual light, such as the eye can appreciate. The light of the Lord

is simply the manifestation of His life; and His life is the law; for in the life of Christ we find the law of God.

Proverbs 4

²³ Out of the heart are the issues of life.

Christ says,

Psalm 40

⁸ Your law is within my heart.

So the life of Christ was the law, and His life was the light of men. Christ lived the law before men, and it was said,

Matthew 4

¹⁶ The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

Says Christ,

John 7

¹² I am the light of the world, he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

The commandment is light, and the Word is a light to our path.

Gospel Light

Of the heavens the Psalmist says,

Psalm 19

³ There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

The speech or words come from the heavens. Whose words? The words of God, assuredly. In the 10th of *Romans* Paul quotes this verse, and says that the heavens are proclaiming the Gospel. And the proclaiming of the Gospel is the proclaiming of the glory of God.

Revelation 14

⁶ And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

⁷ Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

When the angels came to announce the Gospel to the shepherds, they proclaimed,

Luke 2

¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest.

He who receives the Gospel is receiving the glory of God, that God may be glorified. “The heavens declare the glory of God,” and Paul says that their words have gone out to all, preaching the Gospel. Is there any difference between the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the law in Christ? No; for the Gospel proclaims life in Christ, and in Him was the law dwelling in all its fullness. Therefore the proclamation of the Gospel is the proclamation of

Romans 8

² The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,

–making free from death. The heavens, then, are preaching the Gospel. The Gospel is God’s glory; His glory is His righteousness.

Righteousness is shown by the law. The law of God is indeed His righteousness. Then the heavens declare His righteousness, His law. So the Lord has put His law and His Gospel, His light, in the heavens. And he who will recognize the glory of the heavens as the living light of the living God, with gratitude and thankfulness, to him it will be righteousness.

The man who is constantly—momentarily—thanking God for the light of the sun, and His glory in the heavens and the things that He has made, will not be sinning. The recognition of the fact induces thankfulness. Only when men were not thankful they fell into sin.

Romans 1

²¹ Because that when they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful...their foolish heart was darkened.

We can glorify God by recognizing that the glory of the sun is the glory of God, and so of all His works. So if we continually recognize the light as coming from God, and thank Him for it, and the same with the air we breathe and the food we eat, every conscious moment recognizing that He is our life, and that He gives us life in the sunshine, and air, and food, our life will be to the glory of God, the law of God will be manifested in our life.

Changed by the Glory

Thus we see how the Psalmist can go on from the glory of the firmament to the law of God.

Psalm 19

⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.

In the sunlight we recognize God's glory, and in that is the law of God. While we are beholding the glory of God, we are "changed into the same image":

2 Corinthians 3

¹⁸ But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

As we have seen, it is only a portion of the glory that we see in the heavens and the works of God. Christ was the brightness of the Father's glory. If He had appeared on earth

in all the brightness of that glory it would have destroyed all. Therefore He veiled His glory in the flesh, and yet He was constantly manifesting forth the glory in His works. Of His first miracle it is said,

John 2

¹¹ This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory.

His works were works of graciousness and helpfulness. God's glory is to help and to save.

And when we recognize God's glory in the heavens,—all is placed there that the eyes can endure,—and are thankful to God in that recognition, and take it as His life, yielding ourselves to Him that He may do His will in us, He will live in us the same life that He lives in Himself. This must be so or else He would deny Himself.

As we are yielding to Him, looking at His glory, that glory is working in us. This is the law of Christian growth. Really is there any difference between natural law and moral law? The law of plant growth is the life of God. This makes it grow. The law of our life is the life of God. It is the law for every created thing. The same law works in everything the purposes of God for that thing. It is the same life in all creation working God's purposes for that created thing.

Psalm 19

⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.

How God has put Himself on all creation! and when we recognize His life it works peace and joy. The plant is the offspring of the life of God. God works in every plant just what He will. He gives to every seed his own body.

The fruit tree, for example, bears beautiful flowers, but the flower is not the ultimate end of the plant. The fruit is to be produced. God could have made the plant bear fruit without a

sign of a flower. What is the flower? It is the beauty of the plant. God delights in beauty, in the variety of form and diversity and blending of color. And since the life of the plant is the life of the Lord, the beauty of the flower is “the beauty of the Lord.” It is some of the beauty of the Lord’s life revealed to us in the plant. The Psalmist prays,

Psalm 90

¹⁷ Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish the work of our hands upon us.

The beauty of the Lord is shown in what He works in the believer.

Psalm 149

⁴ He will beautify the meek with salvation.

It is not simply joy, theoretically, that we get in this, but there is life in it. There are hard things for some of us to meet. We have burdens to bear, and crosses to endure. Our whole flesh is opposed to God:

Galatians 5

¹⁷ The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other.

We are coming close to the end, face to face with the coming of the Lord, and eternity. The flesh cannot go there, and we will not go there either if we cling to the flesh. We cannot take it with us.

Before the Lord comes, when we will be delivered from this earthly tabernacle, and be clothed upon with the house from heaven, we must have crucified the flesh. That is a practical, everyday work. Paul doesn’t say, “I *was* crucified with Christ,” but:

Galatians 2

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ.

There was a constant crucifixion, and constantly a springing up of life.

John 4

¹⁴ The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Paul sought that He might...

Philippians 3

¹⁰ ...know Him, and the power of His resurrection.

We must make this a practical thing now.

Living the Life

We know this, that as we breathe we are taking in the life of God. As our eyes greet the sunlight, it is the light of His life. As we eat the food He gives, it is His life in it that gives the strength. So all the life we live, we live by God. Said Paul,

Acts 17

²⁸ In Him we live and move and have our being.

The life is the light, and the light lightens every man that comes into the world. So the life of Christ is the life of every living soul. Someone may say,

“How can I get the life of God? How can the connection be made?”

How often have we wished that we might get hold of that life in some way. Now the news comes that we have that life, only hitherto we have refused to recognize it. We have perverted it, and have used it to think and speak and do what God would not do.

Isaiah 53

⁶ We have turned every one to his own way.

We have used God's life in doing it. Now we must say continually,

Psalm 27

¹ The Lord is my light.

He is my life, recognizing Him in everything.

Proverbs 3

⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

This life is already here. All we have to do is to acknowledge it. With this we can understand what the Psalmist meant when he said that the Lord had brought him out of the miry clay, and set his feet upon a rock and put a new song in his mouth:

Psalm 40

¹ I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

² He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

³ And He has put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

A temptation comes to us.

“Whose life have we?”

God’s life. We will simply say,

“The life is Yours, Lord, live it in Your own way.”

It is not the old life that is meeting the sin, but God’s. Cannot God work victory in us? He can if He can live in us. But this He does all the time, He gives us life, breath, food; and in the air, and sunlight, and food, and all His works, God has meant to teach all creation how He is able to live in men. If we submit to Him He will work in us the perfection of His life, and actually as He is, so will we be in this world.

1 John 4

¹⁷ Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world.

This solves the question of the evangelization of the world.

Isaiah 60

¹ Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

What is the glory? His life, His law. What is the light that is come? The life of Christ. What will be the next thing?

³ And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

The life is here, for the light is come. Take it. Rejoice in it; and while we are recognizing it, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, and we thus become the light of the world. The world will see it and recognize the light of the Lord, just as the scribes and rulers recognized that Peter and John had been with Jesus.

Do not let one soul dare to lift up the voice to proclaim the truth until he knows he has the life of God. And then when He says "Go," what will be carried? The life and the light.

Men were convinced by Christ because there was power in His words, and if we go thus, the words we speak will be like the oracles of God, and with the power of God's life. So that we, wicked and sinful as we are, may speak with the same authority, the same convincing power that Christ spoke.

Then life will be carried to men. Men may reject it, but they will be forced to acknowledge, as the Jews did, that there is power there.

This is the power of the Gospel Message. The light has come to enlighten the world. The power from on high is ours and

we can speak the life and shed the very light of God to the world if we will but yield to it.

18. Seeing the Life

Present Truth, January 24, 1895

To the converted man,

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁷ Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new;

¹⁸ And all things are of God.

The man of faith is able to see God in all things; for God is in all things, and faith does not teach men fables, but simply enables them to see and know the truth.

And what a source of strength and comfort is this ability which faith gives! All nature then has a voice which testifies of the power of the life of God: and this power is given unto us.

The life of God develops in the planted seed, and the shoot, though tender, finds its way through clod and rocky barrier to the light. The sap flows through the trunk of the tree, and it swells and expands with a force which cannot be stayed.

The moisture rises from the earth, the clouds form, the rain descends, vegetation grows, the cloud turns water into snow and ice, the sun ripens the fruit and the grain, and in a hundred ways we see nature all around us carrying on her work with a power which no man can check.

Having once learned some of nature's laws, we know that whatever they demand, must be. There is no power that can prevent it. And why? Simply because there is no power that can prevent the Lord from doing His work.

Seen with the eye of faith, all this is encouragement for us; for God, if we but let Him, works in us, and with the same irresistible power. His life is in the growing plant, and His life is also in us; and just as it worked to force the tender sprout

through the hard clod up to the surface and the light, so it works in our hearts to do that which it is sent forth to do. And that it will do it is as certain as any law of nature; for the laws of nature are but the laws of God.

When we receive God's word,

1 Thessalonians 2

¹³ ...not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God...which effectually works [in us],

—and will overcome every obstacle to the accomplishment of its purpose. That is the way God's word works, and in nature we find visible demonstration of the fact. And thus nature speaks to us with a voice of cheer and courage when our ears are but tuned to catch the harmony of God's law.

God's word is Spirit and life. *John* 6:63. It is life to the plant, for by it the plant was created and caused to bud and bring forth fruit and seed after its kind. *Genesis* 1:11. And it is life in us, shaping us irresistibly toward the far higher destiny for which we were created.

We should never become discouraged. Let the word into your heart by receiving it in faith, and it will work and will surely accomplish its purpose. It will surely cleanse you and create you new in Christ. The Lord has spoken it.

Isaiah 55

¹⁰ For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and returns not thither, but waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater;

¹¹ So shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Psalm 1

¹ ...the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,...

² [and whose] delight is in the law of the Lord;...

³ ...shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper.

Whether in the visible things of nature or in the human heart, the word of God will work through every obstacle. The life will be manifested and the righteousness cannot fail.

19. The Life

Present Truth, January 24, 1895

THE only true life is the Christian life. This is so because it is the life of Christ, who is God, and God's life is that which animates all living things. Man can pervert that life by living to himself, but that is not true living. It is struggling against the life, which is God's, and seeking death, which in the end will be obtained.

The proper relation of man to this life is presented in the language of the Apostle Paul:

Galatians 2

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

This is the true standpoint from which life with its various duties and problems is to be viewed: and from this standpoint the view is wonderfully simplified as compared with that obtained from the standpoint of self; because all the imaginary duties, dangers, and difficulties have vanished.

Life, as the Creator ordained it, is a simple thing, as simple as accepting a gift. It is only when a man attempts to live by his own power and wisdom that it becomes complex.

When men forget about the Creator, and put their trust in themselves, they find life to be beset by many and strange difficulties. At every turn problems are thrust upon them, which their human ability is neither able to foresee nor to successfully meet. At best, their world is but a world of chance.

God does not withdraw His providence from the lives of men when they will not recognize Him, but they frustrate and

hide that providence by attempting to provide all things for themselves. The abilities which men possess were not designed to cope with the task of maintaining a pleasurable and successful existence. As much power and wisdom is required for that as for bringing existence out of nothing; which power and wisdom pertains to God alone. And the more men attempt to perform this miracle themselves, the more perplexing and unsatisfactory does their life become, and the more sadly marred by disaster and defeat.

Men are today, and always have been, greatly exercised over the maintenance of their "rights." For they have conceived, either rightly or wrongly, to be such, they have sacrificed their fortunes and their lives; they have in the defense of them endured great suffering themselves and brought distress upon others.

But how simple this problem which has so perplexed mankind becomes when viewed from the standpoint of the Christian. And that which so simplifies this, as it does the other problems of life, is the fact that from this standpoint, wherever we look, we behold the Lord Jesus Christ,—His power, His interests, His work.

It is the standpoint of the man who is crucified with Him; and as the crucified man has no life of its own, so he has no rights of his own. There are only the rights of the Saviour with whom he is identified, and who lives in him. And those rights God Himself maintains.

The Christian is His witness, but God is the One who works, and whose power vindicates the right and accomplishes grand results. The Christian thinks not of any rights of his own, but rejoices in the maintenance and exercise of God's right to the love and homage of the beings whom He has created.

People are often much troubled to guard their "dignity" and

save their feelings from the injuries to which they are liable from the malice or heedlessness of those about them. But what can be said of the “dignity” and pride of the person who is crucified? How much suffering and inconvenience do dead men experience from hurt feelings?

If we are crucified with Christ, and live by His life in us, we shall have no feelings but His feelings. We shall act toward those who persecute and speak evil of us, as He did toward those who persecuted Him; we shall feel toward them as He felt. And He did not feel differently toward men because they maltreated Him; He did not change because men hated Him and worked against Him. His nature cannot be affected by sin; He has never changed, but is:

Hebrews 13

⁸ ...the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.

There is no more ill-will or purpose of revenge in the mind of God today than before sin entered the universe. We may deny Him, but still,

2 Timothy 2

¹³ He abides faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

His love for man has continued unchanged since the days of Adam.

Psalms 145

⁹ His tender mercies are over all His works.

And so will there be love and tender mercy in our hearts toward all His works when we are identified with Christ, instead of the feelings of wounded pride which it costs us so much to bear.

Matthew 11

²⁹ [Jesus Christ is] meek and lowly in heart.

He tells us this in His gracious invitation to come to Him

and find rest.

Philippians 2

⁸ [He] humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death.

On the night of His betrayal He washed His disciples' feet. But this was not an exhibition of newly-acquired humility. His form was the form of man; but His character was the character of God. He had not changed in character by taking on Himself the seed of Abraham. Nor did He speak and act as a man; but, as He declared, His Father, who dwelt in Him, did the works. In every word and act, God was manifesting Himself through His Son; as well when He washed His disciples' feet as when He raised the dead or rode in triumph into Jerusalem.

And so, from the Christian standpoint—from the standpoint of the recognition of the truth—we see that life has no difficulty and no problem but that of giving free course to the life of God that is in us. When we come to the cross, we find that we have been carrying too many burdens,—that we have been bearing a heavy and needless load; and we drop it and experience that relief which comes from laying a burden down. We cease trying to pervert the stream of God's life into channels of our own choosing.

And then we drop so many self-imposed responsibilities that we find we have time enough to attend to those things that pertain to our relation to God. We have time to do some work in His cause. Our time is equal to our opportunities.

This is life in its normal state, as it was ordained for man by the Creator. It is the life that Christ has placed within every man's grasp,—the life, indeed, that all men have, if they will but recognize their life as God's, and yield the control of it to Him.

20. The Word of God

Present Truth, October 24, 1895

John 1:1-14

John 1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² The same was in the beginning with God.

³ All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.

Who Is He?

That this Word means Christ, there is no room for doubt.

John 1

¹⁴ The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

Again, John writes of the Word of life,

1 John 1

¹ Which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled.

And when the same writer saw a vision of Christ, the “Faithful and True” (see *Revelation* 1:5; 3:14), the “King of kings and Lord of lords,” coming to judge the world in righteousness, he saw Him as:

Revelation 19

¹³ The Word of God.

The One of whom we are reading, therefore, is the One who dwelt on earth in the flesh as Jesus of Nazareth.

In the Beginning

The Word, the only begotten Son of God, was “in the beginning.” When was that? It cannot be located. Let the mind run

back to “the beginning” when God created the heavens and earth, and there we see Him. Just before His crucifixion Jesus prayed,

John 17

⁵ And now, O Father, glorify me with Your own self with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

If we could find the beginning of all created things, “whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers,” we should still see that “He is before all things.” *Colossians 1:16-17*. Yes, He Himself is:

Revelation 3

¹⁴ ...the beginning of the creation of God.

Finite minds can never span the space between “the beginning” when the Word was with God, and the present time;

Micah 5 [and margin]

² [His] goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting, [even] from the days of eternity.

He is “from everlasting to everlasting.” *Psalms 90:2*.

The Word of Wisdom

Jesus Christ is the One...

Colossians 2

³ In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

²² [He is] the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

The Hebrew word here rendered “possess,” is the same as that rendered “gotten” in *Genesis 4:1*, where we read that Eve said, “I have gotten a man from the Lord.”

Christ is the only begotten Son of God. In *Proverbs 8:22* there is no preposition in the original, so that a more proper rendering of the verse would be,

Proverbs 8

²² The Lord possessed me, the beginning of His way, before His works of old.

This is indicated in the margin of the *Revised Version*. Christ was not only in the beginning, but He “is the beginning,” (*Colossians* 1:18) even the beginning of the way of the Father. Without Him there was nothing.

The Word Was God

Hebrews 1

⁴ Being made so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

The Son must inherit the name and titles and estate of the Father. Whatever titles belong to God the Father belong equally to Christ. They are His by right. By birth He is:

Hebrews 1

² ...heir of all things.

The Apostle Paul writes of the glorious appearing...

Titus 2

¹³ ...of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Father Himself addresses the Son as God, saying to Him,

Hebrews 1

⁸ Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever.

The Word and the Thought

A word is not merely a sound; it is a thing. The ancient Hebrews had but one term for both “word” and “thing.” So in the Hebrew Bible the word which is rendered “word” is the same that is rendered “thing.” A word is the expression of a thought or an idea. The Word of God is the expression of the thought of God.

John 1

¹⁸ No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

Christ is the expression of God's thoughts to man; and since the thoughts of God toward us are "thoughts of peace, and not of evil" (*Jeremiah* 19:11), Christ "came and preached peace." *Ephesians* 2:17.

Why is it that men do not understand God, but think of Him as stern and hard? Simply because they do not know Christ. It is impossible for anyone to know and believe in the one true God, without knowing Jesus Christ, for:

Matthew 11

²⁷ No man knows the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.

The Word Spoken

2 Peter 1

²¹ No prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost.

But it was the Spirit of Christ in the prophets. *1 Peter* 1:11.

2 Timothy 3

¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable.

An inspiration is a breath. Inspiration of God means the breath of God. Scripture inspired of God, is Scripture breathed of God. Thus we read,

Psalms 33

⁶ By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

The Scriptures the Word of God

Since the Scriptures are God-breathed, they are the Word of God. This is what they claim to be. To Jeremiah the Lord said,

Jeremiah 1

⁹ Behold, I have put my words in your mouth.

God said,

Jeremiah 23

²⁸ He that has my word, let him speak my word faithfully.

To Ezekiel He said,

Ezekiel 2

⁷ You shall speak my words unto them.

Again,

Ezekiel 3

⁴ Son of man, go, get you unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them.

And over and over we find this statement in the prophets,

“The word of the Lord came unto me;” “The word which the Lord spoke by” this or that one. David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,

2 Samuel 23

² The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was in my tongue.

Paul thanked God that the Thessalonian brethren received the word which he spoke to them,

2 Thessalonians 2

¹³ ...not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God.

Again he wrote,

1 Corinthians 14

³⁷ If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

David said to the Lord,

Psalm 119

¹⁰⁵ Your Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

¹¹ Your word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against You.

But time and space would fail to repeat all the instances in which the Holy Scriptures are declared to be the Word of God. That is the claim that they make for themselves. Just as surely as they are true, so surely are they the Word of God.

Christ and the Written Word

Some people imagine that to call the Scriptures the Word of God is derogatory to Christ. They think that since He is the Word of God, the Scriptures cannot be. They forget that this is the very reason why they are God's Word.

Through the Scriptures, which we can see, we become acquainted with Christ, whom we cannot see. The unity of Christ and the written word may be learned by comparing *Deuteronomy* 30:11-14 with *Romans* 10:4-8. We cannot take space to quote them in full, but you can read and compare them for yourselves.

The commandment, we are told, is not hidden, nor far off. It is not in heaven, that we should say, Who will go up and bring it to us? nor is it in the deep, that we need to bring it up. The Apostle Paul uses this same scripture, only inserting Christ in the place of commandment.

When Moses said that it was not necessary to go up to heaven to bring the commandment down, it was the same as though he had said that we need not go up to bring Christ down. He has come, and He is risen,—the Word of life,—and the words which He speaks are spirit and life. *John* 6:63. Whoever reads the words of the apostles and prophets as the Word of God, finds Christ.

The Creative Word

John 1

³ All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.

The Norwegian translation expresses the emphatic declaration of the original:

“Without it [that is, the Word] is not even a single thing made.”

Colossians 1 [RV]

¹⁶ For in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him;

¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

And yet there are people who deny that the Son had an existence before He was born a baby in Bethlehem! To deny that is the same as to deny His present existence.

Creation by Wisdom

The Father, addressing the Son, says,

Hebrews 1

¹⁰ You, Lord, in the beginning have laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Your hands.

God “made the worlds” by Him. Verse 2. We have already seen that Christ is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” Now read,

Jeremiah 10

¹⁰ The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King;...

¹² He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom.

And then read again the words of wisdom,

Proverbs 8 [RV]

²⁹ When He gave to the sea its bound, that the waters should not transgress His commandment; when He marked out the foundations of the earth;

³⁰ Then I was by Him as a Master Workman.

The common version has it, “as one brought up with Him,” which is also the truth.

²² The same was in the beginning of His way.

He was “the beginning of His way.” He was the Architect, the Master Workman, without whom nothing was made.

The Power of God to Salvation

It is not as a matter of mere curiosity that the Scriptures set Christ before us as the power of God,—the One to whom creation owes its existence. It is that we may know His power to save us from sin. The Word of truth is the Gospel of our salvation. *Ephesians* 1:13. The eternal power of God is seen in the things that are made. *Romans* 1:20.

But the cross of Christ is also the power of God to them who are saved by it. *1 Corinthians* 1:18. There is the manifestation of one power by which all things were created and still exist. We have redemption, even the forgiveness of our sins, through the blood of Christ,

Colossians 1

¹⁵ Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation;

¹⁶ For in Him were all things created.

Christ is Redeemer because He is Creator; the power by which He redeems is the very same power by which He creates.

The Word of Peace

Christ is the Word of the God of peace. So:

Ephesians 2

¹⁴ He is our peace.

When He came to earth, He came speaking the words of God, who said to Moses,

Deuteronomy 18

¹⁸ I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto you, and will put my words in His mouth.

So He “came preaching peace.” That was the word that He spoke when the storm was raging on the Sea of Galilee.

Mark 4

³⁹ He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

The winds and the waves recognized the word of the Creator. Power over the elements,—creative power,—was manifested in that word “peace.” It is the same word which by the Gospel is preached unto us; for Christ says,

John 14

²⁷ Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.

John 16

³³ These things have I spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace, in the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

The “peace of God” rules in our hearts only when “the word of Christ” dwells in us richly in all wisdom. *Colossians* 3:15-16. It is the word that creates, because in Him we have peace, and:

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁷ If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

Rest and Peace

Says the Saviour:

Matthew 11

²⁸ Come unto me all you that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,

Both peace and rest are found in Him, because “in Him were all things created.” The firmer our foundation, the more securely we can rest. We rest upon the word of God, and find perfect rest there, because it is the word that created all things.

Exodus 31

¹⁷ In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.

He rested upon His own word, which is living and active, and which continued to uphold that which was created. The seventh day, therefore—“the Sabbath of the Lord your God,”—is the rest of God. It is the rest which Christ gives to us; for since Christ created all things it was He who at the close of the six days’ work rested on the seventh day.

The seventh day is emphatically the Lord’s day,—the pledge of the rest that Jesus gives; and our acceptance of it in spirit and in truth is the sign of our accepting the rest that He offers us.

Sanctification by the Word

The Saviour prayed,

John 17

¹⁷ Sanctify them through Your truth; Your word is truth.

That is the word of Christ, the word by which all things were created. He Himself is the Truth (*John 14:6*), and He of God...

1 Corinthians 1

³⁰ ...is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.

Now hear what the Lord says of His people who had forsaken Him:

Ezekiel 20

¹² I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctifies them.

God has made Christ sanctification to us, and He has given us the Sabbath in order that we may know that He does sanctify us; therefore it follows that our highest knowledge of God in Christ is found in the Sabbath. To know that God has given the Sabbath, and then to reject it, is to reject complete sanctification.

Perfection and Growth

Consider this point further. At the close of each day of creation, "God saw that it was good." Everything was perfect as He went along. But suppose He had stopped at any point of time before the Sabbath, and done no more; what would have been the result? Evidently an imperfect, unfinished creation.

The Sabbath was the crown, the mark of a perfect and complete creation. So with men. They may have come to Christ, to learn of Him. They may have made great progress in His school. It is all good. Sanctification is through obedience, through the Spirit, and if they are mindful of all that He shows them, they are as perfect through the little that they know as if they had known everything.

But suppose the Sabbath, "as the truth is in Jesus" (*Ephesians* 4:21), is made known to them, and they reject it. They then stop short in their growth and are imperfect, no matter how excellent they may have been. The saints of God are the planting of the Lord, "that they might be called trees of righteousness" (*Isaiah* 61:3); but the tree that stops growing is dead.

Knowing God

John 17

³ This is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.

But we do not know God unless we know Him as Creator, and we cannot know Him at all except as we learn of Him in Christ, by whom all things were created.

It is a terrible error to deny the existence of Christ before He came to this earth in the flesh; but the only evidence of His pre-existence is the fact that He created all things. To deny Him as Creator, is to deny His existence at all. To neglect to honor Him as Creator, is to...

Hebrews 2

³ ...neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord.

And we cannot honor Him as Creator unless we accept without questioning the word which tells us about His creation work, and of the rest that follows.

And the only way to know this indeed is to share that rest with Him, as we read again,

Ezekiel 20

¹² Hallow my Sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God.

Let us then “go on unto perfection” (*Hebrews 6:1*), finding in Christ sanctification and redemption according to the measure of His power as Creator, and rejoicing in the Sabbath, the sign which He has given us of creation perfect and complete.

21. The Word of Life and Light

Present Truth, November 21, 1895

AFTER mentioning the Word which was in the beginning with God, and which was God, by whom everything was created, the apostle continues:

John 1

⁴ In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

⁵ And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

⁷ The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe.

⁸ He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

⁹ That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world.

The Life of the Word

Christ is the Word, and:

Colossians 3

⁴ [He] is our life.

His life is the life of God, for:

John 1

¹ The Word was God.

And,

Psalms 90

² [God is] from everlasting to everlasting.

So Christ's power as Priest is...

Hebrews 7

¹⁶ ...the power of an endless life.

On earth He was simply the manifestation of the life of

God.

1 John 1

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

² (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us).

Life in the Word

We have previously seen by comparing *Deuteronomy* 30:11-20 and *Romans* 10:6-10, that Christ is in all the Scriptures, so that they are indeed the Word of God. Whoever reads the Scriptures without finding Christ in them, reads them in vain; he gets only the outward form, or shell.

But he who takes the Scriptures for what they are in truth, the Word of God, finds that they have the very life of Christ.

John 6

⁶³ The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.

To feed upon the Word, is to eat the flesh and blood of Christ.

Life from the Word

Christ, who is the Word of Life, said:

John 10

¹⁰ I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

1 John 5 [RV]

¹⁹ He that has the Son has the life, and he that has not the Son of God has not the life.

In the love of God for the world, Christ was sent,

John 3

¹⁶ ...that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

He that rejects Christ has eternal death for his portion. To say that a man may live forever without Christ, even though it be in misery, is to deny the necessity of Christ's sacrifice for man.

It may be said that the claim that men who reject Christ may live forever does not deny the necessity for His sacrifice, since that was necessary in order that men might have righteousness. But,

Romans 8

¹⁰ ...the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Christ gives righteousness only in giving His life.

Romans 6

⁶ 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.

⁷ For he that is dead is freed from sin.

⁸ Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.

The Life of Faith

Romans 1

¹⁷ The just shall live by faith.

No Christian will deny that righteousness comes from Christ alone.

Romans 5

¹⁹ By the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.

But this obedience of Christ, by which we are made righteous, is the obedience of Christ's own life in us.

Galatians 2

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

Righteousness by faith is nothing but life by faith. “Conditional immortality” is only conditional righteousness, that is, conditional on faith in the crucified and risen Saviour.

The Life of Righteousness

Life and righteousness come from Christ; but since Christ is in the Word which the prophets and apostles wrote, it follows that life and righteousness come through obedience to what is written.

Matthew 4

⁴ Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

God’s Word is the truth (*John 17:17*), and the Apostle Peter says to the saints of God,

1 Peter 1

²² You have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit.

Every word of God is life, and a single word is sufficient to give life, if that is all one has; but the very fact that every word is life, shows that the willful neglect or rejection of one word of God is the rejection of His life.

The Reality of This Life

This is shown in the resurrection of Lazarus, and of all the others who were brought to life by the word of Christ. When the poor palsied man, whose life was almost gone, was brought to Jesus, the Lord gave him righteousness by His word, saying,

Matthew 9

²Your sins be forgiven you.

And then, in order to show the reality of the new life which was conveyed to the man in those words, Jesus caused him to rise and walk in perfect health.

John 20

³⁰ And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;

³¹ But these are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through His name.

Hearing and Living

Jesus calls and says,

Isaiah 55

³ Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live.

When the dead hear the voice of the Son of God, they live. See *John* 5:25, 28, 29. So it was with Lazarus and the others. The moment they heard the word, life was theirs. They obeyed the voice that told them to arise. It was impossible that they should hear the word and not arise.

So hearing, in the Scripture sense, is obeying. He who really hears the word of God, obeys it. Not to obey, is to refuse to hear. So whoever does not turn away his ears from hearing the law, but who listens to God's words all the time, and who is careful not to let one of them escape his notice, will inevitably possess the life and righteousness that is in them. As he lives by them here, so will they be his life in the world to come.

The Life that Creates

John 1

⁴ In Him was life.

So,

Colossians 1 [RV]

¹⁶ In Him were all things created,

and,

¹⁷ ...in Him all things consist.

All things are created in Him, because life is in Him. By the power of His life were they created, and do they exist.

Acts 17

²⁸ In Him we live, and move, and have our being.

Not only are men His offspring, but all the rest of creation as well:

Psalm 90

² Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

Here we read of the mountains having been “brought forth:” literally, as given in some versions, “Before the mountains were born.” God’s breath is life; and:

Psalm 123

⁶ By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

Since all things are created in Him, because in Him is life, and it follows that:

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁷ If any man be in Christ he is a new creature.

Redemption is a new creation by the power of the life which is given to us on the cross.

The Light of Life

John 1

⁴ The life was the light of men.

This is most literally true, for since all things were created and still exist by His life, the light of the sun, moon, and stars is simply the light of His life. In this, as in the resurrection of the dead, the Lord teaches us by those things that we can see, of those things which we cannot see.

As the light of the sun is not diminished by being shared by hundreds of millions, so Christ's life is not lessened although He gives it to many. As each one gets the full strength of the sun, so each soul gets the fullness of Christ's life. Jesus said,

John 8

¹² I am the Light of the world; he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Light from the Word

In the Word is light, and since it is the same Word that we find in the Scriptures, it must needs be that:

Psalm 119 [RV]

¹³⁰ The opening of Your words gives light.

We do not get light on the Word. That would be like getting light on the sun. The light is there already; all that is needed is to open it, and the light will shine forth.

Psalm 119

¹⁰⁵ Your Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Then follow the Word; for:

1 John 1

⁷ If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Light In Darkness

John 1

⁵ And the Light shines in darkness.

When Christ came, then was fulfilled the word of the prophet,

Matthew 4

¹⁶ The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.

Genesis 1

² Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.

Just as God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, so He shines in the darkness of our sinful hearts,

2 Corinthians 4

⁶ To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

The place for light to shine is in the darkness. So when darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people, Christians, into whose hearts light has come, are to hold forth the Word of Life and:

Philippians 2

¹⁵ ...shine as lights in the world;

¹⁶ Holding forth the word of life.

The Incomprehensible Light

John 1

⁵ The darkness comprehended it not.

Darkness can never comprehend light. There is nothing in common between them.

2 Corinthians 6

¹⁴ What communion has light with darkness?

Darkness does not become light, but light shines in darkness, and drives it away. But the word “comprehend” means to contain, to enclose, as in *Isaiah* 40:12, where we read of the

dust of the earth comprehended in a measure. Darkness cannot shut in the light. As nothing is hid from the heat of the sun, so “the Sun of Righteousness” shall dispel all the darkness, and bring in the perfect day.

In that day when the darkness is for ever dispersed, those who have loved darkness rather than light, will be scattered with it, so that no place will be found for them; but the children of light will...

Matthew 13

⁴³ ...shine forth as the sun.

Light for All

Jesus is the Light of the world; so He is the true Light,

John 1

⁹ ...which lights every man that comes into the world.

Or, as some render it,

“In coming into the world, He lights every man.”

The point is that all do have the light. To them that sit in darkness light is sprung up. That life-giving light has shone upon all, and is still shining.

Romans 5

¹⁸ By the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

God’s love embraces all the world, and every man in it. To all He has given “His unspeakable gift.” What a sad awakening it will be at last when men realize what was within their grasp, and what they let go. Let all give good heed to the words of Christ:

John 12

³⁵ Yet a little while is the light with you; walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you...

³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may

be the children of light.

22. The All-Sufficient Life

Present Truth, April 23, 1896

Ephesians 1 [RV]

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessings in the heavenly places *in Christ*;

⁴ Even as He chose as *in Him* before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love;

⁵ Having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

⁶ To the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us *in the Beloved*;

⁷ *In whom* we have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.

In Him

Notice that everything is *in Christ*. In Him we have “all spiritual blessings.”

2 Corinthians 1 [RV]

²⁰ For how many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the yea; wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us.

- In Him we were chosen, and
- In Him we are accepted.
- In Him we have forgiveness of sins.
- In Him we become sons, and
- In Him we are made “holy and without blame.”

Colossians 2

⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

¹⁰ And you are complete in Him.

In Him was Life

According to the most critical Greek text, *John* 1:3-4 reads, as is indicated in the margin of the *Revised Version*,

John 1

³ All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made.

⁴ That which has been made was life in Him; and the life was the light of men.

That is to say, everything exists by virtue of His life.

Colossians 1

¹⁶ In Him were all things created;...

¹⁷ And in Him all things consist.

John 5

²⁶ As the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself.

That is why He is the “wisdom of God, and the power of God.” *1 Corinthians* 1:24.

Saved by His Life

Christ is, by virtue of His kinship with men,

Hebrews 2

¹⁷ ...a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

But He is made priest according to...

Hebrews 7

¹⁶ ...the power of an endless life.

Acts 3 [RV, margin]

¹⁵ [He is] the Author of life,

—and therefore,

Hebrews 5

⁹ [He is] the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.

Romans 5

¹⁰ If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Here is continuation, not contrast. In His death, Christ gives His life to us. The reception of that life reconciles us to God. If the reception of that life reconciles us when we were enemies, much more will the holding fast the life save us now that we have become friends.

The Redemption in Christ Jesus

Romans 3

²³ All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

²⁴ Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;

²⁵ Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past.

This is the same as the text first quoted:

Ephesians 1

⁷ In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

“The redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” is “the remission of sins that are past,” or the forgiveness of sins. And this is accomplished by His blood.

Forgiveness by His Life

The blood is the life.

Genesis 9

⁴ Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall you not eat.

Leviticus 17

¹¹ For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls.

Therefore when we read that we have redemption, or the forgiveness of sins, through the blood of Christ, we know that it means that we have forgiveness through His life. “The redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” is the life that is in Him.

Romans 4

²⁵ [He] was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.

The Lord Our Righteousness

In the days to come, when Christ shall be King over all the earth,

Jeremiah 23

⁶ This is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

This righteousness is His life:

Romans 5

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

His obedience and righteousness become ours when we receive His life.

Justification is Righteousness

A friend has forwarded to me a severe condemnation of a statement made some time ago, to the effect that to justify means to make righteous. The criticism was based on the fact that “Grove’s Greek Lexicon” does not so define the Greek word from which justify is translated.

Opening Liddell and Scott’s Greek Lexicon, I find the very first definition of the word in question is “to make righteous.”

But that is only by the way. Appeals to Greek Lexicons do not edify people.

It was stated that “being justified” means “being made righteous,” because that definition is patent from the reading of the English Bible. In addition to what has already been presented, read the following:

Romans 5

¹ Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But peace is for those only who love and keep the commandments, which are righteousness.

Isaiah 48

¹⁸ O that you had hearkened to my commandments! then had your peace been as a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea.

Psalms 119

¹⁶⁵ Great peace have they which love Your law: and nothing shall offend them.

¹⁷² My tongue shall speak of Your word: for all Your commandments are righteousness.

Moreover,

Romans 10

¹⁰ With the heart man believes unto righteousness.

Romans 3

²⁴ [We are] justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

–through faith in His blood, because His righteousness is declared,

²⁵ ...for the remission of sins that are past.

Justification is therefore the forgiveness of sins.

Forgiveness Makes Righteous

But to be forgiven is to be made righteous. Forgiveness is not an imaginary thing, but is real. If I forgive a fellow-man, it makes no difference in him; the effect is only upon himself. But when God forgives us, He continues the same, but the forgiveness effects a change in us. It takes away the sin. But when sin is taken away, righteousness must take its place. A new life—the righteous life of Christ—is given in place of the old life of sin.

Forgiveness and Cleansing

The same precious truth is taught in the oft-quoted words of John:

1 John 1

⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Note that the forgiveness and the cleansing are immediately consequent upon the confession. When we confess, we are forgiven and cleansed. We have already seen that we have forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ:

Colossians 1

¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins;

—and we read also that:

1 John 1

⁷ The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

So we find that forgiveness and cleansing are really one and the same thing, wrought by the appropriation of the life of Christ. The life of Christ is all righteousness, and so its reception cleanses from all sin; but nothing less than the life of Christ can cleanse a single sin.

One, Undivided Life

Christ has but one life. He needs but one, for the one is so infinite that it comprehends everything.

Romans 8

³² 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?

He laid down His life, and He took it again, because it was a perfect life. He needed not, as we do, to change the life. One life such as His is all-sufficient, and that is why we exchanged our life for His. Having it, we are saved by it.

And Christ's life is undivided. He is not parceled out into fractions, so much to each believer. Each believer receives the whole of Christ.

John 1

¹⁶ Of His fullness have all we received.

Ephesians 4

⁷ Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ

And since a single sin cannot be removed from the soul except by the life of Christ, it follows that in the forgiveness of sins we have the richest gift that heaven can bestow:

Romans 5

¹⁵ ...the gift by grace,

¹⁷ ...the gift of righteousness.

Being made righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Grow in Grace

“What!” exclaims one, in astonishment, “Do you mean to say that there is no ‘higher life,’ no ‘second blessing’? Is a man never to advance beyond the point where his sins are

first forgiven?”

Yes; most certainly. But the “higher life” is the life in Christ, and there is none higher, and this life is given to us in the forgiveness of sins. To be blessed with...

Ephesians 1

³ ...all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and to be raised to...

Ephesians 2

⁶ ...sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

is as high a life as a man can aspire to. As to a “second blessing,” the man who is content with it is as much to be pitied as is the man who is content with a first. Rather accept the continuous blessing of the endless life of our Lord.

John 1

¹⁶ Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for [or upon] grace.

He adds grace to grace in endless succession. But all comes from the one life, which, received by faith, cleanses from sin.

So a man is certain to advance beyond the point where he was “first forgiven,” but it is continual forgiveness—continual righteousness applied—by the one life. Growth is the law of the Christian life. But we are to grow in grace, not grow into grace. Grace is the only soil which promotes spiritual growth.

Notice the statement,

Romans 5

¹ Being justified by faith we have peace with God.

It is not enough that we were at one time justified, but it must be kept up. The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. It is not momentary, but continuous.

The Knowledge of Christ

2 Peter 3

¹⁸ But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The trouble with so many people is that they do not know the value of the treasure which they have received. They receive Christ, and are blessed; then, by reason of not increasing in the knowledge of Him, they are conscious of a great lack, and so hastily conclude that the gift which they have received is not great enough, and that God must have another in reserve for them. As though God had any greater gift than Christ, or that when He gave Christ, He made some reservation.

No; with Him He freely gives us “all things.” *Romans* 8:32. If we have received Christ, our part is to study Him, that we may know that in Him all our wants are supplied.

Ephesians 1

¹⁵ Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

¹⁶ Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

¹⁷ That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him;

¹⁸ The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

¹⁹ And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power,

²⁰ Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places.

23. By What Life?

Present Truth, July 30, 1896

BY WHAT life are we saved? By the life of Christ, and He has but one. Jesus Christ is...

Hebrews 13

⁸ ...the same yesterday, and today and for ever.

It is by His present life that we are saved, that is, by His life in us from day to day.

But the life which He now lives is the very same life that He lived in Judea eighteen hundred years ago. He took again the same life that He laid down. Think what was in the life of Christ, as we have the record in the New Testament, and we shall know what ought to be in our lives now.

If we allow Him to dwell in us, He will live just as He did then. If there is that in our lives that was not in His then, we may be sure that He is not living it in us now.

24. Seeing Life

Present Truth, August 25, 1898
(continued in next article)

MOST young men are filled with an ambition to “see life.” This is a most laudable ambition, but, unhappily, their idea of what constitutes life is so far from the reality that few ever see life indeed.

Christianity is by them considered dull and “hokey.” The one who becomes a follower of Jesus is thought to have thrown his life away. To “see life” it is supposed that one must indulge in dissipation, and must visit places of amusement where, to say the least, he would not feel comfortable with his mother as company.

In fact, the stage is quite generally regarded as affording the real opportunity to see life. But here, let it not be forgotten, the idea of “realism,” real life, is always associated with the representation of what is most corrupt and vicious, thus indicating that the popular idea of life is wickedness. What a sad revelation this is as to what constitutes the “life” of the majority of mankind.

But what are the facts in the case? Is it real life, is it life at all, that people see on the stage, or in the most popular places of resort, or as a general thing on the public highways? Far from it. The Word of God makes the real facts very plain, and every one can for himself prove the truthfulness of what it says.

1 John 5

¹¹ This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

¹² He that has the Son has life...

John 3

³⁶ ...and He that believes not the Son shall not see life.

1 John 1

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

² (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us);

³ That which we have seen and heard we declare unto you.

Proverbs 16

³⁵ There is a way that seems right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death.

How sad it is to think of men rushing to death, while they think that they are enjoying the very fullness of life. They go the way of her who says,

Proverbs 9

¹⁵ Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant;

¹⁶ But he knows not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.

This way which seems right to a man, but which ends in death, is one's own way.

Isaiah 53

⁶ We have all turned, every one to his own way.

And this way we would fain persuade ourselves is life. Re-proofs of instruction, which are "the way of life," (*Proverbs* 6:23), come to us, but we do not relish them; and the result to all who persist in rejecting the way of the Lord is that:

Proverbs 1

³¹ They shall eat of the fruit of their own way,

which is death;

³² For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

Wisdom, which is the fear of the Lord, and departure from evil (*Job 28:28*), calls to us all, saying,

Proverbs 8

³⁵ Whoso finds me finds life...

³⁶ But he that sins against me wrongs his own soul; all they that hate me love death.

What! is it possible that anybody should love death? Yes, it is; and, strange to say, those who talk the most about “seeing life” in this world, are the very ones who are most in love with death. All those who love that which leads to death, love death itself.

Death entered into the world by sin (*Romans 5:12*); all sin contains the poison of death concealed in it. To love sin, then, which is the transgression of God’s law, is to love death. How horrible the thought, that one will clasp a skeleton, or what is worse, a putrid corpse, to his bosom, imagining that it is the embodiment of life. It would not matter how beautifully a body of death were decked out, no one would feel any attraction for it if he could perceive that it was but a decaying carcass.

If then people would but stop to consider the difference between life and death, they would not make the terrible mistake that they do, of pursuing death instead of life. This difference is so very plain that none need have any difficulty in discerning it. The difference, in short, is this:

Life is eternal existence, while death is eternal destruction. Whatever endures has real life in it. Now all know that those things which the world calls pleasures and “real life” cannot exist long, and that is the reason why men are so fierce in pursuit of them. One says,

“Life cannot last long, and I mean to enjoy it while I can.”

He means that the things that he calls life cannot last long.

But that very fact shows that they are not life, but death; for life, real life, is eternal. That which is not eternal is not life.

Life is strength, it is freshness, and fullness of joy. One does not grow weary of life; for the characteristic of eternal life, which is the only life, is that it is continually new. One can no more grow tired of it than he can of the morning dew drop or the clear light of the rising sun.

But men who are wholly devoted to what the world calls the pleasures of life, soon grow weary and disgusted, and often show by committing suicide that death is what they have been after. A Christian cannot commit suicide; he loves life too well. The more he has of it, the better he likes it.

Psalm 34

¹² What man is he that desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good?

¹³ Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile.

¹⁴ Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

Deuteronomy 30

¹⁹ I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your seed may live;

²⁰ That you may love the Lord your God, and that you may obey His voice, that you may cleave unto Him, for He is your life, and the length of your days.

25. The Manifestation of the Life

Present Truth, September 1, 1898
(continuation of previous article)

LAST week we had a few words on this page about “seeing life.” We noted that what is very commonly called seeing life is not that at all, but just the opposite.

What most people call life is nothing but death; for we have all turned to our own way, and that way ends in death, because it has nothing but death in it. Men who are content to live without the knowledge of God, are admiring a dead carcass, under the impression that it is a beautiful thing of life.

There is, however, real life to be seen by whosoever will look.

1 John 1

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

² (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us);

³ That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.

This “Word of life” which was from the beginning, was God. *John* 1:1-4.

John 1

⁴ In Him was life,

because

John 14

⁶ [He is] the way, the truth, and the life;

Deuteronomy 30

²⁰ He is your life, and the length of your days.

Therefore in the injunction,

Isaiah 40

⁹ Behold your God!

–we are commanded to behold the life. It is not only a privilege, but it is everybody's duty, to see life, real life. Indeed, whoever does not see life is plainly in a most deplorable condition.

John 3

³⁶ The wrath of God abides on him.

1 Thessalonians 5

⁹ [But] God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

We, as well as Paul, have been chosen, to...

Acts 22

¹⁴ ...see that Just One.

Romans 1

¹⁹ That which may be known of God is manifest...

²⁰ For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.

And these invisible things of God that are so plainly revealed, are His everlasting power and Divinity. If therefore anyone should say,

“Where is the life, that I might see it?”

We have only to reply,

“Open your eyes, and look about you!”

There's not a plant or flower below
But makes Your glories known.

Everywhere we look, we see life and activity. A walk into the forest or through the meadows will reveal to us more of real life than we could see in a month in any city in the world.

Among men we find the artificial; where God alone rules, we find the real; and it is from the plants, these silent teachers, that we are to learn.

Even among men, however, the life is manifested; for the Word of life is near every man, in his mouth and in his heart, that he may do it. Every soul that has not definitely and finally rejected the Lord, is still influenced to a greater or less extent by His Holy Spirit.

Often the resistance to the Spirit is slackened, and then some of the workings of the Spirit will appear; for the Spirit, like the air, will instantly fill every space that is opened. The good that manifests itself in men and women, no matter how degraded they are, is from the Lord. It is the manifestation of the Life.

1 John 2

¹⁶ All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

¹⁷ And the world passes away, and the lust thereof; but he that does the will of God abides for ever.

Sin is of the devil, and the Son of God—the Life—was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil. *John 3:8*. Sin is death, and we get no life by looking at it. The children of Israel might as well have expected to be healed of their sores by looking at them, as we to get any benefit from looking at sin, whether in ourselves or others. “Looking unto Jesus” is the sole remedy, for by beholding we become changed.

John 1

⁴ The Life is the light of men.

Romans 8

¹⁰ The Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Whatever is good is from God, is the revelation of His life. From evil only death can come; therefore,

Philippians 4

⁸ Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Let us look at the Life, and we shall be filled with it.

26. Being the Truth

Present Truth, December 29, 1898

Original title: Back Page

JESUS CHRIST is the way and the truth and the life. The Holy Spirit, who comes in His name, bringing His own personal experience, is “the Spirit of truth.” Not simply a truth, but the Spirit of it. That which sanctifies through the Spirit is the Word of God, which is truth. Only truth can sanctify; error cannot.

1 John 2

²¹ No lie is of the truth.

Christ, the truth, is the life. Truth therefore is life; a lie is death. And everything that deviates from the character of Christ is a lie.

The truth sanctifies, and therefore saves. But the holding of no creed or articles of faith, however true, can ever save anybody. For no creed that men can formulate can possibly embrace all the truth. Therefore no man can be sanctified and saved merely through the holding of certain truths.

God does not save men as a reward for their acceptance of certain statements of truth; salvation is the inevitable result of receiving and being permeated and transformed by the truth, the whole truth; for that which is true is eternal. Not a few true things, but the Spirit of truth, received in the love of the truth, can save.

Psalm 51

⁶ [God] desires truth in the inward parts.

It is not necessary that one should know all the things that are true, that is, all facts, before he can be said to know the truth. If it were, none could be saved, for eternity will be spent in discovering new facts. But, on the contrary, it is by

the knowledge of the truth that we are able to distinguish facts from fancies. Only he who really knows the truth, cannot be deceived.

1 John 5

²⁰ And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus. Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

This is real life. “The Spirit of truth” (*John* 14:17) “is life because of righteousness.” *Romans* 8:10. From all this we can see the importance of not simply having, but being, the truth. We must not only have the truth, but we must have no lie.

Ephesians 4

¹⁵ Speaking the truth in love,

–this is the only way to make real growth in Christ. We must know that whatever we say is the truth.

1 Peter 4

¹¹ If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.

On this basis it is easy to see how gossiping, and the repetition of tales which one hears, cannot possibly be in harmony with truth. Many people who would be shocked at the thought of telling a lie, will carelessly repeat things that they hear about others, and which they cannot know are true.

Now whoever tells what he does not absolutely know to be true, thereby shows that he does not fear to tell a lie. It is not enough to say that we did not know a certain thing which we told was not true; we must know that it is true, or we must keep silent. Of course “speaking the truth in love” means refraining from repeating many things which we know to be true.

1 John 2

²⁸ And now, little children, abide in Him; that when He shall

appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

God requires good works in His people. He wants to have:

Titus 2

¹⁴ ...a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

And He desires it so much that He gave Himself for us that the object might be accomplished. When God, who calls those things that be not as though they were, gives Himself to make us zealous of good works, it is certain that the good works thus secured will be worthy of Him. In other words, God's own works will appear in those whom He redeems from all iniquity.

The only way that this can be is for God Himself to dwell in men, and work in them to will and to do.

Titus 2

¹⁴ [He] gave Himself for us.

Ephesians 2

¹⁰ We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

We are His workmanship by faith. When we cease from our own works and stop all boasting, and confess that it is He that has made us, and not we ourselves (*Psalms* 100:3), we leave the way open for the Lord to display His own infinite workmanship. We simply show forth His excellencies.

Whoever thus commits His way entirely to the Lord may rest in the knowledge that all is well. The good works which will be required of him in the Judgment, when God, without respect of persons, will judge according to every man's work, are already prepared. Indeed, they are finished; for the works of God were finished from the foundation of the world. We were then created in Christ Jesus, and when we acknowledge this, we know that His works are ours.

Philippians 1

¹¹ Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ.

The man who enters into this rest does not live a life of idleness. He is filled with fruit. He can enter confidently upon tasks which the most ambitious would judge beyond their powers, because he knows that, although the work may seem to call for more of ability and endurance than he has ever displayed in the past, it is not impossible of accomplishment, but is already prepared for him to walk in.

He does not know how the work will turn out, but he walks in it, and step by step he finds the task accomplished, until when he gets to the end, he sees the completed work. He knows that He has not done it, and so does not glory in himself. He can only thank God for this fresh answer to the prayer,

Psalm 90

¹⁶ Let Your work appear unto Your servants.

So the Christian life is made up. There is no fear of the hour of judgment, for those who live by faith are just. This is why the Gospel calls on men to glorify God, "for the hour of His judgment is come," and worship the Maker of all things. *Revelation 14:7*. To give glory to God by allowing Him to reveal His creative power in us, and confessing that it is to Him alone we owe the works thus wrought, is the preparation needed for the hour of His judgment.

The rest to which God calls us is so perfect that it is not disturbed by the anticipation of the most searching judgment.

Colossians 2

¹⁰ You are complete in Him.

The perfect love which is shed abroad in our hearts, fulfilling the law, casts out all fear.

27. Christian Privileges

Present Truth, January 5, 1899

Original title: Back Page

TOO often, when God's promises to men are seen in a new and beautiful light; the only response given by professing Christians is a sighing acknowledgment that:

“We do not half live up to our privileges.”

And at this confession many are, content to stop, as though in making it, they had done all that was, required of them.

To some it seems impossible that they can ever live up to their privileges, for the reason that these are so great. They take too much “living up to.” This is because the privileges are not seen, in their true light. Their value consists in the fact that they can be enjoyed to the full. Privileges which are not available are not privileges at all.

The greatness of the privileges which God bestows upon us consists in the fact that they enable us to...

Ephesians 4

¹ ...walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.

He does not ask us to “live up” to anything; because in ourselves we cannot. The idea that we can do so reveals ignorance of God's way, which is as much higher than ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. *Isaiah 55:9*. It would be as easy for the natural man to live up to his privileges as it would be for him, by taking thought, to increase his stature until his head reached to the stars.

There is one thing needful for the man who would live out his privileges, that is, live a perfect Christian life. That one thing is a Christian life. It takes a life to live, and it takes the life of Christ to live out His privileges. He does not have to live up to them, because they are His life. The man in whom

Christ dwells will also live out his privileges, for he receives them in Christ. In taking Him, we take all things that pertain to life and godliness.

John 1

¹⁶ Of His fullness have all we received.

Christ is the life of men:

Acts 17

²⁸ In Him we live.

The mystery of the Gospel is “Christ in you.” *Colossians* 1:27. The privilege thus bestowed upon men is an inconceivable one, but the problem of how to “live it out” is solved by the fact that it is given to us as a life. Whoever does not receive it as a life does not have it at all. Those who do so receive it, find that it works in them mightily and, instead of sighing over the difficulty of living up to their privileges, they rejoice evermore over the great things that God has done for them in the unspeakable gift of His Son.

If a poor man should ask us for bread and we should offer him a plentiful supply of food, we would expect him to eat and be filled. If he simply looked over the food, and when pressed to fall to should reply sadly that it was very kind of us to take so much trouble, but he was afraid he did not half live up to his privileges, most of us would conclude that it might do him good to go without for a while.

How must the Lord feel when, after He has at an infinite cost to Himself, provided a perfect salvation for all, some treat His gifts with so little appreciation? He offers eternal life, with all that it means, in His only begotten Son, but men judge themselves unworthy of it, as did the Jews to whom Paul preached.

Every one to whom the Lord reveals light must accept or refuse it. It does not palliate the refusal to excuse it by con-

fessing that we do not live up to our privileges. When the judgment sits and some are found unworthy of a place in the Saviour's Kingdom, it will simply be a confirmation of the judgment that they passed upon themselves when the Lord offered Himself to them in all His fullness, and they for any cause judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life.

28. Incorruptible Seed

Present Truth, March 16, 1899

THE Gospel is just as simple as God can make it. That there may be no misunderstanding about it, He has revealed its principles and working in nature, and the birth and growth of the plants teach us the way of life.

Romans 1

²⁰ The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.

Men are to be born again, as children of God, just as the plants are. The seed which is sown in us is the Word of God.

1 Peter 1

²³ Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides for ever.

It is not credit to the earth that the seed is sown in it, because it is by the will of the sower that it is done. So it is with men.

James 1

¹⁸ Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth.

It is sufficient for us to know that God wills to make us His children. If we feel devoid of all desire to be such, this should not keep us back. If we will only let the seed be sown, we shall be filled with God's will. That does not change. Ours does.

Many get discouraged because of their weak, inconstant will to do right. That is because they do not recognize that it is not by their own will that they are born again, or kept, but by God's unchanging purpose.

John 1

¹³ Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh,

nor of the will of man, but of God.

Those who keep this in mind can always be confident, because God's will does not waver. The thought that He is not discouraged or shaken will fill us with courage.

Since then our Christian life is due to the fact that God begets us by the word of truth, how shall we grow? By continuing to hear the Word.

James 1

¹⁹ Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

²⁰ For the wrath of man works not the righteousness of God.

Therefore when we are exhorted to be swift to hear, it must be because this does work the righteousness of God.

James 1

²¹ Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness ["Now you are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you." *John* 15:3], and receive with meekness the engrafted Word which is able to save your souls.

The only reason why any who make a good beginning in the Christian life fail to keep it up, is because they depart from the simplicity of the way. It is not because the way gets harder, for it does not. At the outset, faith came by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. *Romans* 10:17. And that same faith, coming in the same way, will always overcome sin.

We are not to be forgetful hearers, but to look into the perfect law of liberty and continue therein, and since faith works, because the living Word works, we shall be:

James 1

²² ...doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving our own selves.

Acts 20

³² Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

All that is possible in Christian life, and the attainment of the inheritance, is for those who hear the Word, and for them alone. The Word itself does the work. If men were required to do it they could not, and this truth is taught us in the growth of the plants.

Mark 4

²⁶ So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

²⁷ And should sleep, and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knows not how.

This is not only true, as far as our own experience is concerned, but it applies to anything we may seek to do for others. No one can give anything to another, unless he has it himself, and, because men in themselves are nothing, no man can give anything to another in any other way than he gets it himself.

Galatians 3

⁵ He therefore that ministers to you the Spirit, and works miracles among you, does he do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

So it is clear that everything depends upon our hearing the Word of God all the while, not occasionally or in small measure, for man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

Mark 9

²³ All things are possible to him that believes,

and

Romans 10

¹⁷ Faith comes by hearing.

James 1

¹⁹ Wherefore, let every man be swift to hear.

Isaiah 55

³ Hear, and your soul shall live.

Matthew 11

¹⁵ He that has ears to hear, let him hear.

