

“The Gospel of the Kingdom”

“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come;” and I am glad of it. Every act of our lives, and every thought, must have reference to the end; and I am glad there is an end coming, for that end will be the beginning. It will be an end of strife, and a beginning of universal peace; I long for it to come, and I know it is coming, because the Lord has said so.

We preach the end, and in preaching the end we preach the beginning.

Have you ever noticed that the last message to the last of the churches, the Laodicean church, begins: “Thus saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God”? That message which pertains to the end, which has in it the promise of the coming of the Lord, the promise of the sitting upon the throne with Him in His glory; that message which pertains especially to the end, brings us to Him who is the Beginning; and this is the “witness” that is to be borne. It is the witness that is borne by the Faithful and the True; for He is the beginning, as well as the end. So when we have come to the end, we are then at the beginning; when we come really to the beginning, lo, we are at the end; for the end of this world is but the beginning of the new earth; and the world which is to come is the world that was from the beginning, so that when the end comes, we are brought back to the beginning; for the heavens must receive Him “until the time of restoration of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of His prophets since the world began.”

We sometimes get in too big a hurry for the end. You will say, “How can we get in too great a hurry for the end?” Well, we do and on the principle of that old proverb that we learned as children: “The more haste the less speed.” Sometimes we get in so great a hurry for the end that we rush on toward the end without beginning at the beginning; and then we have to go back and begin over again, and that delays the end; so our haste to the end without taking time to begin at the beginning only puts off the time that we would so gladly see come. **The case of Ahimaaz is an illustration. He had no tidings, yet he wanted to run, and he was permitted to run. He proved to be a faster runner than Cush; yet he had to stand aside, and everything had to wait for the man who carried the message. Nothing was gained by the haste of Ahimaaz.**

Sometimes we forget who is the beginning. We think if we must go back to the very beginning and start there, it will take, oh, so long a time for the work to be finished up and for the Lord to come. That is where we make a mistake again; for just as soon as we have come right down to the very beginning, to the A B C of the truth, lo, we are at the end; for Jesus Christ, who is the beginning, is the end as well. “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” And when we have come to the beginning, and to the perfection of the beginning, and have carried that beginning

over all the world, lo, the end will have come. It is the witness of Him who is the beginning, of Him who is the Faithful and the True.

When we read this message of the Lord, “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come,” there is a grave error that we are liable to fall into,—one of the greatest errors that human beings can fall into,—and that is the error of substituting ourselves for the Lord, and putting ourselves in the Lord’s place. We forget who it was that spoke these words, and we make “this gospel” refer to the thing which we are preaching; and we think that when that, meager as it may be, has been preached in all the world, then shall the end come. That is a mistake. Who is it that said, “This gospel of the kingdom must be preached”? —It was the Lord Jesus Christ. He stands here, embodying in Himself the fulness of the truth; and it is He that says. “This gospel, this gospel which I am preaching, this gospel of which I am not only the representative, but the embodiment,—this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.”

You and I may go over all the world, and we may preach, we may preach earnestly, but if our preaching is not the preaching of the Lord Jesus, literally the preaching of the Lord Jesus, that is to say, not simply the preaching about Him, but the Lord Jesus Himself preaching, then either we shall have to go over the ground again, or somebody else will have to go over it after us.

The end shall come, but it surely will not come until this gospel of the kingdom has been preached in all the world for a witness.

Do you know what that means? I said, We must preach—it must be the Lord Himself that is preaching. The apostle Paul tells us that, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us,—hath put into us,—the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors on behalf of Christ, as though God were beseeching by us (as formerly He did by Christ in the days of His flesh). We pray you in Christ’s stead, Be reconciled to God.”

The problem which the Lord has to solve, that thing which He has to demonstrate before the world, before the end can come, is to give every part of this world an equal chance. That is to say, the testimony that was presented to the people of Galilee and Judea, when Jesus of Nazareth was there teaching and preaching, must be given to all the world; and every kingdom and tribe and people and nation on this earth must see and hear the very same things that those people saw and heard. And that is the gospel that must go to all the world.

What is “this gospel of the kingdom”? We read in the fourth chapter of Matthew that Jesus came up from Jordan, where He had been baptized and had received the witness of the Spirit, and from the wilderness of temptation, where He had conquered Satan, and in the power of the Spirit He went through all Galilee and Judea, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. His fame went throughout all the people and they brought Him all that were sick, all that were lunatic, all that were oppressed of the devil, and He healed them.

We read in the first chapter of Mark, of the same time, the beginning of the ministry of Jesus: “Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came unto Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and saying, The time is fulfilled. The kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel.” Then comes the calling of Simon, and Andrew, and James, and John, and then He came into Capernaum, “and straightway on the Sabbath day He entered into the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught as one that had authority, and not as the Scribes. And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? We know Thee who Thou art, the holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? A new teaching! for with authority He commandeth the unclean spirits and they come out of him.”

Yes, Jesus came and brought a new doctrine into the world. There was new teaching, such teaching as they had never heard before. **What was it?—The casting of an unclean spirit out of the man was the new teaching, and that was the expression of the gospel of the kingdom.** And it was of that and of such things as that, that is to say, of the power equal to that, that Jesus spoke when He said. “This gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.”

The seventeenth chapter of Luke: “And when He was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. And He said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them, for as the lightning, that lighteneth out of one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in His day.”

This last verse shows that these words of Jesus refer to His second coming, to the end of the world, and the time of restoration of all things so that we have the two things

connected. This “kingdom of God,” of which Jesus says, “It is within you,” has direct reference and immediate connection with the coming of the Lord. Therefore we come to the same conclusion again, that we ourselves, to whom is committed the work of carrying the gospel to the world, must carry it, not in our hands, not in our pockets, not even in our Bibles, but in our hearts. And if it is not carried there, it does not get to the world. I never read these words without thinking that I am convicted—not condemned. I thank God “there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” No matter how great the reproofs given from the Lord, there is no condemnation in them. (“Amen.”) And I am glad of that—that conviction is not condemnation. There may be a conviction secured against us every day, but it is not condemnation. God does not condemn; He justifies. The greater the sin that He reveals to us, the greater our lack, then the greater the justification.

He says with reference to the time when the redemption is near, and when the end of the world is about to be manifested. “Lift up your heads, and rejoice.” And if there ever was a time for rejoicing, it is when the devil works the hardest. In the twelfth chapter of Revelation we read: “Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ.” Why?—“Because the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” When the devil works hardest, then is the time when the kingdom of God is come.

There are wondrous things that God has for His people, but we have not got to the end yet. I mean we have not exhausted the privileges of God. ***What is the message?*** The apostle John has told us in his first epistle: “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; (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); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.”

That is the message, brethren. God is light, and we are to walk in Him, walk in the light, and we ourselves be lights to the world. We have not time to do anything, or to think anything, that will diminish or weaken our testimony to the world. We have all been conscious of a weakening of our testimony, because we were not light. We have interposed a veil between our hearts and the glory shining from the face of God, and just to the extent that we did that we were not the witnesses of the Lord.

Jesus says, “The kingdom of God is within you.” He came proclaiming the Word. He Himself was the Word, and that is why it was that when He came He said. “The kingdom

of God is at hand;” for all the fulness of the power of the universe was manifested in Him. “In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”

The Lord has marvelous things for us; wondrous things He has for the people through us. **The testimony of Jesus is to be given to the world; but it can be given only as Jesus Himself dwells in us to bear witness of Himself.** And there is so much for us to learn. But when I say this, I do not mean it is going to take a long time. We have a Teacher such as the world can not give. Therefore it need not take so very long a time in which to learn it. We can determine ourselves how long it will be, or how short it may be. But one thing is sure, and we need not think that we can get away from it, and that is that nothing less than the complete fulness of the message, not only as it was proclaimed by the Lord, but as it existed in Him, must be given before the Lord can come.

He was the Word, the fulness of the Word. What does that mean?—It means that just as every word of this Book testifies of Him, just as every word of this Book derives its power from Him, just as no word of this Book can be understood except in and through Him, and just as every word of this Book is necessary, because all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and it is all profitable, so we to whom is committed the glorious task of proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom to the world have given to us the task and the privilege of understanding and proclaiming the whole Word of God,—**the privilege and the necessity of having that Word incarnated in us.**

Are we content with the attainment that we have? Have we rested in inglorious ease and self-satisfaction that we knew the truth, simply because we have received certain things which in themselves are true? Have we thought that because we had certain truths that we knew the whole truth? Have we been studying our Bible? or are we content to take a portion of it? Have we been partial in the Word? Have we thought that we knew enough to carry the gospel to the world, because, perhaps, we knew more than somebody else knew?

All truth is one; but as long as there is any portion of this Word that is not incorporated into our being, how can we say that we are giving the whole message? How can we be satisfied that we are carrying the message to the world so that somebody will not have to go after us and make good that which we have left undone? If there is one portion of the Bible that you and I, as ministers of the gospel (and I do not mean simply those who have been ordained to stand in public and preach, but I mean every member of Christ's body, every one who takes His name, every one who professes the message of the Lord's soon coming,—they are all ministers), I say that if we have not got this, then there is a work for us to do, and we ought to be about it, and very speedily, too.

Seventh-day Adventists, standing before the world as the exponents of the greatest truth that was ever committed to the hands of any people, and boasting, as we have

done, that we are a people who stand upon the Bible, a people who are Bible students, —I say we all have a right to be ashamed of ourselves, that we have neglected that very thing which has been committed to us, and so much of the Word of God has been left to lie idle. Because we have some truth that somebody else has not, and it is a marvelous thing to them, and they think surely this people have marvelous truth, we have been content to hear them say that, and we have looked at the little amount that we have, and we have been satisfied with that, rather than looking forward and upward to the great amount which we have not attained to, and which we do not yet know. We have turned around, and have looked backward, instead of looking forward. We have been looking at what we have done, and we have talked about that when we have come together, and that has taken away from our hearts the thought of the vast field of truth that is yet unexplored. But, brethren, the whole truth, and the fulness of truth, is due to the world. Christ Himself is due to the world, because the apostle says, “We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.” And this is the testimony that is to be given to the world. And we have not done it, have we? Shall we do it? We may, but it means a reining of ourselves up; it means a denial of ourselves, of our flesh, of our appetites; it means a continual holding of ourselves in, not by our own power, but by the power of God, to which we hold ourselves subject; it means a continual fight with the world and the flesh and the devil already in us; that we do not relax our diligence; that we do not let our hands hang down; that we do not become satisfied with what we have attained, instead of pressing forward. When I say we are to look forward and not backward, forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forward to the things that are before, we do not have to repudiate any truth that we once held, but we must understand that the path of the just is the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. It is a seed that is sown and springs up and develops and unfolds.

So is the kingdom of God,—this kingdom which is to be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations,—as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. There is “first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear;” and then he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come. That is the history of the gospel of the kingdom, for the harvest is the end of the world. The seed is sown. It springs up, and then comes the blade, and then the ear, and the full corn in the ear, and all this must take place before the harvest can come, before the end can come.

I hold in my hand some grains of corn. That is good seed, you see. I first exhibit it to some one and let him get a good look at it; I let him turn it over and over and get familiar with it. Now he knows it, and can tell it anywhere he sees it. Then I cast it into the earth. Three months later I take him along by the field, and I say, “There is our seed.” He replies: *“No; it does not bear any resemblance whatever to what I saw; that which I saw had just this shape, just this size. I will hold to that; you can not deceive me; I am not going to be led astray; there is no resemblance whatever between this and that.”*

Now we are in danger of making this mistake, of thinking that the truth which we hear, which first comes to us, must be kept in just those dimensions, or else it is a denial of the truth; and, brethren, let me tell you this, that unless our eyes are opened, unless we learn enough of the divine nature of Jesus to know that it is infinite, and capable of an infinite variety of expression, we shall make the mistake of saying that truth that is developed into its glorious fulness is a contradiction of truth which was first sown, and it is not so.

How many of you have heard this statement, that men who had power in the message ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty, or forty years ago do not have that power in their preaching today? You all know that, do you not? I am not telling you anything new. Men have gone forth with but little knowledge of the truth, but it was new to them, and they went forth with the enthusiasm of a new truth; and that which was new to their own souls had the power with it, and men were converted. Then they said, "Now we have got it; now we can do it, and we will do it that way again;" and I am afraid that some souls have been going on that way for years. They feel as though the truth of God were circumscribed within certain limits, and when they have got that, they imagine that they have learned all the truth, and they tell it over and over and over, and by and by every vestige of the freshness is gone out of it for their own souls, because they are not learning anything new; and the man who does not learn something new from his own preaching may be sure that nobody else is learning anything new.

God used the pioneers in this message mightily; but why did He use them so mightily? —Because they were true to the truth. It was not because they had all the truth that there was in the Bible and all the truth that there was for the world. It was because they were loyal to the truth that they knew and taught; and whenever new light came forth from the Word of God, they stood upon it, and that is why they had the power.

Now if we, in looking back to the fathers, think that we are disloyal to them, and that we are casting reflections upon their memories, if we dare see more in the Word than they saw, then we are showing ourselves to be disloyal to them and to the principles which they held, because it was not merely just a few circumscribed things, but it was truth as God revealed it to them that they preached, and that is what gave the power to the beginning of this message.

Now, when the same truth,—but not necessarily the same words, not necessarily in the same form, but in its enlarged, developed form,—and that same Spirit shall have taken hold of all of us, then the very same power that characterized the preaching of the pioneers of this message will characterize the preaching of those who follow them. And then the end can come.

It has been many years since I was here in California, and, as I go about, I see some of the gardens that I used to be so familiar with. I recognize this house that was being

erected when I was here. There is a garden that was being planted. It does not look the same now. Those little shrubs that I looked down upon are now large trees. That little palm that was so small that you could carry it around in your hand now overtops the house. It is the same tree, nevertheless,—the very same plant. It does not look the same, but it is the same.

Brethren, a tree must grow, or else it will die. You may put a band around it, and say: “We have had the witness, we have had the testimony, that this is a good tree; it is a perfect tree. God Himself has planted the tree, and we know it. Now, lest we get away from this, we will put bands around that tree.” One of two things will take place; either that tree will die, or else it will burst those bands asunder.

But this truth is not going to die; it is not in the world to die, because it is life itself. And I have that confidence in the truth which the fathers preached,—in the truth which my father preached,—that it will break every band, and be a glorious tree, that shall spread out and blossom, and fill the face of the earth with fruit. It will do it. And there is the testimony that the Lord gives to us: “Loose thyself from the bands of the neck. O captive daughter of Zion; arise, and sit down.”

Or, again, the message comes to us, that message which is the message that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. “Arise, and shine; for thy light is come.” What is the light?—God is light, and God is come to us, to try us, to prove us. **How?**—To see whether we will accept Him, whether we will let Him fill us with all the fulness of God, even as He did Jesus of Nazareth, because Christ Himself, who is the fulness of God, dwells in our hearts by faith. So the light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee; and though darkness cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, yet the Lord shall rise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.

How often I have prayed this prayer; “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name, give glory, for Thy mercy’s and for Thy truth’s sake!” I am so glad I can pray it with full confidence: “Lord, let Thy glory be upon me.” Afraid of getting lifted up and getting exalted?—Yes, I am, but not so long as I pray that prayer. Mind you, I do not pray, “Let me have glory,” but, “Let Thy glory be upon me. Let men see Thy glory, and see that it is Thy glory.” Do you not see that just as long as, and as often and surely as, we pray that prayer that the Lord will glorify us with His glory upon us, that men may behold the glory of the Lord, and recognize it to be the glory of the Lord, God may manifest to and through His servants any amount of glory, and the more the better? This is just what He has been wanting to do. “All flesh shall see the glory of the Lord; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Shall He see it upon us?

When Israel came out of Egypt, and stood on the shore of the Red Sea, the message was; “Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.” When they were encamped by the Mount Sinai, the message came to them. “Ye have compassed this

mountain long enough.” And then, when at the last they came to Jordan, Joshua, at the command of the Lord, went through the camp, and told them to make the preparations, and to watch the ark of the Lord; for, He said, “Ye have not been this way hitherto.”

Brethren, that indicates our course,—always forward. “Ye have not been this way hitherto.” You do not know the way you are going. You have not been over this ground. But, oh, the Lord Jesus Christ has been over every step of the way, and He is the Way. And as we have not been this way hitherto, we may know that it is always new, always a new experience, always some new development of truth, but it is the same truth. Do not be afraid, brethren, of truth. It must develop more and more, or else we will never get the gospel of the kingdom preached.

I have thought upon my own experience in the past, and upon the experience of others, as I read it in reports (as I often do), and I have thought that we,—some of us, all of us, to some extent, perhaps, most of us,—are somewhat afraid of these truths which God has given us; and we call some of them “objectionable features.” But, brethren, I have come to the conviction that there is nothing objectionable in the truth of God, if it is presented as it is in Jesus. It is the truth of God that must win souls, and it will do it. But I find many thinking they must hedge about the Sabbath truth, for instance, and they must prepare and work up the way, and build up a foundation, hesitating and fearing and trembling and thinking, “Pretty soon we are going to spring the Sabbath upon them, and then we do not know what in the world will happen.” That is because we have not yet learned what the Sabbath means; for the Sabbath is God’s glorious gift to man; it is the gift of rest; it is the gift of His personal presence, the real presence. And when we learn the truth as it is in Jesus, and we get the truth as it is in Jesus, in ourselves, if we have a congregation of people ready to hear, and we may never have them again, if the Spirit of God so move, we may give the whole counsel of God to them, and see souls converted, and they will know the truth. Having the fulness of the truth, and having it ever developing, we may see the same thing repeated that was experienced forty years ago, when they would go and pitch a tent Friday, and take it down Monday, with a congregation of believers there. That thing can be done; but do not think, brethren, that it can be done if you preach just a few narrow things. **It can not be done unless you get a mighty truth, a comprehensive truth, with many, many features that were not apparent years ago, when we first got hold of it.**

Do not think that all those things make the truth so complicated that people will become confused. It is not so. **The greater the light that shines, the easier is it for people to see.** So that, as we come to the end, and the truth shines with a broader light, a deeper light, a clearer light, than it could have done forty years ago, even to those faithful souls who started out in the message, the more easily will it be comprehended, for it is preached with the power of Him who is the Light of the world.

The words spoken by our Instructor impressed me deeply. Of those who had tried and tempted lives, the question was asked: "How do you deal with your difficulties? Do you harness yourself for an encounter with trial and temptation? And then do you lay hold on these temptations, as you suppose you must while your spirit is hot within you and wrestle with them, quite sure that this is what you ought to do? As you battle with your covetousness and uncharitableness on their own ground, do you come out victor?—No; you come out discouraged, bruised, and wounded, bound and enfeebled spiritually.

"What should you do? Simply put your whole trust in the One who understands your temptations and trials, the One who alone can master temptation. If you had not been premature in your efforts, you need not have fought so terrible a battle; for the Captain of your salvation was at work for you, ready to do for you that which you can not do for yourself, and to leave you free to do that which He has told you to do,—learn of Him His meekness and lowliness. He has been tempted in all points 'like as we are,' and He knows how to succor those who are tempted. Had you first talked with God in prayer, by faith grasping His promises, you would have received strength for the conflict."—Unpublished Testimony.

Sermon by E. J. Waggoner, Monday, March 30, 7:30 P.M.
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