

Chapter 4, *The Return of the Latter Rain*

"Most Precious Message--Response of the Leading Brethren to the Holy Spirit and Advancing Light"

[The Week of October 17-23]

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October/November 1888

Ministerial Institute			10 Wed	11 Thu	12 Fri	13 Sab
14 Sun	15 Mon	16 Tue				
			17 Wed	18 Thu	19 Fri	20 Sab
21 Sun	22 Mon	23 Tue	24 Wed	25 Thu	26 Fri	27 Sab
28 Sun	29 Mon	30 Tue	31 Wed	1 Thu	2 Fri	3 Sab
4 Sun	General Conference Session					

Sources for the 1888 Message:

Waggoner: *The Gospel in Galatians* (1887)

Waggoner: *Christ and His Righteousness* (1890)

White: *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials* (1987)

Multiple Authors: *Manuscripts and Memories of Minneapolis* (1988)

Summary of the 1888 Message:

Elder E. J. Waggoner had the privilege granted him of speaking plainly and presenting his views upon **justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ in relation to the law**. This was no new light, but it was old light placed where it should be in the third angel's message. What is the burden of that message? John sees a people. He says, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep **the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus**" (Revelation 14:12).... {1888 211.2}

The faith of Jesus has been overlooked and treated in an indifferent, careless manner. It has not occupied the prominent position in which it was revealed to John. Faith in Christ as the sinner's only hope has been largely left out, not only of the discourses given but of the religious experience of very many who claim to believe the third angel's message. At this meeting I bore testimony that the most precious light had been shining forth from the Scriptures in the presentation of **the great subject of the righteousness of Christ connected with the law**, which should be constantly kept before the sinner as his only hope of salvation. This was not new light to me for it had come to me from higher authority for the last forty-four years, and I had presented it to our people by pen and voice in the testimonies of His Spirit. But very few had responded except by assent to the testimonies borne upon this subject.... {1888 212.1}

The message that was given to the people in these meetings presented in clear lines not alone **the commandments of God**--a part of the third angel's message--but **the faith of Jesus**, which comprehends more than is generally supposed. And it will be well for the third angel's message to be proclaimed in all its parts, for the people need every jot and tittle of it. If we proclaim the commandments of God and leave the other half scarcely touched, the message is marred in our hands. {1888 367.1}

The Lord has a work for every one of His loyal people to do to bring **the faith of Jesus** into the right place where it belongs--in the third angel's message. **The law** has its important position but is powerless unless **the righteousness of Christ is placed beside the law** to give its glory to the whole royal standard of righteousness. "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12). {1888 375.2}

The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive **the righteousness of Christ**, which is made manifest in obedience to all **the commandments of God**. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure. {1888 1336.2}

This message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world should no longer say, Seventh-day Adventists talk **the law**, the law, but do not preach or believe **Christ**. {1888 1337.1}

This is the testimony that must go throughout the length and breadth of the world. It presents **the law and the gospel, binding up the two in a perfect whole**. (See Romans 5, and 1 John 3:9 to the close of the chapter.) {1888 1339.1}

Events in chronological order (1888):

10/17 Wed	General Conference Session began Two propositions regarding the law in Galatians: EJW refused to debate it
10/18 Thu	EJW: "lesson on the law and gospel"; "key to the book [of Galatians] was 'justification by faith in Christ'; "liberty in Christ was always freedom from sin, and that separation from Christ to some other means of justification always brought bondage"{October 19, 1888 N/A, GCDB 2.11}
10/19 Fri	EJW: "continued his lessons on the law and gospel"; Acts, Galatians, Romans: "real point of controversy was justification by faith in Christ" {October 21, 1888 N/A, GCDB 4.1} Uriah Smith: "danger in Waggoner's position"
10/20 Sab	EGW: "The justice of God was seen in that He gave Christ to die to save man, for the law condemned man to death; but the righteousness of Christ was brought in and imputed to him that he might be brought back to his loyalty to God." {1888 127.1} "I felt that the Spirit of the Lord was resting not only upon me but upon the people.... I knew that the special revealing of the Spirit of God was for a purpose, to quell the doubts, to roll back the tide of unbelief which had been admitted into hearts and minds concerning Sister White and the work the Lord had given her to do." {1888 207.1}
10/21 Sun	Morning: EGW: "There is no power in the law to save or to pardon the transgressor. What, then, does it do? It brings the repentant sinner to Christ.... The law points to the remedy for sin--repentance toward God and faith in Christ." {1888 130.2} Afternoon: Resolution that "nothing be taught ... contrary to what has been taught in the past, or approved by the General Conference Committee"; EGW opposed it: "there was to be special light for God's people as they neared the closing scenes of this earth's history. Another angel was to come from heaven with a message and the whole earth was to be lightened with his glory. It would be impossible for us to state just how this additional light would come.... the resolution was not called for." {1888 239.1}; still pushed, but voted down Evening: EGW: "Instructors in our schools should never be bound about by being told that they are to teach only what has been taught hitherto. Away with these restrictions.... That which God gives His servants to speak today would not perhaps have been present truth twenty years ago, but it is God's message for this time." {1888 133.2}
10/22 Mon	EGW: "Questions were asked at that time. 'Sister White, do you think that the Lord has any new and increased light for us as a people?' I answered, 'Most assuredly. I do not only think so, I but can speak understandingly. I know that there is precious truth to be unfolded to us if we are the people that are to stand in the day of God's preparation.'" {1888 219.2} We want all on both sides of the question.... As Elder E. J. Waggoner had conducted himself like a Christian gentleman they should do the same, giving the arguments on their side of the question in a straightforward manner. {1888 219.3}
10/23 Tue	Kilgore: motion that the "discussion on the subject of Righteousness by Faith" be stopped until Butler was present EGW: ... For the first time I began to think it might be we did not hold correct views after all upon the law in Galatians, for the truth required no such spirit to sustain it. {1888 221.3} The brethren had all the evidence they would ever have the words of truth were spoken in regard to the righteousness of Christ. I knew that if they had distinguished the voice of the true Shepherd, if they had opened their hearts to receive the light, such speeches would never be made to create sympathy and leave the impression upon the congregation that we were at variance and at enmity one with the other. {1888 223.2}