

The 1888 Message

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Many questions have been coming in to me regarding the 1 message of 1888.

Such as:-

Where did the 1888 message of Righteousness by Faith differ, from that of Calvin and Luther? Should we return to Luther and his message of justification by faith?

The message of the Reformers was the message of God. It was the beginning of "the restoration of all things". It was the beginning of the restoring of all truth. Practically all truth was lost in the Dark Ages, That period was well named the "Dark Ages" for the light of life was then well nigh extinguished. The reformation re-lit the lamp of truth. That lamp - the Bible took the place of tradition, the voice of the church. Faith in Christ took the place of looking to dead Christians, the saints. The living Christ took the place of the "blessed" Virgin Mary.

The reformation accomplished much, but it certainly was not completed or perfected. This is the clear statement of Holy Writ. The message to the church of Sardis, is the message primarily to the church of the reformation of the 16th century.

REVELATION 3:1,2 "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things said he that has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars; I know thy works, that you have a name that you lived, and are dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God."

They had a good name - "a name that you lived" but our Lord said "I have not found thy works perfect before God." They began well, but did not carry on the truth. They were "ready to die."

Another translation reads "I have not found thy works fulfilled."

For instance Luther and most of the reformers still believed in "original sin", and with it "baby baptism", or the damnation of unbaptized babies; Sunday Sacredness and that the communion bread and wine was the actual body and blood of Christ. The reformation had many good features, but at best it was but a half-truth. They were handicapped by the devil's lie "You shall not surely die". They largely held to the immortal soul theory, and eternal torment for the lost.

In contrast the message of 1888 had as a foundation the clear light of God's "Everlasting Gospel. God's Last message for this Sad, Mad, Bad world. It was the message of 1888 that led to the revival of the clear revelation of "Righteousness by Faith.

1. It was closely linked with the message of Revelation 14:6-12.
2. It was linked to the cleansing of the heavenly Sanctuary that the hour of God's judgment is come.
3. With that was emphasized obedience to the commandments of God, including the seventh-day Sabbath. These truths were all well in advance of any thing preached by the reformation preachers. The reformers had the beginning but the Advent message has the completion.
4. Further the 1888 message of Righteousness by Faith was no mere forensic pardon, not a mere book entry as of a prisoner released from prison.

"To justify" declared Dr. Waggoner "means to wake righteous. This was emphasized by the two other champions of 1888, A. T. Jones and Mrs. Ellen G. White. Sister White declared, "Righteousness is obedience to the law." SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 6, page 1073. "The righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God." Testimonies to Ministers,

pages 91-94. A. T. Jones stated that Justification by faith makes a man righteous in the sense that it makes him an obedient doer of the law.

To this adds Dr. Waggoner, "Being Justified by faith, then is simply being made a doer of the law by faith." Signs of the Times, May 1, 1893.

Luther and his fellow reformers taught justification by faith in Christ alone. They had much truth but they stopped short.

REVELATION 3:2 "I have not found thy works perfect before God," is our Lord's declaration in His infallible Word. The reformation was the beginning, but the Advent Message is the completion.

God's work will be perfected and completed. This also is clearly revealed in God's Scriptures.

ACTS 3:21 "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Here is complete reformation. A recovery of Truth. It is "the restoration of all things" - All the truths lost in the Dark Ages will be restored. They will be brought back. "Till the time of the Great Restoration". Moffat.

This great restoration is due just before our Lord returns. The blotting out of sin began in 1844, when "the hour of His judgment is come."

Revelation 14:6. Therefore this work of restoration was due in 1844. True to the sure word of prophecy the Advent message arose in 1844. Then the restoration of all things - the completed work of reformation would come. That message would prepare a people for the glory land.

I once visited an exhibition of precious stones. I noticed the choicest stones were set out on a black velvet background. The black background showed up the full beauty of the gem's luster. So in the darkest hour of earth's history, the darkest hour that comes before the dawn of God's eternal day, our Lord will show forth His jewels set in the blackest background. This will show forth the glory of His redeeming power; here in this darkest hour as they that keep the commandments of God "and the faith of Jesus."

1 JOHN 3:7 "Let no man deceive you: he that does righteousness is righteous." Here is the plain statement of God's word. Righteousness is obedience. Many seem to want to be deceived. They want the broad road. God warns "Let no man deceive you". God warns us because He loves us, for "man cannot be saved without obedience." 1 Selected Messages, page 364.

HEBREWS 11:33 The saints "through faith wrought righteousness." Their obedience was the result of their faith. It was righteousness, or obedience by faith. "Righteousness" and "Obedience" are used interchangeably.

ROMANS 5:18 "BY the righteousness of One." or

ROMANS 5:19 "By the obedience of One shall many be made righteous." Righteousness is obedience.

The third Angel's message is a warning against the "mark of the beast" - the mark of disobedience. The mark of the "Man of sin."

The message of righteousness by faith shows the way of obedience or righteousness. Thus the message of righteousness by faith is "the third angel's message in verity," for it produces those that "Keep the commandments of God. It is to get a people ready for Glory for "man cannot be saved without obedience. 1 Selected Messages, page 364.

This obedience includes Sabbath keeping and would be part of this great restoration work. ISAIAH 58:12 "The restorer of paths to dwell in."

Will turn the foot from trampling on:

ISAIAH 58:13 "My holy day" and doing "thy pleasure" on "the holy of the Lord."

A so called message of justification or righteousness by faith that makes the holy of the Lord more of a holiday than of a "holy" day; a sports day instead of the Sabbath, is not the message of God. It is one of the many "Perverse" counterfeit messages of righteousness by faith. This too fulfills prophecy.

ACTS 20:30 "Of your own selves" - right in the church "shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

Other translations instead of "Perverse" read "distort the truth", "teach perversions of the truth", "false message", "false doctrine."

Why should we be surprised when this prophecy comes true and we see it fulfilling in our midst?

The true message of righteousness by faith is found in the "Scripture of Truth". The 1888 message will be held by God's faithful "few", while the perverse but popular, easy message will sweep off thousands. But remember truth will triumph.

REVELATION 18:1 "The earth was lightened with His glory." The "Glory of God" is

revealed in His law.

ROMANS 7:12 "Law is holy". His "saints" - sanctified ones reveal the character of their Lord. They keep His "Sabbath day holy" for they "keep the commandments of God" - His holy law.

HOW WILL THIS TREMENDOUS TASK BE ACCOMPLISHED?

The message of 1888 reveals the secret. Briefly that message was this. Christ was God. He had a divine, sinless nature but for our sakes He took a "flesh and blood" nature. Christ overcame, lived a perfect, sinless life and died an atoning death, He paid our debt full and complete that we may be pardoned or justified. Note a few clear facts on this stupendous theme. "God justifies the ungodly. Yes He certainly does," declared Pr. Waggoner. "It does not mean He glosses over a man's faults, so that he is counted righteous, although he is really wicked, but it means that He makes that man a doer of the law." Signs of the Times, May 1, 1893.

Dr. Waggoner, A. T. Jones, Mrs. E. G. White and the Bible taught one and the same truth in the 1888 revival. For instance:

"The enemy was overcome by Christ in His human nature. The power of the Savior's Godhead was hidden. He overcame in human nature, relying on God's power." SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 7, page 924.

"The Lord Jesus came to our world, not to reveal what God could do, but what a man could do through faith in God's power to help in every emergency. Man is, through faith to be a partaker in the divine nature and overcome every temptation." SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 7, page 929.

"He gave man the perfect example, and through the ample provision Christ has made, we may become partakers of the divine nature." SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 7, page 929.

"Jesus the world's Redeemer could only keep the commandments of God in the same way that humanity can keep them." SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 7, page 929.

"If Christ had a special power which is not the privilege of man to have, Satan would have made capital of the matter. A man, tempted as a man rendered the obedience of a Man." SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 7, page 930.

Never say Christ had a fallen or sinful nature. He had a divine sinless nature. But for us He took:

HEBREWS 2:14 "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself likewise took part of the same that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

See "The Man Christ Jesus" and "The immaculate Conception." By George Burnside.

"He was ever pure and undefiled. Yet He took upon Him our sinful nature. E.G.W. Review & Herald, December 15, 1896.

May we never, like nominal Christendom, water down the incarnation of our Lord and finish with a Christ like the one of the immaculate conception perversion of the man of sin. Christ stooped to the lowest for us and "took" "the same" fallen sinful "flesh and blood" that we have and in that Jesus won. Today in this sad, mad, bad world He can still do the same in our flesh.

Of His saints He can say:

REVELATION 3:21 "To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame." In this weakest and worst generation of fallen mortals, when Christendom is at its weakest and lowest ebb, to His saints in this age He offers the greatest reward.

He will have overcomers who overcame as He overcame. Speaking of this same people living in this same worst period Our Lord can say:

REVELATION 14:12 "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Note they "Keep the commandments of God" When before in all history does God say this of His people? Thus earth's worst period, through His restored "everlasting Gospel," He lifts His people to the highest. He calls them His Saints. They are sanctified through truth.

JOHN 17:17 "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth." Jesus said:

JOHN 17:19 "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified (truly sanctified - margin) through the truth." To the Laodiceans, in the period when compromise is sought more than consecration, Christ will have a people who overcome as He did. Of the same people in the same apostate period our Christ reveals those:

REVELATION 15:2 "That had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark." It is very evident that no one can get the victory over the beast and mark if they do not know what is that mark. These people have come out under the preaching of the three-fold message of Revelation 14 - the same people who are described as those that "Keep the commandments of God."

REVELATION 10:7 "The mystery of God should be finished." The mystery of God is His everlasting gospel that has such mysterious power. It is linked with the Sabbath, Righteousness by faith, the blotting out of sin, the cleansing of the sanctuary and the keeping of the commandments of God. This is God's final call. It is His last message. It will soon be finished. This all inclusive message was never preached in the reformation of the 16th century. It is the Everlasting Gospel which was never given in its completeness since the first century. We must not go back to Luther but we must go back to Luther's Bible, and then forward to the whole truth of God. Anything less would be but a poor substitute. Not to Justification as taught by nominal Christendom, not to the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which God says He hates. Not back to modern Babylon's churches but to the Everlasting Gospel with it's power and it's earth-filling glory. This was the message of 1888.

This is an attempt to set forth in simple language just what is meant by Righteousness by Faith as taught in the Bible and by God's servants Jones, Waggoner, and Mrs. Ellen G. White in 1888. For further reading on this subject the following booklets are Available:

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