

THE 1888 MESSAGE AND LEGAL JUSTIFICATION

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Foreword

This pamphlet discusses what Paul says:

"All have sinned, ... being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:23, 24, KJV). "All alike have sinned, ... and all are justified by God's free grace alone" (NEB).

"The judicial action ... issued in a verdict of condemnation, but the act of grace ... issued in a verdict of acquittal. ... It follows, then, that as the issue of one misdeed was condemnation for all men, so the issue of one just act is acquittal and life for all men" (Romans 5:16, 18, NEB).

The problem

Calvinism says the "all men" are only the elect, legally justified or acquitted."

Universalism says it means that no one will be lost at last.

Arminianism says that Christ's sacrifice does no one any good unless he chooses to accept, that the "verdict of acquittal" applies only to those who believe.

The 1888 message recognizes that on His cross Christ legally justified the entire human race and won for "all men" a "verdict of acquittal" that reversed the "condemnation" "in Adam." But the sinner may choose to resist and reject what Christ has already given him, and thus elect to be lost.

Which view is true?

Background for the Reader

Dr. Larry J. Kane is a Seventh-day Adventist lawyer and church elder in Indiana. He has published what he titles Analysis of the Doctrine of Universal "Legal" Justification. He seeks to refute the message of the 1888 Message Study Committee regarding justification by faith. A number of readers have contacted us to inquire if we would please comment on his views.

Larry J. Kane's Principle Contentions

In his Analysis of the Doctrine of Universal "Legal" Justification Dr. Kane says:

He "rejects the proposition of a universal legal justification."

It is not taught in Scripture.

The "all men" of Romans 5:18 and the "all" of Romans 3:23, 24 are only those who believe, not the entire human race.

Paul's parallels between the "all men" in condemnation "in Adam" and the "all men" acquitted by Christ are not to be taken literally.

E. J. Waggoner did not teach a legal justification accomplished at the cross. (Kane does not mention A.T. Jones's teaching).

"Legal justification" comes only "at the point of conversion," not at the cross.

The doctrine of a legal justification at the cross does not help clarify the repentant sinner's understanding of the saving grace of God, nor motivate him to greater devotion to Christ.

Introduction

We do not wish to contend with brethren; we would much rather "press together" in effectively proclaiming the Good News to the world. But we must know for sure what the "Good News" is! When I read Dr. Kane's paper I sighed, and wished

for the sake of peace and harmony that I could just surrender all my convictions and give in to him. But then I thought of all the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy evidence that Dr. Kane either ignores or denies. That evidence constrains my conscience to speak out. We must understand the cross more clearly.

He says that it is "Romans 5:12-18 ... and specifically verse 18, that is relied upon most heavily by the 1888 MSC (Message Study Committee) in support of the doctrine of a universal 'legal' justification." This alerted me immediately; there are a score of other Bible and Spirit of Prophecy statements that require this understanding, none of which Dr. Kane recognizes.

The 1888 Message Study Committee is not alone in holding this view. Others see in the sacrifice of Christ a legal justification effected for "all men" which is not merely provisional or conditional, but is accomplished. Dr. Arnold Wallenkampf teaches the same in his *What Every Christian Should Know About Being Justified*

(R&H, 1988, chapter 5. Wallenkampf has served as a member of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference). Elder Neal Wilson, while General Conference president, took the same position in his Week of Prayer reading for 1988. Elder Jack Sequeira presents the same in his widespread meetings, with Elder Robert Folkenberg's approval and support. There are numerous pastors and thousands of church members who rejoice in the solid Good News they see in this doctrine.

This of course does not necessarily prove that the view is correct. The Bible must settle the issue. Dr. Kane however should make clear that he opposes the views of this entire group, and not single out the 1888 Message Study Committee alone.

Perhaps he has misunderstood the Good News we have sought to proclaim. The fault may lie with us in not making it as clear as we should. If so, we pray that this "response" may help resolve misunderstandings. We welcome his "Analysis" for

it drives us again to our knees in prayer and to our Bibles for further study. We take such critiques seriously, for we want to know the truth. One must be careful both ways:

The man who once so wisely said, "Be sure you're right, then go ahead,"
Could well have added this, to wit, "Be sure you're wrong before you quit."

Let us bear in mind that the real issue is not a mere tempest in a theological teapot. Rather, it is: what did Christ accomplish on His cross? What is the real truth of "Christ and Him crucified"? What is the Good News that will reach human hearts and motivate to true obedience? What truth will penetrate to the deepest recesses of the human soul, deliver from addictions, and reconcile alienated hearts to God? What is the "third angel's message in verity" that will lighten the earth with glory?

Dr. Kane says this doctrine does not help to clarify the gospel nor motivate to devotion to Christ; but we would respectfully inquire, What

truth will be effective in fulfilling the gospel commission? The Arminianism which has constituted our usual understanding for many decades has failed to accomplish that God-given task. Rather, lukewarmness and worldliness have permeated the world church. We inquire, How is 'the gospel ... the power of God unto salvation?' What missing element will recover that lost power?

We are indebted to Jones and Waggoner for prompting us to see in Scripture this idea of justification by faith and the legal foundation on which it rests. We find the motif appearing frequently in the writings of both the 1888 messengers. They in turn derived the idea from Scripture. We find Ellen White supports it.

Chapter 1

What Does Scripture Say?

Dr. Kane has given us an extended philosophical discourse setting forth his opinions about Romans 3:19-28. We appreciate his well-honed lawyer-like powers of persuasion. But conscience forces us to inquire what the Bible text actually says, word for word, irrespective of hermeneutical attempts to "interpret" it.

Romans 3:23, 24: In chapters 1-3 Paul has been discussing the universal guilt of the whole world ("all the world may become guilty before God", vs. 19), and the universal condition of sin ("all alike have sinned," vs. 23, NEB; the aorist tense of the verb--action accomplished in the past). In verse 24 he sets forth God's solution to the universal problem--His cross: "And all are justified by God's free grace alone, through His act of liberation [redemption, KJV] in the person of Christ Jesus."

Dr. Kane limits the "all [who] are justified by God's free grace" to those who believe, contending that "the overall context" requires that limitation. We would respectfully respond that the actual language of the text governs the context. Paul has the authority to say what he believes; we have no authority to re-interpret his plain words to make them deny their obvious meaning. The fact that he has several times in chapter 3 mentioned experiential justification by faith does not forbid him to mention also the legal basis on which that experience rests.

He says, "All have sinned" (aorist) and in the same sentence with the same subject of the sentence says they are "being justified freely by his grace." The "all" is clearly defined as those that "sinned." The NEB recognizes the obvious grammatical construction by translating verse 24, "and all are justified by God's free grace alone." Such grammar cannot be controverted. The KJV correctly translates the "justified" for what it is--a present participle, "being justified freely." The participle is dependent on the tense of the main

verb of the sentence, which in this case is past tense (aorist). In other words, the "being justified" takes place when the "all sinned." Paul's use of the aorist tense requires the understanding that they "sinned" corporately "in Adam," as he explains later in chapter 5. He does not deny that "all" have continued to sin individually and personally, for in 3:23 he says that they (present tense) "come short of the glory of God."

There is no "context" that can overthrow this grammatical structure. While in previous verses he has discussed the experience of justification by faith, he has every right in this sentence to explain the prior legal basis on which that experience rests. In verse 24 Paul specifically omits any reference to the "all" being justified by faith. Rather, they are being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus which was set forth (aorist again) at the cross. Verse 25 makes clear that the death of the cross ("whom God hath set forth," aorist) is a "propitiation" to reconcile the alienated heart to God. The one being propitiated is not God, but the sinner, "through faith in His

blood." The blood was shed before the sinner could believe.

Further, there is another word introduced in verse 24 that clarifies his meaning as to when and how the justification of "all" took place: it was "through the redemption" ("act of liberation," NEB; "ransom," Conybeare). When did the "redemption" take place? At the cross "through His blood" which was shed there, "by means of death" (vs. 25; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:15). In whom have we received this "redemption"? "In Christ Jesus" who was God's gift to the human race, in His person when He sacrificed Himself for us. Thus "the redemption" or "act of liberation" at the cross is the basis of the justification that applies to "all."

What did Christ redeem by His sacrifice? The world. The cross accomplished "the redemption of the purchased possession" (Jn. 3:16, 17; Eph. 1:14). Ellen White says that "all men are one family" through His redemption (PK 369), and "every blessing man enjoys" is the gift of His sacrifice (Ed 101). He redeemed "sinful humanity" (COL 118).

Christ died for the world. The Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world.

This is not saying that Christ "saved" the whole world eternally. Our opponents cannot fairly impute this idea to us. But He paid the price for the world's redemption, so that legally it was redeemed by His objective sacrifice. This is the only reason that physical life can continue on the planet.

Chapter 2

The Source of Dr. Kane's Confusion

Besides establishing the legal basis for 'all ... being justified freely by His grace,' Paul introduces a second factor: making effective that "redemption." This is accomplished through personal faith: "God's way of righting wrong [is] effective through faith in Christ" (Rom. 3:22, 24, NEB; "manifested," KJV). This is the subjective experience of salvation through righteousness by faith.

Dr. Kane appears to confuse the subjective experience of making effective by faith what was accomplished at the cross, with the objective sacrifice itself. The full force of Paul's statement has to remain true: "All alike have sinned, ... and all are justified by God's free grace alone through His act of liberation." Therefore the "all alike" cannot be limited to the few who believe, for Paul

has already said that the "whole world" is guilty before God (vs. 19). That objective "act of liberation" or of "redemption," Christ's sacrifice on the cross, cannot be limited in a Calvinist sense to the elect. Neither can it be limited in an Arminian sense to those who believe. But Dr. Kane does limit Christ's grace to those who accept it by faith, whereas Paul takes pains to speak of it as a "free grace alone." The essential element of such "free grace" must be its equal application on "the just and on the unjust" (Mt. 5:45), for God "justifieth the ungodly" (Rom. 4:5). "God has encircled the world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe" (SC p. 68).

Dr. Kane informs us that the "direct, logical antecedent" of the "all ... being justified freely" of verses 23, 24 must be only those who believe. Grammatically, this is impossible. His position requires the logical conclusion that the only people in the world who "have sinned" must be those who believe. But Paul's grammar is clear. The participle ("being justified") must have a main verb which it modifies, and the main verb ("have sinned") must

have a subject, and the only grammatical possibility is the word "all." Therefore Paul says that those "being justified freely" are the same as those who "sinned"--"all."

The divine sacrifice was made irrespective of human faith. But Dr. Kane's position logically implies that Christ must wait until we believe before He could give Himself. However, according to verse 25, the "propitiation" of "His blood" was given prior to our exercising faith in it. (We agree with him of course that Christ's righteousness cannot be "appropriated by means other than faith," for the word means making effective the atonement. We insist only that the gift was freely given before we could appropriate it).

If through the tragedy of unbelief we should not appropriate it, the gift was still given in its fullness, Calvinism or Arminianism notwithstanding. A gift does not have to be received before it qualifies as a gift; it, can be rejected after it is "freely" given. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" before

anyone believed in Him.

Dr. Kane holds that Waggoner did not teach a legal justification for "all men." True, in 1891 he did not clearly articulate it in this text, but that does not nullify his seeing it in the next passage, nor does it mean that the basic idea is not there. His understanding grew by the time he wrote his 1896 article for the Signs that does articulate it clearly: "As the condemnation came upon all, so the justification comes upon all" (March 12; Waggoner on Romans, p. 101). Dr. Kane does not recognize that Jones forcefully taught the idea of a legal justification for "all men" in his 1895 sermons at the General Conference (see *Is Beyond Belief Beyond Belief?* pp. 48-54).

Romans 5: Again, Dr. Kane's position is that no legal justification can take place until the believer accepts by faith. But this logically eventuates in justification by obedience instead of justification by faith. The reason is that it requires the sinner's faith to actuate the process of justification so that it is the believer's initiative that

makes salvation possible. The gospel presents justification by faith as a response to what Christ has already accomplished. Dr. Kane may say that God takes the initiative, but his position logically contradicts itself by representing God's initiative as only making a potential offer; His sacrifice has accomplished nothing solid, decisive, eternal.

Paul's actual language in Romans 5 describes a divine sacrifice that accomplishes its objective--not provisionally or maybe or perhaps or possibly, etc., but which actually does reverse the legal verdict of condemnation that came upon the human race "in Adam." A new "Adam," Christ, has brought upon "all men" a legal "verdict of acquittal." Yes, what Paul says takes one's breath away; but there it is, plainly said.

Dr. Kane does not like this. He again unilaterally limits the "all men" of verse 18 to those who have faith, and therefore he limits its "life" to eternal life. But Paul must be allowed to tell us what he believes, not what we think he should say.

His language is so simple that we believe it must not be misunderstood:

God's act of grace is out of all proportion to Adam's wrongdoing. For if the wrongdoing of that one man brought death upon so many, its effect is vastly exceeded by the grace of God and the gift that came to so many by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ.

And again, the gift of God is not to be compared in its effect with that one man's sin; for the judicial action, following upon the one offence, issued in a verdict of condemnation, but the act of grace, following upon so many misdeeds, issued in a verdict of acquittal (vss. 15, 16, NEB).

The judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. ... As one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men (RSV).

The Twentieth Century New Testament adds a nuance: as "the whole race was rendered sinful," so "the whole race will be rendered righteous, clearly indicating a legal standing.

Here indeed is law-court language. Upon whom does this "verdict of acquittal" come? Precisely upon those on whom had come the legal "verdict of condemnation." The "so many" affected by Adam is the same "so many" affected by the sacrifice of Christ. He actually died for their sin. He didn't promise to die for their sin if they did something first.

In verse 17 Paul spells out the difference between the legal verdict of acquittal on "all men" and the making "effective" of that verdict by the faith of those who believe:

If by the wrongdoing of that one man death established its reign, through a single sinner, much more shall those who receive in far greater measure God's grace, and His gift of righteousness, live and reign through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Then he sums up his series of contrasts by an unequivocal statement:

It follows, then, that as the issue of one misdeed was condemnation for all men, so the issue of one just act is acquittal and life for all men (vs. 18).

Therefore as by the offence 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 (vs. 18, KJV).

Chapter 3

Language Couldn't be Plainer

Dr. Kane invokes what he sees as "the context" of Romans 5 to deny that the "justification" in verse 18 can apply to "all men," because verse 1 speaks of our "being justified by faith." However, there is a closer context. In verses 6-8 Paul reverts to the aorist (past) tense in speaking of the objective sacrifice of Christ. Thus the immediate context of verses 12-18 is in the aorist tense (with the exception of verse 17 which speaks in the future tense of reigning with Christ). The aorist, speaking of a punctiliar event in the past with present consequences, directs our minds to the cross. There a universal sacrifice was offered as the basis for present justification by faith.

Is this "wholly at odds with the rest of scripture," as Dr. Kane says? We need to allow some other Bible texts to speak, with Ellen White illumination:

Isaiah 53:6: "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Some questions must be settled: is this only provisional, or is it actual? Does the "us all" mean only those who believe? Did the Lord also not lay the iniquity of unbelievers on Christ? Were there any believers even in existence before He "so loved the world that He gave ..."? On the answer to those simple questions this issue rests. If what Isaiah says is only provisional (Arminianism), the text is forced to contradict itself and to say that Christ did not bear the iniquity of those who do not believe in Him. There the circle comes full, bringing us back into Calvinism again.

But if it is true that Christ actually bore the iniquity of us all, believers and unbelievers alike, then we are forced to recognize a legal justification for "all men." There can be no double jeopardy. If "the Lord hath laid on" us the iniquity of us all (as Dr. Kane's position implies), then it cannot be true that He "hath laid" that same iniquity upon Christ. When Ellen White notes that the Lord has laid on Christ the iniquity of the repentant believer, she is in no way denying the larger application. In her full

context, she does not teach a limited atonement, which is logically Dr. Kane's position.

2 Corinthians 5:14, 15: "If one died for all, then were all dead; and ... he died for all." Is the "all" only those who "accept" or "believe"? Calvinism says yes ... only the elect. But if He died "for all" by "one just act" on Calvary, it had to be the world for which He died. Paul makes this clear a few sentences later in verse 19: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Unto whom did He impute their trespasses? Unto Christ. Otherwise, no human being could live for even a moment. This is the "temporary universal justification" that Dr. Wallenkampf recognizes. Someone must bear the guilt of those "trespasses." If the sinner bears it, he must perish in a moment. Therefore it follows that every human being who lives owes even his physical life to that sacrifice of Christ, because of that legal imputation, whether or not he believes. He is already infinitely, eternally, in debt to Christ. The honest heart cannot resist the resultant motivation ... to live "henceforth unto

Him which died for us and rose again" (verse 15). Here is the truth that annihilates Laodicean lukewarmness. This is why it is so important to understand what Christ accomplished on His cross.

If one denies the obvious import of these texts, his position must logically eventuate in that of Romanism ... Christ has to die afresh every time a sinner takes the initiative to "accept." But in truth, He died "once for all," a mighty event that precedes our response to it.

1 John 2:2: "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Only thus can the "judicial verdict of ... acquittal" of Romans 5 become real. Is He never such a "propitiation" for any sinner until he "accepts"? To take that position would deny what John says, and turn the plan of salvation on its head.

1 Timothy 2:6: He "gave himself a ransom for all" (a related word to "redemption" in Romans 3:24). What was ransomed was the world itself.

The 1888 message recognizes that all physical life is the purchase of Christ's sacrifice, as well as eternal life. Yes, by all means, we gladly insist that this realization is a powerful motive toward heart-devotion to the Lord who bought us with His blood. To appreciate what happened on the cross produces practical godliness! Thousands testify to the power of this gospel truth, especially youth privileged to hear it.

1 Timothy 4:10: Christ "is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe." In what sense can He be the Saviour of those who do not believe? The text does not say that He would like to be, or perhaps may be, or possibly could be, if the sinner does something first; He is already "the Saviour of all men." We must never tell the sinner that Christ is not his Saviour until he first elects Him to be such. (But we as a church have long given that impression). Christ is not like a political candidate who does not become president or governor until he is elected. He became our Saviour at the cross. When we "elect" Him so by faith, then He becomes "specially" so, unto eternal life. He is already "the

Saviour of all men" in that He has already died their second death, paid the penalty for their sins, and thus legally justified them, even though the vast majority may spurn Him.

2 Timothy 1:10: Christ "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." The reason is given in Hebrews 2:9: "that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." What "death" did He "taste," and then "abolish"? The second. If the reality of this stupendous truth sinks into our consciousness, we begin to see that He accomplished a gigantic feat on His cross. Jones's and Waggoner's conclusion becomes inevitable: "There is not the slightest reason why every man that has ever lived should not be saved unto eternal life, except that they would not have it." No human being should have to die the second death unless through unbelief he rejects the grace of Christ who is already his Saviour (Waggoner on Romans, p. 101). The Lord is just; He will never put any human soul in double jeopardy. His punishment was inflicted on Christ; therefore the legal debt has

already been paid. The resultant motivation to the honest person who understands and believes this truth becomes phenomenal.

Ellen White agrees fully. Her illustration of President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation is beautifully precise. The moment the president signed the document, every slave in the Confederate territories was legally free; but none knew experiential freedom until he heard the good news and believed it. Christ "has signed the emancipation papers of the race" (MH 90).

"He restored the whole race of men to favor with God," and "made satisfaction for the guilt of the whole world" (1 SM 343, 392).

Chapter 4

What Does Paul Say in 1 Corinthians 15?

Dr. Kane says that 1 Corinthians 15 indicates that the parallels between Adam and Christ of Romans 3 and 5 "cannot be literally intended. While all die the death of Adam, not all will be resurrected unto eternal life."

Well, all will be resurrected. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (vs. 22). "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth" in two resurrections (Jn. 5:28). Christ has "abolished" the "death" of Adam. He has tasted "death for every man," that is, the second death. If Christ had not come and given Himself for us, we would all die the second death "in Adam." (What we call death the Bible calls a sleep). But Christ has made it unnecessary for anyone to die that second death--but for his unbelief. We cannot use 1 Corinthians 15:22 to

question or weaken Paul's obvious position in Romans 5:18. His language is too "literal" to be misunderstood. We dare not tamper with it.

In Paul's context, by virtue of Christ's sacrifice "all men" are legally entitled to "be made alive" eternally, and will be if they do not interpose a rebellious will (Jn. 3:16-19; SC 27). All that Adam did, Christ reversed; otherwise Paul's contrasts become meaningless. Every wicked person who comes forth in the second resurrection will realize that by his stubborn unbelief he himself has forfeited the eternal life that was already given him "in Christ." He has deliberately thrown it away. The second resurrection will demonstrate to them and to the universe at large that the wicked have disqualified themselves for eternal life by their own unfitness to enter the city (GC 543). We must remember, of course, that such unbelief and rejection need not be conscious in order to be real, but will become manifest in the second resurrection (DA 58).

Chapter 5

The “In Christ” Idea of Scripture

Dr. Kane has taken one sentence of Lightened With His Glory (p. 17) in a way that disregards an abundant context that says the opposite of his representations (see appendix). Of course, no one is experientially "in Christ" unless he is converted. What is repeatedly stated in this book is that the second Adam has reversed all that the first Adam did. By natural birth everyone is corporately "in Adam." But Christ has become the "last Adam," the new Head of the human race. His sacrifice has effected this new standing legally. If every loaf of bread is stamped with the cross of Christ, if no one, "saint or sinner" can eat his daily food but he is nourished by the body and blood of Christ (DA 660), it follows that as a member of that human race he stands now in a new way to God legally because of the sacrifice of Christ. In this sense the whole human race is redeemed "in Christ." The

Good News of the Gospel does not tell him only what Christ will do for him if he first takes the initiative, but it tells him what Christ has already done for him. Thus his believing becomes a heart appreciation of what is already a fact. He was reconciled to God at the cross. Now he believes it, and thus he receives the atonement (Rom. 5:11).

It is in this sense that the "in Christ" idea in Scripture is set over against the "in Adam" idea. But for one to be "in Christ" experientially is to appreciate that he has been redeemed by an event that took place two millennia ago. The fruit of such faith: a change of heart, and joyous obedience to all the commandments of God.

In Paul's context it is clear that the legal "condemnation" that rested on the entire human race in consequence of Adam's sin has been lifted by virtue of Christ's sacrifice: "As by the offence 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." At the risk of redundancy, we point out that if

the actual "condemnation" mentioned in that text truly and fully rested on any human being, he would die in a moment. The obvious fact that "all men" live is evidence that the 1888 view is correct.

It seems quite unfair to characterize this book as saying what Dr. Kane attributes to it: "All men are 'in Christ' regardless of their belief or unbelief in Christ." The book says nothing of the kind. No one is "in Christ" who rejects Christ. The book has scores of references to the vital role of "belief" or "unbelief," and makes abundantly clear that unbelief is the one sin that negates all that Christ has already accomplished for us; it puts the sinner out of the union with God that Christ has purchased for him and actually given to him. By his unbelief the sinner voluntarily puts himself back "in Adam." Jesus says that the lost will be lost at last because of their unbelief, which has been constant resistance of the grace of God (Jn. 3:16-19).

Thus by our unbelief we human beings have brought upon ourselves a "condemnation" that is totally unnecessary in the light of the cross of

Christ. And that is the point of Paul's Letter to the Romans. By unbelief and willful alienation from God we, the human race, have put ourselves in Romans 7 while all along we could be in Romans 8, if only we had faith. Sure, there is self-inflicted condemnation on "all men" in Romans 7, but the Good News tells us that it need not be! The burden was lifted by Christ at His cross. Now, believe it!

Chapter 6

Conclusion

As a lawyer, Dr. Kane realizes how a criminal may be pardoned and released from prison without his heart or character being changed in the process. Although Christ has released us all from prison by His divine sacrifice, many selfishly enjoy the benefits of His release without letting their hearts be changed. In other words, they reject justification by faith. But as Waggoner says, the doors are open—we can walk out into liberty (The Glad Tidings, p. 61). Many sadly choose to remain in their spiritual prison even though the doors are open, clinging to a condemnation that they need not bear. By so doing, they reject the justification, the liberation, that has already been effected for them.

The famous man on Death Row who rejected his governor's pardon died for his crime; but that does not mean that the governor did not actually pardon him. We contend for the Good News that declares our Governor has indeed pardoned us. To

believe that Good News is the only way that repentant sinners can render true obedience to God's law. In other words, righteousness is by faith.

Again we thank Dr. Kane for his thoughtful "Analysis." May the dear Lord save us from unnecessary internecine theological strife, and bring us "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, ... but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

May we heed Ellen White's repeated counsel to "press together."

Appendix

Here is the passage from Lightened With His Glory that has stimulated Dr. Kane's rejection:

Assurance of salvation comes with the 1888 truth of justification by faith. Calvinism says that Christ died only for the elect. While Arminianism protests that He died for "all men," it also says that He merely made a "provision whereby it might be possible for "all men" to be justified if they take the initiative in doing something right first. If the sinner does not take advantage of the offer, then the death of Christ on the cross has done and will do him no good. This is the general idea our people have had.

The 1888 messengers saw that the cross accomplished far more than making a mere provision which is dependent on the sinner's initiative. Christ has done something for every human being! "All men" owe even this present life to the sacrifice of Christ. Human salvation depends on God's initiative, and damnation depends on

man's initiative. When the sinner hears the Good News and believes, he responds to God's initiative, and thus he experiences justification by faith.

Here is where the 1888 idea of justification by faith exposes subtle legalism. In pure New Testament justification by faith "boasting ... is excluded" (Romans 3:27), but in the popular view the key factor is the sinner's initiative. He can say, "I took advantage of the offer, I accepted the provision, I made the decision, that brings me to heaven. Christ's sacrifice did me no good until I did something about it." Thus an egocentric mindset is locked in, and a subliminal legalism remains.

Something is tragically missing in this idea. Christ actually tasted the second death "for every man," and made propitiation for the sins of the whole world" (Hebrews 2:9; 1 John 2:2). The sins of "all men" were legally imputed unto Him as He died, so that no one has as yet had to bear the true burden of his guilt (Romans 5:16-18; 2 Corinthians 5:19).

Therefore "all men" live because He died for them, whether or not they believe (vss. 14, 15). Not only at Easter when people eat hot cross buns, but every loaf of bread is "stamped" with the cross. This means that both saints and sinners are "daily" equally nourished by the sacrifice of Christ (The Desire of Ages, p. 660). He has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Timothy 1:10). For whom has He brought life? For "all men." For whom has He also brought immortality? For those who believe.

Therefore, since "all men" live because their trespasses were imputed unto One who died in their place, it is correct to say that a legal justification has been effected for all men. (Some prefer the term "corporate justification" or "temporary universal justification." The truth is the same.) As "all men" are under legal "condemnation" "in Adam" by birth, so Christ has become the last Adam" in whom the entire human race are legally acquitted (1 Corinthians 15:22; Romans 5:16-18, N.E.B.). This is the "in Christ" idea of the New Testament.

This does not mean that "all men" will be saved against their will. The gift Christ has given "every man" can be despised and refused. ... The 1888 message sees sin in a far more serious light than most Adventists see it. It is not a passive doing-nothing-ness. Sin is so terrible that it constantly resists and rejects the saving grace of God. The sinner doesn't realize what he is doing, and must be told. Only in this light can repentance be seen and appreciated in its true dimensions (pp. 16-18).