

**ARNDT  
JOHANN**

TRUE  
CHRISTIANITY

**Johann Arndt**  
**True Christianity**

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*True Christianity / A Treatise on Sincere Repentance, True Faith, the Holy*

*Walk of the True Christian, Etc.:*

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# Содержание

Introduction By The American Editor	5
Book I.	58
The Author's Preface To The First Book	58
Chapter I.	67
Chapter II.	74
Chapter III.	82
Chapter IV.	90
Chapter V.	97
Chapter VI.	103
Chapter VII.	108
Chapter VIII.	114
Chapter IX.	123
Chapter X.	126
Chapter XI.	130
Chapter XII.	141
Chapter XIII.	147
Chapter XIV.	155
Chapter XV.	164
Chapter XVI.	170
Chapter XVII.	176
Chapter XVIII.	185
Chapter XIX.	191
Chapter XX.	199

Chapter XXI.	211
Chapter XXII.	224
Chapter XXIII.	229
Chapter XXIV.	235
Chapter XXV.	248
Chapter XXVI.	253
Chapter XXVII.	262
Chapter XXVIII.	267
Chapter XXIX.	272
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	273

# **True Christianity / A Treatise on Sincere Repentence, True Faith, the Holy Walk of the True Christian, Etc**

## **Introduction By The American Editor**

Both the general purpose of the venerable Johann Arndt in writing his “True Christianity,” and also his own character and spirit, will be best exhibited by submitting to the reader a statement referring to his personal history. He was born, December 27th, 1555, in Ballenstädt, a town in the Duchy of Anhalt, where his father, Rev. Jacob Arndt, long labored as the chaplain of Duke Wolfgang, and the pastor of one of the Evangelical Lutheran congregations of the place. The latter was a devout and faithful minister of the Gospel, and a wise and affectionate father. He had, from the earliest period, devoted much attention to the religious education of his son, in the performance of which holy duty he was faithfully sustained by his excellent wife. Their efforts were abundantly blessed. The

son, even in his early years, took great pleasure in reading the writings of Luther, and also acquired a fondness for those of Thomas á Kempis, of Tauler, and of others who breathed the same spirit of devotion. That this feature of his religious character did not undergo any essential change in his riper years, appears from the circumstance that he was one of the first who collected, arranged, and republished the religious tracts of Stephen Prætorius, a Lutheran divine of an eminently devout spirit. These were subsequently re-edited by Martin Statius, who prefixed the title: *Spiritual Treasury* (Geistliche Schatzkammer), to the collection. This book of devotion was highly prized by Spener, has often been reprinted, is found in many German households, and well deserves to be translated, and thus made accessible to the English religious public.

§ 2. In his tenth year Arndt lost his father, but the orphan soon found friends who, in the good providence of God, enabled him to continue the studies which he had commenced with distinguished success under the guidance of his father. After completing his preparatory education in the schools of Halberstadt and Magdeburg, he proceeded, in the year 1576, to the university of Helmstedt, which had recently been established. In the course of the following year, 1577, he went as a student to the university of Wittenberg, soon after the official recognition of the principles embodied in the Formula of Concord (published in 1580), by which that institution received a strictly Lutheran character, and every tendency to any other doctrinal system was

successfully arrested. It was here that he formed a very close union, first as a student, and then as a personal friend, with the eminent Polycarp Leyser, the elder of that name, whose firmness and devotion in sustaining the distinctive features of Lutheranism have assigned to him a high position in the history of his Church. – After Arndt had, even at this early age, acquired distinction as an accomplished private lecturer on Natural Philosophy, etc., as well as on the Epistle to the Romans, Leyser furnished him with an unusually favorable recommendation to the professors in Strasburg. This city, the government and population of which were exclusively Lutheran, had not yet been subjected to that great calamity which afterwards befell it, when the despot and bigot, Louis XIV., incorporated it with the French monarchy, and by assigning undue privileges to papists, and adopting other tyrannical measures, opened an avenue for the introduction, not merely of an inferior Romanic language, but also of the errors and superstitions of the Church of Rome.

§ 3. Arndt continued his theological studies in Strasburg, under the direction of Prof. Pappus, who was also distinguished for his devotion to the genuine Lutheran faith. In the year 1579 he proceeded to Basel, where, under the gentle sway of Sulcer, the Lutheran faith had acquired influence and authority. In this city he was temporarily engaged as the tutor of a young Polish nobleman; the latter, on one of their excursions, when Arndt had accidentally fallen into the Rhine, succeeded in seizing his sinking preceptor by the hair of his head, and thus became the

means, in the hands of God, of saving a life of incalculable value, designed to prove an ever-flowing source of blessings to the Church.

§ 4. During this whole period Arndt occupied himself with the study of medicine, in connection with his strictly theological studies; it is possible that he would have ultimately chosen the practice of medicine as the business of his life, if a severe illness had not intervened. After his recovery, he believed it to be his duty to renounce his personal tastes, and he thenceforth consecrated himself entirely to the service of the Church. His medical and chemical occupations, although not abandoned, were afterwards regarded by him only as a recreation.

§ 5. He returned, in 1581 or 1582, to his native place, and labored for some time as a teacher, until he was called by his prince, Joachim Ernest, to be the pastor of the congregation in Badeborn, a village in the Duchy of Anhalt; he was, accordingly, ordained in the month of October of the same year. It was here, too, that he was married, October 31, 1583, to Anna Wagner, the daughter of an eminent jurist, with whom he passed the remaining thirty-eight years of his life in unclouded domestic happiness. She was a devout Christian woman, who cheered and encouraged Arndt amid his many cares, alleviated every burden to the extent of her ability, and was always regarded by him with tenderness and gratitude. They were childless; but many an orphan found that their hearts could overflow with love towards the young and destitute – a love as full of warmth as beloved

children have ever experienced parental love to be.

§ 6. In this first pastoral charge of Arndt, the unhappy state of affairs subjected him, particularly during the latter part of the seven years which he spent in it, to a “Lutheran martyrdom,” as Tholuck expresses himself (*Herzog. Encyk. I., 536*). The duke, John George, who now reigned (a relative of the palsgrave, or count palatine, Casimir, a zealous Calvinist), after various inward struggles, abandoned the Lutheran faith, and, in the year 1596, publicly adopted the Reformed faith, a few years after the transactions to which we now refer. Even Protestant rulers, who had not yet learned the theory that a union of church and state can operate only perniciously, perpetually interfered in the internal affairs of the church. – At this period it was the custom of Lutheran pastors, when they administered the rite of Baptism, to follow the liturgical form which prescribed “exorcism.” This feature of the whole baptismal form, which was introduced as early as the third century, or even earlier (before the days of Tertullian and Origen), consisted simply in a sentence adjuring the evil spirit to depart from the subject of Baptism. The early practice had, like others, been gradually associated, after the rise and development of popery, with superstitious ideas, such as was also the case with the Lord's Supper, until it assumed an absurd and even revolting form. At the period of the Reformation, Zwingli and Calvin (*Inst. IV., c. 15, 19; c. 19, 24*) rejected the whole form of exorcism. Luther and Melancthon, on the other hand, after discarding the popish excrescences, believed that the

scriptural doctrine which the early form involved or suggested, authorized the retention of the practice, when restricted to a very plain and simple formula, expressive of a scriptural truth. – Now, at that period, as it is well known, unfriendly feelings, engendered by various causes, existed to a certain extent, between the heads respectively of the Reformed and the Lutheran churches, in consequence of which even harmless customs which none would, under ordinary circumstances, either advocate or condemn with partisan feeling, assumed a confessional character. Such was the case with the purified and simple Lutheran baptismal sentence containing the “exorcism.”

§ 7. Arndt's course in this matter has often been misunderstood; as it, however, demonstrates him to have been alike a very firm and conscientious man, and also an uncompromising supporter of the distinctive doctrines and usages of the Lutheran Church, the following details may be appropriately furnished. – The language which Luther retained in his form for Baptism (*Taufbüchlein*), after omitting all popish and superstitious practices, was the following. Between the prayer and the reading of Mark 10:13-16, the pastor says: “I adjure thee, thou unclean spirit, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that thou go out and depart from this servant of Jesus Christ, Amen.” – Luther understood the form to be a declaration or distinct confession of the doctrine of Original Sin, and a renunciation of Satan. Still, the Lutheran Church, as such, never recognized the *necessity*

of this ancient form, and its confessional writings never allude to it. After the excitement of feeling peculiar to Arndt's age, had been allayed by time, the Lutheran Church regarded the whole as a mere *adiaphoron*, that is, a “thing indifferent,” not essentially involving any principle whatever, inasmuch as the doctrine of Original Sin had already been very explicitly set forth and confessed in her Symbolical Books. Such was the opinion of the eminent Lutheran dogmatical writers, Gerhard, Quenstedt, Hollaz, etc.; and men like Baier and Baumgarten even advocated the discontinuance of the practice. It is no longer retained in any prominent manner in the Lutheran Church. – But in the age in which Arndt lived, who was not a man that would obstinately cling to a mere form, the *rejection* of the formula of Exorcism *did* involve a principle; for, under the peculiar circumstances, that rejection might be understood to be, first, a rejection of the doctrine of Original Sin, and, secondly, an affirmation that the children of believing parents were in the kingdom of heaven, even before they had received Baptism. But all this seemed to conflict with the Pauline doctrine that all are “by nature the children of wrath.” Eph. 2:3. While, then, J. Ben. Carpzov, the distinguished interpreter of the Symbolical Books, who died in 1557, decides that the “Exorcism” is in itself a matter of indifference, and may without scruple be dropped, he nevertheless holds that if the omission of it should be understood as a denial of the Scripture doctrine of the corruption of human nature (Original Sin), it becomes, in such a case, a matter of

principle to retain the formula. (*Isagoge*, etc., p. 1122 *ff.*; 1608.) Walch, the other eminent interpreter of the Symbolical Books (*Introductio*, etc.), does not refer to the matter at all, as it is no essential part of the Lutheran Creed. But Arndt, who was a calm, sagacious, and conscientious observer, and who may justly be considered as claiming that, in forming a judgment respecting him, we should not overlook the spirit of his times, apprehended that the suppression of the “exorcism” was secretly designed to be the forerunner of the suppression of the entire Lutheran faith, which constituted the life of his soul; he could not, under such circumstances, consent to endanger his most precious treasure.

§ 8. Now the duke, John George, after his virtual adoption of the Reformed faith and practice, issued a peremptory order that the formula of Exorcism should no longer be employed in his dominions at the baptism of any infant. Arndt, who was characterized by a childlike submission to those in authority, as long as matters of principle were not involved, could not renounce his faith in God's word, and, especially, his personal conviction of the natural depravity of the human heart. He might have consented to drop a mere form; but he saw here an entering wedge, which justly alarmed him. His apprehensions were subsequently proved to have been only too well founded, when, soon afterwards, Luther's Catechism was suppressed, and another substituted in its place. Hence, as he could not renounce a prominent feature of the Lutheran creed, he firmly and positively refused to obey the ducal command. He remarked, in the written

statement which embodied his reasons for refusing to obey, and which was submitted to the civil authorities, that his conscience would not allow him to comply with such a demand of the secular authority – that the orthodox fathers, who had, during thirteen centuries, connected “exorcism” with Baptism, understood it in accordance with the mind and true sense of the Scriptures (*ex mente et vero sensu Scripturæ*) – that it was, therefore, by no means “an impious ceremony” (as the civil ruler, a layman, had thought proper to designate it), – that he must necessarily abide by the decision of his conscience – and, that he would humbly submit to any sentence which his prince might pronounce in the case. The date which he affixed to the document, is Sept. 10, 1590. That sentence, which was soon afterwards proclaimed, deposed Arndt from his office, and banished him from the ducal territories. The reader of Book I. of the “True Christianity,” will now understand, after observing the earnestness with which the author insists on the doctrine of Original Sin, or the depravity of human nature, that he could not conscientiously take any step which would, even indirectly, involve a denial of that sad truth of the Bible, – a truth to which his knowledge of his own heart daily testified.

§ 9. But the Divine Head of the Church did not depose this faithful minister. At the very time when Arndt seemed to be homeless and friendless, two important posts were offered to him – one in Mansfeld, the other in Quedlinburg, an important city, which, after belonging to various rulers, has at last been

incorporated with the monarchy of Prussia. The city adopted the Lutheran faith in 1539. Arndt decided to make this place his home, and he labored here with eminent success, during a period of seven years, as the pastor of the church of St. Nicholas. However, he also endured much affliction in this new charge, and his holy zeal and devout spirit, while fully appreciated by intelligent and enlightened believers, were misunderstood and even hated by others, so that he longed to be transferred to another field of labor.

§ 10. He was at length permitted to depart, and removed to the city of Brunswick, situated in the territory of the duke of Brunswick; it aspired at that time to become a "free city," subject directly to the German emperor. The warfare between the duke and the city, during Arndt's residence in the latter, subjected him to many sore trials. His abode in it, extending from 1590 to 1608, is specially interesting, as he then presented to the religious community Book I. of his "True Christianity." Dr. A. Wildenhahn, who has, in recent times, furnished us with various charming volumes, descriptive of the times, respectively, of Luther, Spener, Paul Gerhardt, etc., in which he combines "fiction and truth," has selected this period of Arndt's history, as the one to which he dedicates his two delightful volumes, entitled "Johannes Arndt" (Leipzig, 1861). This author complains that he found it a difficult task to collect full and authentic accounts of Arndt's life. Still, he obtained access to various documents in the archives of the city of Brunswick, and in the royal library

in Dresden, which had not been previously examined even by Arndt's best biographer, the Rev. Frederick Arndt, of Berlin; and these materially assisted him in preparing his own work.<sup>1</sup>

§ 11. During the earlier years of Arndt's residence in Brunswick, as a co-pastor of the church of St. Martin, his life was comparatively peaceful and happy. The purity of his character, the soundness and power of his doctrine, and the diligence and fidelity manifested in his pastoral labors, could not fail to command the respect, and attract the love of all candid persons. But he was at length subjected to trials of a new and painful character, and became the victim of the hostile and persecuting spirit of men from whom a very different course of conduct might have reasonably been expected. The origin of these new difficulties has not always been clearly understood; while some have regarded Arndt as worthy of the censures of those who assailed him, others are disposed to condemn those assailants in unqualified terms. It is strange that, even at this comparatively remote period, such judgments are sometimes expressed in language which betrays personal feeling rather than it announces the calm judgment of a later and disinterested generation.

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<sup>1</sup> A very accurate and interesting "Life of John Arndt," was published in English by Rev. Dr. J. G. Morris, of Baltimore, in 1853, which presents the principal events that belong to Arndt's history, and furnishes a faithful portraiture of his personal character. Wildenhahn's work, admirably translated by Rev. G. A. Wenzel, now of Pittsburg, Pa., was published as a serial in the "Lutheran and Missionary," about three years ago. This work, in a permanent form, would be a rich addition to our English religious literature.

§ 12. It is here necessary to cast a glance at the history of the times which preceded and followed the eventful year 1555, in which Arndt was born, a year ever memorable as the one in which the signing of the articles of the Peace of Augsburg secured a temporary external repose for the Lutheran Church. This "Peace" terminated at least the horrors which had followed the introduction, in 1548, of the *Augsburg Interim*, by which the newly-established Protestant doctrine was seriously endangered. The provisions of this *Interim* were enforced with such merciless tyranny by popish authorities, that in South Germany alone about four hundred faithful Lutheran pastors, who could not conscientiously accede to an arrangement which might possibly restore the full authority of the errors and superstitions of Rome, were driven, as exiles, with their families, from their homes. The spirit of the Christian martyrs of the early ages of the Church revived in these heroic men, and they clung with undying tenacity to their holy faith.

§ 13. That faith now encountered new enemies, who did not resort to fire and the sword, but who adopted more insidious means for corrupting divine truth; and again, assaults like theirs, only increased the jealousy with which the genuine Lutherans guarded the purity of their doctrinal system. It was the only gift of heaven, which sin and Satan could not touch, and which retained all its unsullied holiness. The soul of man had become corrupt; the body was subject to disease and death; the world, fair as it was, and rich in the gifts of God, had nevertheless been made by

sin to bring forth thorns and thistles. But the Gospel truth, which conducted men to Christ and heaven, remained in all its purity and power. These men were willing to suffer and die, but while they did live, they could not relax the grasp with which they held fast to evangelical truth. Now, amid the political and religious commotions of that stormy age, could we expect that devout men should say, "Peace, peace;" when there was no peace? (Jerem. 6:14.)

§ 14. Let us illustrate this subject. Schwenkfeldt, for instance (born in 1490; died, 1561), an opponent of both the Lutherans and the Reformed, as well as of the Papists, and, accordingly, constantly engaged in controversies with all parties, declared that Luther's uncompromising determination to maintain the authority of the written word of revelation, the Bible, was equivalent to a worship of the letter. He assigned, in his fanaticism and morbid mysticism, a rank to an inner and direct word of the Divine Spirit, which he asserted that he received, far above that of the written word of God. He refused to make any distinction between the divine act of the justification of the believer, on the one hand, and the progressive sanctification of the believer, on the other. He taught that the two natures of Christ, the divine and the human, were so fused together, or, rather, that the flesh of Christ was so absolutely deified or converted into God himself, that no distinction between them remained, – that the regenerate could live without sin, etc. He succeeded, in spite of the crudeness, one-sidedness,

and unsoundness of his doctrines, in attracting many disciples. His death, which occurred in 1561, a few years after Arndt's birth, did not terminate the widespread confusion which he had created in the Protestant Church; the dread of that sickly form of mysticism which he attempted to establish, long remained. The fear was naturally entertained that it might lead many astray, who, while they did not otherwise fraternize with Schwenkfeldt in his wild and absurd course, might be deluded by his claims to superior religious intelligence and holiness.

§ 15. The disastrous influences of the demagogue Thomas Münzer (born in 1490), and of his fanatical party, the Zwickau prophets, on sound doctrine and sound morals, as well as the blood which they had shed, were still vividly remembered. – Servetus, the Unitarian, had perished, but he left a seed behind; the doctrine of Christ's deity still remained a point of attack. And besides these false teachers, several others, who were originally connected in various modes with the Lutheran Church, promulgated at various times opinions which seemed to be subversive of all Scripture doctrine. – Agricola, who had originally been an active adherent of Luther, gradually departed from the faith. He unquestionably betrayed the interests of Protestantism by sanctioning the Augsburg Interim of 1548. He engaged in a controversy, at first with Melancthon, and then with Luther himself, on the subject of the proper "Use of the law" – the Antinomistic controversy – maintaining that the law was no longer of importance to the believer, and that

the Gospel alone should be preached. He died in 1566, when Arndt was about eleven years old. The confusion in the church, which he created by his dangerous sentiments on several points, was long painfully felt. – The Osiandrian controversy, respecting Justification, and its relation to Sanctification, began in 1549, and closed only when Arndt was already a student. – The Majoristic controversy originated in the public declaration made by G. Major, that “good works are *necessary to salvation.*” The fears which such a doctrine, that savored of popery, produced among orthodox and devout Lutherans, were excessive. Those who opposed Major, were alarmed by his unguarded expressions, and apprehended that the Gospel doctrine of *Justification by faith in Christ alone, without human works or merit*, would be endangered, unless they silenced him. The controversy, in its most energetic form, terminated about seven years after Arndt's birth, but the indirect effects of the misconceptions connected with the great topic of this controversy, were deeply felt by him. – The Synergistic controversy, relating to the question whether man could co-operate with the Holy Spirit in the work of his conversion, began in the year in which Arndt was born, and was maintained with great energy during several years. – The so-called Cryptocalvinistic controversy, referring mainly to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and involving certain important questions respecting the Person of Christ, commenced about three years before Arndt's birth, and agitated the church during many years. – These, and other subjects on which also

controversies had arisen, were, in the good providence of God, at length calmly considered by learned and devout Lutheran theologians, conscientiously examined in the light of the divine Word, impartially decided, and set forth, in the year 1580, in the Formula of Concord, the last of the special Lutheran creeds, all the doctrines of which Arndt cordially received, as he repeatedly declared in an official manner on various occasions, in his writings, in his last will and testament, and on his death-bed. (See below §§ 2424, 2525.) The very great reverence with which he regarded this noble creed, and his attachment to it, are to be ascribed not only to the spotless purity of the doctrines which it sets forth, but also to the good work which it performed in successfully and permanently deciding several very important questions which had latterly arisen, and on which the preceding creeds had not authoritatively and fully pronounced. It is, however, obvious, that even after these storms subsided, the waves would long remain in commotion, and it was precisely in these troublous times that Arndt labored in the ministry.

§ 16. The catalogue of the difficulties which awaited him, is not yet exhausted. We have to add, as a part of the history of the times, when an extraordinary number of political and ecclesiastical contentions prevailed, the excitement of feeling which certain differences of doctrine between the Lutherans and the Reformed engendered, and which would never have risen to the fearful height in which history now exhibits it to us, if political power, controlled alternately by the two religious parties

in some of the German principalities, had not been invoked by them. The awful death by fire, which terminated the career of Servetus (Oct. 27, 1553, two years before the birth of Arndt, and more than six years after the death of Luther), was decreed by the civil authorities of Geneva, but was sanctioned by Calvin and even the gentle Melanchthon – a sad example of the clouded views of men at that time respecting religious liberty and the right of civil rulers to punish men for their errors in the faith.

§ 17. In the Palatinate (the ancient *Pfalz*, the territories of which are now distributed among Bavaria, Prussia, etc.) the Lutheran Church had been established, and popery ceased to exist. But in 1560, a few years after Arndt's birth, the Elector, Frederick III., withdrew from the church, and adopted the Reformed faith and usages. His successor, Lewis VI., endeavored to restore the ascendancy of Lutheranism; but after his brief reign, the authorities which succeeded, established "Calvinism" (the term employed in Church History) on a permanent basis. A similar ecclesiastico-civil revolution occurred in Bremen in 1562; fourteen Lutheran pastors and the Lutheran members of the City Council were expelled, and the city became Reformed. Such changes occurred elsewhere. Both parties were undoubtedly more or less honest in adhering to their doctrinal views; and both claimed the right to depose and exile those of an opposite faith, whenever the civil and political power was, in either case, directed by them.

§ 18. Let it now be remembered that these contending

Protestants, Lutheran and Reformed or Calvinistic, were led by men respectively, who were confessedly intelligent, learned, and endowed with great abilities, many of whom were not only honest in expressing their convictions, but also conscientious in their conduct, whether they were governed by an erring or an enlightened conscience. That the latter is historically true, is demonstrated by their readiness, when they lost power, to submit to imprisonment or exile, rather than to renounce their respective creeds. They were all too well acquainted with Bible truth to look with other feelings than with horror on the popish creed. But while their own Protestant creed was very precious to their souls, they could not tolerate any departure from it, even if that departure was *not* in the direction “towards Rome.” That departure must, as they judged, necessarily be equivalent to a denial of God's truth, as they believed that they had found it in the Bible. Thus all were alike sensitive – all seemed to feel that if they tolerated any error, *that* error could not be trivial – it was, as far as it extended, a denial of God's truth. Could they safely assume the shame and guilt of such a sin? We may add, that we are here speaking only of the *honest* leaders of the Lutherans and the Reformed, of whom each man judged and acted for himself, as one who was accountable to God. No honest Reformed theologian would have screened a Reformed heretic from condemnation; and no honest Lutheran would, for a moment, have tolerated a nominal Lutheran, who rejected any part of the creed of the church.

§ 19. At the same time, all these men were fallible creatures, subject to all the errors of judgment, and to all the passions and infirmities incident to fallen man. They often supposed that their intentions were pure, when selfish motives governed them, and their jealous guardianship of God's truth was combined with a jealous love for their personal opinions. It was under these circumstances, when each party watched with extreme jealousy over the purity of the faith, as adopted by it, and when, besides, many private interests – personal, political, and pecuniary – exercised vast influence, that Arndt entered on his labors. – We have introduced the above details, in order to explain his declarations in the preface to Book I. § 8, that he rejects the Synergistic, Majoristic, etc., errors, and entertains no other views except those which are set forth in the Lutheran Symbolical Books.

§ 20. When he commenced his labors in Brunswick, he was the youngest member of the “ministerium” of the city, that is, of the college composed of the pastors of the several city churches, all of which at that time strictly adhered to the Lutheran creed. He had long lamented that, in consequence of the infelicity of the times, which caused endless doctrinal controversies, the parties of which were many, Papists, Mystics, Unitarians, Reformed, Lutherans, etc., the attention of many persons was diverted from the practical duties of a Christian life, and directed exclusively to controversies on points of doctrine; the result was, that the understanding was actively exercised, but the heart was not

properly affected. Such considerations induced him to write Book I. of his "True Christianity." It was his object to show that God demands a holy life, proceeding from faith in Christ, and that no jealousy concerning the purity of the creed will atone for the absence of the fruits of the Spirit, as exhibited in the life and conduct of the individual. Hence he insists with a warmth unusual in that excited and controversial age, on repentance, on faith in Christ, and on a holy life. Possibly, the apparently sweeping assertions which occasionally occur in his writings, to the effect that the majority of his contemporaries lacked a heavenly spirit, acquired their sombre hue in consequence of the publicity given to human frailties, and the retirement and shade in which vast numbers of holy men preferred to dwell. His Book I., which constitutes the principal part of the work, was first published in Jena, in the year 1605; a second and improved edition appeared in 1607.

§ 21. It consisted principally of the matter which he had introduced in a course of practical sermons previously delivered by him on week-days. It attracted great attention, and was rapidly circulated throughout Germany. The modest and retiring author, without expecting such a result, at once became a celebrity. Nevertheless, new trials now commenced. An envious feeling seems to have been engendered in the hearts of several of his colleagues in the "ministerium" of the city, when they noticed the honor which the author had undesignedly gained. Perhaps, too, the controversial spirit of the times, and the jealousy of

good men respecting the faith, which was assailed on all sides – by Papists, Calvinists, Unitarians, fanatics, etc., – may have led them to scrutinize the book with too suspicious eyes. All held firmly to the Gospel doctrine of Justification by faith alone, without works. Now, when they found that Arndt insisted with such earnestness on the evidences of faith, as furnished by a holy life, they were morbidly affected, and apprehended that the doctrine of justification by faith *alone*, which their bitter enemies, the Papists, denounced, had not been guarded with sufficient care by Arndt. Other expressions, again, which they did not interpret impartially, led them to fear that he was introducing mysticism and other morbid religious systems into the Church. The reproaches which he was compelled to hear, deterred him for some time from fulfilling his promise of adding three other “Books” to Book I. The complete work may be regarded as consisting of *Four* Books, as published in 1609. At a considerably later period a fifth, and then a sixth book, were added. The former was designed as an explanation and recapitulation of the Four Books, and the latter, consisting in part of letters addressed to various eminent theologians, besides having the same object in view, was intended also to defend the doctrinal and ethical positions assumed in the Four Books. As they partake of the nature of an appendix, and refer, to some extent, to misunderstandings belonging to an earlier age, the Latin versions omit them, and this example was followed by the English translator.

§ 22. Arndt was freed from the unpleasant relations in which he stood to his colleagues in Brunswick, in which city he had spent about ten years, by a call which he received in 1608 to enter a new field of labor in Eisleben. This city, which, as in the days of Luther (who was born and baptized, and who also died there), still belonged to the territory of the Counts of Mansfeld, is at present incorporated with the kingdom of Prussia (Province of Saxony). It was here that Arndt ventured to publish the whole of the Four Books of his "True Christianity." In this new position, his admirable character and spirit were justly appreciated alike by his patrons, the Counts of Mansfeld, by his colleagues, and by the people. The fidelity with which he remained at his post during the prevalence of an epidemic that carried off many of the inhabitants, his self-sacrificing spirit in the discharge of his pastoral duties, and his judicious course as an assessor of the local consistory, demonstrated the true nobility of his soul – the spirit of the divine Redeemer. However, even though his relations with all who surrounded him were of the most friendly character, he did not remain longer than about two years and a half in Eisleben. He had been repeatedly invited to assume important charges, which he declined to accept; for while he had often found opponents, his great personal merit, his eminent services, both as a preacher of the Gospel and as an author of devotional works, and his godly spirit, had secured for him the respect, confidence, and love of the whole religious public. Duke George of Brunswick-Lüneburg, who at

that time resided in Celle (Zelle), invited him, in the year 1611, to accept the two offices of court-preacher and of General Superintendent of ecclesiastical affairs in the principalities of Brunswick and Lüneburg. (Celle was subsequently attached to the kingdom of Hanover, but has, in the most recent times, been absorbed, with the contiguous territories, by Prussia.) The Count of Mansfeld very reluctantly consented to Arndt's removal; the latter, however, believed that it had become his duty to enter the wide and inviting field of labor which Providence had opened to him. The reigning duke, who was deeply interested in the welfare of the Lutheran Church, judiciously and vigorously sustained his new court-preacher in all his labors. The latter, in addition to his ordinary pastoral duties, visited the congregations of the whole territory, introduced various ecclesiastical reforms, and continued till his death, which occurred May 11, 1621, to enjoy the divine blessing himself, and to be a blessing to all whom his influence reached. If he was born during a stormy period, and lived in an age of controversies which wounded his soul, he was, nevertheless, like Luther, very happy in being permitted to terminate his labors precisely at the time when he was called away. For, as Luther closed his eyes in peace during the year which preceded the disastrous battle of Mühlberg (April 24, 1547), so Arndt fell asleep soon after the Thirty Years' War began, before the world saw those horrors which language fails to describe in their awful extent. He had contracted a disease of the throat, which was subsequently aggravated by a violent fever; and

his exhausted frame at length yielded to the assault of disease. He sent for his friend and brother, the Rev. William Storch, early in the morning of May 9. After being placed on a chair, he humbly made a general confession of his sins, declared once more that he adhered as heretofore to the pure doctrine of God's word and rejected every error, and then, with all the cheerfulness of Christian faith, received the Lord's Supper. Dr. Morris, in the work referred to, in a note above, quotes from his authorities the following: "Mr. Storch then addressed him (in language similar to that which Dr. Jonas used in speaking to the dying Luther) as follows: 'I do not doubt, that as you have never entertained any doctrine contrary to God's word, but have always continued firm and steadfast in the pure, unadulterated word, the Scriptures of the prophets and apostles, the Augsburg Confession, and other Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church, and most heartily and sincerely despised and rejected all contrary doctrines, so you will also by God's grace maintain to the end the same doctrines and faith which you have publicly preached and professed.' Arndt replied several times, in a weak but intelligible voice, most decisively, 'Yes, yes, that I will, even to the end.'" On the 11th of May he began to sink rapidly, but was still able to repeat many of his favorite texts, such as Ps. 143:2, and John 5:24. After having slept a short time, he awoke, looked upward, and exclaimed with a comparatively loud voice: "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14. His wife asked him when he had seen that "glory." He

replied: "I saw it just now. O what a glory it is! It is the glory which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive of. This is the glory which I saw." – When he heard the clock striking at eight in the evening, he asked what the hour was. When it struck again, he repeated the question. On being told that it was striking nine, he said: "Now I have overcome all." These were the last words of this "good soldier of Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. 2:3. He lay perfectly still until after midnight, when he breathed his last. God had given him a peaceful death. The serenity of his soul in his last hours seemed to linger on his features, even after the spirit had departed.

§ 23. Two dukes of Brunswick-Lüneburg followed him to the grave (May 15th), as a testimony of their sense of the great worth of their revered spiritual guide. The text of the funeral sermon, delivered by Rev. Mr. Storch, consisted of the words, "I have fought a good fight," etc. 2 Tim. 4:7, 8. His remains were deposited in the church at Celle. The tomb exhibits the following inscription:

Qui Jesum vidit, qui mundum et daemona vicit,  
Arndius in scriptis vivit ovatque suis.

(That is: *Arndt, who saw Jesus, and conquered the world and the devil, lives and triumphs in his writings.*)

§ 24. Nothing could be more unjust than any charge affecting the purity of the faith of Arndt as a Lutheran Christian. His general orthodoxy was always readily admitted; a few unreasonable and prejudiced men, however, who suspected

that mysticism and other errors were concealed in the “True Christianity,” although the existence of such matter could not be established, nevertheless alleged, with a certain morbid feeling, that Arndt did not adopt the entire creed of the Lutheran Church, as set forth in “all her symbolical books.” This circumstance accounts for the frequency and earnestness with which he declares his *unconditional* acceptance of, and hearty belief in, *all* the details of the Lutheran faith. Thus the reader will find, at the close of the Preface to Book I., an emphatic declaration of his recognition of the doctrines of *all the Symbolical Books*, the names of which he enumerates in full. See, also, the conclusion of Book II., and the conclusion of the Preface to Book IV., where similar declarations occur. He repeats them in his Preface to Book VI., where he employs the following language: “My dear reader, inasmuch as our holy Christian faith, the pure evangelical doctrine, has, for about one hundred years, been elucidated, purified, and sufficiently explained, in accordance with the rule of the holy Word of God, and also been cleansed from many errors through the means of two glorious and praiseworthy confessions of faith, namely, the Augsburg Confession, and the Formula of Concord, which have hitherto been, and still continue to be, my own confession of faith; and, inasmuch as some have, at the same time, uttered complaints respecting the ungodly manner of life of the present world, with which the Christian faith cannot coexist; therefore, I wrote, some years ago, *Four Books on True Christianity*, in which I have depicted the internal, and,

also, the external Christian life. For although the pure *doctrine is the foremost point of true Christianity*, I have, nevertheless, not wished to treat of it in a special manner, as this has been copiously and superabundantly done by others, and is still daily done; and I have taken only the *Christian life* as my subject.” This Book VI. appeared somewhat less than a year before his death, and gives special prominence to the last of the Lutheran confessions of faith – the Formula of Concord – in which the doctrines concerning the Person of Christ, the Lord's Supper, etc., are set forth in all their details; he thus repeats anew his cordial acceptance of the doctrines contained therein. In a letter of thanks addressed to Dr. Mentzer, of Giessen (Book VI., Part II., Letter 7), he expressly rejects the serious doctrinal errors of Schwenkfeldt respecting the Scriptures, the Person of Christ, the two Sacraments, etc., and adds: “These errors have been publicly condemned and rejected, partly in the Augsburg Confession, and partly in the Formula of Concord, after the pure doctrine was firmly established.” He concurs, of course, in the condemnation of such errors. – In Letter 8, of the same Book, addressed to Dr. Piscator, of Jena, he says: “I call on the great God, the Searcher of hearts, as my witness, that it was not in my mind, in anything which I have written, to depart from the true religion of the Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord, and that I had no intention to disseminate erroneous opinions, much less to defend any which conflicted with the Symbolical Books of our Church.”

§ 25. On his death-bed he repeated anew, as we have seen, that he continued, as heretofore, to adhere faithfully to the pure evangelical doctrine. In the two copies of his last will and testament, of the years 1610 and 1616, he solemnly declares that he had always held with full consciousness and understanding the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord, and never departed from their contents either in his public teaching or his private views, that he never would adopt any other faith, and that he prayed that the grace of God might sustain him in this frame of mind until his last hour should come. The singularly emphatic manner in which, on every appropriate occasion – and many of such occurred – he declared his sincere belief in the peculiar and distinctive doctrines of the Lutheran Church, in all their details, as set forth in her Symbolical Books, by no means proceeded from a narrow-minded sectarian feeling. “Christ is all, and in all” (Col. 3:11) – these apostolic words indicate the spirit of Arndt's religion. He could not sympathize with the Papist, who robs Christ of the glory which belongs exclusively to his atoning work – not with the Unitarian, who attempts to dethrone Him – not with the fanatic, who, even when honest, is misguided by passion and spiritual pride – not with the unbeliever, who flees from the shame of the cross – not even with his Reformed fellow-Christians, whose merits he readily acknowledged, but whose rejection of the Lutheran doctrine respecting the Person of Christ and the Lord's Supper, as set forth especially in the Formula of Concord, grieved his soul. He

had found the precious Gospel truth, which constituted his life, to be identical with the creed of his Church, and with *that* creed alone, in all its glorious fulness. He could not consent to sacrifice one jot or one tittle of the Augsburg Confession, nor could he assign to it an isolated position, even though Zwingli and his associates readily adopted it, with the single exception of Article X. Nor did his heart or his conscience allow him to ignore the other Lutheran Symbols. The *Augsburg Confession* undoubtedly contained the pure truth of the Gospel, without any admixture of errors; but, owing to the circumstances and the times in which it originated, when it was the great object of Luther and his associates to justify their course in withdrawing from antichristian Rome, it confined itself to those principles which were then specially debated. Hence Calvin, who differed so widely on some points from the fully developed Lutheran creed, readily adopted and subscribed it at Strasburg. – The *Apology*, or Vindication of the Augsburg Confession, set forth, among others, the cardinal doctrine of the Lutheran faith, namely, Justification by faith alone, with extraordinary power and purity. Its full, lucid, and strictly scriptural character has never been successfully controverted. For this very reason the *Apology* was rejected by Papists, as it now is practically by Rationalists and others who depend on human merit, and are unwilling to give all honor to the Saviour alone. – The *Smalcald Articles*, which Luther prepared in order to set forth the points on which no Protestant or Bible Christian could make any concession

to Popery, are also offensive to Papists, to Rationalists, and to the unbelieving and impenitent generally, as they contain the pure evangelical truth, which humbles man, while it exalts God. —*The Two Catechisms (the Large and the Small)* furnish materials for popular instruction in revealed truth, which have never been equalled by other manuals, in their adaptation to the object, their fulness, and their purity. Hence, a friend of divine truth, like Arndt, who took so deep an interest in the religious education of the young, could not do otherwise than regard them as of inestimable value. An enemy of the truth would naturally disavow them. — The *Formula of Concord*— the last of the series of Lutheran Confessions of Faith, and the one which Arndt appears to have prized most highly — was intended, as we have shown above, to determine various important points involved in the controversies which had arisen in the bosom of the Lutheran Church before or at the time when he was born. The very circumstance that this Symbol was demanded by the exigencies of the Church, demonstrates that the Augsburg Confession was *not originally designed to be a full and complete confession of faith*, but only a statement of points discussed during the infancy of the Reformation. While it excludes every error which might dishonor God, and confirm the impenitent sinner in his evil course, it completes the previous Symbols, and forms with them an undivided and harmonious whole, exhibiting with brilliancy, power, and spotless purity the Person of the God-Man, Jesus Christ, and glorifies God alone. A confession of faith which so

unreservedly unveils the fearful character of Original Sin, while it so fully explains and establishes the true doctrine of the Lord's Supper, would naturally be unwelcome to an impenitent heart; whereas, the devout Arndt found nothing in it but animating and heavenly truth. Hence he desired to be regarded as simply an Evangelical Lutheran Christian, – an adherent of the Formula of Concord.

§ 26. Religion assumed an unusually attractive and beautiful form in Arndt, and is strikingly shadowed forth in his “True Christianity;” this work is an admirable portraiture of his inner man. He was naturally of a grave, but not by any means of an unsocial or gloomy disposition; he would not otherwise have been styled “the Fenelon of Protestantism.” Dr. Wildenhahn, whose charming work (entitled *Johannes Arndt*) embodies strictly accurate historical notices, and derives only subordinate matter, such as incidents in domestic life, conversations, etc., from analogy and a fruitful imagination, exhibits him in the true light, as an affectionate husband, a cheerful companion, a generous and self-sacrificing friend of the sick and the poor – in short, as a model in all the relations of life. There is no exaggeration in this language. He possessed great firmness of character; indeed, a truly heroic spirit dwelt in him. He manifested this trait on many trying occasions – not only when he preferred poverty and exile to a denial of a single Gospel truth or Lutheran usage, but also in many other scenes of conflict. The ravages of the pestilence could not alarm his heroic soul; the open

and violent denunciations of enemies he always encountered in the spirit of Him who said: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" (John 18:23.) There was a certain calmness or gentleness in his manner of treating his enemies, which, combined with his earnestness and candor in repelling their calumnies, invariably subdued them. Love – love, not to the amiable and good, or to the poor and sorrowing alone, but also to his enemies – was too often and too variously manifested, to leave the spectator in doubt respecting its true source – a genuine faith in Christ, and deep, ardent love to Him. In truth, it is here that the peculiar type of his religion is seen; he lived more in heaven than on earth. The sacerdotal prayer of Christ (John, Chap. 17) was an unfailling source of light, of hope, of peace and joy to his soul. Expressions like these, "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us" (ver. 21) – "I in them, and thou in me, etc." (ver. 23), and language like that of Paul: "Christ in you, etc." (Col. 1:27), furnished him virtually with the formula: "Christ in me, and I in Christ." Such was his faith in Christ, and such was his love to Him, that he was always calm and hopeful. Hence features appeared in his religious character which his worldly-minded contemporaries could not fully appreciate; they were formed by two different series of Gospel doctrines, which cannot come in conflict, but which relate to two entirely different objects – Christ, the Saviour, and fallen man. No one more sincerely embraced the doctrine of Original Sin, as held by the Lutheran

Church, than Arndt did; of this his writings furnish the evidence. His own searching self-examination, constantly maintained in the light of Scripture, revealed to him the utter corruption of his own heart by nature; he found nothing in himself but sin. He was conscious that he could do nothing without Christ, and deeply felt that grace – nothing but grace – could renew his nature, and save him. These convictions induced him to insist with such earnestness, in his Four Books, on the true and genuine repentance of the sinner. At the same time, there was nothing like sternness, gloom, or despondency connected with his sincere and profound self-abasement. For he received with equal strength of faith another series of truths – he believed with all his heart that “after the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Tit. 3:4-7. Here a new tide of emotions flowed through his soul. Wonder, joy, gratitude, love, took possession of him. His large heart was full of happiness that the lost could be found and saved – that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” Rom. 5:20. And now, when these two distinct principles appear in him in their practical union, the type of his religion is clearly developed. He was grave and earnest, humble, and free from all confidence in himself, for he

was “by nature a child of wrath.” Eph. 2:3. But, on the other hand, God had, in pity and in love, given him a Saviour, engrafted him in that Saviour through Holy Baptism, bestowed on him the fulness of grace, and invited him, as a repentant, believing, pardoned child of Adam, to enter heaven. If sin abounded through the first Adam, grace did, through the second Adam (1 Cor. 15:45), much more abound. His writings, therefore, now assume a very cheerful character — *love* is the prevailing theme. Nothing morose appears in them – sorrow for sin and repentance – faith in Christ and love to him, are his soul-inspiring themes, and a cheerful spirit, a sense of fervent, joyful gratitude to God, a heavenly calm, pervade alike his heart and its language as uttered in the “True Christianity.”

§ 27. The essential features of vital godliness are always the same; yet “there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.” 1 Cor. 12:4. Paul insists on faith; John, on love. Luther's religion was, like that of Arndt, earnest, and yet cheerful. Both were enabled by their personal experience to understand the nature of these Christian virtues, and also the distinction between them. Luther dwells with wonderful power on *faith*. Arndt delights to speak of God's *love*. There is something very beautiful in these different developments of true godliness in the servants of Christ, while the influences of the same divine Spirit controls them alike.

§ 28. It would be an error to suppose that the whole world had risen up in arms against Arndt, after he had assumed his position as an humble and devout Christian. Vast numbers

received his First Book on True Christianity with gratitude and joy. It enlightened their minds; it controlled the conscience; it diffused the warmth of life through their souls; and they thanked God that such a book, so full of love, had been given to the world. A comparatively small number of men rose up against him. Certain individuals, such as his colleague, Denecke, a co-pastor of the same congregation in Brunswick, were, no doubt, influenced by envy and personal dislike. But others who opposed him, were by no means governed solely by unworthy personal considerations. Some of them were so much concerned about “questions and strifes of words” (1 Tim. 6:4), that they overlooked and misconceived the heavenly-mindedness of Arndt. Others, who did him injustice, were led astray by the infelicity of the times. We have already referred to the disastrous influences of the mysticism and fanaticism which, in addition to other corruptions of the true faith, had appeared about, and after, the period of the birth of Arndt. For instance, the Swiss physician, Paracelsus (who died as a Roman Catholic in 1541), had published various fantastic and mystical writings, in which he professed that he understood both mundane and supermundane mysteries. Now a certain Lutheran pastor in Saxony, named Weigel, who died in 1588, and who had been confessedly a man of an upright walk and conversation, had yielded to a tendency to the mysticism and theosophy of Paracelsus. He was thus led theoretically to undervalue the doctrines of the church, and to represent them as merely allegorical forms, involving truths

not known to ordinary men. The natural results of his theory, if its folly had not been exposed, would unquestionably have seriously affected the authority of the written Word. Before his writings were published, a friend had communicated to Arndt a short extract from them, which contained none of his errors; the author's name had been withheld. Arndt, in his innocence, inserted the passage in his book, and was thus burdened with the odium of all the Weigelian errors; but he was subsequently released from all censure, and his freedom from anything like the mysticism of Weigel was generally conceded.

§ 29. Another ground of the charge of mysticism which his opponents advanced, was found in his repeated references in the "True Christianity" to Tauler. Here, too, Arndt made a brilliant defence, by quoting the great Luther as his authority. The latter had obtained possession of a manuscript without a title or an author's name, which deeply interested him. It dwelt entirely on the communion of the soul with God, and on kindred topics. Luther, whose godliness was healthy and sound, was so much charmed with the work, that he published a part of it at Wittenberg in 1516, and prefixed the title: "A spiritual, noble little work, explaining the distinction between the old and the new man; showing, also, who are the children of Adam and the children of God, and how Adam must die in us, and Christ live in us." During the course of the next year he published the whole work, with an extended Preface of his own, and adopted the title: "A German Theology"; this general title it has since

retained. It was received with unbounded favor, and circulated rapidly throughout Europe, for instance, in three English, seven Latin, four French, etc., translations, besides numerous editions of the original German. It was supposed to have been written by Tauler, a very devout man, who was born in the year 1290. His religious tendencies led him, like Luther, to enter a monastery. The sermons and other writings which he left behind, while their general character assign to him a place among those who are denominated "Mystics," nevertheless abound in holy and devout aspirations, and were dictated by a spirit that sought and found peace in the grace of God alone. – Arndt entertained the opinion that the "German Theology" was a production of his pen, and so represents the case in his "True Christianity." It is now, however, generally conceded, in consequence of an allusion in the work itself to Tauler as a religious teacher of an earlier day, that another person, belonging to a later period, was the writer; his name is still involved in impenetrable darkness. – So, too, it is by no means certain that Thomas á Kempis (born in 1380), was the author of the popular book "On the Imitation of Christ," of which more than two thousand editions in the original language, more than one thousand in French, besides innumerable others in German, English, etc., have been published. The historical arguments, adduced chiefly by French writers, intended to support the claims of the eminent Gerson (born in 1363), as the author, although not entirely conclusive, are still possessed of great weight. – Arndt incidentally remarks in a brief statement

respecting the "German Theology," that his copy, printed at Wittenberg in 1520, contained simply the remark that the book had been written by a devout priest of the city of Frankfort, for devotional purposes, but the author's name was withheld. If Luther sanctioned the publication of the "German Theology," Arndt could calmly listen to those who censured him for adopting a similar course. Those extracts at least, which he furnishes in the "True Christianity," are, unquestionably, evangelical and truly edifying.

§ 30. It will, perhaps, gratify the reader to observe the skill with which Wildenhahn, to whom we have already referred, illustrates the childlike simplicity of Arndt's character, by combining fiction with truth. During his Brunswick pastorate, the City Council of Halberstadt sent him an urgent call to become the successor of the deceased Rev. D. Sachse, as pastor of the church of St. Martin in that city. After he had consulted with his intelligent wife, who, like himself, was anxious to withdraw to any spot where peace could be found, he resolved to accept the call; and, in accordance with custom and law, applied to the Brunswick City Council for letters of honorable dismissal. When the question was to be decided, Arndt appeared in the presence of the burgomaster, Kale, the syndic, Dr. Roerhand, and other members of the Council, and renewed his request. These details are historically true. Wildenhahn now subjoins the following: "Tell me honestly," said the syndic to him, "have you really, as you allege, taken no steps

whatever, in order to obtain this call from Halberstadt?" "Not a single step," said Arndt, in a solemn manner, with his right hand on his heart, "the whole is altogether and exclusively a work of God." But at the moment when he pronounced this solemn declaration, it became evident to those who were present, that a sudden thought had startled him; he changed color; he began to tremble; he suddenly covered his eyes with his left hand. Then, with a voice betraying deep emotion, he added: "Gentlemen, I have borne false witness! I really did do something to obtain this call." "Ah!" said Kale quickly, delighted, as it seemed, to find an opportunity for displaying his official dignity, "You did? Pray, tell us what it was." "I prayed to the blessed Lord with tears, that he would assign to me some other spot in his vineyard, no matter how insignificant, if I could only there preach his word in peace." "And was *that* all?" inquired the burgomaster, much surprised, and speaking in more gentle tones. "That was all," replied Arndt, "and this is true, as God lives! But, doubtless, I erred here, in impatiently attempting to dictate to God, etc." Such simplicity of character, such perfect ingenuousness, such a wonderful freedom from artifice and disguise, completely disarmed the members of the Council. They now understood better than previously the artlessness and spirituality of the man before them, and, after that scene, they accorded to him entire esteem and confidence.

§ 31. The great work of Arndt – the "True Christianity," has probably never had its equal as a popular book of devotion. Tholuck relates the following anecdote as an illustration of

the manner in which even Papists could appreciate the merits of the work. When Prof. Anton, of Halle, visited Madrid in 1687, he examined the library of the Jesuits, and incidentally inquired of the librarian respecting the ascetic writer whom they esteemed more than other authors of devotional works. The latter exhibited a Latin book, the title-page and last leaves of which were wanting, and declared that it was the most edifying work which they possessed. When Anton examined it, he discovered that it was a translation of Arndt's "*True Christianity*"! It is only common justice to allow the author to state the objects which he had in view, in preparing the work. The following passage occurs in a letter which he addressed in the last year of his life to Duke Augustus the Younger, of Brunswick: "In the first place, I wished to withdraw the minds of students and preachers from an inordinate controversial and polemic theology, which has well-nigh assumed the form of an earlier scholastic theology. Secondly, I purposed to conduct Christian believers from lifeless thoughts to such as might bring forth fruit. Thirdly, I wished to guide them onward from mere science and theory, to the actual practice of faith and godliness; and, fourthly, to show them wherein a truly Christian life consists, which accords with the true faith, as well as to explain the apostle's meaning when he says: 'I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me,' etc." (Gal. 2:20.)

§ 32. The Rev. Dr. Seiss, the author of "*Ecclesia Lutherana*, etc.," to whose endeavors the religious public is mainly indebted for the appearance of the present edition, remarks in a recent

notice of the work: "This is one of the very greatest and most useful practical books produced by Protestantism. Though written more than two hundred and fifty years ago, it is still unsurpassed in its department. It stands out with marked and superior distinction in the modern ages. Next to the Bible and Luther's Small Catechism, it has been more frequently printed, more widely read, and more influential for good, than any other book, perhaps, that has ever been written. Boehm has not exaggerated, when he says that its effects, in the conversion of souls, has been such, that an account of them would make a history in itself. Nor can any one candidly read it, without finding on every page, scintillations of the sunlike splendors of a mind bathed in the purity, wisdom, and love of heaven." Mr. Boehm, in the Preface to his translation (which is the basis both of the revision of Mr. Jacques, and of the present edition), remarks, that among the learned men in Great Britain, who had read the Latin translation, the distinguished Dr. Worthington had assigned the first rank among devotional writers to Arndt, and quotes the enthusiastic terms in which he extols that "faithful servant of God, John Arndt." And Mr. Jacques closes the Preface to his revision with the following words: "Divines of all communions and persuasions, have united in their admiration of this delightful production. The late learned Dr. Edward Williams has inserted it in his valuable Appendix to the Christian Preacher: and the Rev. John Wesley made a most copious extract from it, comprised in Vol. I. and II. of his Christian Library."

§ 33. And truly God did not design this great work solely for the comfort and aid of the German nation during the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), but for all nations and all times. It has been translated into the Latin, Danish, Swedish, Bohemian, Polish, Low Dutch, English, French, Turkish, Russian, Malabar, Tamul, etc., languages. At least two editions of the work in a Latin translation were published in England; the last appeared in 1708, with the following title: "Joannis Arndtii, Theologici, etc.: De vero Christianismo. Libri IV. Cura et studio A. W. Boemi. Lond. 1708." 2 vols. 8vo. – Another Latin edition was published in Germany in 1624. The Tamul translation had the following Latin title: "De vero Christianismo, in Tamulicum convertit Benjamin Schulzius, Missionarius Evangelicus."<sup>2</sup>

§ 34. The work had made so deep an impression on learned British Christians, who read it in Latin, that the wish was repeatedly and earnestly expressed that it might be made accessible to English readers. At this period, that is, during the reign of Queen Anne of England (who died in 1714),

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<sup>2</sup> The first Latin translation, published at Leipsic in 1704, was prepared by the joint labors of Dr. J. G. Dorscheus and Dr. J. G. Pritius. (The latter published about the same time his *Introductio in lectionem N. T.*, etc., which was highly valued, and passed through several editions; our own copy is dated 1737.) An extended Preface was furnished by Pritius. The whole is presented in a single and very clumsy volume. – The Latin translation published by Mr. Boehm in London, 1708, and dedicated to his patron, Prince George, appeared in two neat and convenient volumes, and is far superior to the continental edition. Copies of these editions, which are now rarely to be found, were obtained by us from the very rich collection of such works, belonging to Rev. Dr. C. P. Krauth, of West Philadelphia.

large numbers of German emigrants from the Palatinate passed through England on their way to the provinces of New York and Pennsylvania. The Rev. Anthony William Boehm, a German Lutheran clergyman, had previously been appointed as the court chaplain of Prince George of Denmark, the consort of Queen Anne. His enlightened zeal and devout heart led him to take a deep interest, not only in the temporal, but also in the spiritual welfare of these pilgrims, who were on their way to the wilds of North America. He accordingly supplied them, by the aid of certain like-minded friends, with German Bibles and Hymn Books, and also with German copies of Arndt's "True Christianity," as well as with other books of devotion. This interesting fact is mentioned in the letters of Dr. Muhlenberg, published in the well-known *Halle Reports* (*Hallische Nachrichten*, pp. 665, 793). But Mr. Boehm also resolved to furnish the people, in the midst of whom he lived, with the great work of his favorite author, in their own language, and accordingly prepared an English translation, which was first printed in London in 1712.

§ 35. It would be unjust to the memory of this excellent man, if we should fail to refer to his literary labors. His high office at the royal court of England, is an evidence of his personal merit. He was not only a devout and faithful preacher of the Gospel, but also an author who acquired distinction. In 1734 he published a very valuable work in the German language, entitled: "Eight Books, on the Reformation of the Church in

England, extending from the year 1526, under Henry VIII., to the reign of Charles II.” In a very beautiful eulogy, in manuscript, found in the volume before us, the writer refers to the successful efforts of Mr. Boehm to provide for the education of the children of the poor in his vicinity. He died May 27, 1722, in his fiftieth year, after having faithfully labored in the service of Christ. He sustained, with eminent success, the Danish Lutheran missionaries in Tranquebar, by sending pecuniary aid obtained in London, as well as religious publications. Besides his great German historical work, which is the complement of Burnet's “History of the Reformation of the Church of England,” he also published several English compositions, such as a “Sermon on the doctrine of Original Sin, Eph. 4:22,” printed in London, 1711, and a “Sermon on the Duty of the Reformation (Jubilee), Rev. 18:4,” London, 1718, besides various religious works in the German language.

§ 36. About the beginning of the present century, the Rev. Calvin Chaddock, who resided in Hanover, Massachusetts, obtained a copy of Mr. Boehm's translation, “accidentally,” as he says, and found it to be so valuable, that he resolved to issue an American edition, which accordingly appeared in 1809, Boston. In his short Preface he remarks, with great truth, that the language of the translation “appears to be somewhat ancient, and the sentiments in some few instances obscure.” He adds, in reference to his own agency: “The only alterations which have been made, are such as respect redundant and obsolete words,

orthography, the addition of some words, and the transposition of some sentences; that the ideas of the translator might appear more conspicuous." He might have, with great advantage, been even more liberal than he was, in correcting the style; it still remained in numerous passages heavy and obscure. As the style, even of the original German, is somewhat antiquated, and as, besides, occasional obscurities and repetitions occur, a later successor in one of Arndt's pastoral charges, the Rev. J. F. Fedderson, assumed the task of revising and abridging the whole of the original German, improving or modernizing the style, and occasionally adding new matter. The result of his labors does not appear to have received the entire approbation of the German religious world; the original and unaltered work continues so popular, that no permanent place has been secured for the substitute. A portion of Fedderson's production was translated and published in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, in 1834, by the Rev. John N. Hoffman, Pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran congregation of that place. The translation was never completed. The part which was given, consisting mainly of Book I., has long since been out of print.

§ 37. In the year 1815, a new edition of Mr. Boehm's English translation was issued in London (evidently without any reference to Mr. Chaddock's American edition), by William Jacques, A.M., who had already distinguished himself by his translation, from the Latin, of A. H. Francke's "Guide to the Reading and Study of the Holy Scriptures," of which a reprint,

in a very unattractive form, and with omissions, appeared in Philadelphia, in 1823. He took Mr. Boehm's translation as the "ground-work," which, as he states in his Preface, he did not "edit either hastily or negligently. There is not a single page, nor a single paragraph," he continues, "which has not been subjected to scrutiny," etc. Nevertheless, Mr. Jacques, who does not appear to have compared the translation with the original German, made only verbal changes, which, as it is evident, materially improve the style. But he allowed all the additions of Mr. Boehm, which are generally quite tautological, and various inaccuracies in thought and expression to remain. So many antiquated expressions were retained, that it would have been inexpedient to reprint the work precisely as Mr. Jacques allowed the text to remain. Besides, he curtailed the full titles of the several chapters, and, with very few exceptions, omitted the important and appropriate texts which Arndt had prefixed respectively to the latter. These circumstances, in connection with others, such as numerous typographical errors, especially in the Scripture references, plainly indicated that a revision of the whole was necessary, before the present edition could be presented to the public.

§ 38. The editor of the present American edition took that of Mr. Jacques as the basis of the translation, but compared every sentence with the original German. He found some cases in which valuable matter had been omitted, and was occasionally required to supply sentences that had been mutilated

or suppressed. But he erased all the verbal additions, and the clauses, or sentences, inserted by Mr. Boehm, where it seemed to have been the object of the latter only to explain remarks that were already perfectly lucid, or to add emphasis by the insertion of adjectives, etc., or else to impart beauty by the adoption of poetical terms or phrases, which were inconsistent with the severe simplicity of Arndt's style. He even represents the author, on one occasion, as quoting from the "Homilies" of the Church of England, which Arndt undoubtedly never read, and certainly does not mention in the original. The American editor has, also, at the request of several friends, who took an interest in securing the publication of the present edition, prepared a somewhat copious Index. One of the Latin editions (London, 1708) contains an index, adapted only to its own pages. Another, in German, is found in some of the German editions, for instance, in that of Nuremberg, 1762, also adapted to the pages of the particular edition only. As the American editor found none in English, and preferred to adapt the new Index, prepared by him, to the work itself (specifying the Book, Chapter, and Section), he accordingly completed his task on this plan, after a considerable expenditure of time and labor. It is somewhat difficult to prepare an Index for a work which is so exclusively devotional in its character as the present, and in which the author does not intend to discuss subjects in a strictly scientific manner. Arndt, for instance, employs terms which, when defined with precision, indicate different shades of thought, almost as if they were

synonymous (*e. g.*, the *grace, mercy, goodness, love*, etc., of God), and often repeats the same thought in different language. For this we can easily account, when we recollect that the materials of the work were taken from a series of popular sermons of the author, delivered at intervals. The editor allows himself to hope that the Index which he has prepared, may occasionally be of service to the reader.

§ 39. But even after having made numerous changes on *every page* of the old translation before him, the American editor is conscious that a critical eye will discover many imperfections in the style. It is often antiquated and heavy, and sometimes even quaint. Nevertheless, in all these instances he allowed the English text to remain as he found it, contenting himself with the correction of orthographical and syntactical inaccuracies, the rectification of Scripture references, the errors in which he found to be unusually numerous, the correction of quotations in accordance with the authorized English version of the Bible, in the many cases in which Mr. Boehm, or one of his assistants, translated from Luther's German version, or quoted the English version from memory, etc., etc.

§ 40. It is eminently proper that a new edition of Arndt's "True Christianity" should appear during the present Jubilee year of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and that it should be undertaken and conducted to a successful issue by members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Pennsylvania. The deep spirituality of Arndt, and his active and pure faith, can be fully

understood and appreciated only when we reflect on the doctrinal system to which he had given his heart, and to which we have referred above. This orthodox system found no favor, at a later period, among the Rationalists; they rejected the doctrines of the Bible respecting the depravity of human nature, the divinity of Christ, the efficacy of the divinely appointed means of grace, and similar truths, and grievously complained of the violence which, as they treacherously alleged, was offered to their conscience, when the demand was made, that if they claimed to belong to the Lutheran Church, to occupy its pulpits, and to receive their support from it, they ought also to adopt its faith. Their influence is happily decaying in Europe, and the restoration of the doctrines of the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church to authority, is coincident with the new and healthy religious life of the Lutheran Church in Germany, Hungary, Scandinavia, and Russia. The sincere Christian, John Arndt, whom we heard protesting before God, with his last breath, as described above, that he believed only the doctrines of the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church, and *all* those doctrines, little thought that more than two centuries afterwards, in the remote Western continent of America, men would arise who would not only reject with scorn “all the other Symbolical Books,” which he revered, but also speak contemptuously of the Augsburg Confession and its holy doctrines.

§ 41. The doctrinal system which Arndt so sincerely revered, was brought to this country by the Lutheran pastors who

visited our shores at a very early period. Dr. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, an eminently enlightened and holy man, was enabled, by his well-disciplined mind and great administrative powers, to create order among the scattered Lutherans whom he found in this country. He was exceedingly zealous in maintaining the purity of the Lutheran faith, to which he owed all his peace and his hopes. He gave unusual prominence to the Symbolical Books – to *all* of them, mentioned by name – in the various constitutions of congregations organized or influenced by him, and very properly claimed that none who rejected them could honestly bear the name of *Lutherans*. We will give only one illustration, of many which might be adduced, to show the fidelity with which he held to the Lutheran Symbolical Books, as enumerated by Arndt in the last paragraph of his Preface to Book I., in this volume. Dr. Muhlenberg states in an official Report for the year 1747, which he transmitted to Halle (*Hall. Nachr.*, pp. 234, 235), that he had visited a congregation in Maryland, in which great dissensions prevailed at the time, occasioned by efforts made by certain individuals to alienate the Lutherans from their faith and church. He says, “Before we commenced public worship, I asked for the Church Record, and wrote certain propositions and articles in it in the English language, and among other statements, made the following: That our German Lutherans held to the holy Word of God, in the prophetic and apostolical writings; further, to the unaltered

Augsburg Confession, and the other Symbolical Books, etc.<sup>3</sup> I then read the same publicly to the congregation, and explained it to them in the German language, and added, that every one who desired to be, and to remain, *such* a Lutheran, should subscribe his name.” He informs us that the genuine Lutherans readily subscribed; the rest, who had unlutheran sympathies, withheld their names.

§ 42. An unhappy change occurred after Dr. Muhlenberg's day. The Symbolical Books, which he and his contemporaries received, believed, and sustained in their whole extent, with religious veneration, existed at that time only in Latin and German. They gradually receded from the view of many pastors of the church; individuals were received into the ranks of the ministry, who had never studied them; doctrines and usages, hitherto unknown to the church, were introduced into many Lutheran congregations. At one period several of the most intelligent pastors yielded, to a certain extent, to rationalistic influences; then, the opposite extreme, of fanaticism, gained adherents; both rationalism and fanaticism were alike hostile to

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<sup>3</sup> The term “Symbol” – a word derived from the Greek – was applied, at a very early period of the Christian Church, by Greek-speaking Christians, to the “Apostles' Creed,” in the sense of a “token or mark of recognition.” He who knew and adopted that Creed, viewed thus as *a symbol*, was recognized as a Christian; he who knew it not, or who rejected it, was not a Christian, but a Jew or heathen. After diverse creeds had been formed and adopted in the course of time, the word Symbol was retained, as applicable to a particular *creed* or *confession of faith*. Hence the term “Symbols,” or its equivalent, “Symbolical Books,” was gradually applied to the several Lutheran Creeds which Arndt mentions with such reverence and love, as we have seen above.

“the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the other Symbolical Books,” and a strange combination of elements, derived partly from rationalism, and partly from fanaticism, temporarily held sway. Dependence was now placed on human measures and inventions, designed for the conversion of sinners and the edification of believers, rather than on the divinely appointed means of grace, which men like Arndt and Muhlenberg recognized as the only channels through which the Divine Spirit exercises his influence. If they had lived among us during the second, third, and fourth decades of this century, when their doctrines, and their mode of preaching, were regarded by many as antiquated, or unsuited to a supposed higher grade of religious development, they would have readily predicted the results – fanaticism, latitudinarianism in doctrine, an evanescent emotional religion, and, by consequence, the rejection, in whole or in part, of the Augsburg Confession and the other Symbolical Books.

§ 43. God, in his mercy, has interposed. The doctrines which Arndt, Muhlenberg, and men of the old faith, regarded as the life-blood of a healthy, scriptural religion, are regaining their authority. Many still reject them; the old faith of the church – Bible truth, is unwelcome to an ignorant, rationalistic, and unconverted heart. But others have been taught by observation and experience that mere human measures and inventions cannot conduct to a healthy and permanent religion, and that divine truth, as taught in the Scriptures, and set forth in our Symbolical

Books, and the other means of grace given to the Church by its divine Head, are the only sources from which such a healthy religion can proceed. In this spirit Arndt wrote the "True Christianity," and by this spirit the Synod of Pennsylvania is animated. This ecclesiastical body desires to take away all glory from man, and to give it all to Christ. One of the results of its attachment to our ancient and holy faith, is the publication of the present volume, in which the author so eloquently and affectionately urges all men to repent, to believe in Christ, and to lead a holy life.

§ 44. The divine blessing has so remarkably attended the use of Arndt's "True Christianity," in the original language, and in its various translations, that the present editor humbly entertains the hope that the time and labor expended by him in preparing this new edition, may also be of avail. And he prays that the "True Christianity" may continue the work which it has already performed, and instruct, guide, and comfort anew the souls of its readers, to the praise and glory of God.

C. F. S.

Philadelphia, August, 1868.

# Book I.

## Wherein True Christianity, Sincere Sorrow For Sin, Repentance, Faith, And The Holy Life Of The True Christian, Are Considered

### The Author's Preface To The First Book

Christian Reader! That the holy Gospel is subjected, in our age, to a great and shameful abuse, is fully proved by the ungodly and impenitent life of those who loudly boast of Christ and of his word, while their unchristian life resembles that of persons who dwell in a land of heathens and not of Christians. Such an ungodly course of conduct furnished me with an occasion for writing this Treatise; it was my object to show to plain readers wherein true Christianity consists, namely, in the exhibition of a true, living, and active faith, which manifests itself in genuine godliness and the fruits of righteousness. I desired to show that we bear the name of *Christians*, not only because we ought to believe in Christ, but also because the name implies that we live in Christ, and that He lives in us. I further desired to show that true repentance proceeds from the inmost centre of the heart;

that the heart, mind, and affections must be changed; that we must be conformed to Christ and His holy Gospel; and that we must be renewed by the word of God, and become new creatures. For even as every seed produces fruit of a like nature, so the word of God must daily produce in us new spiritual fruits. If we become new creatures by faith, we must live in accordance with our new birth. In a word, Adam must die, and Christ must live, in us. It is not sufficient to acquire a knowledge of the word of God; it is also our duty to obey it practically, with life and power.

2. There are many who suppose that Theology is merely a science, or an art of words, whereas it is a living experience and practical exercise. – Every one now aims at acquiring eminence and distinction in the world; but no one is willing to learn how to be devout. Every one now seeks out men of great learning, who can teach arts, languages, and wisdom; but no one is willing to learn from our only Teacher, Jesus Christ, how to become meek and sincerely humble; and yet His holy and living example is the true rule for our life and conduct, and, indeed, constitutes the highest wisdom and knowledge; so that we can with truth declare, “The pure life of Christ opens all knowledge to us.”

3. Every one is very willing to be a servant of Christ; but no one will consent to be His follower. And yet He says: “If any man serve me, let him follow me.” John 12:26. Hence, he who truly serves and loves Christ, will also follow him; and he who loves Christ, will also love the example of His holy life, His humility, meekness, patience, as well as the cross, shame, and contempt

which He endured, although the flesh may thereby suffer pain. And although we cannot, in our present weakness, perfectly imitate the holy and exalted life of Christ (which, indeed, is not intended in my Book), nevertheless, we ought to love it, and long to imitate it more fully; for thus we live in Christ, and Christ lives in us, according to the words of St. John: “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” 1 John 2:6. It is now the disposition of the world to acquire a knowledge of all things; but that which is better than all other knowledge, namely, “to know the love of Christ” (Eph. 3:19), no one desires to acquire. But no man can love Christ, who does not imitate his holy life. There are many – a majority, indeed, of men in this world – who are ashamed of the holy example of Christ, namely, of his humility and lowly condition; that is, they are ashamed of the Lord Jesus Christ; of them he says: “Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed,” etc. Mark 8:38. Christians now desire a Christ of imposing appearance, who is magnificent, rich, and conformed to the world; but no one desires to receive, to confess, and to follow the poor, meek, despised, and lowly Christ. He will, therefore, hereafter say: “I never knew you” (Matt. 7:23); ye were not willing to know me in my humility, and therefore I do not know you in your pride.

4. Not only, however, is ungodliness, in all its forms, at variance with Christ and true Christianity, but it is also the

cause of the daily accumulation of the displeasure of God, and of the penalties which he inflicts; insomuch that he fits all creatures to be avengers, and that heaven and earth, fire and water, are made to contend against us; so that all nature is thereby sorely distressed, and well-nigh overwhelmed. Hence, a season of affliction must be expected; war, famine, and pestilence; yea, the last plagues are coming in with such violence, that we are exposed to the assaults of nearly every creature. For even as the terrible plagues of the Egyptians overtook them before the redemption and departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, so, too, before the redemption of the children of God occurs, dreadful and unheard-of plagues will overtake the ungodly and impenitent. It is therefore high time to repent, to begin another course of life, to turn from the world to Christ, to believe truly in him, and to lead a Christian life in him, so that we may securely “dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” Ps. 91:1. Such is also the exhortation of the Lord: “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things.” Luke 21:36. The same is also testified in Ps. 112:7.

5. Now, to this end, my Christian reader, this book may, to a certain extent, serve thee as a guide, showing thee not only how thou mayest, through faith in Christ, obtain the remission of thy sins, but also how thou mayest avail thyself of the grace of God, in order to lead a holy life; and how thou mayest demonstrate and adorn thy faith by a Christian walk and conversation. For true

Christianity consists, not in words, nor in any external show, but in a living faith, from which proceed fruits meet for repentance, and all manner of Christian virtues, as from Christ himself. For as faith is hidden from human view, and is invisible, it must be manifested by its fruits; inasmuch as faith derives from Christ all that is good, righteous, and blessed.

6. Now, when faith waits for the blessings which are promised to it, the offspring of this faith is *hope*. For what else is hope but a constant and persevering expectation, in faith, of the blessings which are promised? But when faith communicates to a neighbor the blessings which it has itself received, *love* is the offspring of such a faith, imparting to the neighbor that which it has itself received from God; and when faith endures the trial of the cross, and submits to the will of God, it brings forth *patience*. But when it sighs under the burden of the cross, or offers thanks to God for mercies which it has received, it gives birth to *prayer*. When it compares the power of God, on the one hand, with the misery of man, on the other, and submits unresistingly to the will of God, *humility* is the fruit. And when this faith diligently labors that it may not lose the grace of God, or, as St. Paul says: “worketh out salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12), then the *fear of God* is the result.

7. Thus thou seest that all the Christian virtues are the offspring of faith, proceed from faith, and cannot be separated from faith, their common source, if they are indeed genuine, living, and Christian virtues, proceeding ultimately from God,

from Christ, and from the Holy Spirit. Hence no work can be acceptable to God without faith in Christ. For how can true hope, sincere love, persevering patience, earnest prayer, Christian humility, and a childlike fear of God, exist without faith? All must be drawn from Christ, the well of salvation (Isa. 12:3), through faith, as well righteousness, as all the fruits of righteousness. But take great care, my reader, that thou do not connect thy works, the virtues which thou hast commenced to practise, or the gifts of the new life, with thy justification before God. For in this matter, man's works, merit, gifts, and virtue, however lovely these may appear to be, have no efficacy; our justification depends solely on the exalted and perfect merit of Jesus Christ, apprehended by faith, even as it is set forth in chap. V, XIX, XXXIV, and XLI, of this book, and in the first three chapters of Book II. Take great care, therefore, not to confound the righteousness of faith, on the one hand, and the righteousness of a Christian life, on the other; but rather to make a clear distinction between them; for here the whole foundation of our Christian religion is involved. Still, thy repentance must be the great concern of thy life, for otherwise thou hast no true faith, such as daily purifies, changes, and amends the heart. Thou must, moreover, know that the consolations of the Gospel cannot be effectually applied, unless they have been preceded by a genuine godly sorrow, the result of which is a bruised and contrite heart; for we read that "to the poor the gospel is preached." Luke 7:22. How, indeed, can faith give life to the heart, unless that heart has

been previously put to death by sincere sorrow and a thorough knowledge of sin? Do not, therefore, imagine that repentance is a slight and easy work. Remember the solemn and severe language of the Apostle Paul, when he commands us to mortify and crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts, to offer the body as a sacrifice, to die unto sin, to be crucified unto the world. Col. 3:5; Rom. 6:6; 12:1; 1 Pet. 2:24; Gal. 5:24; 6:14. Truly, none of these things can result, when we gratify the flesh. Nor do the holy prophets employ cheerful terms when they call for a contrite and broken heart, and say: "Rend your heart – weep and lament." Joel 2:13, 17; Jer. 4:8. But where is such repentance now exhibited? The Lord Jesus Christ, when alluding to it, demands that we should deny ourselves, and renounce all that we have, if we desire to be his disciples. Luke 9:23; Matt. 16:24. Verily, all this can never proceed from a gay, trifling, and light mind; of this the evidence may be found in the seven Penitential Psalms of David. The Scriptures abound in illustrations of the jealousy of God, who demands both repentance and its fruits, without which eternal salvation cannot be obtained. But afterwards the consolations of the Gospel manifest their power. And both such repentance, and such consolation, are solely the work of the Spirit of God, through the Word.

8. Now this Book which I have written, specially treats of such sincere and earnest repentance of the heart, of the exhibition of faith in the life and conduct, and of the spirit of love which should animate all the acts of the Christian; for that which proceeds

from Christian love, is, at the same time, the fruit of faith. It is true that I have referred to some earlier writers, such as Tauler, Thomas á Kempis, and others, who may seem to ascribe more than is due to human ability and works; but my whole Book is designed to counteract such an error. I would, therefore, kindly request the Christian reader to remember the great object for which I wrote this Book. He will find that its main purpose is this: To teach the reader how to perceive the hidden and connate abomination of Original Sin; to set forth distinctly our misery and helplessness; to teach us to put no trust in ourselves or our ability; to take away everything from ourselves, and to ascribe all to Christ, so that He alone may dwell in us, work all things in us, alone live in us, and create all things in us, because he is the beginning, middle, and end, of our conversion and salvation. All this has been plainly and abundantly explained in many passages of this Book; and, at the same time, the doctrines of the Papists, Synergists, and Majorists, have been expressly refuted and rejected. The doctrine, moreover, of justification by faith, has been set forth in this Book, and especially in Book II., in the most pointed and explicit manner. In order, however, to obviate all misapprehensions, I have subjected the present edition to a very careful revision, and I beg the reader to receive the editions which have appeared in Frankfort and other places, in the sense in which the present Magdeburg edition is to be received. I also affirm, that this Book, as well in all other articles and points, as also in the articles of Free Will, and of the Justification of

a poor sinner before God, is not to be understood in any other manner than in accordance with the Symbolical Books of the churches of the Augsburg Confession, namely, the first Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, the Two Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

May God enlighten us all by his Holy Spirit, so that we may be sincere and without offence, both in our faith and in our life, till the day of Christ (which is near at hand), being filled with the fruits of righteousness, unto the glory and praise of God! Amen.

# Chapter I.

## Showing What The Image Of God In Man Is

*Be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and ... put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.— Eph. 4:23, 24.*

The image of God in man, is the conformity of the soul of man, of his spirit and mind, of his understanding and will, and of all his faculties and powers, both bodily and mental, to God and the Holy Trinity. For the decree of the Holy Trinity was thus expressed: “*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,*” etc. Gen., 1:26.

2. It is evident, therefore, that, when man was created, the image of the Trinity was impressed on him, in order that the holiness, righteousness, and goodness of God, might shine forth in his soul; diffuse abundant light through his understanding, will, and affections; and visibly appear even in his life and conversation: that, consequently, all his actions, both inward and outward, might breathe nothing but divine love, purity, and power, and, in short, that the life of man upon earth might resemble that of the angels in heaven, who are always engaged in doing the will of their Heavenly Father. In thus impressing his image on man, God designed to delight and rejoice in him,

just as a father rejoices in a child born after his own image: for as a parent, beholding himself, or *another self*, in his offspring, cannot but feel the greatest complacency and delight; so, when God beheld the express character of his own Person reflected in an image of himself, his “delights were with the sons of men.” Prov. 8:31. Thus it was God's chief pleasure to look on man, in whom he rejoiced, and rested, as it were, from all his labor; considering him as the great *masterpiece* of his creation, and knowing that in the perfect innocence and beauty of man, the excellency of his own glory would be fully set forth. And this blessed communion our first parents and their posterity were always to have enjoyed, had they continued in the likeness of God, and rested in him and in his will; who, as he was their author, was also to be their end.

3. It undoubtedly is the essential property of every image, that it be a just representation of the object which it is intended to express; and as the reflection in a mirror is vivid in a degree proportioned to the clearness of the mirror itself, so the image of God becomes more or less visible, according to the purity of the soul in which it is beheld.

4. Hence God originally created man perfectly pure and undefiled; that so the divine image might be beheld in him, not as an empty, lifeless shadow in a glass, but as a true and living image of the invisible God, and as the likeness of his inward, hidden, and unutterable beauty. There was an image of the wisdom of God, in the *understanding* of man; of his goodness, gentleness,

and patience, in the *spirit* of man; of his divine love and mercy, in the *affections* of man's heart. There was an image of the righteousness and holiness, the justice and purity of God, in the *will* of man; of his kindness, clemency, and truth, in all the *words* and *actions* of man; of his almighty power, in man's *dominion* over the earth, and inferior creatures; and lastly, there was an image of God's eternity, in the *immortality* of the human soul.

5. From the divine image thus implanted in him, man should have acquired the knowledge both of *God* and of *himself*. Hence he might have learned, that God, his Creator, is all in all, the Being of beings, and the chief and only BEING, from whom all created beings derive their existence, and in whom, and by whom, all things that are, subsist. Hence, also, he might have known, that God, as the Original of man's nature, is all that *essentially*, of which he himself was but the image and representation. For since man was to bear the image of the divine goodness, it follows that God is the sovereign and universal goodness *essentially* (Matt. 19:17); and, consequently, that God is essential love, essential life, and essential holiness, to whom alone (because he is all this *essentially*), worship and praise, honor and glory, might, majesty, dominion, and virtue, are to be ascribed: whereas these do not appertain to the creature, nor belong to anything but God alone.

6. From this image of the Divine Being, man should further have acquired the knowledge of *himself*. He should have considered what a vast difference there was between God and

himself. Man is not God, but God's *image*; and the image of God ought to represent nothing but God. He is a portraiture of the Divine Being; a character, an image, in which God alone should be seen and glorified. Nothing therefore ought to live in man, besides God. Nothing but the Divinity should stir, will, love, think, speak, act, or rejoice in him. For if anything besides God live or work in man, he ceases to be the image of God; and becomes the image of that which thus lives and acts within him. If therefore a man would become, and continue to be, the image of God, he must wholly surrender himself to the Divine Being, and submit entirely to his will; he must suffer God to work in him whatsoever he pleases; so that, by denying his own will, he may do the will of his Heavenly Father without reserve, being entirely resigned to God, and willing to become a holy instrument in his hands, to do his will and his work. Such a man follows not his *own* will, but the will of God; he loves not himself, but God; seeks not his own honor, but the honor of God. He covets no estates nor affluence for himself, but refers all to the Supreme Good; and so being contented to possess him, rises above the love of the creature and the world. And thus ought man to divest himself of all love of himself and the world, that God alone may be all in him, and work all in him, by his Holy Spirit. Herein consisted the perfect innocence, purity, and holiness of man. For, what greater innocence can there be, than that a man should do, not his own will, but the will of his Heavenly Father? Or what greater purity, than that man should suffer God to work in him,

and to do everything according to His pleasure? Or, what greater holiness, than to become an instrument in the hands of the Spirit of God? To resemble a child, in whose breast self-love and self-honor do not yet prevail, is, in truth, the highest simplicity.

7. Of this entire devotedness to the Divine will, our Lord Jesus Christ, while he sojourned in our world, was a *perfect* example. He sacrificed his own will to God his Father, in blameless obedience, humility, and meekness; readily depriving himself of all honor and esteem, of all self-interest and self-love, of all pleasure and joy; and leaving God alone, to think, speak, and act, in him, and by him. In short, he invariably made the will and pleasure of God his own, as the Father himself testified by a voice from Heaven: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt. 3:17. The Lord Jesus Christ, blessed forever, is the true Image of God, in whom nothing appears but God himself, and such manifestations as are agreeable to his nature; namely, love, mercy, long-suffering, patience, meekness, gentleness, righteousness, holiness, consolation, life, and everlasting blessedness: for by him, the invisible God was willing to be discovered and made known to man. He is indeed the image of God in a more sublime sense; that is, according to his *Divinity*, by virtue of which, he is himself very God, the express and essential image of his Father's glory, in the infinite splendor of the uncreated light. Heb. 1:3. But of this point no more can at present be said: our design being to speak of him only as he lived and conversed in his holy *humanity*, while he

tabernacled upon the earth.

8. It was in such a holy innocence as this, that the image of God was, in the beginning, conferred on Adam, which he should have preserved in true humility and obedience. Sufficient it surely was for him, that he was made capable of all the benefits of the divine image; of sincere and unmixed love and delight; of undisturbed and solid tranquillity of mind; of power, fortitude, peace, light, and life. But not duly reflecting that he himself was not the *chief good*, but merely a mirror of the Godhead, formed purposely to receive the reflection of the divine nature, he erected himself into a *God*; and thus choosing to be the highest *good* to himself, he was precipitated into the greatest of all evils, being deprived of this inestimable image, and alienated from that communion with God, which, by virtue of it, he before enjoyed.

9. Had self-will, self-love, and self-honor, been excluded, the image of God could not have departed from man; but the Divine Being would have continued to be his sole glory, honor, and praise. As everything is capable of its like and not of its contrary, and in its like acquiesces and delights, so man, being in the similitude of God, was thereby prepared to receive God into himself, who was also ready to communicate himself to man, with all the treasures of his goodness; goodness being of all things the most communicative of itself.

10. Finally, man ought to have learned from the image of God, that by means of it he is united to God; and that in this union, his true and everlasting tranquillity, his rest, peace, joy,

life, and happiness alone consist. He should have learned that all restlessness of mind and vexation of spirit, arise from nothing but a breach of this union, by which he ceases to be the image of God; for man no sooner turns to the creature, than he is deprived of that eternal good which is to be derived from God alone.

## Chapter II.

# Of The Fall Of Adam

*As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*— Rom. 5:19.

The fall of Adam was disobedience to God, by which man turned away from the Divine Being to himself, and robbed God of the honor due to him alone, in that he *himself* thought to be *as God*. But while he thus labored to advance himself, he was stripped of that divine image, which the Creator had so freely conferred on him; divested of hereditary righteousness; and bereaved of that holiness with which he was originally adorned; becoming, as it regards his *understanding*, dark and blind; as to his *will*, stubborn and perverse; and as to all the powers and faculties of the soul, entirely alienated from God. This evil has infected the whole mass of mankind, by means of a fleshly generation; and has been inherited by all men. The obvious consequence arising from this is, that man is become spiritually dead and the child of wrath and damnation, until redeemed from this miserable state by Jesus Christ. Let not then any who are called Christians deceive themselves with regard to Adam's fall. Let them be cautious, how they attempt to extenuate or lessen the transgression of Adam, as though it were a small

sin, a thing of little consequence, and, at the worst, but the eating of an apple. Let them rather be assured, that the guilt of Adam was that of Lucifer, namely, *he would be as God*: and that it was the same most grievous, heinous, and hateful sin in both.

2. This apostasy (for it was nothing less), was, at first, generated in the heart, and then made manifest by the eating of the forbidden fruit. Though man was numbered with the sons of God; though he came forth from the hands of the Almighty spotless both in body and in soul, and was the most glorious object in the creation; though, to crown all, he was not only a son, but the *delight* of God; yet not knowing how to rest satisfied with these high privileges, he attempted to invade Heaven, that he might be yet higher; and nothing less would suffice him, than to exalt himself like unto God. Hence, he conceived in his heart enmity and hatred against the Divine Being, his Creator and Father, whom, had it been in his power, he was disposed utterly to undo. Who could commit a sin more detestable than this? or what greater abomination is there, that it was possible to meditate?

3. Hence it was, that man became inwardly like Satan himself, bearing his likeness in the heart; since both had now committed the same sin, both having rebelled against the majesty of Heaven. Man no more exhibits an image of God, but rather that of the Devil; he no longer is an instrument in the hands of God, but is become an organ of Satan, and is thereby rendered capable of every species of diabolical wickedness: so that, having lost that image which was heavenly, spiritual, and divine, he is altogether

earthly, sensual, and brutish. For the devil, designing to imprint his own image upon man, fascinated him so entirely by a train of enticing and deceitful words, that man permitted him to sow that hateful seed in his soul, which is hence termed the seed of the serpent; and by which is chiefly meant, self-love, self-will, and the ambition of being as God. On this account it is, that the Scriptures term those who are intoxicated with self-love, “a generation of vipers.” Matt. 3:7. And all those who are of a proud and devilish nature, “the seed (progeny) of the serpent.” So the Almighty, addressing the serpent, says, “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.” Gen. 3:15.

4. From this seed of the serpent nothing but deadly and horrible fruit can possibly proceed; namely, Satan's image, the children of Belial, the children of the devil. John 8:44. As in every natural seed, how minute soever it may be, are contained, in a most wonderful and hidden manner, the nature and properties of the future plant, all its parts and proportions, its branches, leaves, and flowers, in miniature; so in that seed of the serpent, Adam's self-love and disobedience (which has passed unto all his posterity by a fleshly generation), there lies, as it were in embryo, the tree of death, with its branches, leaves, and flowers, and those innumerable fruits of unrighteousness which grow upon it. In short, the whole image of Satan is secretly traced out there, with all its marks, characters, and properties.

5. If we observe a little child with attention, we shall see how

this natural corruption displays itself from its very birth; and how self-will and disobedience especially discover themselves, and break forth into actions that effectually witness to the hidden root from which they spring. Let us consider the child further, as it grows up to maturer years. Observe the natural selfishness of the youth, his inbred ambition, his thirst after worldly glory, his love of applause, his pursuit of revenge, and his proneness to deceit and falsehood. And now these evils multiply. Soon may be discovered in him vanity, arrogance, pride, blasphemy, vain oaths, awful curses, frauds, skepticism, infidelity, contempt of God and his holy Word, and disobedience to parents and magistrates: wrath and contentiousness; hatred and envy; revenge and murder, and all kinds of cruelty; especially if outward occasions offer themselves, and call forth into action this latent and deadly seed, and the various evils of Adam's depraved nature. In proportion as such occasions continue to present themselves, we shall observe the appearance of other vices; wantonness, adulterous thoughts, lewd imaginations, obscene discourses, lascivious gestures, and all "the works of the flesh:" we shall behold drunkenness, rioting, and every species of intemperance; fickleness, excessive wantonness, and all that can please the appetite, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. And besides these, there may soon be discovered, covetousness, extortion, chicanery, sophistry, imposture, and every description of sinister practice; together with knavery, overreaching in trade, and, in short, the whole troop, or rather army of sins,

iniquities, and crimes, which are so various and so many, that it is impossible to recount or declare the number of them; according to the words of the prophet Jeremiah, “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” Ch. 17:9. And if to those already enumerated there be added, in the last place, the seducing and false spirits; then may be observed schisms in the church, wicked and dangerous heresies, yea, the abjuring of God and Christ, idolatry, the denial of the faith, hatred and persecution of the truth, the sin against the Holy Ghost, with every kind of corruption in doctrine, perversion of the Scriptures, and strong delusion. Now, what are all these but the image of Satan, and the fruits of the serpent's seed sown in man?

6. Who could ever have supposed that such a depth of wickedness and depravity could be found in such a weak and helpless child; that so venomous a principle, so corrupt a heart, lay hid in a babe apparently so harmless? Who could possibly have believed this, had not man himself, by his sinful and abominable life, by the imaginations of his thoughts (being “only evil continually,” and desperately bent on what is bad), of his own will brought it to light, and expressed, from his childhood, what was before concealed as in a seed? Gen. 6:5; 8:21.

7. Oh! most vile and most accursed root! from which springs the poisonous tree that is so fruitful in the production of every kind of plague. Oh, seed of the serpent, most hateful, most dreadful! from which an image at once so deformed and foul is

generated; and which continually enlarges itself, as it is excited by outward temptations and by the scandals of the world. Full well might the blessed Jesus so solemnly and strictly forbid, that any, by bad example, should offend little children; knowing that the seed of the serpent lurks in them, as the deadly poison in the venomous worm, ready to break forth into open acts of sin, whenever an occasion presents itself.

8. Learn, then, O man! to know the fall of Adam, and the true nature of Original Sin. Learn, if thou art wise, to discern it in thyself. Examine it, not slightly and carelessly, but deeply, and as the importance of the matter deserves; for this infection is greater, this depravation deeper and more deadly, than can possibly be expressed by words, or even be conceived in idea. “Know thyself!” and deeply consider what thou art, O man! since the fall of thy first father; how thou, who wast in the image of God, art become the image of Satan, an epitome of all his wicked tendencies, and art conformed to Satan in all malice and ungodliness. For as in the image of God all the divine virtues and properties are contained, so in the image of the Devil, which man, by turning himself from God, has contracted, all the vices and properties are to be found, and the very nature of the Devil himself. For, as man, before the fall, bore the image of the heavenly Adam, that is, was altogether heavenly, spiritual, and divine; so, since the first apostasy, he carries about with him the image of the earthly Adam, being inwardly earthly, carnal, and corrupt.

9. Lo! he is become as one of the beasts of the field. For what, O fallen man! is thy wrathfulness? and to whom does it more properly belong, to the lion, or to man? And do not thine envy and thy greediness betray in thee the nature of the dog and of the wolf? And with regard to thy uncleanness and gluttony, are not these evidences of a swinish nature? Didst thou, indeed, but rightly examine thine own breast, thou wouldst there discover a world of unclean and noxious beasts. Even in the tongue, that “little member,” there may be found, according to St. James, a lake of pestilential and creeping things, a hold of every foul spirit, the cage of every filthy and hateful bird (Isaiah 13:21; Rev. 18:2), and, in a word, a “world of iniquity.” James 3:6. Often, alas! do we make such progress in wickedness as to surpass in wrath and fury the beasts of prey; in ravenousness and violence, the wolf; in subtilty and cunning, the fox; in malice and virulence, the serpent; and in filthiness and obscenity, the swine. Hence it was, that our Lord termed Herod a fox, and the unholy, in general, dogs and swine; to whom that which is holy should not be given. Luke 13:32; Matt. 7:6.

10. Whosoever, therefore, fails to correct this corruption of nature, by being truly converted and *renewed* in Christ Jesus, but dies in the state which has been described, must retain, forever, this bestial and Satanical nature. He must be arrogant, haughty, proud, and devilish, throughout eternity. And when he shall have neglected the time of his purification here, he shall bear about with him the image of Satan in the blackness of darkness forever;

as a testimony, that while he was in the world, he did not live in Christ, nor was renewed after the image of God. “For without are dogs and sorcerers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.” Rev. 21:8; 22:15.

# Chapter III.

## Showing How Man Is Renewed In Christ Unto Eternal Life

*In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.— Gal. 6:15.*

The *New Birth* is a work of the Holy Ghost, by which man, of a sinner, is made righteous; and from being a child of damnation and wrath, is made a child of grace and salvation. This change is effected through faith, the word of God and the Sacraments; and by it, the heart, and all the powers and faculties of the soul (more particularly the understanding, will, and affections), are renewed, enlightened, and sanctified in Christ Jesus, and are fashioned after his express likeness. The new birth comprehends two chief blessings, namely, justification, and sanctification, or the renewal of man. Tit. 3:5.

2. The birth of every real Christian is twofold. The first is “after the flesh,” the second, “after the spirit;” the first is from beneath, the second from above; the first is earthly, but the second heavenly. The one is carnal, sinful, and accursed, as descending from the first Adam by the seed of the serpent, after the similitude and image of the Devil; and by this, the earthly and carnal nature is propagated. The other, on the contrary, is spiritual, holy, and blessed, as derived from the second Adam;

after the likeness of the Son of God: and by this is propagated the heavenly and spiritual man, the seed and image of God.

3. There is therefore in the Christian a *twofold* line of descent; and, consequently, *two* men, as it were, exist in one and the same person. The fleshly lineage is derived from Adam, and the spiritual lineage from Christ, through faith: for as the old birth of Adam is in man by nature, even so must the new birth of Christ be in him by grace. This is the old and new man, the old and new birth, the old and new Adam, the earthly and heavenly image, the flesh and the Spirit, Adam and Christ in us, and also, the outward and inward man.

4. Let us now proceed to notice how we are regenerated by Christ. As the old birth is propagated carnally from Adam, so the new birth is spiritually propagated from Christ, through the word of God. This word is the seed of the new creature: for we are “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” 1 Peter 1:23. And, again, “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.” James 1:18. The word of God produces faith; and faith again apprehends the word of God, and in that word embraces Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, by whose spiritual efficacy and virtue man is regenerated or born anew. In other words, regeneration is effected, in the first place, by the *Holy Ghost*; and this is what Christ means by being “born of the Spirit” (John 3:5); secondly, by *faith*; whence it is said, – “whosoever believeth that Jesus is the

Christ, is born of God” (1 John 5:1); and thirdly, by holy *Baptism*; according to that passage of Scripture, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” John 3:5.

5. In Adam, man has inherited the chief evils; as sin, divine wrath, death, Satan, hell, and damnation; but in Christ, he is restored to the possession of the chief blessings, as righteousness, grace, blessing, power, a heavenly life, and eternal salvation. From Adam, man inherits a carnal spirit, and is subjected to the rule and tyranny of the evil spirit; but from Christ, he obtains the Holy Spirit, with his gifts, together with his comforting guidance. From Adam, man has derived an arrogant, proud, and haughty spirit; but if he would be born again and renewed in his mind, he must receive from Christ, by faith, an humble, meek, and upright spirit. From Adam, man inherits an unbelieving, blasphemous, and most ungrateful spirit; and it is his duty to obtain from Christ a believing spirit, that will prove faithful, acceptable, and well-pleasing to God. From Adam, a disobedient, violent and rash spirit is inherited; but from Christ, we imbibe, through faith, the spirit of obedience, gentleness, and modesty, and the spirit of meekness and moderation. From Adam, we, by *nature*, inherit a spirit of wrath, enmity, revenge, and murder; but from Christ, we, by faith, acquire the spirit of long-suffering, love, mercy, forgiveness, and universal goodness and benignity. From Adam, man, by nature, inherits a covetous heart, a churlish, merciless spirit, that seeks only to profit self, and grasp at that which

is the right of another; but from Christ, is obtained, by *faith*, the spirit of mercy, compassion, generosity, and mildness. From Adam proceeds an unchaste, unclean, and intemperate spirit; but from Christ, a spirit of chastity, purity, and temperance, may be obtained. From Adam, there is communicated to man a spirit full of calumny and falsehood; while on the other hand, he acquires from Christ the spirit of truth, of constancy, and of integrity. Lastly, we receive from Adam a brutish and earthly spirit; and from Christ, a spirit from above, which is altogether heavenly and divine.

6. Hence, it behooved Christ to take upon himself our nature, and to be conceived and anointed by the Holy Ghost, in order that we might all receive of his fulness. It was requisite that “the Spirit of the Lord should rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord” (Isa. 11:2), that so human nature might in him, and by him, be restored and renewed, and that we, in him, by him, and through him, might become new creatures. This is accomplished by receiving from Christ, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, for the spirit of folly; the spirit of counsel, for that of madness; the spirit of might, for that of cowardice and fear; the spirit of knowledge, instead of our natural blindness; and the spirit of the fear of the Lord, instead of the spirit of impiety and infidelity.

7. It is in this heavenly change that the new life and the new creation within us consist. For as, in Adam we are all spiritually

dead, and incapable of performing any works, except those of death and darkness; so, in Christ, we must be made alive (1 Cor. 15:22) and do the works of light and life. As, by a *carnal generation*, we have inherited sin from Adam; so, by *faith*, we must inherit righteousness from Christ. As, by a fleshly descent from Adam, pride, covetousness, lust, and all kinds of impurity, are entailed upon us; so by the spirit of Christ, our nature ought to be renewed, and all pride, covetousness, lust, and envy, be mortified within us. And thus is it necessary that we should, from Christ, derive a new spirit, heart, and mind; even as we derived from Adam our sinful flesh.

8. With reference to this great work of regeneration, Christ is called “the everlasting Father” (Isa. 9:6), and we are renewed in him to life eternal, being here regenerated into his likeness, and made in him new creatures. And if our works ever prove acceptable in the sight of God, they must spring from this principle of the new birth; that is, from Christ, his Spirit, and an unfeigned faith.

9. Henceforth we must live in the new birth, and the new birth in us; we must be in Christ, and Christ in us: we must live in the spirit of Christ, and the spirit of Christ in us. Gal. 2:20. This regeneration with its attendant fruits, is described by St. Paul, as the being “renewed in the spirit of our mind,” “putting off the old man,” and the being “transformed into the image of God.” He likewise considers it as the being “renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created us,” and “the renewing of

the Holy Ghost.” Eph. 4:23; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10; Tit. 3:5. It is termed by Ezekiel, “taking away the stony heart, and giving a heart of flesh.” Ch. 11:19. Hence it appears how the regeneration of man proceeds from the incarnation of Jesus Christ. As man, by ambition, pride, and disobedience, turned himself from God, so his apostasy could not be expiated and removed, except by the extreme humility, lowliness, and obedience of the Son of God. And as Christ, when upon earth, was most humble in his conversation among men, so it is necessary, O man! that he should be the same in thee; that he should dwell in thy soul, and restore the image of God in thee.

10. And now, O man! contemplate the perfectly amiable, lowly, obedient, and patient Jesus, and learn of him; live as he lived, yea, live in him, and tread in his steps. For what was the cause of his living upon earth? It was that he might become thy example, thy mirror, and the rule of thy life. He, *he* only, is the rule of life, and the pattern which every Christian should strive to imitate. It is not the rule of any *man* whatsoever. There is but one example, – Christ; and him the Apostles have, with one consent, set before us for our imitation. And in the same manner are we called to view his passion, death, and resurrection: even that thou, O man! shouldest with him, die unto sin; and in him, with him, and by him, spiritually rise again, and walk in newness of life, “even as he also walked.” Rom. 6:4.

11. Thus may we see, how our regeneration arises from the passion, death, and resurrection, of our gracious Lord and

Saviour, Jesus Christ. Hence, St. Peter saith, "God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Pet. 1:3. And all the apostles will everywhere be found to lay the foundation of repentance and of a new life, in the passion of Christ. St. Peter, indeed, gives this express charge: "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear; forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:17-19); in which we may observe, that the ransom paid for our redemption is urged as the motive to a holy conversation. The same apostle tells us, likewise, that "Christ his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness" (1 Peter 2:24); and Jesus himself has said: "Thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name." Luke 24:46, 47.

12. It is evident, therefore, that from the passion and death of Christ, proceed both the satisfaction made for our sins, and the renewing of our nature by faith; and that they both are necessary to the restoration of fallen man. The latter, as well as the former, is the blessed effect of Christ's passion, which worketh our renewal and sanctification. 1 Cor. 1:30. Thus the new birth in us proceeds from Christ. And as a means to attain this end, holy Baptism has been instituted, wherein we are baptized into the death of Christ, in order that we might die with him unto sin by

the power of his death, and rise again from sin by the power of his resurrection.

## Chapter IV.

# Of True Repentance, And The True Yoke And Cross Of Christ

*They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.— Gal. 5:24.*

Repentance, or true conversion, is the work of the Holy Spirit, under the influence of which, man, through the *law*, acknowledges his sin, and the wrath of God provoked against it; and earnestly mourns over his offences; and then, understanding, through the *Gospel*, the grace of God, by faith in Christ Jesus, he obtains the remission of his sins. By this repentance, the mortification or crucifying of the flesh, and of all carnal lusts and pleasures, is carried on; together with the quickening of the spirit, or the resurrection of the new man in Christ. Under the exercise of repentance, therefore, the old Adam, with his corruptions, dies within us; and Christ lives in us, by faith (Gal. 2:20); for we must be aware that these two are inseparably connected. The resurrection of the spirit follows the mortification of the flesh; and the quickening of the new man, destroys and annihilates the old man; the ruin of the one, is the life and resurrection of the other. “Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.” 2 Cor. 4:16. We are, therefore, enjoined to “mortify our members which are upon the earth” (Col. 3:5); and

to “reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rom. 6:11.

2. Let us, however, inquire why the flesh is thus to be mortified; and why the whole body of sin is at last to be destroyed. It has been remarked (Chap. II) that, by the fall of Adam, man became earthly, carnal, and devilish; without God, and without love: for being without God, he was also without love. Man was now turned from the love of God to the love of the world, and especially of himself; so that in every situation, and under all circumstances, he now studies, favors, flatters, counsels, and applauds himself; and provides only for his own interest, honor, and glory. All this is the consequence of Adam's fall; who, while meditating how he might erect himself, as it were, into a *God*, was involved, together with all his posterity, in the same awful sin and perdition. This depravation of human nature must of necessity be entirely removed; and this can be effected only by serious repentance; by godly sorrow; by a faith that apprehends the remission of sin; by the mortification of sensual pleasure; and by the crucifixion of pride and self-love. For true repentance consists not in putting away gross and open sins only; but it requires that a man should enter his heart, and search into its inmost recesses. The secret parts, the windings and the turnings of iniquity are to be laid open; in order that the returning sinner may be thoroughly renewed, and, at length, be converted from the love of himself, to the love of God; from the love of the world, to a life of spirituality; and from a participation of earthly pomps

and pleasures, to a participation, through faith, of the merits of Christ.

3. Hence it follows, that a man must deny himself (Luke 9:23); that is, he must mortify his own will, and suffer himself to be entirely led by the will of God. He must no longer love, seek, and esteem himself; but he must account himself to be the unworthiest and most miserable of all creatures. He must renounce all he has for the love of Christ; and trample on the world, its pomps, and its vanities. He must pass by his own wisdom and natural endowments, as though he beheld them not; he must confide in no creature, but in God alone; yea, he must “hate his own life” (Luke 14:26), that is, his carnal will and pleasures; his pride, covetousness, lust, wrath, and envy. He must not please, but rather displease himself; nor must he attribute anything to his own strength or ability. In a word, he must be crucified to the world (Gal. 6:14), to the lust of the eyes and the flesh, and to the pride of life. This, and this alone, is that true repentance and mortification of the flesh, without which no man can ever be a disciple of Jesus Christ. This only is conversion from self, the world, and the devil, unto God (Acts 26:18); without which no one can receive remission of sins, nor be saved.

4. This is the true cross and yoke of Christ; that of which the Saviour spoke when he said, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” Matt. 11:29. As if he had said, “Thy self-love and ambition must be removed by

earnest and inward humility, of which thou hast an example in me; and by the example of my meekness, must thy wrath and desire of revenge be subdued.” This, to the new man, is an easy yoke and a light burden; though, to the flesh, it may seem to be a most bitter and afflictive cross. This is to crucify our own flesh, with the affections and lusts. Gal. 5:24.

5. They, therefore, who are acquainted with no other cross than the tribulations and afflictions of this life, greatly err; being ignorant of that true cross, which we ought to bear after our Lord daily; namely, inward repentance, and the mortification of the flesh; submitting to our enemies with great patience; and overcoming the malice of slanderers by humility and mildness, after the pattern which the Lamb of God has left us. For it becomes us to follow the example of Christ, who renounced all worldly splendor and glory, and everything that is commonly esteemed great and noble.

6. This yoke of Christ is the real cross, which when a man bears he truly dies to the world. It is not to retire into monasteries and cloisters, nor to adopt a set of rules and orders for the regulation of life; for while the heart remains disordered, and the love corrupt; while the man is puffed up with spiritual pride, and a pharisaical contempt of others; while he is devoted to lust, envy, hypocrisy, secret hatred and malice; he does not die to the world, but altogether lives to it. This is not the Christian yoke nor is it the cross of Christ; for these consist in mortifying the flesh, with its sinful propensities; in turning away from the world

to God; in an inward and constant secret sorrow for our sins; in a daily dying to the world, and living to Christ by faith; in following his steps with sincere lowliness and humility; and in confiding only in the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

7. To this unfeigned repentance, this true and inward conversion from the world unto God, hath our blessed Lord called us. The imputation of his righteousness and obedience, together with the remission of all our sins, apprehended by faith, is promised to it alone. If we are destitute of repentance, Christ profiteth us nothing; that is, we cannot then become partakers of his grace and favor, nor of the efficacy of his merits; because these can be applied only by a contrite, penitent, lowly, and believing heart. And truly this is the fruit of the passion of Christ in us, that we die to sin by a sincere repentance; as the fruit of his resurrection is, that Christ may live in us, and we in him.

8. All this is necessary to render man that *new creature* in Christ Jesus, without which nothing availeth in the sight of God. 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15.

9. Hence, therefore, let us be instructed in the nature of true repentance; lest we be led away into that common error, that the mere relinquishment of some gross enormity, as theft, fornication, profaneness, blasphemy, is the genuine and only repentance. It is certain, that this is a kind of *external* repentance; but it is no less so, that all the Scriptures alike inculcate the necessity of an *inward* repentance, which takes possession of the whole soul. A man under the influence of this repentance, not

only supports a fair conversation in the world, but he also denies and hates himself. Renouncing the world and all he calls his own, and crucifying the flesh, he commits himself by faith to God alone; and offers up to him a broken and contrite heart, as the sacrifice most acceptable in his sight. This character of inward repentance is eminently set forth in the Psalms of David, and particularly in those termed Penitential.<sup>4</sup>

10. This is, therefore, the only true repentance, when the heart of the sinner is inwardly torn with grief, and weighed down by heaviness; and when, on the other hand, it is healed by faith and the remission of sin, quickened by the infusion of divine joy, provoked to good works, and thoroughly transformed and changed. Such a frame of mind cannot fail to be attended also with an *external* reformation of life and manners.

11. But, on the other hand, though a man be very serious in the performance of bodily penances, and, from a dread of punishment, abstain from the commission of notorious sins; yet if he continue unreformed and unregenerate in his heart, and enter not upon that new and inward life which it has been our object to describe, he will prove but a *castaway* (1 Cor. 9:27) at last, notwithstanding the whole train of his external acts. It will avail him nothing to cry, "Lord, Lord!" He will hear the tremendous declaration, "I never knew you!" For most certain it is, that not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but those only who do the will of their Heavenly Father.

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<sup>4</sup> [These are Psalms, 6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143.]

Matt. 7:21-23. And under this awful sentence of divine majesty, all men are comprised, of what rank or order so-ever, who do not truly and inwardly repent, and who are not new creatures in Christ, for “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Rom. 8:9.

# Chapter V.

## Wherein Does True Faith Consist?

*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.*— 1 John 5:1.

Faith is a sincere confidence, and a firm persuasion of the grace of God promised to us in Christ Jesus, for the remission of sin and eternal life; and it is enkindled in the heart, by the word of God and the Holy Spirit. Through this faith we obtain the forgiveness of our sins, without any merits of our own, of mere grace (Eph. 2:8), and for the sake of the merits of Christ alone; that so, our faith might rest on a firm and solid foundation, and remain unmoved by perplexity and doubts. This forgiveness of sin constitutes our justification before God, which is true, solid, and eternal; for this righteousness is purchased neither by men nor angels, but by the obedience, merit, and the blood of the Son of God himself. We appropriate and apply it to ourselves by faith; and hence the imperfections which still adhere to us cannot condemn us, since, for the sake of Christ, who now lives and works within us, they are covered with a veil of grace. Ps. 32:1.

2. By this cordial and unshaken faith, man wholly dedicates his heart to the Almighty, in whom alone he seeks his rest. To him only is he now united, and with him alone he enters into delightful fellowship. He partakes of all things that are of

God and of Christ, and is made one spirit with the Lord. From him he receives divine power and strength; together with a new life, attended with new joys, new pleasures, new consolations, in which are found peace, inward ease, and durable satisfaction, together with righteousness and holiness. And thus man is born anew of God by faith. For wherever there is true faith, *there* Christ is verily present with all his righteousness, holiness, and remission of sin; with all his merits, justification, grace, adoption, and inheritance of eternal life. This is the new birth and the new creature, springing from faith in Christ. Hence, the apostle calls faith a *substance* (Heb. 11:1); understanding by it, a sure, solid, and unshaken confidence in “things hoped for,” and a lively conviction of “things not seen.” For the consolation conveyed by a vital faith is so powerful, as to convince the heart of the divine truth by inward experience, and by the tasting of the heavenly goodness in the soul, and of the peace of God, that passes all understanding; yea, it is so mighty as to enable its possessors to die with a joyful heart. In this consist that strength of the spirit, that might of the inner man, that vigor of faith, that holy boldness; this is that confidence toward God, that exceeding and abounding assurance, which are so copiously set forth by the holy apostles. 2 Tim. 2:1; Eph. 3:12, 16; Phil. 1:14; 1 John 3:21; 1 Thess. 1:5; 2:2.

3. That for which a man will dare to die, must be rooted in the soul, and, by the operation of the Spirit of God, afford an inward assurance. It must be a cordial, powerful, and eternal comfort,

infusing heavenly and supernatural strength into the soul, by which the fear of death and the love of the world may both be subdued. Now all this begets so solid a trust in Christ, and so close a union with him, as neither death nor life is able to dissolve. Rom. 8:38; 2 Tim. 1:12. Hence St. John says: "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." 1 John 5:4.

4. *To be born of God* is in truth no vain figure, no empty name; it must necessarily be a lively and powerful change, worthy of the majesty of an omnipotent God. To believe that the living God could beget a dead offspring, that lifeless members and useless organs could proceed from him, were very wickedness. It is sure and undoubted that God, being a *living* God, cannot but beget a *living* man, even the new man in Christ Jesus. And our faith is the victory which overcomes the world. 1 John 5:4. Who can question whether it be endued with strength sufficient for the conquest? It is, it *must be* a lively, vigorous, potent, divine, and victorious principle; but all its power is derived from him who is embraced by it, even Christ. By means of faith, we return into God again, and become one with him; and from Adam, as from an accursed vine, we are transplanted into Christ, the living and blessed vine. John 15:4. In Christ, we possess everything that is good, and in him, are justified.

5. As a scion, when grafted on a good tree, grows, flourishes, and bears fruit, but, without it, withers away; so man, when out of Christ, is as an accursed vine, whose grapes are bitterness and gall; and all his works are sin. Deut. 32:32, 33; Rom. 14:23. But

when he is *in* Christ, he is righteous and blessed; because “*he* was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Cor. 5:21.

6. It is most evident, from what has been advanced, that works cannot possibly justify a sinner; because, before we can perform any good work, we must be engrafted into Christ by faith: and it is equally clear, that justification is entirely the gift of God, freely conferred on man and preceding all human merit. How shall a dead man see, hear, stand, walk, or do any good thing, unless he be first raised from the dead, and endued with a new principle of life? So neither canst thou, O man, who art dead in sins, do any work that is good or acceptable, unless thou be first raised unto life by Jesus Christ. Thus righteousness proceeds only from faith in Christ. Faith is like a new-born babe, weak and naked, poor and destitute, and laid before the eyes of the Saviour; from whom, as from its author, it receives righteousness and sanctification, godliness, grace and the Holy Ghost.

7. The naked child is thus clothed with the mercy of God. He lifts up his hands, receives all from God, and is made a partaker of grace and health, truth and holiness. It is, therefore, this receiving of Christ in the heart, that makes a man holy and happy.

8. Righteousness proceeds therefore solely from faith, and not from works. Indeed, faith receives the whole Christ, and accepts him, together with all that he has. Then sin and death, the devil and hell, must flee, and are unable any longer to preserve their

ground. Nay, so effectually and so powerfully do the merits of Christ justify the sinner, that if the sins of the whole world were charged on one man, they would not avail to condemn him, if he believed in Christ.

9. Inasmuch, therefore, as Christ lives and dwells in thy heart by faith (Eph. 3:17), never, O believer! indulge the thought, that his indwelling in thee, is a dead work unattended with any vital power. Rather believe that it is a quickening principle, a mighty work, and an effectual transforming of thy mind. Faith effects two things: it first *engrafts* thee into Christ, and gives him freely to thee, with all that he has; and then, it *renews* thee in Christ, that thou mayest grow, flourish, and live in him. The wild graft is introduced into the stock, for no other end than that it may flourish and bear fruit. As by the apostasy of Adam and the temptation of the devil, the seed of the serpent was sown in man, growing up into a tree and bearing the fruits of death; even so by the divine word and the Holy Spirit, is faith sown in man, as the seed of God. See Chap. II. In this seed all divine virtues and properties are, in a most wonderful manner, comprehended; which gradually expand themselves from day to day. This tree is adorned with a profusion of heavenly fruit; as love, patience, humility, meekness, peace, chastity, righteousness. And thus the whole kingdom of God descends into man. For true and saving faith renews the whole man, purifies the heart, sanctifies the soul, and delivers from the love of the world. It unites with God; it hungers and thirsts after righteousness; it works love;

and it brings peace, joy, patience, and comfort in adversity: it overcomes the world; it makes us sons of God, and heirs of the treasures of heaven; and it constitutes us joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. But if any one should not be conscious of that joyfulness which faith imparts and does not experience its consoling influences, let him not, on that account, despair; but rather let him trust in the grace which is promised in Christ: for this promise ever remains sure, immovable, and everlasting. And though, through the infirmities incident to human nature, he should stumble and fall; yet, if the sinner return by unfeigned repentance, and more cautiously watch against the sin which so easily besets him, the grace of God will not be withdrawn. For Christ is and will ever be *Christ* and a Saviour, whether the faith that embraces him be strong or weak. A weak faith has an equal share in Christ with a strong faith, for faith, whether it be weak or strong, possesses the whole Christ. The grace which is promised is common to all Christians, and is eternal, and on this grace faith must rely, whether it be weak or strong. The Lord will revisit thy soul in his own time, with a sense of his gracious favor, and of his abundant consolations, although, at the present, he may think fit to put a veil over it in thy heart. Ps. 37:23, 24; 77:7-10. Upon this subject, see Book II.

# Chapter VI.

## Showing How The Vital Power Of The Word Of God Should Be Manifested In Man Through Faith

*Behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*— John 17:21.

Inasmuch as man's whole welfare depends on his regeneration and renewal, it was the will of God that all those changes which ought to take place in man *spiritually* and by faith, should be also *outwardly* set forth in the words of Holy Scripture. Since the Word is the seed of God (Luke 8:11) within us, it is necessary that it should also spring up and spiritually bear fruit. That must be accomplished *in us* by faith, which is declared *without us* in the letter of Scripture; and if this effect be not produced, then the Word is evidently to us but a dead seed, destitute of life and energy. Hence, we ought in faith and in spirit to learn by our own happy experience the truth of that which the Scriptures have outwardly declared.

2. When God revealed his will in his Word, he never designed that the latter should be a dead letter, but that it should grow up in us to a new and inward man; otherwise the Word is of no benefit to us. These truths may be explained more clearly by a reference to some example, as that of Cain and Abel. The nature,

manners, and actions of these two persons, as they are recorded in Scripture, clearly explain the motions and workings of the old and the new man in the breast of the believer. Cain perpetually endeavors to oppress and destroy Abel. What else is this but the daily strife of the flesh and spirit, and the enmity subsisting between the serpent and the seed of the woman? With Abraham, the Christian is required to quit his own country, leaving all that he possesses, even life itself, in order that he may walk before God with a perfect heart, obtain the victory, and enter into the land of promise and kingdom of heaven. Such is the meaning of the Lord's words: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple;" that is, he must renounce all these rather than renounce Christ. Luke 14:26. With Lot, he must depart from Sodom and Gomorrah, forsaking the wicked course of the world; not looking back with Lot's wife, but obeying Christ's injunction (Luke 17:32), in order that his deliverance may be completed. Hither are all the wars and battles of Israel against the heathen and infidel nations to be referred; for what is represented under this history but the continual strife between the flesh and the spirit? Whatsoever is recorded of the Mosaical priesthood, the tabernacle, the ark of the covenant, or the mercy-seat, with the sacrifices, etc., – all has relation to the Christian believer. For unto him it appertains to pray in spirit and in truth; to burn spiritual incense; and to slay the sin-offering by presenting his body, through mortification, as

a reasonable service and sacrifice, so that Christ may truly dwell in him by faith.

3. And if we advert to the New Testament itself, what is this but an outward expression of those truths, which are to be inwardly fulfilled by faith, in the experience of the believer? If I become a new creature in Christ, it is incumbent on me to live and walk in him; in him and with him, to flee into exile, and to be a stranger upon the earth. The virtues that resided in him I ought to practise; humility, contempt of the world, meekness, and patience; and I am bound to be fervent in acts of benignity, charity, and loving kindness. In and with Christ I should exercise mercy, and pardon and love my enemies, and, with him, do the Father's will. I must be tempted by Satan with him; and, with him, I must obtain the victory. I am to be derided, despised and vilified for the sake of the truth that is in me; and, if called to it, I ought to die for and with him, after the example of the saints, and in testimony that he, by faith, hath lived in me, and I in him.

4. This is to be conformed to the image of Christ; this is to be born with and in Christ; to put on Christ; to grow up and be strong in Christ; to live with Christ in banishment; to be baptized with his baptism; to be scoffed and crucified with him; to die with him; to be buried with him; to rise with him from the dead; and to reign with him to all eternity.

5. If ever thou desirest to live in a constant union and conformity with thy Head and Saviour, thou art in this manner to die daily with him, and to crucify the flesh. Rom. 6:5, 6. Should

this divine harmony not exist, and another way be devised more consonant to thy fancy, then Christ will not be *within* but *without* thee; far from thy faith, thy heart, and thy spirit; and, in that case, he will profit thee nothing. But if thou permit him to dwell in thy heart by faith, he will be thy strength, thy comfort, and thy salvation.

6. All this, O man! doth faith in Christ effect within the heart; and thus the Word of God becomes a living Word, and, as it were, a living witness in us of all those things which are externally declared in the Scriptures. Hence, faith is termed by the apostle a substance and an evidence, Heb. 11:1.

7. It is therefore evident, that all the sermons, discourses, and epistles, contained in the Word of God, whether proceeding from Christ, or the prophets, or the apostles; and, in a word, that all the Scriptures, in general, as it regards their complete fulfilment, belong to man, and to every man individually. Not only do the plain doctrines appertain to us; but all the parables and miracles with which the history of Christ abounds, have their final reference to man.

8. The purpose for which they were written was, that they might be spiritually fulfilled in our own experience. When, therefore, I read that Christ healed others, I promise myself the same relief; for we live in unity one with another, Christ with me, and I with Christ. When I read further, how he cured the blind, I am encouraged to believe that he will restore me to the enjoyment of spiritual sight, who am blind by nature: and so, with regard to

all his other miracles. Only own thyself to be blind, lame, deaf, or leprous; to be dead in trespasses and sins; and then, he will surely heal thy maladies, and quicken that which is dead, that so thou mayest have part in the first resurrection.

9. The substance of all that has been advanced is this: the Holy Scripture bears *outward* testimony to those things, which are to be *inwardly* fulfilled in man, by faith. It points out that image externally, which, by faith, is to be formed within him. It describes the kingdom of God in the *letter*, which is to be established in the heart, by faith, after the *spirit*. It exhibits Christ outwardly, who is, by faith, to live within me; and it testifies of the new birth and of the new creature, which I must experience in myself. All this I am to be made by faith, or the Scripture will profit me nothing.

## **Chapter VII.**

# **The Law Of God, Written In The Hearts Of All Men, Convinces Them That On The Day Of Judgment They Will Be Without Excuse**

*When the Gentiles ... do the things contained in the law ... they shew the work of the law written in their hearts.— Rom. 2:14, 15.*

When God created man in his own image, in righteousness and holiness, and endowed him with exalted virtues and gifts, he impressed three qualities on the human conscience so deeply, that they can never be effaced: First, the natural testimony that there is a God. Secondly, a testimony that a day of Judgment will come. Rom. 2:15. Thirdly, the law of nature, or natural righteousness, by which man is enabled to distinguish between honor and shame, and to experience joy and sorrow.

2. For no nation has ever been discovered so wild and barbarous, as to deny that a God exists, inasmuch as nature furnishes internal and external evidence of this fact. Indeed, men have not only acknowledged the *being* of a God, of which they were assured by their consciences; but they have also been affected with a sense of his *justice*, as an avenger

of evil, and a rewarder of good; and this persuasion arose from the consciousness, that, on some occasions, they were harassed with fearful apprehensions; while, on others, they felt a certain measure of peace and joy. By this knowledge, they even proceeded farther, and discovered the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, as appears from Plato, who most amply discussed this subject. And, lastly, they gathered from this inward law, that God was the author and source of all that was *good* in nature, and therefore ought to be worshipped by an assiduous attention to virtue, and with a pure heart. Hence, they defined virtue to be man's chief good; and schools of moral virtue were accordingly instituted by Socrates, and by other heathen philosophers. This may be sufficient to convince us, that God, even since the fall, has allowed a spark of natural light to remain in men, in order that they might be admonished of their heavenly origin, and be assured, that it was only by following these footsteps of divinity, that they could be restored to their former perfection. Some of the heathens themselves, have not been unacquainted with this truth; among whom is Aratus, the poet, quoted by St. Paul, who declares that "we are God's offspring." Acts 17:28.

3. The Gentiles, however, stifling the testimony of conscience, contemned the light of nature, and "the work of the law written in their hearts" (Rom. 2:15); so that it cannot but be their own fault, that they are condemned and lost; and they are, as St. Paul argues, left altogether without excuse. Rom. 1:19,

20. And as the Gentiles knew, by nature, the justice of God, and that such as did evil were worthy of death; and yet not only committed evil but had pleasure in it; it follows, that they thereby condemned themselves, whilst “their thoughts accusing or excusing one another,” convinced them of the certainty of the day of judgment. Rom. 1:32; 2:15. But if the *Gentiles* shall be “inexcusable,” because, though endued with the natural knowledge of God, they sought him not, as was their duty; what shall *they* plead in their own behalf, to whom God hath given his Holy Word, and whom he hath so earnestly invited to repentance, by Jesus Christ his beloved Son; in order that, forsaking the corruptions of the world, they might, by faith, apprehend the merits of the Saviour, and obtain eternal life and salvation?

4. Therefore, every false Christian shall, in the day of judgment, be condemned by two mighty witnesses: by his own conscience or the law of nature, and likewise by the revealed Word of God, which will then judge him. In that day, “it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom,” than for such false pretenders to religion. Matt. 11:24.

5. Their anguish and torment shall be without end; since God has made the soul immortal and planted the conscience in it, to be both a witness and a judge. The conscience can never throw off the recollection of God, and yet cannot of itself approach him; which must be attended with unutterable pain to the soul, and expose it to the worm that dieth not, and to the fire that cannot be quenched. And the more the wicked have, through

impentence of heart, treasured up to themselves “wrath against the day of wrath” (Rom. 2:5), the more severe will this inward and eternal suffering be. For as God, in the exercise of his righteous judgment, gave up the Gentiles to a reprobate mind, because they sinned against their own consciences, and “the work of the law written in their hearts;” so that they became blind in their understandings, and rushed into every kind of filthy and abominable pollution; thus drawing down upon themselves the wrath of God, denounced against all crimes that are committed against the light of knowledge: so the same doom (yea, and a far heavier one) will be inflicted upon those who rest in the mere profession of the Christian faith, and deny the life and the power of godliness. The reason of this is obvious: such persons have contemned the inward as well as the outward word and testimony of God, and have not only persevered in a state of impentence, but have resisted the Divine Spirit, and blasphemed Him who favored them with the light of his Gospel. On this account, God gives them up to a reprobate mind, so that they become worse than heathens and infidels. He sends them “strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2 Thess. 2:11, 12.

6. This is the true reason why vices of so detestable a nature universally abound among Christians; many of which were not so much as known among the Pagan nations. What satanical pride, what insatiable covetousness, what unheard-of intemperance,

what bestial lust; in a word, what inhuman wickedness, is not practised by those who call themselves Christians! And whence does all this arise, but from that blindness and hardness of heart, which they have contracted by confirmed habits of iniquity. When those who are called Christians disdain to imitate the meek and lowly Jesus in their manners and their conversation; when they are scandalized at him, and consider it disgraceful to look to him whom God has appointed to be the light of the world, and our great example (John 8:12); then the righteous God gives them up to follow Satan; to take upon them the life of the devil, his abominable impiety, wickedness, and lies; that they may execute with him all the works of darkness, inasmuch as they refuse to walk in the light. For thus saith the Lord, "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." John 12:35.

7. Finally, if God gave up the heathen to so terrible a blindness and so reprobate a mind; and this because they proved disobedient to the glimmering light of nature; or, as St. Paul expresses it, "because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge," in order to be preserved by him (Rom. 1:28); how much more shall those be banished from life and salvation, to whom the truth of God has come not only by natural light, but by means of his revealed word, and the new covenant, and who yet haughtily despise these special tenders of divine mercy! Of which new covenant, God thus speaks: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God,

and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jer. 31:33, 34; John 6:45.

8. And here, let us also attend to that which the Apostle says, concerning those who offend wilfully. “If,” says he, “we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law,” continues the Apostle, “died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Heb. 10:26-31. These words, however, are not pronounced in reference to those who fall through natural infirmity, but against them who sin wilfully and against knowledge, and who persevere to the end in a state of impenitence.

## Chapter VIII.

# No One Can Find Comfort In Christ And His Merits, Who Does Not Truly Repent

*No unclean person was permitted to eat of the passover.*—Exod. 12:48.

It was the declaration of the Lord Jesus Christ, “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Matt. 9:12, 13. By this declaration the Lord teaches us, that he indeed calls sinners, but that he calls them to *repentance*; whence it is evident, that no man can come to Christ without true repentance and conversion from sin, and without a true faith.

2. Now repentance consists in dying unto sin through true sorrow for our sins, and in obtaining the remission of sins through faith and living unto righteousness in Christ. There is no real repentance unless a genuine godly sorrow is first experienced, by which the heart is broken and the flesh crucified. Hence it is termed “repentance from dead works” (Heb. 6:1); or the renunciation of such works as issue in death. To abstain from dead works is, therefore, one of the principal parts of true repentance.

3. If we be not the subjects of this repentance, the merit of Christ profits us nothing; nor can we lay the smallest claim to the

benefits which thence accrue; for Christ proffers his aid, as the physician of souls, and his blood, as the only effectual medicine for our spiritual maladies.

4. But as not even the most precious remedy can effect a cure of a disorder unless the patient refrain from things that are hurtful in their tendency, and that resist the operation of the medicine, so the blood and death of Christ will be of no avail to him who does not fully resolve to forsake his sins, and to live up to the requirements of the gospel; for St. Paul says: "They who do such things (the works of the flesh), shall not inherit the kingdom of God," and, of course, have not any part in the Lord Jesus Christ. Gal. 5:21.

5. Again, if Christ, by his most precious blood, is to become our medicine, it cannot be doubted that we must be in a diseased state, and that we must, for ourselves, *feel* that we are so. The whole need not a physician, but the sick only (Matt. 9:12); and none is spiritually sick (at least so as to be conscious of it) who does not experience unfeigned contrition for the sins which he has committed, and who has not a sense of the indignation of God which is excited against them. He is no proper patient for the physician of souls who avoids not worldly lusts and vanities, honors and riches; but goes on in a state of spiritual unconcern, without any regard to his past life or his final salvation. Upon a man of this character, no cure can possibly be wrought. He does not see his distemper, and therefore needs no physician. In short, Christ profits him nothing, and his merits leave no saving effect

upon his soul.

6. Remember, therefore, O man! that Christ is come to call *sinner*s to repentance; and that it is only such as are broken in heart and contrite in spirit; only such as fervently desire and thirst after this righteousness that are in a condition to receive the saving influence of the blood, death, and merits of the Lord Jesus.

7. Happy is he who feels in his heart, and still more happy he who proves obedient to this holy calling, that is, the “godly sorrow for sin, which worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of,” and which is the work of the Holy Spirit himself. It arises, first, from the *law*, and from serious meditation on the *passion* of Christ, which abounds with loud invitations to unfeigned repentance. It exhibits, as in a mirror, both the wrath of God against sin, and also his infinite grace in saving the sinner. To make an atonement for our sins, Jesus shed his blood; and love induced him to die for us while we were yet sinners. Rom. 5:8. Here the divine justice and clemency combine for the salvation of souls.

8. How is it possible that a man who believes in Christ, should continue in sins which the Lord expiated at no less a price than his own most precious blood? When, therefore, O man! thou art tempted to pride and ambition, reflect upon the contempt and humiliation to which Jesus submitted in order to atone for thy pride and thy ambition. When thou art covetous after this world, think of the poverty which he underwent that he might make

satisfaction for thy cupidity; and, surely, this will extinguish in thee the love of money and of worldly estates. What anguish and agony did Christ suffer on account of thy lusts and sinful pleasures; and art thou yet in pursuit of these pleasures that will leave behind them a mortal sting? Alas! how great must be the corruption of our nature when we can delight in things for which our Redeemer and Lord was sorrowful even unto death! Christ died to expiate thy wrath, hatred, and enmity; to atone for thy bitterness and rancor, for thy love of revenge, and the implacableness of thy spirit. This he effected by his extreme mildness and patience, mercy and long-suffering. And wilt thou be angry on every trifling occasion, and esteem revenge to be sweet, when, to atone for it, thy Redeemer drank to the very dregs the cup of bitterness and affliction?

9. Truly as many as assume to themselves the name of Christians, and yet do not forsake the pleasures of sin, “crucify Christ to themselves *afresh*, and put him to an open shame” (Heb. 6:6); and it is, therefore, utterly impossible that they should partake of that merit which they tread under foot. They pollute the blood of the everlasting covenant, and do not believe that their sins are expiated by it. They do “despite unto the Spirit of grace;” they despise and resist him; and, by their ungodly lives, scorn and condemn the grace of God offered in Christ Jesus. Heb. 10:29. Hence, the blood of the Saviour, which was shed for their sakes, cries aloud for vengeance against them; and this it does by the righteous judgment of God, which they thus draw

down upon themselves, – a consideration that ought to strike a terror into every one that names the name of Christ. Indeed, “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:31); for he is a *living* God, and not a lifeless idol, incapable of punishing so scornful a contempt of his grace and mercy.

10. With this divine wrath and vengeance, even their own consciences threaten them, as inevitably following those who (though they know that it was to atone for sin that the Son of God died so ignominious a death) are yet not careful to put away their sins.

11. It was for this reason that, soon after the death of Christ, repentance was preached over all the world; namely, both because he died “for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2); and because *in all places* of the world men should repent. Acts 17:30. Thus it is said, “God now commandeth all men *every where* to repent,” and to receive with a contrite, penitent, and believing heart the sovereign medicine purchased by the death of Christ, in order that the grace of God be not frustrated, but answer the end designed.

12. Remission of sins immediately follows true repentance; but how shall a man have his sins remitted when he does not repent of them, nay, when he still rejoices in them? Nothing surely could be more preposterous than to expect that sins should be pardoned which a man has no design to renounce; and nothing can be more absurd than to seek consolation in the sufferings of Christ, and yet continue in the mire of sin which caused Christ's

death.

13. But certain and obvious as these truths are in themselves, there are many that call themselves Christians who never repented, and who yet will presume to lay claim to a share in the merits of Christ, and in the remission of sins which he has purchased. They have not ceased to indulge their accustomed wrath, covetousness, pride, malice, envy, hypocrisy, and unrighteousness, but have rather become more and more enslaved by them; and yet, alas! they expect forgiveness of sin, and presumptuously apply to themselves the merits of Christ as a defence against the impending judgment of Almighty God. And though this is one of the grossest and most palpable of errors, yet they do not hesitate to bestow upon it the specious name of *faith*, by which they hope for salvation. These are they that flatter themselves to their own destruction; fondly supposing that they are true Christians because they have a speculative knowledge of the Gospel, and because they believe that Jesus died for their sins. This, alas! is not *faith*, but *fancy*; and thou art an unhappy, and most awfully infatuated *false Christian*, if thou canst suffer thyself to be deluded in this manner! Never did the Word of God teach such a doctrine; but the unvarying language of the inspired writers is: "If thou earnestly desirest the pardon of thy sins, *repent* of them, and firmly resolve to give up the practice of them; and thus, grieving from thy heart that thou hast so greatly offended God, and determining to lead a new life, believe on Jesus Christ, the great propitiation for the sins of the whole world."

14. But how should that man feel sorrow for his sins, who will not be induced to quit them? and how should he quit them, while he remains unconcerned about committing them? Christ, and all his apostles and prophets, unite in teaching thee, O man! that thou must die to the world and to thy sins; die to thy pride, thy covetousness, thy lust, and thy wrath; and that thou must return to the Lord with all thy heart, and implore his gracious pardon. And this being sincerely done, thou art absolved, and thy sins are forgiven. *Then*, the heavenly physician looks upon thee graciously; for he is come to revive those that are of a contrite spirit, and to bind up the broken in heart. Ps. 147:3. But if thou seekest for some other way to be saved, than that which is here pointed out, then Christ will profit thee nothing, and the boasting of thy faith is altogether vain. For *true* faith renews him who possesses it; it mortifies sin, and raises the soul, with Christ, into a new life; for such a man lives, by faith in Christ, in his love, his humility, his meekness, and his patience. It is thus, O man! that Jesus becomes unto thee the way of life, and thus thou becomest in him a “new creature.” But if thou continuest to commit thy favorite sins, and remainest unwilling to die to the corrupt bent of “the old man” (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22), how wilt thou pretend to be a new creature? How is it possible for thee to belong to Christ, when thou dost not “crucify the flesh, with its affections and lusts?” Gal. 5:24.

15. Even if thou shouldst listen to ten sermons in one day, shouldst confess thy sins every month, and receive the Lord's

Supper, thou wouldst derive no benefit from such exercises, nor obtain the remission of sins; the reason is, that thou hast not a penitent, contrite, and believing heart, which can be reached by the healing influences of the medicine. The Word of God and the Sacraments are, indeed, salutary remedies; but they are such to those alone who unfeignedly repent and believe. What would it profit, to anoint a stone with costly ointment? What harvest shalt thou reap, if thou sowest among briars and thorns? First pull up the thorns and thistles that choke the good seed, and, then, thou mayest reasonably expect the precious fruit. Luke 8:7. And, in fine, Christ will never profit thee at all, if thou continuest to love sin rather than Him. The *birth* of the Saviour is of no advantage to a man whose aim it is not to be *born* with him; nor shall his *death* avail for any, who are not disposed to *die* to sin, and to mortify the deeds of the flesh. Rom. 6:11. So, the *resurrection* of Christ will benefit none who will not *rise* from sin, and live unto righteousness; nor will his *ascension* prove a blessing to any who refuse to *ascend* with him, and to have their conversation in heaven.

16. But when, on the contrary, a man, like the Prodigal Son, truly returns to his offended father, deploring, hating, and forsaking his sins; when he earnestly seeks forgiveness, and, with the eye of faith, beholds Christ and his bleeding wounds, as the Israelites beheld the serpent of brass, and lived (Numb. 21:9); when, at last, under a real sense of guilt, he cries out with the penitent publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke

18:13); then, *then*, the pardon is granted, the absolution is sealed, however great and many the sins be which he has committed against his God.

17. Such is the efficacy of the redemption which the blood of Christ has effected, and of so extensive a nature is his merit, that it is fully imputed, through faith, to every penitent soul. Thus is brought to pass the scripture, “He giveth repentance and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31); that is, he pardons the repentant sinner freely and wholly, for Christ's sake. For it is a pleasure with God to exercise mercy, and to forgive a sinner. “My bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.” Jer. 31:20; Hosea 11:8. Then it is, that the death of Christ is rendered truly effectual; and then it is, that the angels of God rejoice in heaven (Luke 15:7), because the blood of Christ was not shed in vain for the poor sinner for whom He had died. 1 Cor. 8:11.

## Chapter IX.

# The Unchristian Walk Of Many Persons In Our Day, Is A Cause Of The Rejection Of Christ And Of The True Faith

*Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.*— 2. Tim. 3:5.

Every one calls himself by the Christian name, even though he do not perform the least part of what he thereby professes; and, by this means, the Saviour is denied, contemned, blasphemed, scourged, crucified, and, as it were, cast out of the sight of men, as dead. The Apostle expressly declares, that some persons “crucify the Son of God afresh.” Heb. 6:6.

2. Would to God that Christ were not, even in *our* days, crucified again and again among those who call themselves after his name, and honor him with their lips; and yet, by their anti-christian lives and actions, utterly reject and deny him. His most holy, humble, and exemplary life is, at this day, to be found among but few; and wherever there is not the *life* of Christ, *there* Christ is not himself, however loudly the faith and the doctrine may be commended. For the Christian faith without a Christian life is a tree without fruit. True faith works by love (Gal. 5:6); and wherever it is found, there Christ dwells, with all his divine

graces and virtues. Eph. 3:17.

3. But when these are not expressed in the lives of those who profess his doctrine, there Christ himself is rooted up and denied; for it is only where true faith exists that Christ dwells.

4. Now Christ hath said, “Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father and the angels.” Matt. 10:33; Luke 12:9. This denial of Christ is not only made in words (as by those who renounce Christ and Christianity), but it is also done when, by our lives and actions, we wilfully sin against the Saviour and resist the Holy Ghost. St. Paul speaks of some who “profess that they know God, but *in works deny him*” (Tit. 1:16); and it is certain that Christ is no less denied by a wicked and satanic life, than he is by a verbal abjuration. It is with hypocrisy and an empty profession of the faith as it is with open wickedness; and this is strikingly illustrated by our Lord's parable of the two sons, who were commanded by their father to go and work in his vineyard. The one (*openly* denying) said, “I will not;” while the other (*professing* obedience) said, “I go, sir,” and went not. Matt. 21:28-30.

5. This is a forcible representation of those Christians who make religion to consist in empty profession without obedience. They will cry “Yea, yea,” and “Lord, Lord!” (Matt. 7:21), and yet are worse than others, because they pretend to be children of the Father, and yet do not, in any respect, obey his will. Their character is thus given by St. Paul: “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” 2 Tim. 3:5. Now, what is it to

deny the power of godliness but to deny Christ himself, and to shake off allegiance to him, and thus to act the part of a heathen under the mask and name of a Christian? These are “the children of unbelief or disobedience,” in whom the spirit, not of Christ, but *of this world*, worketh. Eph. 2:2. They, therefore, who usurp a Christian's name, and yet do not a Christian's work, shall be denied, in their turn, by the Saviour when he shall pronounce the sentence: “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Matt. 7:23.

# **Chapter X.**

## **The Children Of The World Are Against Christ, And, Consequently, Their Life And Their Christianity Are Both Alike False**

*He that is not with me is against me.*— Matt. 12:30.

If the conduct of the generality of men in the present age be examined by the standard of life and doctrine left us by Christ, we must soon come to the conclusion that it is wholly *unchristian*, and totally repugnant to his example. The lives of men in our day are, in too many cases, made up of insatiable avarice, sordid and self-seeking manners, worldly-mindedness, worldly cares, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life; disobedience, wrath, strife, hatred, malice, contentions, and a violent thirst after human applause, pomps, and dignities. Add to these the jealousies, the revenge, the secret feuds and envyings, the unforgiving spirit, the injustice and hypocrisy, the frauds and calumnies, the lies and perjuries, together with all the impurity and unrighteousness with which the world so exceedingly abounds. In short, the whole life of the children of this generation consists of the love of the world, self-love, self-honor, and self-seeking.

2. To all this the life of Christ is entirely opposed; it can have no sort of communion with it. His life is nothing else but pure and sincere love to God and men. It is composed of humanity and kindness, of meekness and patience, of humility and obedience even unto death, of mercy and righteousness, of truth and simplicity, of purity and holiness, of contempt of the world, its honors, wealth, and pleasures; of self-denial; of the cross, tribulations, and afflictions; of fervent desires after the kingdom of God, and after the fulfilment of the divine will. This is the life of Christ, to which the false Christianity of the present age is so greatly opposed.

3. If, then, it be the truth that he who is not *with* Christ is accounted as one that is *against* him; and he that *standeth* not *in* the will of God, as he that *withstandeth* it (and we know that this is the meaning of the language of our Lord himself), it is most evident that the generality of those who make a public profession of the Christian faith, not being with Christ, must be against him. They have no communion with him, but are contrary to him; they are not led by a Christian, but by an antichristian spirit. Scarcely any, indeed, are to be found who are of one soul, one will, one mind, and one spirit with him; and yet only these can be Christ's, or be accounted his disciples. It is in reference to the latter that the apostle speaks when he says, they have "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16); and, in another place, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Phil. 2:5. The children of the world have not this mind, and it is hence certain

that they are not *with* but *against* Christ. Now whatever any man's profession and doctrine be, he who is thus *against* Christ in his life and actions, is most undoubtedly an antichrist. 1 John 2:18.

4. Where, alas! shall we now find true Christians, in the midst of so many *unchristian* disorders that universally abound? How justly may they be termed "a little flock!" (Luke 12:32) as they were called by our Lord himself. How justly has the prophet Isaiah compared the church to a solitary cottage in a vineyard, and to a wasted city! Isa. 1:8. "Woe is me!" exclaims Micah, "I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape-gleanings of the vintage: there is no cluster to eat: my soul desires the first ripe fruit. The good man is perished out of the earth; and there is none upright among men." Micah 7:1, 2. See also Ps. 74:19; 102:7.

5. God alone knows where and who these are: but be they where and who they may, assuredly Christ is with them, yea, in them, "alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:20. Nor will he ever leave them without sufficient succor; "I will not leave you comfortless," he says; "I will come unto you." John 14:18. For he knoweth them that are his, and those whom he is said to *know*, he watches over with never-ceasing and distinguishing care. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." But who *are his*? The answer is immediately annexed: "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2 Tim. 2:19. But let those who are not disposed to obey this injunction, assume some *other* name

that shall better accord with their conduct; and let them not name *His* name, until they conform to His life by a living faith.

## Chapter XI.

# Showing That He Does Not Truly Repent, Is Not A Christian, And Not A Child Of God, Who Does Not, In *His Life And Conduct*, Follow Christ; Also, Wherein The New Birth And The Yoke Of Christ Consist

*Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.*— 1 Pet. 2:21.

God has appointed our Lord Jesus Christ to be our prophet or teacher; and, by a voice from heaven, has commanded us to hear him; saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him.” Matt. 17:5. This office was most faithfully executed by the Son of God, not only in words, but (as became a teacher engaged in so sacred a function) by a most holy and unblemished life. In allusion to this, St. Luke thus prefaces his account of the Acts of the Apostles: “The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to *do* and teach, etc.”; where, it is to be remarked, that he places *doing* before *teaching*; intimating that these ought never to be separated. It certainly is the duty of every true teacher, first, to

practise himself the duties which he purposes to teach others. Such a teacher was our Lord Jesus; and his conduct is the pattern of teaching, and the book of life which we ought to study.

2. It was for this cause, that the Son of God became man, and conversed with men upon earth, that he might give us a visible example of an innocent, perfect, and divine life; and that we might follow him as a light that shineth in darkness, to lead us in the way in which we should go. Hence he calls himself “the light of the world;” and promises that “he who followeth him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” John 8:12.

3. Hence it clearly appears, that they who refuse to follow Christ in his life, and to tread by faith in his steps, remain in darkness, and are not in the way to obtain “the light of life.” But what is this *darkness*? It is an impenitent and depraved life, called by the apostle “works of darkness,” which are to be cast off, that so we may put on “the armor of light” (Rom. 13:12); and in genuine repentance both these duties are comprised.

4. It has been abundantly proved above, that godly sorrow and true faith thoroughly change a man; that they crucify the flesh, effect an entire transformation in the soul, and beget, through the Holy Ghost, a new life. Lest, however, this should be a mere theoretical knowledge, devoid of life and practice, God has been pleased to set before us his own Son, not only as a ransom and a Mediator, but also as a *mirror* of perfect godliness, and as a most finished pattern of the new man, who is regenerated after the image of God. In him, the fleshly Adam, the corrupt nature,

never reigned; but the blessed God alone. Him it hath pleased God to set forth before our eyes, that, contemplating him and his righteous life, we might be daily more and more renewed after his image. Let us explain this point more fully.

5. Sad experience teaches us continually, that our whole nature, body and soul, is polluted with every kind of sin, vice, and corruption. These are the works of the devil appearing in the carnal man; and it is principally in the depraved and perverted *will*, that these diabolical operations are most visibly discerned. For the depraved will is the root of all sin: if that were removed, there would be sin no more. With regard to the power and natural bias of this will, it consists chiefly in turning man away from God and from *His* will. Now, whatever departs from that Being who is the sovereign and supreme Good, cannot but be in itself evil; for it partakes of the nature of the supreme evil, and is a violation of the original constitution of our nature, as derived from God himself. It was this *turning away* from God that produced the fall both of Satan and of man; whence sin entered into the world, and has, by fleshly generation, passed upon all men.

6. The nature of man is then inoculated with the nature of the devil himself, and his will tainted with satanical wickedness, as with deadly poison. Hence Christ called the Pharisees “children of the devil” (John 8:44); and even to one of his own disciples gave the name of Satan (John 6:70); intimating as though the covetousness, lying, pride, and evil concupiscence, by which the nature of all men is defiled, were Satan himself.

7. Hence it may, with all propriety, be affirmed, that they who lead a life void of repentance, a life of pride, avarice, lust, and envy, live in the devil, and partake of his nature. Such persons may assume the garb of honesty; they may veil their real characters under a fair show of morality and correct deportment, yet, *inwardly*, according to the saying of Christ to the Jews, they are, nevertheless, devils. John 8:44. Such a declaration is dreadful to be made; but the truth of it is confirmed, both by the Word of God and by continual experience.

8. Our nature, as fallen creatures, being thus miserably depraved, thus desperately perverted, and vitiated in all its springs; there is an absolute necessity that it should be purified and *renewed*. There must be a *total renovation* of the soul, in all its powers and all its faculties. But how shall this be effected? We answer: As the *chief evil* has made a breach upon our nature, and has infused poison into its very springs; so must the *chief Good* revisit and renew our nature, that it may be assimilated to itself. That which the supreme evil has so radically corrupted, can be corrected only by a thorough and vital *penetration* of the supreme Good, even of God himself; and, therefore, it was necessary that the Word should be made flesh.

9. The Son of God truly became man, not for his own sake, but for our sakes; that, by reconciling us to God by himself, he might make us partakers of the sovereign good, having cleansed and sanctified us, to that end; for whatever is to be sanctified, must be sanctified by God and with God. And as God is in Christ, so

ought we to be united to him by faith, that we may live in God, and God in us; we in Christ, and Christ in us (2 Cor. 5:19, 21); that the will of God be in us, and we in the will of God, being made the righteousness of God in Christ. 2 Cor. 5:21. This is the only way in which Christ administers medicine to our corrupt nature; and the more powerfully he influences man, the more thoroughly will human nature be purified.

10. Oh! how blessed is the man in whom Christ does all and is all; whose will, thoughts, mind, and words, are the will, thoughts, mind, and words of Christ! It was thus the apostle said, "We have the mind of Christ." 1 Cor. 2:16. And so indeed it must be with the believer; because the life of Christ is the new life, yea, the new man in him; and whoever lives in Christ after the Spirit, hath really put on the new man, and all the graces with which he is adorned. His meekness and obedience are the meekness and obedience of Christ; his patience and humility are the patience and humility of Christ; and his life itself is the life of Christ, by whom and in whom he lives. This is the "new creature" which is created after God (2 Cor. 5:17); and that life of Christ in us, of which St. Paul experimentally says, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Gal. 2:20. This is to follow Christ truly. This is to walk in the light of his life, and to bring forth "fruits meet for repentance;" for, by this means, the "old man" is destroyed, the carnal life gradually declines, and the new and divine life is established in the soul. He who has this life is not a *nominal*, but a *real* Christian; a Christian not in word and in appearance

only, but in deed and in truth. He is a true child of God, begotten of Him, and quickened and renewed by faith after the image of Jesus Christ.

11. Although we cannot attain to a state of perfection, while encompassed with so many infirmities that obstruct our progress in the divine life, we ought not, therefore, to be discouraged, but rather to be inspired with more fervor in seeking after a consummation so much to be desired. We ought ardently to wish and pray, to endeavor and study, that the kingdom of Christ be established within us, and the kingdom of Satan destroyed. 1 John 3:9; Eph. 2:5. The object of our cares and efforts, of our groans and prayers, should be – how we may more and more mortify the old man by daily repentance. For, the more a man dies to himself, the more Christ lives in him; the more corruptions are removed by the good Spirit of God, the more divine grace possesses the heart. In proportion as the flesh is crucified, the spirit is quickened; as the works of darkness are put off, the armor of light from above is put on; and in the same degree as the *outward* man perisheth, the *inward* man is strengthened and renewed. 2 Cor. 4:16; Col. 3:5. The decrease of the carnal life, is the increase of that which is spiritual and divine. As the affections of the former, self-love, ambition, wrath, covetousness, and voluptuousness, are weakened and subdued, so are opposite affections of the spiritual life invigorated and raised. The farther a man departs from the world, from “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16);

the more do God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit enter into the heart and dwell there. And, on the other hand, the more nature, flesh, darkness, and the world, reign in man; the less of grace, light, the Holy Spirit, God, and Christ, is there to be found in him.

12. This spiritual life is enmity to the flesh, because the latter is hereby restrained, subdued, and brought under the yoke, and crucified with its “affections and lusts.” In this, however, consist the power, efficacy, and fruit of true repentance. The nature of flesh and blood is to lead a lawless, dissolute, and voluptuous life, unshackled by restraint, and entirely agreeable to its own will and humor. It is this which it finds sweet, and in which it rejoices. To the flesh and the “old man,” the life of Christ is a most severe cross, and an intolerable burden; but to the new and spiritual man, “this yoke is easy and this burden light” (Matt. 11:30), and attended with divine serenity and peace of mind. For the true rest of the soul will be sought for in vain, unless in faith in Christ; in his meekness and humility, patience and love. Here he hath himself promised, “Ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Yea, he that really loves the Lord Jesus, will not deem it hard to suffer even death for his sake, but account it a joy and a happiness. Such is the yoke of the Saviour, which we are invited to take upon us, that we may find “rest unto our souls.”

13. It is necessary, therefore, that every one who is resolved to take upon himself the yoke of Christ, and to imitate His holy example, should, in the first place, shake off the yoke of Satan, and repress the carnal, selfish, and unruly propensities of his

fallen nature, in order that the flesh may vex the spirit no more. All must be subjugated to the obedience of Christ, to the wise and righteous discipline of his law; that is, the will, understanding, reason, and appetites, together with the sensual desires of the old Adam, that before reigned in the mortal body, must henceforth yield a free obedience to the government of the Lord. Rom. 6:12.

14. True it is that the flesh is highly gratified when honored, courted, and praised, and when abounding in the riches and pleasures of this life; but the yoke of Christ, by which the flesh is mortified and subdued, requires us to prefer ignominy, contempt, and poverty, to affluence and honor; to account ourselves unworthy of these things, and freely to give up all that is great in the estimation of the world. It is here that the humility and life of Christ are most striking and apparent. This is the “yoke” and this the “burden,” which are easy and light to the spirit; this is the law of love, the commandments of which are not grievous but delightful. 1 John 5:3. What was the whole life of Christ but holy poverty, extreme contempt, and severe persecution? Is it not true that he “came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many”? Matt. 20:28.

15. It is the tendency of the natural man to desire to excel others, and to be thought of importance; but the spiritual man loves the humility of the Redeemer, and desires to be reputed as nothing in this world. The carnal man, that follows the propensities of corrupt nature, and has never learned of Christ's

humility, meekness, and love, deems it folly to live as Jesus lived, and thinks those only are wise who indulge their appetites in security, and satiate themselves with every object which they desire; and when such a one most lives in the devil, he is so blinded by ignorance and darkness as to esteem his own life the happiest that can be desired, and to applaud himself in his own folly. And hence it is that these deluded wretches, following the false light of carnal wisdom, are not only deceived themselves, but are the means of involving others in the same ruin. They, on the contrary, whose minds have been enlightened by the true and eternal light, are struck with horror and surprise whenever they cast their eyes upon the pomps and vanities of this world, upon the ambition and pride, the wrath and revenge, the intemperance and voluptuousness, and the other fruits of the carnal life which universally abound. Their language is: "Alas! how far removed is all this from Christ! How far from true repentance and the knowledge of Jesus is the man that acts thus! How far from the nature and disposition of a child of God! Alas! he is still dead in sins, and a slave of the devil." That man, therefore, who does not imitate the life of Christ, is an entire stranger to true repentance; he is not a Christian, nor a child of God; nay, he is wholly ignorant of Jesus Christ; for he who desires to know Christ savingly, both as the Saviour of the world and as the great exemplar of life, must know him to be pure meekness, gentleness, and love, and to be wholly composed of patience and humility. This living ensample of goodness and piety which

the Lord hath set before him, he must carry in his heart, and must labor to be transformed into its image. The virtues that resided in Christ he must have within himself; and if he would ever effectually know him, he must love and admire them in his inward soul. As a plant discovers its nature by the fragrance which it diffuses around, so the knowledge of Christ discovers itself by the sweet and sacred odors which proceed from it. Then is acquired an experimental knowledge of the life, power, rest, and consolation which flow from the Saviour; which circulate through all the faculties of the soul, and quicken them by a kind of spiritual sweetness. Thus is man made to “taste how good the Lord is” (Ps. 34:8); thus is the truth known, and the supreme and eternal good apprehended and enjoyed. And thus is it certainly ascertained that the life of Christ is infinitely superior to every other life in goodness and sweetness, in dignity and in peace; yea, that it resembles life eternal itself, being indeed the foretaste of such a life upon *earth*.

16. As there is nothing more excellent than the life of Christ, nothing more delightful, more peaceful, or more satisfying to the soul, it ought to have no rival in our affections, but to be endeared to us above all things else. He who is destitute of Christ and of his knowledge, can form no conception of the rest and quiet of eternal life; or of the sovereign good; or of the everlasting truth; or of the imperishable word; or of the joy of the soul; or of the true light of love; for all these centre in Christ, and he who has him has them; because Christ is all these to the man who truly

believes in his holy name. “Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.” 1 John 4:7, 8.

17. It is, therefore, most evident that the fruits and effect of the new birth do not consist in words, however sound, or in a *form* of godliness, however specious, but in an *abiding substance*, even in that *love* which is God himself. A son bears the image of him who begat him; and whoever is born of God should evidence it by *love*, for God is love; and hence it is clear that “he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.” 1 John 4:16.

18. The *knowledge of God*, in like manner, does not consist in words, nor in merely speculative and superficial knowledge, but in a vital, consolatory, and divine feeling, in a pure and unmixed pleasure, gently infusing itself into the heart by faith, and penetrating it with an unutterable and heavenly sweetness. This is a true, living, and efficacious knowledge of God; such as that which the Psalmist means when he says, “My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God” (Ps. 84:2); and again, “Thy loving kindness (as experienced in the divine sensations of my soul) is better than life” (Ps. 63:3); that is, this divine life infinitely transcends every other life; in which it is evident that he means that unutterable joy which is produced by an *experimental* knowledge of God, and which is infused into a believing heart. Thus man liveth in God, and God in man; and thus man knoweth God in truth, and is known of God.

## Chapter XII.

# The True Christian Dies Unto Himself And The World, And Lives In Christ

*Christ died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.— 2 Cor. 5:15.*

“Christ,” says the apostle, “died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.” Besides that this sentence is replete with divine consolation, declaring that Jesus died for all, it inculcates a lesson of the most salutary nature, namely, that we should live not unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us. To live to him, however, before we are dead to ourselves, is impossible. If, therefore, thy resolution be to live to Christ, thou must certainly die to the world and to thyself; but if thou rather inclinest to live to the world and to thyself, it follows that thou must renounce thy communion with the Saviour. For what communion hath light with darkness, Christ with the world, or the Spirit with the flesh? 2 Cor. 6:14, 15.

2. There are three kinds of death: the one *spiritual*, the second *natural*, and the third *eternal*. The first occurs when a man dies daily to himself; that is, to his own carnal desires, to his avarice, pride, lust, and wrath, and such other sins and passions as have

their rise in a corrupt nature.

3. It is of the second kind of death that the apostle speaks, where he says, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Phil. 1:21. As if he had said, Christ is the life and death, the gain and advantage of the believer, even when he passes through *natural* death, for, by it, he exchanges a short and miserable life for an eternal and blessed one; and earthly objects for possessions that are eternal and divine: an exchange which cannot but prove in the highest degree gainful to himself.

4. If, however, any think that the apostle's language is also to be understood of the *spiritual* death of sin, they will not commit an error. For thrice happy is the soul to whom, in this sense, "to live is Christ:" thrice happy the soul in which Jesus lives by faith, and that imitates the graces which manifested themselves in him, especially those of humility and meekness. But alas! by far the greater part of men have put on the life of the devil rather than the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, by yielding to avarice, pride, anger, and other unholy passions.

5. Awake, therefore, O man! and consider who it is that liveth in thee. If thou canst truly affirm, "to me, to live is Christ," happy art thou, as it respects both this world and the world to come. Here, even on earth, let Christ be thy life, that he may be thy life to all eternity: and in order to this, account it the greatest of gain, when thou art enabled to die to the world and to thy own corruptions. Then, in both senses, for thee, to live is Christ, and to die, gain. What, indeed, can be more profitable or advantageous,

than to die, in this respect, to all thy sinful desires and affections? Go on, then, in the Lord, and never faint, allowing Christ to live in thee now, that thou mayest also live with him hereafter.

6. No man is capable of settled peace and tranquillity, who is distracted and disturbed with earthly desires and designs, therefore, before thou canst live unto Christ, thou must die to the flesh and to the world. This dying to self and living to Christ, may be illustrated by a reference to several types and histories in the Old Testament.

7. Thus, as the promise relative to Christ, and the seal of it by circumcision, were not given to Abraham, until he had quitted his father's house and relinquished his earthly inheritance (Gen. 12:1, and 17:10), so man, as long as his affections cleave to the world, is unprepared to receive the promise which is by the Saviour; and as long as he refuses to die to it, and deny himself, so long it is impossible that he should enjoy Christ, or the things which are His.

8. Jesus can never live in thy soul, until thou art dead to the affections of carnal nature. St. Paul was thus dead; and hence he could say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20); and writing to the church at Colosse, he says, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Col. 3:3.

9. A man may be considered as dead to sin, when sin dies in him, and he ceases from the commission of it. The same apostle says, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Gal. 5:25. If we live in Christ, we must walk even as he walked; for it

is not sufficient to boast of the Spirit in words, while our words are not confirmed by our works; or of faith, while this is not evidenced by its fruits. Indeed it is said unto *all*, – “If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” Rom. 8:13.

10. Multitudes, however, may be compared to Saul, who, instead of slaying Agag (1 Sam. 15:8), according to the commandment of God, only cast him into prison. They do not *destroy* their lusts and sinful desires; but are contented to conceal, and as it were imprison them, that at a future opportunity, they may indulge them with the greater secrecy. But let us carefully avoid this trifling; and instead of subjecting our corrupt propensities to a temporary restraint, let us lay the axe of mortification to the very root: for unless this be effected, we shall, like Saul, be cast out from the kingdom, and lose the crown of everlasting life.

11. Some professed friends of religion resemble trees, the leaves of which fall off when winter approaches, but their foliage appears again when the season becomes more favorable and mild; for in the winter of adversity, they conceal their lusts, and restrain their sinful propensities; but when prosperity smiles upon them, they break out again, as at the first, and return to their evil ways. This is an evidence of *hypocrisy*; whereas a true Christian is in all circumstances, and under every vicissitude, whether public or private, always the same, and remains unalterably fixed in his God. He is the same both in prosperity and adversity, in poverty

and in affluence, steadily cleaving to God, and meeting with resignation every affliction that Providence lays upon him.

12. The history of Ahab (1 Kings 20:42) furnishes us with another instance, not much unlike the case of Saul; for, in opposition to the command of God, he spared the life of the king of Syria; and, in consequence, sentence went forth against him, and his life was required for that of the captive king. They who nourish in their breasts those lusts which are the enemies of God and of themselves, and which are appointed to destruction, voluntarily draw upon themselves everlasting death and damnation.

13. Neither prayer nor a devout spirit can ever be perfected in man, without the mortification of the flesh. Thus God appointed that every beast which approached the holy mount of Sinai should be destroyed. Exod. 19:12, 13. How much more does it behoove us to slay our unholy lusts and affections, if we would ever ascend the mountain of the Lord's house (Isaiah 2:2, 3; Mic. 4:2), offer up the incense of prayer, or meditate upon the Word of God! If we neglect to do this, we are already judged, and shall be banished forever from the presence of the Lord.

14. Jacob (Gen. ch. 29) served for his beloved Rachel twice seven years; and love so alleviated his toil, that the years seemed but as so many days: thus, for the salvation of our souls, did Christ Jesus undergo thirty and three years' service, and what Jacob said of himself is, in an eminent degree, applicable to Him: "In the day, the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my

sleep departed from mine eyes” (Gen. 31:40): “for the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Matt. 20:28. Shall we, then, scruple to love Christ again, and to fight under his banner against his enemy, the world?

## Chapter XIII.

# The Christian Ought Willingly To Die Unto Himself And The World, For The Sake Of The Love Of Christ, And For The Sake Of That Future And Eternal Glory, For Which We Were Created And Redeemed

*Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.— 2 Cor. 8:9.*

Thou art required, O man! to die to thyself, thy sin, and the world; and to lead a holy, harmless life, according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This thou art to do, not with a view to merit anything at the hands of God, but from a principle of love to him, who performed and merited all for thee, and died to save thee.

2. Be not deceived: Jesus must be loved by thee, not in word and in tongue; but in deed and in truth. “If,” says he (John 14:23), “a man love me, he will keep my words;” and so St. John speaks: “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3. And, again, the Saviour says: “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Matt.

11:30. To him, indeed, who loves Christ with all his heart, it cannot but be easy to sacrifice the pleasure which earthly vanities afford, and to do that which is good, without constraint. Love renders every burden light that is laid upon us by Jesus; whereas to him that is devoid of this heavenly principle, every act which duty requires is grievous and oppressive. To such a one, every religious exercise is painful and laborious; whereas the man who sincerely loves the Lord Jesus Christ, esteems death itself to be in nowise terrible, when submitted to for his sake. And, therefore, the Apostle says: "Unto you it is given, in the the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Phil. 1:29); nay, to lay down life itself, whenever that sacrifice is required of us.

3. In order to confirm thy faith, consider the example of Moses, who, "by faith, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Heb. 11:24-26.

4. Consider Daniel, who refused the luxuries of a court, and desired to be fed with pulse and water, resolving "that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank." Dan. 1:8, 12. He contemned the pleasures of Babylon, that he might attain "the wisdom that is from above" (James 3:17), which dwells only in a heart preserved pure from the pollutions of an unholy world. So, if thou desirest

that Christ, the eternal Wisdom, should enter into thy soul, thou must abhor the pleasures of sin. For as Daniel and his companions were made fairer by their sobriety and abstemious life, so be thou firmly assured, that thy soul will appear more beautiful and fair in the sight of God, even as “partaking of the divine nature,” if thou escape “the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 Pet. 1:4.

5. Consider, further, the example of St. Paul, who says, “The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal. 6:14); that is, I am dead to the world, and the world is dead to me. Thus are all true Christians *in* the world, yet not *of* it. Though they live in it, they do not love it; for they view it as a transient shadow; and its poms, dignities, and lusts, as vanity and deceit, vexation and disappointment. Hence, they are crucified to the world, though they remain in it; and the world is crucified to them; that is, they desire no mere worldly honor, wealth or joy.

6. How happy is the man who is dead to earthly vanities, and alive to God; separated from the world, and drawn into Christ! How blessed is he into whose heart divine grace is so infused, as wholly to wean it from inferior objects, and exalt it to the fruition of the light and glory of heaven. Such a state is the effect of daily prayer and supplication, without which a true Christian cannot possibly exist.

7. Agur prayed to the Lord thus: “Two things, have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die. Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me.” Prov. 30:7, 8.

So let the Christian pray: "Two things I desire of thee, O Lord, even these two: that I may die to myself, and to the world." For without this death, it is utterly impossible to be a true Christian. If thou, O Man! thinkest otherwise, thou certainly deceivest thyself, and shalt at last hear from the mouth of Christ that awful sentence, "I know you not." Matt. 7:23; 25:12.

8. Though to die thus to self and to the world, is, to flesh and blood, a grievous cross, yet will the spirit and the love of Christ eventually triumph over every difficulty. So powerful indeed are these aids, that they enable the true Christian to bear all things for the sake of the Beloved, as a pleasant yoke and easy burden. And although he who lives a life thus mortified, will be hated by the world, yet shall he be loved of God; for the enmity of the world is friendship with him (James 4:4). And the Lord hath himself declared, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John 15:19.

9. Those who are dead to the world for the testimony of Jesus, it casts out; but it honors and applauds them who, living in the enjoyment of its pomp and splendor, are its genuine offspring; because they live in the world, and the world liveth in them.

10. In short, that man is not received and commended by the world, but is, on the contrary, cast out of it, in whose heart, pride, covetousness, lust, wrath, revenge, and the other corrupt passions of nature, are mortified and restrained. Unto him the world is dead; and he again is dead to the world: he begins to live

in Christ, and Christ lives in him: and he will be confessed by the Saviour, as one of his peculiar people, in whom the great design of redemption has been effected. To others, on the contrary, it will be said, "I know you not, as ye, in like manner, knew me not." You have not confessed me before men, but have been ashamed of my life, my meekness, humility, and patience; and I will not confess you: you have despised the shame of my cross; and you shall be with shame disowned by me. Mark 8:38. For whoever refuses to live with Christ in time, cannot expect to live with him in eternity: whoever has not the life of Christ here, shall never have it set forth in him hereafter: and whoever disdains to follow Jesus in the present world, shall never be glorified with him in the world to come.

11. Therefore, O Man! strictly scrutinize thy life, and see whether thou bearest a greater conformity to the life of Christ, or to the life of the devil: for thou must inevitably be united to one or other of these throughout all eternity.

12. If thou art dead to thyself and to thy depraved desires within thee, thou wilt find it no hard task to die to the world and its vain allurements which are without thee: and whoever is thus dead to the world, will not love it or the things which it contains; for, "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John 2:15. Again, how shall his desires any more go out after the world without him, when he is dead to it? Great indeed would be the loss sustained by a lover of the blessed God, were he, in any degree, to yield to the allurements of the world, and

allow it to obtain a share in that affection which should be fixed solely on the Supreme Good. A soul so undecided would soon be entirely vanquished by the blandishments of sin, as was Samson by the charms of Delilah (Judg. 16:6); and would become subject to all that misery and vexation of heart, which invariably attend the love of this world.

13. The love of the world appertains not to the *new* creature, but to the *old*: for the world has nothing to bestow but honor and vainglory, riches, pleasures, and carnal desires; in these the “old man” delights. The new man, on the other hand, has no peace except in Christ, who is his honor and glory, his riches and his heaven.

14. And as nothing can be conceived of that is greater or more exalted than the image of God renewed in Christ Jesus, so it should be our only concern and care, to render ourselves partakers of this exalted honor; remembering the words of Tauler, “What man, who is possessed of reason, can doubt for a moment, that God can infinitely more rejoice and delight the heart, than the corrupt and indigent creature is capable of doing?”

15. In addition to this, the Scriptures assure us that man was not created for the world's sake, but the world for man's. It was not to pamper his appetite, to heap up riches, or to extend his empire without limits, that man was formed; it was not that he might acquire large estates and possessions, erect palaces, or be gorgeously attired, that he was endued with a soul intelligent and immortal: man was made to be *lord* of the earth, and not its *slave*;

to subdue, and not to be subdued. He was not to seek his pleasure and enjoyment on earth, however fair and fascinating it might be to a depraved taste: he was not destined to be an heir of this inferior world, nor the possessor of terrestrial, treasures, nor to be actuated by any worldly motive whatsoever. Man is to depart hence, as one that dwells on earth as a *tenant at will*. He was not made for it, and cannot remain in it; he entered it naked, and naked he must quit it again. Many, indeed, are born into the world at the same time; but an equal number, on the other hand, are daily taken out by death; nor can any carry with them even an atom of the treasures which they had accumulated upon earth.

16. Man, then, is but a guest and a pilgrim below; and most obvious it is, that he was not created for this temporal life, and that this world was never designed to be the *end* of his being. That *end* is God, and the image of God in Christ Jesus, unto which we are renewed by the Spirit; and we are created for the kingdom of God and for eternal life. These our blessed Redeemer purchased for us, when they had been forfeited by us; and it is his Spirit that regenerates men who had been without God in the world.

17. How unreasonable, therefore, is it in man to fix his affections on temporal objects, when we are assured that the soul is infinitely more noble and more precious than the whole world! How preposterous is it, that he should lavish his time in the pursuit of earthly things, when he is conscious that he was created to bear the image of God in Christ, through the Holy Spirit! Therefore, let us now solemnly repeat what has been

before affirmed, namely, that man was not made for the world, but the world for man. The excellency of the image of God in Christ Jesus, is inconceivably great and glorious: so that were all mankind to unite their labor and might, their wealth, their honors, and their all, they could not succeed in restoring even *one* soul to the possession of this image. It became requisite that Christ himself should die, in order that this divine image which had been utterly defaced by sin, might, through His Spirit, be revived; and that man might again become the temple and house of God through all eternity.

18. This being duly considered, as certainly it ought to be, how is it that man so thoroughly debases his soul as to seek after the things of this world, its honors, its pleasures, lusts, and wealth? He should surely reason with himself, and say: “Shall I, for the sake of a little gold, or for this fading world, or for all the honors and pleasures it can afford me, – shall I, for the sake of *these*, sacrifice my *immortal soul*, which Christ has redeemed at so infinite a price? God forbid.” “What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” Matt. 16:26. Alas! the “whole world,” with all its power and glory, could not avail to rescue one soul from eternal destruction; for the soul is immortal, while the world passeth away with all that it contains. 1 Cor. 7:31; 1 John 2:17.

## Chapter XIV.

# The True Christian, Who Imitates Christ, Hates His Own Life In This World, And Forsakes The World

*If any man come to me, and hate not ... his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.-Luke 14:26. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.— John 12:25.*

In order that a man may hate himself, he must, in the first place, cease to love himself; secondly, he must daily die to sin; and, thirdly, maintain a continual warfare with his corrupt nature, or the flesh.

2. There is nothing that more obstructs the everlasting salvation of mankind than *self-love*. This is not to be understood of that natural love which excites to a due regard to self-preservation, but of that carnal and inordinate affection which influences man to be wholly concerned about himself, without any reference to the Supreme Being, the great Author of life. In this sense the term is used in the present Book. Man was created to love God alone; and since God only is to be loved, it follows that he who loves himself is an idolater, and makes of himself a god. The heart of man rejoices and rests in the object of his affection; and, whatever this be, he is brought by it into bondage,

and is devoted to it. Man, in this state, is become a servant, and is deprived of that genuine liberty in the enjoyment of which he was originally created; and in this lapsed and divided state he must serve as many masters as there are objects upon which his affections are placed. But if thy love, O man! be sincerely and simply fixed on God, then thou art subject to no lord but Him; and thou preservest thy liberty with all the privileges appertaining to it. It becometh thee, therefore, to be very circumspect in thy life and conduct, lest thou shouldst in any degree obstruct the progress of divine love in thy soul. If ever thou desirest to possess God alone, thou must make a surrender of thyself solely to him. If thou lovest and pleasest thyself, instead of loving and pleasing God, then sorrow and fear, sadness and anxiety, will inevitably attend thee; whereas, if thou wholly yieldest thyself unto God, cleaving to him and delighting thyself in him alone, then he will never leave thee nor forsake thee, but remove by his gracious presence all fear and anxiety from thy mind. He, on the other hand, who seeks himself in all situations and in every circumstance, and who incessantly pursues after profit, praise, and lust, can never attain to serenity and peace of mind; for some circumstance there always will be to cross his desires and to disturb his rest. Never, therefore, yield to the belief that an accession of fame, wealth, or honor in this world, is always good and profitable for thee; when, on the contrary, a righteous contempt of all such transient objects, nay, an utter extirpation of our love of them, would be attended with an infinite blessing

and advantage.

3. As then, on the one hand, the things of this life, such as praise, riches, and pleasure, are frail, and pass away with the world that supplies them, while, on the other, the love of God endureth forever, it is evident that no satisfaction can be durable that is founded upon the love of self and of earthly objects. Such peace would be interrupted by every trivial circumstance that occurred; whereas, when the mind is firmly set upon God and upon his love, it cannot fail to be preserved in perfect peace and perpetual serenity amid all the changes of this life. Forsake thou, therefore, all things, and thou shalt, by faith, recover all things again; for never can the lover of himself and of the world find the blessed God.

4. Inordinate self-love is begotten of the world, and not of God; it is earthly, and the chief enemy to “the wisdom which is from above.” James 3:17. This wisdom does not seek the praise and applause of men; and though in itself “a pearl of great price” (Matt. 13:46), yet appearing with no other recommendation than its own native simplicity, it is but little valued in the world, and, with but few exceptions, is entirely neglected and forgotten; and though there are many who make a boast of this wisdom, yet the gem conceals itself from all who do not desire to apply it in their practice. If, therefore, thou desirest to be possessed of it, O man! lay aside all that human wisdom which “puffeth up” (1 Cor. 8:1), together with thy self-love and self-applause, and then shalt thou exchange thy earthly

wisdom, which the world admires, for that which is heavenly and divine. Then, instead of the wisdom of this world, which in its nature is elevated and seeks the applause of men, thou shalt be put in possession of a wisdom which, far from attracting the notice of the world, is despised and rejected by it, but which is, nevertheless, of a divine origin, and of everlasting continuance.

5. It is impossible to love God, until thou abhorrest thyself; that is, until thou art heartily displeased with thyself and with thy sins; until thy own carnal nature is crucified, together with the evil propensities of thy self-will. For the more a man strives to love God, the more he labors to subdue the lusts of the flesh and his sensual appetites; and the more he departs from self and from self-love, by the power of the Spirit of God, the more nearly he approaches, by faith, unto God, and to his divine love. For as inward peace depends on a freedom from desires after the things of this world; so when this peace is once settled in the soul, and the heart has disengaged itself from the ties which bound it to the creature, it returns freely into God, and rests in him alone.

6. Now he who is sincerely disposed to deny himself, must follow, not his own will, but the will of Christ, who has declared, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." John 14:6. As though he had said: "Without the way, no man walketh; without the truth, nothing is known; and without life, no man liveth: therefore, look upon me, who am the way in which it is thy duty to walk, the truth in which thou art called to believe, and the life in which thou art bound to live. I am the unerring way, the infallible truth, and

the everlasting life: the way to immortality is through my merit; the truth itself is in my word; and life is through the efficacy of my death; and, therefore, if thou continuest in the *way*, the *truth* will guide thee unto eternal *life*. If thou desirest not to go astray, follow me; if thou wilt know the truth, believe in me; and if thou wouldst possess life everlasting, put thy whole trust in me, who for thy sake have endured the death of the cross.”

7. What, indeed, is the safe way, the infallible truth, and the endless life? What, the way, truth, and life, that are more excellent than every other? Surely there is no way, but the holy and precious merits of Christ; no truth, but his eternal word; no life, but a blissful immortality in heaven. If, therefore, O Christian! thou desirest to be raised up into heaven with Christ Jesus, believe in him here, and tread in the footsteps of his humility; this is the safe Way to everlasting glory. If thou wouldst escape the snares of the world, take hold of his Word by faith, and follow the example which he has left for thy imitation; because this is the infallible Truth. And if it be thy wish to live with Christ, then die thou with him and in him unto sin, and become a new creature; for this is Life. Thus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life; and he is so, both by his example and by his merit.

8. “Be ye followers of God as dear children.” Eph. 5:1. Let us labor and strive after this one thing; that our lives may resemble the life of Christ. Were there nothing else to confound the false Christian, the example of Christ might effectually and abundantly do it. When we consider that Christ our Lord passed

his life in grief and pain, we ought to be ashamed to spend our lives in ease and pleasures. If the soldier forgets his own ease and comfort when he beholds his captain fighting unto death, shalt thou pursue after worldly pleasures and honors, when thy Prince was so ignominiously treated, and, for thy sake, nailed to the cross? Is it not a sign that then thou dost not, in fact, fight under his banner?

9. It is true that, in our day, every one desires to be considered a Christian; but how few are they who imitate the life and deportment of Christ! Had it been the character of a follower of Christ, to aim at the acquisition of honors and possessions, our Lord would never have taught that these are not worthy to be compared with heavenly treasures. Contemplate the life and doctrine of the blessed Jesus, and thou shalt own that nothing can be more opposed than he and the world. Behold that manger and that stable! do they not forcibly evidence a contempt of worldly things? And will the example of Christ lead thee to err from the right way? No! he is the way, and he is the truth; and his life, compared with his doctrine, is the only means to preserve thee from mistake, and to guard thee from the delusions and errors of the world. Since then the Lord hath chosen to enter into his glory by the way of suffering and reproach, why shouldst thou labor to make thy way to hell, through the pomps and vanities of the world? Return, then, O deluded soul! escape from the broad way that leadeth unto death, and in which thy only enjoyment is “the pleasures of sin for a season” (Heb. 11:25); enter into this

safe Way, in which the wayfaring man shall not stray: cordially embrace that Truth which never can deceive: and live in Him who is Life itself. This way is the truth, and this truth is the way. Awful blindness! a worm of the earth would make himself great in the world, when the Lord of glory abased himself to the very dust. O faithful soul! when thy bridegroom moves to meet thee, clothed with humility, come down from the elevation of thy pride and ambition, and descend into the vale of humiliation to meet him, and he will embrace and receive thee with joy.

10. As Abraham quitted his father's house, to go into a land which the Lord was to show him (Gen. 12:1), so quit thou, as a true child of Abraham, the pleasure-house of self-will and self-love, that thou mayest obtain the divine blessing. Self-love biases the judgment, blinds the understanding, disturbs the reason, seduces the will, corrupts the conscience, closes the gates of life, and acknowledges neither God nor neighbor. It banishes virtue; seeks after honors, riches, and pleasures; and, in a word, prefers earth to heaven. He, therefore, who thus "loveth his life, shall lose it; but he that hateth his life" (that is, resists this principle of self-love), "shall keep it unto life eternal." John 12:25. Self-love is the root of impenitence, and the cause of damnation. They who are controlled by self-love and self-honor are destitute of humility and a knowledge of sin; consequently, they never can obtain the remission of sin, though they seek it with tears; their tears not being shed because they have offended God, but merely on account of the personal loss which they have sustained.

11. The kingdom of heaven is compared in Scripture to “a pearl of great price;” in order to obtain which, a man sold *all* that he had. Matt. 13:45, 46. This pearl is God himself, and that eternal life which he has promised, and for the attainment of which every other object must be forsaken. We have an example of this in our Lord Jesus Christ, who descended from heaven not for his own sake, but for thy sake; not for his own profit and advantage, but for thine. Luke 19:10. And wilt thou yet delay to love him who gave himself up unto death for thee?

12. It doubtless is the part of a faithful spouse, to please her husband alone: and art thou desirous of pleasing the world, when thou mayest be espoused unto Christ, the great lover of souls? Forsake therefore and sincerely despise all that is in the world, in order that thou mayest become worthy of the eminent dignity of this spiritual marriage: for if thy love cleave not solely to Christ, it is a corrupt and adulterous love, and not that which a Christian should bear to the Redeemer. For the Christian's love to the Redeemer must possess virgin purity.

13. The law of Moses required that the priest should marry a virgin (Levit. 21:13, 14); and Christ, our High Priest, will espouse only a *virgin-soul*; one that is attached to nothing that the world can offer, but solely to himself; nay, one that loves not even herself, in comparison with Christ. “If any man come to me,” he says, “and hate not his *own life*, he cannot be my disciple.” Luke 14:26.

14. In order to understand what is meant by hating ourselves,

we are to remember that we carry about with us “the old man,” and are indeed the old man himself; whose nature is to hasten from one sin to another, to love himself, to pursue his own profit and honor, and to indulge his own will and carnal appetite. For the flesh is at all times the same; always considering itself, easily grieved, envious, bitter, covetous, and revengeful. This, O Man! is what thou doest: these sinful motions proceed from thy heart; this is thy very life, even the life of the old man in thee: and therefore thou must of necessity hate thyself, and thine own natural life, if ever thou desirest to be a disciple of Christ. Whoever loves himself, must love his own pride and avarice, his own wrath and hatred, envy and lying, perfidiousness and unrighteousness; and, in short, he must love all the progeny of unholy desires, and a corrupt heart. But if thou desirest to be a Christian indeed, thou must not love, nor excuse, nor palliate thy sins, but thou must hate them, forsake them, and subdue them.

## Chapter XV.

# Showing How The “Old Man” Daily Dies, And The “New Man” Is Daily Renewed, In A True Christian; Also, Wherein Self-Denial Consists, And What Is Meant By The Christian's Cross

*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.— Luke 9:23.*

It is the charge of the apostle Paul, “Put off the *old man*, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put on the *new man*, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Eph. 4:22-24. And in another of his Epistles, he gives us a reason for doing so: “Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.” 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

2. We have already noticed what is meant by *the old man*; namely, pride, covetousness, lasciviousness, unrighteousness, wrath, enmity, hatred, etc.; all of which must die in the Christian, if ever the *new man* arise in him again, and is day by day renewed.

3. In proportion as the old man dies, the new man is quickened. As pride loses its influence, humility, by the grace of God the

Holy Spirit, succeeds; as wrath yields, meekness advances; as covetousness is done away, trust in God is increased; and as the love of the world is removed, the love of God takes its place in the soul, and becomes more and more vigorous and ardent. In this consists the renovation of the new man. This is the fruit of the Spirit; this is practical and living faith (Gal. 5:22); this is Christ in us; this is the new command of Christ and new obedience; this is the result of the new birth in us, in which thou must live if thou desirest to be a child of God; for those only who so live have a right to be so called.

4. This is the reason why a man ought now to deny himself; to renounce his own honor and will, his own love and pleasure, and all his profit and interest in the world; and why he ought freely to give up his own right and life, and consider himself unworthy of everything that Providence bestows upon him. A real Christian, who is endued with the humility of Christ, readily owns that no man can lay claim to even the least of those benefits that descend from above, because they are all gifts, and freely proceed from the goodness of God. On this account he uses all as being really the property of God, with fear and trembling; not to promote his own pleasure and satisfaction, his own profit and praise, but from necessity alone, and because he cannot otherwise subsist.

5. Let a true Christian who denies himself, and a false Christian who is filled with inordinate self-love, be compared together. If an affront be offered to the latter, you may soon behold his anger rising, and visible marks of passion and

discontent; and these are, not unfrequently, followed up by reproachful language and actions, by a spirit of revenge, and sometimes by imprecations and curses. All this proceeds from the *old man*, whose proper character it is to be angry and bitter, and to exhibit rancor and asperity. On the contrary, he that is a Christian indeed, and has sincerely begun to practice self-denial, is gentle, patient, and ready to forgive; free from a revengeful spirit; full of compassion and tenderness; and esteems himself worthy of all the sufferings which Providence may be pleased to allot to him. These qualities are all included in *self-denial*.

6. In the exercise of this patience, meekness, and lowliness of mind, our Lord Jesus Christ has set us an example by willingly denying himself. “The Son of man,” he says, “came not to be ministered unto, but to minister” (Matt. 20:28); and again, “I am among you as he that serveth” (Luke 22:27); and in another place, “The Son of man hath not where to lay his head.” Luke 9:58. David, when reviled by Shimei, practised the duty of self-denial, for his words were: “The Lord hath said unto him, Curse David.” 2 Sam. 16:10. As if he had said: “I am a worm in the sight of God, and deserve to suffer far worse things.” And thus have all the saints and prophets of God freely denied their own will, and esteemed themselves unworthy of every blessing. They bore the burden of their day with patience (Acts 5:40, 41); they cursed not when they were cursed; they blessed their persecutors, and prayed for them by whom they were slaughtered (Acts 7:60); and thus, “through much tribulation, entered into the kingdom

of God.” Acts 14:22.

7. This was true when they acknowledged themselves unworthy of any favor, but worthy of all the evils that could befall them.

8. Now, this self-denial is the cross of Christ, which he has encouraged us to bear, saying: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” Luke 9:23. This self-denying life is a severe cross to the flesh; the natural man desires a life free from restraint and contradiction, and would follow the inclination of his own will, and seek after his own ease and pleasure, rather than the humility, patience, and meekness of Christ, with the other graces of his life and example.

9. But whatever opposition *the old man may* raise for a time, he has received the sentence of death, and if thy soul be ever saved, he must surely die. For never canst thou be clothed with the humility of Christ unless thy natural pride be first subdued; nor canst thou feel a love of his poverty unless thy avarice and thy love of the world be first overcome. Thou wilt not be able to follow Christ in the contempt of vainglory, nor to endure the reproach of his cross, until thine ambition be rooted out; nor wilt thou ever express in thy life the meekness and patience of Jesus until thy revengeful spirit be inwardly mortified.

10. These are the spiritual exercises which the Scriptures mean when they speak of *denying ourselves*, of *bearing the cross of Christ*, and of *following him*, – exercises that are submitted to, not with any expectation of profit, merit, reward, interest, or

praise, but from pure love to the Saviour, and because Christ hath passed through all this before us, and “hath left us an example that we should follow his steps.” Since the image of God is the greatest dignity of man, we ought the more earnestly to practise the duty of self-denial, by which that image, effaced by sin, is revived within us. And as this is the highest honor of which our nature is susceptible, so is it the strongest inducement that can possibly be suggested to endear to us the practice of self-denial.

11. Why, then, should man so eagerly desire the fading honors of this world, which, however they may raise him in the estimation of his fellow-mortals, render him in no degree more acceptable in the sight of God. The great and the wise have bodies composed of flesh and blood as the meanest and the most despised; so that, in this respect, no man has the slightest superiority over another. One is born even as the other, and dies even as the other; for the beginning and end of all men, as to this world, is alike. What folly then is it to covet worldly honors and the praise of men! Such desires spring from the root of self-love, that bane of the soul, that seed of all spiritual diseases, by which the heart of man is turned from God to the world, and from Christ to *self*. How incapable and how backward is the lover of himself to obey the words of the blessed Redeemer, and to lose his life for His sake that he may save it. This is a paradox hostile to the inclinations of the “old nature,” and therefore but little considered by the bulk of mankind.

12. Alas! how small is the number of those who have a

thorough knowledge of the depraved life of the old Adam, or who heartily strive against it! And yet, if ever we would rescue our souls from perdition, we must die to it and to all its restless workings. Whatever corruptions have been entailed on us by Adam, must be removed in Christ. In his humility, our pride and ambition must expire; in beholding his poverty, our thirst after earthly things must die away. The contemplation of his bitter sufferings should subdue our sensual lusts; the reproaches which he endured, and the entire resignation with which he submitted to the contempt of the world, should restrain us from the pursuit of worldly honors, and from the indulgence of anger and passion.

13. He who is thus dead to himself, will also readily die to the world, its pomps, and wealth, and honors, and pleasures, solacing himself with those higher riches, dignities, and enjoyments, to which he is admitted by faith in Christ. He becomes, indeed, “a stranger upon the earth” (Ps. 39:12), but he is the friend of Christ, and Christ will comfort his heart with the light of his countenance here, and with joy everlasting and unutterable in the world to come.

# Chapter XVI.

## A Conflict Is Constantly Maintained In The Christian Between The Spirit And The Flesh

*I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind.— Rom. 7:23.*

The two opposite principles in the heart of the real Christian, are spoken of by the apostle under different names, viz.: *the inward and outward man* (2 Cor. 4:16), the *law of the mind* and the law of the members (Rom. 7:23), and the *flesh and spirit*. “The flesh,” says he, “lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.” Gal. 5:17.

2. When the Spirit conquers the flesh, then man lives in the new nature and is in God and in Christ: but when the flesh vanquishes the Spirit, and thus gains the ascendancy, then man lives in the devil and in the old nature; he is under the dominion of the world, and without the kingdom of God, and, consequently, is called *carnal*. And “to be carnally minded is death.” Rom. 8:6.

3. It is according to the predominance of either of these principles (the flesh and the Spirit), that a man obtains his name in Scripture, and is called *carnal* or *spiritual*. When the flesh and its sensual lusts are subdued, it is an indication of the strength of

the spirit, and of a man's proficiency in the inward life; but if a man be vanquished by the flesh, it betrays the weakness both of his faith and spirit.

4. Solomon says, "He that ruleth his spirit (his mind), is better than he that taketh a city." Prov. 16:32. If, then, thou desirest to be a valiant conqueror, and to gain an immortal victory, conquer thyself; subdue thy passions, mortify thy pride, quell thine ambition, and destroy every inordinate lust with which thou art assailed; and thus shalt thou overthrow the kingdom of Satan, who, by means of such sins, ruleth in the world. Many have signalized themselves by the capture of towns and cities; but, alas! how few are they who, in a higher sense, may be denominated *conquerors of the world!*

5. If thou yieldest too far to the flesh, thou destroyest thy soul. It is surely better that the soul overcome, and that the body also be preserved, than that, the body overcoming, both body and soul should be destroyed together.

6. This contest, though attended with various trials and difficulties, will, however, issue in a glorious victory and a heavenly crown: "Be thou faithful unto death," saith the Captain of our salvation, "and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2:10. And the disciple that lay in his bosom tells us, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4. Thou wilt say, What is it to overcome the world? We answer, It is the world within us, which is here principally meant. Overcome thy *self*, and then the victory over the world is thine.

7. Some may, perhaps, be here ready to inquire, "What, if sin sometimes closely beset me, and bear me away against my will; must I be excluded from the number of God's children, according to that saying of St. John, 'He that committeth sin is of the devil'?" 1 John 3:8. To this it must be replied: If thou feelest the conflict of the Spirit against the flesh, and art grieved that thou sometimes doest things which thou wouldst not, it is an evidence that, amidst the infirmities which encompass thee, thy faith and thy spirit struggle against the flesh, and are opposed to it. St. Paul himself teaches us that this warfare has place even in godly and believing souls, when he says, "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind (that is, against the new, inward man), and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Rom. 7:23); thus causing him sometimes to do the things which he would not. To will, was present with him; but to perform the good which he would, he was not always able; inasmuch as he could not do of himself the good which he would, while to do the evil which he would not, was always easy to him. Hence he exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:24. And to this agrees what Christ himself says: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matt. 26:41; Mark 14:38.

8. As long, therefore, as this *conflict* is felt in man, sin cannot be said to *rule* in him; for he who is continually fighting against sin, resists its struggles for dominion; and sin cannot destroy the

man who opposes the attempts which it makes upon the soul.

9. It is the experience of all the saints, that they alike have sin, according to the word of St. John: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." 1 John 1:8. It is not, however, the *indwelling* sin that condemns a man, but the *reigning* sin. The sin with which we contend, and to the commission of which we do not consent, is not imputed to us; as St. Paul says: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1); that is, who do not permit the flesh to rule. But as for those who are altogether strangers to this spiritual strife, this combat of the flesh and Spirit, they are not born again, but are under the *reigning* influence of sin; they remain the servants of sin and Satan, and are, consequently, damned; for "the law of the Spirit of life" hath not made them "free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2), so long as they thus suffer sin to rule over them, and to "reign in their mortal body."

10. All this is illustrated in Josh. 16:10. The remnant of the Canaanites were permitted to dwell amongst the children of Israel, but not to have dominion over them; and thus the Israel of God feel their remaining imperfections, but do not allow them to gain the pre-eminence. To preserve this pre-eminence is the duty of the new man in Christ, whose name is Israel (that is, *a prince of God*) (Gen. 32:28); and who, as a *prince*, hath power with God, and shall at last prevail.

11. This daily strife with the old man, is an encouraging

evidence of the existence of the new man; for it plainly indicates that there are two contending principles in him who is the subject of it. The strength of the spirit and the victory succeeding it, demonstrate the true Israelite; and the warfare of the spirit indicates the real Christian. The land of Canaan cannot indeed be gained without war: but when the flesh, like the Canaanite of old, invades the territories of the spirit, it then becomes the part of the spiritual and true Israel not to submit to such a master; but, after true repentance and remission of sin, to collect new strength in Christ, and by the grace of God to rise again from his fall, and earnestly implore Jesus, our true Joshua, to vanquish for him and in him, the spiritual Canaanite, the enemy of his soul. When this is accomplished, the sinner is not only forgiven and restored to favor, but he is likewise refreshed and strengthened in Christ, his great Captain in this spiritual combat. With regard, therefore, to such as continue to feel many infirmities in the flesh, and who cannot do the things which they would, I exhort them to cleave to Jesus as sincere penitents, and to cover their blemishes with his perfect obedience. It is in this order, and in this order alone, that the imputation of Christ's merits becomes salutary and effectual; that is, when a man forsakes his sin, and by daily repentance strives against it; repairs his former losses, and guards against future temptations. But while the sinner remains a stranger to brokenness of heart on account of transgression; while he continues to gratify the unholy propensities of the flesh, nothing can be more absurd than for him to suppose that the

merits of Christ are imputed to him; for how can the blood of Christ benefit him who treads it under foot? Heb. 10:29.

## Chapter XVII.

# The Inheritance And Possessions Of Christians Are Not Of This World; They Should, Therefore, Regard Themselves As Strangers In It, While They Make Use Of Earthly Things

*We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.— 1 Tim. 6:7, 8.*

The design of the blessed God in creating temporal things, was that they might supply man's bodily wants; and it is right that they should be used for such a purpose, and be received at the hands of God with gratitude, attended with fear and trembling. In regard to those things which are not absolutely necessary, whether gold and silver, food and raiment, etc., they are left to man in order to *prove* him; so that from the manner in which he employs these objects, it may be discovered how he stands affected towards God, while possessed of the goods of this world: whether, on the one hand, he will still cleave to God, and in the midst of earthly possessions, keep his eye constantly fixed on those which are to come; or whether, withdrawing his love from God, he will attach himself to this fleeting world, and prefer a fading earthly

paradise, to that which is permanent and heavenly.

2. Man is therefore left to his own liberty and choice, in order that he may be judged hereafter according to that which he has chosen here, and thus be without excuse in that day. Agreeably to this principle, it was the solemn declaration of Moses to the people of Israel: “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 thou and thy seed may live.” Deut. 30:19.

3. The things of this world are then designed, not to fill us with earthly delight and pleasures, but to be tests and trials of our fidelity. In these trials the fall is very easy, when once we begin to withdraw from God. The pleasures of this world are the fruits of a forbidden tree; of which we are warned by God not to eat, lest our minds going out after them should eventually take delight in them, after the manner of those who know no other pleasures, but such as are derived from earthly objects. These persons, by indulging the flesh, convert meat, drink, and apparel into snares by which they are turned away from God.

4. It certainly is the duty of every true Christian, to esteem himself a stranger and pilgrim in this world; and as bound to use earthly blessings, not as means of satiating lust or gratifying wantonness, but of supplying his absolute wants and necessities. We ought not to set our affections on these inferior objects, but on Him alone who is able to satisfy them. To do otherwise, is to expose ourselves to dangerous temptations, and with Eve, to eat

daily of the forbidden tree. The real Christian is not intent upon worldly concerns, or delicious fare; for his interior eye is directed to that bread which endureth unto eternal life. Nor is he solicitous about fine and fashionable apparel; aspiring rather after robes of divine light, and the raiment of glorified bodies. In short, all things that please the natural man in this world, are, to a true Christian, only so many crosses and temptations, allurements of sin and snares of death, that continually exercise his virtue. Whatever man uses without the fear of God, whatever he applies to the mere gratifying of his flesh, cannot fail to operate as a poison to the soul, however pleasant and salutary it may appear to be to the body. Yet, so far from laboring to know the forbidden tree of worldly pleasures and its various fruits, man gives himself up to a careless and thoughtless state of life, and yields to the lust of the flesh, not considering that this lust is really *the forbidden tree*.

5. The Christian, on the other hand, uses all things in the fear of God, and as a stranger and pilgrim on the earth; avoiding every kind of excess in meat, drink, apparel, houses, and the other things of this life, lest, by an improper use of them, he should offend both his Father in heaven, and his fellow-Christians upon earth. He will not so much as gaze on the *forbidden tree*, in order that he may not be ensnared; but with the eye of faith, he steadfastly beholds the future felicity of the soul, and for the sake of this felicity, refuses to yield to the cravings of corrupt nature. What does it profit the body that in this world it swims in lusts

and pleasures, when, after a short period, it must be devoured by worms, and stripped of all its enjoyments! "Naked," says Job, "came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither." Job 1:21. We bring into the world a naked and infirm, a poor and indigent body; and even this is the spoil of death; for when we pass out of this world we leave it behind us forever.

6. Whatever we enjoy from the time of our birth to the period of our dissolution, is all the bread of mercy and affliction, and designed to supply the bare wants of this mortal life. At the approach of death all is taken from us again, and we depart out of the world poorer than when we entered it. When man enters the world, he brings with him life and a body, and finds the necessary shelter, meat, and drink provided for him; but, after existing a short time, he is, in a moment, bereft of all, and leaves behind him even his body and his life. Consider then, O man! whether there can be anything more wretched and poor, more naked and miserable, than man when he dies, if he be not clothed with Christ's righteousness, and enriched in his God.

7. As, therefore, we are confessedly strangers and pilgrims here, and at the hour of dissolution must leave behind us every earthly enjoyment, let us, at least, cease to encumber our souls with things which we cannot carry out of this world, and the use of which is restricted to this life only. Is it not a species of madness to heap up riches for a frail body, for a body which we must leave behind us, and which cannot possibly enjoy wealth hereafter? Luke 12:20, 21. Are we ignorant that there is another

and a better world, another body and another life, and that, whatever we may appear in the sight of men, we are in the eye of God only strangers and sojourners on the earth? Ps. 39:12; Lev. 25:23. "Ye are," saith the Lord, "strangers and sojourners *with me,*" that is, "*before my eyes,* although ye may not remember it."

8. If, then, we are strangers and sojourners, it follows that our country and our home must be elsewhere. This will be most evident to us, if we compare time with eternity, the visible with the invisible world, the earthly tabernacle with the heavenly, and things that are frail and perishing, with those that are lasting and eternal. Such a comparison will afford us a due insight into time and eternity, and lead us to behold with the eye of faith, such things as remain altogether unknown to the unthinking multitude. It is from the want of this consideration, that so many become lax and disorderly in their manners, wallow in the mire of earthly pleasures, and drown themselves in avarice and worldly cares. It is from the want of this reflection, that the major part of mankind, however keen and shrewd in the pursuits of this world, are blind and insensible to the concerns of the immortal soul. They addict themselves so much to this life, as to esteem it to be the most delightful, the best and noblest of all; while the true Christian, on the contrary, accounts it an exile, a vale of tears, a place of misery, a deep and dark prison.

9. Hence it is that those who love this world, and seek their happiness in it, do not excel even the brute creation in wisdom or understanding; and as they live, so they die like beasts. Ps. 49:12,

20. They are totally blind as it respects the inward man; they do not even think of heavenly and eternal things; they never rejoice in God, but only in the low and sordid pleasures afforded by this world. It is in earthly things that they seek their rest and their enjoyment; and having obtained their object after much labor and toil, they sit quietly down and congratulate themselves on their possessions. Wretched, miserable men! blind and insensible to the tremendous concerns of their eternal salvation! here, they lie contentedly in the darkness of ignorance, soon to remove hence to that of death and damnation. Luke 1:79.

10. In order to our better acquaintance with the nature of our pilgrimage here, we should unceasingly consider the example left us by the Redeemer, and earnestly follow him both in his life and doctrine. He hath set us an unerring pattern of universal holiness. He is our captain and our guide; and to his life and manners, our lives and our manners should be conformed. Go thou, therefore, and look unto him; unto him who, when the greatest of all men, voluntarily chose that life in which nothing of greatness appeared; a life of meanness, poverty, and contempt of honor, wealth, and pleasure, the threefold deity of this world. All these things, to which the world offers sacrifice, the Lord contemned; for he himself said, "He had not where to lay his head." Matt. 8:20.

11. Such, likewise, was the character of David; who, before his exaltation to the throne, was poor and despised; and who, when created king, accounted all his regal splendor as nothing

compared with eternal life, and the kingdom of God, to which he was called. "How amiable," says he, "are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." – "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." Ps. 84. As if he had said, I possess indeed a kingdom, and have people subject to my sway; I possess kingly palaces, and the strong hold of Zion; but what are all these in comparison of thy tabernacle, O Lord of hosts? So, too, Job found comfort in his *Redeemer*. Job. 19:25.

12. Neither Peter, nor Paul, nor any of the apostles, sought the riches of this life, but directed their attention to those which were laid up in another and better world. Hence they freely espoused the despised life of Christ, walking in his charity, lowliness, and patience; contemning the earth, and triumphing over the world, its snares, and its allurements. They prayed for those who cursed them; they thanked those who reproached them; they blessed those who reviled them. 1 Cor. 4:12; Acts 5:41. When they were persecuted, they glorified God; when scourged, they were immovably patient, professing that "through much tribulation they must enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22); and when slaughtered, they prayed (with Christ their Head), "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34); "lay not this sin to their charge." Acts 7:60. Thus were they, on the one hand, dead to all wrath and revenge; to bitterness, ambition, and pride; to the love of the world, and of their own life also; while, on the other, they lived in Christ and in his love, in his meekness and humility, his patience

and his resignation. They are, indeed, made alive in Christ by faith, who thus live.

13. To a lover of the world, this excellent way of life is unknown; for with regard to those who do not live in Christ, nor know that the *truth* is in him, these are still dead in their sins; dead in wrath and hatred, in envy and avarice, in pride and revenge; and as long as they so continue, they are in a state of impenitence, and have not been quickened by faith in Jesus, be their boasting what it may. But the genuine disciples of Christ know it to be a duty to follow the steps of their divine Master (1 Pet. 2:21), and to be conformed to his life, as the supreme and original pattern of all virtue and goodness. In a word, the life of Christ is their exemplar; he himself is their *book*, whence they derive all solid and substantial learning, as it respects both life and doctrine. Such persons declare with the apostle, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:8. And with holy men of old they unite in saying, "Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." Heb. 13:14.

14. If, then, from a review of all these considerations, it evidently appear, as it surely does, that in this world we are strangers and have no abiding place, it follows that we were not created for the sake of earthly things as the ultimate end of our being; but that there remain for us another country and other dwellings, to gain which we ought not to hesitate to sacrifice a

hundred worlds, or even life itself. These are subjects upon which the true Christian continually meditates with pleasure; and it is his joy that here he has no continuing city, but is created for life eternal. But how sad is the state of those who, occupied wholly in pursuing the things of this life, lade their souls with a crushing weight of worldly vanities, and thereby expose them to endless perdition.

## Chapter XVIII.

# Showing How Greatly God Is Offended, When Man Prefers Things That Are Temporal To Those That Are Eternal; And How Great The Evil Is, When Our Affections Cleave To The Creature And Not To The Creator

*And the anger of the Lord was kindled; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them, etc.— Numb. 11:1.*

Many there are, in our day, who, under cover of religion, seek after earthly and carnal things; who use more diligence to become great and affluent by the gospel, than to be good and happy. They love “the praise of men, more than the praise of God.” John 12:43. They choose rather to gratify the flesh in its sinful propensities, than to bring it down into true repentance and brokenness of spirit. But the character of the true Christian is of an opposite kind. He is more concerned about eternal than temporal things; he seeks the glory that endureth, more than that which passeth away; he thirsts after heavenly and invisible riches, and not after those that are earthly and visible. In short, he

mortifies and crucifies the flesh, in order that the spirit may live.

2. The sum of Christianity is *to follow Christ*. Hence, it should be our chief care to imitate the example which he has left us. Our thoughts and actions, our desires and labors, should all terminate in the attainment of this *one thing needful*, how we may come to Christ; how be saved by, and united with him to all eternity.

3. Never should we cease to consider that endless felicity to which we are called; but cheerfully await the dissolution of our earthly bodies, and a translation to that inheritance which is reserved in heaven for us.

4. By these means, which habituate the soul more and more to the presence of God, there is begotten in man a holy thirst after eternal things; while a desire after earthly objects, which is insatiable in its nature, is at the same time powerfully restrained. This is taught by St. Paul in that precious saying: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Col. 3:17.

5. The *name* of God, in which all things are to be done, is the honor, praise, and glory of God. Ps. 48:10. To this great end of human life, all our works should tend; for then it is that they are wrought in God (John 3:21), and will follow us into a blessed eternity. Rev. 14:13.

6. In a word, Almighty God, our chief and sovereign Good should be the *principle* and *end* of all our designs, if we would not fail of eternal salvation. Hence St. Paul says, "But thou, O man of God, flee these things" (1 Tim. 6:11); namely, covetousness and

the love of the world. He calls the Christian, “a man of God,” because he is born of God, and lives in God, and therefore is the son and heir of God; as, on the other hand, a man of the world, is one who lives in conformity to the world, who “has his portion in this life, and whose belly is filled with the hid treasure” of the earth. Psal. 17:14. From these snares the Christian is required carefully to flee, and to follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness; and to lay hold on eternal life, whereunto he is called.

7. When a man refuses to be guided by these salutary maxims, he falls of necessity into every kind of enormous and presumptuous sin, and will at last be punished with eternal fire. See, for an illustration, Numb. 11:1.

8. Inundations and war, famine, pestilence, and conflagrations, are, it should be remembered, punishments inflicted by God, on account of our preferring things temporal to things eternal; and because we are more careful of a weak and perishing body, than we are of an imperishable, immortal soul. All this betrays the highest ingratitude, and an open contempt of the blessed God, deserving to be visited with punishments, both here and hereafter. For, does not man by such conduct set aside an almighty, eternal Being, from whom he derives both his body and his soul; and convert an impotent creature into an idol, to which he surrenders his love and affection? He who loves the creature more than the Creator, and things transitory more than those which are eternal, offers surely the highest possible affront

to his Maker, and opposes the great design of the Christian religion.

9. It is no doubt true, that all the creatures of God are good in themselves; but when men begin to set their affections on them, and by their irregular love to convert them, as it were, into idols, they then become an abomination in the sight of God, and are justly ranked among the most odious images of gold and silver.

10. What else can result from a carnal love of the world but hell and damnation! Consider the case of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24), and the one in Numb. 11:1, already mentioned. These are illustrations of the eternal fire and damnation which must follow a rejection of God.

11. The love and joy, the wealth and honors of the true Christian, are circumscribed only by eternity itself; for, “where his *treasure* is, there will his *heart* be also.” Luke 12:34. From the lust and love of the world, on the contrary, nothing can result but eternal damnation. “The world passeth away and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever” (1 John 2:17); and hence, St. John calls upon the faithful entirely to withdraw their affections from the world; saying, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.” 1 John 2:15. These and similar considerations powerfully convince us, that God will not permit us to fix our affections on any creature whatsoever.

12. But this will more fully appear from the following reflections:

I. Love is the very *heart* of a man, and the noblest of all his

affections; hence, it is due to God only, as the supreme object, and sovereign Good.

II. It is absolute folly to love temporal things, which cannot love us; whereas the infinitely blessed God deserves to be loved alone, since from a pure principle of love, he created us unto eternal life, and hath, to the same purpose, redeemed and sanctified us.

III. *Like* things are naturally loved by their *like*. Hence, God made us after his own image, in order that we might love Him; and that, next to himself, we might love our neighbor, created after the same image.

IV. The human soul resembles a mirror, representing every object indifferently that is placed before it, whether it be of heaven or of earth. Therefore turn thy soul wholly and only to God, that this image may be fully expressed in it.

V. The patriarch Jacob, when dwelling in Mesopotamia, far removed from his native soil, never abandoned his purpose to return, and, at length, after twenty years' service, demanded his wives and wages; and, cheered by the recollection of the place of his nativity, returned thither. So should thy soul, amidst the various engagements of this life, and the hurry of outward employments, long without ceasing after thy heavenly fatherland.

VI. Man is made either better or worse by that which he loves. He that loves God, partakes freely of the divine virtue and goodness that reside in Him; but he that loves the world, is defiled with all those sins and evils which attend it.

VII. When King Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:33) was too much controlled by the love of the world, he lost the very form of a man, and degenerated into that of a beast. So all men, blotting from their hearts the image and love of God, are transformed, as it respects their inward man, into the nature of brutes. For surely those who wholly surrender themselves to the love of this world, are no better.

VIII. Lastly, that which a man has loved here, and carried about in his heart, shall be manifested in him hereafter; and with this he shall associate himself forever, whether it be God or the world. If the world have been the object of his love in this life, it will never leave him hereafter, but will prove his death and his tormentor to all eternity.

## Chapter XIX.

# He Who Is Most Of All Conscious Of His Misery, Is Most Of All Acceptable To God; And His Christian Knowledge Of His Misery, Urges Him To Seek The Grace Of God

*To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.— Isaiah 66:2.*

These comfortable words, our gracious and merciful God hath spoken by the prophet, in order to cheer our hearts, when they are most oppressed with misery and sorrow. Be not thou therefore ashamed to be bruised in spirit, and abased in thine own eyes. Humble thyself in the dust, and deem thyself unworthy of all grace and favor; so shalt thou be raised out of thine own vileness, and obtain, in Christ, acceptance with Almighty God.

2. He who is still *something* in his own estimation, is not duly humbled and depressed in his heart; nor can he expect to be regarded by that Being who looks upon the poor and contrite ones only. “If,” says the apostle, “a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself” (Gal. 6:3): and the reason of this is, that God is *all in all*, alone; and the creature must consequently become a bare and empty *nothing*. So great

and so practical is this truth, that man is not only to believe it in his heart, but to express it in his life and conduct.

3. If ever thou designest, then, to give all the glory and honor to God, that He may be all, alone, thou must surely thyself become *nothing* in thine own eyes; and entertain a very low opinion of thyself, and of thy profiting in spiritual things. For how is it possible that God should be *all in all*, whilst thou thyself continuest to be *something*? By this self-exaltation thou invadest the sovereignty of God, and appropriatest that to thyself, which is his proper due and prerogative. "It was *before the Lord*," said David to Michal, who had reproached him, "and I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight." 2 Sam. 6:21, 22.

4. A man that will be *something*, is the matter out of which God is wont to make *nothing*; but he, on the contrary, who loves to be reputed as nothing, and who, in his own judgment, is so, is the matter out of which the Almighty maketh *something*. He that will be wise in his own opinion, is the matter out of which God maketh a fool; and he who is truly sensible of his own folly and nothingness, is that of which God forms a wise and great man. He who, before the Lord, sincerely confesses himself to be the greatest and most miserable of sinners, is, in the sight of God, the first and greatest of all men. He who believes himself to be the chief of *sinners*, shall be honored by the Lord as the chief of *saints*. Matt. 23:12; Luke 1:52.

5. This is that humility which God exalts; that misery which

he regards; that *nothing* from which he createth *something*. And as, at the creation, the glorious frame of heaven and earth was brought forth out of *nothing*, so must man be reduced to a deep sense of his vileness and nothingness, if ever he be exalted to glory and to dignity.

6. Reflect upon the example of David, whose misery God beheld, and to whom he granted the richest gifts of his grace. Consider, again, the example of Jacob, who confessed, "I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies." Gen. 32:10.

7. But above all, lay to heart the example of Christ, the grand and blameless pattern of a Christian. He was abased below the meanest of men; was made a worm and a curse for our sake (Ps. 22:6), despised and rejected of men. Isaiah 53:3. But the lower he sunk, the higher did he afterwards rise, when he received a name which is above every name.

8. But who is that blessed and lowly one who is *nothing* in his own eyes? It is he who inwardly and in his heart esteems himself worthy of no divine benefit, whether bodily or spiritual. For he that arrogates anything to himself, esteems himself to be *something*; and is, therefore, the farthest removed from divine grace and from this new creation. So destructive is the spirit of self, that it renders even grace of no effect, and shuts out that which contains all things in it. For if a man judge himself worthy of anything, he then does not take all things as a free gift from the hands of God. Whatever we are, however, is of *grace* and not *merit*; nor can we call anything our own, except our sins, our

helplessness, and our misery. All else belongs to God.

9. A man considered in himself, that is, independently of God, by whom he subsists, is no more than a shadow. And as the shadow of a tree constantly conforms to the tree on which it depends, so should man conform to the will of God from whom he has his very life and being; as the apostle says: "In him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts 17:28. It is true, the fruit will sometimes appear in the shadow of the tree; yet it does not therefore belong to the shadow, but to the tree: so all the good fruits that may appear in thy life and conduct, are not the produce of thy own self and thy ability, but of God alone, who is the original source whence all good fruits proceed. And as the apple grows not from that gross substance the wood, which is seen by the eye, but from the seminal virtue which the tree contains, and which is made active from above; so the new man, and the fruit he bears, spring not up from anything that is gross and visible to the eye, but from a supernatural and invisible seed.

10. Now, man is by nature a dry tree; but God is his strength, whereby life is renewed in him, and he himself is made fat and green in the house of God. God is the "strength of our life" (Psal. 27:1), says the Psalmist: and hence we "shall bring forth much fruit whilst we abide in Christ." John 15:5.

11. When a man is thus wretched and poor in his own eyes, and has nothing in the world in which to trust but the pure grace of God, manifested in Christ Jesus, then God graciously "looks upon him." This divine regard must be understood in a divine

sense. The look or countenance of God, is not as the countenance of men, destitute of life and virtue: but it is accompanied with a living power and influence that supports and revives the faint and penitent sinner. And as none but the humble and contrite are capable of this heavenly regard; so the more fully they receive the consolation which God grants, the less do they think themselves worthy of it. Such a one deems himself unworthy of all blessings divine and temporal. He says with Jacob, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant:" for behold, since thou gavest me thy Son Jesus Christ, I come with two bands, with the blessings of grace and of glory. Gen. 32:10. And truly, if a man should weep a sea of tears, it were by no means sufficient to purchase or deserve the least part of heavenly comfort: the grace of God cannot be merited by men, who deserve nothing but wrath and eternal damnation.

12. Whoever thus acquaints himself in faith with his own misery, is truly one of those poor and contrite men, to whom the Lord graciously looks. Without this previous brokenness of heart, man cannot expect to enjoy this blessed aspect of God, nor indeed that grace and kindness which is promised to the poor in spirit only. In this weakness and poverty the apostle glories, when he says: "If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities" (2 Cor. 11:30): and he adds the reason: "that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Cor. 12:9. For so great indeed is the mercy of God, that he will not see the work

of his hands destroyed: but the weaker the creature is in itself, the more is it sustained by the power of an Almighty Being. For in the weakness of the creature, the power of God is exalted, as the Lord declared unto Paul: “My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”

13. The more vile and miserable therefore a Christian is in his own opinion, the more freely God looks upon him, to the greater manifestation of the riches of his glory. And in bestowing this heavenly consolation, he does not look at all on man's merit, but barely on his want and poverty. And this comfort can in no degree be compared with any human comfort, all which it infinitely exceeds. In such a sense, then, God looks to the contrite man and comforts his spirit.

14. By “the poor and contrite man,” is not to be understood, a man that is poor in the outward sense of the word, or who is altogether destitute of human help and relief; but *he* is the poor man, who labors under the load of his sins, and is grieved for them. If sin were not in the world, there could be no misery: but now so much misery cannot befall a man, but that he is still worthy of much more. Ps. 103:10. Far be it therefore from us to grieve, because we have not many temporal benefits conferred upon us; since we are not worthy even of the least of them, no, not of life itself. Our flesh and blood may think this a hard saying; yet every penitent sinner ought to be a severe judge in his own case, and ought not to make the least allowance to his carnal propensities. This is the order in which we are to obtain God's

favor and mercy.

15. And what has man now left to boast of, or what language shall he employ when he opens his mouth? The best course he can take will be to say simply, “Lord, I have sinned; have thou mercy upon me!” And, truly, God himself requires no more from a man than that he humbly deplore his sin, and in the unfeigned language of repentance pray for pardon. Whoever neglects this, may be said to have slighted the best and most needful part of his being, Weep not therefore, O Man! on account of thy *body*, that it is naked and sick, pinched with hunger and cold, insulted and persecuted; or because it is confined by bonds and a prison: but humble thyself before the Lord, and bewail the woful condition of thy *soul*, which is constrained to dwell in so wretched a house as thy body is, a house of sin and death. “O wretched man,” says the apostle, “who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Rom. 7:24. This free and Christian acknowledgment of thine own inward misery, this godly sorrow, this thirst after divine grace, this faith leaning on Christ alone, open, in Christ, the door of grace, by which God enters into thy soul. “Be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand,” saith the Lord, “at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me” (Rev. 3:20): which supper is nothing else than the remission of sin, attended with heavenly comfort, with life and blessedness. This is the door of faith (Acts 14:27), through which the Lord, at the right time, enters into the soul; and after the day of toil and

sorrow is over, refreshes her with the light of his countenance. Then it is, that “mercy and truth meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other; that truth springs out of the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven.” Ps. 85:10, 11. Then it is that the woman, that poor sinner, but now a penitent, anoints the feet of her Lord, washes them with tears, and wipes them with the hairs of her head, expressing thereby all the marks of an unfeigned and deep humility. Luke 7:37. Then it is, that the spiritual priest (Rev. 1:6), in the holy ornaments of faith, offers up the true sacrifice, even a broken and lowly spirit, with the incense of true contrition and prayer. Ps. 51:19. Then it is that the true sanctified water of purifying (Numb. 8:7) is applied, – the tears which grief for sin caused to flow; and now, through faith and by the power of the blood of Christ, the spiritual Israelite is washed and cleansed.

16. And thus, O Christian! is seen how by the sense of thy own misery, and by faith in Christ attending it, thou mayest attain the grace and favor of God. To conclude, the more wretched and miserable any one is in his own judgment, the more dearly he is beloved of God, and the more gracious is the regard which the Lord will bestow upon him.

## Chapter XX.

# A Truly Christian Sorrow For Sin Promotes The Daily Amendment Of The Life Of Man, Makes Him Meet For The Kingdom Of God, And Fits Him, In An Increasing Degree, For Eternal Life

*Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.— 2 Cor. 7:10.*

True Christianity consists solely in pure faith, love, and a holy life. This holiness of life springs from true repentance, sorrow, and self-knowledge; so that a man not only more and more feels his failings and imperfections, but amends them also, and, in this order, partakes of the righteousness and holiness of Christ by faith. 1 Cor. 1:30.

2. But in order to regulate the grand work of salvation with the better order and care, thou oughtest now to walk in a submissive and filial fear of God, guarding against all that would gratify the flesh. “All things are lawful,” says the apostle, “but all things are not expedient” (1 Cor. 6:12); that is, “all things edify not.” 1 Cor. 10:23. As a dutiful child, confined to the father's house, does not so much as attempt to follow his own humor in everything; but,

unwilling to offend his parent, observes his will and pleasure: so a true Christian and child of God will behave himself in his Father's house, in so careful a manner, as not to allow his senses any unlawful liberty. He will neither do nor speak anything without consulting first his Father in heaven, under whose eye he constantly lives, knowing that He is everywhere present.

3. Most men live without any fear of God, freely indulging themselves in worldly pleasures and satisfaction. They will not consider that it is far better to have a constant fear of God fixed in the heart, than a constant joy of the world. For as the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and begets a serious frame of mind; so the joy of this world extinguishes all good impressions, and banishes true wisdom out of the heart, together with all godly fear and devotion.

4. By daily repentance and mortification of the flesh, man is daily renewed in God's image; for "though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16); and often, in the midst of his sorrows, is he visited with a taste of heavenly joy and sweetness. Whereas, the pleasure and joy of the world are always attended with heaviness of heart, and an inward sting of a wounded conscience. If the people were but more sensible of the melancholy effects resulting from worldly pleasure, and particularly of that damp which it puts upon heavenly comfort, they would certainly dread all loose and worldly enjoyments: since thereby the grace of devotion is quenched, and the soul diverted from those purer pleasures which

the Gospel of Christ affords.

5. There are two things which prevent those who seriously consider them from being influenced either by worldly pleasures or outward calamities. The one is, the *eternal pain of the damned*; whoever earnestly ponders it, will almost find it impossible to be thoroughly merry after the way of the world. The other is, *the eternal joy of the blessed in heaven*. Whoever has a sound apprehension of so happy a state, will never be greatly moved with the calamities of the present life; and this arises from the consideration of the eternity of those divine enjoyments. But so great is the levity of our hearts, that it hinders us from any serious reflection on so important a subject. And hence it is no wonder that we are both without this wholesome contrition and sorrow, and ignorant of all celestial joys and comforts.

6. It is the prerogative of a true Christian to be, on the one hand, but sparingly, if at all, moved with earthly things, or temporal advantages; and, on the other, to be the more deeply impressed with the joys of God, and of life eternal. Neither is he immoderately dejected in the present adversities that may befall him; but the loss of the soul grieves him to his very heart, and he counts it worthy of long lamentation. As for the perishing comfort of this life, he knows it cannot be called a loss, since he shall receive a thousand-fold for it in the world to come. But when a soul is once cast away, it can never be restored.

7. Blessed is the man who is affected with godly sorrow, and tastes that celestial consolation which succeeds it. But, alas! how

much of our time do we spend in worldly joy and merriment, when we have greater reason to bewail our own misery and that of others! There is no true liberty, no solid delight, no substantial satisfaction, but in the fear of God, and in a quiet, serene conscience. But this blessing can never exist without faith, and without a holy life and conversation. This faith, attended with godly sorrow, daily proceeds more and more to correct our faults and imperfections. Whoever neglects this daily reform of his life and manners, wastes the most precious part of his time, which he should employ to secure the interest of his immortal soul. He is an adversary to the new life; he hinders the kingdom of God in himself; and he can never be cured of the blindness and hardness of his heart, so long as he remains in that state.

8. It follows, therefore, that he only deserves the name of a prudent and wise man, who carefully avoids whatever he understands to be an obstacle to the reforming of his life, and to the improving of himself in heavenly gifts and graces. Happy is he who not only avoids such things as are detrimental to his body and estate, but also detests those which hinder the soul in her spiritual progress.

9. Be therefore courageous, O Man, and endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ! 2 Tim. 2:3. An evil habit of mind must be overcome with a good one. It is the apostle's exhortation: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Rom. 12:21. The cure of thy soul is not impossible. View, in the first place, thy own corruptions, and judge them severely, before thou presumest

to censure the faults of thy neighbor. Be not too forward in admonishing and correcting others; but endeavor to heal first thy evils at home, before thou enterest upon the reforming of those that are abroad.

10. Go on, therefore, O Christian, and learn the lesson of daily repentance, sorrow, and contrition of heart. If the world despise thee upon that account, and decry this wholesome exercise as error and as melancholy, be not concerned at such poor and empty reflections. Grieve rather that thou art called indeed a Christian, but that thou hast not yet arrived at that strictness of life and purity of manners, which the Gospel requires. Bear the contempt of the world with Christian constancy, and consider the singular benefit which thence accrues to the whole practice of true religion. For, if thou be scorned by the world, then God is ready to support thee by fresh supplies of life and comfort, according to his own declaration: "I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Isa. 57:15.

11. It is impossible that divine and worldly joy should, at one and the same time, reside in the heart of man; so very contrary are they to each other, and so inconsistent in their natures, causes, and effects. The joy of the world is begotten in prosperity; but that which is from heaven, springs up in the midst of crosses and adversities.

12. It is true that it is against the bent of nature to rejoice in the

time of adversity, as the apostle himself seems to intimate: "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." 2 Cor. 6:10. But then it is no less true, that the grace of God cleanses our nature, and qualifies it for such spiritual exercises. And it was after this change that the apostles rejoiced, because they were "counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ." Acts 5:41.

13. A Christian is become by the grace of God, a new creature, and hence the tribulations of this life are made easy to him. The apostle declared, that he even "gloried in tribulations." Rom. 5:3. As affliction is a grievous burden to the old man, so it gives ease and joy to the new man in Christ. Again, that joy which is from above, infinitely surpasses that which is from below. Nay, the very reproach and contempt which a Christian undergoes for the sake of Christ, is attended with a secret satisfaction: and the reason we are so little affected with these heavenly visitations, is on account of the joy of the world, to which we are still too much addicted.

14. A truly humble man thinks himself worthy of all manner of sufferings, and unworthy of any divine comfort: but the more unworthy he thinks himself in true brokenness of spirit, the more is he visited with the goodness of God. And the more he weeps over his sin, the more is he weaned from worldly enjoyments; for the whole world gradually becomes to him a burden and a bitter affliction.

15. A man that seriously views himself and his inward

condition, finds more reason to mourn than to rejoice. And when he takes a survey of the lives of others, he will undoubtedly meet with abundance of objects worthy of pity, or of compassion, rather than of hatred and envy. Why did Christ weep over Jerusalem, even over that Jerusalem which persecuted and slew him? Luke 19:41. Truly their sin and blindness was the evident cause of it. And in this he has also left us a pattern, and with deep feeling taught us, that nothing in the world should more powerfully melt us into tears and compassion, than our own sins, and the impenitence and carnal security which everywhere abound.

16. Did a man as often revolve in his mind, that he must certainly die, and appear before the judgment-seat of God, as he thinks on the concerns of this life, and how to provide for them, surely he would be abundantly more serious in his conversation, more diligent in the reformation of his life, and more fervent in all the duties of repentance. Did he moreover call to mind the unspeakable and eternal torments of hell, succeeding, as they do, a short enjoyment of sin; this consideration would embitter to him the sweets of this world, and in comparison, render all the afflictions of this life, pleasant and easy to him. But alas! the enticements of the flesh are so strong and prevalent, and our compliances in their favor, so forward, that we seldom yield to such serious reflections as these.

17. Upon the whole, this should be a Christian's daily consideration: if his body be pampered in lust and luxury; if the

flesh be humored and gratified in its inordinate cravings; then the life of the spirit loses its vigor, and if not seasonably supported, will pine away into death and destruction. Whereas, if the flesh be crucified with its lusts and desires, the spirit lives and gathers strength. One is the death of the other. If, therefore, the spirit shall live in thee, then thy body must be certainly made a spiritual sacrifice (Rom. 12:1), and must spiritually die to the world, and to all conformity with it.

18. This has been the constant practice of all the saints, from the beginning of the world until now. They have with thanksgiving eaten and drunk the bread and cup of tears, according to that declaration of David: “Thou feedest us with the bread of tears, and thou givest us tears to drink in great measure.” Ps. 80:5. And in another Psalm: “My tears have been my meat day and night.” Ps. 42:3. Again, “I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping.” Ps. 102:9.

19. This has been the “daily bread” of all the saints to this day; yet it has, however, been sweetened to them, *faith* being mixed with it. This is that godly “sorrow which worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of.” 2 Cor. 7:10.

20. But as this godly sorrow is attended with life and happiness, so the “sorrow of the world worketh death” itself. 2 Cor. 7:10. This kind of sorrow arises from the loss of honor, of temporal goods and estates, and other things of that nature. This sorrow has proved so fatal to many, that they have laid violent hands on themselves, and procured their own ruin and

death by various contrivances. Of this there are not wanting many examples in the history both of Pagans and Christians: though, indeed, the latter ought better to understand the maxims and doctrines of Christ, who has abundantly taught us, not to set our hearts on objects so frail and perishing. For what is the loss of a handful of fading things, to the life of a man, with which all the goods of this world cannot be compared?

21. Be not, therefore, cast down by the loss of temporal goods, which, by the very laws of nature, we can enjoy but a little while: but lay the more to heart those incorruptible riches, that are laid up in the world to come; and do whatever thou canst to prevent the loss of *them*. Death will strip thee at last of all worldly possessions. Here shall be an end of pomp and greatness. This law of death is equally given to all, and the penalty of it attaches to all alike. The greatest king is seized on the throne, and the meanest beggar on the dunghill (1 Sam. 2:8; Ps. 113:7); for as the body of the one is, so is also the body of the other: both putrefy and turn alike to corruption. Nevertheless, the Lord will remove at length the veil of the shadow of death, which is spread over all nations, and will “swallow up death in victory” (Isa. 25:8), and “wipe away all tears from our eyes.” Rev. 7:17; Isa. 25:8.

22. Let these and the like considerations, induce thee patiently to bear the loss of earthly things; remembering that the whole world does not come up to the price of one soul, for which Christ vouchsafed to die. The more thou withdrawest thy heart from temporal goods and estates, the less will it affect thee, when thou

shalt be obliged one way or other to leave them. Thy grief will undoubtedly be the greater, the more thy love has been wrapped up with them. Thus does the “labor of the foolish weary every one of them” (Eccl. 10:15); as the wise man expresseth it.

23. This is the unhappy state into which the children of this world plunge themselves. They hoard and amass their goods with assiduous pain and labor; they possess them with fear and anxiety of mind; and quit them at last with grief and groans, when they can no longer enjoy them. This is the “sorrow of this world,” which begets no less an evil than *death* itself.

24. We read, that such as adored the beast “had no rest” (Rev. 14:11): so they that adore the great and toilsome beast of sordid and earthly Mammon, may be said to have no rest, day nor night. This description of men, most wretched and most unquiet as they are, may be fitly compared to camels, or mules. These animals, traversing rocks and hills, and carrying gold and silver, silken garments and pearls, spices and wines, draw many attendants with them for their better security: but at night, when they are stabled, all their precious ornaments, their embroidered garments and vestments, are taken from them, and they, being weary and stripped, appear to be what indeed they are, poor and miserable beasts of burden. Nothing is now seen upon them but the prints of their stripes, and the marks of the blows which they received upon the road. So, in like manner, that man who in this world shone in gold and silks, in “purple and fine linen” (Luke 16:19), when the day of his death is come, has nothing left but the prints

and scars of a wounded conscience, contracted by the abuse of such riches as were committed to his trust.

25. Therefore, O man! learn to relinquish this world, before it relinquishes thee. If thou break not with the world, the world will break with thee, and leave horror and anguish behind it. He who withdraws his soul from the world, before he quits the world with his body, can joyfully die: since he is loosed from the ties which bound him to these inferior objects. As the Israelites, when they were about to leave the land of Egypt, were daily afflicted with greater burdens by Pharaoh, who designed to destroy them, and, if possible, utterly to extirpate their progeny (Exod. 5:9); so the infernal Pharaoh, who desires to hinder our eternal salvation, when we are now upon the very borders of life everlasting, still attempts to load us with more of the concerns of this life, and thereby to obstruct our passage into a better world.

26. It is certain that we cannot carry with us the least dust of all our earthly possessions into the kingdom of heaven. Nay, our very body must be left behind us until the day of resurrection. If we know anything, we know that the way leading to life is so very *strait*, as to strip the soul entirely of anything that will hinder her passage. "Narrow is the way which leadeth to life, and few there be that find it." Matt. 7:14. As the husbandman separates the wheat from the chaff, so death frees the soul from all the chaff and dross of this world, from all riches, and greatness, and worldly attire, which now, like the chaff, are driven away.

27. Go therefore, O man, and seriously ponder in thy mind

what the apostle declares: “Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.” 2 Cor. 7:10.

# Chapter XXI.

## Of The True Worship Of God

*The sons of Aaron offered strange fire before the Lord, and there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them.— Lev. 10:1, 2.*

This fire is called *strange*, because it was different from that which continually burned upon the altar, and with which, according to the command of God, the burnt-offerings were consumed. It is, therefore, a type of false worship; and the sons of Aaron were destroyed with avenging flames, because they violated the divine precept.

2. This marked displeasure of the jealous and righteous God, is in like manner provoked by those who, from the motion of their own unregenerate mind, and from a singular presumption of devotion or religious sanctity, introduce a new and peculiar worship of God; which, not being enjoined by himself, provokes his indignation, anger, and vengeance; because “God is a consuming fire.” Deut. 4:24; Heb. 12:29.

3. In order that *we* may not incur the wrath of the divine majesty, let us consider wherein the true worship of God consists; for the punishment of temporal fire, inflicted on false worship under the *Old Testament*, is to us a proof, that the Lord will also, under the *New dispensation*, take the severest vengeance on all

strange worship, not only with everlasting, but also with temporal fire, wars, desolations, and effusion of blood.

4. Now, we can learn wherein the true worship of God consists, when we compare the Old Testament with the New. The ceremonies which the former prescribed, referred typically to the Messiah. Devout Jews saw, as it were, the Messiah from afar, believed on him, and, according to the promise, obtained deliverance from sin and death through him. But our worship, according to the *New Testament*, does not consist in external ceremonies; we are taught to worship God in spirit and in truth, that is, to believe in Christ, who fulfilled the Law. Thus he redeemed us from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13), and made us free from all Jewish ceremonies (Gal. 5:1); so that now, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we serve God with a willing heart and mind (Jerem. 31:33; Rom. 8:14), and our conscience and faith are not bound by human ordinances.

5. To true, spiritual, internal Christian worship, three things belong. 1. The *true knowledge of God*. 2. The *knowledge of sin*, accompanied with unfeigned repentance. And 3. The *knowledge of grace*, attended with remission of sin.

6. The *knowledge of God* consists in faith, which apprehends Christ, and in him, and through him, knows God, his omnipotence, love, mercy, righteousness, truth, wisdom; all which are God himself. For what is God? Surely no other than pure omnipotence, pure love and mercy, pure justice, truth, and wisdom. And the same is to be said of Christ, and of the Holy

Spirit.

7. But whatever God is, he is not to himself only, but also *to me*, by his gracious will, made manifest in Christ Jesus. Thus *to me* is God omnipotent; *to me* he is merciful; *to me* eternal righteousness, through faith and remission of sins. *To me*, also, he is everlasting truth and wisdom. Thus it is, also, with Christ. He is made *to me* eternal omnipotence, the almighty Head, and Prince of my life, my most merciful Saviour, everlasting love, unchangeable righteousness, truth, and wisdom; according to the words of the apostle: "Christ is of God made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. 1:30. All of which is also true of the Holy Spirit, who is *my* eternal love, righteousness, truth, and wisdom.

8. This is the true knowledge of God, which consists in faith. It is not some empty and speculative science, as people imagine; but a cheerful, lively, and effectual reliance on God, in which I feel the rays and influences of the divine Omnipotence really descending upon me, so that I perceive how I am upheld and preserved by him; how "in him I live, and move, and have my being." Acts 17:28. I must also taste the riches of his goodness and mercy. Is not that which the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, have done for thee, for me, and for us all, the effect of pure love? What more perfect and complete righteousness can there be than that, by which he rescues us from sin, hell, death, and the devil? And do not his truth and wisdom most conspicuously appear in all that he has accomplished for us?

9. This, therefore, is the true and substantial faith, which consists in a living and effectual reliance on God, and not in empty words. In this knowledge of God, or faith, we must, as becomes the children of God, make daily advances, and abound more and more. 1 Thess. 4:1. Hence the apostle pours out most fervent prayers, “that we may know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.” Eph. 3:19. As if he had said, “Though it were the sole care of our lives to learn the depth of the love of Christ, yet would there still remain continual and never-failing matter for further inquiry.” Neither is it to be supposed, that this knowledge consists in a barren acquaintance with the universal love of Christ, extending itself over the whole world; but we must also taste it in our own hearts; we must experience the sweetness and delight, the power and vital influx of this immense kindness displayed in the Word, and embraced by faith. Can he say that he knows the love of Christ, who never tasted its sweetness? Hence it is said of some that were endued with this experimental sense, that they had “tasted of the heavenly gift, and the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.” Heb. 6:4. All this is effected by faith through the Word. The same experience of the divine love is also intimated by the “shedding abroad of the love of God in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.” Rom. 5:5. In this consist the fruit and efficacy of the Word of God. And this only is the true knowledge of God, proceeding from experience, and founded on a living faith. For this reason the Epistle to the Hebrews calls our faith a *substance*, and a certain

and well-grounded *evidence*. Heb. 11:1. And this knowledge of God, that arises from a living faith, is one part of the inward and spiritual worship of God. In a word, *faith* is a spiritual, living, and heavenly gift; yea, the very light and power of God.

10. When, therefore, this true knowledge of God is attained, by which God offers himself, as it were, to be touched and tasted by the soul, according to that Psalm, “O taste and see that the Lord is good” (Ps. 34:8); it is impossible that a sincere repentance should not immediately ensue; that is, a real renovation of the mind, and reformation of the life. For, from a sense and knowledge of the divine Omnipotence, proceeds *humility*; since he must necessarily submit himself unto the mighty hand of God, who has perceived its irresistible power and energy. From the experience of the divine mercy arises *charity* to our neighbor; for no man can be uncharitable who has ever been affected by a sense of the divine compassion. Who can refuse to lend to his neighbor, that considers that God, from pure mercy, has bestowed himself upon us? From the long-suffering of God, proceeds great *patience* towards our neighbor; so that were it possible that a true Christian could be killed seven times a day, and as many times be restored to life again, yet would he always freely forgive his murderer, and this on account of the boundless mercy of God conferred upon himself. From the divine justice flows the *knowledge of sin*, as the prophet teaches us: “Righteousness belongeth unto thee, O Lord, but unto us confusion of faces.” Dan. 9:7. “Enter not into judgment with

thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.” Ps. 143:2. “If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?” Ps. 130:3. From the knowledge of the truth of God, flow *fidelity* and candor towards our neighbor; and all fraud, deceit, lying, and other such sinister practices, are, in consequence, freely abandoned. The sincere Christian reasons thus with himself: “God forbid that I should deal deceitfully with my neighbor; for then I should offend the truth of God, which is God himself; since he has dealt so faithfully with me, it would be the blackest impiety were I to act otherwise by my neighbor.” The consideration of the eternal divine wisdom produces the *fear of God*. For whoever knows God to be the Searcher of hearts, viewing the most secret recesses, must necessarily dread the eyes of the divine majesty. “He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see?” Ps. 94:9. Therefore, “Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? Or shall the thing framed, say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?” Isa. 29:15, 16; see also Jer. 23:24, and 32:19.

11. From the true *knowledge of God*, arise the *knowledge of sin*, and consequent repentance. This repentance brings renovation of mind, and renovation of mind is accompanied with amendment of life. And this knowledge, together with

those things that attend it, makes up the other part of the inward worship of God; and it is that sacred fire which, by the appointment of God, is to be used with the sacrifices, lest his wrath should be kindled against us, and we be consumed by the fire of his vengeance.

12. The injunction of God to the priests, not to drink wine or strong drink when they were about to enter the tabernacle (Lev. 10:9), is an illustration of this repentance; and in a *spiritual* sense, it extends itself to all Christians. For if we would enter into the tabernacle of God, even into life everlasting, it is necessary that we should abstain from the lusts of the world and of the flesh, and from all that tends to bring the spirit in bondage to the body. For the love of the world, the love of pleasure, pride, and other vices, are like palatable wine, by which the power of the soul and spirit is clouded, and at last brought under subjection to the flesh. Man, so subjected, is restrained from entering into the tabernacle of God; that is, he cannot arrive at the knowledge and the sanctuary of God; consequently he is deprived of that discerning faculty, which distinguishes between things sacred and profane, clean and unclean; so that he understands nothing of divine and heavenly operations, and therefore is unfit to instruct those in sound doctrine who are committed to his care. His understanding and thoughts are not enlightened from above; but being overcome with the wine of worldly lust, are eventually involved in gross darkness. This repentance, contrition, and grief for sin, and this true faith in Christ, are followed by the *knowledge* of *grace* and

*remission of sin*; which, as it proceeds from the merit of Christ only, so the benefit of this merit can be claimed by no man without repentance. Repentance was therefore necessary, even to the thief upon the cross, that his sin being first remitted, he might accompany Christ into paradise. And that his repentance proceeded from a heart affected with a holy contrition, appears from the reproof which he gave his companion: “Dost not thou fear God? We receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss” (Luke 23:40), and from the request he addressed to Christ: “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” Verse 24. These are most undeniable proofs of a contrite heart, embracing Christ and his merits by faith.

13. This gracious absolution from sin, which is apprehended in faith by a penitent heart, supplies all those defects under which we labor: but it is entirely the effect of the death and blood of Christ. All our offences are as completely annulled by his abundant satisfaction, as if they had never been committed. The merit of Christ is of that extent and power, that David exclaims: “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be (not only as white, but even) whiter than snow.” Psal. 51:7.

14. Hence also it is, that God is said to *mention* the sin no more when the sinner returns to his duty. Ezek. 18:22; 33:16. For whatever is fully and completely paid for, yea, blotted out too, must of necessity be buried in eternal oblivion. Isa. 43:25. But conversion must go before remission, according to the order proposed by the prophet himself: “Wash ye, make you clean, put

away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil. Come now and let us reason together: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” Isa. 1:16. As if he had said: “Ye who require your sins to be forgiven, according to my covenant and promise, come forward and call me to an account. I do not indeed deny, that I promised you remission of sins; but it was on no other terms than that you should first repent. Where is your repentance? where is your true and living faith? If you have these, all is well! It shall not be my fault, if your sins (though as crimson in grain, though so deeply dyed, that neither heaven nor earth can blot them out), be not wholly pardoned and made whiter than snow.” Repentance, therefore, is the true confession of sin; and if you have this in yourself, namely, sorrow for sin mixed with faith, be assured, that Christ, by virtue of his death and blood, will entirely forgive you your sins. This blood, as it is shed for us, so it cries to God in heaven, and procures a full remission of sin.

15. When a man is thoroughly affected with this sense of sin, he hastens in spirit to those cities of refuge, of which three, Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan, were set apart on this side Jordan, by Moses, being appointed by him, in order that he who had inadvertently killed his neighbor, might flee unto them and be preserved. Deut. 4:41-43.

16. And, alas! O Lord, how often have we inadvertently slain our neighbor with thoughts, words, hatred, envy, anger, revenge, and unmercifulness! Let us, therefore, fly upon the wings of faith

and repentance, to the sanctuary of the grace of God, and to the merit and cross of Christ. No sooner do we arrive there, but we are safe; nor will the avenger measure to us again with that measure with which we served our neighbor. For by those cities of refuge, Christ Jesus is signified and represented. He is the true *Bezer*, that is, a *fenced tower*, according to that saying of Solomon: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." Prov. 18:10. He also is the true *Ramoth*, which signifies *exalted*: for Christ is the Most High (Isa. 52:13; 57:15), "And at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." Phil. 2:10. Nor have we any other *Golan* besides him; which, as the word imports, is a *heap* or *multitude*, a storehouse of all manner of celestial gifts. Hence, we read in the Psalms: "With the Lord there is mercy; and with him is plenteous redemption." Psal. 130:7. And in the epistle to the Romans: "The Lord is rich unto all that call upon him." Rom. 10:12.

17. And this is the *third* part of inward, spiritual, and true worship, arising from the knowledge of God. This knowledge is also the source of repentance, as repentance is of remission of sins, and each rests on an experimental knowledge of God, as on a proper foundation to sustain it.

18. Thus is the letter of the law of Moses changed into spirit, or into an inward, holy, and new life; and its sacrifices are converted into unfeigned repentance. Hereby we offer up unto God our body and soul, together with the sacrifices of praise and

thanksgiving. Hereby we ascribe unto him alone, our knowledge, conversion, justification and remission of sin, that God alone may be all in all, and his grace be worthily acknowledged, and celebrated with thankful hearts and tongues unto all eternity. This, then, as hath been already mentioned, is the true worship of God, of which the prophet says: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Mic. 6:8. O when, therefore, shall we wretched mortals become truly penitent, that we may obtain this gracious pardon of sin? For without penitence it is impossible we should secure unto ourselves so incomparable a mercy. For how can sin be remitted, when there is no sense of sin, no sorrow affecting the mind, no hunger after divine grace? And how can he grieve for sins, who utterly refuses to abandon them, and to change his life for a better? May God, for Christ's sake, turn us, that so we may be truly turned! Lam. 5:21.

19. From these considerations it abundantly appears, that the true worship of God is seated in the heart, and consists in the knowledge of God, and in true repentance, which mortifies the flesh; and, through grace, renews man after the divine image. In this order, man is made the holy temple of the Lord, where, through the good Spirit of God, internal worship is performed, in the exercise of faith, charity, hope, humility, patience, prayer, thanksgiving, and the praise of God.

20. But though this worship has regard to God himself, and is

offered to him alone; yet far be it from us to believe, that God has any need of our adoration or service, or that he receives any advantage from it, or any addition to his perfection. Let us rather think, that such is the mercy of God to miserable men, that he is willing to impart himself wholly to us with all his benefits, to live, to operate, and to dwell in us, provided we be but ready, by true knowledge, by faith and repentance, to entertain him in the heart, that as in the school of the Spirit, he may teach us true wisdom, and carry on the work which he has so happily begun.

21. For there is no work approved and accepted of God, but that of which he himself is the author. Therefore has he commanded us to repent and to believe, to pray and to fast; not that the benefit in any way might return to him, but belong to us alone. For to God no man can give, and from him no man can take away; him none can profit, and none can injure. If we be found devout and sincere in his sight, we shall reap the advantage of it ourselves; but if we be found false and corrupt, the evil will return upon our own heads. But what harm, O man, canst thou do to God, if even thou shouldst wilfully persist in impiety and a dissolute course of life?

22. God, therefore, commands that he should be served on thy account, not on his own. He being Love itself, it pleases him that many be found in his service, to whom he may freely impart the streams of his love, yea, even himself too. For as a mother cannot but love the infant that reposes on her breast, so God takes a singular pleasure in a free and unconfined communication of

his love and kindness.

## **Chapter XXII.**

# **A True Christian Is Known Primarily By Love, And By A Daily Amendment Of Life**

*The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to shew that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.— Ps. 92:12-15.*

Not a Christian name, but a Christian life, evidences a true Christian: let this therefore be the care of the Christian, that in him Christ may be seen: and visibly appear unto others, in love, humility, and kindness! for he in whom Christ does not live, cannot be a Christian. And this holy life, having its roots within, in the spirit and heart of a man, must of necessity proceed from this inward principle – just as the fruit proceeds from the inherent virtue of the tree. For it is necessary that our life should be influenced by the Spirit of Christ, and fashioned after his example; according to that saying of the apostle: “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Rom. 8:14. “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom. 8:9): for all life proceeds from spirit; and as is the

spirit which inwardly acts, moves, and governs in a man, so will the man outwardly appear. Whence it is evident, how necessary the Spirit of God is to a truly Christian life; and, therefore, Christ has not only commanded us to pray for the Spirit, but has also promised unto us this gift. Luke 11:13. This Spirit is the Spirit of regeneration (Tit. 3:5), by which we are quickened in Christ, into a new, spiritual, and heavenly life, and from the life and never-dying power of this Spirit of God, every Christian virtue must be derived. It is then that “the righteous man flourisheth as the palm tree, and groweth like a cedar in Lebanon.” Ps. 92:12.

2. Hence it follows, that a man must be first internally renewed in the spirit of his mind after the image of God; and that his inward desires and affections must first be conformed to Christ (which the Apostle terms “the new man created after the image of God”) (Eph. 4:24), before a suitable life can proceed from the heart. But as soon as the heart is inwardly renewed, the outward life proceeding from it is but a constant expression of that vital principle which prevails within the mind. Yea, since “God trieth the heart and the reins” (Ps. 7:9), it is reasonable that a man should possess, in the more secret recesses of his heart, even much more than outwardly appears in his life.

3. Though, in our inward part, we attain not unto the purity of angels, it is but just that we should fervently sigh after it. And, indeed, God approves the desires of our spirit when it thirsts after a further purification: “The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be

uttered.” Rom. 8:26. Yea, the blood of Christ purifies us by faith (Acts 15:9), so that we are “without spot or wrinkle” (Eph. 5:27); and in this respect we possess, not the purity, holiness, and righteousness of any angel, but that of Christ; yea, and Christ himself. 1 Cor. 1:30.

4. This undeserved righteousness, freely applied to us, must renew our body, soul, and spirit, and produce a true holiness of life and manners. And this life, though it is at first like a tender palm tree, must daily become more and more vigorous in us, and gather strength in Christ Jesus. And our growth in Christ will be in proportion as we advance in faith, in virtue, and the practice of a Christian life and holiness. This is to “flourish like a palm tree.”

5. As the palm tree, when depressed, mounts the higher, so ought a Christian to be renewed continually in his spiritual desires and exercises. Eph. 4:23; Col. 3:10. He is to strengthen himself every day with fresh purposes to walk suitably to his new name, and with unwearied endeavors to avoid the danger of being a false Christian. He is to proceed with vigor and earnestness, as if he had but this day been initiated into the principles of true religion. For as one that enters upon a new office should have nothing more at heart than worthily to acquit himself in his post; so also should we act, who are called unto Christ, “with a holy calling.” 2 Tim. 1:9. If this holy purpose be not firmly rooted within, no amendment of life will ensue, no vigor in piety, no increase in Christ; yea, the very quickening Spirit of Christ must be wanting. For such a resolution and holy firmness of doing

good is the work of the Spirit of God, and of that preventing or anticipating grace which allures, invites, and moves all men. Happy is the man, who with his ears and heart proves obedient to it, and hearkens to that heavenly wisdom which “utters her voice in the streets.” Prov. 1:20. In a word, whatever a man views with his eyes, is a manifestation of the Creator, by which he calls upon man, and endeavors to draw him to the love of himself.

6. Whenever, therefore, we feel this heavenly call or impulse upon our minds, we should immediately set our hand to work, and take care that a moment so invaluable do not slip away in a light and careless manner. This is an hour free from such obstacles as at other times closely beset us. If this be slothfully neglected, other days and times may possibly succeed, in which we cannot think, hear, speak, or do any good. This being foreseen by eternal Wisdom, she everywhere lifts up her voice, and calls upon us, lest we should neglect the opportunity which is so freely offered.

7. As a tree planted in the open air readily admits the light of the sun, and the benign influences of heaven; so the grace of God, with other celestial influences, shines upon thee, O man, and would revive and nourish thee by its presence, if the affairs of this world did not hinder thee from receiving the benefit.

8. Call to mind the shortness of the time appointed for life! Seriously consider how many opportunities of doing good, and of reducing the Christian virtues into practice, thou hast already neglected. One half of thy life has possibly been consumed in

sleeping, and the other in eating and drinking, and in other natural actions; so that when thou now comest to the grave, thou hast but just begun to enter upon a better life.

9. If thou art afraid to die in wickedness, O lead a holy life whilst thou art in good health! If thou desirest to leave the world as a Christian, endeavor to be a good Christian whilst thou art in it. Now, he only lives as a Christian, who demeans himself as if he were every day to die; well knowing that a good servant will at all times be ready at the call of his master. And God, by death, as by his messenger, summons us all before his tribunal.

10. "Blessed," therefore, "is that servant, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. Of a truth, I say unto thee, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath." Luke 12:37, 44. And who is it that watches, but he who does not suffer himself to be carried away by the world, or its unhappy votaries? Let us, therefore, flee from both; knowing that the manners of this corrupt age are like baneful excrescences, which consume the vital sap of a tree, and, in a short time, cause it to wither.

## Chapter XXIII.

# He Who, In Christ, Desires To Grow In Grace, Is Often Compelled To Withdraw From Worldly Society

*How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! – My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.– Ps. 84:1, 2.*

Thou actest wisely, if thou avoidest too frequent an intercourse with worldly men. For as it is never better for our bodies than when they are at home; so it is ever best with the soul, when it is at rest in its own habitation, which is God himself; from whom it derives life and being. To him, therefore, the soul must return again, if ever she is to enjoy rest, and find safety.

2. It is observed of all creatures, that they nowhere thrive so well, as where they drew their first life and origin. Thus the sea to the fishes, the air to the birds, the earth to the plants, and God to the soul, is the place of rest, according to the Psalmist, “The sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young.” Ps. 84:2. As that man will bring trouble upon himself, who gives young people too much liberty to go abroad; so shall he suffer much, who yields up the reins of his tongue and thoughts, allowing them to wander through the affairs of the world, as so many circles of vanity. Be assured, that

you will escape many faults, if you study to confine your thoughts within the limits of your heart.

3. “Those that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.” Ps. 92:13. What are these courts? They are the internal and spiritual sabbaths of the heart, which, as Lebanon in the desert, flourish best in a retirement of mind, and abstraction of spirit. Labor to attain this solitude of soul, and thou shalt become fit to search thine own heart, and to contemplate that variety of wonders and mercies which God has bestowed upon us.

4. Nor are we to imitate those who admire subtle disputes and inventions, who take pleasure in reading fine, pleasant, and witty productions; which, if rightly considered, deprave, rather than improve the mind of the reader. Whatever does not promote the repose of the heart, and the continual renovation of the mind, should neither be heard, spoken, read, nor even be entertained in thought, by a disciple of Jesus. True Christians are like the trees of God, which should daily grow stronger, and take deeper root *in Christ*. St. Paul testifies of himself, that besides “Christ and him crucified,” he desired to know nothing. 1 Cor. 2:2. And this has been the practice of all the saints of God, who have endeavored, to the utmost of their power, by carefully cherishing this blessed tranquillity of heart, to approach nearer and nearer to a life raised above the world, and to emulate those elevated minds that entirely rest in God, as the centre of all their happiness. One of them once said: “As often as I converse with men, I return

less a man in some part or other.” For since the dignity of human nature principally consists in the similitude of God, and therefore God hath described man to be the image and likeness of himself (Gen. 1:26); it follows, that the more unlike any man is to God, the less a man he is: and the more closely he unites himself to God, the more conformed to Him does he become. None can, however, turn himself to God, who does not first withdraw himself from the world. It is the nature of every seed, to bring forth a plant of its own kind; so if the seed of God, the Holy Spirit and Word, be in thee, thou shalt become a “tree of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.” Isa. 61:3.

5. Nothing is more common, than that some word or other is dropped in the conversation of men, which being idle and vain, grievously wounds and pollutes the soul. No man, therefore, has more security and peace, than he who keeps at home, in the house of his heart, and restrains his thoughts, his words, and his senses, from straying beyond their bounds.

6. He that will speak well, must first learn to be silent; for to talk much is not eloquence, but prating. He who desires to command well, must first learn to obey; since it is impossible that he should be a good ruler over others, who knows not how to be subject and obedient to God. He that desires peace and serenity of mind, must set a watch over his tongue, and maintain a good conscience; for an evil conscience is like the troubled sea; yet shall it find rest if it return unto Christ in true repentance. The dove which Noah sent out of the ark, not finding any place of

rest, returned to it. Gen. 8:9. This ark is Christ and the Church, having only one door or window, which is that of repentance, through which we are to come to Christ. And as the dove retired into the ark immediately when she found no rest for her foot; so when thou art floating in a sea of worldly affairs, and art in danger of suffering shipwreck, retire immediately into thy heart to Christ; lest, being too much tossed on the floods of the world, thy rest be broken, and the tranquillity of thy mind entirely destroyed.

7. While thou conversest with men, and art engaged in the affairs of this world, be careful to manage everything with fear and humility. Avoid all self-confidence and rashness in acting. Remember that thou art as a tender shoot tied to a prop, in order that it may grow up with the more safety: so do thou constantly lean on the staff of humility, and the fear of God, lest a sudden tempest should arise, and lay thee level with the ground. Alas! how many a man is deceived when he, too unadvisedly, rushes into worldly affairs. Persuade thyself, therefore, that it is as unsafe to trust to the world, as to the sea. The external joy of the world, though for a time it soothe a man in his carnal security, and promise prosperous things, yet may soon be disturbed by an unexpected tempest, leaving nothing behind but the sting of an evil conscience.

8. If a man would, on the one hand, seek no pleasure in what is frail or perishing; and if, on the other, with a mind freed from secular joys and affairs, he would give himself up

to those more heavenly concerns that become a true Christian, he would often be visited with a fervent devotion, a profound peace, a sweet tranquillity, a serene conscience, and other divine comforts. But, alas! we will not be persuaded of these things; and hence it follows, that our conversion, amendment, and devotion are, by our too free conversation with men, rather hindered than improved. We may find within us, what we easily lose in an inconsiderate pursuit of things without us. And as a tree nowhere prospers better than in its natural soil; so the inward man grows nowhere more happily, than in the inward ground of the soul, where Christ resides.

9. The conscience of man is possessed either with joy or sorrow. If the conscience be conversant with things internal and heavenly, it will refresh us with inward delight and comfort; but if it be polluted with an excessive cleaving to worldly concerns, it will be of necessity attended with inward sorrow and perplexity. 2 Cor. 7:10.

10. As often as the soul is affected with hearty remorse for sin, she bewails herself, and sends up secret groans to the throne of mercy. This penitential exercise is a wholesome fountain of tears, in which the soul, night after night, cleanses and washes herself by the Spirit and by faith, through the name of *Jesus* (1 Cor. 6:11), that so she may be duly prepared to enter into the inward sanctuary, and holy of holies, and there enjoy a secret intercourse with the Lord.

11. And because the Lord is “a God that hideth himself” (Isa.

45:15), the soul must approach him in a way remote from the noise of the world, that she may the more freely partake of his divine communications. Hence the Psalmist says: "I will hear what God the Lord will speak." Ps. 85:8. And "I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." Psalm 34:4, 6. "Unto thee will I pray: my voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." Psalm 5:2, 3. Thus the farther the soul retires from the world, the more intimately she converses with God; just as the patriarch Jacob conversed most familiarly with God and angels when he was farthest removed from friends and children. Gen. 32:24-29. It cannot, indeed, be expressed in words, how much a soul sequestered from the friendship and fellowship of the world, is loved by God and by angels.

# Chapter XXIV.

## Of The Love Of God And Our Neighbor

*Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.— 1 Tim. 1:5.*

In this verse, the apostle sets before us love, the highest and noblest virtue; and acquaints us at the same time, with four particulars concerning it. *First*, that Love is the summary of all the commandments: for “love,” says the apostle, “is the fulfilling of the law” (Rom. 13:10); in which all the precepts are comprehended, and without which, all gifts and virtues are unprofitable and fruitless.

2. What he says in the *second* place, namely, that Charity must arise from a pure heart, relates to the love of *God*, which requires a heart void of worldly love and affection, according to that saying of St. John: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.” 1 John 2:15-17. Whosoever, therefore, has a heart purified from all love to the creature, so as to depend or acquiesce in no transient good whatsoever, can cleave most intimately to God, saying with

David, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Psal. 73:25, 26. The love of such a one, proceeds out of a "*pure heart*." Of the same character also, is that love which is attended with great delight, pleasure and joy in God; of which we have an illustration in David: "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." Psal. 18:1, 2.

3. The apostle, in the *third* place, teaches us, that love must be "out of a good conscience." This properly concerns the love of *our neighbor*, who is to be loved, not for the sake of interest or worldly advantage (which would be a false love out of a bad conscience); but for the sake of God only, and of his commandments. Nor ought we to afflict our neighbor either by word or deed, either secretly or openly; nor on any account, bear envy, wrath, hatred, malice or rancor against him; that so our conscience may not accuse us when we address ourselves in prayer to God Almighty.

4. The *fourth* requisite of Love is, a "faith unfeigned;" so that nothing be done that is contrary to the rule of faith, and to our Christian profession, and that God be not denied publicly or privately, in prosperity or adversity. This is the substance of what is contained in that sentence of the apostle. We shall now speak more particularly, with respect to each of the several parts.

5. In the *first* place, then, *Love*, according to the apostle, “is the end of the commandment;” for that love which arises from a pure faith, is the noblest among the fruits and effects of faith; than which a man can do nothing better or more acceptable to God. For God does not require at our hands great and difficult enterprises, no high performances that exceed our capacities; but he has changed the yoke of the Old Testament service, and its many commandments and ordinances into faith and love, and has given us for this end the Holy Ghost, who, “shedding abroad in our hearts the love of God” (Rom. 5:5), renders everything sweet and easy, and proves the original spring of this heavenly virtue.

6. Love, therefore, is not a hard work, a labor attended with toil and difficulty; on the contrary, it makes everything easy to a good man. “His commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3), that is to say, they are not so to an enlightened Christian; for wherever the Spirit of God comes, he creates a free, willing and ready heart in the discharge of Christian virtues. Nor does God require of his children great skill or learning: it is only love which he regards. If this be sincere and fervent, free from disguise and dissimulation, God takes more pleasure and delight in it, than in all the knowledge and wisdom, in all the art and talent that any man upon earth, in his best works, can possibly exhibit. Wherever this divine love is wanting, there all wisdom and knowledge, all works and gifts, are altogether unprofitable. They are accounted vain and dead, as a mere body without life. 1 Cor. 13:1, 2.

7. As for human learning and great abilities, they are common to heathens as well as to Christians; and great actions are performed as well by infidels as by believers. It is *love* only which proves the sure test of a sound Christian, distinguishing between the false and the true. For wherever Charity is wanting, there can be no good thing, however it may claim the admiration of men by its specious appearances. The reason is, because God is not there; for “God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.” 1 John 4:16.

8. Love is also pleasant, not only to God who gives it, but also to man, who exercises it: whereas, all arts and sciences, all the knowledge and wisdom which man grasps, are not attained but with great labor and study, with much care and application, and even at the expense of bodily health. But this heaven-born love cheers both the body and the mind. It invigorates the spirits, confers new strength, and wonderfully improves and exalts the mind. Nor is it attended with any loss whatever, but on the contrary, produces many good and noble effects in the soul. Love is itself the reward of the lover, and virtue always carries its own recompense with it: as, on the contrary, the vicious man is punished by his own excesses, and vice is the constant tormentor of him that commits it.

9. Again, when the other faculties of the body and mind are faint and wearied, love faints not. Love is never weary, never ceases. Prophecy may pass away, tongues may cease, and sciences may be destroyed; arts may be lost, the knowledge of

mysteries may vanish; yea, faith itself at last may fail also: but yet “love never faileth,” nor can fail: for when all that is imperfect is happily removed, then love alone abides forever, and attains its full perfection. 1 Cor. 13:8.

10. To render anything pleasing to Almighty God, it is necessary that it proceed from him; since he approves of nothing but what he himself works in us. Now, God is love; it therefore follows, that all that we do, ought to proceed from a divine faith, in order that it may be pleasing to God; and from pure love, that it may prove profitable to men. This love must be *pure*, without any regard to self-honor, self-interest, and those mean designs which sometimes intrude into a Christian's actions. In like manner our *prayers* should spring from a principle of love, that they may have the more ready admittance to the God of love. Consider, therefore, how that man's prayer can be acceptable to God, who is full of wrath and rancor, hatred and malice? Were such a one to repeat the whole Psalter every day, it would be but an abomination before the Lord. True worship consists in spirit (John 4:23, 24), in faith, in love, not in a long recital of words. Remember the example of Christ, who, from a merciful heart, cried, “Father, forgive them.” Luke 33:34. A man that does not love God, is also unwilling to pour out his heart in prayer and supplication: but to him who is affected with a sense of divine love, the duty of prayer is easy and delightful. A man that has a cordial love to God, readily serves him; but he that is void of this love, does not serve him at all, though he may submit to much

toil and drudgery, and even heap one mountain upon another.

11. Upon the whole, then, nothing is more agreeable to human nature, nothing better and more profitable, than this divine love, which, therefore, should be stirred up in the heart of man, and when once raised into a flame, should be carefully preserved from being ever quenched.

12. Faith should work all things in a Christian through love; and love should be the agent of faith, as the body is the agent of the soul. The soul sees and hears, speaks and acts, through the body, to which she is united; so, O man! should the love of God, springing from faith, do all things in and through thee. Whether thou eat or drink, hear or speak, commend or reprove, let all be done *in love*, after the example of Christ, in whom resided nothing but pure love. If thou beholdest thy neighbor, behold him with the eyes of a compassionate friend; if thou hearest him, hear him with love and tenderness; and if thou speakest with him, let thy speech be seasoned with love and Christian affection.

13. Carefully preserve the root of Christian love by faith, in order that nothing but that which is good may grow up in thy heart, and issue thence, as from its genuine centre. 1 Cor. 16:14. Thou shalt then be enabled to fulfil the commandments of God; since they are all comprehended in love. Hence, a holy man has expressed himself after this manner: "O love of God in the Holy Ghost! thou art the highest joy of souls, and the only divine life of men. Whosoever enjoys not thee, is dead even while he lives; and whosoever possesses thee, never dies in the sight of God. Where

thou art not, there the life of men is a continual death; but where thou art, there life is made a foretaste of eternal happiness.” Whence it appears that this divine love is the sum and fulfilling of all the commandments of God.

14. We consider now, in the *second* place, that our love to God ought to proceed “out of a pure heart.” The heart of a man who is desirous to love God, ought first to be cleansed from all worldly love and attachment to the creature. It is then that God becomes the chief and sovereign Good to the soul. She can then say, “The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.” Ps. 16:5. “The Lord knoweth the days of the upright,” that is, those that love him out of a disinterested heart; “and their inheritance shall be forever.” Ps. 37:18. “Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” Ps. 37:4. In a word, God is the only fountain whence all our joy ought constantly to spring.

15. God, therefore, should be the most beloved object of our souls, and our hearts should rest in him alone, because he is the highest good. He is nothing else than mercy and goodness, love and kindness, clemency and patience, truth, comfort, peace, joy, life, and happiness. All this he has laid up in Jesus Christ. Whoever, therefore, has Christ, is thereby put into the possession of all these heavenly virtues. And whoever loves God, must also of necessity love God's truth and mercy, his goodness and kindness, and the whole train of divine virtues.

16. For, a true lover of God has a love to all that God loves,

and an aversion to all that God hates. If any man loves God, he must love truth, mercy, and righteousness, because God is all this himself. He must also delight in humility and meekness, since thereby he is rendered conformable to that meekness and lowly-mindedness which resided in Jesus. On the other hand, a true lover of God cannot but abhor all ungodliness, with all the works of iniquity; because all manner of impiety is enmity against God, and is the work of the devil himself. A lover of God hates a lie, because the devil is the father of lies, and was a liar from the beginning. And this is the reason that every one who loves lies, injustice, and other vicious workings of nature, must needs, in that sense, be the offspring of the devil (see John 8:44); and again, whoever loves Christ, his Lord and Saviour, loves also the example of his pure and holy life, his humility and meekness, his patience, and the other heavenly virtues that appeared in his conduct. And such a one must of necessity be adopted into the number of the children of God.

17. This love, proceeding out of a “pure heart,” must be obtained from God by prayer and supplication. And truly, God is willing to enkindle in us this heavenly flame through the love of Christ, if he be but earnestly solicited, and if the heart be every day and every moment laid open to his divine influence. If thy love should grow cold and weak at any time, arouse thy heart, faint not, but stir up the grace of God within thee, and be not too much discouraged at it. In the name of God arise again, set to work, and renew the acts of thy first love.

As thou art sensible of thy coldness in love, thou mayest be assured from that circumstance, that the eternal light of divine love is not *wholly* extinguished, although it be eclipsed, and at present give but little heat. Doubt not that thy Saviour will enlighten thee again, and fire thy heart with his love; so that thou mayest sit once more under his shadow, and rejoice in the light of his countenance. At the same time be earnest in prayer and supplications, lest hereafter the flame of this heavenly love should be again deadened in thy heart. Such is love “out of a pure heart,” unmixed with love of the world.

18. Let us now consider, in the *third* place, Love, as arising from a “good conscience,” and as it respects our neighbor. The love of God and the love of our neighbor are so closely united, that they can never be separated. The true touchstone of our love to God, is the love which we bear to our neighbor. “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God, love his brother also.” 1 John 4:20, 21. For the love of God cannot dwell in a man who is filled with hatred or malice, or divested of all bowels of love and compassion. If thou hast no pity on thy brother, who stands in need of thy help, how canst thou love God, who needs not anything that is thine, and has commanded thee to express thy love towards him, by bestowing marks of it upon thy brother?

19. As faith unites to God, so love unites to our neighbor; and

as a man is made up of body and soul, so faith and love (that is, the love both of God and of our neighbor) make up a true Christian. Thus he that “dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God.” 1 John 4:16. And since God effectually desires the good of all men, it follows, that he who loves in like manner is of one heart with God; and that he who is otherwise affected is against God, and has not the mind of the Lord, but is the enemy of God as well as of his neighbor. He is, unquestionably, an adversary to God who is an enemy to men.

20. It is the property of this love to bewail and compassionate the infirmities of others. Gal. 6:1. Indeed, the failings and weaknesses of our fellow-creatures represent to us, as in a mirror, our own imperfections, and remind us of the various defects that encumber our nature. Therefore, when thou seest another overtaken in a fault, consider that thou also thyself art but a man; and learn from thy own infirmities, to bear those of others with patience, meekness, and humility. Rom. 15:7.

21. Such especially as sin, not from, malice or determined wickedness, but who are surprised into a fault by weakness and inadvertency; and who, coming soon to themselves again, repent of that which they have done, and firmly resolve to watch the more against the snares of Satan for the future; such souls as these are surely to be pitied and assisted. He that does otherwise, shows that he has nothing in him of the merciful and forbearing spirit of Christ. When a man hastily condemns the faults of his neighbor, without feeling any love or compassion, it is an evident

sign that he is altogether void of God, and of his merciful spirit. On the contrary, a true Christian, being anointed with the spirit of Christ, treats all men as one that has a fellow-feeling with them, and bears with them in a sympathizing Christian love and tenderness, according to the example of Christ, which he has left us to follow. Therefore, if any man, upon serious search into his inward condition, finds that he has not the love of his neighbor abiding in him, let him know, assuredly, that the love of God remains not in his soul, and that he himself is without God. This should strike him with horror and indignation against himself; it should influence him the more speedily (after repenting of his sin from the bottom of his heart) to reconcile himself to his neighbor, that, in this order, the love of God may also return to him again. Then all his actions, while he continues in this love and faith, are good, holy, and divine; and this love, dwelling in his heart, will actuate him freely and willingly to embrace all men, and with great affection and joy to do them all manner of kindnesses; so that he will “rejoice over them to do them good,” even as God himself. Jer. 32:41.

22. Without this love, whatever is in man, is diabolical and altogether evil. Nor is there, indeed, any other cause why the devil can do no good, but because he is utterly destitute of love both towards God and man. Hence, all which he does is radically evil, and deprived of all intrinsic goodness. In all that he sets about, he designs nothing but God's dishonor, and man's destruction. He cunningly contrives ways to vent his enmity both

upon God and man; and, therefore, he seeks for such hearts as he can fill with spite and envy, and then discharges through them his malice and wrath. “And hereby it is manifest who are the children of God, and the children of the devil.” 1 John 3:10.

23. *Lastly*, Love must be “out of faith unfeigned,” that is, we must love God equally in prosperity and adversity. Whoever loves God sincerely, accepts with joy all the dispensations of his Providence, after the example of Christ; who, with a cheerful and ready mind, took up the cross, which he knew that the will of his Father imposed on him. “I have,” says he, “a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened (and in pain) till it be accomplished!” Luke 12:50. In the same manner have all the holy martyrs carried with joy their cross after him.

24. To those that unfeignedly love God, the cross, which Christ enjoins us to bear, does not prove grievous or burdensome; and this for no other reason, than because it is the *yoke of Christ*. Matt. 11:29. If the magnet attracts the heavy iron, why should not that heavenly loadstone, the love of God, attract the burden of our cross, and render it light and agreeable; especially after the heart is affected with a touch of the divine love? If the sugar sweeten such herbs as are bitter by nature, why should not the sweetness of the love of God make that pleasant and easy, which to the flesh is nothing but a cross and affliction? And truly it was from the fulness of this love, that the blessed martyrs bore the most exquisite pain with patience and joy; being transported with it to such a degree, as to be almost insensible of their very

torments.

# Chapter XXV.

## The Love Of Our Neighbor, More Particularly Considered

*Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.*— 2 Peter 2:19.

There is no bondage more hard and grievous, than to be under the yoke of the passions: but of all these, none is so cruel as *hatred*, which so weakens and depresses all the powers both of body and mind, as not to leave to the man one free thought. On the contrary, he who lives in *love* is *free*. He is no slave to anger, envy, covetousness, pride, lying, or calumny; and being delivered from these by love, he suffers not himself to be subdued by evil desires, but continues Christ's freeman (1 Cor. 7:22) in the liberty of the Spirit: for "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. 3:17. Whosoever, therefore, walks in the love of Christ, is no longer a slave to sin, or a servant to carnal affections; for the Spirit of God's love has freed and purified him from carnal concupiscence. And we see that the love of God extends over all men; of which we not only find sufficient proofs in Scripture, but the footsteps of his universal benignity are also everywhere displayed in nature. We are all equally covered with the heavens, and have all the use of the sun, the air, the earth, and the water; as well they who are of high degree, as they who

are of the meanest condition. And the very same mind that is in God towards us, ought also to be in us towards men; God himself having set us a pattern of universal kindness for our imitation. He regards not one more than another, but loves all with an equal affection. With him there is no respect of persons, of dignity, or merit; but he beholds all alike in Christ. This is for our instruction. Now, as God acts towards us, so ought we to act towards our neighbor. And truly, after the same manner as we deal with man, so God will deal with us again. We need not go far to inquire what favor we have with God Almighty. If we but enter into our own conscience, it will impartially tell us, what mind and affection we bear to our neighbor; and as we have done to him, so will God certainly do to us again, and return our works into our own bosom. And in this sense it is said of God, that “with the pure he shews himself pure; and with the froward, shews himself froward” (Ps. 18:26); that is, if thou bearest an evil mind to thy neighbor, God will be thine adversary also.

2. Since, therefore, God has no need of our service, he has substituted our neighbor in his place, to receive our charity, and has commanded us to pay it as to himself. He has made this love of our neighbor the very *touch-stone* by which we are to examine the sincerity of our love to God.

3. And it is for this reason that he has enjoined the love of our neighbor with so great earnestness, requiring us to show constantly the same love to him which God shows to us. For unless a man be fully reconciled to, and be in perfect charity

with his neighbor, he cannot have the favor or grace of God. And although all the sins of the world are atoned for by the death of Christ, and a full pardon obtained, yet all mankind may in some sense be said to be in the same circumstances with the servant in the parable, who had not wherewithal to pay; the king freely remitted him all his debts: but when he afterwards behaved himself cruelly towards his fellow-servant, the king revoked his pardon, and condemned the servant, on account of the hard usage with which he treated his neighbor. Matt. 18:23, etc. This parable Christ concludes with the remarkable expression: "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother, their trespasses." Verse 35. And, "With the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38.

4. Hence, it plainly appears, that man was not created for himself alone, but for his neighbor's sake also. So strict is the commandment of loving our neighbor, that when it is broken, the very end of our creation is destroyed, and the love of God is immediately withdrawn from the soul. Nothing is left but the severest justice, judging and condemning all that are void of this charity.

5. If we duly considered these things, we should never be angry with one another; neither would "the sun ever go down upon our wrath." Eph. 4:26. It is true, on the one hand, that Christ by his death on the cross has offered a full and complete atonement for all our trespasses, and in this respect, has remitted all our sins at

once; yet is it, on the other hand, an awful consideration, that the whole extent of the merits of Christ will be of no avail at all to us, if we continue to hate our brother, and will neither pardon nor love him. We shall be entirely cut off from all the benefits that flow from the atonement.

6. Hence it appears how important the love of our neighbor must be in the sight of God, binding us even to such a degree, that God refuses to be loved by us, unless we love our neighbor also; so that if we fail in our benevolence toward the latter, we fall at the same time from grace and divine charity. And for this reason, we were created all equal and of the same nature, that we might not despise one other; but, like children of one common parent, live in peace and love, and endeavor to maintain a good and serene conscience.

7. Now, whoever hates and despises his brother, hates and despises God also, who has forbidden all such animosities in the severest terms. If thou contemnest thy brother, God also contemns thee; which hastens thy judgment and condemnation, and deprives thee of all interest in the merit and redemption of Christ, by which sin is forgiven.

8. For it cannot be possible that a heart filled with wrath and bitterness, should in any degree reap a saving fruit from the blood of Christ, which was shed from a motive of pure love. Yea, the above parable (Matt. 18:35) plainly convinces us, that God was less offended at the debt of ten thousand talents, than at the barbarous cruelty of which the servant was guilty; he can

overlook the debt, but he cannot overlook the want of love. Let us, therefore, ponder the words with which the Lord concludes the parable: “So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you.”

## Chapter XXVI.

# Wherefore Our Neighbor Is To Be Loved

*Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.— Rom. 13:8.*

“Wherewith shall I come before the Lord? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? – He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.” Micah 6:6-8.

2. By this question, and the answer to it, the prophet teaches us, wherein the true worship of God properly consists; not in ceremonies and sacrifices, since we are not able to give anything to God, because all is his own already; not in offering up human sacrifices, which he does not require at our hands, but detests and abhors, because they are injurious to Jesus Christ, the great propitiatory oblation which God appointed to take away the sins of the world (John 1:29): but the true worship of God consists in pure faith, which, from the visible effect of it, the prophet here describes, by “doing justly,” that is by the exercise of faith in righteousness, in charity and mercy, (which is more pleasing

than all sacrifices); and in true humility and contrition, as it is said: “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” Ps. 51:17.

3. To this divine worship, founded within the heart, and proceeding from faith, love, and humility, St. Paul powerfully exhorts us in Rom. 13:8-10. His admonition contains in it both the praise of Christian love, and the perpetual duty in which we stand engaged to our neighbor, and without which it is impossible to serve God aright. For truly there is no other way of serving God, except by that which he himself works in our hearts: so that to serve God, is nothing else but to serve our neighbor, and to do him all the offices of Christian love and humanity which we are able to perform.

4. The apostle calls love a summary of all virtues, and the “fulfilling of the law.” Rom. 13:10. Not that we are able by any acts of charity, to fulfil perfectly the divine law, or that consequently we can merit eternal life thereby; (which cannot possibly be, except our love were complete in every respect, and arrived to a consummate perfection): but the apostle desires to suggest thereby the wonderful excellency of this virtue, and to incline us, at the same time, to an unfeigned love. As to our righteousness, it is not grounded on any work of ours, but only on the merits of Christ applied to us by faith.

5. From this righteousness of Christ, apprehended by faith, springs love to our neighbor, together with the whole train of Christian virtues, called by the apostle “fruits of righteousness,

which are to the glory and praise of God.” Phil. 1:11. But since the dignity of this virtue is so very eminent, it will be proper to set forth further motives by which the practice of it may be endeared to us.

6. The first and strongest of all motives, is that which St. John uses: “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him” (1 John 4:16). For who would not wish to be in God, and to remain in Him; and that God should be and remain in him? And who, on the contrary, would not abhor to be in Satan, and to have Satan dwelling in him? And yet this is the ordinary consequence, as often as charity is repulsed, and unnatural animosities are admitted into the heart. For as God is a lover of men, ready to save them from eternal destruction, so the devil is a hater of men. This is further explained by St. John: “He that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God.” 1 John 4:7. And again: “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.” 1 John 3:10. Now, can there be anything more desirable than to be ranked among the children of God, to be begotten of God, and to know God truly and experimentally? But whoever has his heart void of this love, and has never felt its force and energy, nor tasted its goodness and gentleness, long suffering and patience, this man knows not God, who is pure love. For the knowledge of God must proceed from enjoyment and experience. And how is it possible that a man should know Christ, whilst he is a stranger to love,

and to that loving intercourse which subsists betwixt Christ and the soul? Hence it follows, that he that is without love, is without Christ also. But he who is earnest in the exercise of love, shall not be left barren in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ: “For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Pet. 1:8.

7. The second motive is found in what our Lord himself says: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” John 13:35. Now, in order to be a disciple of Christ, it is not enough to be a Christian in name, or by a mere verbal profession; but to be a disciple of Christ implies much more. Such a one must believe in his name; must love him, imitate him, live in him. He must, in a peculiar manner, adhere to him; must feel the love of Christ infused into his soul, and freely partake of all the gifts and benefits purchased by him. Whoever has not this love of Christ abiding in him, is not Christ's disciple, nor can he pretend to have any share in his merits. For how is it possible that Christ should know a man who has neither faith in, nor any love to him? As a flower is known by its fragrance, and fruit by its flavor, so a true disciple of Christ is known by his love.

8. Hence, St. Paul does not hesitate to affirm, that “all gifts without charity are nothing” (1 Cor. 13:2); which is a third motive why we should desire this excellent gift. In truth, neither the knowledge of divers tongues, nor the gift of miracles, nor the understanding of high and sublime mysteries, nor any

extraordinary endowments, are sufficient marks by which to know a Christian; this prerogative being entirely reserved to “faith, which worketh by love.” Gal. 5:6. Nor does God require any hard things at our hand (such as the working of miracles), but to exercise love and humility; virtues that may be apprehended by the meanest capacity. Nor will it be demanded of thee in the day of judgment, whether thou hast been versed in arts, tongues, and sciences, or what great parts thou hast possessed in this world; but whether thou hast exercised thyself in faith and love. “I was a hungered,” saith our Saviour, “and ye gave me meat, etc.” Matt. 25:35, etc. And St. Paul says to the Galatians: “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision (no gifts, no parts, no endowments, no respect of persons); but faith which worketh by love.” Gal. 5:6.

9. Add to these, as a fourth motive, that passage of St. John: “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God, love his brother also.” 1 John 4:20, 21. This all the inspired writers teach, that love towards God cannot possibly exist in the soul without love to our neighbor. For he that hates his neighbor must be an enemy to God; because God is a lover of men, and requires us to be of the same mind.

10. A fifth motive is, that love is the great law of nature, and attended with many things beneficial to mankind, without which

we would not be able to live. When any good thing happens to man, it certainly proceeds from divine love. Hence, St. Paul calls love, the “bond of perfectness” (Col. 3:14); and describes, in Rom. 12:9, 10, the excellent fruits that grow upon this stock. And our Saviour himself teaches to the same effect: “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” Matt. 7:12. And this is so universal a truth, that the heathens themselves were, by the very law of nature written in their hearts, convinced of it. Hence they said: “That which you would not should be done to yourself, do not the same to another.” This excellent sentence, the Emperor Severus, a prince adorned with many virtues, had daily in his mouth, and enacted it into a law for the good of the country.

11. A sixth motive is, that love is a beautiful image and a foretaste of eternal life; when the saints shall love each other sincerely; when they shall delight in one another, and converse together with wonderful and ineffable concord, in an inexpressible sweetness, in unfeigned affection, cheerfulness, and joy. Whoever, therefore, would conceive to himself an image of that marvellous love and harmony, and obtain some foretaste of the exquisite pleasures of the eternal beatitude, let him study this love, in which he will find a singular pleasure, with much peace and tranquillity of mind.

12. The more pure and fervent our charity is, the nearer it approaches to the divine nature. This is a seventh motive. In

God, in Christ, and in the Holy Ghost, there resides the most pure, fervent, and transcendent love. It is then that our love becomes pure, when we love one another, not for the sake of private interest, but for the sake of the love of God, which is the great and unerring pattern which we ought carefully to follow. For God loves us with a disinterested love: but if any man loves his neighbor for his own private profit and interest, his love is not pure at all, nor does it, in any degree, come up to that sublime example which is set us by God Almighty. This makes also the difference betwixt heathen and Christian charity. A Christian loves his neighbor in God and in Christ, disinterestedly and generously, without debasing himself by any ignoble or selfish design. Thus is his love preserved pure and sincere, free from dissimulation, falsehood, and any counterfeit. Whereas the heathens polluted their deeds with self-honor and interest, and other sinister ends, which mingled with the best of their actions. This Christian love, when it becomes a habit in the mind, produces a true fervency of spirit, to perform still greater acts of love and benignity. And it is then that love is truly fervent, when it inspires the lover with great mercy and tenderness towards his fellow-creatures, and prompts to vigorous efforts to relieve their necessity. When he has the affairs of his neighbor as much at heart as his own, then he is ready even to “lay down his very life for the brethren” (1 John 3:16), if need be, or, after the example of Moses and Paul, to be “accursed” for the brethren, and to be “blotted out of the book of God,” if this

possibly could be done. Exod. 32:32; Rom. 9:3.

13. Hence it follows (which is the eighth motive), that we ought also to love our enemies, according to the Lord's precept: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not the publicans the same?" Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:32, etc. Herein consist the excellency and prerogative of a true Christian; namely, to subject nature to this divine principle, to tame flesh and blood, and to overcome the world, and the *evil* therein with *goodness*. Rom. 12:21. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him." Rom. 12:20. It is not enough for a Christian not to hurt his neighbor or enemy; but he is commanded to *do him good*, and to support him with such aids, as are convenient for him (Exod. 23:4, etc.); whoever refuses to comply with these terms, cannot be a child of God, or a disciple of Christ.

14. The ninth motive is, that whoever does not practise Christian love and charity, separates himself from the spiritual body of Christ, that is, the Church; and forfeits all the privileges of this body, and even the merits of Christ; there being but "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." Eph. 4:5. For as the members when cut off from the body, no longer partake of the life and power of the head, but are dead; so those that do not live in the practice of love and charity, are separate from Christ, the sole Head of the Church, and can receive no power and vital influence

out of his fulness. Therefore, St. John says, “He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death.” 1 John 3:14.

15. Lastly, we ought to love one another, because on the wings of this love the prayer of a Christian ascends to heaven. By prayer, all good gifts are to be obtained; and without prayer, all helps and consolations are expected in vain. But then our prayer must spring from the evangelical principle of love; since God gives ear to no prayers, but to those that are grounded on faith and Christian charity: “If two of you agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.” Matt. 18:19.

16. Come then, O man! let this sweet agreement and harmony be established among us upon earth. Let us live in the spirit of love, that peace and union may dwell among us; for where peace is, there is the God of peace (2 Cor. 13:11; Rom. 15:33); and where He is, there “he hath also commanded his blessing and life for evermore.” Ps. 133:3.

## Chapter XXVII.

# Wherefore Our Enemies Are To Be Loved

*Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.— Matt. 5:44, 45.*

The first cause why enemies ought to be loved, is the express commandment of God by his Son; for which he gives this reason, “that we may be the children of our Father in heaven,” that is, “of him that loved us when we were yet his enemies.” Rom. 5:10. As if he had said, “Unless you love your enemies, you cannot be the children of the heavenly Father: and he that is not God's son, what father shall he have?” This commandment of the Lord is little practised; alas! how backward we are in bringing forth such fruits as become the children of God! If we be his children, truly we ought to study the great lesson of loving our enemies, that so, in some degree, we may express the character of our Father in heaven.

2. The Scripture says, “He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death.” 1 John 3:14. And why does he abide in death? Because he has not yet received that vital principle which is to be derived from Christ. The spiritual and heavenly life consists in faith towards God, and in love to our neighbor. Thus, St. John says,

“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” 1 John 3:14. Whence it is manifest, that love is an undoubted sign and effect of spiritual life or restoration to life in Christ; as hatred to men is an infallible proof of spiritual death and separation from God. And this spiritual death here, will end in eternal death hereafter; of which our Lord faithfully warns us.

3. Whoever, therefore, suffers his heart to be filled with wrath and bitterness against his neighbor, ought to know assuredly, that even his best performances, his prayer and attendance on divine worship, and other works of that nature, are altogether vain, and of no account before God. St. Paul says, “Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” 1 Cor. 13:3.

4. It is, on the other hand, the property of a noble and divine mind, to pardon injuries. Behold how long-suffering God is, and how easily he is reconciled. Ps. 103:8. Consider the example of Christ, the Son of God, who, in the midst of his exquisite torments, like a patient lamb, did not so much as “open his mouth.” Isa. 53:7. Contemplate the nature of the divine Spirit, who appeared in the form of a dove (Matt. 3:16), with a view that by such a representation he might teach us a dove-like meekness of mind, and recommend to us that tender simplicity of manners, which becomes a true Christian. With what patience did Moses bear the reproaches of the people, thus deserving to be called “very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the

earth.” Numb. 12:3. Remember also the conduct of David, and with what lenity of mind he heard the curses of Shimei. 2 Sam. 16:10.

5. True love teaches us to be angry with none but ourselves. True peace consists not in having much wealth, but in bearing patiently whatever goes against our nature. Should a madman rail at the sun, and curse it for being nothing but darkness, the sun would never be darkened by his reproachful language, but continue his course, and enlighten the world as before. So do thou also, and remember that there is no sweeter or better revenge than to forgive. Such wise and excellent rules were practised by many of the heathens themselves. Pericles, the Grecian orator, having patiently heard a man revile him for the space of a whole day, when night came on, kindly invited him to his house, and entertained him in a friendly manner, saying, “It is easier to speak evil of virtue than to possess it.” Thus Phocion, general of the Athenians, when he had deserved well of his country, but through envy was adjudged to death, and was now about to undergo the sentence, being asked if he had any commands for his son, generously made answer: “None, except that he never take measures to revenge this injury, which I suffer of my country.” The Emperor Titus being told that two brothers had conspired to cause his death, scrupled not to invite them both to sup with him; and in the morning went with them to the theatre, and placed himself betwixt them, to behold the play. Thus with marvellous clemency he overcame, at last, their baseness. And

when Cato had committed suicide, Julius Cæsar said: “I have lost a glorious victory; for I had intended to forgive Cato all the evil that he has done to me.”

6. But after all, as to the man who cannot be influenced by the unspeakable patience and meekness of the Son of God himself, to forgive and to love his enemies, him neither the example of the saints, nor of heathens, will ever be able to melt into love and forbearance. For what greater injustice and barbarity can be conceived, than that the Son of God should be so shamefully treated by the children of men, be scourged with stripes, crowned with thorns, spit upon, and loaded with all the marks of scorn and derision; and lastly, be nailed on the cross? Nevertheless, he was able to bear, with an unshaken firmness, all the affronts and indignities which the malice of men was able to contrive; nay, and freely to pardon all this barbarous usage, and to pray, “Father, forgive them!” Luke 23:34.

7. And, truly, it was to this very end that our blessed Redeemer set his example before our eyes, that it might be an all-healing medicine for such spiritual diseases as have seized upon us; particularly, that it might abase all pride and loftiness, strengthen what is weak, supply what is defective, and correct what is evil and out of order. Can the distemper of pride be so violent, as not to be healed by the profound humility and lowliness of Christ? Heb. 5:8. Can avarice and covetousness prove so stubborn, as to baffle a remedy derived from that sacred poverty which appeared in Jesus Christ? What wrath is so fierce and vehement, that his

meekness and lenity cannot mollify it? What desire of revenge so bitter and barbarous, which his patience cannot assuage and compose? What inhumanity so great and cruel, which the love of Christ cannot warm into a sweet and compassionate temper? And what heart can be so hard and obdurate, as not to be melted with the tears of Jesus Christ himself?

8. Who would not heartily wish to be made like God the Father, his Son, and the Holy Ghost, and to carry within him the excellent image of the sacred Trinity, which chiefly consists in love and forgiveness? For it is the highest of all the divine properties, to show compassion and mercy, to spare and to pardon, to be kind and gracious: and that must be undoubtedly one of the sublimest virtues, which makes us bear the nearest resemblance to the Most High God, and to all such persons as are the most conspicuous for goodness and virtue.

9. Lastly, the highest degree of virtue is, when a man, overcoming himself, is ready at any time to forget injuries, to pardon offences, and to show acts of favor and clemency. "He that is slow to anger," says Solomon, "is better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." Prov. 16:32. This is the highest step of the soul's ascension in her spiritual exercise; and when she has attained it, she rests in God, and is perfect in him.

# **Chapter XXVIII.**

## **Showing How The Love Of The Creator Should Be Preferred To That Of All Creatures; And How Our Neighbor Is To Be Loved In God**

*If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.— 1 John 2:15.*

The heart of man is so constituted, that it cannot exist without love; it must love God, or the world, or self. If, therefore, man be under so strong a compulsion to love, let him direct his love to God, the supreme Good, and give up that affection to Him, who originally planted it in man, and kindled it by his good Spirit; and who is still ready, at our fervent request, to rekindle this flame in the soul. His love to us is still the great principle that produces our love to him: and if his love to us meet with a suitable return on our side, then his love will, day by day, more ardently embrace us. For love begets love, according to the words of the Lord: “He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father.” John 14:21.

2. Wherever the love of God resides, it disposes the soul freely to love all men, and not only to wish them well, but to do them all proper acts of love and beneficence; this being the property of that love which is grounded in God, and derived from him. Such

a lover of God and of his neighbor, will never hurt or defraud any man in word or deed.

3. But the generality of the people are engrossed so much with the love of the world, that they never even admit the love of God into their hearts. This is plain from that false love with which they treat their neighbor, and which, under a show of friendship, seeks nothing but temporal advantage. Nothing in the world should be loved to such a degree, as to injure the love of God, or to come in competition with it; especially since there is so great a vanity and vileness in the world, and so great a worth and majesty in God, as that no comparison can ever be made betwixt them. As God infinitely excels all his creatures, so the love of God infinitely excels in holiness and dignity all the love we can bear to the creature, and is in no wise to be compared with it. No love to the creature ought to have sufficient weight with us, to make us offend the love of God, or to act in opposition to the same.

4. St. Paul says: "Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?" 1 Cor. 9:7. These words may not improperly be applied to this case. Who is more worthy of our love, than he that hath planted it in our hearts, and to whose love we owe our life and being? And as we all live by the love of God in Christ, so we should all adhere to this love, and make it our constant support even in the time of adversity. As a pilot in tempestuous weather, does not leave the ship to the mercy of the billows, but secures it by the anchor as well as he can, and stays its unruly motions; so in like manner, when the ship of our faith is tossed about in the

sea of this world, and beset on all sides with the temptations of sin and vanity, of wrath and pride, of lust and avarice, we should hold to the love of Christ, and not suffer our hearts to be removed from that spiritual steadfastness, which is to carry us safe through all the tempests of this perverse and boisterous world. Romans 8:38, 39. Thus, when sin and death, the devil and hell, tribulation and persecution, and other miseries, threaten to overwhelm us, we are then to hold fast the love of God manifested in Christ Jesus. This divine love is like that mountain of salvation which was showed to Lot when he went out of Sodom, to escape the fire of that accursed place. Gen. 19:17.

5. The fire of lust, attended with everlasting flames and torments, is worse than that of Sodom. But the love and fear of God are a sovereign remedy against this profane love, and against any motion contrary to its pure and heavenly nature. It was this divine fear and love which preserved Joseph from the enticements of Potiphar's wife, and it still guards us against the snares of an evil world. Gen. 39:9.

6. No man can love the world, but he who has never tasted the love of God; nor can any man hate, defraud, or circumvent his neighbor in anything, but he that does not love God from his heart. Whence arise all the anxious cares of this life, that grief and vexation of spirit with which poor mortals are disturbed? Surely, from nothing but from a want of the love of God. For the sweetness of divine love is so strong and effectual, that it mitigates the sense of all the miseries that are incident to this life.

This love renders a man happy even in death itself.

7. Again, such is the nature of love, that it influences a man to lay aside all thoughts about anything else, and to fix his attention entirely on the beloved object, in order to possess and enjoy that alone. Why then are the children of men so much besotted with the things of this world? Why do they not entirely forget all wealth and honor, lust and riches, that they may enjoy him alone, whom they profess to love? This was in former times the constant practice of the holy men of God; whom the exquisite sweetness of this divine love had so much overpowered, as to make them forget the whole world, and even themselves also. Hence they were accounted fools in the world, when at the same time they were the wisest of all men; and their despisers most deserved the name of fools and madmen, as preferring a handful of frail and transient things, to everlasting and never-fading prosperity. Those are the greatest fools, who call the godly by that name, who, setting their love on things above, are deeply concerned to obtain and eternally enjoy them. 1 Cor. 3:19; 4:10.

8. A true lover of God, loves God as if there were nothing in the whole universe to love but God alone. And for this reason, he finds all that in God, which he sought before in the world. For God hath in himself all things *essentially*, whatever we can desire. He is true honor and joy; he is peace and pleasure; he is wealth and magnificence. With him are light and life, glory and majesty, and all those delights that the heart of man can desire. All is found in a more substantial and transcendent manner in God, than it is

in the world. If, therefore, thou lovest any creature, for the sake of *beauty*, transfer thy love to God, who is the fountain of all beauty. If thou wouldst love that which is *good*, fix thy love upon God, who is the eternal source of all goodness, nay, the essential *Good* itself, and without whom there is no goodness at all. Matt. 19:17. For whatever goodness the creature may seem to possess, it is but an inconsiderable drop derived out of the ocean of the infinite goodness of God, and which is besides impaired by many frailties and imperfections that adhere to it.

9. To conclude – is it not far better to set thy love and affections on God alone, the unexhausted fountain and well-spring of all perfection and goodness? The less a thing has of earthly gravity in it, the lighter it is, and the more easily is it carried upwards. So it is with the soul; the more it cleaves to earthly things, and is pressed down by them to the ground, the less ability has it to raise itself to God, and rejoice in its Maker. In a word, the less a man loves this world, the more will the love of God and of his neighbor prevail in the soul.

10. Hence it follows that he that loveth God, cannot but love his neighbor also, and he that dares to offend God, will not forbear to offend his neighbor.

# **Chapter XXIX.**

## **Of That Reconciliation To Our Neighbor, Without Which God Withdraws His Grace**

*First be reconciled to thy brother.— Matt. 5:24.*

Every one who desires to be reconciled to God, must of necessity endeavor to reconcile himself to his neighbor; because God takes the injury which is offered to man, as offered to himself, and the evil done to man, as done to himself.

2. When, therefore, any one offends both God and man, he cannot be restored to the favor of God before he is reconciled to man his neighbor; for having offended them both, he must also be reconciled to both, which is expressly attested by Christ himself: “If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” Matt. 5:23, 24.

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