

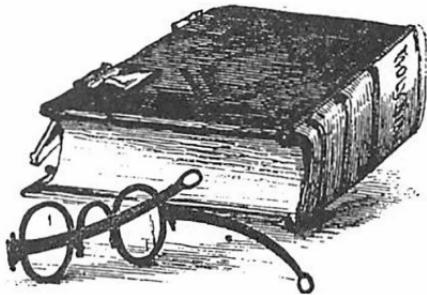
MORAL LAW



CLIFFORD W. WILSON

MORAL LAW

An in-depth theological treatise on
man's fall into sin, and the
journey that leads
back to holiness
before God.



Written
by:
Bro. Clifford W. Wilson

Printed by:
Faith Publishing House
P. O. Box 518
Guthrie, OK 73044

**Original Printing
1997**

For additional resources visit:
www.churchofgodeveninglight.com/books

Introduction

This work is not presented as an exhaustive study of comprehensive morality. Technical or scientific morality goes into far more detail and reaches to far wider boundaries than this work was ever intended to cover. The primary interest of the author and basic thrust of the effort is to assist men in understanding themselves and what they are attempting to accomplish in a Christian experience a little better. It has been my feeling for a number of years that if folks knew clearly what they were attempting to achieve, and what is available to them in order to achieve, along with at least some of the basic regulations governing achievement, they would be able to enjoy better success in their efforts to live saved. We sing in one of our *Evening Light* Hymns, "Good works will not answer, no penance will do, Morality, too, is vain: For naught will avail but a creature made new, Ye must be born again." In observing my own personal experience, as well as that of others, it soon became apparent to me that living for the Lord automatically involved moral response. Then there must be some form of morality that is acceptable before the Lord. That is what I have attempted, in my own simple way, to recognize and define in such a manner that it will be useful to myself and others in our endeavors to be what our Lord would have us be. I have studied some publications on morality, some of which I could accept and some of which I could not, yet there were basics that seem to me are universal and that God recognizes as such in His dealings with man. Some of these I have attempted to set

forth in an understandable manner, for they have been a benefit to me in my efforts to serve the Master. It is my sincere hope and prayer that they will, in like manner, be a blessing and benefit to someone else along the road of life who is likewise seeking to meet the Lord in peace at the end of the way. I have recognized in my own experience that it is most often things I do not understand that provide a seed-bed for doubt and fears, both of which are destructive to a life of faith. If I can grasp a concept of what I am doing, how I am to do it, and where I expect it to take me, I have less reluctance and indecision when I meet the various details involved in accomplishing the overall goal.

Morality alone points men to a better life, a more noble life, a more satisfactory life. But human morality finds its source and realizes its fulfillment in only human endeavor. Religious morality presents concepts that reach above and beyond human capability. These concepts invite men to seek for and attain this higher plane. Void of religion, morality involves nothing more than human effort and offers no reward beyond the satisfaction of human accomplishment. Combined with true religion, morality becomes a framework, a structure upon which mortal man may safely build for eternity. I see very little real value accomplished when morality is separated from religion. Morality that is directed by pure religion provides man a traceable path that leads him back to where men were originally intended to be from the beginning. It is this path that I have attempted to expose and identify until it can be somewhat more clearly seen by all who are honestly seek-

ing to find it. I have been greatly blessed and benefited in my own soul while studying these various details. It is my sincere prayer and earnest desire that all who read this will be likewise blessed in their experience with our Lord.

In setting forth the various sections of the material so that all could be blended together into one complete whole, it seemed most practical to restate factual material on occasion as it applies to each developing section rather than expect the reader to make the necessary carry-over. This restating of fact may sometimes appear as unnecessary repetition but when this occurs, please remember that the restated factual material used at the moment was of vital importance to the subject of the moment in order for the current subject to be clearly understood. I would hope and trust that this occurrence will not be too annoying or offensive to the reader.

I would not dare to hope that everyone who reads will agree with what is set forth. I would hope and urge that whether there be agreement or not, by all means give it consideration and lend your own powers of thought and reasoning to the issue with an honest and open mind and heart. I pray God to lead you into even deeper truths than these. May God richly bless us every one in Him is my earnest prayer.

In deepest Christian love, —Clifford W. Wilson

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Common Notions	8
A Divine Kingdom	11
A Moral Fall	21
God and His Concern for Man.....	30
Man's Concern	39
God's Plan for Man's Recovery	42
A Few Thoughts About Man	64
Man's Place in Creation	90
God's Dealing With Man	109
Moral Advancement	114
Moral Virtue	141
The Just	162
Holiness	176
Duty	197
Conscience	214
Sentiments	228
Liberty	257
Merit and Demerit	273
Sanction	281
Morality Compared	296

Common Notions

It is commonly known and accepted in humanity that everyone is able to distinguish between right and wrong. All men recognize the difference between good and bad, the noble and the despicable. Since all men recognize these capabilities in themselves and in others, they feel justified in expecting all men to perform in accordance with what is commonly accepted as being right and good. To be aware of what is right leaves one with a feeling of obligation to do what is right. We feel obligated to perform correctly, simply because we feel it is the proper thing to do.

Just as all men recognize what is right, so they also and at the same time recognize what is wrong. The concept of wrong is accompanied by a feeling of obligation to refrain from wrong. We feel that wrong should be avoided and right should be performed simply because that is the proper course to follow. We feel constrained to perform in accordance with these concepts because that is how all men ought to perform. This feeling or compulsion to perform correctly leaves us feeling duty-bound to perform in accordance with our inward convictions.

Duty, then, may be defined as that inward constraint or feeling of obligation that prompts us to perform in accordance with what we perceive to be right. By defining and identifying the influence that prompts to duty, we discover the power or agency that enforces moral law.

Moral law is composed of that body and volume of perceived moral requirement, which, when men

comprehend, they feel duty-bound within themselves to obey. It is the presented formula, that when it is put into function in human life, produces moral excellence. Moral law, like all law, demands, forbids and permits. It is expected that a man provide for the needs of his family. Thus a moral demand has been established. It is deplored and considered wrong when a man greedily exploits his brother to his own enrichment. This knowledge places a moral restriction. Man is morally obligated to earn for the satisfaction of his own needs and the needs of his loved ones, but he is likewise morally forbidden to unjustly exploit his brother for the satisfaction of his own greed or lust. Some requirements of moral stipulation are absolute and allow no fluctuation. We are never allowed to consciously perform contradictory to known right. If our performance is void of some quality of known moral virtue, we are expected to correct the void and keep it corrected. If our performance is manifesting anything unbecoming to moral virtue, we are expected to eliminate the offensive action and keep it eliminated.

These basic concepts of moral acceptability are what we term "common notions," for they are generally accepted by all men of all nationalities, of all generations. All who are able to identify them are made conscious of the stipulations and requirements of a general law. No man is supposed to be ignorant of the law; therefore, all men may justly be expected to conform to the requirement of the law.

With the discovery of what we recognize as a general law comes another realization. All law presupposes a lawgiver. If there is an existing law, it had to

emit from some contributing source. Those who would accept humanity as the supreme intelligence of our universe would have us believe that man is propelled upward by virtue of his own understanding. Human experience does not prove this to be true. Man, left to his own devices, recedes and declines away from the good and virtuous. Humanly spawned moral qualities alone have never been able to propel man into the realm of moral excellence. Moral law is obviously designed and intended to provide for and promote man's moral improvement. Man has no ability to formulate and carry out a program of this kind. It would be safe to conclude that the way of true virtue has sprung from some source of intelligence other than that of man. No building ever drew its own blueprint. No painting ever designed its own pattern. Neither is humanity capable of providing the instruction needed to effect its own moral advancement.

The only source we know which provides information in the area of morals is the Word of God. Moral law, with its provision for human improvement, and religion, with its presentation of true deity, which possesses superior intelligence, are brought together in the Word.

God, The Great I Am, has declared Himself the Author and Supreme Sovereign of everything. He has declared His provided Word to be the document by which He would reveal Himself to humanity. It is likewise the agency of the Word that will instruct men of God's good pleasure for man. It would indeed seem prudent to give a brief consideration of what He has to offer.

A Divine Kingdom

Before any individual has gone very far along the journey of life, he becomes aware that there are influences about him which he cannot explain. Even when he is alone, he may feel the heaviness of another Presence and wonder what it is and how it might affect him. What he has yet to learn is that he is a being brought into existence by an Intelligence other than his own and that he is under that jurisdiction. It is toward this Influence, that so intimately affects every one of us, that our attention goes and our curiosity is aroused. If we are the property and subjects of another Being, then, of course, we would like to understand all we can about Him.

Reading a few verses in the first chapter of Isaiah makes it clear to us that some influence separate and distinct from humanity has had a bearing upon our existence. Somehow, we automatically know that we are the rebelling transgressors referred to in the text. In Jeremiah 10:6-10 that influence is identified. "Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee. But they are altogether brutish and foolish: the stock is a doctrine of vanities. Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman, and of the hands of the founder: blue and purple is their clothing: they are all the work of cunning men. But the Lord is the true God, he is the living

God, and an everlasting King: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation." In this text this Influence or Presence, that all men are aware of, identifies itself to us as God and He positively declares Himself a King in His own right. His holding of Kingship may not seem of much import to us until we begin to consider that perhaps we are some of the subjects under His jurisdiction. If we are, then He would surely have interest in us and we become infinitely more interested in Him.

Though we may wonder if there indeed be a King who has interest in us, let us assume that there is one existing and that He is ready, willing and able to be active in our lives. Then, too, let us remember the Scripture and accept it as the Word of God. Whatever He is, He seems to be concerned not only with the fact of life but also with the quality of life. Job 22:21 invites us to become acquainted with that King.

If there is a kingdom, that is, a working, recognizable dominion, then there must be certain characteristics by which it may be identified. Every kingdom is made up of basic elements. There will be a ruling Monarch who presides over a jurisdiction and there will be dominion over which He will reign. It will be equipped for its own defense and it will have subjects under its control. There will be rules and regulations by which it is governed and there will be some means provided for law enforcement. We would expect God's jurisdiction to be no different than any other and so, of course, God's Kingdom would likewise need a king. No kingdom would be complete without a ruling Monarch to occupy its throne and

so we hear Jeremiah 10:10 declaring, "But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation." I John 5:20 says, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." John 17:3 says, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Isaiah 45:21 says, "Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me." Isaiah 46:9-10 says, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Exodus 3:14-15 says, "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." Psalm 22:28 says, "For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the nations."

Here the Word makes it plain that there is One who declares Himself to be the Ruler over all. He is obviously knowledgeable regarding the functions of the Kingdom which He rules, knowing not only the past, but also the future. Not only that, but He is also willing to make us acquainted with Himself. He wants us to know who He is and what part He has in our existence. He also wants us to know what part we have in Him. Time seems to be no limiting factor with Him for He declares Himself to all generations and testifies that He knows the end from the beginning.

But a kingdom, in order to be a true kingdom, would need something more than just a king to be complete. If there be a ruling monarch, then there must of necessity be dominion over which the king reigns, else he has no kingdom. As to whether or not this King of whom we study has dominion, let us hear His testimony. Psalm 24:1 says, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Psalm 50:12 says, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." I Corinthians 10:26 says, "For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." Exodus 19:5 says, "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine."

In each of these texts, and a great many more that could be sighted, the Lord is declared to be the Ruler, or Monarch, over all the earth. Not only the earth, as such, but also the fullness of it. In other words, He rules the earth and everything it contains.

All is under His control. But His dominion does not stop there.

Genesis 14:19 says, "And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth." Matthew 11:25 says, "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Isaiah 66:1 says, "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?"

Here we see that this God is not only the Ruler and Monarch of the earth, but His domain reaches into heaven also. But that is not all. Deuteronomy 10:14 says, "Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, and the earth also, with all that therein is." And Psalm 24:9-10 adds, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory."

Wherever the heaven of heavens and the kingdom of glory are, this great God and King is ruling there as well as here on this earth upon which we dwell. He does indeed have dominion over that which He has jurisdiction, and is a true Monarch exercising the authority of His office.

His Kingdom would need, along with a King and domain, some means by which to defend itself. No kingdom could long endure without being able to provide for its own protection. Isaiah 59:16 says, "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that

there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him." Psalm 98:1 says, "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory." Exodus 15:6-7 says, "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble." Revelation 19:11 says, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." Proverbs 30:5 says, "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him." Romans 12:21 says, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

When we realize that the only power or influence we know that opposes the Kingdom of God is that of wickedness or evil, then it is not difficult to recognize His defense. Righteousness, purity, truth and holiness are all deadly weapons against evil. His Kingdom is made up of these qualities, thus it cannot be thrown down for they are stronger and will prevail over all the powers of wickedness.

A King, with dominion over which to reign, and defense with which to protect Himself, would also need subjects over which to rule. Ezekiel 18:4 says, "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Psalm 47:8 says, "God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his

holiness." Daniel 4:17 says, "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." Psalm 50:10-11 says, "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine." Hebrews 1:6 says, "And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." In I Samuel 6:5 there is an account of other gods being in subjection to this true God and in Job 2:6 command is issued unto Satan which he could not go beyond, thus proving his subjection under God. Isaiah 48:13 says, "Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together." Job 37:1-14 gives a vivid description of the Lord operating in the natural world around us. Note that not only is He over the natural, material world, but also over the spirit world. There are angels, and even Satan, in subjection under Him and obedient unto His command. Angels, men, animals, planets and spirits—God has many subjects over which He rules in His domain.

We have identified a Kingdom, which possesses a King. We recognize dominion over which He reigns and defenses for protection. There are also subjects under His jurisdiction. All of this would need some judicial regulation by which to be governed. Since we have recognized that part of God's territory is the

heavens, and even the heaven of heavens, then let us take note of Psalm 119:89. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." From this we realize that there is no disobedience, rebellion or violation of God's command in that particular segment of His domain. All is in perfect agreement and accordance with His prescribed Word. Not only is it so now, but His proclaimed decree is that it will be forever so.

God is also in perfect control of the natural world. Jeremiah 33:25 says, "Thus saith the Lord; If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth;..." Also in Genesis 8:22 He says, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." All we need do is observe the processes around us and we immediately know that His laws are in force and operating in the natural world. We also see His jurisdiction in the biological world. Genesis 1:24-25 says, "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good." And so we still observe all of them yet today. They are performing exactly as the great King prescribed that they should perform from the very beginning. He is indeed able to lay down the laws by which His Kingdom will operate. He also laid down a law for man to observe. Genesis 2:16-17 says, "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou

mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Here we see that God's requirement of man was based on man's ability to understand and willingness to obey. Let us note also that the program that governs man is different from that of all other of God's creation.

Since we can plainly see that God has the power to enact rules and regulations over His jurisdiction, then we can also see that it is necessary that He be able to execute or enforce those laws. Again we find this proclaimed in the Scripture and may observe it in operation, as well. Psalm 119:90-91 says, "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth. They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants." Genesis 9:14-15 says, "And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh." Genesis 3:19 says, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Look about on every side and see God's decrees in operation just as He said they would be. The days come and go and the nights take their turn. The seasons rotate around the year, each following its appointed succession. The rainbow in the cloud reminds us the flood will no more destroy the earth. We need not worry about the polar ice caps melting and in-

undating the earth with water again. The King has decreed it shall not happen. One glance at the obituary column of the paper and we recognize God's law in function there, for men are returning to dust just as He said they would. (Genesis 3:19.) We also see men toiling to procure a livelihood, just as the King has said they would. We observe His law being enforced all down through the ages. He does, indeed, possess a Kingdom. He is the King who rules in that jurisdiction. He has domain to preside over and means to defend His interest. He has subjects who are under His jurisdiction and He establishes the laws by which they are governed. He has the power and means by which to enforce His prescribed laws. Now, here is a rather startling realization. Of all of God's domain, with all of its subjects that we have any knowledge of at all, man is the only part of the entire structure that has violated God's law. Consequently, man is the only segment of creation that is out of harmony with its Maker.

A Moral Fall

In the beginning, when all of creation was entirely new and operating as God had planned, God was pleased. He looked upon it and exclaimed, "Behold, it is very good." Genesis 1:31. But the day of transgression came when man elected to disobey and violate God's specified instruction. This violation brought the awful pall of sin upon man and it separated him from the presence of his Creator. Read the account given in the Scripture. Genesis 3:1-6, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." Up until then man had been holy. He had been created in God's image and knew nothing but purity of heart and life. Now, a new quality began working in man that God did not possess.

In the second chapter of Genesis where we read of man's experience in the Garden of Eden, it is

pointed out to man that he may freely eat of every tree that is bearing fruit in the Garden except the one which produces the knowledge of good and evil. This lets us know that prior to the eating, man knew nothing but good. In order to acquire the added concept of evil, man had to deliberately and knowingly violate the command of his own Creator and eat the forbidden fruit. It is noteworthy that in the temptation, Satan had his intended victim rehearse for him in detail the command which she had received from her Maker. That means there could be no mistake as to whether or not she knew what was expected of her. She was able to repeat the command word for word and even added a bit to the provision. God had said they were not to eat of the tree; Eve added that they were not to eat of the tree or even touch it.

Along with the issued command to refrain from the tree came the pronouncement of prescribed consequence for violation. The consuming of what this tree had to offer would be fatal to their own spiritual existence. They would die. Knowing all of this, the couple went ahead and partook of the fruit of the tree anyway, and so humanity became aware of both good and evil. It is significant for us to note that these two elements of moral opposites are the only ones that men know anything about. Everyone, since the partaking of the forbidden fruit in the Garden, is born with some perception of good and evil, and, as our Lord told us when He came to earth, everyone is following one or the other of these two paths. While it is indeed true that no man can follow both of these paths at the same time, it is likewise true that he is unable to avoid both of them at the same time. It is

impossible for man to occupy a neutral position. This is what Jesus was teaching when He told the people, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matthew 6:24. Since Christ knew this, He could safely tell us that only good trees bear good fruit, for corrupt trees always bear evil fruit. (Matthew 7:15-20.) Fruit bearing is the direct result of the path men elect to follow with their lives.

The eating of the fruit in the garden did much more than introduce them to the element of evil. The actual eating was a direct violation of divine Command and so man was exposed to transgression for the first time. To know good and do it not is identified in the Holy Scripture as sin. (James 4:17.) All men are aware that the committing of sin is the practice of evil. The Word declares that man was created in God's image. (Genesis 1:27.) Man, in the beginning, was exposed to nothing but good. The concept of evil came from an outside source. We automatically associate the good with God. God is also the One who breathed into man the breath of life so that we became living souls. Psalm 36:9, speaking of the Lord, declares, "For with thee is the fountain of life:..." We know of no other source of life. Man was informed in the garden that if he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he would perish. To eat was to transgress and transgression is sin and, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezekiel 18:4. Men who violate the law of good, by knowingly transgressing its understood provisions, are severed from the fountain of life and so, of course, they perish spiritually.

While transgressing man is indeed severed from the tree of life so that he can partake of its fruit no longer, yet, God in His great mercy, still grants man an extended period of physical life in this body. Spiritual life in the soul expires. It is this extended period of physical life that our Lord has used in an effort to recover His sinning creation back to Himself. Man sins by committing willful transgression, but God does not strike him dead immediately. The physical life goes on and the Lord still strives with the soul of the sinner. God's hope is that somewhere in his physical lifespan, the man will acknowledge his soul's need and cry out for mercy and deliverance. If he will but do that, our God is ready and willing to abundantly pardon. It is an act of God's great mercy that He allows man to go on living physically even though he is sinning and the declared penalty for sin is death. It is in this period of proffered mercy, where penalty is withheld, that God deals with transgressing hearts and offers them redemption from sin if they will yield to Him, begin keeping His laws and quit the sin business. It is also in this period of extended mercy where men sometimes feel they have defeated the proclamation of the Creator, for they are sinning with apparent impunity. But the Word has already pronounced the decree, "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." The evil we perceive in our own lives convinces us that what God has already proclaimed is true. We are no longer in His image, for God does not violate the laws of righteousness. Men do. One of the first things man learned after he acquired the knowledge of evil was that he

possessed no power within himself that could conquer evil; consequently, it would take him captive at its will. (Romans 7:18-24.)

Just a few moments' contemplation convinces that a notable change was wrought in man at the fall. Only with the help of the Lord will men be able to grasp the magnitude of the change. Our God is the Author of all goodness and truth; thus, the product of His divine making would be of that same quality. This provides us a degree of insight into the nature man possessed in the beginning. Man was totally and completely God-oriented for he knew nothing else. He was holy for he knew no evil. He was good for he knew nothing bad. His concepts were in truth for he knew nothing of deceit or lying. His judgments were correct for they were based on truth. His decisions were righteous for he knew nothing but righteousness. He was guided and directed by the same forces of moral virtue and purity that God is directed by. He knew nothing else but to perform in holiness for he was created holy. Those pure forces working in man produced in man God's identical image. Man was clean and upright for he was pure and holy. He knew no selfishness for God is not selfish. Man was totally and completely subject to the mind and will of his Holy Creator.

With the coming of the fall, all of this made a drastic change. God is holy simply because He is free to exercise His own will and that is what He has willed Himself to be. In order to achieve that condition, He deliberately and intentionally obeys the requirements of holiness. It makes Him righteous and holy. In His faithfulness to man, God made known

to man that to pursue the path of evil would end in death. Man, like God, could partake to his heart's content of the produce of all good and suffer no adverse effect, but to consume the evil would bring destruction. The couple in the garden, prompted by the suggestions of the tempter, questioned the honesty and truthfulness of God's declaration and so they disobeyed God's instruction. They partook of the tree of evil and in so doing they transgressed the law of righteousness. They automatically became sinners when they followed that path. The coming of evil into men's lives forced a separation from God for God still abstains from all evil. With the departure of God from men's lives went also the element of spiritual life, for God is the fountain of life. But the absence of spiritual life was not the only void left in man at God's departure. Until that time man had been totally and completely God-centered in every facet of his existence. He thought like God, he acted like God, he was in perfect conformity to everything God is, for he was in God's very image. Now, God was gone. Man knew of no way to rid himself of his own sin and thus restore himself back into God's good graces. Sin requires unblemished sacrifice for its atonement and man possessed no such sacrifice to offer. He was blemished by sin himself which left him unacceptable as a sacrifice for the need of his own soul. (Isaiah 1:1-15.)

The departure of God from man's heart and life left man with a great void. The only image known to man that could fill that void was his own, even though he was sinful. Thus man put himself in the place that rightfully belonged to God in his heart and life.

Where he had once been totally God-centered, he is now, since the fall, totally self-centered. His first and natural concerns are for himself and his own interests. His natural impulse is for his own welfare and pleasure. He is completely self-oriented. It is the pursuit of this self-interest that produces greed, hatred, jealousy, etc. Man is totally absorbed and saturated with the desires, pleasures and ambitions of his own flesh. This is what we call the Adamic Nature, the Carnal Nature, the Fleshly Nature, for Adam was the first man to possess it and he bequeathed it to all who sprang from him.

In Romans 5:12, we find this writing, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." We may wonder how it can be that the original transgression of the couple in the Garden could reach to all other men. It is not such a mystery when we begin to ponder the laws of genetics. No man is able to transmit a moral likeness to a succeeding generation which he does not possess himself. God could convey holiness and life to man for He was in full possession of these qualities. While God had given them to man in the beginning, yet, these are the very qualities man lost in the fall. Fallen man no longer possesses God's moral image, he possesses his own image. With God's image gone, the only thing man has to transmit is his own self-image. That self-image is what we find emerging in human offspring all the way from Adam to the present generation of men. (Genesis 5:3, Psalm 14:1-3, Romans 3:23, Proverbs 20:9.) Just as soon as individuals become mature enough to recognize themselves

in possession of themselves, they begin to pursue their own self-interest.

Since all men descended from the original couple, then of course, all men become involved in the original sin. Each one receives of the Adamic self-nature that Adam and Eve adopted to themselves. Then of course, the patterns of the first couple's lives begin to reflect in succeeding generations. The works of the flesh begin to appear. Psalm 58:1-5, "Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men? Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth. The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely."

This is the inevitable result of following the ways of self and the flesh. It is also what we find developing in every human life as it progresses towards maturity. Man's inherited nature is to please himself and satisfy his own desires. This pursuit will automatically take him into the ways of sin for the pleasure of the flesh is not the way of holiness. As self exerts itself more and more in each life, so the works of the flesh develop more and more in the life also. The flesh follows the ways of its own pleasure and lust.

We may inquire as to why it is, when both parents of a child are saved and sanctified, the child is not born holy. This is explained when we realize that the personal cleansing provided in a sanctified expe-

rience was not designed nor intended to cleanse the human race. Sanctification is a provision of divine mercy to cleanse the individual heart. It is granted only to those who make the necessary concessions of dedication and consecration of their own free will to meet their own personal need. The parents' free will and consent cannot cover the will of their offspring. Their child is born a free moral agent within itself, the same as the parents were and the course of the child's life will be the direct result of its own individual choosing. One couple's Holy living can only answer to satisfy its own need. It has no ability to project its holiness to cover the life of another. If the child is to become saved and sanctified, it will be the direct result of the child's own choosing.

There is another result of eating the forbidden fruit. Man also became acutely aware of good. Knowledge tends to fix responsibility so that when one becomes aware of right, he feels himself obligated to perform the right. Remember, man was originally an obedient child, performing in complete accordance with the pleasure and virtue of his heavenly Father. Though the influences of the flesh are strong, compelling men into performance they despise, there is still this inward prompting back toward the good, the upright, the true. All men admire, to some degree, a noble life and all men desire, at times, that they might do better. Men who yearn strongly enough, discover the desire of their heart in the bosom of the Savior. (Matthew 7:7-8.)

God and His Concern for Man

We have already observed some of the majesty that belongs to God in the Kingdom over which He presides. Now, let us observe some of what He is as a Being in His own right. Isaiah 46:9 tells us that He is God and that He is one of a kind, stating that there is none like Him. The eighth chapter of Proverbs tells us of God possessing wisdom. It also records some of the accomplishments He was able to achieve by utilizing His divine wisdom. Our own understanding tells us that wisdom is only able to function in those beings who possess mental capacity. Wisdom cannot direct a being who is unable to comprehend wisdom's prompting. So completely is God given to the instruction of wisdom until we recognize in Him a Being who is what we call omniscient or all-wise.

In Isaiah 46:10 God declares, "...My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Mental faculty alone would accomplish nothing. But mental comprehension, combined with ability to achieve, produces dramatic result. By wisdom, God visualized a functioning, useful universe and by power, He was able to bring His visions into performing reality. By considering the text of Isaiah 4:10 we realize that God is able, or has the power, to do whatever He sets Himself to do. There is no power capable of deterring Him from His purpose. Thus we recognize in Him a Being who is not only all-wise but who is also omnipotent, or all-powerful. (Isaiah, chapters 45 and 46.)

When we consider these faculties performing in the area of moral accomplishment, they broaden our

concept of God again. Wisdom declares in Proverbs 8:12 that it is found performing where prudence dwells. True wisdom speaks only truth and all wickedness is abomination in wisdom's sight, for all evil is unwise. God has recognized the virtue of true wisdom and what it teaches. Being a free moral agent in His own right, He recognizes Himself capable of His own selection. Possessing power sufficient to accomplish His purposes renders Him able to be whatever He wills Himself to be. Wisdom has supplied Him the understanding that righteousness abides forever for there is nothing about it that corrodes, ages or decays. Prudence has prompted Him to take the path of wisdom and so He has embraced wisdom's counsels. Being all wise, He cannot be tricked, fooled or tempted away from the path of wisdom. Being all powerful, there is no strength or force capable of preventing Him being what He has purposed in Himself to be. Since these are His choices, then, of course, to pursue them will produce their characteristics and so we find in God a Being who is righteous and altogether holy. This is what makes God eternal, for the ways of righteousness do not decay. God is altogether righteous. So complete is His dedication to righteousness and so fervent is His attendance to its ways, until the Word says, He cannot even be tempted away from it. In the same text the Word declares that God does not tempt men into evil either. Men, the Word says, are tempted and drawn away through the enticement of their own lusts. (James 1:13-14.) Think of what perplexity it would plunge men into if they felt the very God they are looking to for deliverance from temptation is the same God who is tempting

them. Jesus faithfully identified for us the true source of all such activity. Here is what He said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." John 8:44. All of this is the direct opposite of what God is as a Being, but the devil seems to be a spirit and eternal the same as God is.

John 4:24 tells us, "God is a Spirit...." This lets us know that He is not confined to a physical form as we are. He is not limited to either time or space. This helps us understand how He can be everywhere all at once. He can offer Himself a present help in time of need to every man, everywhere, all at the same time through the Spirit. It also explains how He can discern the thought and intent of every heart. The inner functions of each human mind are closed to other human minds but no mind is closed to the probing of the Spirit. This lets us know that God understands all men, altogether, everywhere all at once, through the function of His Spirit. He is omnipresent.

May we consider for a moment another factor. Referring again to Isaiah 46:10, we hear Him say, "...I will do all my pleasure." Let us notice a sequence of function. God is capable, as we have observed, of moral selection and He has so completely yielded Himself to the ways of virtue until He identifies Himself as the personification of all righteousness. (Psalm 145:17.) He is also the Possessor of all true wisdom. Along with these, He has the power to perform His

own intent. It was divine wisdom that conceived the idea of a universe with a world in it. That world would provide housing for free moral agents who would be capable of being righteous as He is righteous if they would so choose. With His power He brought His conceived idea into existence and so the universe is here, a manifest product of His own personal design and intent. The idea of a physical universe is the expression of the wisdom of God. The creation of that conceived universe is the expression of the power of God. The manifest functioning of the universe is the expression of the will of God. He is the prevailing force that caused it all to happen and He tells us it will continue to function until He issues the command for it to cease. (Revelation 10:5-6.) Obviously, He is the Owner and Operator of the entire enterprise.

Every perceived effect, to the mind of man, is accompanied by a legitimate cause, if that cause can only be discovered. Now, we recognize the will of God expressed in divine intent as it functions in creation all about us. Any clear thinking mind could see then that He is the first cause, the all cause, the uncaused cause. He is the Originator of it all. The physical universe and everything in it is here because He willed it to be here that it might fulfill His divine purpose. It is His divine intelligence that brought it all into being.

Upon completion of the universe and all of its attending functions, it is said that God beheld the finished product and exclaimed, "Behold, it is very good." From that time forward God was acutely interested in everything that concerned His new cre-

ation and He was very attentive to it. Obviously, God's prime concern was the man whom He had placed here, for the man was created in God's own image. God carefully provided for all of man's physical needs and supplied an ideal place where man could dwell. He was careful to warn him away from that which would damage or harm him.

All of this reveals another side of our God. Love is that disposition of heart and feeling of affection that one intelligent being feels for another. God loved His new creation and it filled His deepest desire when He beheld His created ones loving and obeying Him in response to His protecting instruction. It grieved God deeply when His created man elected to forsake His counsel and go another way for then He could no longer associate with His man as He had before. Even though the departure worked a separation between man and God, yet God never stopped loving and caring for the human family. As it is with other of His characteristics, so it is with this one also. So complete and intense is His affection for man until He declares Himself the personification of love. So deeply ingrained in God is His love for man until He has dedicated Himself to man's spiritual recovery.

God's sovereign majesty, excellence of wisdom, unlimited power, perpetual duration, righteousness of character and fervency of love presents Him to us as an awesome Being and well it should. What an encouragement and inspiration it is to us when we realize that this selfsame awesome God has set Himself in array to recover us from our fallen, sinful condition.

When all of creation was performing according

to God's plan and obeying His rules, He was well pleased with it and pronounced it very good. But the introduction of sin into the man's sector ruined that part of creation, for God is holy. He could no longer associate with man and his sinful ways, so man was put out of the garden lest he eat of the tree of life and live forever in that sinful condition. That state would be worse than this. However, God, being of the nature He is, was not satisfied to leave the man in his fallen condition without making an effort toward his recovery. His Son would later explain to man the nature of the Father and how He felt. In Luke 15:3-5 He gave this account, "And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing." Remember, in the discussion of God's subjects, the declaration was made that "all souls are mine." Though transgression came and sin entered with its defilement and guilt, yet God did not deny His ownership of this property. While He could not associate with it because He cannot abide sin, yet He still claimed it as His own. He felt obligated to do what He could to effect man's recovery. Nowhere do we find God denying the ownership of man until after the judgment has taken place. Then He will say to those on the left hand, depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you. (Luke 13:25-27.) This is where the wicked are formally disowned by God.

We may assess this situation and ask, how could God deny ever having known man when He is man's

Creator? We may also recall the position Christ took when He said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven," thus indicating that all children are acceptable to Him in His domain. But as we ponder the matter, we realize that no man is guilty of and held responsible for sin until he has knowingly committed sin. Children who have not come to an understanding or concept of moral wrong are therefore innocent of known wrongdoing and so are held guiltless of willful transgression in the Lord's eyes. Their own ignorance of sin will leave them uncondemned. While this is true at the immediate present, it is also true that the carnal nature is inherent in them. As they mature enough to begin to comprehend, then they will knowingly follow the promptings of the flesh and its desires which will separate them from the Lord. Known transgression is sin.

It is this carnal nature, so vividly described in Psalm 58:1-5, that God refuses to know or give any place to. All men who have spent their entire time on earth under the influence of this Satan-introduced and directed power, need not look for nor expect any recognition from a holy God at the judgment for there will be none.

The carnal nature so totally distorts the heart until it automatically responds to the impulses of the flesh. This fact makes men, from the womb, creatures that God does not know for such nature is foreign to Him. Men who traverse this physical life are exposed to the various and sundry promptings and pleadings of God's Spirit to turn from the evil and do right. If they still go on and leave this world unsaved,

they may be justly classified as unknown to Him. Though He has, indeed, brought them into the world, yet, because the choice is theirs, they will never be His unless they freely and willingly give themselves to Him. If they will repent of their sin and yield themselves to serve righteousness, He will forgive their transgressions and claim them as His own.

That God was, and is, troubled about man's fallen condition is plainly held forth in the Scripture. II Peter 3:9 reads, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." He wants every man to come to Him and be saved. His possession was a valuable thing to Him in its original condition and He is willing to bring that condition into being again if men will allow Him the privilege. Isaiah 59:16 says, "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him: and his righteousness, it sustained him." He then, being just and righteous as He is, would become the power and supply the means for man's escape. He alone could meet the requirement of divine justice and accomplish the task. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Since the only means we know that can overcome evil is righteousness, we recognize immediately the wisdom of God's choice. God is altogether righteous; then of course, His only begotten Son would bear that same image. The qualities of character

which God possessed would transmit on to His Offspring, and so by placing this Offspring in the earth, sufficient righteousness would be available to overcome all the evil present. He was sent to destroy the works of the flesh and of the devil. (I John 3:8, Galatians 5:19-21.) This one Son, begotten of God, would be able to bring to all humanity who would accept Him, enough righteousness to defeat all the wickedness that had attached itself to man since the fall. Little wonder then, that He is designated the Author of eternal salvation.

Man's Concern

Not only was God concerned about the transgression of His people and the resulting breach which it produced between God and man, but man was also disturbed.

Man is by nature a religious being who naturally seeks a higher power to worship. But he kept finding his efforts frustrated because of his sin. Listen to his pitiful cry. Isaiah 59:11-12, "We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them." Every way man would turn, always there was this specter of sin that kept looming up. It prevented him from being in intimate contact with the kind, tender and loving heavenly Father he so longed to know and serve. Jeremiah 10:23 expressed it this way: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Even though man should develop every faculty available to him to the fullest of his ability and exploit it to its highest attainment, yet it was never sufficient to lead men into the way of holiness. Only holiness would allow him to associate with a holy God. There was no answer to the problem, when it was traced to its roots, but to realize that if man ever knew the joy of salvation it would have to be through the influence of a power other than his own. The only way he knew to pursue was his own way, and his own always led him astray, so that he missed the

mark. Little wonder, then, that we hear the plea of Psalm 14:7, "Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad." Man hoped for a day when provision would be made. The search of God's Word gave some hope that deliverance was forthcoming. But the prophet realized that it was not yet revealed, and he longed to see it appear. Such an experience, he knew, would fill the longing of every honest heart and that heart would burst forth with joy and gladness. He wanted desperately to be a partaker of that wonderful blessing and so he sent forth his plea to his Maker that it might come forth.

Job also recognized the barrier that existed between God and his fallen men. Job 9:32-33, "For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both." Job's human makeup was such that he and God could not sit down together and work out a solution to problems. Man was self-willed and knew not how to direct his thinking into Godly channels. God's efforts to instruct him were rejected, disbelieved and refused so that mutual communication was utterly out of the question. We get a little inkling of how great was the gulf from the text which says, "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." John 1:5. The light, even though it was the light of life, when it reached to the darkness of sin had difficulty penetrating sin's dismal depths. Even the Anointed One proclaimed,

"...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. Man would have to be removed from sin's clutches before he would be fully able to comprehend the wonderful provision that had been made for him and was being offered to him. In the selection of His only begotten Son, God laid bare His own right arm and sent it forth in righteousness to meet the need of His fallen race. This was the Daysman that was needed, the Intercessor that could prevail, the One who could reach God with one hand and fallen man with the other and bring about a reconciliation between the two. This was the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us, whose glory we have seen, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father. (John 1:14.)

God's Plan for Man's Recovery

Creation was, has been, and is, God's own domain and jurisdiction by virtue of His own craftsmanship. He did not steal, rob or coerce His possessions from anywhere else. He created His own and consequently, justly and rightly seeks to recover that which has been removed from Him. Remember the text which states, "...All souls are mine;..." saith the Lord. Ezekiel 18:4. Since all souls belong to God, then let's inquire into the plan He devised and put into operation to recover the "lamb that was lost." From His lofty throne on high, He began to foretell events that would occur which would indicate the method He would use. Psalm 2:6-8 reads like this: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." God, the almighty God, who is and has been from the beginning, and who is the Ruler of all things, has now proclaimed that He would appoint and establish a King to be the sovereign over a territory which God would ascribe to Him. The relationship which would exist between the Appointee and the Appointer would be that of Father and Son. We could expect, then, to find that appointed Son bearing the identical image and characteristics of His Father. We find Him exclaiming on one occasion, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then,

Shew us the Father?" John 14:9. Jesus bore the true image of His Father.

From Zion, under the old law, the decrees went forth. Zion was God's chosen seat where He agreed to meet with His chosen nation, and so this spiritual jurisdiction that would come into being would operate from His chosen location, also. Zion would still be Zion, only under its new sovereign its precepts would become spiritual and its laws would go clear to the heart of man's need. Notice the constraint that is placed on the candidate for office. He was not commanded to go; He was invited to reach out or ask. Not until He recognized the possibility of the offer and was willing to apply for the opportunity was He deemed worthy. Since He has come and won the redemption of fallen man, it becomes obvious that He asked of the Father and was granted the opportunity to come and win this inheritance.

Notice also that He was not given jurisdiction over the entire universe. God would go ahead with that administration the same as before; the Son would realize His jurisdiction over "the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth." The heathen are those who know not God and the uttermost parts are all who are separated from God. He tells us that when He came He concluded all in sin. (Romans 3:9.) He also declared that unless they repented, they would all likewise perish. (Luke 13:3-5.) The laws He enacted applied only to this specific section of creation and only those who willingly and gladly accept Him are governed by Him. He made no attempt to exercise authority in any other segment of God's overall domain. He came to seek and to save that which was

lost and He confined His efforts to that perimeter. While He did, on occasion, control the tempest, the sea, etc., yet He told them plainly, "the things I see my Father do, that I do also." John 5:19. He operated strictly under the regulations His Father had already established and was using. He made no new ones of His own, save in the sector which was ascribed to Him.

Another prophet beheld the pattern and wrote accordingly. Isaiah 9:6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:..." Notice here the acknowledgment of restricted jurisdiction. This one was not coming to rule all of creation but rather to work specifically with that segment that was in trouble. Here is man acknowledging the mission. The same man is recognizing the purpose and the need for the mission. He explains, "...Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:..." Unto those who have sinned and are defiled is this provision made. It is given that men might be recovered from the defilement of sin and again be able to associate freely in fellowship and unity with our heavenly Father. The governing rules enjoined upon His subjects would be appointed for them to follow. Beyond that He would make no effort to rule or govern any other part of God's overall domain. It was not given to Him; He was sent only to us. "...And the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice

from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isaiah 9:6-7. Here again we have the Father-Son relationship advanced, but notice the wording, "To us a son is born"—the normal means for offspring, but this one would not be of man's lineage. It was not to be the result of normal human effort or activity; it was to be "given." Without this quality, it would be no different from any other human offspring, and if such be true, it would be able to accomplish no more than any other of humanity. This Son was to be a Gift from the One who made the promise. Since He was the One who had declared the decree and had the power of supervision in His hand, then He, of course, could bestow its government upon whom He would. This Son was His chosen candidate. The Son would be familiar and acquainted with God's laws and manner of administration. He would be able to set up a governing structure that would be acceptable to the August Majesty who is over all. His name is called Wonderful for He did what no other man could do. All who have found in Him the answer for sin, realize what a great thing He has done and so His name becomes even more wonderful. Being acquainted with His Father, and the Father's image, He is able to counsel men in what the Father had designed men to be. Sin has so distorted man's concepts of what man was originally intended to be until he has no idea of what is acceptable. This Son would be able to reestablish that divine image upon the earth again. Men, under His counseling, could "measure to the stature of the fullness of Christ," and be saved simply by following His instruction. (Ephesians 4:13.)

The Pharisees of old became greatly offended when Christ proclaimed Himself the Son of God. But this was bequeathed to Him of the Father and He would utilize it in the building of His Kingdom. The characteristics He bore were those of His Father, and so the Kingdom He would build and govern would also be like that of His Father. Both were to be everlasting. He is the Prince of Peace, the very opposite of the tumult of sin. The growth or progress of His jurisdiction would not terminate or see any end, and its constant characteristic would be that of peace. Other earthly kingdoms have come and gone, but this one, He has said, will abide forever. Notice again the limitation of His jurisdiction. (Psalm 9:7.) It was to cover only the territory governed by the throne of David, namely the chosen people of God or those born of the Hebrew nation. This new Kingdom would govern and rule those who are born of His Spirit and who are washed in His blood. God Himself set about to see that all of this would come to fulfillment. We also hear the Son saying, "I do always those things that please my Father." (John 8:29.) The Son sent forth His appeal to all, "whosoever will," to come take of the water of life freely. (John 7:37-38, Revelation 22:16-17.) For all who accept, entrance is granted into the special Kingdom that was established to recover the lost. (John 1:12.) Thus the uttermost part of the earth is brought under the jurisdiction of the Lord Christ.

In Daniel 2:44 another prophet beheld this activity. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other

people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Quite often when we hear this scripture read and discussed, we almost get the impression that God had no Kingdom up until this time, but now He is going to assert Himself and establish for Himself, finally, a Kingdom. Not so. He has possessed His overall Kingdom and been reigning in it ever since He created it. He established its laws and put them in operation from the beginning. All of His creation is observing and obeying them except man. He is simply here announcing again that at the appointed time He will establish among the nations a spiritual Kingdom that He will preside over through His chosen Delegate. While other man-made dominions will crumble and fall to decay, the one He will establish will abide forever. History so far has proven it to be true.

Isaiah 32:1 says, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." The August Majesty on high is the King of righteousness and His Son is in His very image. His governmental administration will also be in like manner. His ruling in righteousness means He is conquering in righteousness. Those who are gathered to Him are made righteous and able to reign over sin in their lives. Thus they become princes ruling in judgment. They are able, by sound judgment, to discern the right and obtain power through the Spirit to perform the right. They are indeed princes in His everlasting Kingdom, for righteousness endures forever.

Matthew 17:5-6 reads, "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my be-

loved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." What greater affirmation could the Father give His Son than this, proclaimed even in the ears of those who were reluctant to believe? "This is indeed the Son that I have given to you. Hear His counsel and obey His commands." The indication was given that all He was doing, and had done, was acceptable and pleasing to the Father on high. If only man could accept it, God and man could be brought together and the longed for Daysman established. Why, oh why, is man so dull of hearing and so slow of heart to believe?

John 3:34-35 says, "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." Now, we can understand more plainly what the Son meant when he said, "No man can come to the Father but by me." And again, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby ye must be saved." The heathen, the uttermost part of the earth, the lost, He accepted as His inheritance. Then of course, His subjects would of necessity have to go through Him to obtain their need. He is the one the Father recognizes when He comes to the Father in behalf of the needs of His subjects.

II Peter 1:16-19 says, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." To the apostle this was no fairy tale nor figment of someone's imagination. This was actual fact and his reporting was of what he had actually seen and experienced. Yet even then, real as the experience was to him, he would not expect them to receive only his testimony alone. He diverted their attention to the great volume of prophecy that had already been given concerning this very thing. It is some of these same prophecies which we have been considering. Personal testimony is wonderful, but the Word of God is even more dependable than that. Combined, they should by all means be sufficient to convince the most obstinate skeptic to believe. If man will but believe, the Day Star will arise in his heart, ushering in the light of a new day. God was indeed in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

When salvation work has been completed, when the cup of iniquity is brimming full; when all has been done that can be done and the heir of the inheritance has recovered all it is possible to recover, then we hear the Word again. I Corinthians 15:24-28, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when He saith all things are put under

him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Now, we can plainly see that God did not relinquish at all His supreme sovereignty of the universe in any degree. He did not have in mind to replace Himself with a succeeding generation. He simply used a part of Himself to recover that which had gone astray. The entire operation was under His supervision all the time. It was carried out by His own faithful and obedient Son. That the Son was willing to accept that position of subordination to the Father seems evident by His own declaration. Revelation 3:21, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Ephesians 1:17-23, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to

be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Once again we notice the limit of the jurisdiction. He is "the head over all things to the church." His domain is the souls of fallen man. His laws are enacted for them and are applied to them in accordance with the faculties that belong to them.

Matthew 28:18, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." In accordance with that declaration of authority, He issued to them their duty and responsibility for the furtherance of the gospel of the Kingdom. He pointed out specifically the pattern they were to use. He also committed Himself to be their present companion in all the journey. (Matthew 28:18-20.) He is indeed a worthy Sovereign over His house.

Hebrews 1:1-4, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

Surely this text serves to substantiate the truth that the Son was given a dominion over which to reign. See also Hebrews 1:8-14 and Hebrews 2:6-18.

In John 3:3 this text is given: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee,

except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." In our physical existence, no man has anything to say about his birth. We are here through no choice of our own in any manner. We had nothing to say about whether or not we be here. We could not select our parents, we had no choice of nationality, we were given no color selection, we could not pick the features we would prefer, we had no choice of gender, we could not select the geographic location we would prefer to enter, nothing. In this new birth, such is not the case. No man will be born again without his own consent. When that consent is given and the individual willingly and voluntarily yields himself to his Savior to be His and His alone from then on, that individual becomes "born again" or a "new creature" in Christ Jesus. Only then, after this voluntary submission, will he realize how the Lord is ruling over His subjects and accomplishing His will in them. It is by this means that Christ is their Sovereign, their ruling Monarch, their King. They will begin to see the kingdom of Heaven.

Matthew 20:23 says, "And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." The Son seemed to be well informed as to how far His authority extended and He was careful not to overstep His bounds. Matthew 24:36 acknowledges to us that there are some things which the Father has kept strictly unto Himself, not sharing them even with the Son.

Quite often the question is asked, "What is the

difference between the Kingdom and the Church?" To attempt to make a comparison between the Church and God's universal Kingdom, over which He reigns and is the Sovereign, is hard to do. All of that domain is filling its place just as He designed it to in the beginning, except man. The planets keep their appointed orbits. The sun and moon fill their prescribed rolls. The stars continue as ordained. The earth turns on its axis, an axis that no man can find nor understand for sure how, or why. Yet God put it into function and it continues. The physical world continues according to His prescribed plan. We still have day and night, four seasons of the year, seedtime and harvest, rain and snow, sleet and hail, thunder and lightning. The biological world is performing according to the rules by which it was to be governed, just as He told it to. It reproduces after its own kind in the pattern which He prescribed for it to follow. It migrates, hibernates and adheres to all the characteristics ascribed to it. It remains in its allotted setting, doing what it was commanded to do from the beginning. The birds still find their place in the air and the fish still occupy the water. The beasts and creeping things are at home on the land. All of this is performing just as God commanded it to from the beginning. Where then, do we find any need for comparison or analogy for all of this with the Church? The law of instinct is readily identifiable in the biological world, but to what does it allude in the spiritual world or in the government of the Church? The Church is governed by an entirely different system as we shall soon discover.

Let us look for a moment at this new Kingdom

which God, in His majesty, has erected. He has set His own Son over it, ascribing all power and authority to Him for its administration. This is the Kingdom whose function is to be specifically and only the recovery of fallen man. We have no difficulty identifying this institution with the Church. Its purpose is to reclaim the honest ones who desire deliverance from sin. Its administration is in righteousness so that sin and its influence is defeated. Its righteous action is termed a new birth and the man who receives it is proclaimed a new creature, removed from the power of darkness. He is made a citizen in this special Kingdom that was erected by God's own Son. Those who obtain this experience are governed by the laws which the Administrator of the Kingdom prescribe for them. To each of them are given an abiding Companion or Comforter. The assigned function of this Comforter is to lead them into all truth and to supply them power to conform to discovered truth. This Kingdom of His dear Son we have no trouble identifying with His Church. No further portion of God's vast domain was given to be under Him and so we find His entire interest and effort being exerted toward the salvation of men. His rules point them in that direction and guide them unerringly along that path. He, the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us, is indeed unto them, "the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6.) Under His divine guidance our steps can be, and are led, in the way everlasting.

Jesus Himself described for us the work that was laid out for Him to accomplish before the salvation of man could become a reality. John 10:1 reads,

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." This is a well-known scripture and nearly all Bible readers will agree that to attempt entrance into salvation and consequently into heaven by any means other than the Door would result in failure. But this text is not dealing with candidates for heavenly citizenship. If it is, then how will we intelligently explain verse two? "But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." This would indicate that everyone who gets converted becomes the shepherd of the sheep; yet, the Word says there is one fold and one Shepherd. (John 10:16.) What then, is the real meaning of the text? The next verse says, "To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." The dictionary definition of a porter is: A person stationed at a door or gate to admit or assist those entering. Now, Jesus was made in the likeness of sinful flesh with one specified design and purpose in mind. He was to bring sinful man back into favor with His holy, heavenly Father. In order to discover the barriers that were erected and the doors that were closed that keep men and God apart, we would need to go back across the ages and observe what took place in the beginning. Genesis 3:24 says, "So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." This became an effective barrier. It was a closed door, which man had no power nor ability by his own strength or wisdom to reenter. It was guarded by duel agencies,

the heavenly beings called Cherubims and the rotating sword. Here is the porter, or doorkeeper, mentioned in John 10:3. Any agency purporting to restore enduring life to humankind would of necessity have to be able to penetrate that barrier. It was specifically charged with keeping the way of the tree of life. God did not want His beloved creation living perpetually in a sinful condition. This is why He established a watch of His own choosing and charged them with that responsibility. No man would be able to reach the goal of restored spiritual life without the knowledge and consent of these porters. Ephesians 6:17 mentions the sword of the Spirit and identifies it as the Word of God. Here we recognize the magnitude of the gatekeepers. The Cherubims, being of heavenly or spirit-world origin, would be able to protect the way of the tree of life from that sector. No spirit-world being would be able to violate the decree. Likewise, the Sword, or Word, the very agency that spoke earth and everything in it into existence, would protect the physical or natural side of the decree. Nothing from this sector would be able to violate the decree either.

We recognize immediately the need for protection from both the spirit world and the physical world when we remember that it was a spirit-world being who lured man away from his heavenly Creator in the garden. In time to come the Word, or Sword, began to speak through the mouths of prophets and lawgivers. They identified a suitable Candidate who would be acceptable to gain admittance back through the gate. He would also achieve access to the tree of life. This would be realized in the only begotten Son

of God. In the meantime, by means of His Word, God gave the Old Law and its attending ceremonies and rituals. He outlined the literal structure and its attending functions. He proclaimed Himself a Participant in the entire proceeding. Man likewise had his part to play. If man performed faithfully and in good trust, God would respond by performing His part and the resulting product would be hope of attaining eternal life for man. The law process had many details of ritual and ceremony. Each had its own particular meaning, yet the outstanding feature of the entire program was animal sacrifice? Animal sacrifice offered for sin and animal sacrifice accepted in atonement for sin became the accepted price for committed sin. Thus the price, having been paid and accepted, left the payer excused of his transgression for one year. The next year it would have to be offered again. All of this was but a foreshadowing of a complete sacrifice that at the proper time God would offer for the price of sin, and it would accomplish its purpose forever. Surrounding the Holy of Holies, where God dwelt in the temple, were the facilities needed to perform the various sacrifices. It was in this realm that man performed his prescribed duties and made his sacrifices according to the instruction of the Word or Law. In the Holy of Holies, God dwelt and performed His part of the transaction.

Now, let us take some notice of the fixtures that adorned God's quarters. There was the Ark of the Covenant. This speaks to us of divinely contracted commitment; a covenant that was offered by God and accepted, and performed by fallen man would lead men back into acceptable favor with their of-

fended Creator, so far as their literal sacrifice was able to achieve. The ark contained the Ten Commandments and the tables of stone. These were the basis for the offered contract. They, along with the other detailed requirements given in Leviticus, constituted man's instruction for duty. Also in the ark were Aaron's rod that budded and the pot of manna. Both of these speak to us of life and its sustaining requirements. The potential for life was present. Now, apparently, access was being offered to it under proper and acceptable circumstances. Overspreading the ark and above it was the mercy seat. God's willingness to occupy this mercy seat, denoting His intention to have mercy upon sacrificing humanity, is all important in the program. Though man was fallen, contaminated with sin and full of evil, yet, if he would turn to his Maker and meet the requirement, there was mercy freely granted. It was ready and waiting to usher man on into the other blessings provided, namely life. Remember that it was God's Word or given Law that spoke all of this to man's understanding. The Word, which we have already observed, is the expression of God and is found demonstrated by His Spirit. (Ephesians 6:17.) Over-spreading the mercy seat, and all that it contained, were two Cherubims. There was one on each side, each looking toward the other and their wings were spread out and touching over the mercy seat on one side and reaching to the wall on the other. These two Cherubims of beaten work, that were divinely designed and installed in the literal temple, were specifically given to typify the heavenly Cherubims who were divinely appointed to keep the way of the tree

of life. Forgiven sins would mean canceled transgression and where transgression was absent, life could be reinstated. Since it was the Master Himself who was instituting the plan, with His own person in attendance on the mercy seat beneath, then of course, the Cherubims would allow access back to the tree of life. The literal program of sacrifice and acceptance was but a pattern of the true that was to come. The divinely appointed porters were present and aware of the entire process. They freely gave of their consent. They are faithful at their post. Their performance reflects the mind and will of God in allowing access back to the tree of life through forgiveness because of acceptable sacrifice. The annual sacrifice for the sins of the people was brought into this Holy of Holies. That sacrifice was a direct requirement of the issued Word. It was carried out under the watchful eye of the two Cherubims overshadowing the mercy seat. Through the avenue of God's great mercy, the hope of life would be available to man again with the porters' sanction and approval. Man could offer only the sacrifice of animals, which could not meet the moral need of his soul. In time to come, God would offer His perfect sacrifice and it would meet every need of fallen man. So perfect and effectual was it that only once did it need to be offered and it would suffice forever. It met all the basic requirements of the law program and was accepted by the Author. It was so effectual that when the sacrifice was complete, the veil covering the Holy of Holies was rent asunder from top to bottom. This signified that full and complete access to eternal life was now available. The Word made flesh (the flaming Sword)

had spoken and the way was now open. His sacrificial blood, given for man's sin, opened the way directly into the provision of life made in the promise. The process possessed the full sanction and approval of the way-keeping Cherubims. This makes clear what He meant when He said, "...He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." John 10:1-3. Consider this in connection with the text which says, "That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. All men will hear His voice and those who respond and accept His appeal become His sheep and He leads them out of the bondage of sin. He is indeed the great Shepherd of the sheep and the Door through which they must enter. Others who proclaim to be able to fulfill this need for fallen man have climbed up some other way and are only thieves and robbers. The true porters will only open to the true Shepherd. Consequently, only He has access to the tree of life. Only He has the ability to lead His sheep into this blessed, holy experience.

We read of other kingdoms in the Word. One place speaks of the kingdoms of this world. We have no trouble identifying them. In Luke 4:5-6 when Christ was being tempted, Satan acknowledged ownership of the kingdoms of this world and declared that he exercised jurisdiction in them. Christ did not contest the claim. Various places speak of "the kingdom

of Heaven." In a great many of these texts the application is obviously toward this Kingdom of His Son. In those cases we get the impression that the term "kingdom of Heaven" is referring to this divine institution that was conceived by the mind of God in heaven. It was divinely and supernaturally sent to this world to accomplish what nothing else had ever been able to accomplish. Its divine origin would set it apart and distinguish it from the human kingdoms of earth and so it was designated the "kingdom of Heaven." It is also "The Kingdom of His dear Son," and likewise "A Kingdom of Peace." The Son is "The Prince of Peace."

In the classic text, in which the Church is first mentioned, we notice that Christ made some positive and authoritative pronouncements. He not only announced His intentions, but declared the infallibility of the structure when it was completed. Matthew 16:13-18, "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This declaration of Peter's was a public acknowledgment that here in person

was the fulfillment of God's promise of One to come. That coming One was to be a King in His own right, with jurisdiction over which to reign and subjects to govern. The acknowledgment of this fact was the rock-hard foundation of truth upon which He would build. The result of that building He would call "His Church." Men who are "born again" are born of the Spirit, which makes them offspring of God. Jesus was the offspring of God, being the Only Begotten, whom sin never touched. All who are born again become members of one big family, the family of God. Salvation makes them citizens in our Lord's dominion, members of His Church and part of His Family. There seems to be no practical way to distinguish between these three classifications. All seem to be referring to the one and selfsame thing, only under different titles. The Kingdom God provided, the Family God heads as Father, the Church which His Only Begotten built in God's name, are synonymous—they are one.

Now, here is a truth of great significance that begins to take shape in our understanding. It is God who prescribed and established the porters who are responsible for keeping the way of the tree of life. Jesus and the plan of salvation He brought met the porters' approval and so He was accepted past the porters to the throne of mercy. The plan He presented provided for His subjects deliverance from sin and access to holiness, thus correcting the very thing that had removed man from God in the beginning. No other candidate known to man has been able to achieve all of this. Religious systems come and go and they spring from all kinds of sources, but the

important thing is that unless the system and its propagator are able to win the approval of the keepers of the way of life, they have no life to offer their followers. Jesus described those who indulge in such things as they who climb up some other way, and He pronounced them thieves and robbers. Christ's ability to satisfy the porters with His sinless, holy life provided Him access to the Father, who is the Source of all life. By this, He is able to offer eternal life to all of His true followers. His true followers are those who have been cleansed from sin in Christ's own blood and who keep themselves free from sin by the power of His Spirit. This cleansing, keeping process renders them acceptable candidates to pass the gatekeepers into God's divine presence also. Any movement or system of religion, regardless of how cunningly it is devised or how popular it may be among the masses of the people, if it makes no provision for cleansing from sin and keeping from sin, will not pass the gatekeeping porters. Then of course, it can offer no access to God and eternal life. It can provide nothing but false hope and final disappointment. Christ's Kingdom was to be established in righteousness; therefore, we may justly expect that all of His subjects will be made righteous or else they would defile His Kingdom. Righteousness is required in order to pass the porters. Any establishment offering its subjects anything less than true moral righteousness has not passed the gatekeeping porters and so cannot possibly provide for anyone access to eternal life.

A Few Thoughts About Man

Man's transgression is the event that produced the need for a special Kingdom; man's recovery is the prime objective of that Kingdom. It would seem profitable to consider how the new King in His jurisdiction went about to accomplish His purpose. First of all, let us give some thought to the depths to which man had fallen. The great majority of humankind had degenerated under the yoke of sin, both committed and inherited, to the place that they scarcely knew or were able to discern anything about God at all. Their pursuits of life had been after their own selfish, fleshly interests for so long until they no longer had any concept of what a divine nature would be like. So great was the darkness that when the light did finally begin to come, it is said "the darkness comprehended it not." We get a glimpse of the magnitude of this statement when we realize that normally the deeper the darkness, the greater is accentuated the introduction of light. In this case darkness had deepened until light was not even able to penetrate it. Yet, in the face of all of this, if man was to be recovered, light would somehow have to prevail. Christ came, the Light of life. Life could come from no other source for it was only to Him that the porters opened. His assigned task was to penetrate this veil of darkness with the illumination of understanding. With understanding, men could comprehend the true and living God and be drawn to Him for their salvation. Unless that was to happen, they had no hope. He was confident of His ability to fill the place that was assigned to Him. His forerunner

proclaimed in advance, "This is the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." He was equal to the task.

The only gods man knew were the gods of his own making. Since man has no ability to convey characteristics he does not possess, then of course, his visualized gods would possess the nature and disposition of man. They were greedy and lustful, torn with strife and contention, deceitful and dishonest, cruel and heartless, bearing no resemblance to the true and living God. (Psalm 115:4-8.) This is but a glimpse of the condition of man, but these very conditions are what designated him heathen. These are the very heathen who were to be the inheritance of the Son made King. If they were to be reached, the King would have to extend Himself clear to the depths to which they were fallen and begin His work with what He found available to work with.

One quality which He knew was there, evidently placed there by a loving Creator, is the fact that all men are by nature religious beings. All seem to have a desire to worship something. This does not necessarily mean that all men are inclined to go to church as we know it. It means that all men entertain some feeling of reverence toward what they consider a superior being. They may not ascribe to it any visible form, regarding it as a spirit. They may accept it as a tree, a rock, the sun, the moon, stars, a river, a beast, or an endless list of other objects, but always they ascribe to it a power above and beyond that of normal human ability. It would take a great deal of effort, teaching and patience to bring them to an understanding of the true and living God.

Man has demonstrated a disposition to worship from the very beginning. Genesis 4:3-4 gives the account of the two boys of the first family unit who came to offer sacrifice before the Lord. There is no account of them having been commanded to sacrifice. No custom had been established of which we have any record. However, our God knew even then, that in order to satisfy the requirement of divine justice, blood would have to be shed before sin could be remitted. He also knew that these young men, having never been taught in the principles of transgression and sacrifice, would not understand the functions and purposes of the process. God knew the requirements, and God is completely honest. It would be unthinkable for Him to accept a sacrifice that shed no blood for sin here and then later demand that blood be shed in the same situation. That action would confuse all men. Unless the process followed a fixed pattern, how could anyone be certain his sacrifice was accepted? The explanation given of the rejected sacrifice was that it still left sin lying at the door. That is the reason it was refused. If the primary purpose for offering a sacrifice was because of sin and it did not accomplish the purpose, then its performance was useless. If God had accepted the action under those circumstances it would have left the boy with a false hope. God's honesty would not allow Him to do that. In time to come, as men became able to comprehend moral values, He could explain to them. Sin committed can only be remitted by an unblemished blood sacrifice offered. The price that must be paid for sin is death. This animal life that was offered was brought in the hope that its

lifeblood might be accepted for sin and the sinning man be freed. The fruit of the ground had no life-blood to offer and so there was nothing to answer for the man's sins. They were left lying at the door. These young men had no way of knowing all of these details at that time, but God did, and so He was faithful to what He knew to be true. It appears that they simply felt a reverence and a need to worship a superior being.

This feeling of reverence toward a higher power is basically the same feeling being experienced in humanity today when we feel a desire within ourselves to live more virtuous, moral lives. Responding to an impulse that prompts us toward what we feel is a better quality of living makes us feel better about ourselves. We feel that we are improving. It also leaves us feeling more closely associated with whatever power or influence it was that prompted us to such personal upgrading. It is God who appeals to men to live better lives, and the feeling of satisfaction that we enjoy when we comply is what we call the blessing of obedience. It never fails. No man has ever deliberately expended honest effort in service to our Lord and gone unrewarded.

No doubt Adam and Eve had spoken to their sons of the time they had spent in company with the God they had once known, but with whom they could no longer associate. Whatever their experience may have been, there was obviously this inward desire to worship in sacrifice before this Supreme One.

In Genesis 8:20 is given the account of Noah's reaction and response to having been spared the destruction of the flood by means of the ark. Under

stress of no constraint whatever of which we have any account, only the feeling of reverence and worship which he felt from within himself toward his divine Benefactor, he built an altar and sacrificed. "And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar." Genesis 8:20. This voluntary, spontaneous manifestation of appreciation and gratitude had a profound effect upon God. His response was an expression of pity for man's condition. Verse 21: "And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth;..." God was realizing that it was useless to punish or penalize a man for a thing he knew not how to prevent. Raw flesh burning has no pleasing odor. It was not the burning of flesh that pleased God; it was the attitude and disposition of heart that prompted the burning that touched God's heart. Consequently, He exclaimed, "It is man's imagination that leads him astray. When he recognizes reality his response is acceptable." Noah came face to face with the undeniable reality that the great flood, for which he had prepared so long, had come and gone and he and his family had been spared. This was truth that could not be shaken and so his gratitude overflowed. He worshipped spontaneously, willingly, gladly and genuinely. It touched God's heart then, it will touch His great heart of love yet today.

Genesis 12:7 reads like this: "And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto

the Lord, who appeared unto him." Here again is an account of an individual who came in close, intimate contact with the true and living Supreme Being. His spontaneous reaction was a response to his feeling of reverence to that Being and so he built an altar and worshipped. So intense was his devotion and so firm was his persuasion of the truth that he had been receiving from his God, until he would not let it go. He became the father of the faithful. He had not accepted imagination or fantasy. What he had experienced was reality so convincing that he could accept it as truth and believe in it, though the Scripture says he never saw it! (Hebrews 11:8-13.)

We may wonder at what perhaps seems a quaint pattern of worship to us, but before we criticize them too severely, let us pause here and notice a little more of what the fall in the garden exposed man to. In the garden, the only existence man knew outside of himself was God, the One who created him. He was a God who was altogether holy in every way. He told no falsehood, He practiced no deceit, He indulged in no dishonesty. He was altogether dependable and trustworthy in every way. Man lived in God's holy presence completely free of all doubt or fear, for there was no reason to doubt and man knew nothing to fear. It wasn't until after the encounter with Satan that man was exposed to deceit and dishonesty. Man soon learned that scarcely anything Satan presented could be depended on to be as it was presented. God's true image was gone now, because of man's disobedience, so man was continually exposed to this lying, deceptive, dishonest influence all of the time. Little-wonder that he grew to distrust everything that

came along and to fear for his own safety and personal welfare in everything that was presented to him. He soon learned that without God's holy presence to guide him, he was helpless against the superior power of the Devil. He could not even be sure of his own assessments of right and wrong. The adversary would so cunningly twist what was wrong until it seemed to be all right and so he would be snared again. When we realize this, in a measure at least, we can understand how it was that humanity became reluctant to believe or trust anything. We may say, "But God was talking to him so he should have believed and listened," but we have to remember that Satan is a spirit being the same as God and that he presents what he has to offer to man through the same channels that God uses to present His information.

With a brief picture of this sad state of affairs before us, we cannot help but see how important to man becomes the issue of truth. We realize its essence more clearly by what our Savior brought to us. Notice His words: "Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." John 18:37. In His previous teaching to the people He gave this: "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the

father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." John 8:43-45.

Truth revealed will automatically expose deceit that is hidden, and Christ is fully able and thoroughly competent to accomplish the revealing. But that is not the problem. What is accomplished when the truth is revealed if no one is willing to accept and follow it? This is what the Word means when it says, "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people..." Isaiah 60:2. When we begin to realize the far-reaching effect a taskmaster like Satan has had upon fallen humanity, we can better understand how it is that one of the first things our Lord does in each of our lives is to reestablish in us concepts of truth that provide us something reasonable, stable and secure to attach our souls to and believe in. To achieve this He begins to introduce us to undeniable and irrefutable influences about us that testify of themselves to an existing truth. Each of these influences, as we recognize and examine them, reaffirm the testimony of the others so that we are increasingly convinced of the truth of the whole. As we recognize these various truths, we become more and more aware that the Author of all this is also One who is worthy of our recognition. He is One to whom we can bring our honest and truthful worship and not be disappointed. Our natural inclination to worship may be safely brought to Him for He will be honest and truthful with us. Truth presents and establishes reality. Divine truth, faithfully presented to honest human intelligence, provides that individual with such irrefutable fact until he feels safe to rest his eternal soul upon it.

God, of course, is at liberty to reveal Himself to every man as He sees fit and no doubt He does. But there are also undeniable truths that are recognized by all men. They are what are called primitive concepts and we would like to consider some here briefly. They consist of recognized and established influences of reality that have touched and affected all men of all ages. Acts 14:17 tells us, "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

Human mentality, being what it is and performing as it does, helps us to understand how it is that the perception of reality would lead men to God. When we perceive and observe an undeniable function performing right before our eyes, our own personal intelligence prompts us that something has caused this action to take place. When we observe processes occurring which could only be caused by some Power or Force greater than anything we know, we begin to inquire above and beyond what we can intelligently explain, and it brings us face to face with the true Author. May we present a few examples.

One good example of primitive concept that witnesses to all is the fact of time. Time came into existence before man and has influenced every human that has ever lived. The Bible opens with this statement, "In the beginning." This is an expression of time demarcation. It is the announcement of the start of sequenced events, the process we call time. Thus it seems that time is perhaps the first thing that was created. Genesis 1:3-5 tells us about the introduction of time division. "And God said, Let there be

light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." Time is a remarkable thing. Were it divested of all of its identifying characteristics, man would be greatly handicapped in his efforts to cope with it. Men placed in conditions where time divisions are not available soon lose all concept of where they are in regard to time. None of the senses man possesses provide him with any ability to measure or identify time. How would we describe a minute? We might say, "It is that time division found between a second and an hour," but what have we really said? We say we have clocks to tell us the time but actually what we are measuring is mechanical movement. We can set up a device which, when water is passed through it, will measure the exact amount of water. We can do the same thing with gas or electricity, but we are hard put to measure time. We have the original demarcations of day and night, winter and summer which, we have discovered, are the result of the earth's turning on its axis, but without these, we would find the exact measure of time difficult indeed.

The text tells us the Creator put into effect the first division or measure of time when He spoke day and night into existence. This reality becomes a truth which all men of all ages have beheld and pondered. Without fail it performs its function. Earth has never missed a day since the Lord put it into operation. Not only did He divide the light and dark to make day and night, He divided those up into seasons.

Genesis 8:22, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." While we cannot see nor feel what we think of as time, yet we are fully aware of its passing and of its effect. Very few things we know of are able to endure the effects of time. All are aware that time, in relation to a great many of its subjects, is rationed or allotted. Beyond that limit they seem powerless to pass. All men have time on their hands and nearly all men feel a sense of responsibility for what they do with time. When we consider time, we are compelled to acknowledge it is here. We ask, from whence does it come and to where does it go and what force causes it to progress from the one to the other? We are grappling with reality. Revelation 10:6 tells us, "And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer." God has acknowledged responsibility for starting the element of time. He has fixed its denominations, He has declared His ability to and His intention of bringing it to its appointed terminal. The fact of time's reality and the undeniable presence of its regulation surely ought to convince us of the truth of its termination. The same source has prescribed the function for all three. Thus this recognized reality points men to the existence of a higher intelligence. We are brought face to face with the One who designed and created all of this and who even now keeps it working. We are compelled to recognize a living, active God.

Another example of a primitive concept is that of space. Here again we may trace its origin to the beginning. Genesis 1:7-10, "And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. And God said, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good." Here we behold the allotting of specific substances to prescribed perimeters, or in other words, the assigning of space. In subsequent activity of creation, creatures would come into existence in response to command. Each would be assigned its place of dwelling, or space, in the environment for which it was prepared. Everything occupies a space. This is a common recognition, normally taken for granted, yet a fact of reality that cannot be denied.

Two objects cannot occupy the same space at the same time. To attempt such a feat will result in extreme resistance and possibly even violence. One auto, progressing down the highway produces no complication whatever. But, should there be another on the same highway, and each attempt to occupy a given space at the same time, there is produced what we call an accident and quite possible violence. Not only that, but in a very short time there will be someone of authority on the scene wanting to know who had right to that specific space at that particular time. Space is of consequence to all men.

Space is also of great importance to the biological world. The puppy you bring to your home as a household pet will accept your house and yard as his domain. Just as soon as he is old enough he will, by means of the scent glands provided him for that purpose, begin to mark out the boundary of his domain. He announces to others of his species that this space belongs to him and any attempt at intrusion will be met with fierce opposition.

The birds we hear singing so cheerfully in the springtime are not vocalizing for pastime or enjoyment. They are, in fact, announcing to others of their kind that this space belongs to them. They will sing a few times at one particular location, then move to another, then on to another until they have described a perimeter. Their song is, in essence and fact, a challenge to intruders that this space is necessary in order to successfully produce and rear a brood. Notice is hereby served that it is taken. Intrusion will result in violent opposition.

The man who cares for and is concerned about the welfare of his family feels a responsibility to provide a space for them to occupy which will afford them suitable protection and comfort. He will also feel a need to defend their safety should there be any attempt to intrude on the premises.

Man is also allotted space as an individual, which most men are quick to identify and defend. This calls to mind the proverbial "chip on the shoulder." One of the most pronounced indications of development from adolescence to adulthood is the serving of notice that the youth feels himself now able and is expecting to handle his own space. Announcement is

given in some form or other that he will, from henceforth, make his own decisions and order his own conduct without the intrusion of outside influence. This is the essence of the account of the prodigal son. There will come a time when the perimeter will have to be respected.

The dignity of this perimeter is dramatically illustrated by the respect the Savior attributed to it. Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." The "supping" the Lord offered was the bread of life, without which no man can be saved. But though the transaction took on the magnitude of eternal life or eternal punishment, depending on the decision of the householder, the Savior would not violate the perimeter of the individual's space. Unless the householder, of his own volition, saw fit to swing the door open there would be no continuing relationship between himself and the One who knocked, regardless of the consequence.

Space, by virtue of commitment, can take on some concentrated aspects. When two individuals conclude within themselves by mutual vow to become one, that space takes on a somewhat congested complexion. Adjustments of activities, attitudes, etc. will be made between these two within the confines of their collective space. No one else is allowed or has any right to participate. As intimate as this relationship may be, yet there is reserved for everyone, married and unmarried alike, a certain space that only God may enter. While couples may be held responsible for their

conduct as a couple, they are also, and at the same time, held accountable as individuals.

By virtue of the wisdom of divine intelligence, it was designed that from the intimacy of this shared space there should proceed the origin of new space. I Peter 3:7, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." Reflective thought immediately tells us that in just a matter of time that new life which emits from a shared space will occupy its own space and in further course of time will demand jurisdiction over it.

One of the outstanding characteristics of Christianity is the due respect and regard its subjects pay to the space of others. A large proportion of the instruction of the Word is dedicated to information teaching the rules and methods acceptable in our relationships with our fellow men. We are to acknowledge, accept and respect the space of others with the same dignity and consideration that we feel due our own. This is, in fact, the essence of the Golden Rule.

Every individual feels a sense of responsibility for what transpires within his space. Man does not know how he got the space. He knows not why he has the space. He cannot tell what influence gives him jurisdiction over the space. He cannot explain his intuition that he will be held accountable somewhere, sometime for his handling of the space. When he begins to ponder these questions, he is grappling with reality and sooner or later it will point **him** to

the existence of a Higher Intelligence. He begins to realize that something has caused all of these manifest situations and that something is prompting him to the reactions he feels toward them. Sooner or later his conclusions will bring him face to face with God.

Another primitive concept that is faced by all men is the fact of self-existence. No man in his reasonable mind can deny that he is indeed alive and existing. It makes no difference how he may feel toward it. His reaction to it will not change the fact that he has it. Irrespective of what may be his attitude toward it, he is still present and faced with what life may present. The field is played from one extremity to the other. Some men will grasp life with vigor and enthusiasm and exploit it with great indulgence. Some men will regard it as a common duty and responsibility and seek only to fulfill its requirements and expectations. Some men will loathe it and despise its responsibilities and its possibilities and refuse to participate in either. They will even allow their own minds and thought processes to deteriorate and decay. Some men will regard it and what it has to offer as nothing but despair and in the throes of that despair relieve themselves of their own existence. Some men will recognize in life bestowed the expression of a great, loving and all-wise Creator whose loving intent they are privileged to seek and fulfill. They will dedicate themselves with all the might at their command to that grand purpose. The apostle described it thus, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection,..." Philippians 3:10. Remember our previous observation in the consideration of God's subjects in His Kingdom? The text said,

"Behold, all souls are mine, saith the Lord." Ezekiel 18:4. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and 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." I Corinthians 6:19-20. Regardless of how assertive a man may become and how tenaciously he may seek to establish his own independence, there is always this deep and disturbing feeling that something, somewhere is expecting something more of him than the pursuit of his own self-interest and pleasure. He is grappling with reality and sooner or later it will point him to the existence of a Higher Intelligence. Again He is brought face to face with God.

Another of the primitive concepts is that of external existence. No one would attempt to convince himself that he is the only one who exists or that there is nothing going on around him. He sees the sun rise in the morning and set at nightfall. He beholds the gathering of the clouds and sees the flash of the lightning. He hears and feels the accompanying crash of the thunder and he scurries for shelter from the downpouring torrent of rain that follows. He observes that everything which falls from the heavens is not water that runs off or soaks away. On occasion there are flakes that noiselessly come floating down, and instead of running away they accumulate and remain, leaving the earth robed in white. On other occasions he finds the earth blanketed in a garment of white and the sky clear, yet the hoarfrost is on the ground. He sees all of these elements in regard to the crops he plants and the harvests he

reaps and he recognizes their influence on the other creatures that share his environment with him. He is aware and conscious of others of his own kind who are living here on this earth. Somewhere along the way he will find himself wondering, "Where did all of this start, and where is it all going? What put it into operation and what keeps it performing?" Consider the preaching of the apostle of old: "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Acts 14:15-17. The evidence the apostle was using to convince these strangers of old supplies the answer for a great many of the questions being asked at present. Men observe the performance of the natural world around them and here again they find themselves pointed to the existence of a Higher Intelligence. They are brought face to face with God.

Every one of the concepts presented heretofore finally bring us back to the same realization, namely, the existence of an all-wise being who is capable of design, and of construction, and of force. The questions to which the consideration of reality bring men are the automatic result of simple deduction. Since men are beholding a recognizable and identifiable effect, there must somewhere be a corresponding cause sufficient in magnitude to produce that obvi-

ous effect. Effects produced, which reveal no corresponding cause, leave men in bewilderment and confusion and lead to superstition. Even the slight-of-hand tricks performed by the vaudeville magician send men away shaking their heads in disbelief. They saw the produced effect but were unable to perceive the corresponding cause and so they felt bewildered. The scripture states that, "God is not the author of confusion." He not only wants men to behold His handiwork, He also desires that they would investigate and search it out until they discover its source. The discovery of the source will reveal the cause. Romans 1:19-20, "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." Obviously then, these primitive concepts were ordained and put in place to testify to men of the existence of a divine intelligence. That Intelligence created all things and put them into operation and is now, by presenting undeniable reality, seeking to make contact with this inquiring segment of His own creation. When men will acknowledge the existence of Supreme Intelligence, they have found the cause, the all cause, the uncaused cause, the self-evident cause, the Originator of all things, the Founder of the universe and the One who put it all into operation and causes it to continue.

Now, let us examine a little more closely some characteristics that are discovered in Higher Intelligence. Consciousness or sensibility, intelligence and

will are the elements or attributes that are recognized in personality. When we can recognize effects that identify these characteristics in the manifestation of reality about us, we are brought to the realization of a truth. What we have called Supreme Intelligence is actually the manifestation of an understanding, comprehending, intelligent Being. This personality or Being is thoroughly capable of intelligent design and He possesses the means to execute that design into reality. This is the very reality, in fact, which brings men finally to Him. He is none other than the almighty God, the true and living God, the Great I Am. Hear the testimony of Scripture: Psalm 19:1-4, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun." Deuteronomy 10:17, "For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward." When men come to know Him and learn of His true nature, they invariably find Him to be a kind, loving and benevolent heavenly Father who purposes for them nothing but good. "For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me

with their whole heart." Jeremiah 24:6-7. The honest soul who desires with all of his heart and soul to know and understand the Lord and His ways that he might follow Him in a manner acceptable, always finds Him kind, congenial, helpful and encouraging. God is pleased with that kind of devotion and is glad to do all He can to assist it to thrive. It is His Spirit that inspires individuals such as you and me to "do better," to improve our moral condition, to become more like what He is for He is the perfect individual.

II Chronicles 16:9, "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him...." When individuals have inquired diligently enough after the Lord they will find Him. Upon discovering Him, they will recognize in Him a quality of virtue surpassing anything they have ever known. They will feel a compulsion or desire to worship Him. John 12:32, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Acceptance and acknowledgment of Him and what He is, and an expressed desire to follow Him in all His ways opens the door for intimate communication with Him. This greatly increases His potential to instruct and teach those principles which He had designed that men should know. (See Matthew 5:6.) Such information must be learned, for none were equipped with it at birth. We were all conceived in sin and born in iniquity (Psalm 51:5), and we all go astray from our mother's womb, speaking lies. (Psalm 58:3.) This process of superior instruction is what we call divine revelation.

Men who are void of this divine revealing, yet seek-

ing to satisfy their urge to worship, create for themselves their own object of worship. They fall down in devotion to whatever they have erected but it will miserably fail to produce the fruits of the real divine. Men who worship man-made creeds or systems, be they ever so strict, demanding and cleverly devised, will never achieve the degree of excellence perfected in the program given by Supreme Intelligence. (Read Psalm 115:4-8 and Psalm 135:15-18.)

By recognizing the truth of the precepts here set forth, we can understand why and how, guided by the light of the gospel, men are brought to what we term monotheism, or the worship of just one God. Heathen men, responding to a desire to worship something, and not knowing for sure just how to proceed, visualized a multiplicity of gods. They ascribed various duties, responsibilities and jurisdictions to each. They also envisioned them in strife, conflicts and disputes such as men would indulge in. Consequently, they attributed to them the characteristics of men. With the presentation of the Word of God came the concept that only one God is true and living. He alone is all-wise, all-powerful and everlasting. By His own declaration He proclaimed Himself one of a kind and made it clear that there was none His equal. Scientific study has discovered the universe to be in harmony, in accordance and performing wonderfully after the pattern of advanced intelligence. It is not torn, shattered and exploited as by jealous, covetous, vindictive deities driven by greed, hatred and strife.

We may inquire as to why the Lord chose the method He did to attract men unto Himself. What

better method could He have selected than to bring men to understand and comprehend the actual reality of His own being by revealing to them His own manifest handiwork first? He who comes by displaying a work already done and presenting it in operation, demands the attention and acknowledgments of the beholder. Who can deny the accomplishment when it is on display? The faculty of a man's own intelligence will hold him to acknowledge what is presented, for it is self-evident. Here is something to consider: The Scripture spends no time attempting to convince anyone of the existence of God. It wastes no effort in attempted self-justification. It assumes the existence of God without question and proceeds to present Him as an acknowledged fact. The Scriptures do not come seeking to convince of a higher power; they come pointing men to a higher power. If a man and his accomplished work were standing before us, we would deem it a foolish thing indeed for him to embark on a lengthy discourse to convince us that he is actually there. Neither does God waste His time on such an endeavor. He and His handiwork are on display everywhere, all the time, and need no further confirmation.

Here is another thought. Suppose we were to encounter someone who had constructed a complicated machine which performed a lengthy operation. And suppose we watched the machine perform the first part of the operation to perfection, while the operator explained the various details as they progressed. But before the operation was complete a call came and we were compelled to leave. However, before we left, the operator explained in detail the

rest of the procedure the machine would go through. He also gave a running account of what it will have accomplished at the operation's completion. We would no doubt go away thoroughly convinced the man was competent and dependable. We would surely feel that he knew what he was doing and was able to do it beyond question. When men can study and see God's accomplishments manifest on every hand, why do we doubt that He will or can do what He has purposed to do in the future? The same Word that spoke the first part also spoke the last part? I Peter 1:25, "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." The same Power and Intelligence that created the universe in the first place and that has kept it operating up to this present, has also the power and intelligence to bring it to its appointed terminal. It will at the same time have accomplished all that He had in mind for it to accomplish in the process.

We may look at all of this and ask ourselves, "What does God and believing in God have to do with me being a better person, and why does my interest in moral improvement always end up in a discussion of religion and God?" If indeed this line of thinking has crossed our minds, then here are a few thoughts we might consider: Separate and independent from God, the only concept of moral virtue we possess is that of our own making. When we study the recorded history of what we call civilization, we do not find very much moral advancement in society until the influence of God and religion is introduced. David Livingston, the noted explorer and missionary

to darkest Africa, reported that in his contacts with those various, primitive tribes, he was surprised to find them all recognizing, to some degree at least, all of the cardinal, moral virtues upheld by civilized societies except plural marriage. They all felt it was unacceptable to lie, steal, cheat, etc. even in their own ranks. We can clearly see here what our Maker meant when He said that if humanity partook of the forbidden tree he would acquire a basic knowledge of good and evil. It is this basic concept, when it is pondered by intelligent minds, that prompts men toward the more virtuous side and away from the baser side of his concept. But just as the basic knowledge of this concept did little to improve the primitive, unlearned tribes of old, so it will be powerless of itself to do much for people of today for the virtue of moral instruction does not come from the information, it comes from the Author, the One who gave the information. Conveyed knowledge alone accomplishes little, but bestowed knowledge that brings humanity into contact with living, dynamic force that propels men into superior performance is of great worth. The old law system alone did very little for man from a moral standpoint, but when the Christ came, offering grace along with perceived truth, man's moral possibility increased greatly until we are invited to bear the image of our Christ who did no sin. Human morality alone has never been able to even come close to a performance like that. Not only that, but what self-centered, human intelligence would have ever been able to perceive and convey the virtue of Christian living? This is why any man who honestly and sincerely seeks real moral improvement

is soon brought face to face with God and religion, for without God there is no true religion.

The greatest political dynasties this world has ever known, when we study their internal moral standards, reveal themselves saturated with the characteristics of the carnal flesh and its defiling influence. In the same manner, when we study the internal workings of the world's greatest religions, we find them fraught with the same carnal influences and offering no escape from such influence even though they present themselves as being under the direction of higher intelligence of some kind. Any system that offers no release from and cure for moral defilement here in this life is not a system ordained by and sent from the true and living God. Christ came to this world to destroy sin in the flesh. (Ephesians 2:13-22.) Sin in the flesh is the element that destroyed moral virtue in the beginning; therefore, if sin be removed from the flesh, moral improvement will automatically occur. When such is not the case it is a sure sign that the problem of sin has not been conquered. The cause may be that the religious system being followed makes no provision for sin's defeat, or it may be that the candidate who is following is not willing to abide by all the system teaches. Whatever the case may be, the end result remains the same. Tolerated sin produces morally defiled hearts and lives.

Man's Place in Creation

May we spend some time in consideration of man as he stands in relation to other of God's creation. Genesis 1:27 states, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him;..." It is interesting to note that nothing else in the whole of all creation received this kind of special designation. If this be indeed true and God in His own Word has said that it is, then it would seem a highly prudent thing for man to inquire into the depth of its meaning. When we begin this kind of inquiry we are soon brought to some of what we have already discovered about God. Consciousness or sensibility, intelligence and will constitute the attributes of personality. The discovery of these attributes brought us to a recognition of God as an active, performing Being who possesses identifiable characteristics. Now, since we are created in His image, we may justly expect to discover these same qualities in ourselves. Consciousness or sensibility would, therefore, be found in those beings who by virtue of normal, mental development have come to the place that they are able to deal with the duties and responsibilities of life in a normal and sensible manner. They are alert, capable and competent to conduct themselves in an acceptable way. They are what we call sane.

Intelligence is that mental faculty that renders man capable of understanding. Being exposed to information, he is able to comprehend the meaning of the information and he is also able to retain what he comprehends. This constitutes the acquisition of knowledge. He who possesses such capability is said

to be intelligent. In man's case, as in God's case, what is done or accomplished with the accumulated understanding is determined by the will. Without the function of the will, nothing can be accomplished for, we say, he does not try. The Scripture, however, in its declaration puts very little limit on what can be accomplished with the force of the will in operation. Matthew 7:7-8 says, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Man possesses the ability to perform all of these qualifying requirements. He is conscious of what is going on about him enough to know he has a need. He is intelligent enough to recognize where to turn for the help he needs, and his willingness to ask indicates that he is actively pursuing in that direction, which is a manifestation of his own will. Men are then functioning as personalities in their own right. Genesis 1:27-28 says, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." God was explicit in His designation.

The first sentence of this text carries considerable importance. It seems quite obvious that God was anxious for men to be fully aware of their original source and background. If He had only said, "So God created man in his own image," it would have

been easy for men to say, "He simply made us like ourselves." To forestall any such interpretation as that, God added, "In the image of God created he him." Then He went on and specifically included both genders of humanity in the designation. All of this is so clearly stated until there is no possible way for humanity to disassociate itself from God. Since God Himself is the true pattern for the original pair, then of course, all succeeding generations will bear some form of that same likeness in themselves. None can successfully disclaim relationship with God nor can anyone deny responsibility before God. When we realize that God does indeed have a vested interest in all of humanity, we can understand why He continues to deal with humanity. He is interested in us because we are aware, conscious, intelligent and capable of asserting our own will the same as He is, and He wants us to exercise those possibilities in the pursuit of true holiness the same as He does.

The capabilities afforded man by the bestowing of these divine attributes made him superior to other of creation, especially in the area of intelligence. Because of this, he could conceivably be entrusted to have "dominion over them." Man is, then, of a little higher classification than the other creatures of the biological world. This unique characteristic also places man in a separate bracket when it comes to his government. Other of creation is governed by the rules ascribed to them. The natural world is governed or regulated by direct command. The earth and celestial bodies pursue their respective orbits. The heavens accommodate the clouds and produce rain. The tides of the sea ebb and flow, and time knows its

days and seasons. The creature world, having a token of intelligence but not enough to determine their own destiny, are under the law of instinct. This means that programmed into them from their birth are the impulses that will regulate their conduct and existence so long as they live. Man, being a creature who possesses intelligence and will, finds himself being governed in accordance with his own capabilities.

While man is of the flesh and fleshly and in this respect on an equal basis with the beasts, yet in the intellectual sphere he is superior to the beasts and over them. When we look in the other direction, toward the spirit world, man's fleshly characteristics apparently diminish him to a status subordinate to the angels. Psalm 8:3-8, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." Man, though he possesses a spiritual quality, is also of the flesh and consequently subject to the restrictions of the flesh. The flesh is subject to death; therefore, it cannot possibly be eternal. Man's consciousness is of the fleshly rather than of the spiritual.

None of the physical qualities that belong to man make him aware and conscious in the spirit world.

So long as man knows nothing but the flesh he is dead in the realm of the spirit. He is no more aware of what is going on in the spirit realm than the body from whom physical life has departed is aware of what is going on in this literal realm. Without a work of regeneration in his heart, man is declared dead in trespasses and sins. Man's physical senses do not perform for him in the spirit world like they do in this physical world. We do not see, feel, taste, smell or hear spiritual things. We are made aware of the spirit world by our intellect, our faculty for understanding. Contact with the spirit world stimulates our feelings and emotions, but these faculties will bear watching, for they of themselves are conscious of no knowledge of good or evil. The ability to discern moral virtue is invested in the intellect. That explains why the gospel utilizes the avenue of teaching. Good or bad spirits can either one stimulate human feeling and emotion into demonstration. This is why the Word tells us that the divinely inspired spirit, who is prompted by heaven's love, doth not behave itself unseemly. (I Corinthians 13:5.) When the manifestations of feelings and emotion begin to run wild and become extreme, it is a sure sign that the intellect has either been ignored or else never been taught in proper spirit conduct. I Corinthians 9:25 says, "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things...." Philippians 4:5 says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." It produces great emotional elation and stimulates much physical action to follow the prompting of feelings, but unless the feelings are governed and directed by discreet, intellectual promptings from the

Spirit of God, they will also lead men away from the path of true spiritual virtue. Emotional stimulation is accompanied by pleasurable feelings and men tend to interpret the pleasurable as being the good. Such is not always the case because the pleasurable will too often be that which satisfies the self-interest. Self-interest is the influence that took God's place in man's heart and life when he disobeyed God and fell away from Him in the beginning. It is important then to recognize the influences that we may expect to find performing in human life that has actually been quickened into spiritual life. The true Spirit of God will never lead anyone into any kind of activity that will leave true holiness diminished in human understanding. The true Spirit of God will never appoint or support human instrumentality when it is attempting to fill a place that rightfully belongs only to God. God's Holy Spirit is not directing the life that exalts human action and thinking to a position superior to spiritual action and thinking. The Holy Spirit never works in accordance with carnal self-interest.

Man will, of necessity, be required to accept what knowledge he is able to procure of the spiritual by faith, for he cannot behold it. On the other hand, angels are total spirit beings and so are apparently not able to be in direct communication with the fleshly over extended periods. Hebrews 1:13-14 says, "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

In the development of God's program, man's sta-

tus will transpose from the medium of the flesh to that of the spirit. The process is to begin even now, while we are here, for we are commanded to "sow not to the flesh but sow unto the spirit." When that instruction has been successfully carried out here, and we lay this flesh aside to go and inherit a place in that coming clime, our existence will be entirely spiritual. Luke 20:35-36 reads, "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; (the angels are spirit beings, thus, we being equal with them, may expect to be spirit beings also) and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." I Corinthians 15:44 says, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

This understanding helps us to comprehend a little better how it was that our salvation fell on the only begotten Son. It is said that search was made in the earth and even under the earth to find one who was worthy and only the Son could qualify. (Revelation 5:1-10.) Angels are altogether spirit beings and apparently unable to transpose from one clime to the other on a prolonged basis. While they are able to appear in a visible form and be used at God's option as messengers, etc. to man, yet they are not able to "take on themselves the likeness of sinful flesh." Whatever candidate would be selected to come and effect the redemption of man would need to possess some very exacting qualifications. He would need to be able to perform effectively in both spheres, that

is in flesh and spirit. He would have to be able to take on Himself the likeness of sinful flesh, yet never be contaminated with the defilement of fleshly sin. He would be required to be thoroughly schooled in the operation and regulations of both worlds, and He would need to know absolutely how to lead His subjects successfully along the path of transition. Angels were not able. Only the Son, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, was accounted worthy. As the Son was moved into His place, He was made King over a newly erected Kingdom whose purpose and aim was to secure, for the spiritually lost and dying, an escape to the glory of eternal life.

One other scripture serves to accentuate the progression from the fleshly to the spiritual. Hebrews 1:7, "And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." Spirit is the quality that, so far as we know, angels have always possessed. He made them that way from the beginning. He was alluding then, in the latter part of the text, to His fleshly, spirit-filled and spirit-called ministers. No man is qualified nor has any right to take up the office of the ministry without being spirit-filled. A perishing world was waiting for a saving gospel and an appeal was hanging heavy in their ears to "pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the vineyard." (Matthew 9:37-38.) Yet, the direct command to the apostles of old was to "tarry at Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." (Luke 24:49.) God's ministers are to be spirit-filled and on fire for God. They are to radiate the warmth of His love and the comfort of His shelter. They are to shine forth the illumination of the light of life that

will dispel the darkness of sin and loose its shackles from the hearts and lives of men. They are to be actively busy opposing and resisting all evil, wickedness and sin. This is all spiritual activity and cannot be done by a candidate who is not living after the spirit and denying the things of the flesh. A quality greater than that possessed naturally by man is required to effect this kind of performance. This is why, from the start, the Son introduced man to the combined virtue of grace and truth. These elements were introduced with the coming of the Spirit. Thus men are commanded to be filled with the Spirit and in so doing they come into possession of enabling grace and revealing truth.

The magnitude and necessity of grace and truth and other divine virtues are accentuated when we take into consideration the condition man is in and the opportunities and restrictions he experiences. Being the possessor of intelligence and will, he is also given the right of choice and presented with option. The specific terms of the option are to obey or transgress and he elected to transgress. Thus he finds himself separated from his loving Creator. This is the very Creator who is now seeking His lost ones through the efforts of His dear Son. It is the Son who is offering to man the forgiveness of sin and return to peace and comfort. This state and condition we describe as the Joys of Salvation. These are some of man's opportunities.

Human experience also teaches of some restrictions. While man was given the opportunity to sin or transgress His given command, he was not equipped with means to extricate himself from the effects of

that transgression should it occur. Disobedience became sin and sin became abiding so that, loathsome and defiling as it might be, yet man had no means by which to rid himself of sin's effect. Sin is conceived in the spiritual or moral side of man and finds its manifestation in the physical or fleshly side of man. (See Matthew 15:17-20 and James 4:1-8.) It is apparent, then, that if the sin which is being manifest by the actions of the body is to be conquered, the process must start at the source or go to the root of the problem. This is what man had never been able to do. The entrance into sin brought the knowledge of good and evil and made known to man the difference between the two. It also removed man from the source of all good for he was separated from God. Since God is spirit and man fleshly, whatever concept man is able to acquire of moral good will now have to be obtained by understanding and that understanding believed and accepted. Man's ability to associate with the Lord physically, was lost at the fall in the garden. While the spirit relationship was made more remote and obscure by the fall into sin, the fleshly part of man was accentuated so that man is acutely aware of its demands. Automatically he began to respond to the devices of the flesh. That, of course, does not lead to the spiritual. The flesh, if left to itself, is governed by selfish motivation. Since no other influence is readily available, man finds it quite normal and acceptable to follow the impulse of the flesh. Now we can see the necessity of truth. Man was not designed to be governed by fleshly impulse; he was designed to function in accordance with the nature of his Maker. Because of sin his inbred incli-

nation toward self-interest so distorts his view of divine nature until he must be instructed as to what real, divine nature is. That is the job the Son came to perform.

This is in fact the "truth" that came by Jesus Christ. (John 1:17.) If man were to have any hope of recovery from sin and its effects, he must first of all know that he is indeed lost and in need of a Savior. Until he comes to a knowledge of that fact, he will feel no need for any change. When he does finally realize his lost condition, there is also presented the truth that there is now, through Jesus Christ our Lord, offered a means of deliverance from that condition. This understanding will prompt a response from every man who possesses it. Either he will refuse and cast it aside, which of course cancels his chance of deliverance, or else he will begin to believe and accept it. This believing is called faith, and is the quality which the Scripture declares to be necessary if man is ever to be pleasing and acceptable to his heavenly Father. (Hebrews 11:6.) Truth may present itself in such unassailable terms until it cannot be denied, but until it is believed and accepted it will produce no practical effect. Men, in mass, will and do stoutly affirm that they believe in God, but very few believe to the saving of the soul. Real belief or faith that is effectual for the need of the soul, is something more than the expression of an abstract sentiment. Even the devils believe to that extent. (James 2:19-20.) In this same text, the apostle asserts that "faith without works is dead." We realize, then, that faith which stimulates to no action is a useless thing so far as the need of the soul is concerned for, he

said, "It stands alone." Hence, we conclude that man needs and must have, not only a mental belief in a Supreme Being but also a living, active, dynamic acceptance of revealed truth. Such positive acceptance will produce results in that man's life. The truth says, "...the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezekiel 18:4. Along with that comes the promise, "...but the gift of God is eternal life..." Romans 6:23. Any man who recognizes and believes these truths will begin searching how he may find and obtain that gift. (Matthew 13:44-46.) He has accepted what he believes to be true and is acting to secure the salvation of his own soul. (Matthew 5:6.)

Truth revealed, accepted and followed starts men in a search for the real good. All truth is pure and will direct men into an upward path. To know the good is one thing, but to achieve the good is another. Knowledge, within itself, presents only information. It does not bestow ability to apply that acquired information. Adam and Eve knew they were demoted from their original state of innocence, yet that knowledge gave them no ability to reinstate themselves back into their original condition. That is part of where they were deceived by the tempter. His insinuation was that to possess knowledge of good and evil would elevate men to the status of gods. With that knowledge at their command, then they, as well as God, would be able to handle sin that knowledge would reveal. What in fact did happen was that men remained men, who now were aware of evil and its effects, having participated in it. They were soon to discover they had no ability to rid themselves of the wrong they could now comprehend. While they now

knew what evil was, what it was doing and had done to them, yet they knew no way to halt the process nor to avoid reaping its effects. Their best intentions would miserably fail and their most noble efforts would be defeated. Now Satan could "take them captive at his will." (II Timothy 2:26.) Try as he would, man would always find himself disappointed in his own efforts until at last he finally realized the hopelessness of his condition. Read the lament of men of old. Psalm 51:3-10, "For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." All men recognize the presence of evil working in themselves for they all practice deceit or dishonesty or something of unvirtuous character to some degree. Such knowledge causes them to feel condemned in their own eyes, much less in divine eyes, yet they know no means whereby to correct the cause and achieve a cure. Jesus introduced truth or true information to the hearts and minds of men. That truth would

lead men not only to a good that man would recognize and acknowledge as good, but beyond that to a plane of virtue that God would accept as good. Knowing full well that man, with nothing but his own ability, would never be able to achieve that high estate, our loving Lord came prepared to supply the needed ingredient. Man needed a force that would give power over sin and make him able to achieve the right. Truth was made available through the Spirit to enlighten. Faith on hand would enable man to accept the truth revealed. Along with that, grace was given to make men able to perform what they realized truth was requiring. By this means men could be led into a state of holiness.

Only one thing was necessary now for man to possess the reinstatement he sought back into the Eden relationship with his heavenly Father. Man would be responsible to provide the motivation. Motive is that influence in men that causes an individual to act. Whatever quality was selected to achieve that accomplishment would need to be of great and powerful merit. It would not only need to start the process, but also keep it stimulated in time to come lest the effort begin to dwindle and so fail. Our appointed Sovereign knew exactly where to turn and He knew how to appeal to the quality that was needed. Thus we hear Him saying, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." This is the only influence known to man of sufficient strength to cause men to obey our Lord's voice and do His will. Fear could never be sufficient, for it provides nothing attractive for the soul to attach itself to and cherish. Fear fills men with dread and foreboding. The influences that

incite fear tend to repel the human heart rather than attract it. Love encourages men to strive the harder.

Outside force could never be a satisfactory medium, simply because it ignores and overrides the built-in function of the personal will. How could a soul be brought to any meaningful experience with the Lord while he is spending his time resisting what he feels is a foreign force that is compelling him along a course he does not wish to follow? Coercion is basically the application of outside force. Love never drives men, it invites them. When the path of right is pursued because that is the personal choice of the traveler, that soul will prosper because he recognizes the worth of true moral virtue and he loves that pattern of living enough to yield his own personal life to it. Truth is informing, which is necessary. Faith is accepting, which is also necessary. Grace is enabling, which is likewise necessary. Now comes the motivation of love which is the vehicle that puts the entire process into action. We realize the importance of this factor when we recognize that sin is indulged in with the consent of the will. This is why some influence is necessary to adjust the thrust of the will. Though the intellect may perceive truth, and assurance be confirming that grace is able, yet without the stimulation or motivation of the will, no progress is made. Remember the experience of the children of Israel the first time they approached the crossing of the Jordan River? Love is the only emotion known to man which is able to permanently overcome or alter the action of the will. Even hate, strong as it may seem, is forced to fall in submission under the power of love. Notice the priority ascribed to the attribute of

divine love (charity) given in I Corinthians 13:8 over other attributes and accomplishments listed. Though it says these other attributes might fail and cease to perform, yet love would continue faithfully. Certainly it is a noble, desirable and necessary ingredient in any successful Christian endeavor. This points up the importance of the new birth. No man filled with self-interest can imbibe divine love on a prolonged basis. If any man would love with a true heart, fervently, he must of necessity experience a change of heart. This change we recognize as regeneration, or becoming a new creature in Christ Jesus. (II Corinthians 5:17 and Galatians 6:15.) This new creature, which is born of the Spirit, is born back into God's likeness and possesses God's characteristics. One of its most prominent qualities is love for God.

Love is an influence that flows from one to another. Usually it is conceived in one and then directed toward an object of its choice. It works in such a way until the object becomes aware of the extended affection. Should the intended object refuse or ignore the approach, there is no alternative but for the extender to experience disappointment. On the other hand, should the object respond and display an interest, the extender will be encouraged to further demonstrate its feeling of affection. Continued favorable response will allow the relationship to increase to full maturity. True love can only conceive and flourish with the willing consent and conscious effort of two participating parties. Each must be willing to give of its own love and at the same time receive of an offered love. Only in this type of conducive atmosphere can a love affair be born and suc-

cessfully continue to prosper in a relationship.

Individuals who find themselves being attracted toward each other experience a feeling that they ought to present themselves at their best to each other. There is something about the realization of affection bestowed that calls for an upgrading response in the recipient. When we recognize ourselves being loved and we feel inclined to respond to that proffered affection, we will automatically find ourselves seeking ways to make ourselves more attractive to our lover. We will make conscious effort to present ourselves, as much as we know how, in accordance with what we feel noble individuals ought to be. True love brings out the best in people. It is this inward prompting toward self-improvement that the Savior appeals to when we begin to respond to the love He offers us. He invites us to the level of His own virtue. Thus the Savior bids His loved ones to "follow in His steps who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." (I Peter 2:21-22.) He also invites, "Be ye holy for I am holy." (Leviticus 19:1-2.) When individuals have been touched by the Savior's love and realize that He really cares for them, they spontaneously find a desire welling up within themselves to rise to this level of purity. They begin to cast off bad habits, foul language, improper attitudes, etc. This is a direct response to the purity of life and love that the Savior presents to those who are affected by His love. When men in a natural, sinful state come in contact with a pure, holy, loving Savior they soon realize that this kind of life and quality of living is what the Father desires of all men. They also become acutely aware that they themselves are far below such excellence.

This recognition of inferior performance also prompts those who desire pure living to strive the harder to achieve pure living. All, somewhere along the journey of life, experience these realizations. John 1:9 says, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." No man will be able to face the Lord in the judgment and honestly declare, "I am not saved because no opportunity was given me." All men are brought to an understanding, at some time in life, that they are something less than they ought to be and are offered opportunity to do better. Their own indwelling concepts of right and wrong are already urging them to perform the right and avoid the wrong. Then, this new concept of the purity of holy beings adds to their yearning toward more virtuous living. Now this recognition of divine love, extended so intensely to them personally, convinces beyond the shadow of a doubt that they are being invited to a more noble plane of living. The only thing that stands between an individual and virtuous living, when he has reached this position, is the freewill consent of his own mind and heart. Only he can provide that and when he does, his moral improvement will begin immediately. But man would be presumptuous indeed to feel that he is able to take this discerned framework and by force of his own abilities effect the salvation of his own soul. Man cannot love selflessly until he is regenerated into his Maker's image. God is love. Pure love cannot be obtained from any other source. Human love will bear the characteristics of its own source, and so human love is selfish, self-satisfying, self-gratifying and cannot possibly propel the soul to God.

the Author of pure love. In our observation of the laws which govern the subjects of Christ's Kingdom, we must keep these ingredients before us at all times, namely: truth, faith, grace and love; all of which are divine elements directly given to man by the Son of God.

God's Dealing With Man

With God the ruling Force in the dominion in which men live, we may reasonably expect that God and man will be in contact with each other. The initial effort will have to come from God. Self-centered man makes no meaningful room in himself for anything but himself and his own interest. Most men are not greatly interested in cultivating any other influence in their lives. The regression into this sinful state did, however, leave man equipped with a primary knowledge of good and evil. This knowledge or information is present and functional in every normally developed human being. It is recognition and awareness that is present without conscious, rational thought or influence. It is an immediate apprehension and conviction provided by what we call intuition. We are unable to explain its presence, yet we are all aware of its function, for we recognize its prompting. All men recognize a liar. Everyone is able to detect a thief. Adultery is identified by all people. By the same token, all men are able to identify truthfulness. Everyone expects marriage chastity. We all feel everyone should be honest. These are only a few of many moral opposites but they serve to illustrate the point. This ability to identify and distinguish between two opposite moral elements is found in everyone. It is what we might term moral apprehension, for it demonstrates basic knowledge of good and evil. We noticed previously that God, being King over His own domain, has the right to establish and enforce the laws for that domain. No one is supposed to be ignorant of the law. It would neither be just nor

fair to condemn and punish a man for failing to abide by a law of which he had no knowledge. If a law is established and compliance demanded, then it would be the duty and responsibility of the lawmaker to see that the subjects covered were aware and conscious of the law's provision. Now we can understand how it is that all men everywhere, through all generations of time, have known and recognized the difference between good and evil. Our God has been faithful to make the primary requirement of His divine law known to all humanity.

The presence of existing law, when it is revealed to its subjects, necessitates further information. This additional information does not come by intuition but by pronounced decree. Man violated the law given to him in the garden, which made him a transgressor. That transgression provided man a basic knowledge of good and evil, and that acquisition of moral understanding demands an explanation of moral responsibility. Thus the Scripture begins to speak: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." I John 3:4. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die...." Ezekiel 18:20. This information makes it clear to man that the transgression of known, divine law carries with it a prescribed penalty. "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation;..." Hebrews 2:2-3. According to the plainly stated decree, no man sins with impunity.

In further faithfulness to man, God has revealed clearly where the source of all sin is found. "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." I John 3:8-9. With these facts plainly stated, there can be no doubt in the human mind as to who he must follow if he would aspire to achieve real good. This helps us to see how futile indeed is human effort alone in the pursuit of moral improvement. Man was never able to improve himself to the point that he could avoid sin by his own effort; neither is he able since the coming of Christ, except he embrace the Christ and follow His divinely prescribed instruction. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:4-5. Now we can see why human morality alone is very little more than an exercise in futility so far as the need of the soul is concerned.

As we inquire into moral essence and the forces that propagate it, we become increasingly convinced that this is the realm where God is the Ruler. He is not interested in worldly acclaim nor political jurisdiction. His interest is to destroy iniquity and to secure the release of those who are held in the bondage of sin. Being altogether righteous, then of course, He will conduct His campaign in accordance with

the requirements of righteousness. We need not be afraid that God will deal unjustly or unfairly with any of us.

The Lord has already informed us that He is knowledgeable as to the thoughts and intents of our hearts. (Hebrews 4:12.) Possessing that capability provides for Him a continuing knowledge of just how much of His divine law we understand at any given time. When He knows how much we know, He knows exactly how much we may justly be held responsible to obey.

Another factor utilized by the Lord in His dealings with man as we have previously observed, is the knowledge He has that all men were created to worship. The events and circumstances of life bring men occasionally to a realization of the nearness of God. A near tragedy, the death of a close loved one, some dreaded calamity, all bring men into immediate awareness of divine presence. It is in times like these that they become aware of God as a Power or Force who is willing to be friendly and helpful to them personally in their hour of distress. In these contacts men are also touched by God's divine chastity and wholesomeness. The purity of divine holiness prompts within man a desire to possess that same quality of being. It is under the influence of these convictions that men quite often begin making effort to improve the quality of their lives. Man's first efforts toward improvement will probably be a response from only his own strength and wisdom, for he knows no other approach. As he pursues the quest for better living, it will inevitably lead him to God. When this happens, he will soon learn that carefully obey-

ing his Lord will provide him the elements he needs in order to live a virtuous life. This process is the work of the convicting Spirit of the Lord. If men will allow it to prompt them, it will eventually lead them to full salvation and complete deliverance from sin.

We may inquire as to what it is that caused the Father to provide for man's recovery. We find the answer in God's own Word. John 3:16 tells us, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Moral Advancement

Moral improvement is the innermost desire of every honest heart. Genuinely honest men will admit that unsaved men are not what righteous men ought to be, and the Word will quickly tell us why. We are made acutely conscious of the sins we have committed and for which we stand guilty before a just God. Obviously then, if we would aspire to gain more virtuous living, the first thing we will need to do is make some satisfactory disposal of the sin we currently possess. Since we are the offenders in the matter, it will be up to us to go to the One whom we have offended and seek His pardon. With God and His righteousness being the Ones we have wronged, it is to Him we will have to come and present our plea for pardon and absolution. He has already anticipated such a move on our part and so His answer is ready and waiting. Jeremiah 31:33-34, "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, 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 neighbour, 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." With this kind of divine commitment clearly stated, our believing and accepting is all that is needed to make the promise a reality for us. When this believing and accepting has been done, we begin to walk with our heavenly Father. It is significant

to note here that this divinely prescribed transaction was to take place personally, individually, between God and the seeking candidate. Nowhere in the entire volume of His Word does God relinquish or delegate to anyone or any agency the right nor authority to act for Him and His interest in these matters. Since the Father and the Son are one together, then of course the Son is included, but other than that, the dealing is strictly between the individual human and God. No earthly church dignitary is given that commission. No synod or church creed is authorized to fill such a place. When it comes to individual, moral requirement, God has stated that He, personally, will inscribe the requirement on every heart and His declaration is that the inscription will be so plain until every candidate will understand its stipulation. (Isaiah 35:8.) In the event we find ourselves uncertain or confused as to what is the proper way for us to take, then the proper place to turn for such information is to our Lord. The textbook He uses is His own Word, and the teaching agent is His own Spirit. Since these agencies are both of divine origin, we may be certain that they will never contradict each other. God will never be divided against Himself nor will He, His Son, His Spirit or His Word ever lead contrary to the ways of righteousness. Remember, it is God's responsibility as a Lawgiver to make known to His subjects the provision of His prescribed law.

At first we may feel perplexed and somewhat baffled as to how to go about Christian living, but keep in mind, we are now experiencing an entirely new life that is following a course we have never trav-

eled before. It is the way that leads to the highway of perfect holiness and all we have ever known has been to face a life of sin. It will require time, effort and much perseverance, along with a great deal of divine assistance, for we will have to learn the ways of holiness. The old life came equipped with a carnal mind and it automatically prompted us into the ways of the flesh. Now, all of that will have to be deliberately put aside and out of our lives and our hearts, and our minds filled with the mind and likeness of our Christ. (Philippians 2:5.)

Let us pause here briefly and observe for a moment the great work Christ did for us that we might receive this blessing. Man is a twofold being, both spiritual and physical. Sin reaches both sides of man's being for it is conceived in the heart and manifest in the body. Animal sacrifice could not atone for that depth of transgression, for it has nothing to offer for spiritual defilement. The animal is innocent in its flesh and so could be offered for the defilement of the flesh but it has nothing to offer for the defilement of the heart. Man is the only being we know who has spiritual dimension, but all men have sinned. Justice demands that sacrifice for sin must be without blemish, which means that a thing which is steeped in defilement itself could not be offered as sacrifice for atonement from defilement and purchase anything, for it is not clean within itself. Sacrifice meant the shedding of blood, or, in other words, the taking of life in order to avail, but the sinning soul is devoid of spiritual life itself. Thus it has no life to offer spiritually even though it were to give itself physically. This is where Christ enters the picture.

God gave His only true offspring, His only begotten Son. Likewise the Son, of His own free will, gave Himself to pay the penalty for man's committed sin. He was a sacrifice without spot or blemish for He "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." (I Peter 2:22.) Yet, He paid the full price for sin as though He were the vilest of sinners. Consequently, He paid a price for sin although he had not committed sin. That price He used to pay the sin-debt of fallen man, who had no acceptable price to pay for himself. Hear the testimony of the Word: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Hebrews 5:8-9. We must never lose sight of the fact that our salvation is not a thing we earned; it is a thing Christ bought and paid for and gave to us.

The primary and paramount task facing those who become partakers of the provision Christ has made, is obedience to His instruction. As we have previously observed, fallen man is governed by his own self-life, which responds to the built-in influence of the flesh. Since that is all we have previously known, it would seem quite plausible and reasonable that the pattern would continue. It would seem quite normal and proper to us that our newly-found experience should provide us pleasure and so we begin to associate what we feel is moral goodness with our feeling of pleasure. In other words, we will conclude that because these newly-found sensations make us feel good, they must be virtuous. Though this may seem acceptable to our candid thinking, yet when we begin to examine it closely, we discover

that the pleasurable will not always stand the scrutiny of true holiness. Pleasure is that state or feeling of personal enjoyment or satisfaction derived from what is pleasing to one's own self. It consists of personal gratification and delight and quite often self-enjoyment is the sole end it serves. True religion is not designed nor intended to satisfy the pleasure of this earthly flesh; it is that process whereby men recognize and pay to true righteousness the esteem and dignity that rightfully belongs to righteousness.

Pleasure can be broken down into a wide variety of manifestations. Some pleasure man has in common with the beasts. They seek the shade from the hot sun and a shelter in the time of storm. They enjoy the pleasure of food and drink, and men likewise enjoy these same pleasures. These we call creature comforts. Some pleasures man experiences are peculiar to himself alone. Many men find great pleasure in the pursuit of ambition. To set a goal and achieve a purpose provides a great deal of personal satisfaction. Accomplishment is their reward. Some pleasures are acute and intense but they are short-lived. Such is the pleasure of passion. Some pleasures are durable and continuing, such as good health, family relationships, neighborhood, community, etc. They are rewarded with a feeling of personal security. Some pleasures are great but uncertain. There are those who find great pleasure in the thrill of daring. They enthusiastically rise to the challenge of chance and vigorously indulge themselves in pursuits fraught with danger to accomplish feats which heretofore have not been achieved. Their re-

ward is the acclaim that accompanies the accomplishment of the unusual or difficult.

These are but a few general categories of human pleasure that perhaps everyone will recognize, but it is also quite well-known in the societies of men that pursuit of pleasure can be, and usually is, of specific individual application. Experience will also soon teach us that one man's pursuit of his own pleasure may well have effect on other lives as well as his own. The individual who finds his pleasure in excessive use of intoxicants does so in violation of the command of the Giver of righteousness, so that law is violated. He offends further by abusing his own body, which the Word tells us is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Some will even rob the table of their own loved ones in order to satisfy their own selfish indulgence. This is a transgression against their own family. Such pursuit will lower an individual in his own eyes as well as in the eyes of his fellows. It violates the dignity God ascribed to man when He created him. God made man upright.

The individual whose pleasure is wicked lewdness defiles his own body. He is also helping someone else to defile theirs. If he has a home, then he violates the sanctity of that home and defrauds the one to whom he has given his marriage vow. Such conduct would not at all be in keeping with the pursuit of good.

All pleasure pursuit may not carry this kind of pronounced, adverse effect, though it still may carry some. It may be pleasurable to eat, but to overindulge to the point of excess can become unacceptable. Hence we have the admonition of the Word to

be temperate in all things. It may be pleasing to the flesh to wear scanty or see-through clothing when the weather is hot and humid, but our Lord directs us to practice decency and instructs us to keep our bodies covered, even if the weather is hot and humid and the clothing somewhat uncomfortable. Idleness may present itself as pleasurable, but the prompting of the Word is to be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. (Romans 12:11.) It may sometimes seem pleasurable to wish vengeance on someone whom we feel has done us a wrong, but the way of righteousness teaches us to forgive rather than seek to vindicate ourselves. We are to give no place unto wrath but rather to be kind, tenderhearted and understanding.

We also soon learn that the disagreeable or unpleasant is not always bad. It may be embarrassing, humiliating and unpleasant to go to someone and confess that we have done them a wrong which we wish to correct, but the reward of obedience will more than repay the discomfort. Industry and perseverance may seem difficult and demanding at times, but when we practice them in compliance with our Christian duties and responsibilities, they become rewarding and profitable. It may seem a hard thing to arise early and go out into the bitter cold of winter to secure a livelihood for ourselves and our loved ones, but the Word says that failure to provide for our own indicates we have denied the faith and are worse than infidels.

All of these illustrations serve to convince us that human pleasure and displeasure are not at all dependable guides when it comes to judging moral ac-

ceptability before God. We must remember that human pleasure is dictated by human impulse and so, of course, it will tend toward self-interest. But those who would follow Christ must no longer be governed or guided by self-interest; they must seek to please Christ. This means that Christ's mind and will must always be respected above our own. This concept convinces us that some actions, attitudes, etc. that have not been in our lives before must start up and be active now. In like manner, some things that have been in our lives and active before will need to be brought to a close now. In this process of adding and eliminating we soon discover that what pleases us does not necessarily provide a very accurate guide as to what is actually virtuous. Some things that righteousness may require are not always pleasant and some things that are pleasurable do not always conform to the requirement of righteousness. This helps us understand why some actions and patterns of life which we enjoy and find pleasure in practicing we feel reluctant to discard or bring to a close in our lives. It is issues such as these that we tend to justify and continue practicing. Even though they may reflect on true virtue and leave the image of righteousness a bit blurred, yet we will declare, "But there is no evil intent in me, I simply enjoy this sort of thing for my own personal pleasure and so what will it hurt or what difference will it make?" Thus we are ascribing virtue to our own personal pleasure and are actively defending it even though the practice may be questionable morally. These are the influences of human thinking that we must deliberately and intentionally resist and conquer in ourselves if

we ever expect to achieve the true good. Our thinking must no longer be our own but we are to think with the mind of Christ. If we honestly have to say in our hearts that the issue we are defending is casting the way of true virtue in a bad light, then that in itself is ample reason for us to bring it to a close in our lives, regardless of the pleasure it may have provided us. For us to conduct otherwise would bring reproach upon our Lord's cause.

These thoughts introduce us to the idea of usefulness or utility in moral behavior. Since moral choice is always an option and every individual is his own chooser, it becomes obvious that to gain the goal of moral virtue the paths that will lead to that desired end must be consistently selected and followed. Thus we can see that a pattern of conduct which adds nothing to our moral upgrading has no utility for us in moral pursuit, and so, of course, we will be wise to seek one that will. It is the prudent man who sees to it that he walks the path that will produce the greatest righteousness in his life. This is the path that offers the most usefulness to him. The wise man termed it "the way of wisdom." But the pattern still leaves us somewhat perplexed or puzzled sometimes for it provides no clear and positive guidelines that all men may safely follow. We readily recognize the principle and all will agree that if moral improvement is to be achieved the immoral must be eliminated from our lives and the virtuous cultivated. All will acknowledge that prudent selection and diligent application are ingredients necessary in the quest for moral good, but the path that one man chooses in his effort toward moral achieve-

ment may be of little value to another man in his pursuit of the same goal. None of our personalities, dispositions, sentiments, backgrounds, ambitions, etc. are the same and so, obviously our needs will not be the same either. What one man may have to resist hard and long may not even be a temptation to another man. Yet, every man, the Word says, has his own "besetting sin" which must be conquered and overcome if he is to enjoy any hope of moral excellence. It is the responsibility of every individual then, to diligently pursue the path that, so far as he is able to understand, will be most likely to provide for him the moral virtue he desires. Thus we can see that utility will vary in every life according to the needs of that life. There seems to be no positively defined formula provided that may be clearly understood and universally expected of all men, that will meet the present need of every life individually. It is true that the Scripture does set forth moral and immoral designation and positively requires the one and faithfully denounces the other, but it still leaves latitude that can only be covered by individual prudence. May we consider a text: Galatians 5:19-21, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." At first glance it would seem that such an all-inclusive listing as this would certainly cover everything contrary to virtuous living and in a

general sense it does, but who is to decide what all is included in a heading such as uncleanness? Where are the guidelines which tell each heart where hatred begins or ends? Who defines the boundary for variance or emulation or strife? While the general categories are identified and listed, it is also quite obvious that the application is a personal matter involving the integrity and degree of chastity that is present in every life involved. There are a number of scriptures in the Bible that itemize for us unbecoming conduct for virtuous living. Colossians 3:5 and Colossians 3:8-10 are quite comprehensive and they are given even greater dimension when we consider them along with the instructions of Christ? "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." Matthew 5:29-30. Certainly this scripture teaches the importance of utility in virtuous living. If what we are currently practicing in our daily lives is not assisting us in our closer walk with our Lord, then it has no usefulness for us in that capacity and so, of course, it should be pared away. But the fact still remains that in the Scripture listing no specifics are mentioned, so then no positive demands can be made. One man's right eye might be filled with fleshly lust while his neighbor's eye might be filled with greed. One man's right hand might be prone to violence while another man's right hand might be given

to thievery. What the Word provides in the matter is a moral principle, but obviously it is left up to each individual to assess his own case and execute his own convictions as he feels them required of him before his Lord. His own personal integrity, directed by his own personal convictions, will have to guide him in the path most useful for him to follow in his case in order for him to achieve the greatest moral advancement.

Now, here is another point that is worthy of our notice. These guidelines are not the built-in impulse of some divinely implanted instinct that happened to us when we were born again. Our new birth did bestow upon us pure minds but those minds will have to be taught in the ways of moral virtue. The Word and the Spirit are both active agents in the process but we each have our part to do as well. The Word is positive declaration issued under the influence of divine anointing. It is offered as fact and compliance is mandatory if right living is to be achieved, but the performance is left strictly up to the personal choice and individual determination of the candidate involved. It is made known to men what is required in order to live right, but every man must, of his own will and initiative, perform what is right in order to achieve what is right. It becomes quite obvious, then, that man will not be guided into moral virtue by following his own pleasure but rather by obeying what he recognizes to be morally right and correct in his own understanding. Thus we can see that every individual is responsible to meet his own concept of moral virtue for himself.

Now let us consider another dimension that must

be developed if we would achieve the real good. Let us suppose for a moment that an occasion has arisen in which someone is at fault. The apparent evidence is that my neighbor is the offender, but the actual fact is that I am to blame. Someone will obviously pay the consequence. If the case be such that if I remain silent no one would ever know the truth, my neighbor included, utility or usefulness, in an effort to protect my own self-interest, would dictate that I remain silent and let my neighbor suffer the blame. This, however, would not be the path of true virtue, for it is dishonest. We may readily see that something more is involved in real good than either pleasure or utility. All men experience pleasure and displeasure, even though every man may be different in his individual choices. We tend to measure utility or usefulness to a great extent by the pleasure the action affords; therefore, individual pleasure will gauge utility to a great extent for every man. But now, here is a dimension that is applicable and required of every man, in every situation of life, regardless of pleasure or utility. Let us mark it well. Usefulness or utility and the pleasurable, all find their real value in the pursuit of good only when they are accompanied by personal honesty.

To engage in any relationship with ourselves, with our fellows, or with God, with anything but absolute honesty will consistently lead us away from the very virtue we seek to achieve. Man cannot possibly believe a thing to be true and at the same time know it to be false, for such an attempt would violate his own honest concept of what he knows to be true. This realization has its greatest impact on man as

he confronts his own self and the understanding he possesses in his own heart. Honesty presents itself in straightforward fairness of chaste conduct that adheres to established fact. The divinely appointed characteristics of right and wrong were established for man by God when man fell from his original purity in the garden. Every individual, then, who develops to the point that he begins to understand, recognizes the basic characteristics of true and false, good and bad, whether he wants to know or not. The almighty God has declared that it would be so. This is factual material of divine origin that is bestowed by divine appointment, and it provides the framework and pattern by which all other knowledge and understanding is measured. When a human mind begins to tell itself a thing is true when he knows it is not, it is but a matter of time until he will be perplexed and confused as to whether or not anything is true. It is God, working through the Word and the Spirit, that establishes in every man's understanding the basic difference between right and wrong. When man divorces himself from these established moral moorings and declares them null and void in his life, he severs himself from the only influence that can establish moral truth in his own understanding. Without these moorings man has no concept of what is truth and so he, like Adam and Eve of old, will abandon himself to the pleasures and lusts of the carnal flesh for he has forfeited his concept of any other path to follow. From then on they blunder and stumble in moral darkness, telling themselves that their own pleasure and fleshly satisfaction is sufficient. Little wonder the Savior declared, "If the

light which is in you become darkness, how great is that darkness!"

The necessity of this quality of honesty in moral concept catapults us into an entirely new and advanced sphere of thinking. Men's lives and men's conduct are made up of more than simple pleasures and selfish utility that we indulge in or refrain from according to our own personal whims. To inject the quality of honesty into all of our doings, that is, the acts performed and the thinking patterns entertained, and keep them all in harmony and accordance with what we perceive as being true, right and good, stabilizes the entire system of our moral endeavor. Honesty will identify truth and truth is unchanging.

When people of normal intelligence begin to comprehend and understand the meaning and intended application of the plain Word of God, they have met truth. Then it will require a measure of dishonesty for them to convince themselves otherwise. The application will cover every phase of human existence and moral concept. Let us consider an illustration. Since the Word clearly specifies virtuous conduct in the matter of fleshly pride, then, only the dishonest person could deck himself in fleshly ornamentation and superfluous extravagance and still honestly declare himself free of fleshly pride. Those who cater to the fads of the world, practice the habits of the world, and indulge themselves in the activities of the world will have a hard time convincing anyone, even themselves, that they are free of worldly influence. Simple honesty will expose the fact that such is not the case. This principle is true whether we are observing an

individual or an entire body of individuals. Self-pleasure and self-satisfaction can be tolerated en masse as well as individually, and quite often is. Thus, when we observe a congregation or body of people who are not practicing the clear teachings of the Word of God, we have to know that they are not being honest with the truth, for the truth of God's Word clearly states otherwise. It is not the patterns and practices of society that identify for us the requirement of moral virtue, it is our divinely revealed concept of what is just and right before God. This is the understanding that our Maker will hold every man accountable for, because it is true. No man can knowingly violate these personal convictions and ever meet his Maker in peace, for he knows better, even if the crowd is doing otherwise.

True honesty will run true to form wherever it is found among men, regardless of nationality or generation. Hence, it may justly be termed a true universal law. All will agree that the pleasurable is not the same for all men. All can see that the useful would not be the same for everyone. Consequently, they would neither one constitute a universal rule that all could be expected to observe, but honesty does. All men will expect the good man to be honest, and justly so, for God expects the same thing. It is never impossible to do right, for right is always obvious and self-evident. We may not always be so sure of pleasure or utility for they are more or less tied to self-interest. Honesty exerts its requirement irrespective of self interest. The honest man will starve before he will steal. He will go to prison before he will tell a falsehood. He will go to the stake or to the rack

before he will deny his Lord. In short, the honest man will adhere to what he recognizes is right, regardless of the circumstance or condition of life in which he finds himself. Any individual who fails to be honest has disregarded the basic requirement of moral achievement.

The truth, same as any other knowledge, is effectual in us only as it is acknowledged and put into practice. To know the truth and perform the truth will bring us into contact with the Author of truth. He is the One who gave Himself for us that we might know how to come to Him, and likewise, be able to come to Him. Here again we find the combined elements of grace and truth and we realize that without honesty in us they are useless so far as we are concerned. This establishes a truth that none can deny. All good men are honest.

Let us observe some of the effect adherence to honesty will have on our application of pleasure and utility. We have already seen that all men are not alike, and that usefulness would have different meaning to different people. We also are aware that both pleasure and usefulness are closely associated with self-interest and will bear watching. The useful will demand competence and urge men to excel and will present the opinion that such action will advance moral standing. While we are instructed in the Scripture to be industrious and labor faithfully, etc., yet, it is never acceptable to conduct ourselves in any way that would not conform to the requirements of honesty.

The useful would demand skill in order to achieve, but the accomplishment of applied skill is not the

basis for moral achievement. No man is required to be skillful or competent, physically, in order to progress morally. A person may not be an accomplished carpenter, a skillful mechanic, or understand how to handle money advantageously. Some may not be fastidious housekeepers or immaculate in personal appearance. Some may not be well coordinated and athletic. Some may not be systematic and punctual in all of their affairs. Some may not possess musical ability, etc., but all men are capable of being honest.

Coupled with our concepts of what we recognize is right or wrong, honesty will leave us with a feeling of obligation to perform the right and avoid the wrong. Failure to do this leaves men expecting to reap a chastisement or punishment for that failure. That feeling is also confirmed in the Scripture. James 4:17 says, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." This concept could not be understood if we accepted the useful only as the requirement for good. Moral good does not come by physical dexterity, as usefulness might suggest. Men are not made better moral beings by being skillful craftsmen, and that fact covers the entire spectrum of human endeavor whether it be mechanical, musical, oratorical or whatever. Just because an individual is a dynamic speaker does not make him holy. It is freedom from sin that makes men holy. Musical talent does not necessarily indicate a holy life. It is the absence of sin that leaves men holy. This is why moral virtue is judged on the basis of moral purity rather than on the basis of physical aptitude. No man could be justly punished for inaptitude. All men do not

possess the same capabilities; therefore, it would be neither just nor fair to punish one man for failure to possess what another man has possessed from birth, nor would it be just to declare a man unspiritual because he is not physically skillful. However, since it is well within the power of all men to be honest, therefore, all may be justly held responsible to perform in accordance with true honesty. We are judged, then, according to the principles of action we recognize and the basic honesty with which we apply them. Luke 19:22: "And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow."

Honesty, accepted and practiced, will run true to form regardless of the circumstance under which it finds itself. It will perform the same in all societies and all generations of men. It may safely be accepted, then, as a solid footing upon which any man may build. It provides a dependable gauge by which any man may be judged. This consistent manifestation of true pattern is necessary in the true performance of the real good. Without this stabilizing quality, men find themselves building on the unsure footing of shifting sand. It is interesting to note that the basic characteristics of divinely established moral virtue are recognized and respected in all nationalities of people. All men know it is wrong to steal. All men despise the liar. All peoples frown on adultery and everyone recognizes cruelty, hatred, jealousy, envy, etc. At the same time these same people recognize kindness, gentleness, forbearance, love, good will, etc. From whence came these identical concepts that

all men recognize? There is but one satisfactory answer. These are the values and principles that God recognizes and so, of course, they are the elements that He would establish in all men's understanding. Honestly interpreting these understood elements establishes for us what we recognize as truth.

Though information is presented as being true, yet, if the source of the information can be proven dishonest, the credibility of the information is automatically questioned and quite possibly it will be discredited. Without truth and honesty there is no abiding foundation for anything, and so whatever moral structure is built, void of these ingredients, is doomed to failure. Any time we knowingly make room for a wrong premise and treat it as though it were true, we are giving way to dishonesty and weakening our moral structure. Then there has to be more to being good than the performing of acts or the conforming to social patterns. There is a response necessary from within the soul to the more noble qualities of character that are found in moral virtue. This is a response that can come from no other source than the heart of the individual involved. No man has the power to bestow upon another man the virtue of honesty. Men may establish and require rules for each other to observe and go to great lengths to see that their rules are respected, but men who are dishonest will still find ways to violate the rules whenever it is to their own selfish advantage.

Individual response covers the entire scope of human life. One man might enjoy and appreciate music while another would prefer peace and quiet. Neither would necessarily be right or wrong. Then

who could say that either had chosen the wrong pursuit? The man who enjoys a crowd, who finds great pleasure in social contacts, in meeting people, and in conversing with others, etc., will of course find utility or usefulness in mingling with the throng. Another man who finds great pleasure in reflective thought and concentrated thinking will find it useful for him to be alone and quiet for that provides an environment conducive to that activity. No need to require or expect that these two individuals be the same for there is no wrong in either choice. It is, however, fitting and proper to require and expect that both of these men be governed by honesty in their pursuits. Honesty is not a thing springing from natural impulse or any other personal characteristic. It is a quality of character within itself. It may, consequently, be required or expected of all men. It is also worthwhile to note that the requirement of honesty may, and sometimes does, cut directly across the natural impulses. A natural inclination for music might suggest that all music is acceptable to true virtue, but an honest observance of truth will prompt us that some music and the spirit it carries is not acceptable for those who would pursue righteousness. Concentrated thinking would be no unacceptable activity within itself, but the field of application would need to be governed carefully by an honest observance of truth. It would be unacceptable to deliberately concentrate on how to cheat or take advantage of our fellows. Recognition of these truths adds dimension to the text of Jeremiah 10:23 for he says, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his

steps." If man would aspire to achieve a level of performance that is acceptable to the Lord, then he must be lifted above the influence of natural impulse. Sincere honesty, springing from a devoted heart, opens the avenue through which the soul may rise to divinely accepted virtue.

Honesty is a virtue of divine origin that is perceived by all men. When it functions within the framework of right, as opposed to wrong, it begins to elevate men beyond the good and into the virtuous. Men, by natural impulse, may perform some good. They will help one another in times of need, speak encouraging words in times of trial, share of their abundance with others less fortunate, etc., but all of this can be and often is nothing more than the manifestation of natural goodness. Some do good simply because they feel it is expected of them. Some respond because of the publicity it will afford, but all of this is included in the Scripture when it said, "...and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;..." Isaiah 64:6. When men select and do the right, the good, the honest, simply because it is right and honest and for no other reason except that they prefer that course of action, that is virtue. True virtue needs no other prompting. It will willingly and voluntarily perform the right simply because it is right. Natural impulse will say, "I owe him nothing because of the wrong he has done to me." Honesty with truth will tell us, "His doing of wrong to me will not add virtue to my doing of wrong to him. I prefer to seek the way of virtue; therefore, I will do good to him even though he has done wrong to me." Real honesty, when it is properly observed, will perform in consistent har-

mony with established truth. Natural impulse will say, "Well, it is no worse for me to wear a dress that is too revealing than it is for them to keep and watch a television." Honestly acknowledged truth will prompt us that neither action is conducive to moral virtue and therefore neither could be justly tolerated before God. No truly honest man would attempt to justify one form of unacceptable conduct with someone's practice of another form of faulty conduct.

When we admit the truth, then we all must acknowledge that unless we find some help beyond our own ability we are doomed to destruction. We are guilty of known wrongdoing and may justly expect to be cast into outer darkness for our transgressions. We know that we are without hope and without God. True honesty, then, will prompt us to personal humility. When men become honest enough to admit their hopeless condition and humble enough to cast off their pride and cry out for mercy, divine assistance is ready and waiting to answer that plea. Natural impulse resists all of this process, for natural impulse finds its fulfillment in personal interest and personal interest finds it distasteful and degrading to admit itself at fault. He who seeks nothing but his own personal interest is commonly recognized as a selfish man. These are the attributes of a self-life. Anything that would diminish one's self in his own estimation or mar the image of what he feels himself to be, will be rejected by natural impulse. Its reasoning will be that such would not be in the best interest of personal interest. Honesty, on the other hand, will unwaveringly contend that unless and until personal interest is denied in favor of what is known to

be true, no real virtue can be achieved. It becomes readily apparent that the path to moral virtue leads away from and in direct contradiction to the self-life. There is no real moral virtue nor real moral goodness without unselfishness. The honest man who acknowledges the shortcoming of natural impulse and honestly desires to achieve the virtuous, will go down in the dust of humility, embarrassing and humiliating as it may seem to be, and cry out for the help he realizes he needs. Now, we have the basis for another universal requirement.

Selfishness, self-interest, natural impulse, the self-life, must all be sacrificed in favor of the honest. Hear the proclamation of the Scripture as it invites us to that more virtuous plane. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world (fleshly, selfish gratification): but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Romans 12:1-2. Here is truth that no honest man can deny: To whatever degree selfishness or self-interest injects itself into our lives and our activities, to that extent the true virtue of the effort is damaged.

We may vehemently uphold some particular segment of Scripture which is apparently being ignored, and the truth of the subject may be well established, but if we have as a side issue a desire to diminish, embarrass or injure someone else, we have a personal self-interest involved which will hinder the virtue of our campaign. We want to convey the impres-

sion that our prime motive is the promulgation of the truth, and we stress that for all to see, but there is also an opening this effort provides which allows us to expose and accentuate someone else's fault or shortcoming or failure. Such is not altogether honest nor is it at all virtuous.

One may be busily involved in a ministry, spending full time in the field and keeping himself very active, but if his efforts are affected anywhere by self-interest, the virtue of his effort will suffer. He may be an articulate and dynamic speaker, with remarkable ability to attract and to hold the attention of a crowd, but if at any time he should allow any of those qualities to begin to affect his own personal self-interest, it will soon begin to detract from the virtue of his message. Personal interest can take any one of a great number of avenues or even use a combination of several to accomplish its purposes. Some may use their abilities with the thought of monetary gain in mind. Others may have little concern for the monetary but be greatly interested in popularity. They want to enjoy the applause rather than the affluence of the people. Others may have very little concern for the aforementioned qualities but have great concern for power or control. They love to dominate and have others in subjection to them. In any issue that may arise, they want to be heard, and they become disturbed if their voice is paid no heed or given little regard. They are hungry for power.

Preaching is by no means the only activity where self-interest may be manifest. All will agree that giving is good and that Christians are expected and required to share their means with others, but when

the act is performed with the idea in mind and in such a way that it lifts up or extols the giver, there is self-interest involved and it will injure the virtue of the entire transaction. Little wonder then the Savior said to us, "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly." Matthew 6:1-4.

Suppose we take the Scripture that teaches us of the gifts of the Spirit and their various manifestations and begin to seek after one of them. We are not out of the bounds of the Scripture for it admonishes us to desire spiritual gifts. But if somewhere along the way we begin to give room for a little feeling that to possess this particular gift will magnify us a bit, or will add something to our reputation as being a spiritual person, or will cause people to acknowledge in us someone who can "get a prayer through," we are courting personal self-interest, and the true virtue of our endeavor will come into jeopardy.

One may be zealously busy in the neighborhood "witnessing for the Lord," urging folks to meeting, etc., but if there be anywhere in the effort a feeling that "winning souls is a credit for me," or a finding of

pleasure in mentioning how many "I have won," it is time to be on the lookout for self-interest.

Self is ready and willing to do all sorts of good works, perform many good deeds and make great sacrifice, but somewhere at the proper time it will also demand some recognition. Jesus has said, "And I, if I be lifted up...will draw all men unto me." John 12:32. He is not selfish in His assertion; He is owning what rightfully belongs to Him, for He is the original Maker and is seeking to recover what has been wrested from Him. He has come with power and virtue to perform in behalf of man's needs and will perform to accomplish men's good, whereas self-interest would perform to magnify its own self. If men would know the blessedness of real virtue, self-interest must be laid aside.

These are but a few illustrations, yet human experience will compel us to acknowledge that every facet of human existence is susceptible to these influences, and that if we would know the virtue of real good, then selfishness must be put to the cross and crucified. Only those who are totally honest will be able to accomplish that feat.

Moral Virtue

Under a former heading we considered man as a twofold being, not only as possessing a fleshly, earthly body but also as being crowned with glory and honor. It was pointed out that this crowned condition was applying to a spiritual, abstract form. By this we are able to recognize, in ourselves, beings who are made up of a physical, fleshly body that is occupied and controlled by an abstract, spiritual entity. It is this combining of flesh and spirit that has produced the human race. We also remember the instruction of the Scripture to sow to the Spirit and not to the flesh. Let us pick up this line of thinking and inquire into some of its provisions. To every individual is given that part of him which is physical and is made up of flesh and bones. It was created out of the dust of the earth as testified by the Scripture. (Genesis 3:19.) It was also declared that back to that same dust it would return. No one would attempt to deny that process. While this body, when considered by itself alone, is nothing more than an inert, inanimate lump of helpless clay, yet, when it is combined with the attributes of the abstract part, it becomes very much animated and alive. This unification is what the Scripture is referring to when it said, "...and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Genesis 2:7. Apparently man came into being in two stages: First the body alone, then the breathed life and he became soul and body. The body, or the flesh, of itself, is nothing. It makes no demands, it selects no choices, it offers no preferences, it indulges in no animation, nothing. Consider the body

in the casket. All of these various activities come into being and become dynamic only when the breath of life is present. The body, then, is simply a vehicle to accommodate the soul. The choices made by the inner man are the influences that regulate the actions of the physical man. Matthew 12:33-35. "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."

From this, we can readily see that if we would aspire to influence the conduct of the physical, we must first gain control of the spiritual. (Mark 7:20-23 and Matthew 23:23-28.) The apostle of old recognized this when he declared in Ephesians 6:12, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." The hearts and lives of men are some of the highest places known to man in this world. James 2:26 makes this observation, "...The body without the spirit is dead,..." This twofold being is further portrayed in the text which says, "The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Job 33:4. Job 33:6 says, "...I also am formed out of the clay."

With this information to guide us, we can readily see that the physical side of man is not where the seat of sin lies. Jesus told us in Matthew 15:17-20,

"Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man:..." Though the actions are performed by the physical body, yet the prompting that spawns the action comes from the soul, the inner man. Without that inward prompting, no action from the body is forthcoming. Left to itself alone, the body is completely dormant. Consider the man whom we say is unconscious. When the soul or spirit and the body separate, the body becomes what we call lifeless and it immediately begins to compost back into mother earth the same as all other organic matter. Ecclesiastes 12:7 says, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." This undoubtedly refers to the living spirit that was breathed into the physical body. The spirit was a part of, or a projection of, God Himself, extended into physical man. It produced in man what God termed a living soul.

This living soul was a being in its own right. It was, however, different from God in at least one detail. It is a being made up of soul and body while God, the Word says, is totally spirit. That man is a separate and independent being in his own right is attested to by the fact that he possesses the right and necessity of selecting the moral influence he will follow. God is a spirit and God is good, but all spirits are not good. God breathed into man of His good

spirit which made man a living soul. That soul is governed by spirit influence but the spirit selected to do the governing is left entirely to the discretion of the soul-possessing man.

Since all of the choosing and directing is done by the inner man, from the heart, then we can understand why there is no need to summons the physical body to a moral judgment. It made no right or wrong decisions, it did nothing of itself that would fix blame or merit reward. All of its action was conceived in a mind and was prompted from a heart. It is the soul, the spirit side of man, that directs the heart. Then the soul may justly be held to give account for the deeds the body performs. The physical body will be discarded and it will decay back to dust, but the soul will endure forever somewhere. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28-29. Having observed that the body is merely a vehicle, an object governed and directed by another acting force, let us give some consideration to that force.

The soul, or abstract side of man, is also made up of two parts. One is superior from a moral standpoint, the other is inferior. The one tends toward the more noble, the upright, the true, the virtuous. The other is more carnal, more material, and tends toward the body, the flesh. As might be expected, the former, which tends toward the spiritual side of man, is sensitive to intelligence, to moral sentiments, and to the will. The other side is more easily influenced

by the senses, the emotions, the appetites and the passions. The influences preeminent in the inferior side of the soul, the senses, the appetites, the passions, and that find their expression in selfishness and egotism are the ones found prominent in all flesh. The lower animals are subject to many of these very impulses and justly so, for they know nothing better.

The natural, biological world is not under moral law but under the law of instinct. Thus when fleshly instinct or impulse dictates a self-interest, the flesh responds to accomplish its own satisfactions regardless of what the consequence may be to another, even if the other be of its own kind. The larger, stronger swine will gorge on available food, rooting its weaker litter mate away even though he may be starving from lack of food. The stronger feels no guilt or condemnation from such action for he possesses no higher intelligence. All his governing law required of him was to attend to his own self-satisfaction, desire and welfare.

The distinguishing quality that elevates man above the status of animals and puts him under another governing law is the more virtuous moral side of his being. It tends toward the abstract, the spiritual side of man, and as we have observed, has for its influences intelligence, moral sentiment and will. Those influences that tend toward the flesh we recognize as the carnal or self-nature. Those influences that direct us toward the more virtuous we recognize as the divine nature. The elevating factor that man possesses is his ability, by his own choices, to rise above the appeals of passion, appetite, self-

ishness, etc., that influence the animals, and to exercise the faculties of his own will. By thinking, reasoning, loving, we turn to the more noble influences, thus imitating the divine nature.

This provides quite a broad field of thought. By this we become aware that whatever influence is predominant in our lives is the result of one or the other of two factors. Either we are performing as we are because we know no better or else we are performing by choice. To follow the virtuous is to prefer what is best in us and to strive to achieve it, and to refuse what is less good and strive to avoid it. This clarifies the scripture which states that man was crowned with glory and honor. (Hebrews 2:7.) That crowned condition is realized in man's ability to prefer the virtuous qualities of the soul, the dignity of superior, moral nature to the qualities of the body, the degrading defilement of the fleshly lusts and passions. While man does not possess total ability to will himself into divine moral virtue by his own effort, he does possess the deciding power of choice. If he elects to follow the good, at the prompting of his own intelligence and will, and turns to the Savior for His assistance, he will "obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16.)

With that divine assistance he may successfully achieve the real good he desires. The virtuous individual prefers the more noble affection of the heart to the less virtuous and degrading influences of his selfish flesh. Noble men who discover their lives less virtuous than they would like for them to be will make effort to improve the situation. Such action is automatically moving toward the good, the virtuous, the

righteous, and it will without fail attract the attention of the Lord. (II Chronicles 16:9 and Matthew 5:6.) He, knowing that they will not be able to succeed in their quest by their own strength, is prompt to make Himself available to them. He generously offers to supply the only ingredient that will insure their success. He has grace available in abundance.

Man, we remember, is of a religious nature from birth, desiring to worship. Moral improvement in humanity is automatically associated with religious activity. It involves worship. Thus, any man's voluntary move toward a higher plane of living opens the door wide for the Savior to do His work. He is the Author of a better way. He demonstrated its feasibility when He lived it Himself. He stands ready and anxious to lead all men along that more virtuous path to the way of holiness.

Now, let us consider the influences of some other crowning characteristics. Man is of a free will, that is, he is able to make choice of which influences he would prefer to pursue. He possesses intelligence which makes known to him which choice is more noble and virtuous. He has the enlightenment of reason to verify the validity of his selection. Armed with this information, it would seem a simple thing to always make the right choices and thus be automatically catapulted into divine virtue. It would perhaps be a blessing if such were the case, but a little reflective thinking will soon teach us that such is impossible. We must remember the declaration of the Word which points out to us that it is not in man to direct his own steps. By the prompting of the Holy Spirit, men are guided into the paths of right. Void of the

Spirit men revert back to human impulse which caters to the fleshly, and so they go astray. Man does not possess the intellectual capability of directing himself into divine nature. Such reasoning would be on the same level as expecting a manufactured automobile to rise up in its own capability and produce an engineer to drive itself. The apostle of old points out this same principle in Romans 9:20. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Since all men are made sensitive to the prompting of spirit influence, it is of vital importance which spirit it is that he allows to influence him. Here again we have the Scripture: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Titus 2:11-12.

Jesus came teaching a doctrine that produced astonishment in His audiences. They had never heard any such instruction, yet, He proclaimed it the only way of eternal life. He also taught the need for divine rescue and obedience to divine instruction if man was to ever achieve divine nature. Hence, we must be born again, which is divine rescue, and receive the assistance of divine grace which provides enablement, if we would aspire to become the sons of God. The stated fact that man must be taught into such virtuous living is clear evidence that he does not possess this knowledge of himself. If he ever obtains it, it will be through the avenue of divine instruction.

Notice the avenues of approach He used in reaching out to fallen man. He did not approach through selfish, fleshly appetites and passion. His appeal is to the intellect, the reason and the will; the more noble side of man's being. Some men never lend themselves to the influences of the more noble. They choose rather to remain satisfied and contented with the rewards of self-satisfaction and fleshly pleasure. They will never know the wonder and beauty of divine nature. Men who will lend themselves to and seek after those more noble attributes have God's promise that they will be rewarded. (Matthew 5:6.)

Going back to the description of the changes that took place in man at the fall and the influences that became predominant in man when God withdrew, it is not difficult to discern that salvation is a program divinely designed to salvage man from that fallen condition. It will require, as we have observed previously, the removal of all selfishness, for selfishness is of the flesh and carnal. It will neither admit nor submit to the requirements of divine nature.

The voluntary acceptance of regeneration or salvation subjects the individual reasoning back to the will of God and His truth. Until this takes place a large proportion of man's judgments are false and undependable for the soul. The achievement of divine nature, we would expect, if transposed to us, would be identical to what we perceive in Him. We would expect to become holy for He proclaims Himself holy. To expect to achieve moral excellence or divine nature and not possess holiness defies the logic of reason. There is no way such could be the case. God is holy. He designed His children holy. Sin

ruined that condition. Then if man is to be restored, sin must of course be eliminated. If sin is eliminated from our hearts, then what other condition than holiness could prevail? Sin is what destroyed that condition in the beginning. We have previously observed the yearning of men's hearts, languishing in despair and crying out to God for divine deliverance. (Psalm 14:7 and Psalm 53:6.) In Christ this deliverance was fulfilled and the original state of man restored. Our past sins He took upon Himself, nailing them to His cross, suffering their blame in our stead. (Colossians 2:13-14.) He paid the supreme price for our guilt with His own blood, thus satisfying the requirement of divine justice which was holding us. (Ezekiel 18:4.) That transaction put us in His hands. (Romans 8:7-15.) Then, instead of accusing us and exploiting us as being under obligation to Him as though we were some sort of purchased slaves, He quickened us into new life. We were born again of His Spirit and made new creatures in Him. He invites us now, by the power which He gives us through His abounding grace, to keep ourselves free from the entanglement of sin which had us under such bondage. He then proclaims us on an equal with Himself: the sons of God. (John 1:13.) It is easy to see, now, why the flesh and the spirit, the selfish and the divine do not and cannot mix. His constant directing and consistent teaching is away from the influence of selfish flesh and toward the more noble virtues of the spirit. Thus He teaches us of truthfulness, honesty, fairness, uprightness, purity of heart and life, etc. (I Peter 2:9-12.) He purchased our redemption with His own blood and then secured the success of

our continuing purity by sending to us the third person of the blessed trinity. He, as our Redeemer and Intercessor (Hebrews 8:1-2), would of necessity be required to return unto His Father and perform His intercessory duty. Yet, He would send one to us to dwell with us and abide in us. (John 16:7-15.) He also proclaimed that when this Comforter would come, He would give us power beyond the normal ability of humanity to perform or achieve moral excellence. (Acts 1:8 and Hebrews 9:11-14.) That Spirit would lead us into all truth. The power He would bring would enable us to walk in, or perform, that revealed truth which would develop in us the divine likeness or image. (II Corinthians 3:17-18.) The guiding would always be away from the fleshly, the sensual, the devilish and toward the noble, the upright, the truthful and the honest.

This achieving of moral excellence or divine nature finds its expression in varied application. Its first and prime manifestation is as it pertains to the individual personally. When man becomes acquainted with God, he recognizes a need in himself. At the same time he perceives, in God's offer, the fulfillment of his need. His response to that offer is all on an individual basis—man and God reasoning together. (Isaiah 1:16-20.) Until and unless that need be taken care of completely, man's moral advancement will never take place. Sin has taken every man captive as proclaimed by the Scripture and as is taught by human experience. Then sin is the problem and deliverance is the need, but how to achieve is the question. God's offer to man is the perfect solution. Since sin has occurred on an individual ba-

sis, then of course the solution must be applied on that same, identical basis. This adds dimension to the scripture which says, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. No man will be able to meet his God in judgment and declare, "I am not saved because I did not know how." Jesus makes it His business to see that every man knows how and is given opportunity to be saved. If men know how to be saved and yet are not, then the only other excusable plea is that "I am not able." God's reasonable offer to man, as He approaches each man, confronts him with the information that now, by virtue of divine intervention, an avenue of escape is made available. Man may successfully elude the clutches of sin that has, until now, kept him under its bondage. He is made aware that if he will but seize this opportunity and act upon it, honestly and faithfully, he may actually achieve deliverance from his sins. What has, in fact, happened is that the proffered grace of our risen Lord Jesus Christ has stepped in between an honest, seeking heart and the enemy of his soul. Christ's presence has made that enemy stand back and take his power off of the man, providing the man opportunity to make his own uninterrupted choice of which he would rather pursue, the ways of the flesh or the more noble ways of the Spirit. Men who are made knowledgeable of the need for salvation and who are provided the means for deliverance have no excuse for continuing unsaved except that they do not want to be saved. To knowingly and voluntarily remain in a sinful state when full and complete deliverance has been provided and rejected will, of course, leave the indi-

vidual subject to the rewards and punishments provided for that action. A halfhearted preference, partially accepted and carelessly lived, will result in what we call a hypocrite.

Accompanying the offer of grace and deliverance is a feeling or awareness, of caring, of concern, of loving. This feeling is so intense and pervading until its genuine sincerity cannot be denied or even doubted. The individual is acutely aware that God really is interested in and actually cares for him. For the soul who spurns this offer away and elects to continue in his old way, the feeling soon fades. He soon goes on as before pursuing his own fleshly interests in sin. The individual who accepts the offer and responds to the appeal has made his choice in favor of our Lord and will submit himself to Him. He will cry to Him for mercy and forgiveness. That man is blessed beyond description. His plea is heard and forgiveness is granted. Sins that are forgiven no longer demand atonement or penalty. If justice is satisfied, then it no longer demands reconciliation. This relieves the guilt and condemnation that accompanies sin's presence. With the sin gone, the guilt is gone and the individual life takes on an entirely new dimension. He realizes a great change has taken place. His conduct is radically altered. His interests are changed. His thinking is changed. His desires are changed. He is, in fact, a new creature and he lives in a new world. He has been born again and is translated out of the power of darkness into the Kingdom of His dear Son. The feeling of love, that he was made aware of at the first, becomes a pervading, overwhelming, consuming force that engulfs and satu-

rates his entire being. Never before has he ever known affection of such intensity and magnitude as the love he feels in his heart now. This is normal, for God is love and this individual who has been made a new creature, is a product of divine love. Of course he would possess his parent attributes. This that he is experiencing is the development of a maturing love affair between himself and his God. Our Lord has offered of His divine love, and this individual has responded with the offering of his own love in return. Love offered and love accepted provides the climate and surrounding necessary for love to mature and produce. The apostle of old put it this way: "We love him, because he first loved us." I John 4:19. This is the motivating force that will keep him pursuing in the pathway of his Savior as the Word has said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15. The choice the individual has made is but the beginning of a long series of choices. If he would aspire to continue in favor with his new-found Savior, he must diligently and consistently make those choices day by day and hour by hour that meet his Lord's approval. Our Lord will always lead in the more noble and virtuous path of holiness. Man's response to that divine leading will determine the spiritual quality of his life.

Now, let us consider briefly another aspect of our human composition. We noticed previously that the abstract side of man, the soul, was made up of two parts, namely the more noble side and the baser side. According to the teaching of the Scripture as we understand it, these two poles are governed by contradictory forces. We find the champions of these two

forces meeting head on in the fourth chapter of Matthew. Both were quoting Scripture, but one was making the wrong application. Here is a noteworthy observation. The Holy Scripture is true and was given by divine inspiration to holy men of God who wrote under the unction of the Holy Ghost. But, when they are interpreted and applied by carnal, fleshly thinking minds they will always miss the mark. The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (Romans 8:6-8.) It finds its expression in the self-life, and all its application is self-oriented. As we have already discovered, there is no room for selfishness in a life of moral excellence or holiness. The champion of the self-life offered to his opponent all the kingdoms of this world and their glory if He would but fall down and worship him. The Lord of glory did not contest his right of ownership, and so we conclude that he actually has power of jurisdiction over the kingdoms of this world. He is portrayed in the Scripture as the father of lies, the ruler of the darkness of this world, one in whom no good dwells, the accuser of the brethren. His origin is from beneath. He is the prince of the power of the air, etc. All of these, and a great many more that could be listed, go to describe and identify the domain over which he reigns. It portrays the diabolical work which he is doing. This work is conceived in the mind of spirits, and by exerting their influence upon the souls of men, they find their fulfillment in human action.

The Savior, on the other hand, came offering truth instead of lies. He brought proper and profitable interpretation of Scripture for misconceptions. He pro-

vides the Light of life for spiritual darkness. He offers the blessing of the virtuous in lieu of the passions of the selfish flesh, etc. This, too, is offered to interested humanity through the avenues of the Spirit.

Consider for a moment what these facts mean to humanity. There are, so far as we know, only two poles—the good and the bad. Each is dominated by a champion, and each works its works through the agency of spirit. We have no knowledge of any neutral or in-between ground; in fact, the Scripture tells us that all men are serving or lending themselves to one or the other of these two masters. It states that it is an impossibility to serve both at the same time. (See Matthew 7:17-18). Jesus told some, "Ye are of your father the devil, and his works ye will do." In Job 1:8, Job was designated by God to Satan as being one who was perfect and upright. He obeyed God and the Holy Spirit.

Man's service to God and His Spirit is never coerced nor forced. It is never demanded nor extracted. It is always and constantly the spontaneous response of the man's consenting will. It is the demonstrated expression of personal preference. It is the manifestation of yielded volition. It is the public demonstration of willing consent. In short, men serve the Lord simply because they want to and for no other reason. No man will be dragged nor pushed into heaven. None will be tricked or deceived in, nor will any fall in there inadvertently. Men will arrive in heaven because they chose to be there and want to go more than anything else in the world. No sacrifice will be too great if failure to comply will keep them out.

When the selection is made to yield to the virtuous at the invitation of the Father through His convicting Spirit, they receive of the power of His Spirit. This power, working in them, will sever all former earthly ties. Later, when they are able to comprehend and receive, that same Spirit will teach those who are willing how, of their own volition, to consecrate and dedicate themselves to God for Him to use as He sees fit in His sacred service. They may be perfected in holiness, for that voluntary dedication surrenders forever the old, selfish, self-life. It commits the soul to God and His complete jurisdiction, to be governed and directed by His spirit from then on. (Romans 12:1.)

Note well the work of the convicting Spirit. He tells us that no man can come unto Him except the Spirit draw him. Men do not get delivered from their sins and live holy lives by "making resolutions" or "turning over new leaves" or "making decisions." They must receive the powers of divine deliverance that will break and loose the binding chains of sin and this world. With that done, they may successfully turn their backs on the old life and begin anew. It will be a walk with a new Master, a journey to an eternal and everlasting abode with the Lord. The axe has indeed been laid to the root of the tree and it has been hewn down and committed to destruction. The problem of sin has been squarely faced and the solution is proven effective. Beauty has taken the place of ashes and holiness has replaced selfishness and sin. A new creature has been wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord. Divinely instituted moral excellence has been realized and accomplished in the heart and life

of an individual as it applies to him. He is made clean in the all-cleansing blood of the Lamb. He finds his heavenly Father's pleasure and favor falling upon him as it did on the forefathers in the garden of old. He has been translated out of the power of darkness into the Kingdom of His dear Son. He has laid aside the spirit of the world and the spirit that rules the world. He has taken upon himself the spirit and nature of Christ and Christ now rules in him. Read the account of the apostle given in the sixth chapter of Romans.

None could deny the fact that the conduct of our lives will proclaim the quality of spirit influence that we are yielded to. Thus Jesus could safely declare, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The knowing is noteworthy for others, but it is also of great value to the achiever of divine nature. One of Satan's oldest ploys is to put the idea in the mind, "How can I know I am really saved?" We have already shown that without divine assistance no man can get saved nor yet keep saved. If we are living a life of moral excellence, how else did we achieve it? But, we say, "I don't feel like it. I don't really feel like anything different has happened to me!" Remember this, we were not converted in the first place by great emotion or feeling. We were converted by heavenly teaching. Teaching is not great demonstration, it is the conveying of understanding. When we realize that we are saved because He said we could be saved and that He would in no wise turn us away, our faith mounts up and we reach out to receive the promise. Then, as we realize the fruits of our lives are proving the validity of our testimony, that gives us courage and bold-

ness to lay hold upon the experience more vigorously. We boldly declare it to be so.

Herein lies a secret of strength. Achievement of moral excellence and the bearing of acceptable spiritual fruit adds dignity to that experience and commands a respect not only from others but also from ourselves. It is the consciousness of this accomplished achievement that gives us what we call "the victory." We have, with the aid of His divine assistance, been able to successfully maintain a level of acceptable moral excellence. We feel triumphant because of the accomplishment. This experience has put many an individual to leaping and shouting for joy, and justly so. The confidence we have in Him and the work He has done in us is vital to our experience. It provides us the courage and stamina we need to remain true when nothing else but accomplishment is evident. In other words, I may not feel saved but here is the evidence of my virtuous life to prove I am saved even to me? I am living free from the guilt and condemnation of sin. That is victory. All of this transaction has to do, by and large, with the individual as it pertains to the individual. Its accomplished result we call virtue. It provides for the one who possesses it a basis for personal, moral dignity. He feels himself of some moral worth in his Lord's Kingdom.

Now, let us go back a bit and pick up an idea expressed in an earlier section and observe its application here. In the discussion of the primitive concepts, we spent some time with the idea of space. We observed that every individual possesses his own space and is responsible for it. When we behold the

virtue of holy living and conclude that this is the kind of life that we want to live, we set out to achieve this blessed experience. We respond to the Savior's knock, swing wide the door and invite Him to freely come in that we may sup with Him and He with us. The supping, we soon discover, is not the eating of a physical meal. It is rather the imparting to us of the ingredients that produce growth and maturity of the soul. This is the kind of food that was presented to the woman at the well. It is also the food that satisfied Jesus Himself in the transaction. This is the spiritual food that will build strong and dependable spiritual bodies. It will also produce sturdy and unshakable footing for the soul. This food will so work in us until we, with confidence, can present ourselves to ourselves and declare before the Lord, "So far as I know and am able to understand, my life is acceptable before You." At one time we were defiled in sin and contaminated with iniquity. The guilt of that committed sin left us feeling degraded beneath the level God intended us to occupy. Now, by virtue of His provision, we can, with boldness and courage, come and present ourselves to Him. Because we have obeyed His instruction, we feel ourselves accepted of Him. This means that He has bestowed upon us the dignity that now belongs to us as sons of God. Men who are defeated possess no dignity. They are treated as scum by themselves as well as others. Men who have triumphed in battle are victorious and are quick to demand the dignity that conquest affords. Those who succeed in the conquest of sin in their lives will do well to present themselves before the Lord without condemnation and manfully declare themselves

partaker of the dignity of a child of God. His Word instructs us, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,..." Psalm 107:2.

Now let us explore this a little further. The first place we need to feel our experience acceptable is before ourselves. We are the ones who possess the basic honesty that can judge our condition correctly. The next place we must offer our experience for acceptance is before the Lord. When we feel assurance that we have His sanction and approval, then we have confidence to place it on public display. We declare to all, "I am now a Christian, a child of God." I am here and now declaring that I have so occupied the space allotted unto me in honesty and virtue until my loving Lord is willing to publicly accept it as His own. His declaration of me is, "The space he now occupies belongs to Me, having been committed to My jurisdiction fully and freely by his own will and consent. I hereby accept it as My own and bestow upon him the dignity of a child of the King." Christians need not and ought not go around with their heads down. He declares them a chosen generation, a royal priesthood. They are individuals who can, and have, offered acceptable sacrifice before the August Majesty on high. They have received the recognition of His extended royal scepter. Holy people are a dignified people and worthy to be presented as such to all. Now keep this in mind for future reference. When our lives please us and we feel confident they please our Lord, then we are ready to present them to our fellows for their acceptance. We boldly declare, "I am saved."

The Just

Now let us consider this application of moral excellence. It is fitting and necessary that the first priority for moral advancement will be as it pertains to the individual alone and his relationship with God. It is likewise understandable that following closely in the wake of that accomplishment would be moral excellence as it applies to others. It is one thing for a man to behave himself properly as it has to do with himself. It is quite another thing to behave himself properly as it pertains to his fellow man. A great volume of New Testament teaching is instructing folks how to get along acceptably with other people. We may examine our lives, as they pertain to us, and conclude that we are free from selfishness and self-interest. But the supreme test will come when other people begin to enter the picture.

Here is an illustration. One may experience disappointment because some desired advancement did not come as he had hoped it would. He may be able to obtain satisfactory victory over the disappointment until he discovers that someone else obtained the position he desired. That is when he discovers that he not only wanted the position, but he also did not want someone else to have it and, perhaps, especially not the particular individual who did obtain it. True Christians who are free of self-interest are without partiality. They do not allow themselves to indulge in resentments nor unkind thinking, much less unkind words and actions. It would be unthinkable for the Christian to actually indulge in tactics that would make the job more difficult for the other fel-

low simply because he did not want him to have the job in the first place. To contemplate such issues brings us face to face with the scripture in Matthew 7:12, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:..." This text made no room for individual characteristics, nor did it make any provision for personal preferences. It did not take into account prevailing social attitudes or opinions. All men are to be treated as we would like to be treated ourselves without respect to our personal likes or dislikes, or the attitudes and opinions of others. This type of conduct will indeed require a freedom from selfishness, for selfish preference would not admit of such practicing. Think for a moment what this implies when we consider it in connection with the scripture of Matthew 7:3-5 where he tells of the beam and mote. Self-interest, motivated by disappointment and resentment, when given an opportunity, would be quick to slash, tear, hurt and destroy. It would justify itself with the idea that, "I did not think they should have this position in the beginning; therefore, I am under no obligation to help them succeed." It is a difficult task indeed to remove a mote with an eye filled with a beam. True, selfless, divine nature would lend all possible assistance toward the other fellow's success even though he is succeeding in the very position I had hoped to fill and when I know that he could not possibly succeed without my assistance. Not only that, but divine grace would enable that one to lend his assistance pleasantly, graciously and even rejoice with the other fellow in his achieved success.

In the household of faith we are admonished by

the Word to "let each esteem other better than themselves." All men are to be regarded as equal with us but the brethren are to be regarded as "better." Think for a moment what this implies when we project our thought into heaven. There will be none but brethren in that clime; therefore, all are to be considered better than ourselves.

Go to any or all of the various catalogs of unacceptable human indulgences listed in the New Testament and note how many of them have to do with us as we relate to others. Of the seventeen works of the flesh cited in Galatians 5:19-21 only four or five would normally be thought of as being indulged in by one individual alone. All the rest involve other people some way or other. With this understanding comes also the conviction that in our endeavors to achieve moral excellence, we must conduct in such a way that our fellows will be convinced and satisfied with our accomplishment as well as ourselves. (Matthew 5:16.) Our fellow man has concepts of right and wrong, the same as we do. If we would do justice to him and his understanding, we must give some consideration to his concepts as well as to our own. (Romans 14:14-16.) Christians need to practice recognizing, accepting and treating every one of our fellow beings with the dignity and respect that belongs to them as fellow beings in our Lord's creation. Our faithfully paying to them their due regard is what we call "The Just." All who profess moral excellence may reasonably be expected to be just in their dealings with others. It has, for its prime objective, the well-being and happiness of others, and its reward is realized in Christian fellowship and brotherhood.

Now, let us pick up the last thought of the preceding topic. When our lives satisfy us and we feel confident they please the Lord, then we are ready to present them to our fellows for acceptance. No man has the right to present his life, expecting it to be accepted by others, until it is in complete accordance with the teaching of the Word so far as he understands the teaching to be. No man has the right to expect to be loved as a brother until he has presented himself lovable as a brother from a Christian standpoint. This points up the necessity of some administered regulation in the Lord's Kingdom. The commands and requirements that I have obeyed have brought me to a state and condition of acceptable holiness. I may justly expect that the same commands, obeyed in my fellow man's life, will produce results comparable to my own. If this be true, then, when we meet we will recognize spontaneously the corresponding results in each other, and we will feel comfortable in brotherhood.

There is abundant reason why the divine Mind so studiously instructs us in the matter of our relationships with each other. Job in his trial asked, "What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?" Job 7:17. Job was looking at and inquiring after a human race that had been marred and defiled by the contamination of sin. He perhaps had some perception of what men were like in the beginning, and he certainly possessed a working knowledge of what they were in his day. His exclamation of his own life was, "I loathe it; I would not live alway: let me alone; for my days are vanity." Job 7:16. He saw no way for

man to be restored to the lofty position he had held before the fall. Without that position, man's life was only vanity or emptiness. It accomplished nothing.

In Hebrews 2:6-8, the writer gives us this: "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him...." With this information at our disposal, our concept begins to broaden. Glory and honor are abstract attributes that belong to beings who possess intelligence and will. These are the qualities that render a man capable of determining the course of his own conduct. When the choices he makes in life are noble and virtuous, then he is worthy of the honor that accompanies such sensible decisions. It provides for him a degree of glory or recognition. Such prudence is honored of the Lord, and a dignity and respect is extended to the candidate who is performing so prudently. It demands the respect of all honest, intelligent beings. Sin warped and mutilated the judgments and purity of man until his choices were no longer virtuous. With unholy choices his conduct becomes offensive, and so the dignity and honor that should have been his is lost.

Here is another place where Christ becomes involved. In Hebrews 2:8 it is pointed out, "...But now we see not yet all things put under him." It was referring to fallen man, and the chief thing that was

not under him was the sin nature he acquired at the fall. The writer went on. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

Here we can clearly see that salvation's work was designed and intended to bring fallen men back to a state of moral chastity that would restore the glory and honor that rightfully belongs to nobly performing, intelligent beings. So thorough is the work until the only begotten Son of God declares He is not ashamed to own kinship with them. He calls them His brethren and further points out that they are made all of one in Him. But what is it that they are all one of? Since Jesus is the Captain of the enterprise, and the manifest Pattern for the whole, let us consider Him first. In the text just cited in Hebrews 2:6-11, when it was referring to man and likewise when it was referring to Jesus, it specifically stated that both were crowned with glory and honor. These are characteristics or attributes that are found in beings who are of what we call higher intelligence. These beings possess intellect and will, and they are capable of perceiving and following the more noble requirements of moral law. Conformity to moral law, obedience to divine prescription, is the most honorable life that any man can live. It is this kind of per-

formance that provides for the performer what we call a good name. He who wins a good name will possess a degree, at least, of public acclaim or esteem. Because of the moral virtue of noble living, there comes a showing of merited respect and dignity. It brings recognition when lived to divine specification, and it produces divine approval.

Glory is the acclaim, honor and distinction that is extended by common consent to a commonly accepted, worthy candidate. It supplies him with what we term renown. Thus his meritorious living is a glory to himself as well as others.

Jesus had already won acclaim and recognition in His Father's presence before the world ever was. Now, God "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Hebrews 1:2-3. It was not in heaven where Jesus needed to win acclaim; it was here on this earth, for here is where the dignity and respect that belongs to intelligent beings had been destroyed. Jesus is the first Being ever known to man who lived His entire lifespan on this earth without ever once betraying the prescribed moral law of His Father's Kingdom. It won for Him the acclaim, praise, honor and dignity of the August Majesty on high. What greater merit than that exists that could be obtained?

But let us keep in mind that Christ was not here winning acclaim for Himself. He was here purchas-

ing salvation for fallen men. It was by His faithfully measuring to the requirements of divinely appointed moral law that He became the Captain of our salvation. With this perception before us, we have no trouble understanding why He would lead and instruct us, as His constituents, into this same pattern of virtuous living. But there is more. It is not only necessary that we, each one, be performing in accordance with virtuous living; it is also imperative that we all be performing together in accordance with virtuous living. The text said He made us all of one, Him and us together. Obviously He never intended that His followers should be a multitude of unattached, unconforming, individualists, each going on his own separate, independent way, paying no regard to anyone else. He said He made them all of one. Now we can see why, when our experience pleases us and we feel like it pleases Him, that we are then ready to present it to our fellows for their approval as well. This will be perhaps what we could term the supreme test for the plan of salvation. One of the very basics for deliverance from sin was that before deliverance could take place we would have to get rid of the self-life. Nearly all of self's interest involves other people. Then, of course, this will be one of our greatest hurtles. We have previously observed that we have very little trouble with self-interest when we are alone. Almost everyone gets along all right with himself. It is when we begin to interact with others that our problems begin to escalate.

The Captain of our salvation addressed the problem straightforward and head-on. "Therefore 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." Matthew 7:12. What is it that men desire the most of all from their fellow man? It is the dignity, honor and respect to which all men feel they are entitled as intelligent, sensible, rational beings. In our Christ we are able to observe self-dignity in perfect example. There is a dignity, an honor, a respect that belongs to every individual who performs nobly and virtuously. It is a recognition that is justly and rightfully his, and he is entitled to accept and enjoy it as his very own. The fact is, the time will come as he walks with his Lord that he will have to stand up and own what he has rightfully won through Christ or else Satan will take it away from him. On the other side of the ledger is the fact that this factor, like all the rest of man's nature, is subject to the influences of self-interest. When self alone is entertained in the heart, it will go beyond and demand more praise, recognition or honor than it is rightfully due. It will seek credit which the life does not merit and it will demand recognition when the performance does not testify of prudence. It seeks the acclaim of renown without having worked the works of renown. Thus our Captain was telling us, "Do not present to your fellow man a loosely lived, carelessly kept life, expecting his wholehearted acceptance and acclaim any more than you would want him to do you that way." This puts all of our Lord's subjects under obligation to everyone else in His brotherhood to live just as clean and pure before them as we want them to live before us—our Lord included. When professed Christians cannot get along in Christian fellowship, it is a sure evidence that some self-interest

is working somewhere. When we comprehend these basics, then various Scripture begins to accentuate in our understanding. "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." I Peter 3:8. "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Philippians 2:2-5.

There are vital and fundamental requirements of moral excellence that all are called on to observe and obey, for they are divinely prescribed and divinely required. There are other dimensions that seem to come from personal concept, social requirement, etc. Jesus expects us all to be just as lenient and tolerant with our brethren as we want Him and them to be with us. "Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another." I Corinthians 12:22-25.

The suggestion would present itself to our minds,

"But if we extend such leniency and tolerance until the very basics of moral requirement are undermined, how can that be God's doing?" It is understood in the giving of divine requirement that those who are receiving divine provision are being provided the longing of their souls. This being the case, they will gladly and willingly accept and measure to what they perceive is correct. This measuring may sometimes be a struggle and require a span of time in order to achieve. The apostle, in the text, is pleading for tolerance until this normal growth process can have time to function. That is an entirely different situation than the one where folks are deliberately, knowingly, intentionally performing beneath divine requirement. The Scripture instructs us, in such cases, to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them. When there is open and flagrant violation of the rudiments of moral chastity and flat refusal to make any adjustment or consider any admonition toward greater conformity, then there comes a time of rejection. The mind of Christ does not accept flagrant moral betrayal. It is none of His. All men then, who honestly follow Christ to all they know and understand, may justly expect to find that same quality of moral performance emitting from their professed brethren. When this condition exists, we automatically accept each other in brotherhood. The individual who presents himself for acceptance, whose life is not manifesting the results of obeyed, divine instruction is damaging the image the instruction was designed to portray. He has diminished the dignity which the life should have produced. He is not pleasing his Lord; therefore he

need not be surprised when he encounters reluctance of acceptance among the brethren. Thus we realize the critical importance of each individual experience. My experience must not only be acceptable to me but to my brother as well if there is to be brotherhood. The degree of confidence my brother is able to invest in me will be gauged directly by the quality of life which I present to him. Likewise the confidence I place in him will be meted by the same measure. This exchanged confidence is the sole basis of Christian unity. Any factor that damages or impedes that transaction weakens the unity of the entire structure. Thus we can see that excess leniency or excesses of fanaticism will either one destroy true brotherhood, for neither of these portray the true pattern of moral conduct.

In Matthew 12:25, we are informed that any household or kingdom that is divided in its own ranks against itself is proceeding toward collapse. Let us note this lesson well: I have accepted my Lord and Master and made Him the supreme Sovereign in my heart and life. The requirements and regulations of righteous living which He brought to earth and demonstrated to men, I have embraced and initiated into function in my own life. Since I know of no other who has ever advanced such a virtuous pattern of living to humanity before, I may justly conclude that He is the only Propagator of such virtuous living. If all of this be true and valid, then I may reasonably expect that any other candidate who receives the same Author that I accepted will be introduced to the same pattern of performance that I met. With each of us accepting and practicing an identical set

of regulations, then, of course, we would expect to find the same pattern developing in our separate lives. If such is not the case, then the laws are not uniform nor universal, and they do not reflect the result of intelligent design. The fact is, they are uniform in character, requiring the same austere observation of all who aspire to follow them. They are universal in scope, requiring the same exacting commitment of all men of all nationalities and generations. They do indeed produce uniform results in all men's lives who sincerely follow them. They are what makes the Church of God, the Kingdom of God, the household of faith, the body of the saints, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. They are one body in Christ, having been so wrought in true holiness. They are filled so completely with His likeness until they present to the world His image. They are saturated with His divine love. Produce an individual who cannot blend with this blood-washed throng and you will be looking at someone who has failed somewhere to meet the requirements of true holiness in his life. Not only is God's Kingdom not divided, His subjects are commanded to have no schism among them. (I Corinthians 12:25.) This explains, then, how His subjects can be drawn from all nations and His Kingdom made up of individuals taken from the four points of the compass throughout the whole world. All generations will be represented in the gathering and each one given the dignity, respect and recognition he rightly deserves. These are they who have come up through great tribulation, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. These are they

who have hated sin and its author. They are the ones who have despised self and its corroding works and who have received with gladness the invitation to accept the pardon of their Lord and Master. They have availed themselves of His grace and Spirit and have ridded themselves of these other defiling influences. They have fought the battle against wrong and conquered until holiness reigns in them. They have been willing to crucify self and put it to the cross until it expired, no more to work its diabolical works in them nor produce its destroying effects in their lives. These are men who recognize spontaneously this quality of character when they see it in others for they have prayed, labored, struggled and battled to perfect it in themselves so that others might be able to receive them. Oh, my brethren, could we dare to do less? May God help us to strive the harder, to press the stronger, to persevere the more diligently to uphold in dignity and respect the banner of that blood-washed throng of which we are one. To diminish these values is to betray that vast multitude who have held them sacred through the ages, and such betrayal would deny the plain teachings of our loving Christ. Those who have lived and conducted themselves in such a way until they have won the respect and confidence of their fellows are what we term "The Just."

Holiness

When we pursue our quest for moral improvement to what we feel is its ultimate achievement, we find that we have arrived at what we call holiness. If such is the case, then to what have we come and what may we expect to find now that we are here? First of all, let us do some background thinking. Of all the various, so-called religious systems offered to humanity, only one presents a divine Being who declares himself "the Father" of the human race. He does not offer Himself as a working part of what we call nature; He declares Himself the Author of nature and the Maker of everything that nature embraces, man included. (Isaiah 44:24.) Moreover, His statement to us, given in what we accept as His inspired Word, is that we were originally created in His very image. (Genesis 1:26.) This means that as He is, so in the beginning He designed men to be and Isaiah 5:16 pronounces Him a God who is holy. Man's deviation at the beginning did nothing to change the character of God. He was holy at the outset of creation, He has remained holy throughout His entire experience with man and He is holy yet today. He will always be holy. In all of His contacts with man that we have any record of at all back through the ages, His consistent desire has been the restoration of man back to the lofty plane man once held in His image. The image man lost at the fall is not a physical form; it is a moral likeness. It involves the powers and influences that affect sane and intelligent beings and cause them to be the kind of personalities they actually are. Since sin is what changed man

from his original state, then of course, at the root of the issue will emerge the elements of good and evil. The Champion of all good, so far as men are concerned, is realized in Christ for He is presented to us the only begotten of God, or, in other words, He is the only Being known to man who has taken on the same form and likeness that we possess and remained holy. He did no sin, the Word says, and no guile was found in His mouth. (I Peter 2:22.) Obviously, it was His refraining from sin and His practice of no deceit that allowed Him to retain His Father's divine image and remain holy in His Father's eyes even though He was here in this present, evil world that we know. All of His example and teaching to men has been on how to regain our Father's lost image and how to so conduct our lives that we maintain that newly acquired image when we gain it. So far as humanity is concerned, Christ is the "True Type," "The Moral Ideal" in whom is found the apex of moral attainment. He is the One who, after having lived here upon this earth that is saturated with all kinds of known sin, was still able to leave here untouched and undefiled by that sin and be caught back up to God in heaven. (Luke 23:46.) For Christ, that means He entered this world in His Father's likeness in holiness, and He never, one time, allowed Himself to be defiled with the contaminating forces of evil. Consequently, He could be received back to His Father's dwelling for He had remained holy in all of the transaction.

For man it means that just as soon as we voluntarily commit known wrong, the purity of our innocence is defiled and we become another host for evil.

We perish spiritually in trespasses and sins and are separated from the influence of divine holiness. Our voluntary, individual plea for mercy and forgiveness, when we come in repentance, will touch the great heart of our holy God, and He will hear and extend the forgiveness we need. This provides for us a deliverance from the sin or defilement that we have accrued by voluntary wrongdoing. Then He sets about immediately to instruct us in how to maintain that forgiven, holy state so that we need not fall or revert back to our formerly defiled, sinful condition. Let us notice here in Rom 12:1-2, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Our bodies are made holy in our forgiveness for sin by virtue of the all-cleansing blood of Christ that was shed as an atonement for our committed transgression. It washed away our guilt and made us acceptable again at Father's throne. Now, He is inviting us to bring our cleansed body and offer it voluntarily and of our own accord to Him who is holy, vowing to Him, with all of our heart, that by His proffered grace we will keep and maintain in us that holy image He has so graciously recreated in us when we were born again. We make our solemn vow to Him that from henceforth we will live holy as He is holy.

Then He turns to the opposite side of the ledger and identifies exactly for us what will be necessary in order for us to maintain this holy state. There is

to be no conforming to this world whatever and even the thinking patterns of our minds are to change so that they will reflect the mind and will of our heavenly Father. It is quite positively stated here that if holiness is to remain in us, then the world and what it has to offer must be laid aside from us and refused.

In this present, evil world is where the works of the flesh are catered to and practiced, and where sin and evil of every kind and description is cultivated. Since we have all been victims of the fallen flesh, we can understand how it is that "the world" seems to encompass so much. Up until our conversion, the world was all we had ever known. Little wonder He told us that we would have to learn to do right. (Isaiah 1:17.) The body presentation that we are to make was to be acceptable to God. That means it is to be holy, for nothing else is acceptable to Him. But true holiness can only be realized where there is a total absence of all known evil.

As we begin to pray, examine ourselves and eliminate that which is unacceptable before our Lord, we become amazed at the depth to which evil has penetrated our lives. Jesus told us in His teaching, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." Matthew 22:37-38. Obviously His divine understanding told Him that to love the Lord and the holiness He embodies to any lesser degree would not be sufficient to prompt us to carry out the adjustments we would have to make in our lives in order to be acceptable before the Father of all holiness. It will be necessary, then, for all who

aspire to be what our Lord would have them be, to love Him and His divine ways more than they love any other possibility that is offered them. That will include, of course, all of the pleasures, influences and ambitions that tend to tempt this present flesh away from the virtue of true holiness.

Since sin has penetrated to every facet of our human lives, so by the grace of our Lord, it will have to be ferreted out and eliminated from our lives if we would hope to remain holy. When we begin this process, we soon learn that it involves not only the committing of acts with this body, but it has to do with the attitudes, opinions, intentions and feelings as well. True holiness covers the abstract or spiritual side of man as well as the physical or fleshly side of man. This fact is what prompts such Scripture as this: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Galatians 5:16-17. In Galatians 5:24-25 we read this: "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

Now we can see that real heart purity, genuine holiness before our God, can only be obtained by a complete and entire surrender of the self-life and the self-will to the ways of His righteousness. We also recognize that it has been His divine leading that has brought us to this depth of spiritual understanding. As we continued to walk with Him we became more and more aware of what it took to make us

holy and what it would take to keep us holy. At His request, we began to repent of our committed sins and beg forgiveness and we began to correct the wrongs that we knew we had done in our lives. His guidance was leading us toward holiness of life and His presence was there to help and encourage us in our efforts to comply.

Now, let us notice for a moment the stability that is found in holiness. True holiness will never betray itself. It will not declare itself holy when it knows it is practicing something that is morally wrong. It will never indulge itself in deceit or half truths or dishonesty of any kind, in any facet of human behavior, when it is occupying the dedicated heart and life. These practices and patterns of conduct are manifestations of unholiness. It is our Lord who makes known to us the path of right, and it is likewise our Lord who supplies us the grace to do the right, but the will to perform the right will always be the product of our own desire. We serve Him because we love Him and want to pursue the paths of His holiness for ourselves. One very accurate gauge we have that indicates the fervency and sincerity of our service to Him is this: How quickly and how thoroughly do we move to make His known will for us effective in our daily lives? When we recognize reluctance to comply or a dilatory stance in regard to promptness of obedience, we are observing a regression of our own sincerity and fervency. Our performance will soon begin to wane and decline.

The more we examine ourselves and our Lord the more we become aware of the stark difference there is between us and Him. We were conceived in sin

and born in iniquity, which means that our natural impulse will be toward the flesh and the fulfillment of its desires and pleasures. We will refuse and protest anything that conflicts with our own wants and desires, and we will do everything we can to see our own pleasure fulfilled. It is only as we come to value and respect the ways of righteousness more than we desire the satisfaction of the flesh that we become willing to voluntarily turn from the one to the other. Unless and until we come to that place, we will never acquire the beauty of holiness. But such progression from the one to the other is not the result of human endeavor alone. The Word says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8-9.

This means, then, that if any mortal would walk in true holiness, he must have and maintain a close, effective, working relationship with his Lord and Master. Such intimate relationship with the Lord will set a man apart from this present, evil world and all it has to offer, for this world is polluted and saturated with that which caters to and satisfies the lusts, pleasures and desires of the flesh. All of this is easy to read in words and think in thoughts but the real magnitude of it reveals itself when we recognize it in actual function in human life. Jesus told those of His day that their righteousness must exceed that of others who were professing around them. (Matthew 5:20.) When we search the reason why He told them such as that, then we can see that the same reasons that made superior performance necessary for them apply to us yet today. By the grace that He supplies

His own, He may justly expect a performance of moral virtue that exceeds anything else that can be produced by humanity alone. I John 2:15 instructs us, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Thus we are able to see how pronounced is the contrast between these two moral elements and what the effect would be if we attempt to mix the two, No man can remain holy and at the same time tolerate and entertain elements of known unholiness in his own life. Hear again the Word of the Lord: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matthew 6:24. It becomes obvious, now, that for anyone to walk the way of true holiness will require that he put everything else aside that might hinder that holy walk.

As for the matter of our personal inclinations, only a glance will convince us that to yield to them will only open the door to our old self-life and its natural impulses. But the temptation, nevertheless, does come, and the battle against them is real and very personal. Our Lord met the battle in a very real sense in the Garden of Gethsemane, and it was no easy struggle. It did, in fact, produce sweat as it were great drops of blood. It produced agony of soul and required dying out to self in order to take the position He took and make the decisions He made. The final report that He made of the struggle to His Father was, "...Nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." Mark 14:36. This surrender that He made emphasizes for us more acutely the total and com-

plete submission of our Lord to what He knew was heaven's will for Him, even though His own personal preference would have been otherwise.

This performance portrays for us very vividly the absoluteness of His dedication to the principles of divine truth and right and His willingness to follow the prompting of divine intelligence that was bidding Him obey what He knew was proper. But the matter did not end with Him. Those who were there and who embraced His doctrine for themselves found it necessary to separate from this present, evil world and to maintain a complete and absolute separation from the world and all of its influence the same as He did. As they did that, the world became increasingly antagonistic and even belligerent toward them. The account of Stephen in the first part of the book of Acts depicts the same dedication that our Christ portrayed. But his was only a beginning. Subsequent history is overflowing with accounts of men by the multitudes who have found and dedicated themselves to these same principles of truth and holiness and who, after having found them, would rather perish physically than to allow them to depart from their personal lives. They are what we call martyrs for the faith. But we must realize that the same identical dedication to truth and right that they embraced, along with the same rejection and conquering of the flesh and the world that they achieved, must be realized in us of today if we are to have any hope of becoming a part of that blood-washed throng in eternity where they are.

It is in the facing and conquering of these unwanted, soul-defiling elements that the battle for

truth and right is fought in human lives. Every man must recognize and conquer sin as it applies to him and his own life, and, the Word tells us, every man has his own besetting sin. (Hebrews 12:1.) In other words there is something in every individual heart that, without the grace of God, he will never be able to overcome. This is the reason our Lord is willing to play an active part in every individual's salvation. It is also why morality alone is unable to propel a soul into the holiness of heaven.

As we noticed previously, divine holiness covers every facet of human existence, which means the spiritual or abstract side as well as the physical or fleshly side. We also discover that the fleshly, physical side is subordinate to and controlled by the abstract or spiritual side. It is the spiritual side where values are formed, where preferences are forged and where decisions are made. Thus the Word tells us: "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." Matthew 12:33-35. This makes it very plain indeed that the quality of fruit brought forth by the body is a direct result of the values and preferences of that individual heart. When the heart is fully and completely yielded and submitted to the ways of holiness because holiness is what it loves, the conduct of that life will faithfully reflect the ways of moral excellence. It is

just as plainly stated here that it is a virtual impossibility for moral excellence to emit from any life which does not possess that virtuous attitude and condition of heart.

For the honest man who is sincerely seeking to please his Lord and Master, the Word offers guidelines. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Galatians 5:19-24. Jesus stated in the Word previously given that it is by the manifest fruit that the ruling influence of every life may be identified.

Now, we can see that holiness is not merely a characteristic found in a virtue listing; it is the embodiment of all moral virtues blended into one functioning, performing entity. That quality of virtuous living will be accepted at the throne on high for it constitutes holiness. This caliber of holiness will always run true to character, or, in other words, it will always be true to itself, for no matter what situation or condition of life it may encounter, it will still perform in holiness. The life which loves holiness enough to perform to this degree of intensity will give up life

itself before it will betray the holiness it loves. Any candid mind can see, now, that this quality of moral performance is what our Maker and Savior has designed and intended for all of those who love to follow Him. These are the possibilities that have been offered to all generations of the past, and they are still being offered to all nationalities of men yet today. They may be justly termed, then, a universal law, for wherever they go they will call for conformity from all who perceive them.

We have observed a bit of the scope that holiness covers; now let us observe briefly some of the depth to which it penetrates. Perhaps our first conscious perception of influence that affects us along these lines comes when we recognize the element of basic honesty. We observed some of how that would affect a human life; now let us inquire some into the result produced when honesty is combined with holiness in the pursuit of moral virtue. The Word has said that one would chase a thousand and two would put ten thousand to flight. If such be true, then we could expect to see some dramatic results proceeding from this compound effort. All men will expect a holy man to be truthful but a true holy man will tell the truth even if he knows it will send him to prison. He will perform in accordance with truth even if no one else in the world knows what the actual truth is but himself. He will be honest with what he believes to be true regardless of what the consequence may be. He will not steal food even if he is starving. He will not steal clothing even if he is freezing. He will not knowingly misrepresent a truth for any consideration. He will make every possible effort, at his command, to

make his word good when he has made a commitment to his fellow man. He will not speak unkindly of another though he has been abused by that one. He will not seek to retaliate though he has been done grossly wrong. He will continue to love and do good to others even when they present nothing at all lovable to him. He will do good to them even when they are doing bad to him, and he will not murmur and complain of the treatment. Go on down the list and we discover that in each case we find the holy man performing over and beyond human expectation. This is the doctrine that astonished men of old when they heard it from the lips of Christ, for they had never encountered anything like it before. (Matthew 7:28-29 and Matthew 22:33.) James 2:10 tells us that though we keep the whole law, yet if we offend in one point we are guilty of all. One may be ever so truthful and faithful to be honest, but if when something does not go just right he gets ugly in action and abusive in speaking, he is not manifesting an example of true holiness. (I John 3:17-18.) This practice of consistent, holy living is what makes God's people a peculiar people for they are zealous of good works. (Titus 2:13-14.)

There are, however, issues of moral worth which touch all men's lives, of all generations, which are not so easily identified or defined. Part, at least, of the problem may be geographic, some may be social, some may involve generation influence, but the universal gospel is still sufficient to cover all of this. He did not and does not regiment His subjects into costume or uniform nor confine them to any certain color or pattern. He does require them all, regardless of

what generation or society they may find themselves in, to clothe themselves in modest apparel with shamefacedness and sobriety. They are not only to present themselves decently covered, but they are also to be void of the pomp and fashion that denotes the pride of their current society. We are commanded to be not of the world. This also establishes a pattern.

The world is to be avoided, action by action, item by item, step by step, but we are also to avoid its "tone," its pattern, its current, its spirit if you will. Fashions of the world can and do change, but the true child of God, seeking holiness in his life, will not allow worldly fluctuations to sway him from his purpose. God did not specify dress lengths nor material consistency. Yet, nearly every one who is infringing on these requirements is aware of their infringement and feel uncomfortable before the Lord. Somehow we know when our clothing is too revealing, or patterned in such a way until it is not shame-faced, or worn in such a manner that it is suggestive. All of these various practices, along with many others that could be added, are violating the law of holiness. It is also noteworthy that such devious conduct is violating the principle of honesty. If we cannot honestly say, before our Lord, that our conduct is pleasing to Him, we betray our own honesty to go ahead and declare it acceptable because that is the way we want it to be.

Since the Scripture does not specify certain patterns, certain consistency, certain color, etc., men are prone to declare the option open and left up to personal preference, but such is not the case either.

Clothes that are revealing spring from and cater to the lusts of the flesh. All of such indulgence will mar the image of holiness in that life. Remember, God will not accept a blemished sacrifice at His altar. It is great folly to attempt to thwart the requirement of the principles of holiness on the basis of some technicality. One may stoutly protest, "This brother says my dress length is satisfactory and this sister finds no fault with my clothing." But when the individual himself is aware that, in certain positions, under some circumstances, the body is not sufficiently covered and indecency is being displayed, then they must know that they are violating the law of holiness as it applies to them. It will make no difference what others may say. We have already observed that holiness is a pattern of consistent holy living. One careless or thoughtless moment can cast a shadow upon the entire holy image we seek to build that could mar that image for years to come or even for eternity.

In the assessment and evaluation of such issues there are various features that need to be given consideration. In the clothing issue again, one of our prime objectives is the covering of the body. The reason for this necessity is because of the strong and uncontrollable influences of the flesh. Remember David's experience? He was a man after God's own heart, but he had no Holy Ghost to give him supernatural power; consequently, the flesh was able to overcome him. Men today have no such excuse, but they are still commanded not to tempt God.

In the Eden state, where Adam and Eve first dwelt, they associated freely in a nude condition without any condemnation, for they were innocent. Their

thoughts were holy for they possessed no self-motivation. They needed no protection from fleshly carnality for they were not carnal. In fact, their relationship was pure and unselfish, insomuch that the Lord instructed them to multiply. We would have thought that function a spontaneous reaction, needing no prompting, until we realize that they were not motivated by fleshly desire. There was nothing unholy about the relationship in that original setting. Immediately, upon the transgression, all of this innocence changed. The first realization they had was that they were nude, and that seemed to be their greatest concern of the moment. Because of the overpowering drives they were experiencing within themselves toward each other, they fashioned aprons of leaves for themselves in an effort to shield themselves from this awful, consuming influence.

Sexual satisfaction is certainly one, and quite possibly the most prominent, of the drives of the flesh. It is also one that demonstrates, perhaps, the most prominent self-drive. Likewise, it pleads loudest and longest for fleshly fulfillment. That the Scripture was correct in its instruction toward decency is readily verified when we realize that every civilization that has fallen to decay, of which we have any record, started down that path of regression by prominently indulging itself indecently sexually. It will, does and has regressed to the point that parents will even exploit their own children sexually to satisfy their own selfish, fleshly lusts. Decency, in shamefacedness and sobriety, presents itself an effective barrier and suppressant against this tidal wave of fleshly lust. The more people will adhere to the laws of decency,

the less of the degradation of fleshly defilement they will have to endure.

In the Eden state people were pure because of their innocence, but with the coming of the fall and self-prominence, the exposing of the body became a shameful thing, to be avoided. Shame, remember, is the result of indulgence in those activities that lower one in his own eyes and in the eyes of others, God included. The discovery of the mysteries of the human body is an experience to be shared by a man and a woman alone and only then after suitable vows and commitments have been made to each other before the Lord. Those commitments are to be made for life and honored accordingly. It is shameful and morally wrong to share the secrets of a married relationship with others outside the marriage bond. What a striking contrast this presents to what we see on every hand today where people, married and unmarried alike, go about with such scanty clothing until there is scarcely anything secret any longer. What a shame and disgrace to the world, much less to those professing godliness. Certainly anyone honestly seeking would not hesitate to decry the practice as unacceptable and defiling. If this be true, then it seems indeed strange why it is so difficult for some to add some to their dress length or select material of a heavier consistency.

Decency was not given as a sort of obstacle course to see if we could meet the requirements for heaven; it was given for a defense and protection against the ravages of depraved human nature. When we expose ourselves negligently, carelessly, or purposely we are openly inviting an accosting from the depraved world.

for they are constantly on the alert for just such openings. To actively and knowingly encourage or give permission to such indulgence will result in a blemish on our own image of holiness. We may be keeping the pattern act by act, requirement by requirement, but be losing out to the overall current about us. Certainly, anyone honestly seeking the way of right would readily agree that such practice would not be acceptable.

This matter of body covering, although it is important, is not the only factor to be considered in the matter of clothing. There may be an abundant sufficiency of material utilized until the body is generously covered, but the patterns and accompanying frills and decorations may be such until the image of holiness is still marred, not because of the lust of the flesh but because of the pride of the flesh. Either of these will deflect the triumph of holiness. The purpose is different, the motive is different, the method is different, but the end result is the same—a ruined holiness. Without that holiness, men forfeit their relationship with God.

We realize, then, that Satan, our adversary, is not above using any issue, or even combination of issues in a compound application, if it will assist him in his efforts to defeat us. Notice some of the various applications of this one issue. We are to be aware of our clothing and be sure that it is sufficient to cover our nudity. No man can be holy and expose himself promiscuously. As well as sufficient, it must also be adequate. That is, it must be of such consistency in substance and body until it will properly clothe the body in decency. The covering must be more than a

token gesture; it must fill the present need. Since the teaching of holiness is temperance, we would not expect to find a costume that is gaudy or outlandish or extremely unusual. All of such is used to gather attention to oneself. Temperate people ought not be found involved in any extremity. Such abstinence will include many of the fads of the world.

To be in keeping with the way of holiness, the clothing would be fashioned and worn in such a way that it would positively and unquestionably distinguish between the male and female genders. God made a clear and distinct demarcation between the sexes, and He positively commands that each keep its respective place. The clothing was to assist in this identification. "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God." Deuteronomy 22:5. God did not initiate, nor does He sanction, unisex. After the clothing has been given all of these various considerations and been approved, it can still be worn or put on display in such a fashion that it will destroy all the virtuous potential built into it. A toss of the head, a flash of the eye, the tone of a laugh, any of these, and a great many more that could be listed, will be sufficient to tell anyone who is alert that what they are seeing is merely a costume to be seen and very little more.

It is a fruitless and frustrating effort to attempt to enforce moral law by physical means. The apostle recognized this in the Corinthian letter and outlined it clearly. (I Corinthians 3:1-13.) There is a vast difference between leading folks to light and attempt-

ing to get folks to measure to light already perceived. Some folks seem satisfied to build with wood, hay or stubble even though this is all combustible material that will surely perish. Again we say, men are saved only because they want to be saved more than anything else in the world.

We may ask ourselves what a discussion of clothing has to do with moral concept and application until we realize that religious morality is not dictated by feelings or desires; it is guided by the prescribed Word of God. When the expression of the divine mind is revealed to us it will always lead us in the paths of righteousness because, the Word says, all of His things are done in righteousness. To pursue in another course when we already know what His mind and will is for us will automatically lead us away from the good, the true, the holy. The expression of the divine mind is clear and distinct in the matter of clothing, as has been discussed. To develop a sentiment or feeling that opposes or conflicts with that revelation can only lead to trouble in moral pursuit.

The discussion of clothing is but one facet of moral pursuit, and we have used it here as an example of the multitude of details and complexities involved in virtuous living. The same details appear in every segment of virtuous endeavor. In our business life, our family life, our religious life, as we associate with others, they all involve the same basic rules and will reflect the diligence and sincerity we invest in them. It is when we realize this that we recognize that the honor and respect or the shame and contempt we extend to ourselves and our fellows is derived from the manner and fervency of attention we pay to the

various details of virtue. Real good is more than casual virtue. It is good carried out in minute detail to every facet of our lives. He who performs such, we regard as honorable. He who performs less when he could have done better, we regard with contempt.

Holiness has, for its objective, heart purity before God. It realizes its fulfillment in what we call saintliness. It finds its achievement in rendering to the God and Father of the universe that which is His just due. Thus we are able to observe and identify moral good in some of its various applications. As it applies to the individual himself, it is termed virtue. As it applies to the individual and his relationships with other men, it is termed "The Just." As it applies to the individual and his relationship with God, it is termed piety or saintliness.

Duty

The first place we would expect to find moral law in function is in that realm where moral law stands supreme. The gospel, which provides the handbook of instruction for true religious morality, tells us in I Corinthians 9:14, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." God Himself is the only One we have any knowledge of who has ever offered to humanity a program of what we regard as religion that directs the souls of men into higher moral concepts. Since He is the Propagator of such concept, then we could, according to His own declaration, expect to find Him practicing the provisions of His presented gospel. The old Levitical law was provided for and administered to the Hebrew nation exclusively, but when the Christ came, the greatest preacher of righteousness this world has ever known, He extended the program to include all of humanity. It is by diligent study on man's part, accompanied by a willingness to instruct on God's part, that we are able to comprehend and discern the true working of moral function. Christ came to this world offering Himself as "The Word" demonstrated in the flesh. The doctrine He taught was personified in the life He lived. He reminded us repeatedly that the life He lived corresponded exactly with the life His Father in heaven was living. We must know then, that the life He is inviting us to live is identical to what is lived in that divine realm. When we examine the precepts presented in the gospel, then we can identify moral requirement as it affects intelligent beings in that heavenly realm. I John 3:17

reads like this: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" We are quick to discern that sharing is what is expected of holy men, but let us project for a moment this same principle into the realm where God abides: If He indeed be the only fountain of life and the source from which all life comes, then how could He sit casually by and watch fallen man perish because of sin that we are powerless to avoid and unable to prevent? It is true that a great many men are satisfied and contented to have things just as they are, but what of the few who would be glad to have it otherwise if they only knew how and were able. It is this number, meager as it is as compared to the whole of humanity, that prompted our Lord into action in our behalf. This is the very process we wish to notice and consider. For God to observe and ignore our need, when He had abundance to fill our need, would have been morally wrong. God does no wrong; therefore, He responded to our appeal and provided a means for our escape. Justice would exert no such pressure, for justice demands only its own fulfillment. Justice states that the soul that sinneth, it shall die and men en masse were perishing spiritually because of sin. Therefore, justice was being satisfied. But what of the law of love, of compassion, of pity, of well-doing? It is mercy, not justice, that provides redemption and deliverance from sin for man. These are the influences living and working in the heavenly family and that brought forth results in our behalf, unworthy as we were. He took of His abundance to supply our need.

because that is what true righteousness will do.

Notice the pattern the process follows. God was touched and responded because it was the right thing to do, and it would have been ignoble and selfish for Him to have done otherwise. His own Word says, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:..." Matthew 7:12. Thus, we can see that the heavenly family performs in perfect accordance with true divine nature. This divine disposition, when it enters man, leaves those who possess it feeling likewise constrained to perform according to the dictate of true holiness.

This is what makes God righteous, the performance of moral duty He carried out under the duress of no pressure other than His own willingness and desire to perform in accordance with right. We can see, then, that God's performance is not a forced submission at all but a consented to action entered into with the full permission and cooperation of His personal will? He performs as He does because He **wants** to perform as He does, for that is the path of right. The issue is twofold. It involves not only what is the way of duty toward others, but also, what is the proper way to perform in order to keep the way of holiness for the performer. It is, then, a self-imposed and self-implemented performance, deliberately and intentionally indulged in, with its chief purpose and aim being the fulfillment of the requirement of heavenly virtue in the candidate performing. This is the way it operates in the heavenly realm where the Father and His Son dwell, and this is the pattern the Son brought to earth and taught to us. We recognize these same identical precepts operat-

ing in us when we realize ourselves being prompted away from the vile, baser side of ourselves and toward the noble, the pure, the good. We are prompted, through the avenue of our higher intelligence, toward the right, and we recognize that if we would possess the virtue we can perceive in Him, we must follow the instruction perceived virtue supplies. When we desire that quality of character badly enough, then its requirement becomes our command and we yield ourselves to its stipulation because we desire the effects it produces in our lives. Now we can see that moral law does not constrain the will nor does it force anyone to perform contrary to his own preference. It accepts and rewards only consented to, voluntary service that is performed with the singular purpose in mind of obtaining moral virtue. It becomes quite obvious that true moral virtue establishes its own demands and provides its own requirements, but the quality of moral life realized will hinge directly on the fervency and sincerity of the being who is purporting to perform.

We will do well to pause and examine these two working forces of fervency and sincerity before we proceed further. These are abstract forces that demand something more than mechanical function such as the performing of action. Sincerity has to do with honesty of intent and genuineness of purpose. Fervency is closely associated with diligence and zeal in offered performance. Both of these demand voluntary, personal response and contribution from the candidate performing. There must be a conscious act of the will and a deliberate exertion of personal perseverance in order for either of these to reach the

degree of intensity they will need if they are to achieve moral virtue.

But these forces are not called on nor expected to stand alone in intelligent beings. Let us notice this process working in our heavenly Father: "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jeremiah 31:3. (See Isaiah 43:1-7.) This element of personal affection obviously greatly compounds and enhances both sincerity and fervency and contributes to a willingness to perform in the individual who is doing the loving. It is true in God, and He has pointed it out to us as a necessary ingredient in us if we would be like Him. Notice His words: "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings:..." John 14:23-24. Now we can see that without a personal, individual love of his own for our Lord and His virtuous ways, no man will be able, or even much interested in, those ways.

Virtue does indeed provide its own guidelines for all to follow, but in its application every individual becomes his own enforcer. Every man performs in righteousness in direct proportion to what he is willing to perform. Only the Master above can know for sure exactly how much moral concept every individual possesses and so, of course, only He would know exactly how much everyone could be justly held responsible to obey. Individual knowledge and personal willingness will both have bearing on the extent and quality of moral accomplishment in every

human. For the honest and sincere seeker of real, moral excellence, the requirement of moral virtue becomes his law and he feels himself duty-bound to perform in accordance with what he perceives. This is also a commonly accepted principle recognized by all men, saved and unsaved alike, who possess sufficient intelligence to comprehend the demands of moral requirement. While they may not conform to nor practice what moral requirement would demand of them, yet, they will be quick to identify and expect such virtuous performance from everyone else toward themselves. So common to human mentality are these basic concepts of expected, acceptable moral behavior until they could be safely classified as a universal law. They are what we term the law of duty for we feel all men should feel themselves obligated to observe them.

Because penalty against sin is not executed just as soon as the sin is committed does not mean at all that men will not reap the ultimate penalty for sin. The reaping may not be immediate; indeed, it may seem prolonged and the misery and grief that accompanies it may be awesome to behold, but at the appointed time the reaping will begin and its magnitude is appalling. II Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Some have thought to defeat this proclamation of Scripture by ordering their physical remains cremated and the ashes scattered in some remote place or by having their remains committed to the depth of the sea, etc., but it is not his physical form

that will be called to the judgment, it is the soul, the inner man.

While the principles and requirements of moral duty are discernable and become obvious in the broader, overall application, yet in the more detailed avenues of everyday life they take on an intimate dimension and produce profound effect in the individual performer.

Now let us give some consideration to the force, impulse or influence that imposes upon us a feeling of obligation to perform as holiness would prescribe. In other words, what is it that would hold a man to tell the truth even when he knows it will send him to prison? What is it that will cause a man to refuse to deny his Christ when he knows it will send him to the torture chamber? What is it that will cause a man to give up his job, relocate his household, rearrange his life, all so that he may preach the gospel to a congregation? What is it that prompts a man to say, "Praise the Lord," when he is blessed in a good meeting? Whatever the force is, it may correctly be termed a law, for it exerts its influence on every individual who will pursue the path of right. In order to accomplish what is right, we feel it necessary to do the right simply because it is right and for no other reason. We regard the feeling of compulsion we experience as being the requirement of duty, for we feel morally obligated to comply. It is a constraint, yet a moral constraint. It imposes a feeling of obligation, yet, it does not impose on the will. This is indeed its distinguishing characteristic. Social constraint is derived from the circumstances about us and is imposed by force upon us. It dominates the

will. For example, civil law is legislated into being by a surrounding society and is enforced by those appointed to fill that task. A violation of civil law will bring an enforcing agency down upon us, and they will carry us off to jail irrespective of our will in the matter. On the other hand, we find the law of duty a moral constraint which imposes a feeling of obligation to do the right, but the option of action is always left up to the individual who is feeling duty-bound to obey. He realizes that obedience to his feeling of obligation would be the proper thing to do, but the actual performing of action will occur only with the consent of his own will. He will perform only if he wants to perform. Thus a man may be justly measured in the area of his integrity by the actions which he finally produces, for he does only that which he is willing to do. We must know then, that man is judged both on what he has done and what he has left undone that should have been done morally. What moral law actually does is to constrain the reason or intellect of man without violating the liberty of the human will. Reason tells us that the action ought to be taken and the feeling of necessity we have within us, which urges us to perform the action, is what we term moral obligation. When we say the performing of right is obligatory, what we are actually saying is we consider ourselves held to do it without being forced to do it. When we feel pressured from an outside source to perform, we feel our own individual rights have been violated, for obligation has been laid upon us while our own concepts of right and wrong have been ignored in the matter. This is why it is impossible to legislate moral law. True religious moral

law was instituted and delivered by the hand of the divine, and it cannot be humanly manipulated. Any attempt at such will finally remove the manipulator away from true virtue. Remember the scripture: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." No man is able to direct his own way, nor is he anymore capable of directing someone else's way. God-given moral law prescribes its own requirements, imposes its own constraint to obedience, judges the quality of offered performance and provides its own rewards and penalties, all in accordance with its own prescribed mandates. Man is involved in the process when he perceives what the law requires as it pertains to him. He is likewise judged by how he performs in his handling of what he perceives to be right. Moral perception is a concept which no man can avoid. Notice the proclamation of scripture: "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. Now, we can see that every man is introduced to moral law but no man is forced to comply with moral law. Every man will recognize what he had ought to do, yet, every man is also free to do what he chooses to do. The constraint of moral law is never anything more than a feeling of obligation to perform moral duty. Thus Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him,..." Revelation 3:20. True virtuous performance, then, is the voluntary and willing practice of what is known to be right. Our obligation to what we feel is right must voluntarily be performed and so we could justly define it as an obligation consented to.

Duty presents itself in a twofold character: It is

absolute and it is universal. To term duty as absolute is to recognize that it imposes its obligations without regard for our desires or wishes, our passions or our interests. We can readily see why when we realize that our desires and passions are the attributes of a self-life? The processes we have been studying have revealed to us that, in order to achieve a state of holiness, all carnal, self-interest must be laid aside in preference to the virtuous, the pure, the noble. If this be indeed true, then holiness need not exert its requirements with regard for selfish interests, for they are gone. A holy life will be consecrated to a holy God, and the prime interest and concern of that life will be to perform God's holy will. The feeling of duty will be in that direction, and no self-interest of our own will be given any consideration in the matter. We may recognize the influence of true and honest moral obligation as opposed to self-interested manipulation by the goals they each seek to achieve. The patterns that self-interest will follow are those actions which are deliberately calculated to produce a self-interested result. In other words, they are little more than a means to a certain end with the chief aim being what the individual considers desirable. True moral obligation will perform with no other thought or intent of heart but to carry out and promote the divine will of our heavenly Father. It will look only to Him for its rewards and renumerations, and the satisfaction of the divine Will is its greatest aim and desire.

Thus the man who goes forth to preach the gospel, whose primary interest is the applause of the people, will engage himself in those activities that

will most likely make him popular and well accepted by the crowd. The man who is interested in his bank account will concentrate on those themes and actions that will be likely to add to his own affluence. Regardless of the interest and whatever the approach, the pattern remains the same. Self-interest will pursue a means to an end, and the end is always personal satisfaction. True, honest and holy men of God need always be aware, alert and on guard that no such influence overtake them. Such dedicated, holy men will accept the message the Lord gives and will deliver it in faithfulness even if they know that it will not be well accepted by the listeners. They will not be greatly affected by acceptance or rejection, whichever the case may be. They are not working for themselves, nor the people, but for the heavenly Master.

The law of duty on the other hand, when accepted in honesty and carried out according to divine intent, accomplishes its own purposes. Duty is the prompting that leaves one feeling obligated to perform what he knows to be right. When duty is performed by the holy man, it will always be in accordance with the character of holiness. Holy attributes will be its manifested complexion. This law of duty is what constrains the honest man to tell the truth even if it will injure him? This is likewise the same influence that touches the heart of a man and constrains him to the work of the Lord. In Luke 3:11 we are told of this type of constraint. "He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise." James 2:15-16: "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you

say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" II Kings 7:9 tells of the lepers in the Syrian camp and of the duty they felt upon them to go and tell their brothers of the good news of abundance. Acts 16:9-10 tells of a vision the apostle beheld in which one was urging him to come to Macedonia and preach to them. It left such a feeling of duty upon him until he immediately began making preparations to depart. Thus we see that duty will compel us to share our abundance with those less fortunate than ourselves. It will also constrain us to do all we can to impart to others the message, blessing, and joy of this great salvation which He has so freely given.

It is this constraint to duty the Lord uses in placing the members in the body as it pleases Him. (I Corinthians 12:18.) We are all made members of His body when we are born again. As we yield ourselves to Him for Him to work His good pleasure in us, He begins to fit and prepare us for the place He has purposed for us to fill in His body. He does that by the influence of His Spirit, making us feel it a duty to perform as He teaches us. As we respond to that influence, He is able to move us into our place in His Kingdom. As was stated before, these constraints of duty will be applied without regard for self-interest. The duties of holiness may leave us self-conscious and embarrassed and feeling inadequate and incapable on occasion, but faithfulness to holiness must take priority over our self-consciousness.

We may feel obligated, on occasion, to expend our means beyond what would seem just and pru-

dent in our efforts to help someone else. We may tell ourselves that our own need is greater than the one we are seeking to fill, but if the feeling of duty is still imposed, then the obligation is still ours. Duty will sometimes prompt us to perform true to our concept of holiness and its virtues when no one else seems to be experiencing the same appeal. (Jeremiah 26:8-11 and II Timothy 4:16-17.) Obviously, our obligation to duty cannot always be safely gauged by the sentiments of others. Holiness will make its demands of all, but it will always run true to form. Duty will deal with each one individually, yet it will never violate the bounds of holiness. The appeal to duty is absolute and unrelenting in its requirement. To refuse a prompting to duty will become sin to the refuser, for the appeal is the direct expression of the will of God. Violation of His known, holy will is, of course, sin. The tasks appointed for men to perform will vary according to God's appointment for each one. By each performing what he feels it his duty to do, all men, of all nationalities, of all generations, can be brought into perfect fellowship and agreement with each other in one brotherhood. We may easily see by this how the Savior could safely enjoin on all mankind, universally, the instruction to do to others as you would wish to be done to, and do not unto others as you would not wish to be done to. Such instruction defines clearly the conduct we will be expected to present to others and at the same time defines the conduct we will expect to see proceeding from others toward us. It is, then, a universal law applicable to all men, and it hinges on the obligation of duty. Hence, if we find ourselves con-

stantly at odds with other of God's holy people, the fault may perhaps be in us. Self-interest, misunderstanding, lack of knowledge will all disrupt the functions of fellowship in brotherhood. If one feels himself "out of harmony" with a group whom he has accepted as being approved by the Lord, there should be some close examination done to discover the reason for the discrepancy. Self-interest, remember, may be accurately identified by what it seeks to achieve. (Acts 8:17-24.)

Misunderstanding or lack of knowledge may easily be corrected by exchange of communication. For one to withhold deeper truth from another in order to maintain prowess or appear more skilled in Scripture than the other would be the obvious exploitation of self-interest. Holy men will be glad and anxious to do all they can to assist everyone they can in advancing in the truth. If the instructed go beyond and God reveals to him truths that his instructor did not know, there should again be a mutual exchange, and so everyone is built up in the faith. Thus the Church edifies itself in love. (Acts 18:24-28.)

It is also a well-known truth that it is the Holy Spirit who is the Great Teacher. He was sent expressly to lead us all into truth. (John 16:13.) A great many movements about us today do not seem to be built on a foundation of truth. If this be so, then they are not acceptable before the Lord. Our holiness may conflict with the self-interested manipulation of some group. Our concept of truth, as the Bible teaches, may not be in accordance with their prescribed regulations which they are unwilling to change. When this happens, we may well conclude ourselves in the

wrong group and begin to search for a people who will conform to the requirements of the Word. God does not need people establishing laws for other of His people to abide by. What He does need is for all men to accept, measure, and conform to the perfect law which He has already established for all men to follow.

True moral law comes to us when God's Holy Spirit reveals to our own reason and understanding what He designates is true and right. It is through this same avenue of reason and understanding that we feel duty-bound to perform what we have accepted as right. (James 4:17.) Legislated law comes from what some outside source has declared right, and it imposes itself upon us regardless of our understanding or feeling. It will use force, if necessary, to subdue the will to conformity. Moral law never intrudes on our liberty. Duty may impose a responsibility ever so forcefully but unless we yield the consent of our will the duty will go unperformed. Notice the text in I Corinthians 3:10-15. Here the apostle is pointing out that in faithfulness to the grace of God which he has been given, he has performed his duty. He has expounded to them the wonderful provisions of the gospel insomuch that every element needed for them to erect a substantial, successful, spiritual structure has been provided. He has indeed preached Christ. That is the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us. The next consideration of the text is the work they perform in response to that teaching. If in earnestness, sincerity and honesty they have built according to their perceived duty, they will be utilizing durable and acceptable material. Under the test

their structure will abide. If, on the other hand, any of them accept the gospel as a keeping of imposed rules and regulations, not perceiving the principles of right and wrong that prompt to action, that man's building material is of inferior, combustible quality. When the fiery trial comes along, it will consume in the flame and he, the builder, will suffer loss. Life is structured in such a way that the path from sin to the plane of righteousness, though strait and narrow, is, nevertheless, discernable and must be followed deliberately and resolutely in order to achieve success. (Luke 16:16.) To pursue in that fashion means to know what we are doing and why we are doing it and then do it because we recognize the divine virtue of such performance.

Holiness will never be achieved by rule-keeping, not even rigid and restrictive rule-keeping. The Levitical law was a stringent set of rules and regulations, but it left its subjects crying out in agony of soul, "Oh, that the deliverer would come to Zion!" The law of grace, that is at once demanding, yet unrestrictive, is that law that reveals the right and prompts the soul to perform the right. It provides the grace to achieve the right along the entire pathway of our lives. It is a moving, active, dynamic force that proceeds along with its subjects as they traverse life's journey. It prompts them more and more away from the wrong and into the right, the true, the holy. (Proverbs 4:18.)

Growing in grace and the knowledge of the truth does indeed broaden and expand our relationship with Him. It also increases our dependency upon Him. The more we know of Him, the more we desire

to be more like Him. The more we desire, the more we strive to achieve that image, and so in turn the more of His grace is needed to make us able. The Scripture says, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14.) Holiness cannot be achieved by legislative regulation. Creeds, dogmas, catechisms, etc., are all useless tools in a feeble attempt to effect a condition that can only be achieved by the willing consent and performance of the heart.

Let us make one more observation in regard to the law of duty. The constraints we have been observing, we notice, are always pointing us toward the good, the virtuous, the holy. These are the known attributes of God, and having created us in His own image, He, of course, desires that His image be perfected in us. Consequently the path of moral duty is leading us consistently along that very course. When we are responding to the laws of honesty and goodness, moral excellence and duty, we are, in fact, performing the will of God for us. Morality without religion is nothing more than human endeavor. Religious morality, performed under the direction of the Lord and His Holy Spirit, becomes the power of God unto salvation, for the pathway of the just shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Conscience

Man's mind is of a nature and character that makes him able to receive and comprehend ideas. He is also able to retain comprehended thought. These capabilities render man able to perform contemplative thinking. By the association of multiple ideas, as applied to one specific subject, he may develop the scope of his understanding of that particular subject. As he begins to retain more thinking, the accumulation of acquired understanding begins to mount. Sooner or later, it will begin to manifest itself in application. It is by the analysis of what he accepts as accumulated facts or ideas that man arrives at conclusions. Accepted conclusions produce decisions, and applied decisions result in actions. Now, all of these thought systems do not always possess moral values that involve right and wrong.

At an early age in life one child may find a great liking for the color green and be very fond of it. Another child in the same family might have an intense attraction to the color blue. Since neither color is right or wrong then both of them are equally acceptable. There is no moral value involved in the case.

The same could be true of two neighbors who were considering buying new automobiles: One might give consideration to the available machines and conclude that one particular brand would please him best. His neighbor might consider the same line of machines and conclude another brand to be the best. Neither would be right or wrong, for there is no moral value involved in the issue. A great many of life's decisions are of this nature. There are, however, those

issues that do possess moral value, and that fact does effect the disposal of the issue.

When an issue presents itself which does indeed possess qualities of right or wrong, that fact alone will render it acceptable or unacceptable to us morally according to the decision we make regarding it. Remember the law of utility? If we treat it as though it were no different than a color preference or something of no particular moral value, we soon discover there is something within us that will protest that disposition.

Let us reconsider the two neighbors and their car buying. One goes to review the machines available with no other thought in mind but that of service and comfort. He will select the one that will meet his need at the most reasonable price. His neighbor comes along to do his car shopping, but along with his search for utility, he adds another factor. He not only wants service and comfort, he also wants one that will make him stand out in the community when he passes by. His selection is one that will reflect his affluence and call attention to him. He may, and quite often does, take the position, "Why, I have done nothing out of the way anymore than my neighbor. He bought a new car too." But an honest conscience will have to be shouted down within him for it will be crying out, not against the car buying, but rather against the self-prompted pride that was involved in the car buying. Now we become aware of an inner prompting, pointing out to us that this is no longer a neutral issue involving no right or wrong. It is possessing moral values, and we are prompted to adhere to that more noble quality of higher virtue in

our disposal of the issue. In other words, from within our own selves we are prompted to select and perform the good. This action or process is what we call the function of the conscience.

We will do well to recognize immediately that the conscience is not the discerner of right or wrong. That function has already been performed by the intellect. It is with the mind, through the understanding, that information is acquired and cataloged. It is in the matter of intellectual disposal that the conscience exerts its prompting, urging us to perform in accordance with what the intellect already knows is right. In the account given in Luke 19:20-23 of the man who kept his pound laid up in a napkin, unused, the Lord made it plain that the man was convicted on the basis of what he already knew was required of him. Knowing that such information administers its own constraint to perform duty, we can safely conclude that all the while the duty was refused and neglected the conscience was attempting to persuade to performance.

The intellect acquires all sorts of information and feeds the sum of the whole into the accumulated volume of understanding. It is the conscience that comes into play in all matters pertaining to right and wrong. Its prompting is continually directing toward the right and away from the wrong. Some conformity to conscience-prompting is comparatively easy and performed without hesitation. Other forms of conformity are more difficult and perhaps performed with some reluctance. For the basically honest man, the temptation to steal is quickly and easily disposed of and given no further thought. The constraint of

duty which bids one to give his spare coat to a coatless brother may present quite another problem. Moral value is involved in both cases, and, consequently, the conscience will exert its constraint in each of the two cases. Conscience works in accordance with what the intellect has already accepted as being right; hence it holds the intellect responsible to perform in accordance with its own concept.

Having arrived at this realization we can easily see, then, how no one can be expected to obey a law of which he has no knowledge. Ignorance does not place any constraint of duty nor does it exact any sting of conscience. We may safely conclude, therefore, that unless and until the intellect is made aware of the information, the other functions do not operate. No man is conscience-smitten for failing to keep a law of which he has no knowledge. Here again we recognize the magnitude of the Savior's responsibility. "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. In conjunction with this, let us remember what took place in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3:22 says, "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil:..." Everyone has some basic concept of right and wrong, good and evil, acceptable and unacceptable.

These concepts, within themselves, provide the individual with sufficient information to make an acceptable moral decision in a matter, and duty will prompt the individual to obey what he feels is right. The conscience will then hold the individual responsible to carry the proper decision on into acceptable action. Here we see that the conscience plays a part

in the process. While an inherent concept of basic right and wrong is possessed by all, yet God, in His gracious dealings with fallen man, developed and refined the process. He reveals His will and proclaims His truth in such a way until, if fallen man will dutifully follow it, it will lead him out into true holiness. It will bring man into God's own image. Thus the conscience, every man's conscience, prompting toward the good, the just, the holy is, in fact, directing man toward his faithful Creator. We find this conscience function, like some other processes we have observed, exerting its influence in a variety of applications.

As we have been observing, conscience actively constrains one to perform or conduct, in an acceptable manner, as dictated by his intellect. He knows it to be right, duty prompts him to act, and conscience constrains him to perform properly. While this is a common and easily recognizable function of the conscience, yet, there are others.

In a great many cases, conscience will prompt to positive action, but in some cases conscience will act as an influence prompting to avoid or refrain from some action. Consequently, we see that conscience may exert itself either positively or negatively in its performance. Some things we may do and still maintain our integrity. Some things we may not do and still feel ourselves clear. For example, in the event an issue were to present itself in which principles of moral worth were under discussion, the Christian would feel conscience-smitten if he was to remain silent and appear neutral in the matter. At the same time, if he was to voice his convictions and in the

process allow himself to become so overwrought and outspoken until his conduct became unbecoming as a Christian, he would again feel conscience-smitten. Conscience is faithful to serve us, in each case, according as the need may be.

Along with these, the conscience will also judge us in accordance with what has already been done. One may feel, "Well, I know this isn't just exactly what it really ought to be, but I would like to have it this way anyway. Besides, if I can get it done without too much disturbance, things will soon settle down and be accepted anyway. Then everything will be all right and I'll still have what I wanted." Such action may well put one in conflict with his own conscience. We must remember that the conscience is appointed to deal with right and wrong as they pertain to us individually, and it recognizes those qualities wherever they appear.

Self-interest, we have already observed, does not lead to moral virtue. Conscience will recognize and reject selfish misbehaving along with all other forms of unacceptable conduct. Though the action may have already been committed and the event already moved into the past, yet if the action was not what it should have been at the time, the conscience will still require an adjustment. The commonly recognized term is "restitution." In the event our conduct has not been what it should have been under the prevailing circumstances, the conscience will hold us to go back and correct the matter in order to feel clear in our own hearts before the Lord.

While all men inherently possess some basic knowledge of right and wrong, yet, the fine-tuned

concepts of divine revelation and its accompanying unveiling of moral requirement may not be so readily understandable to all. The motive may be pure, the method sincere, the desire beyond reproach, but he just did not understand. Because of this he may be performing in a manner unacceptable to others who are more learned than he, yet with a clear conscience, simply because he knew no better. (See Acts 18:24-28.) This we might term an ignorant conscience. The solution is the acquisition of needed understanding. This is what the saints of Ephesus took care of for their brother, Apollos, so that he was able to go forth from them with a broader concept of our Lord's working.

Closely related to this condition is the matter of an innocent conscience. This is usually the state found in children and the undeveloped, but with the children anyway, this condition must in time begin to rectify itself. Normal development will stimulate those powers of intellect and reason that will activate the dormant conscience.

Another process, which has to do with the conscience, is very much in order here and that is the steps men employ to avoid the reproof of conscience when they wish to perform in conflict with what they already know their conscience will require. They may know full well what the truth is and be fully capable of meeting its requirement, but they simply do not want to perform in such a manner. At the same time, they do not wish to suffer the lashing of an offended conscience. They will almost always resort to what is known as a sophism. A sophism is an argument apparently correct in form but actually invalid, es-

pecially when it is used to deceive. We will present our case in such a way that any candid mind would agree that our deductions are correct and acceptable, but we will fail to present some segment of information that we know has definite bearing on the moral structure of the case. Without that information our deductions seem valid and above reproach, but with its introduction the complexion of the entire issue is changed. We present the information we want our listener to hear, and we listen humbly and graciously as they relate to us how they see nothing offensive in the assessment we have made of the matter. Then we go smugly on our way harboring the decision we wanted to hear and telling ourselves everything is all right with the Lord too. This is one way, at least, that sophisms are used to deceive. This type of practice may also be employed in various application. One consideration would be as it pertains to the individual himself.

We have previously observed that following the good, the true and the honest is not always easy nor is it always pleasant. Sometimes, in fact, it can actually be embarrassing and even humiliating. There are instances that could even involve the physical well-being. Reflect for a moment on what would have been the outcome had the Savior concluded in the garden, "The Father is able to devise some other way to rescue fallen man without me having to go through all of this," and then put the thing down! He knew that He was the Only Begotten. He knew that He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He knew that there was none other name under heaven, given among men whereby men could be

saved. Then, in order to conclude some other way was available, He would have had to accept an invalid argument that had no merit. Such an act would have left the Savior conscience-smitten. The fate of the salvation of the whole world hung on His decision, and He knew it. The magnitude of the decisions we make may not be so momentous as the one He made, yet, the ones we do make are of vital importance to our own soul.

Let us look at another application. Suppose we found ourselves in a position where we needed some information on which to base a decision we had to make, and we turned to someone we trusted to obtain the information. They gave us information, and we made our decision, only to discover that the decision was not satisfactory, leaving us at fault. In the course of subsequent investigation it was discovered that the information we had obtained from our trusted confidant was indeed true, so far as it went, but that there was other information, known to the party at the time, that was also true but deliberately withheld from us, which would have had a definite bearing on our decision. Having made all of this discovery, would we not be inclined to regard our trusted friend as something less than honest, even though they had conveyed to us only truth but not all of the truth? And would we not be quite likely to consider him a bit deceitful? If, in course of time, this same one should come along aspiring to disclose to us the way of truth and the path of righteousness that would propel us into holiness, is it not likely that we would be reluctant to receive his message because of his former conduct? (Isaiah 52:11, II Timothy 2:6 and

I Corinthians 9:14.) As for the one who gave the information, we all know the position he will take. "I have no guilt because all that I told was true." In reality he practiced deceit, for there was more known truth concerning the case which he knowingly withheld. May we not be so naive as to fail to realize that it is indeed possible to be deceitful with the truth. Our conscience, paid its proper respect and given its rightful consideration, will, in fact, admonish us toward what our intellect has accepted as actually being true.

Should the intellect begin to override the clear and distinct dictate of the conscience, offering instead some form of faulty and invalid argument in its place, this can result in an erroneous conscience. I have, in my study, a clipping ascribed to Nathaniel Hawthorne which reads like this: "No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself, and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the true." Reflect for a moment on what sort of stress this practice would place upon the conscience.

Suppose, for an example, it is of one's natural disposition to be caustic of tongue and sharp of word, perhaps even unkindly, critical and sarcastic. When it is brought to attention that such conduct is offensive and even hurtful, the offender, rather than humble down and begin making effort to correct the offense, begins to justify the action. He tells himself, "This is only constructive criticism," or, "I am just doing this for their own good," or "Someone needs to straighten this out." He may, in actuality, be offering himself a sophism to soothe his own conscience

for his own misconduct. True honesty would recognize the unacceptability of the conduct. It would begin to sincerely take steps to correct the cause. In so doing, his own character and personality would be more of what the Lord would desire, and the corrective action would leave the man feeling better in his own conscience.

Actual truth may not always be the concept of the intellect. One may honestly believe something to be correct when in actuality it is in error. People of old, worshipping idol gods, believed themselves, because of lifelong teaching, under obligation to commit their firstborn child to the flames in concession to the demand of that idol god. They found themselves conscience-smitten if they declined or refused. Their intellect had been taught and they had accepted the idea that such practice was necessary and so their conscience would hold them obligated to perform. On the other hand, a clear understanding of the Word of God and its requirements would admit of no such practice, and so, of course, that concept would be in conflict with their practice. The only means of satisfactory reconciliation would be to somehow arrive at some form of acceptable understanding of real truth. It is not the conscience that needs adjusting; it is the intellect through the understanding. This kind of information is useful to the individual seeking to win souls.

If someone has received and accepted a false premise and is attempting to abide by it, there will have to be some means devised to instill the real truth in his mind, and, at the same time, establish the fallacy of his present thinking. When that is ac-

complished, he will be in a position to receive an understanding of truth. Remember, the first thing the Savior taught man was that he was in sin and needed to be saved. Then he taught them that He was a Savior available.

This also makes it clear that the conscience, of itself, is not a safe guide to walk by, for it is not the predominant or presiding influence in man's being. It is simply a monitor, a stabilizer to hold the predominant factor—the intellect—under a feeling of obligation to conform to what it has already recognized as being right.

II Peter 2:19 states, "...for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." The same is true of any conquering force. Thus, if the intellect is able to stifle the conscience into submission, then the intellect becomes the dominant factor and the one that must be altered if any life pattern is to be adjusted.

As man's intellect and understanding is adjusted, there will follow a corresponding, simultaneous and spontaneous adjusting of the conscience. It will experience no difficulty transferring from the one program to the other so long as the intellect remains firm and steadfast in its concept of what it accepts as real truth. This explains how the apostle Paul could be so firmly convinced of the virtue of his position as he went about persecuting the Church and then in such a short time be so equally, firmly convinced that the Church was right in its position. The adjustment was made in his intellect by adding to his understanding. It is also significant to recognize that the old concept was not attacked and mutilated

all at once. The virtue and truth of the new was presented in such logical and reasonable fashion and with such demonstration until the fallacy of the old became readily obvious automatically. No clearly thinking mind would fail to perceive the superiority of the power and demonstration of resurrected grace over the keeping of physical regulation when it comes to the matter of spiritual advancement. Revealed truth will automatically expose error.

The condition which does produce difficulty and brings feelings of bewilderment is when the intellect is in doubt or perplexed. We will do well to make some observation here. The perplexity or doubt will never be in regard to right or wrong, for right is always self-evident and discernable and may be followed if one so desires. The difficulty comes in the conflict we experience between two or more duties. We may be aware that some action is necessary and we may be ready and willing to perform, but we may not be absolutely sure just what specific move is best for us to make at this particular time. The question is not as to whether the issue is right or wrong; if there is wrong involved it is rejected without hesitation. The question is, which is the proper course to pursue in order to achieve the most good from the available opportunity. We may not always be able to discern positively the best way to take, and, on some occasions, perhaps we may not have time nor opportunity to pray the matter through as we would like. There is, however, one guideline that will always be safe to follow. It is this: When we find ourselves facing a decision in which we are perplexed and in doubt as to which path to pursue, it will be

safe, so far as the right is concerned, to select that course which will least favor our self-interest.

The one outstanding scripture that comes burning in our hearts as we give consideration to these things is that found in I Peter 2:21-22 which reads: "...leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Any man, yea, every man who will follow in that same path which He followed need not be troubled about being deceived, nor will he need worry about a seared or overridden conscience. He will be performing exactly in accordance with God's will as he was designed to perform from the beginning. God will be pleased with that life. Take time to look up the definition of the word "guile." It becomes glaringly obvious that without this influence working in the life, the conscience will have no trouble performing satisfactorily. The most valuable and necessary supports for the conscience are honesty and enlightenment.

Sentiments

Intelligent beings who are able to acquire and retain knowledge will sooner or later be affected and influenced by that knowledge. Our own reasoning ability will evaluate information we have available to us, and we will use that information to draw our own conclusions. These conclusions are what we call feelings. Our feelings play a major part in our thought patterns. They have a profound effect on our attitudes and our judgments. When our feelings prompt us to fixed attitudes and established notions, we develop specific views or what we call opinion. It is as we assess and evaluate the various details and intricacies of a matter that we develop a specific opinion of an entire matter. A great volume of the information we use in forming our feelings and notions comes from our own deductions. There are, however, at least two factors that derive from a different source. One of them we have already discussed under a former heading. It is the knowledge of good and evil. That information is knowledge placed in man by the decree of the Almighty, for only He would make it known to man. It would not be to Satan's best interest to reveal such as that.

The other factor that affects all men is the built-in tendency of all men to worship a higher power. Men were originally created noble creatures in God's likeness. They possessed His attributes and characteristics. A gratuity, benevolence or kindness bestowed upon them automatically prompted within them feelings of gratitude, appreciation and thankfulness. The intense love and affection God poured

out in His kindness toward them prompted from them a response of love that mounted to adoration. It culminated in worship. "We love him, because he first loved us." I John 4:19. Man, in the garden, was acutely aware that he was on earth and alive only because his God willed it so. He realized that every comfort and necessity he enjoyed was supplied by his Maker's hand. He was conscious of God's care and love for him, for every day He came by to pay him a visit. Man loved God for being the kind of God that He is, and he worshiped Him.

This feeling or disposition to worship is, like the knowledge of good and evil, built into every normal human being. Like all the rest of God's attributes that man possessed in the beginning, it has been warped, deformed and mutilated by man's exaggerated self-image. It is still true, however, that when any honest soul finds his way back to his true Maker, he automatically falls down in spontaneous adoration and worships before Him. Through the ages man has never lost this built-in intuition that somewhere there still remains a divine Intelligence that possesses divine characteristics. He visualizes and formulates deities of his own, but always they revert back and reflect his own self-image rather than divine image. The most advanced civilizations the earth has ever produced presents the world with gods who reflect human nature. They portray themselves fraught with hatred, jealousy, greed, vengeance, lust and all the other attributes our God has instructed us to put aside if we would be like Him.

In our approach to our heavenly Father, He makes no demand of us to satisfy His greed. He freely lets

us know that if we were to give Him all of this world's goods that we think we have, it would add nothing to His wealth for He made it all in the beginning, ourselves included. He also lets us know that the final disposal of it all will be in His hands, not ours. He seeks to wreak no vengeance upon us. He does not meet us with a scowl of hatred that fills us with fear and foreboding. He approaches us with an attitude of love and mercy and offers to teach us a way whereby we may be delivered from the penalty of our own wrongdoing. We offend His righteousness when we sin, that is true, but in the final analysis we are the ones who are hurt most for we perish in the process. It is an act of divine love that reaches to help us out of our fallen condition.

When we realize that man is basically a religious creature with built-in prompting to worship, we can better understand why we possess some of the feelings we do. Man was designed to worship a holy Being who is the embodiment of all purity and righteousness. Every man possesses built-in concepts of what he feels is good and evil. It is completely understandable, then, that man would develop some feelings and attitudes as to these very principles and what he feels they require. His concept of good and evil provides him a pattern of what he feels a true moral being would be. By accepting a god as a higher power, he will expect to find these qualities working in that god. Imagine the disappointment, frustration and perplexity created when man falls down to worship a god of his own concept and discovers his god possessing the same attributes he finds in himself, only on a more elaborate scale. A god who is not fair,

just, honest or pure is not the god who provided for man a knowledge of good and evil. When these attributes appear in supposed deity, it is little wonder that all men begin to question and doubt all deity. This helps us understand why God presented Himself as the true and living God. He is, indeed, the God who established the rules and requirements of all righteousness. He is the One and only God known to man who practices these prescribed requirements for righteousness. When men find the true God, they find the concepts of good and bad functioning in Him, for they discover Him altogether good. There is no way God could expose the good without at the same time exposing the bad. We know of only two ways. To present one with its attributes could do nothing else but leave the other with its attributes standing alone.

A responsibility delegated to the Christ, when He came to earth, was to enlighten the minds and understanding of men. He was to bring men into working contact with the true and living God. He was to let men know that the God who established the difference between good and evil is still altogether good and that He is still eternally opposed to bad. As men begin to recognize these truths their concepts begin to broaden. Their feeling is that since this is what the true God is, then this is the kind of being that they want to be. Thus, we see sentiments developing. These feelings or emotions that prompt us toward good and repel us from evil we experience every time we observe the presence or performance of either right or wrong, whether it be in ourselves or in others. Since all men possess basic concepts of right and wrong, we tend to feel all men responsible to act

accordingly. We find these feelings working in ourselves with regard to actions contemplated and likewise in regard to actions already performed. When we become aware of an approaching situation in which we perceive the potential for either right or wrong to be performed, we feel an attraction toward the more noble or virtuous choice, and at the same time we feel a revulsion or distaste of the less virtuous choice. These developing feelings are sentiments. The feelings will vary in intensity according to the magnitude or seriousness of the issue at hand. We may feel incensed and resentful toward the man who does not feed his dog properly but we will be horrified and consider it intolerable for someone to fail to feed his own children adequately. God possesses the same feeling in such cases. (I Timothy 5:8.) While the anticipated issue may or may not actually develop, yet we are all aware and conscious of these existing feelings of approval or disapproval, whichever the case may be. Thus we may recognize our sentiments as they form.

When a situation or circumstance has developed in which we find ourselves confronted with a decision and consequent action and we perform in conformity with what we believe to be the right, we experience a feeling of deep satisfaction. This feeling in the soul is the blessing or reward for obedience. It is God who makes known to men the way of right, and it is God who appeals to men to follow the way of right. It is also God who renders men, through His grace, able to achieve the right. It is likewise God who rewards the faithful performer with the feeling of satisfaction which he experiences for his having

done the right. That feeling is divinely designed to encourage the man to continue his acceptable performance. This is a blessing that never fails. (Matthew 10:42.) No man ever felt condemned, accused or belittled within himself for having performed nobly or virtuously. The crowd may not always offer its applause, but in his own soul, when any man has performed the right and knows it, he will feel the satisfaction of having done well.

Reflect for a moment on what this truth meant to Joseph of old when he was ejected from his master's house and cast into the prison, especially when none but his accuser and himself knew of his virtuous conduct. In his own heart he knew that he had done well. Without doubt the approval of his heavenly Father was upon him, and so he enjoyed the blessing of soul-satisfaction. May we never lose sight of this great truth that right performed, truth kept, virtue upheld, is always rewarded with soul-satisfaction and blessing. It is always the opposite performance that yields guilt and fear, shame and condemnation.

On the other hand, when a situation is presented and we make the wrong choice, performing against the right and in harmony with wrong, we find ourselves experiencing a feeling of remorse or perhaps even repentance. Let us notice, in passing, the difference in these two sentiments. Everyone, having performed despicably, experiences feelings of dissatisfaction with himself and his unacceptable conduct. His own concept of what is right prompts him that his action is not in keeping with right. He will not feel comfortable with the action within himself nor

will he feel comfortable with such action around others. He is aware of their disapproval, and so to some degree he feels guilty and conscience-smitten for his unacceptable behavior. This feeling is what we call remorse. He is aware of his unacceptable action and may even despise himself for having so conducted. But the remarkable feature about the experience is that under like circumstances he will, without hesitation, perform in an identical manner. This explains how it can be that men will indulge themselves in satisfying the desires of the flesh to their own hurt, and then lament loudly the awful price they are compelled to pay for their folly. Then they will turn right around and without hesitation perform the same despicable action over again. They know the sting of remorse, but they feel no constraint toward restraint. Consider the man who comes home from the tavern or bar in a drunken condition and without provocation turns in and beats his wife black and blue and abuses his own children before making his way off to bed to sleep off his drunkenness. He is filled with remorse and guilt upon awakening and learning what he has done. Some will even weep and cry in their expression of regret and reproach themselves severely for their misconduct, but come next pay day the same process repeats itself all over again. That man has experienced only remorse.

Another man may protest bitterly the racking cough he experiences each morning upon awakening and lament loudly the severity of the chest colds that so frequently infect his damaged lungs, but to refrain from the smoking that produces that condi-

tion seems the furthest thing from his mind. He is only experiencing remorse.

In a more subtle manner this same process makes its appearance at our altars and finds its way into men's lives who tell themselves they are seeking salvation. The forgiveness of sin was designed an instantaneous transaction, and abundance of divine assistance is provided to make it true. Yet, there are those who weeks, months and even years later, in some cases, are still wrestling with the same old problems, stoutly protesting that they are just not able to get the kind of victory they need. This kind of testimony leaves the appearance that the power of God is just somehow not quite able to reach their case and do for them what it has for some others. The only thing that seems to be left for them is to struggle along in this semi-saved condition, longing to do better but never quite able to achieve. The trouble is not in God's power; it is in man's willingness. In order to understand this, let us look for a moment at the process of repentance.

While remorse, within itself, does not prompt to any corrective action, yet it provides an introduction to the force that will. No man will pursue repentance without some prior feeling of remorse. When men realize the difference between right and wrong and knowingly perform the wrong, this feeling of remorse or self-condemnation will always occur. With prolonged practice it can be successfully thrown off or ignored, but anytime it is given consideration it will always produce its same effect. All men, to some degree, will loathe the areas of their lives that they feel are beneath what they ought to be. So long as

the process progresses no further than that, no effort will be made to correct the situation. Repenting men come to the place that they loathe the effects, and the forces that are causing the effects, to the point that they are ready and willing to employ every means available to correct the condition. This is true repentance and it will not fail in its ability to perform, with God's help, for it opens the way for God to work in the case. Hear His Word: "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him...." II Chronicles 16:9. No rational mind would accept the idea that God is not able to conquer evil. If evil remains and persists, it is a sure indication of an imperfect heart that is seeking to be delivered. The drunkard can quit his drinking and treat his family right. The smoker can quit his smoking and rid himself of its awful effects. The semi-saved Christian can rise up in the power of grace and actually possess sweeping victory. The secret is in the approach.

Remember, men are saved because they want to be saved more than anything else in the world. The man who hates sin only because of what it is doing to him may be merely selfishly motivated. The man who hates sin because it is wrong and in opposition to all that is noble and right, and wants it purged from his heart and life because he loathes the wrong and its results, will find the sanctuary he seeks in our blessed Lord in abundance. Sin that seemingly cannot be conquered is more than likely sin that is wanted. God's only begotten Son suffered the awful experience of Calvary and its cross. He paid the aw-

ful price for sin that men might obtain deliverance from sin's power. But a halfhearted approach will, in like manner, realize a halfhearted result.

Let us remember, also, that it is the righteous Lord who made known to us in the first place the difference between right and wrong, and it is this same righteous Lord who prompts us consistently toward the right. The feelings we experience, then, in regard to our own misconduct and the prompting we experience to do better are not a product of our own doing but are, in fact, the very channels the Lord left open for Himself to work through in bringing us back to Him. When we behold the righteousness and purity of our loving Christ and then look at ourselves in our defiled and guilty condition, we realize immediately how far we are from what men were designed to be. We begin to feel condemned within ourselves of our shortcoming. We find ourselves longing to be like Him and to perform as He would perform. This is what we call conviction.

Now we can see why the only begotten Son had to be made flesh and dwell among us. It would indeed be difficult to draw men to an ideal that had never been on display. But when He came, walked this life just as we walk and kept Himself free from sin all the while, He can then invite us, not to an ideal, but to an achieved accomplishment. Thus we hear the appeal, "...follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." I Peter 2:21-22.

Remorse, then, is a feeling of self-condemnation and guilt for a despicable action. Repentance is a deep-seated and sincere, heartfelt yearning to be

freed from the cause of the action, accompanied with an honest and sincere commitment to take whatever steps are necessary to correct the condition. To the soul who has come to this degree of commitment, salvation is granted. (Jeremiah 29:13 and Matthew 5:6.) The man who is filled only with remorse feels the revulsion of his action, but the man filled with repentance finds deliverance from his despicable actions. Never, before Christ, was this possible. But now through His grace and shed blood, all men are invited and bidden to come enjoy this blessed release.

Repentance is a commendable and divinely honored action and is abundantly affirmed by the intensity of the blessing or soul-satisfaction that accompanies its fulfillment. No greater, pure joy has ever been experienced by mortal man than that felt by the individual who has been languishing under a load of guilt for sin and suddenly feels himself, by virtue of divine forgiveness in response to his repentance, freed from that load of guilt. So great is the elation of that event until it becomes contagious. The Scripture tells us that even the angels rejoice on that blessed occasion. The Word also testifies of the wonder of this transaction. Our sins are declared cast as far from us as the east is from the west. (Psalm 103:12, Hebrews 8:12 and 10:17.) In another place it is presented as being cast into the depths of the sea. (Micah 7:19.) Repentance begins with a feeling of remorse and when pursued to its intended fulfillment produces dramatic results. "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made

you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter. II Corinthians 7:8-11.

Two more sentiments that we recognize are what we call honor and shame. Let us identify here the elements we will be working with. Honor is that feeling of esteem and acclaim we pay to the individual who performs in accordance with the good. Shame is that feeling and attitude of contempt we feel toward the individual who performs poorly or beneath what may be justly expected of him.

Conviction of wrong, when responded to in the honest heart, leads to repentance for wrong committed and prompts to appropriate action to stop the offensive behavior in the life. All of this is a conscious and deliberate response to our concepts of right and wrong. Since man's natural impulse is toward wrong because it satisfies the desires of the flesh, then all men are influenced in that direction to some degree. To move in the other direction, toward the right, will require an intellectual concept of what one is doing, and the action, when taken, will require a conscious, deliberate exercise of the personal will in order for

the effort to succeed. Our Lord is ready and willing to assist, but only when He is thoroughly convinced that this is what we desire with all of our hearts.

When we embrace the way of righteousness for our life-style and begin to pursue in that vein, we soon discover that we are developing inward feelings and attitudes toward the various influences we encounter. Where at one time our only thought was of self-interest and pleasure, with little regard for right or wrong, now our primary thought is of what is right, and we discredit what we recognize as wrong. These changing sentiments are what prompted the conviction we experienced and resulted in the repentance we were willing to yield ourselves to. Then, as we continue in our pursuit of moral righteousness, we find other sentiments developing in regard to these two basic elements of right and wrong. The honorable man will realize in himself those influences of character which will prompt him to the performance of actions that will elevate himself in his own eyes as well as in the eyes of others. That same influence will prompt him to avoid actions that would lower himself in his own eyes as well as in the eyes of others. These are also the sentiments that gender in us either respect or contempt, and they produce a sort of basis for human dignity. The man who conducts himself honorably will command our respect and the man who performs shamefully will feel our contempt. Thus men who perform will feel themselves judged by their fellows, and that supposed evaluation will tend to gauge the dignity of which they feel themselves worthy in their own eyes. When we feel that this is the way others feel about us, we tend to ac-

cept that supposed evaluation as the measure of our own performance. Thus we feel that if society about us is approving our actions, we must be performing satisfactorily. This is the kind of mutual human sanction the apostle was dealing with in II Corinthians 10:12 when he said, "...but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." Such action would satisfy human morality, for it is spawned of the flesh and seeks only to satisfy the flesh. Religious morality is gendered by God from heaven and works to produce a holiness that is acceptable in heaven. True religious morality will accept and acknowledge the respect and dignity that belongs to a righteous man, but it will likewise reject and refuse honor bestowed where no honor is due. When feelings of self-worth go into action with no other prompting but selfish fulfillment, they will inevitably develop into an exaggerated and inordinate concept of one's own worth and due regard. When a man regards himself as having performed in such a way as will elevate him in his own eyes, he will likewise feel as though he is, or should be, elevated in the eyes of others. Before long he will begin to demand that kind of recognition, for he has convinced himself that God pays to him superior regard. That this type of self-exaltation is unacceptable as being in keeping with the right is attested to by the realization that those selfish demands, in time, will become offensive to others, God included. Sooner or later this offensive conduct will leave the offender feeling condemned because of his treatment of and attitude toward his fellow man. No man in this condition could successfully follow the

Golden Rule. It is indeed true that there actually is a respect and dignity to which men are rightfully entitled, but it will most likely not be properly or fairly evaluated except under the influence of salvation's experience. Genuine salvation will put exaggerated self in its proper perspective.

Men are of worth before their Creator, sufficiently enough until He went to great length to rescue them from their moral fall. A successful achievement of that recovery with its accompanying requirement of triumph over sin, self and the flesh should and does afford a fair and honest amount of self-esteem and self-regard. But the honest soul who well knows the truth of the matter, will freely and honestly confess, "Though I have been able to overcome in the conflicts of life, yet I am what I am only by the help and grace of God that was so graciously given unto me by Him who loved me most." In the honest heart, it is not the man who deserves to be exalted; it is the Lord who made him able, and so the Lord alone deserves the credit. This is what we term humility, and while it does put a truthful and honest evaluation on a man and his true worth, yet it does not, by any means, impose any feeling of shame for it is not degrading or defiling. It simply recognizes what is true. The honest man, who recognizes himself for what he actually is and truthfully acknowledges the fact, is not damaged in any degree. If there is damage done, it is only selfish pride that is injured. Thus we can see that, in the matter of real human dignity, personal honesty is a necessary ingredient, for only then can a true evaluation of self-worth be made.

On the other end of the spectrum from honor is

the idea of shame. This is the feeling of self-diminishing we experience when we have acted in such a way that it lowers us in our own eyes and in the eyes of others. It is quite often the feeling that leads to remorse and finally to repentance. When we remember that it was man's own self-interest that replaced God's image at the fall in the garden, we can easily see how man would develop an inordinate estimation of himself. It is this exaggerated opinion that does not wish to acknowledge itself wrong or that it is doing wrong. It also rejects any move toward self-conviction, either through his own concept or from divine prompting. This explains why remorse produces no corrective results.

The repenting heart will not only acknowledge his fault but will also confess his need and be willing to cry out for help to overcome. This is diminishing to the exaggerated self-image and is another function of humility. Thus, humility, when allowed to do its work, will put self in its proper place in our own estimation so that we realize ourselves lost and undone morally and begin to seek for some means to correct the condition. That opens the door for the Savior to do His work. Remember His Word, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28. His ability, delivered through His grace, combined with man's sincere and honest desire to be delivered, can and does accomplish the need at hand. Consequently man has an abundant entrance into redemption. The apostle of old commended those who sorrowed unto repentance, for he who repents is removed from the influence of exaggerated self. He is now directed by the

dictate of divine virtue which propels him into the good, the right, the holy. He is indeed made an honorable man.

This transformation out of the power of darkness and into the kingdom of His dear Son (Colossians 1:13) adds new worth to the individual. He is no longer performing the despicable, but the noble, which automatically gives him a feeling and realization of true self-worth. His feeling is not one that seeks or desires to dominate others or exalt itself to exaggeration again, but is a true and honest evaluation and acceptance of the work that has been done and glorifies his Lord for the accomplishment. To fail to make this honest acknowledgment and evaluation is to undervalue the quality of the experience. Jesus was tempted to diminish His true position as the Only Begotten of the Father but He would not do that even though the multitude declared it blasphemy. (John 10:32-33.) Men who, as recipients of the grace of God, fail to acknowledge and evaluate it at its proper worth, put their experience in jeopardy and stand to lose it along with its blessings and benefits. (I Corinthians 15:10.) God expects men to own and exploit the work He has done in them. Remember the parable of the talents.

While men tend to feel and act in accordance with their own feelings or sentiments, yet we will do well to remember that our feelings may not always be God's feelings. Our judgments are made according to our knowledge and God's judgments are made according to absolute truth. The Bible declares that all unrighteousness is sin whether it be small or great. Sin, in any form, is sufficient to keep men out of

heaven just like it was sufficient to extricate man from the Garden of Eden. The murderer will occupy a place in hell along with the teller of "little white lies."

Apart from the influence of salvation, the sentiments of honor and of shame do not present a very trustworthy guide as to the quality of actions. Unregenerate man, who feels himself honorable because of his successes in society, will quickly and easily divest himself of all feeling of shame at how he achieved his success even though that achievement was not altogether honest. The feeling of remorse will be presented to him, but he will tend to magnify and flaunt his achieved success while at the same time stifling the feeling of shame he experiences for his dishonesty. Society about him may even help him justify himself, lending its approval to his dishonest deeds and commanding him highly on his influence which he is able to build in the community. It may applaud him loudly for his financial successes, even bestowing upon him what it terms recognition and honor. Thus in many cases honor is given where honor is not really due and credit placed where there is no accompanying merit. This type of misapplication can and does find its way into many avenues of men's lives.

The ambitious man will be constantly on the alert for means to further his own interest, whether it be political, social or even concerning church position. The licentious man will be on the watch for opportunity to fulfill his fleshly desires, and the prodigal will be consistently seeking to be out from under any form of governing influence other than his own. All

such activity will seek to present itself in an upright and acceptable manner so that no shame or remorse need be felt even though the actual motive was to accommodate self-interest. Here again we are forced to recognize the necessity of honesty when dealing with moral values.

While individual performance is assessed and measured as to quality and fervency, there is yet another factor of considerable importance to be remembered. Though the dedication to a cause may have been faultless and the performance in support of the cause without flaw, yet the virtue and integrity of the cause supported is also an issue of vital importance. Individuals and even groups array themselves to accomplish some prescribed task. They rally forth declaring it moral obligation to support their purportedly virtuous cause, but, many times, when examined to its basics, the cause turns into a self-interest.

One outstanding example of such activity is the idea of armed conflict. One nation will decide for some reason or other to go to war with another nation, and so it will begin a campaign to gain support for its cause. It will extol the virtue of its own action and condemn the action of its opposer, and it will, inevitably, attempt to impose a feeling of moral obligation upon its subjects to support its effort. Human morality is quick to take up the cry, and great acclaim is given to those who are so engaged. Great religious movements of the day lend the effort of their support and urge their adherents to compliance, but what of the requirement of religious morality? Religious morality is not formulated from human source, nor was

it designed to promote human cause. One of its clearly stated regulations is "Thou shalt not kill," and it offers no exceptions of application. He who takes human life is declared a murderer, and the Word plainly states that no murderer shall enter heaven. (I John 3:15.) True religious morality will not even accept hatred, the sentiment that leads to murder, much less the act itself.

While societies bestow great honor upon those who go and offer their lives in support of their national cause, and even though those who go may do an admirable job of the task at hand, yet if the cause supported and the methods used violate the way of divine virtue, it will not have divine approval. It becomes obvious, then, that if men would build virtuous lives they must support and practice virtuous causes. National cause, strong as it may seem to be, is still the product of human manipulation and is used to promote human, fleshly interest. It does not necessarily adhere to divine interest, either in cause or method. The instruction of the Word in such matters is, "...Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely;..." Luke 3:14.

While all men experience certain sentiments which they feel toward themselves and their own actions, they will at the same time experience feelings or sentiments toward the action of others. When any man accepts what he feels are required rules of practice and conduct, as pertains to moral responsibility, he will not only feel himself constrained to comply with those rules, but he will also feel that all other men should meet the same requirement. This points up the necessity of uniformity in the rules.

If all men are to be governed alike, then the laws will need to apply identically to every man, else they would not be just. This is where religion and morality compliment each other. Moral law is of real value only when it is applied through the agency of a divine Lawgiver. Human application will leave too much room for self-interest and manipulation. Since Christ is the ultimate in moral virtue, He alone would be able to give and apply a faultless rule. So trustworthy was He in this capacity until the Father on high could safely declare, "The government is upon His shoulders." Since He is the Savior of all and thoroughly acquainted with all, then He is the logical Administrator of moral expectation. He is not working to satisfy any selfish motivation of His own. He loves us all and does not want to see any of us perish. His love for all dictates that all must be treated fairly and alike. He declares that He does not respect persons. This explains how we can identify rules or laws such as honesty and holiness and apply them to all men, of all nationalities, of all generations. He is indeed no respecter of persons. Even King David, who was designated a man after God's own heart, was not exempt nor excused when he transgressed, but was required to meet the penalty of the violated law.

God's universal laws do not go into great detail nor lengthy enumeration. He lays down a basic requirement for all men, then leaves it up to men to work out the details that will fit their particular society, in their specific generation.

Earlier we introduced a thought, just for a moment, and then dropped it. Let us go back now and

pick it up. It is the idea of respect and contempt. When an individual has performed an action that we regard as commendable or noble, we pay that individual what we call respect. When someone has performed actions that are ignoble or degrading we find ourselves entertaining feelings that diminish that one in our estimation. This is what we call contempt. Because an individual acted basely, imprudently or unwisely when he could just as easily have performed nobly, gallantly or admirably we feel contemptible toward him. These again are emotions, thoughts and attitudes that develop from our feelings and they, too, are sentiments. They will produce a profound effect upon us. No man is an island. We are all here in contact and association with one another; therefore it stands to reason that the estimation we place on each other and our accompanying performance will affect our relationship.

The position, status or regard we command in the household of faith is not the result of physical genealogy nor of social prowess but is rather the result of our skill, prudence and sagacity in the conduct of our life of holiness. The completely foolish man does not acknowledge God or His ways at all; consequently, we pay him very little moral respect. There are those who acknowledge the Lord all right, but their judgments somehow seem to be sometimes faulty. Their choices are not always prudent, and their decisions are not always the wisest. When these conditions occur frequently or on a regular basis, they begin to form patterns in lives that tend to leave one disappointed in the overall quality of the life. It

appears to be carelessly lived or lacking in proper attention.

When the disposition of someone is of such caliber that he expects everything to be handled with greatest prudence, even in minute detail, he will tend to look down a bit on any less careful lives and entertain something less than a favorable attitude toward them. Whether or not these issues are of importance or of real consequence is quickly answered when we realize that it is upon the basis of these evaluations that our confidence is going to be placed and our esteem bestowed. We are members in a brotherhood, each striving to develop an image of righteousness in ourselves and at the same time be in harmony with the remainder of the brotherhood. This may appear an easy undertaking at first glance, but actually it develops into a fine art.

Consider the loosely handled performance for a moment. It would be a mistake and an injustice to write the entire endeavor off as unacceptable and discard the complete effort. Before that could conscientiously be done, one would need to give some careful consideration to the candidate offering the service. Moral law, remember, does not require all men to be fastidious nor skillful nor sagacious. It does require all men to be honest, true, just and holy.

If an individual is honestly and sincerely performing in an acceptable manner before the Lord with the fullness of the capacity he possesses to perform, God accepts that service and honors that man just as much as He does the one who pays fastidious attention to every detail. (Read Romans 14.) It would be a mistake to fail to pay a man less than full es-

teem and not extend to him full confidence in his battle for right, as he sees it, even though his performance may not particularly please all other people.

On the other hand, when we observe a life that appears "ragged" and "shabby" and we are thoroughly convinced that the inferior performance is the direct result of carelessness or perhaps even rebellion, we find it difficult indeed to extend a full measure of esteem to that one, and we are reluctant to bestow upon him our unreserved confidence. The more prominent the unsatisfactory conduct becomes, the more pronounced becomes our contempt. If the condition progresses far enough, our confidence will disappear altogether. It takes a great deal of patience, love, divine wisdom and divine assistance to deal successfully with a "loose" life. Little wonder the Master required these qualities be found in those whom He would use as pastors. It is difficult indeed to build a model congregation with a few, or even one, around who live "loose," but few, if any, of these are finally won by bidding them depart. Contempt can be endured and lived with until the offending life can be adjusted. When that occurs the contempt can change to respect, esteem and confidence. (Luke 13:8-9.)

This again points out to us how universal law can be applied to all men, even to men of greater or lesser capability, and them still remain in fellowship and have respect one for the other. The fastidious man can find grace to accept his offending brother when he is convinced he is able to do no better. The brother who is not given to minute detail can find grace to accept his fastidious brother with all his

fuss over what he feels is trivial when he is convinced the man is honest. This quality is identical to the quality of love, in that none has a right to expect to be respected until he has presented himself respectable morally.

The sentiments we feel toward each other should be honestly and fairly drawn on the basis of performance from a moral standpoint and not from personal likes or dislikes. It is said of Abraham Lincoln that he once appointed a man to a responsible position of state because he knew the man's capability in that field even though he knew the man intensely disliked him personally. When questioned later as to what he thought of the man, he had nothing but good to say about him and his performance. Finally, someone asked, "Do you know what he thinks of you?" Mr. Lincoln replied, "You did not ask what he thinks of me, you asked what I think of him." In the final analysis it is what we think of others that will govern our confidence and esteem and our actions toward them.

When we regard a life as being carelessly lived, from a moral standpoint, we will experience difficulty extending full confidence to that life. It will also follow that our esteem for that life will be less than full and our respect will also be affected. All of this tends to diminish the unity between us. When these conditions prevail within a group, they will surely weaken, and perhaps even destroy, the spiritual and moral power of the group. Thus we realize how important it is that we all have one divinely established set of governing regulations that we all recognize and are able to measure to, so that we may all give and

receive confidence in each other. In this manner we are able to become an effective, accomplishing, working force that knows and achieves the right, the good, the just, the true and the holy. This helps explain why human morality is not acceptable.

Humanity alone cannot formulate a flawless law. Unregenerate men are self-oriented; therefore their judgments will be erroneous for they are selfish. Divinity can and has provided just such a flawless law for we find it detailed in the Holy Scripture. Its assertions are true and its requirements are just. Its demands are attainable for they are accompanied by grace. Its results are true and uniform and they lead men into holiness. It is holiness that prepares the soul for heaven.

There are also sentiments that others stimulate in us. When we feel an urge or longing or disposition to share the impressions of others; we are experiencing what we call sympathy. These impressions may be of varied hue and embrace such opposites as joy and sorrow, pleasure and grief, but of whatever they consist, when we lend ourselves to enter into the essence of them with our fellows, we are in sympathy with the experience. Jesus was a Master in this field. He healed the brokenhearted and had pity on the afflicted. He rejoiced with the couple on their wedding occasion, and He wept with those who experienced the grief of death. He was touched with men's infirmity, and He was concerned with their lack of understanding. So intense was His involvement, until He was willing to give of the fullness of what was available to Him, that the plight of men might be bettered. He also wanted them to know the

joy, pleasure, gladness and satisfaction that He had known. Read His prayer in John 17. Sympathy is the root from which springs a great many other influences such as pity, compassion, mercy and tenderness and finds fulfillment in such conditions as sorrow, pain, embarrassment and grief.

Though we may feel a compelling tendency of sympathy toward the condition or position of others, yet there is caution that must be exercised lest we be sympathetically drawn into violation of the laws of holiness ourselves. While it is lamentable that anyone should become involved in anything that would defile their holiness, and we may feel a compelling desire to assist those who have fallen to recover, yet we must exercise caution lest we also become influenced by the same thing. It is impossible to rescue people from wrong by entering into wrongdoing. The Scripture, or perfect law, instructs us to not only refrain from doing such things but likewise to have no fellowship with those who do. We may feel sorry for and desire to help folks in distress, but we are not permitted to embrace the thing that produced the distress. We are to "...have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,..." Ephesians 5:11. These cautions are necessary, not only in working with individuals, but also when dealing with the influences of groups. Organizations or brotherhoods, or whatever, that are not observing and abiding by the prescribed rules of the Kingdom are not worthy to follow nor to lend our sympathy to. Their influence will not bring the life to holiness nor the soul to heaven.

Sentiments, like other of the emotions, tend to

escalate in accordance with intensity. Kindness is a disposition to wish well toward all men, and we feel constrained to extend that disposition to all of our fellows with no further consideration. There are, however, some who we feel kindly toward, that after we have given some reflection and evaluation, we realize that they have acted or performed exceptionally well. When we tend to extend to these a little greater than the usual kindness, we call this esteem. There are those who consistently adhere to the higher virtues and have over a span of time. We regard them beyond kindness or esteem; we ascribe to them profound respect. There are some whose lives and conduct are of such outstanding character until we regard them as an ideal, a model, a hero. This is what we term admiration. Thus we see that our emotional sentiments escalate in intensity in direct relation to our feelings.

On the other hand, contempt is the feeling of disgust we experience when someone performs poorly. When action performed is condemnable, we project what we call blame, and when action performed is criminal and revolting, we experience horror. The feelings which develop in us in the various events of life will be directly influenced by the intensity of the actions which we observe. Our reactions will reflect those feelings. God seems to experience the same reactions to some degree. The Scripture tells us that the one who did not know was beaten with few stripes, but the one who knew and did otherwise was beaten with many stripes. We also feel it justice to require more of the intentional offender than of the inadvertent transgressor, etc. This presents to us another

area of striking contrast between human morality and divinely instituted morality.

Human feeling will experience these various degrees of intensity and react according to them, but when God reviewed the situation, He concluded us all in sin and in need of a Savior. This places all men on an equal level and leaves all men in need of divine assistance in order to be saved. Without this assistance none can be saved; therefore, no man is able to achieve the desired experience by himself. If any man is saved, it is solely by the merit and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Thus the apostle of old declared, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8-9. May we all realize that whether our sin be classified as great or small, unless we find divine or supernatural assistance to overcome, we cannot be saved. Of what, then, do any of us have room to boast? We are what we are only by the power of the grace of God that works in us. God does not deal with us according to the magnitude nor intensity of sin but rather according to the fact of sin. God does not countenance wrongdoing whether it be small or great. He also does not evaluate moral virtue from man's point of view, but from His own concept of holiness. Thus we may be sure that His judgments are fair for He tells us that all of His things are done in righteousness. (Proverbs 8:8.) God is, indeed, aware of fluctuations in intensity and magnitude of performance, but all wrongdoing, He declares, is sin and subject to sin's penalty. There are conditions which He declares shall receive the greater damnation. (Matthew 23:14.)

Liberty

Moral law was designed and instituted to fit the need of a specified segment of God's creation. Just as instinct law was designed to meet the need of less intelligent animal creation, so moral law was specially tailored to meet the need of specifically qualified intelligent beings. God recognizes those superior capabilities and insists that men do the same. Some would like to ignore these superior qualities and pretend they do not exist, along with their accompanying responsibilities. God will not allow men to shrug off these duties. We are reminded of the parable of the man and his one talent. His neglect of duty did not excuse nor nullify his responsibility before the Lord.

It is apparent to all normal minds that there are events and activities going on around us all the time and that these developing occurrences may be manipulated to personal advantages. They may be successfully used to produce both pleasure and profit and a great many other things that afford satisfaction.

While these privileges and possibilities are normally thought of as being available to all, yet there are some for whom they do not exist. Consider those in the innocent and carefree state of childhood and those who are not blessed with sufficient mental development to comprehend. Time will take care of the immature, but the undeveloped may never possess these blessings. Everyone who is capable of recognizing presented opportunities, realizing their worth and being alert to their possibilities, we con-

sider sensible or sane. He is conscious of what is going on about him.

When an individual observes the stream of events taking place about him all the time and begins to recognize the possibility at his command to influence the stream of events so that it will produce to his own personal advantage, he is considered an intelligent man. His dexterity may be greater or lesser according to his latent ability and diligence of application, but the very fact that he is able to perform attests to his intelligence and demonstrates his mental capabilities.

Just as this recognition of possibility develops, so in turn, ways and means of manipulation formulate in the mind to exploit the possibilities to one's own advantage. He will automatically begin to experience a strong urge to try his hand in the matter. This is the very thing described in the story of the prodigal when the son began to make petition for what he felt belonged to him. His desire was to use his own faculties as he saw fit in a quest for his own pleasure and satisfaction.

With God's image gone out of man's heart, his desires and pleasures have both greatly changed. This being the case, the prime motive of his manipulation in the events of life will be to satisfy his own self-desires and pleasures. He possesses a basic concept of right and wrong, which is another demonstration of his intelligence. He has quite likely developed some sort of sentiments about them, the one over the other, etc., but the urge to plunge into the current of events about him will almost assuredly be to satisfy his fleshly desires.

This accentuates the effects of the fall, for at the fall the more noble ways of the Spirit became more obscure and the ways of the flesh were accentuated. With the recognition of presented opportunity comes a demand for freedom of choice which will allow the pursuit of whatever selection is preferred. When the selection of the intellect is made, then the will gets busy to put the choice into function. And so we hear the declaration, "This is what I want and this is what I am going to have." We call it self-will. Every man feels he has a right to make his own choices and to pursue his own selection in whatever manner pleases him. When man is actually in that position, he becomes what we call a free moral agent. He possesses the liberty of choice and the freedom to act with nothing to interfere but his own self-imposed restraints. Since man is now selfishly disposed, it becomes immediately obvious that if two or more people are to dwell together, there will need to be some sort of mutually acceptable rules of conduct to prevent them from selfishly taking advantage of each other. This is what brought civil law into being.

Civil law is, basically, a mutually agreed upon set of regulations, designed to produce acceptable conduct between individuals. Society imposes these rules upon itself for its own safety and protection. It conforms, by and large, to the commonly accepted concepts of right and wrong. Without these civil rules men would be total savages, exploiting each other at their own discretion, with cunning and brute force being the deciding factors in any dispute. Civil law has allowed mankind to develop according to his higher concepts until we call him civilized. God de-

clares this development a blessing from His hand and instructs His subjects to be in submission to civil rule and to pray for those who are committed to its administration. Visualize for a moment what society, in general, would be like with no other governing influence but the selfishly motivated impulses of every man as he may choose.

While civil restriction has a place and is necessary in order to establish and maintain some sort of social tranquility, yet it is not by any means the ideal form of government. It is conceived in the minds of fallen man and is formulated and applied through the same agencies; therefore, it will automatically possess the same faults. Men will seek to manipulate the laws to their own self-advantage at the expense of their fellows and will seek to devise means to avoid lawful restriction. This fact necessitates the large and expensive force necessary to enforce the laws society lays down for itself to obey.

Because mankind is self-willed and determined, he must be forced to observe the regulations of society in order to protect society. Men are free to make those unacceptable choices if they so desire, and they do; so consequently they must be physically forced to conform. Notice is thereby issued to such offenders that they must cease and desist from such conduct or suffer the penalty. The idea of the penalty is to make it so severe until the violation will not be worth the price demanded. In some cases violators are forcefully removed from mingling with society in general, because they will not obey its rules nor observe its restrictions.

While these measures may be acceptable and

have utility in civil law, yet the entire process is totally different from God's law. In society, civil law is formulated and enforced to protect its own interest, the assumption being that what is good for society in general is likewise good for each of its members in particular. Society assumes the responsibility of enforcement and sets its agencies to work to see to it that all of its members obey its prescribed rules. No consideration is given to the individual preference in the matter and so men are forced, contrary to their will, to obey.

In God's Kingdom, the approach does not start with the group, but on an individual basis. The laws do not need to be formulated for they have been in existence from time immortal. They are, in fact, the very laws that make God what He is. God is holy because He adheres strictly and consistently to the rules and requirements of holiness. He is just, because He is the embodiment of all honesty and truth. We could go on down the list of God's characteristics but such seems hardly necessary. The whole of what God is, is the result of His having totally and constantly conformed to the virtues of His own noble choices. (Read Proverbs 8.) God is conscious and aware of what is going on about Him, and intelligent enough to recognize the truth and worth of the noble virtues. Possessing the right and freedom to select and pursue the path of His choice, He has elected to walk in the ways of the higher virtues and it has made Him what He is. He and His virtues are so totally and completely embraced in each other until it is difficult to ascertain which begat the other. It almost seems they are simply a varied application of

the same power, One portraying the pattern, the other manifesting the finished product. Whatever the case may be, the point is this: His choice was voluntary and He is what He is because that is what He wants to be.

Stop and think what makes God eternal. He is all-wise, attesting to His intelligence. He knows what it is that destroys eternal life. He cannot be tricked nor deceived for He knows all truth. All of His judgments are correct. He is all-powerful; therefore, there is no force able to cause Him to perform contrary to His better judgment. He has elected, by His own choice, to willingly follow the path of virtue which makes Him holy, and this process has rendered Him eternal, for there is nothing decaying or corroding about that which is virtuous and holy. These virtues are immortal and will endure forever. Their subjects will endure for the same span and for the same reason.

He comes to us individually, on a one to one basis, approaching everyone who is of sufficient maturity and mental development. He offers to each of us the privilege of making the same noble choices for ourselves that He made for Himself. He assures us that the benefits for us will be the same as they are for Him if we will but receive. Is any qualifying necessary? Yes, we will have to hate the evil and love the good with all our hearts the same as He does. If we will do that, the way is open. He stands ready to lead that soul to the good and on to the virtuous and then on into the fullness of holiness. (II Chronicles 16:9.) Always and consistently this upward progression will be on a voluntary basis.

Man possesses the right of choice and that right will not be ignored. He may refuse the offer at its very beginning. He may accept for a while and then conclude to go no further. He may attempt to go half-heartedly or he may profess to go but not go at all, but always the choice is up to the individual. Thus we can plainly see where the responsibility of enforcement lies, for no man has the right nor ability to force his fellow into virtuous living.

Outside intervention will encounter the same handicaps as civil law. It will need physical force to enforce, and it will find it necessary to subdue the will by force. These imposed regulations will not result in virtue nor holiness of heart. God loves the ways of truth and righteousness which He follows and invites us to do the same for the same reason. The man who does not love the truth will have trouble keeping the truth even when enforced regulation is bound upon him. The man who does love the truth will not settle for anything less even if no pressure is imposed upon him.

Now, we can see how every man becomes his own lawkeeper. If every individual, in any given society, is totally dedicated to the observance and keeping of that society's regulations because he loves them, there will be no need nor use for any enforcing agency. Each member will be conforming because he loves the institution and wants with all his heart to keep its regulation that he might be accepted in its fold. Just a hint that he might be falling short will put him to searching and correcting his life for he wants desperately to be all that he ought to be. God's Kingdom is the only one known to man where these con-

ditions exist. Men love, serve and obey the Lord and His teaching because they love Him and recognize the virtue of His ways and the beauty of His holiness. They desire to be partakers with Him more than anything else in the world.

So interested was God in man's success at serving the Lord that He provided and sent into the world the agency of His Holy Spirit. That Spirit was commissioned to take up its abode in every dedicated and consecrated heart and to lead that heart into all truth. Man's own impulse would prompt him wrong, but by following the prompting of the Spirit, he may be successfully directed into the way of eternal life. Again, we say, no man will be pushed, tricked or fall accidentally into heaven. He will arrive there because he desires to go more than anything else in the world. He will do whatever is required of him in order to achieve that goal.

As we previously stated, all men do not elect to follow the upward way nor do they accept God's offer, preferring instead to go their own way, make their own decisions and follow their own choices. This is a right given to all men; otherwise they would not be free. The demand of the prodigal was, "Give me that which is mine." In other words, allow me to make the decisions of my own life, go the way I choose, do the things I prefer. When given the rights he demanded, he did exactly what all men do; he squandered them on the lusts and desires of the flesh which brought him to ruin.

Now, let us notice and observe another side of God's dealing with man. Men are all exposed to the stream of the events of life as they occur from day to

day for all. Always, and for everyone, there will occur those issues that possess moral value and that will not only offer, but require, that choice be made according to personal preference and sentiment. No man can go both ways at the same time, that is impossible; therefore, he will lend his sympathy one way or the other. Either he will elect to follow the more noble ways of right or else he will lend himself to the degrading influence of evil. God, through the agency of man's intelligence, has equipped all men with a knowledge of right and wrong so that, when the time of choice comes, he will know what he is selecting.

Along with that, through the agency of man's conscience, man is prompted or urged to make the correct choice and select the right or good. On the other hand, the appetites, desires and lusts of the flesh will plead for their pleasure and satisfaction, even though it will require a betrayal of the good to meet their demand. The option is presented to the individual, and the choice is put in his hand to dispose of as he sees fit. But God is not through yet.

While God does not interfere with any man's choice as such, yet He does make known to man the consequence of his choice, whatever it is. That has been God's method from the time He started dealing with man. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword:..." Isaiah 1:19-20. (Read Deuteronomy, Chapters 28-30.) This process is not just a happenstance affair; it is the product of intelligent design. God recognizes in man a creature of intelligence who is able to discern moral value and

who possesses the right of choice so that he may select his own preference. God also makes it His business to see that man is aware of the consequence of his choice even though he is free and able to act as he pleases in any given matter.

Liberty automatically supposes one to be in possession of himself. This state and condition would not exist if one were asleep or a child, delirious or unconscious, etc. In the process of selecting and acting, man develops inward feelings or sentiments in regard to the action. At the moment of acting, he feels himself free to act or else to refuse to act at his own discretion. Should he elect to perform, he feels himself capable of discontinuing the action so long as it has not been completely executed. When the action is completed, he is convinced that he might have acted otherwise had he felt so disposed. All of this, he feels, is under his own control and so, of course, he feels free, or at liberty, to act as he sees fit.

Moral law, as has been pointed out, is not a martial law demanding enforced compliance. It is a reasonable and understandable presentation of what is good, best, just and right for us in order to be holy, and through the conscience it imposes the constraint of a feeling of duty to do what one recognizes to be best. When this constraint is accepted and acted upon, we have a consented to obedience that enjoys the sanction and approval of the will, for the will feels free. It has chosen to perform thus. Consequently it is a keeping of a law, yet it is a consented to obedience. Men are free to perform or reject ac-

cording to their own discretion. It is called "the perfect law of liberty." (James 1:25.)

When we recognize a law working, then we have opportunity to study its functions. If the constraint of duty is appealing for compliance, leaving one with the feeling that they "ought" to perform, then it stands to reason that they are able to perform. No man could be justly held to do that which he is unable to do. If, then, there is a law within which constrains to perform the good and avoid the evil, it is because the agent is capable of either, according to his own preference. He may do the good if he so chooses. He may likewise refuse the good in favor of the bad if he so chooses. Thus he is free, yet in either case he is able. It is indeed, then, a perfect law of liberty. It does not constrain the will but the reason through the intellect, and the consent of the will is given voluntarily to perform the preference of the intellect. Men do what they want to do, morally. Thus we hear the words of the Savior, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." The implied alternative is that if you don't love Me, you won't keep My commandments. Love is an emotion that functions only with the consent of the will; hence when love is present, the consenting will is obvious. In like manner the absence of love is mute testimony to the refusal of the will.

When an action is performed, there are accompanying sentiments that follow that action. To perform well will produce a feeling of moral satisfaction. We feel the Lord's approval upon our conduct, and we say we are blest in our soul. This is a reward that never fails. When a bad action is performed it brings

a feeling of remorse, shame and perhaps even repentance. We feel guilty and condemned. Let us not fail to notice this: No man feels himself blest for action he has performed against his will. By contrast, it is equally true that no man will reproach himself for action he performed under compulsion. His plea, consciously or unconsciously, will be that my will was not given consideration in the matter, yet I was forced to comply; therefore, the result is not a thing of my own doing. I am not responsible for the produced result. Again we say, it is virtually impossible to physically enforce moral law. To attempt such action will ignore all the normal function of moral applications. All men feel that they may be justly reproached only for action which they have committed willfully. A common plea when one is approached in regard to unacceptable conduct is that I did not do it on purpose; it was totally unintentional. Since the will was not exercised in the matter, we feel ourselves of lesser blame and we feel others should regard the matter from the same viewpoint. Thus we see that moral responsibility is not able to impose itself where there is ignorance of requirement, or where freedom of the will is curtailed. Either condition, we feel, relieves us of responsibility.

We tend to hold each other in accordance with the same restraint we place upon ourselves. We would think it unreasonable to exhort anyone to be hot or cold or not to suffer thirst or hunger, because we well know that this is not dependent upon the action of the will. No man possesses voluntary control over these functions. At the same time we would feel no hesitation to exhort all men to be truthful or hon-

est, for all would feel this well within the capability of anyone who so desires. There is occasionally the one who offers this plea, "But this is my natural makeup. I was born this way and so this is the way I naturally am; therefore, I cannot be justly held responsible for that fault. Others will just have to make room for me as I am." Such philosophy, when accepted, defeats the plan of salvation completely.

Man is what he is because of what sin has done to him, and sin is able to work in him because he yields himself to its ways. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. When men yield themselves to Christ, He is able to work His works in them and do a work that will change their entire being. They are made new creatures in Christ Jesus. Thus, the works of sin can be destroyed out of men's lives. This process, however, requires the consent of the will. God will not purge any heart from sin against its will. Any heart who comes in entirety seeking deliverance, He says, He will in no wise cast out. (John 6:37.) If the nature, then, cannot be changed it is because the possessor does not really want it changed. He prefers to keep it like it is, yet he will quite likely feel that he should be accepted as a true Christian, regardless. Jesus said, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Luke 6:46.

Free moral agents who exercise their right of choice and, on the basis of their intelligent understanding, begin to draw conclusions and arrive at decisions, will also begin to perform actions. Since the action did not previously exist until they had performed it into being, they become the cause of the action. It is the direct result of their contempla-

tive thinking and deliberate performing. They are its author or originator whatever the action may be. Since they are the cause and originator of the action, then, they may justly be held responsible for the consequence of the action. In other words, it may be attributed to them or charged to their account. This is what we call imputed. Imputed sin is that transgression which is performed with the full knowledge and consent of its performer. It is that which he voluntarily entered into with his full consent and permission, knowledgeable and aware all the time of its unacceptability and final consequence. Such sin can, and will, be imputed to its author and its penalty will be exacted. (Galatians 6:7-8, Matthew 13:40-43 and Romans 5:13.) The only deliverance known to man from this penalty of imputed sin is that presented by the Savior when He offered to those who would humble themselves and repent, the blessing of forgiveness.

All functioning law requires its own observance and provides its own reward. Moral law is no exception in its provision, though it may vary in its application. Civil law will seek its offender and execute its penalty immediately, while the moral recompense, though it is just as sure, may not be meted out until sometime in the future. (Ecclesiastes 8:11.) What a marvelous manifestation of God's forbearance and mercy. If every offense of man was seized upon, judged and penalized immediately, there would be no opportunity for repentance and recovery. Yet, since the provision is made and justice forestalled for the time being, let no man be so foolish as to conclude that no accounting will ever be taken. (Hebrews 2:2.)

The Scripture states clearly that every transgression will receive a just recompense of reward. The Scripture also makes it clear that any sacrifice made for the Lord and His cause will likewise realize its accompanying reward. (Matthew 16:27, Romans 2:6 and Revelation 2:23.) Thus we realize that men who are consistently and earnestly striving to achieve the good, the virtuous, the holy are in actuality struggling toward that anticipated reward. Disregarding what is seen, they strive toward that which is not seen, for that which is seen is temporal but that which is not seen is eternal. (II Corinthians 4:18.)

Some would offer the idea that no holy God, filled with kindness and compassion, would commit anyone to a never-ending, burning hell. Let us realize that it is not God who is sending anyone there, it is every man as he makes his own choices. God is doing everything He can to prevent men from going there. All will concede that the offender of the law may justly be judged and condemned by the provision of the law. God's law is no exception. Any man may avoid the penalty of the law by conforming to its requirements. God has gone to great length and expended great effort and sacrifice to provide man an escape from the penalty of transgressed law. Man will have to humble himself, accept the provision made for his deliverance and then abide by that law in order to reap its benefits and avoid its retribution.

While it is declared in the Scripture that God will sit in judgment upon the world at the last day, yet it is also true that the same Scripture makes known to man the content of the law that will be in force at the time of the trial and the conditions upon which ev-

every man will be tried. (Revelation 20:12-13 and II Corinthians 5:10.) His pronouncement and execution of justice at that day will be the expression of the indignation and wrath of all righteousness, not only His own but that of the laws that produced it as well.

Merit and Demerit

Let us consider merit from the standpoint that it is the quality of character that would present one deserving of reward. By contrast, let us consider demerit as that quality of character that would present one deserving of punishment. On the basis of what, then, would we make these evaluations? It seems quite reasonable and logical that at least two factors would need consideration. One would be the difficulty of the action, and the other the importance of the duty. We read the story of Joseph of old and his experience with his master's lewd wife, and we unhesitatingly ascribe to him great merit for the difficulty he overcame and the good it accomplished.

On the other hand we award very little merit to the poor man who has lain for a long period of time on a pallet of spikes in the name of religion, even though the action is very difficult, for we see nothing of real importance accomplished by the action. Difficulty, as it stands alone, is worthy of very meager merit, while difficulty that is overcome, in performance of moral duty, becomes of great worth. In II Samuel 23:15-17 is given an account of King David and his lament for a drink from the well of Bethlehem. He was under the duress of the siege of battle, and the enemy held the very well from which he longed to drink. Hearing his appeal and unbeknownst to him, three of his mightiest men took their own lives in their own hands, broke through the enemy line and secured the water, bringing it safely back to King David. So appalled was he at such difficult and meritorious action until he felt himself completely un-

worthy of such allegiance and declared that only the Lord was worthy. He denied himself and poured the water out unto the Lord. His own conduct thus became a meritorious action on his part.

Here is an area in which we need to give some careful consideration in our service to Him who loves us. Service alone is not enough. He is looking for service that will accomplish. The man with five talents secured five more and he was commended. The man with two acquired two more and he was commended. The man with one presented only what he started with and he was rejected. Service that produces no more than is ordinarily expected of all men bears no particular merit. These are some of the declarations that astonished the multitudes that listened to Jesus' preaching. He taught them to love their enemies, to do good to those who hated them, to produce righteousness that would exceed the ordinary accepted quality and to love the Lord with all their heart. These kinds of things, He said, would be worthy of soul merit and would gain recognition before His Father. None of these were commonly practiced.

Let us consider, briefly, the idea of moral responsibility. Its primary conditions may be discovered in these two basic factors: One is the knowledge of good and evil, and the other is the liberty of action. As these two conditions may vary, so responsibility will vary accordingly. We have observed before that no man is held to perform the impossible, and we are able to accept that. But we will likewise hold every individual responsible to be honest in what he is willing to label an impossible situation. Otherwise

what is presented as a valid reason becomes nothing but a flimsy excuse.

Natural qualities are not a worthy basis for credit or merit to anyone. No one is rendered commendable, morally, for physical strength, beauty, health, wit, dexterity or any other physical quality. Thus, the apostle of old declared that bodily exercise profiteth little. (I Timothy 4:8.) We are to develop and use the various talents and abilities that are bestowed upon us at birth to the glory of God and in His service, but we are not to exploit them with the feeling that by so doing we are gaining prowess and thus deserving of special consideration spiritually.

There is a strong tendency among human beings to attribute virtue to a pretty face or leadership to a well developed physique, etc., but human experience, as well as the Word, teaches us that such is no basis for moral excellence. These qualities are both found in abundance on the Hollywood scene, yet this is the area where moral standards are the lowest, and the practices and patterns of life portrayed there have led the general public on a downward path. Not only that, but it would be neither just nor fair to attribute merit to one for qualities he acquired at birth and demerit another for failing to be born with these same qualities. This is an area over which no man has any control. No man may be justly expected to meet a requirement which he is powerless to fulfill, nor may he be justly punished for failure to perform that which is beyond his ability. But all men will be held responsible for what they might have done had they availed themselves of the grace of God.

The stream of events that accompany life and that

ebb and flow about us all the time will exact from each of us moral responsibility in proportion to the degree in which we were capable of effecting the stream. Man is judged in accordance with what he could or should have produced, prevented or directed in life's events, and the diligence or neglect he displayed in so doing.

Along with this comes our moral responsibility to other men. We think immediately of home and family. Certainly all feel responsible here to teach and manifest the higher virtues. The Scriptures are plentiful in fixing that responsibility. We are commanded to "let our light so shine before men" and to "reprove the unfruitful works of darkness." And so the list goes on. He tells us if our light be hid, it is hid to those that are lost. Let us be diligent to keep our lamps trimmed and burning. None would attempt to deny that all of God's people have responsibility to others, saved and unsaved alike. While it is true that every life produces some sort of effect on other lives about them, it is also true that one life cannot produce enough virtue or merit to answer for anymore than its own need. It took the Christ, who was of supernatural ability to accomplish that. Here again we are brought to the realization that regardless of what our lives may contain, unless we obtain the aid of divine assistance we will in no wise be saved. We, of ourselves, and perhaps even general society about us, may hold us in high esteem and ascribe great merit to our lives, yet no man advances to the place where he is able to answer for the need of another. (Revelation 20:13.) Only Christ was able to offer an acceptable, vicarious sacrifice. Human morality

would suggest that a consistent, proper selection of meritorious conduct would surely and finally add up to an acceptable life, but such is not the case. By grace we are saved through faith, the Word says, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast. Furthermore, He tells us that when we have done all that we know to do, to say of ourselves that we are unprofitable servants for we have done only that which was our duty to do. (Luke 17:10.) Now, we can see that our salvation is effected, not by works or meritorious performance on our part alone, nor yet on the offering of vicarious sacrifice alone on His part, but rather on the mutual consent and cooperation of both factors, each doing its respective part toward the accomplishment of the whole. It takes man and God working together to achieve man's salvation. Consider Romans 2:3-11, "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasures up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory,

honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God." Here we must acknowledge that human morality alone is ineffectual and insufficient, but religious morality, followed as it is directed of the Lord, will produce effectually to the saving of the soul.

Every man's salvation, then, will be based on a combination of factors, the first and foremost of which is the acceptance of Jesus Christ in the role He fills in the matter. As we have observed previously, a yearning for a virtuous life will inevitably bring us into contact with the divine, where we soon learn that true virtue or real holiness can only be obtained through Him and His guidance. As we have also observed, these qualities are only achieved by the laying aside of our own selfish, fleshly will and way and the putting on of Him and His divine will and way. It is commendable to yearn for righteousness, but it is accomplishing to accept the ways and provisions of righteousness that are provided through His Dear Son. Our good deeds and actions will accomplish nothing, for our righteousness is as filthy rags in His sight. The works He performed in our behalf will work to the saving of our souls. On this basis we can readily understand, then, why the prime question at the final judgment will be, "Are we under the blood?" or, in other words, "Is the merit and righteousness of Jesus' vicarious sacrifice pleading for us before the judgment bar or are we appearing with only our own?" The accepting of Him and His sacrifice for us is the first and most meritorious act we can perform. There then must begin and continue a consistent pattern

of meritorious behavior on our part if we are to retain the original blessing. This is the plain and understandable teaching of the text just presented, and it presents plainly the consequence of whichever course is taken.

Some would have us believe that after having once accepted Christ as our Savior, we are then free to continue on practicing the same patterns of life as before, only now our sinning is overlooked because we have accepted Christ. Romans 6:1-2, along with a multitude of other Scripture, teaches us otherwise. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" There was, and now is, sufficient grace provided in Christ's sacrifice to stop the sin business in human lives. However, it was never designed nor intended to deliver us from the power of sin and then free us to go on continuing to tolerate sin in our lives. It is difficult indeed to believe that Christ's perfect answer for the problem of sin was to legalize it, especially in the face of such Scripture as the one found in II Corinthians 7:1. It says, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." And we have the utterance of the wise man who declared, "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." Proverbs 14:34. Surely our loving Savior never intended that we continue displaying that kind of universal reproach. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should

live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:11-14.

Sanction

The idea of merit and demerit points us toward another consideration. Good or bad conduct and action is of little consequence until we become aware that reward or punishment is to be administered on the basis of the quality of our everyday lives. (Romans 2:6.) This realization makes us acutely aware that our actions, attitudes, etc., are important. It is extremely needful that we conduct our lives in accordance with the requirements of the higher virtues, which involve the law of holiness. This need is accentuated when we realize that the body and volume of recompenses and punishments attached to the keeping or violating of any law is what we term its sanction. Moral law is no different. God has always been faithful to humanity to make known His laws and then to point out the rewards of obedience and the punishments of violation. (Deuteronomy, Chapters 27-32.)

In the beginning of this treatise, we noticed briefly six requirements for a kingdom. They were as follows: a king, dominion, defense, subjects, laws and enforcement. God is our King and Majesty Supreme, ruling over all from His royal throne on high and over us through the agency of His dear Son. That Son, to us, is King of kings and Lord of lords. We are His subjects. Therefore, we come under the jurisdiction of His laws, for they apply to us. His laws are those rules and regulations that govern moral values. Since we possess the capability of moral concept and performance, then we, of course, come under the regulation of moral law. All men accept the

idea that the presence of functioning law will carry with it accompanying requirements. It is also universally accepted that to violate or ignore the requirement of the law is to experience its retribution, while to obey the requirement of the law is to enjoy its reward. These are the very principles taught by the Savior. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,..." Matthew 6:19-20. In other words, so conduct your lives that ye may reap the blessing of reward. The apostle speaks of the patriarch of old who looked forward to the recompense of reward, and he urges all of us to do the same. His admonition is, "Be not weary in well doing," assuring us of impending reward if we remain faithful.

The accounting of the Scripture is prolific with the related instances of violation and retribution, obedience and blessing. Yet, in the very face of all this testimony, men will still dare to rise up and declare that God will not execute retribution on those who violate or ignore His moral laws. Every law exacts penalty when it is violated. Why then, would intelligent beings conclude this one to be different, especially when this one is the most important of all, for the eternal soul is at stake? It is true that the penalties of violated moral law, as they are described to man, are almost beyond human ability to comprehend but so also is the realm of the soul. Who can understand or visualize perpetual duration? Everything man has ever known has had a beginning and either has, or will have, an ending. Little

wonder, then, that men stumble at the idea of eternal life, much less eternal destruction or retribution. But whether it is perceived or not, the Giver of the law, with His own Word, declared it to be so and men will be foolish to refuse or ignore it. Notice Hebrews 10:26-27: "For if 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." Sin is the common name for violating moral law, and so we understand that it is for sin or moral violation that retribution will be given.

While the recompenses of moral violation are stupendous and almost incomprehensible, so the blessings and rewards of obedience are correspondingly magnificent. Accomplished moral excellence, or holiness, promises the reward of access to eternal life. It offers continual company in the presence of our loving Savior, the One who loved us and gave Himself for us. It offers the banishment of all sickness, sorrow, pain and distress. It promises no more death nor parting, and tears are wiped away forever. All of these and many, many more are set forth as the rewards of moral excellence or obedience to His moral law. Who could be unwilling to strive for such as that?

Though long-term reward for consistent adherence to the requirements of holiness is offered, yet there are also short-term effects. When one has performed a virtuous action successfully he begins immediately to experience a pleasure and satisfaction for having so performed. Consider Jesus' reaction

after talking to the woman at the well. (John 4:31-34.) The performance affords its fullest satisfaction when it is accomplished with the knowledge of no one but its performer and when its prime motive and reason is because it is good and virtuous to thus perform. Jesus was directing men into this kind of blessing when He instructed us, let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Do not your alms before men to be seen of them but rather perform before the Author of all virtue to be seen of Him and Him alone. (Matthew 6:3-4.) The reward is greatest under those conditions. Doing good simply because it is good and finding soul pleasure and satisfaction in thus performing, with no other applause or recognition needed or even wanted is a virtue within itself. It is the practice and cultivation of this virtue that will enable one to so perform even when the recipient of the good action is acting ugly.

To perform in a manner that is commonly accepted as commendable toward someone with the motive and idea in mind to "heap coals of fire on his head" or make his performance look inferior or diminished as compared to ours will not produce the same blessing or reward, for it is spawned from different motivation. Such action could, and in some cases perhaps even should, leave the performer feeling guilty. It could even be an expression of enmity under the guise of virtue, and so, of course, in that situation there would be no soul-satisfying blessing. At the best it would be a fleshly fulfillment. Doing good simply because we love to do good, being good and virtuous simply because we find pleasure in its accomplishment, will leave the soul revelling in bless-

ing and pleasure that the recipient will not be able to describe. One in one place expressed it thus, "...joy unspeakable and full of glory." I Peter 1:8.

Here is a principle worthy of consideration: It is not that the law should be fulfilled that there are rewards and punishments, but rather because it has been either fulfilled or violated. Rewards are intended a function of justice, not a tool of utility. Their primary purpose is to acknowledge performance already accomplished, and not to be a stimulus to prompt toward performance. This is the true principle of reward. To attempt to apply it as the prime incentive for acceptable performance will leave one in conflict with the Scripture. Jesus, Himself, gave us plainly the prime and only successful motive for living holy lives when He said, "If ye love me ye will keep my commandments." No one wants to go to hell, of course, but that factor alone will not be strong enough to enable any man to avoid that experience. To love the Lord our God with all the soul, mind and strength, as He commands, will automatically gender a whole-hearted desire and yearning to be as He is. This type of perfect heart toward Him will be accepted by Him, and His grace will then be able to function in our behalf. It will deliver us from the power of sin. Our works or actions will then begin to be acceptable before His righteousness. When that occurs, our reward will be that of the good, the virtuous, the holy. Love is the only element known to man sufficient to conquer the power of sin and to bestow the fruits of true holiness. It is imperative, then, that men serve the Lord from love and love alone, not primarily because they are seeking reward or attempting to avoid

punishment. God is love; therefore, if we would be holy, we must be immersed in Him for He is likewise holy. There is no way to get to the Father but by His Son, Jesus Christ. (John 14:6.) To accept the position, then, that by consistently performing what I feel are works of sufficient merit to reward me with my desired goal, namely heaven, is to attempt to arrive in heaven by virtue of my own good works. It will miserably fail. While it is a blessing and an encouragement to us to know that there is great reward provided for the faithful, yet, we must not lose sight of the fact that faithfulness means being true to our loving Christ and His requirements for us, not the seeking of reward.

While reward, in its truest sense, is the acknowledgment of action already performed, yet there is a quality whose function it is to encourage toward better performance. We call it chastisement and it does, perhaps, present a form of reward. When the performance, for some reason or other, is unacceptable or beneath the quality the Lord expects, that agent will be subject to chastisement. It is not designed a final retribution but rather an expression of expected drastic improvement. It was apparently not intended to destroy but to be accepted as a blessing even though it may leave one self-conscious, perhaps embarrassed or possibly even ashamed. It is presented to us in the Scripture as a tool used in the Lord's hand to perfect in us the beings that He designed us to be, and He admonishes us not to be discouraged by its use, for it is a product of His love. (Hebrews 12:5-11.) The reward it offers, then, is a safe prompting back into the holy way when the steps are beginning

to stray. When the heart is perfect in its intent to serve and please the Lord, it becomes of great value to be prompted back into acceptable performance if one is falling short or under performing. It is not administered as a retribution but as a mercy, the idea being an aid and stimulus to improvement or greater acceptability. It is indeed a manifestation of God's great love for man. (I Chronicles, Chapter 21.)

Another element closely related to the idea of reward is what we call favor. It consists in the bestowing of gratuity that is not deserved or earned. It is the pure expression of goodwill by one agent toward others. Favor is distinguished from reward in that reward is regarded as a remuneration in return for something. Favor is a gratuitous performance presented to express its own goodwill. It may be bestowed or it may be received. The outstanding example we have before us continually is the unmerited favor the Lord had toward us when He came to this sin-darkened world to bring us the Light of life. His generosity was most assuredly unearned and undeserved, and at first it was even unaccepted but He carried it out anyway for it was the expression of His goodwill toward fallen man. Here again, reward is not hardly the element involved, yet there is a certain form of remuneration. The pleasure and satisfaction of extended favor accepted and duly appreciated is the remuneration of the donor, for he feels his efforts a blessing to others and he rejoices in that realization. (Luke 16:4-10.) It is indeed humbling to realize ourselves as Christians, the product of our Lord's generous and gracious favor toward us, simply because He loved us and extended to us the

benefit of His goodwill. Without doubt, He came manifesting His favor and goodwill toward us, to some degree at least, because if He had been in our condition that is what He would have wanted someone to do for Him. Now, He instructs us who have accepted Him, as ye would that other men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them. (Matthew 7:12.) He is expecting us to manifest our goodwill and favor to other of our fellow men. He tells us in one place, "do good unto all men." (Galatians 6:10.) To demonstrate our goodwill to others brings a blessing to us. To be the object of someone else's goodwill is likewise a blessing so that there is most assuredly a remuneration for the performance, yet it is not exactly reward in its true sense.

Let us notice briefly some of the classes of sanction. One is what we might call the natural sanction, for it rests on the natural consequence of our conduct. It is natural for ambition and perseverance to provide improved existence. It is natural for slothfulness to produce poverty. It is natural for unwise choices to present one foolish. It is natural for goodwill to prompt goodwill. It is natural for sound decisions to win respect and esteem. And so the list could go on and on. Some might object that these are only examples of good, common sense, but that same common sense will remind us that they are fixed laws for they follow consistent patterns, generation to generation, in race after race. In any generation, among any people, the man who is slothful reaps poverty. The man who is unfriendly has few friends; the man who acts hateful is despised, and so on and on. Natural qualities and characteristics produce natural re-

sults. The book of Proverbs is an extensive collection of this type of natural law.

Another sanction is legal sanction. It consists of the punishments and censors a law places upon its violators. By virtue of God's great love and mercy extended to man, the greater volume of His retribution is withheld until after the final judgment. Jesus declared that, "...God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John 3:17. Now is time and opportunity offered for men to recognize their need and straighten out their lives in preparation for that impending judgment. For those who fail or refuse to take advantage of the proffered opportunity, retribution will surely fall, swift and awful, offering never again any hope of escape from its awful clutches. (Mark 9:43-48.)

Another sanction consists in the opinions and attitudes others entertain in regard to our character and conduct. The man who has the reputation of not meeting his obligations will find it difficult to obtain assistance even though he be in dire need. The man who is given to stealing will not be freely trusted. The man who is consistently untruthful will be doubted in all he tells. The Scripture exhorts the Lord's servants to be of good report of them that are without. (I Timothy 3:7.) All men are aware that a reputation once earned among our fellows is difficult indeed to "live down" and overcome.

Another and important sanction is that which springs from a man's own conscience when he regards his own life. He who is living low, degraded and despicable, despises himself and holds his own

self in contempt and disrepute. It is the function of this inward sanction that helps to produce conviction that brings repentance. The man who despises himself enough for his unacceptable conduct will begin to search for means of deliverance. When his search becomes earnest enough, the Lord will be there to show him the way. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Matthew 5:6. The individual who is well-pleased and contented with his life like it is will never search for anything better nor will he ever find it so long as he carries that attitude.

All these various applications portray in some way some form of recognizable sanction as it exerts itself upon humanity. Each application has its own specific part to play and its own corresponding place to fill as it applies to every life on a day to day basis. As these various influences apply to individual lives, they produce effects and bring forth definable results in the lives they touch. No man has the power nor ability to avoid them, for they are divinely instituted and administered. Men do have the ability to affect the results these various sanctions bring forth in themselves by the attitudes and dispositions they entertain and give place to toward them. The mariner in which each one is handled is entirely under the control and given to the option of the individual to whom the sanction applies. Thus if he elects to ignore the sanction of natural law, the option is his. If he decides to extend no favors from his life, he may refrain. If he sees fit to ignore a moral chastisement, the choice is his. If he chooses to disregard the opinion of others, he is free to do so. If he refuses to be

prompted by his own conscience, he may do that, but in each of them the positive or negative effect they exert and the intensity of their application will be governed directly by the decisions and conclusions of the candidate involved. But this is only part of the story.

Another factor is that man is not the only intelligent being involved in this affair; therefore, man is not the only candidate subject to the requirement and sanction of moral law. In Ezekiel 18:4, God plainly states, "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine:..." Since He is, by virtue of His own declaration, in a position of ownership, then He is, of course, in a position of jurisdiction. His added statement in this very text is that, "...The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Romans 3:23 makes the positive assertion that, "...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Now, the remission of sin is only accomplished by the shedding of the blood of unblemished sacrifice. (Hebrews 9:22.) Since men have all been contaminated with sin, they have no unblemished sacrifice to offer for their own transgression. This is where the influence of moral law touched the Only Begotten of the Father and prompted Him to come to this sin-cursed earth and do for dying men what they had no power to do for themselves. In obedience to the law He serves, He was doing for men what He would want someone to do for Him if He were in their place. Thus He manifested His divine favor toward us and offered Himself in payment for the sins of which we were guilty. (Hebrews, Chapter 9.) In other words, He stood in our place, assumed

our blame, paid our debt with His own unblemished blood, then from His own mercy He freely forgave our guilt and set us free. This transaction answered the requirement of prescribed law, for the sin committed had been remitted by the shedding of unblemished blood, and so justice had been satisfied so far as the law was concerned. But with the entrance of divine intelligence and His influence in the matter, came also a moral obligation and personal responsibility from man toward that divine influence that had secured human release from sin. Since that force was moral strength administered by the Champion of moral virtue, then, of course, it was applied according to moral pattern, and so the obligation reaches morally capable men, not as a demanded law but as an appeal to do what moral intelligence tells everyone is the proper and right thing to do. When God had loved and cared for men enough to go through all that He went through to purchase man's release from sin's awful bondage, the least men could do would be to love and serve Him in return. Moral law has been designated the perfect law of liberty, which means that every subject is at liberty to handle moral requirement as he sees fit; but now, with the advent of divine intervention in the matter, there is not only obligation to the prescribed law but to this divine Benefactor as well. Just as the law exerts its benefits and sanctions, so also this divine Being issues His benefits and sanctions. Every man is at perfect liberty, morally and physically, to spend his life as he chooses, but then he falls into his Maker's hands where he is required to give account.

of how he has used the opportunities of his life.

We will do well to consider what our Maker has to say. Proverbs 1:20-33: "Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." II Corinthians 5:9-11 says, "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or

bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;..." Hebrews 10:26-31 says, "For if we sin willfully 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 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, where-with 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. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Matthew 25:29-30 says, "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

How else could we justly and intelligently interpret such declarations as these but to conclude that there is divine instruction faithfully given and divine enablement freely provided so that every man who genuinely wants to know and follow what is true and right will know how and be able. But for everyone who refuses and rebels, preferring instead to go his own way and pursue his own pleasure, there will be no alternative for him but to pay the penalty of violated moral law and to face the indignation and wrath of an offended and insulted God whose provision for

man's deliverance was scorned away and rejected. The duration of this overall sanction is to continue forever and there is no hope offered that its intensity nor its duration will ever diminish. With all of this in our understanding, ponder for a moment the magnitude of the Word when it says, "...Choose you this day whom ye will serve;..." (Joshua 24:15.)

Morality Compared

Realizing it is moral values that men pursue which bring them to true holiness, it would seem expedient that we define the moral values we follow. While the patterns and functions of morality may be perceived and understood by the human intellect and may be followed and practiced to the fullest extent of human capability, yet this performance at its best will produce an inferior quality of moral virtue. Human nature, as we have already observed, is self-centered and seeks its own selfish fulfillment. No man, apart from supernatural assistance, is able to project himself beyond this selfish limitation. The automatic result, then, will be that whatever performance of moral effort he delivers will reflect that self-interest. This is what we may term human morality, and it will bear watching, for it springs from human endeavor.

No fountain is able to elevate its own flowing above the level of its own fountainhead. If the performance of morality is ultimately the result of only human endeavor, then its accomplished result cannot be expected to extend beyond that level either. No work can, in any wise, present itself in quality beyond the capability of its author, whether it be physical or moral. If the morality we follow is designed and formulated to meet human requirement alone, then only human effort will be needed to achieve its satisfaction. This is one cunning method Satan has for getting souls involved in self-righteousness.

While the formulated pattern they followed may not have been their own at all—it may even have

been one formulated by someone more learned or skilled than themselves—yet if it is formulated from human mentality alone, it will still only perform to serve human interest. It is, then, still the manifestation of human capability in essence, and its inevitable result will be of inferior quality. Thus we can see that the self-righteousness of one, if offered to another and followed by him, is still self-righteousness when we reduce it to its origin. The fact that it changed hands did not alter its consistency in the least. Perhaps it would be more aptly termed human righteousness.

When we begin to accept and apply religion, which is defined as the service and worship of God, or the supernatural, to our morality, we are immediately elevated to a loftier plane, for the fountainhead has been raised. Thus the emitting requirements will become more stringent, and the resulting performance will, in like manner, become more exacting. So much was this true until it shocked and astonished the people who heard it taught at the mouth of the Savior. Any candid mind will recognize immediately upon reading the Sermon on the Mount, a decided upgrading of acceptable moral requirement. God was indeed honest with men when He told us in His Word, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, and my ways are not your ways." (Isaiah 55:8.) His requirement at the first was, be ye holy for I am holy, but it soon became obvious that carnal man was incapable of such elevated performance.

May we present one illustration. They of old questioned the Savior on the matter of divorce, wanting to know why Moses, in the law, had made it avail-

able. Jesus made it known plainly that such was never the true pattern nor intention of the Father but that it was given only as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, who came offering, along with the revelation of the will of the Father, a divine grace supplied by the Savior, so that now man, through that provided power, would be able to meet the requirement of divinely appointed virtue. This is what religious morality is all about. It flows from a fountain-head that is on a higher plane than unregenerate humanity, and it invites all who will do so to come up to that higher existence in Him. While its attainment is beyond natural human capability, yet through the direction of His divine guidance and the assistance of His divine grace, the achievement is made possible. With these faculties functioning in his behalf, man is now able to perform acceptably on that higher level. He is able to attain to and remain on the plane of holiness if he will.

Having made this brief distinction between human morality and religious morality, let us observe some of the differences in their functions as they apply to men. Perhaps one of the first variations that will catch our attention is the vast difference in the scope of application. Man, or a group of men, may formulate a set of ideals to which they attach either real or supposed moral value. The formulation may be on a rapid basis or over a long period of time, even involving centuries. When they are in power, they will exert influence over those in subjection to them to accept these formulated values, and they will impose on them feelings of obligation to abide by their formulated regulations. Thus, their subjects feel

morally constrained to accept and abide by the imposed requirements, whether the formulated structure be good or bad. When it is humanly designed, we may be sure that it is fulfilling some form of human interest.

Every world conqueror has been accomplished at the art of making his subjects feel obligated to him and his cause, even at the expense of their own lives if it becomes necessary. He spends much time and effort convincing them of the value and virtue of his campaign, and when their devotion and allegiance is moved to sufficient pitch and fervor, he is ready to sally forth on his expedition of conquest which is actually designed to accomplish his own ends. This basic pattern of operation can be identified in almost every campaign that requires the support of the masses in order to succeed. Its application covers a broad field of endeavor, a few of which are political, military, social, even religious endeavors. The values need not be wholesome, the requirements need not lead to virtue, the subjects involved need be given no consideration beyond that of tools or pawns, for it is formulated and designed to serve human interest, which feels no constraint to observe any of these values. It has simply devised a way to rally a mass support which is willing to lend its allegiance to the offered cause. Thus we can understand the proliferation of modern day cults in the name of religion. Some structures even go so far as to offer eternal benefits for fulfilling their formulated requirements, a commitment they have no power to meet. Consider some of our fraternal organizations and some vast

religious teachings. It seems rather cruel. (See James 4:1-4.)

Now let us observe, in contrast, some of the characteristics we find in the program which the divine Mind has formulated. First and perhaps foremost, let us note that it is not, by any stretch of the imagination, selfishly motivated. It was initiated because "God so loved the world" (John 3:16), not because He desired to conquer the world. It was not instituted to better God's position, it was provided to elevate man to a higher position. (Isaiah 51:1.) It does not present itself under the guise of stimulated emotional propaganda, it comes teaching the way of truth and right. It asks no man to accept its precepts under the duress of coercion but invites all men to "Come, let us reason together." (Isaiah 1:18.) When its requirements, rewards, punishments and motivations are all clearly understood, then it invites, "...Choose you this day whom ye will serve;..." Joshua 24:15. Christ did not come seeking men to sacrifice their lives to conquer evil, He gave His life to conquer evil; then invited evil men to sacrifice their evil will that they might live holy in Him, a life that He had already purchased for them. His total interest, effort and concern was the betterment of poor, fallen humanity and He never, one time, asks any man to give up anything that is good and wholesome. Never does He do any man wrong, and He flatly states that there is no respect of persons with Him. He plays no favorites. Any man who will accept His mercy and follow His direction will know His blessing for His great love is shed abroad to all. His professed campaign in the earth is the salvation of men's souls,

and His divine wisdom is working to that very end all the time. He tells us His eyes are going up and down throughout the whole earth seeking those whose hearts are perfect toward Him that He might shew Himself strong in their behalf. (II Chronicles 16:9.)

The moral values, then, that God has approved and appointed for man to follow are those requirements that will further the cause He came to promote and the goal He purposed to achieve. The cause is the redemption of fallen man and the goal is the acquisition of eternal life for man. Not one shred of selfish motivation is anywhere detected in the entire campaign. He has worked and is working for man's good and benefit. Because of our need, He declared Himself a servant to all, and justly so, for His entire effort here was to benefit man who so sorely needed divine assistance.

The regulations that humanity erect are designed and intended to exert their influence on only those who are subject to their jurisdiction. Thus the political power imposes its regulations on only its own citizenry. The fraternal organization requires its rules met by only its members. The religious sect exacts obedience to its creed only from its converts, and so on down the list.

Since God firmly declares that, "All souls are mine," then it is no unnatural or out-of-the-ordinary thing that He should lay down all-encompassing rules and regulations for all men to follow. Thus we realize that divinely instituted moral law will cover all men, of all nationalities, of all generations. The honest man we will expect to display honesty whether he be red

or yellow, black or white and whether he be found in Caesar's generation or in the 20th century. It seems clear, then, that God's established regulations and requirements are universally recognized. Killing, stealing, lying, adultery, etc. are recognized by all men as unacceptable. Those literal regulations of the old law controlled the actions but the "perfect law of liberty" that came by Jesus Christ went to the motivation and intent of the heart and corrected the cause, thus preventing the action. By adjusting the nature of the heart, the conduct would change, and so wrongdoing could be brought to a close in that life. Man could, by that process, be made holy. This brings us right back to moral values, for these are the issues religious morality embraces. Its concern is with right and wrong, good and bad, righteousness and evil.

In almost all of humanly instituted morality, there will come a time when it will consent to a breach of its regulation. When the conduct is despicable enough or the imposition is maintained long enough or the violence is severe enough, even societies will allow for retaliation. Religious morality will allow no such deviation. Its subjects are taught to be good and to continue on in their good-doing regardless of what may be the outside reaction. Men have gone to the rack, the stake, the wild beasts, all sorts of torture in obedience to this requirement rather than forfeit their moral virtue. (I Peter 2:15-25.) Thus we are able to detect another difference between human morality and religious morality. We pointed out earlier that with the coming of Christ the fountainhead raised and the requirements became more stringent.

Now, let us observe another variation: As we have previously pointed out, humanly instituted moral requirements and regulations may be applied to almost anything if the subjects involved can be persuaded to comply. Suppose the influence formulating the rules and requirements is a political power. The subjects upon which it will impose its requirements will, of course, be its citizenry and so it will emphasize patriotism. Allegiance to one's homeland will be presented as noble, courageous and certainly, beyond the shadow of a doubt, worthy of supernatural attention when one leaves this world. Then anything possessing such obvious virtue must certainly leave everyone under a feeling of obligation to perform in behalf of such a worthy cause. Keep in mind that this has been the theme of all great civilizations all through history. Each one has stoutly held that their cause was noble, virtuous and worthy to be defended against any who would seek to do it harm.

Ponder for a moment the testimony of history. The Babylonian empire, the Median and Persian empire, the Greek empire, the Roman empire, the great Ghengis Kahn empire, Napoleon and his conquests, Hitler and his Germany, these are some of the more prominent ones. Think of the multiplied millions of human lives that have been sacrificed to further someone's selfish ambition for power and conquest. Reflect for a moment how the influence of selfishness worked in the matter of King David and his selfishly motivated episode with Uriah's wife. It cost Uriah his life. That was only one individual, but think of the millions who lost their lives because of Hitler's greed and ambition. But they are not alone

in their crime. History is full of such accounts all down through the ages.

This is what Jesus was trying to convey to the minds and hearts of His followers. My Kingdom will not be like that because I am not like that. I did not come to conquer, I came to save. I did not come to force a submission, I came to offer deliverance. I did not come to further my own selfish cause, I came to help fallen man out of his depraved condition. I did not come agitating men to defend my cause, I came offering truth and holiness for all who would, to follow. My appeal? Love Me and keep My commandments—not because I want it so but because it will make you good and pure, as I am good and pure and that is what you want for yourselves. What is the nature of expected performance in worldly kingdoms? Why, to kill and be killed, if necessary, in order to preserve this noble institution. But the apostle of old took a different view of the matter. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." James 4:1. Does this not clearly identify the pattern of humanly instituted, selfish morality?

At the time of conflict when mass support is a necessary ingredient to the success of the campaign, all that is allowed to surface is the virtue of the endeavor. Thus the masses are willing to rally to its cause and support the effort. Only afterward, when the campaign is completed and men are settled down,

does the real selfishness, greed and human interests begin to appear. History records that heads of state are busy dividing up conquered territory long before the battle is even over. Let us compare this sort of procedure with what God is willing to accept. We pointed out previously that God's laws were instituted to govern all men, of all nationalities, of all generations. His declaration to all is "thou shalt not kill," and we have observed that God's regulations do not deviate but remain firm regardless of the surrounding circumstance. To deprive another of his life we call murder, and murder is never, under any circumstance, noble in God's eyes. Well, but here is my homeland that needs defending, the very land that shelters my loved ones and all of our possessions. Strangely enough, your prospective opponent is pleading the same cause. If you are a praying man and your opponent is a praying man, then reflect for a moment on what God is hearing. Then something is obviously manipulating mass support to promote selfish cause.

Human morality is not necessarily consistent in its administration. The story is told of an incident that took place during World War II. A serious fire had broken out in the forest of one of our western states that covered a large area and threatened to do great damage. Manpower was short, so every available means was brought into action against the fire. Soldiers were on maneuvers in the area, so they were called in to help fight the fire. A prison trustee camp was near, so they were called on to help fight the fire. There was also, in the area, a conscientious objector's camp of fellows who were doing work for

the government in lieu of military service. They were likewise called in to help fight the fire. In the course of the night the fire was contained behind fire lines, but those lines needed to be patrolled periodically, so the men were divided into groups of three and spotted at regular intervals around the perimeter of the fire. Every two hours or so each group would face the fire and move to the left until they came to the place where the other group had been; thus the fire was entirely patrolled. In one of the groups it happened that one man was a soldier, one was a prison trustee and one was a conscientious objector. Someone asked the prisoner why he was in prison. He replied, "For killing a Jap." The soldier thought a moment and said, "I was awarded a medal for killing Japs." The conscientious objector spoke up and said, "I'm doing time for refusing to kill Japs." This is rather a confusing state of affairs if one were seeking moral virtue in truth.

Religious morality will admit of no such transgression in its universal laws. Under the old Mosaic law, where grace was not given and men were subject to the impulses of the flesh with no power given to break that force, men fought and God worked with them according to the righteous intent of their cause. But, now, the Christ has come and His elevated level of requirement for human behavior allows no such deviation away from divine appointment. In the introduction of the Gospel and its Author, when John was preaching beyond Jordan, he was asked of the soldiery, "And what shall we do?" His response was, "Do violence to no man." Christians who suffered great persecution at the hands of imperial Rome,

found one of the issues held against them was their refusal to take up arms and do violence to their fellow men. A great volume of the colonists who migrated from Europe to the Americas in the early days of this nation did so because their moral values would not allow them to bear arms and still feel clear in their soul before God. They would rather move to America, with all of its hardships and privations, than to violate their conscience. May God help us everyone to realize and acknowledge that God's universal laws, that He has established for all men to follow, have not and will not bow to the whim of human institutions. There are, in the world we live in, so-called religious institutions that make their conquests by military force and stoutly declare to their subjects that life lost in battle for their cause is a sure passport into glory. God's Word admits of no such thing. His law proclaims, "Be ye kind, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." His Word further states, "Love your enemies, do good to them that despitefully use you and persecute you." (Luke 6:27-28.) God established His regulations in accordance with the requirements of holiness, and that is the measure by which He will evaluate every man in the day of judgment. Humanly instituted programs, even though they may have wielded a vast influence over multitudes of people, will have to bow in shame and submission before the superior requirement of God's universal law at the day of judgment. Political dynasties and dominions are erected and propagated under the jurisdiction of human mentality and will perform to serve human interest. (Jeremiah 19:6-15.) When their

astutely devised systems are presented to the people and extolled by cleverly devised methods designed to gender support for the proposed cause, it is still nothing more than a product of human initiative. It will not serve to elevate nor better any moral position; it will serve to promote the current endeavor. God's program never finds it necessary to sacrifice anyone who is sincerely trying to keep His commands. He said a bruised reed He would not break, and a smoking flax He would not quench.

Further than this, Christ used these very principles in teaching us of His Kingdom. His declaration was, "...My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." John 18:36. Here is a clear and distinct demarcation between the Kingdom of the divine and human institutions. Since Christ had no selfish motivation, then of course, He felt no urge to take vengeance on His opposition. His purpose and effort was to save His enemies along with all the rest. How could He ever hope to accomplish that by wreaking vengeance upon them? This points out clearly the unselfishness of His motives and the divinity of His jurisdiction. When He gave instruction to His disciples, just before He ascended, His command was to take the saving gospel of forgiveness and salvation to Jerusalem first, the very place where His opposition was the strongest. We who are of His Kingdom do not fight today but still maintain that same attitude of love and goodwill toward all men even as He did when He was here showing us the way. What would we think of a gospel that

came teaching, "We will show you the way of love right after we have whipped you into submission?" Remember a lesson we learned earlier in the study which says, "Holiness always runs true to form?"

God's perfect law designed that one man and one woman should be joined together in the bond of Holy Matrimony. That unity was to endure for the lifetime of the pair involved. Only at the expiration of one was the other released from the obligation of the marriage vow. (Romans 7:2-3.) While under the old law, where grace was not given to enable men to adjust their lives from the bad to the good, it is conceivable for the relationship to become unbearable, but with the coming of grace that enables folks to adjust the cantankerousness of their lives, there is no legitimate reason why they cannot utilize God's grace and get along happily if they will. Human morality finds it much more convenient to just dissolve the relationship and go find someone else, but this is a breach of God's universal law and launches those who accept that path onto the road of adultery. (Luke 16:18.) All men realize that adultery is not accepted as moral virtue before the Lord, regardless of what societies of men may decide.

Thus we can see that the path which leads to the good, the virtuous, the holy is one that requires perseverance, endeavor and endurance. The one who selects this path must be alert, on guard and careful lest he be deceived. His path will be strewn with a variety of encounters such as disappointment, grief, sorrow, pain, pleasure, enjoyment, contentment, soul-satisfaction, etc. Because of these various influences, this life is what we sometimes term a trial,

and it will indeed require all of our skill and ability, along with divine assistance, in order to successfully achieve. But it has for its reward the joy of salvation and in the end eternal life. And so again, the word speaks, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Galatians 6:9.

INDEX OF SCRIPTURES

Genesis			
1:24-25	18	10:17	83
1:26	176	22:5	194
1:27	23, 90	chapters 27-32	281
1:27-28	91	chapters 28; 30	265
1:3-5	72		
1:7-10	75	Joshua	
1:31	21	24:15	295, 300
2:7	141		
2:16-17	18	I Samuel	
3:1-6	21	6:5	17
3:19	19, 20, 141	II Samuel	
3:22	217	23:15-17	273
3:24	55		
4:3-4	66	II Kings	
5:3	27	7:9	208
8:20	67, 68	I Chronicles	
8:21	68	chapter 21	287
8:22	18, 74	II Chronicles	
9:14-15	19	16:9	84, 147, 236,
12:7	68	262, 301	
14:19	15		
Exodus		Job	
3:14-15	13	1:8	156
15:6-7	16	2:6	17
19:5	14	7:16	166
Leviticus		7:17	165
19:1-2	106	9:32-33	40
Deuteronomy		22:21	12
10:14	15	33:4	142
		33:6	142

37:1-14	17	8:12	31
Psalm		14:34	279
2:6-8	42	20:9	27
8:3-8	93	30:5	16
9:7	46	Ecclesiastes	
14:1-3	27	8:11	270
14:7	40, 150	12:7	143
19:1-4	83	Isaiah	
22:28	13	1:1-15	26
24:1	14	1:16-20	151
24:9-10	15	1:17	179
36:9	23	1:18	300
47:8	16	1:19-20	265
50:10-11	17	4:10	30
50:12	14	5:16	176
51:3-10	102	9:6	44
51:5	84	9:6-7	45
53:6	150	32:1	47
58:1-5	28, 36	35:8	115
58:3	84	43:1-7	201
98:1	16	44:24	176
103:12.....	238	45:21	13
107:2	161	46:9	30
115:4-8	65, 85	46:9-10	13
119:89.....	18	46:10	30, 32
119:90-91	19	48:13	17
135:15-18	85	51:1	300
145:17.....	32	52:11	222
Proverbs		55:8	297
1:20-33	293	59:11-12	39
4:18	212	59:16	15, 37
chapter 8	261	60:2	71
8:8	256	64:6	135

66:1	15	6:24	23, 183
Jeremiah		7:3-5	163
10:6-10	11	7:7-8	29, 91
10:10	13	7:12	163, 170, 199
10:23	39, 134	288	
19:6-15	307	7:15-20	23
24:6-7	84	7:17-18	156
26:8-11	209	7:28-29	188
29:13	238	9:37-38	97
31:3	201	10:42	233
31:33-34	114	11:25	15
33:25	18	12:25	173
Ezekiel		12:33-35	142, 185
18:4	16, 23, 42, 80, 101, 150, 291	13:40-43	270
18:20	110	13:44-46	101
Daniel		15:17-20	99, 142
2:44	47	16:13-18	61
4:17	17	16:27	271
Micah		17:5-6	48
7:19	238	20:23	52
Matthew		22:33	188
5:6	84, 101, 147, 149 238, 290	22:37-38	179
5:16	164	23:14	256
5:20	182	23:23-28	142
5:29-30	124	24:36	52
6:1-4	139	25:29-30	294
6:3-4	284	28:18	51
6:19-20	282	28:18-20	51
Mark			
		7:20-23	142
		9:43-48	289
		14:36	183

Luke		
3:11	207	
3:14	247	
4:5-6	60	
6:27-28	307	
6:46	269	
13:3-5	43	
13:8-9	251	
13:25-27	35	
15:3-5	35	
16:4-10	287	
16:16	212	
17:10	277	
19:20-23	216	
19:22	132	
20:35-36	96	
23:46	177	
24:49	97	
John		
1:5	40	
1:960, 107, 152, 207		
1:12	46	
1:13	150	
1:14	41	
1:17	100	
3:3	41, 51	
3:16	37, 113, 300	
3:17	289	
3:34-35	48	
4:24	32	
4:31-34	284	
5:19	44	
5:28-29	144	
6:37	269	
	7:37-38	46
	8:29	46
	8:43-45	71
	8:44	32
	10:1	54
	10:1-3	60
	10:3	56
	10:16	55
	10:32-33	245
	12:32	84, 140
	14:6	54, 286
	14:9	43
	14:15	154
	14:23-24	201
	15:4-5	111
	16:7-15	151
	16:13	210
	chapter 17	254
	17:3	13
	18:36	308
	18:37	70
Acts		
	1:8	151
	8:17-24	210
	14:15-17	81
	14:17	72
	16:9-10	208
	18:24-28	210, 220
Romans		
	1:19-20	82
	2:3-11	277
	2:6	271, 281
	3:9	43

3:23	27, 102, 291	4:18	271
5:12	27	5:9-11	293
5:13	270	5:10	202, 272
6:1-2	279	5:17	105
6:23	101	7:1	279
7:2-3	309	7:8-11	239
7:18-24	25	10:12	241
8:6-8	155		
8:7-15	150	Galatians	
9:20	148	5:16-17	180
12:1	157	5:19-21	38, 123, 164
12:1-2	137, 178	5:19-24	186
12:11	120	5:24-25	180
12:21	16	6:7-8	270
chapter 14	250	6:9	310
14:14-16	164	6:10	288
		6:15	105

I Corinthians

3:1-13	194
3:10-15	211
6:19-20	80
9:14	197, 223
9:25	94
10:26	14
12:18	208
12:22-25	171
12:25	174
13:5	94
13:8	105
15:10	245
15:24-28	49
15:44	96

II Corinthians

3:17-18	151
---------------	-----

Ephesians

1:17-23	50
2:8-9	182, 256
2:13-22	89
4:13	45
5:11	254
6:12	142
6:17	56, 58

Philippians

2:2-5	171
2:5	116
3:10	79
4:5	94

Colossians

1:13	244
------------	-----

2:13-14	150	5:8-9	117
3:5	124	8:1-2	151
3:8-10	124	8:12	238
I Timothy		chapter 9	291
3:7	289	9:11-14	151
4:8	275	9:22	291
5:8	232	10:17	238
II Timothy		10:26-27	283
2:6	222	10:26-31	294
2:26	102	11:6	100
4:16-17	209	11:8-13	69
Titus		12:1	185
2:11-12	148	12:5-11	286
2:11-14	280	12:14	213
2:13-14	188	James	
Hebrews		1:13-14	31
1:1-4	51	1:25	267
1:2-3	168	2:10	188
1:6	17	2:15-16	207
1:7	97	2:19-20	100
1:8-14	51	2:26	142
1:13-14	95	4:1	304
2:2	270	4:1-4	300
2:2-3	110	4:1-8	99
2:6-8	166	4:17	23, 110, 211
2:6-11	167	I Peter	
2:6-18	51	1:8	285
2:7	146	2:9-12	150
2:8	166	2:15-25	302
4:12	112	2:21-22	106, 227, 237
4:16	146	2:22	117, 177
		3:7	78
		3:8	171

II Peter			
1:16-19	48	5:20	13
2:19	225	Revelation	
3:9	37	2:23	271
I John		3:20	77, 205
2:15	183	3:21	50
3:4	110	5:1-10	96
3:8	38	10:5-6	33
3:8-9	111	10:6	74
3:15	247	19:11	16
3:17	197	20:12-13	272
3:17-18	188	20:13	276
4:19	154, 229	22:16-17	46

