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OUR LOVE OF GOD

I

THE hallowed love cherished towards God in believing hearts is of His own planting (1 John iv. 7, 19; Deut. xxx. 6). Humanity could never of itself have evolved it. Fallen man may indeed, as he rapturously contemplates and admires the works of God in outward nature, appear to himself or his fellows to entertain a love for Him. But will he love God adoringly when and in so far as he apprehends Him to be a Sovereign Who works according to His own almighty holy will and makes visitation for human disobedience? It is recorded of the younger Pitt how, influenced doubtless by legalist dread, he bounced out of a church where he had been listening to an Evangelical Revival preacher, exclaiming, "Why, the fellow expects us to love God!" No, the unregenerate mind, as the Apostle testifies, can prove itself to be, not disaffected merely, but a veritable compound of "enmity" towards God. This love is supernatural, Divinely inspired. It is as the moonlight reflecting the sunlight: God's own love has gone out abundantly to man, and He would and will have it recognised in the glad hearts of His true people, and "smiled back".

The Mohammedan pronounces this love towards God impossible, on the score of its alleged absence from the nature of Deity (Gairdner, *Reproach of Islam*), though it would be a strange thing surely if a Creator, not Himself possessing such an attribute, should be found to have endowed His creature with it (even if only in a non-spiritual form), and still more to be inviting the cherishing of it in boundless measure towards Himself.

Aristotle adjudges love to God to be absurd and irrational, since He is "unknowable". Undoubtedly His invisibility does constitute a difficulty, one which Scripture recognises (1 John iv. 20), in the way of our entertaining towards Him the "tender emotion" which, in the natural sphere anyway, serves as love's basic element. Yet we may ask, even if the analogy be crude, if love is not possible on a child's part for a parent in a distant colony, whom he has indeed never seen, but from whom he has

been endlessly receiving loving gifts and messages. The hating of a hitherto unseen person is not so unthinkable. That Apostle who moves God farthest from our outer senses by declaring that He is Spirit is the same that stresses most both our privilege of being loved by Him and our duty to love Him in return. There is such a thing as "the eye of faith" (see Heb. ii. 9; xi. 27; Eph. i. 8), and we may conceive it to be radically independent of an element which the lower animal world shares in (1 Pet. i. 8).

II

In the days of the less complete O.T. revelation, God laid claim to His saints' love, and that a love holding sway over the whole personality in every aspect of its complex constitution (Deut. vi. 5), and the claim met by grace with a hearty response. The actuality of the thing was historically verified. They "loved His name", *i.e.* His "character" and perfections as so far disclosed to human ken (Ps. v. 11; lxix. 36; cxix. 132; Isa. lvi. 6). They learned to "delight" in Him (Pss., Job, Isaiah)—a word in English which once bore a soberer sense than now. They loved steadfastly and so were said to "cleave to Him".

In due season the Son of God became incarnate and "tabernacled" among men. God made Himself known to us in a human nature, "in the face of Jesus Christ", so that they who saw the Son saw in a real sense the Father also (2 Cor. iv. 9; John xiv. 9). The aforesaid Divine claim on His people's love was made afresh, as unbounded as and more explicit than before, nor did it fail of genuine response again even in the pre-Calvary days (John xvi. 27; Luke vii. 47, the word *philein* in the one case in general implying sensibility, as *agapan*, in the other, valuation). And ever since by his believing flock their gracious Lord has been reckoned incalculably "lovely" (Rutherford). Without having (sensibly) seen Him they love Him (1 Pet. i. 8), as they look backward to that Life of His on earth, with its words of grace and its deeds of mercy and forbearance, and pre-eminently to the redeeming death, and upward also to the Throne for His unfailing high-priestly "sympathy" (Heb. iv. 15, Greek) and sustainment, and onward as well to His promised personal reappearing. The faith which embraces heartily all these blessed revealed facts generates inevitably a rich returning

love (Gal. v. 6; Eph. iii. 17; vi. 23; Phil. i. 29; etc.). Not that a gracious soul's love of God starts at the outset as a product of sheer self-regard. A motion, to quote Kuyper, born in the soul of a magnetising power coming forth from God, first proceeds to draw us away from whatever influences have been tending to separate us from Him, communicating simultaneously a preliminary view, broad and general, of His supernal excellency in Christ.

III

Many devoted Christians, it is worth recalling, have seen in Canticles viii. 6, 7 the ideal Church's psalm of love to Christ her Bridegroom, notably Bernard of Clairvaux, who contributed a choice enlargement on the passage, holding as he did essentially the Protestant view of Justification. And, by more than one writer of sound judgment, John Newton's "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds" has been pronounced the best hymn we have expressive of personal love to the Divine Saviour.

Ordinary, natural love, according to MacDougall, the eminent authority on psychology, is a complex of feelings, comprising joy, gratitude, solicitous fear, sorrow (or pity), with "tender emotion" serving as a groundwork. None of these feelings should embody any ingredient inharmonious with any of its coefficients. Let us venture to pass them severally in review in the spiritual relation we are concerned with.

IV

Joy it is which is stated, by another authority, Shand, to be the most conspicuous constituent in the complex sentiment of love. And in the spiritual sphere of the Gospel we accordingly find that love "rejoiceth" (1 Cor. xiii. 6). The Gospel itself provides the joy: it came as "good tidings of great joy". The most favoured material analogue for it, perhaps, is a feast. Faith in it begets this joy (Rom. xv. 13; Phil. i. 25). "Salvation-joy" is the O.T. anticipatory Messianic term, which we meet with a dozen times. Nor can it be deemed by any means wholly self-related on the part of the godly ones who evince it. Theirs is a joy inspired by the Holy Ghost (Acts xiii. 52; Rom. xiv. 17; Gal. v. 22; 1 Thess. i. 6). They rejoice "in God" (Rom. v. 11; Phil. iii. 1; iv. 4; Philem. 20)—as is so frequently predicted

likewise of the saints in the O.T., where also the Psalmist likes more demurely often to speak of joy in God's "name", His revealed nature or will. Instance the purely unselfish rejoicings over the triumphs of God's cause recorded in Luke xv. 24; xix. 37; John iii. 39; Acts xi. 23; xv. 3. Not that self-relation is at all excluded in its due course. The Gospel was designed to give the oil of joy for mourning: joy in the knowledge of reconciliation with God, in victory over temptation, in answered prayer, in all the divers personal outcomes of saving grace. And every true apostle is sent as a helper of others in that Gospel joy (2 Cor. i. 24). It fell to the Reformers to revive it in their day; their recovery of justification truth, says Harnack, initiated "a personal joy and certainty which no medieval Christian had ever possessed". And the same may be claimed for our own Evangelical Revival, two centuries later; someone has compared its work to the re-ringing of joybells that had been hanging silent for long in dark, forsaken towers.

"The Gospel *hope*" (Col. i. 23) is this joy relative to that portion of Gospel bounty and blessing which awaits an assured, though deferred, consummation (Rom. v. 2; xii. 12; xv. 13). It has been Divinely communicated, though "reserved in heaven" (cf. Rom. xv. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 16; with Col. i. 5; Heb. vi. 19). Personified, it is Christ Himself coming in His kingdom (Col. i. 27; 1 Tim. i. 1). The word or term suffers in this hallowed connection from the looser and cheaper sense it bears in common parlance as something ranging from bare chance to strong likelihood. "Sure and stedfast", this sacred hope will never put to shame (Rom. v. 5), though the Pilgrim may not always hold the telescope steadily as he essays to descry the coming glory from the hill called Clear. And it develops meanwhile a calm trust in God, a love towards our co-sharing fellows, and a purity in ourselves (Lam. iii. 26; Col. i. 4, 5; 1 John iii. 3).

V

Godly Christian *thankfulness* or gratitude likewise need not be, nor is, at the outset a totally self-related motion of the mind, the output of sheer self-love. As has been already implied, self-love is in itself a purely natural principle, neither good nor bad *per se*, capable of residence alike in the hearts of devils or angels. Christ and Satan agree in attesting this (Luke vi. 32;

Job i. 9). When God has graciously and savingly drawn the heart first of all to Himself and to a sense of His all-transcending excellency, self-love at once can and does duly perform its own distinctive devotional part. "We thank Thee for Thy great glory", says that most ancient of liturgical chants, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, re-echoing David in Ps. cxxxviii. 4, 5, R.V. That glory was to him and the pre-Christian saints, however rudimental in comparison, what it is in our Gospel day, a "grace-glory" (Eph. i. 6). Glory and goodness could be interchangeable terms (Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19). Do we not grant that God's unceasing objective must be that which is the very best? And, then, if that entity were distinct from Himself, would it not excel Him in goodness—an impossible conclusion? Hence God's end and objective must ever be His own glory. The Psalmist sings again: "His tender mercies are over all His works. All Thy works shall give thanks to Thee" (cxlv. 9, 10, R.V.), and we intuitively concur; compare also cxi. 1, 2, and the oft-repeated "give thanks unto Thy name", R.V. All this belongs to the pre-Calvary day, yet has its providence-regarding counterpart presented also in the N.T., for the Apocalyptic elders cry: "We give Thee thanks because Thou hast taken Thy great power and reigned" (xi. 17), and the Apostle Paul calls on us to give God thanks "always for all things" (Eph. v. 20). But, towering above all such concerns, rises the Cross of redemption. Our awed reverentialness, far from being diminished, is deepened at the sight of the Divine Majesty stooping to redeem and reconcile, which sheds such glory on the Father's holiness and wisdom and faithfulness and love, and on the Son's compassion and endurance and mediatorial power. And sanctified self-love, singling itself out, exclaims "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift", 2 Cor. ix. 15 (cf. Rom. vii. 25; 1 Cor. xv. 57). It is otherwise with the unregenerate heart. The gratitude principle is discerned to be a combine of two elements, (a) the pleasing sense of experiencing a kindness and (b) the humbling consciousness of the donor's ability and title, if he had willed to have withholden it. Of these the first, in the natural sphere of human things, and still more in the spiritual domain, is too apt to show itself tenuous and fitful. Hastings' great *Dictionary of the Bible* has not a single paragraph in its four mammoth volumes expressly dealing with thanksgiving—"the final religious virtue towards God" (Mackensie,

Christian Ethics)—which must have been a sheer oversight, yet is an illuminating one as well. As regards the second, in either sphere self-sufficient hearts will, no doubt more or less unconsciously, sit loose to any such self-abasing mental attitude. Romanists believe, credally, that Christ died for their sins' pardon, yet self-confidently set themselves to "make their souls" by merits and penances and wearables and Virgin-devoteeism and Purgatory. Protestant churches in the homelier days used to announce a harvest "thanksgiving": nowadays they usually celebrate their harvest "festival".

VI

The godly *fear* which love to the Lord begets is a solemn, awed, and sensitive solicitude lest anything in the realm of thought, word, or deed should haply cause displeasure to the Almighty Heavenly Father. He Himself instils it, and the desire to be imbued with it, into His people's hearts (Jer. xxxii. 40; Ps. lxxxvi. 11) by His Spirit (Isa. xi. 2). It abounded in O.T. days, the "fear of God's name" being frequently referred to. An utterance in Ps. cxxx expresses the secret of the matter so evangelically that the later versions almost without exception jib and boggle at it: "There is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared." A reader of the Scriptures, nevertheless, might have been prepared for it by words in Solomon's great temple-dedication prayer (1 Kings viii. 39, 40) and would find it endorsed in Jer. v. 24; xxxiii. 9 and Hos. iii. 5. It is an anticipation of 1 Pet. i. 17 f: "Pass your sojourning time here in fear, forasmuch as ye were redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ." That was what Gospel pardon and peace cost. So we need not be taken aback by the R.V. of Eph. v. 21, "the fear of Christ", and may heartily endorse Cowper's lines:

What fear he feels his gratitude inspires.
Shall he, for such deliv'rance dearly wrought,
Recompense ill? He trembles at the thought!

Moreover, there is grace continuously present as well as that which has passed. God inworks both desire and decision for that which is good in the hearts of His people (Phil. ii. 13). And His apostolically announced assurance to them is sound: "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are . . . under

grace" (Rom. vi. 14). "There is nothing here on earth", says Bunyan, "that can awe the heart like the grace of God."

This fear, this gracious solicitude, is a whole hemisphere removed from the tormenting conscience-fear which perfect love casts out (1 John iv. 18). Love ushers in this. They are to each other as nadir and zenith: see them contrasted in Isa. viii. 12, 13 and 1 Pet. iii. 14, 15. On the other hand, with hallowed reverence this gracious fear oscillates between affiliation and identification, as has just been glimpsed under the subject of thankfulness. When esteem for any ordinary mortal is entertained, simple respect will be the essential uppermost element; in a native ruler's case, honour or homage; in relation to God, adoring reverence; whilst, given a varied, a not diverse but complementary direction to the view, in the sentiment or bearing towards a father it will be devoted love. But in God divine majesty and ideal fatherhood unite, whence arises the feeling we are dwelling upon. How virtually interchangeable and synonymous these two become may be seen from comparing Ps. xxxi. 23 with xxxiv. 9 and xcvii. 10 with Prov. viii. 13.

Like the other constituents of our love of God, this gracious fear is capable of holding itself above any undue self-interest, above the mere guarding of self from hazard of incurring His chastisement. "It will persuade a man purely for the goodness and loveliness of God to fear to offend Him, though there were no interest at all in it of a man's own misery or happiness" (Leighton). "He who considers what kind of a Father is God to us will see reason enough, even were there no hell, why the thought of offending Him should seem more dreadful than any death" (Calvin). So it is the sovereign evangelical prophylactic against all and every antinomianism. It is the sounding-board which makes the Divine appeal reverberate decisively in the Christian heart: "Oh, do not this abominable thing which I hate!"

Besides, this love-fear is bound, taking a wider survey, to be at times exercised relative to this and that, corporate or official or social, violation of or slight upon God's honour or revealed will, which comes under notice. The phase of it which is in such a case experienced is termed in Scripture "godly jealousy" (2 Cor. xi. 2, 3; Num. xxv. 11, R.V.; see 1 Kings xix. 10). It may take the form of a refusal, grave and sober yet pointed and outspoken, to countenance some movement or enterprise

or practice; or to accede to some passing personal proposal, as when Abram rejected the present of the king of Sodom (Gen. xiv. 23) or Ezra the proffered Persian escort (Ezra viii. 22). It may creditably call forth a manifestation of righteous anger (Eph. iv. 26) when the offence is at once inexcusable and unexpected. In our own day if Hooker were alive again in England he would doubtless reiterate: "He cannot love the Lord Jesus in his heart who can brook a mingle-mangle . . . of ministers and massing priests." And what is to be thought of many of the methods resorted to for the procurement of funds for the upkeep of religious institutions?

At the same time, it calls for notice that Scripture is quite devoid of all expression of apprehension for the ultimate fortunes and welfare of God's cause and kingdom. Christ never foretold that His Gospel would convert the world and sweep all before it. "They would not come" expressed what He knew and stated would be its conventional reception. Its object was and is "to take out of the nations a people for His name" (Acts xv. 14), and it is doing that. "Gospel prophecy", said Mozley, "draws no sanguine picture, speaks of no regeneration of society here" (*University Sermons*, 118). "In every generation", says Dr. Inge, "many are called, few chosen; we must expect to find ourselves in a small minority" (*Gate of Life*, 23). The flouted "doctrines of grace" are the real cordial for our spirits here. God's covenant in Christ for His people is everlasting, and His sovereign electing love and power beyond defeat. Old Hilary of Poitiers was right in decrying any *irreligiosa sollicitudo pro Deo*.

VII

Lastly, there is "godly sorrow" (2 Cor. vii. 9), frequently termed "evangelical humiliation". The awakened, enlightened sinner cannot but entertain regret for all his deviations, past and present, from obedience to God. As well as the transgressions of his life, his nature's depravity also inspires a serious and permanent humiliating sense. If Christ had good reason to teach us to ask continually for our trespasses to be forgiven, there must be continual cause for our penitence. And it is with the holiest of men that we find the most constant recognition of its necessity. Christ, by His own teaching when on earth and since through the Holy Spirit, has deepened our knowledge

of sin, its range and its gravity, whilst at the same time deepening our confidence of being Divinely enabled to overcome it. Its exceeding sinfulness has also been manifested, as John Newton observes, by its being capable of acting against light and love, and not only against command and warning. Where conviction is aroused of some definite backsliding in which one is conscious that the sinful act or course was as spontaneous as it was pronounced, this penitent feeling is materially intensified. The Apostle expresses it with the special Greek word, *entropé* (1 Cor. vi. 5, etc.). The prophet looks for a "self-loathing" to follow from the realising of the meantime Divine forbearance (Ezek. xxxvi. 31). And primarily the sin is seen to have been against God (Ps. li. 4), however grievously fellow-man has been wronged.

In this regard, too, the godly soul has at times to look around as well as within. The Christian finds himself baffled as to the effective opposing or checking of some public sin, and so can but "sorrow after a godly sort", like "Zion's mourners" who were known by God to "sigh and cry" for their city's apostasy (Isa. lvii. 18; lxi 3; Ezek. ix. 4).

There are worthy souls who mistakenly advocate a set, deliberate habit of cultivating and fostering this sorrow. They would have us to keep feeling our spiritual pulse, as it were, to ensure the maintenance of a proper level or depth of "compunction". But how can such building on frames and feelings be advisable for the Christian? It brings to mind the medical "Holland's Law" which affirms that whenever special attention is directed persistently to any one organ, its action becomes more or less deranged. Is the frequent reopening of an old sore for mere inspection a wise thing? Does a wise sculptor expend much of his valuable time poring over samples of his past comparative bungling instead of riveting his study on model creations? Have we so much time to spare that we run a risk of too much "looking away unto Jesus"? It is in beholding *Him* that we are changed into His image (2 Cor. iii. 18). Is joy, and the joy specifically in His finished work, to be held suspect, and less holy than our sin-sorrow, seeing that hereafter it will be everlasting, whereas sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Isa. xxxv. 10)? When variety of temperament is taken into account, it is not so surprising that even some evangelicals, such as Charles Simeon, with his disciples Brainerd and Martyn, following Doddridge, should be found prone to this sorrow-

cultivation; but the fact is eloquent enough that the most favoured authority with those who promulgate the exercise is William Law, a strenuous denier of Christ's satisfaction and propitiation, and next to him certain Caroline divines and Jesuit devotees (A. Whyte, *Our Lord's Characters*, 153). It is never the Apostles! though it is the Word of God that is the supreme and sovereign discernor of the thoughts (Heb. iv. 12).

The sister perversion to this is the studied *expending of pathos* on the sensitive and emotional, as distinct from spiritual, *suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary*. (Of this Faber's well-known hymn, "O come and mourn", is the classic example.) Far be it from us to ignore or belittle the former suffering. Prophets foresaw it; Apostles in general terms recall it. It was an element in His expiation; surely our sinless Lord's sensibilities must have been in the highest degree refined. Even so, the Gospel narrative of the Passion puts forth no effort to arouse pathos, but tells how He Himself checked the emotionalism of the women who were present. Likewise the Epistles, though Peter and John, at least, had been spectators. Several early Fathers interpret the "piercing sword" of Luke ii. 35 as misgivings of faith on Mary's part. The "lamb" comparison of Isaiah liii portrays non-resistance, simply, and Lam. i. 12 is no utterance of Christ. It was likewise with the primitive Christians. The Nicene Creed is content to say "He suffered". "The crucifixion was never represented in its true form till the fifth or sixth century", writes the Roman Catholic Archbishop Porter, Bombay (*Letters*, p. 481).

How was this? Would not good taste, if nothing else, so dictate? The Greek artist, painting Iphigenia about to be immolated for her nation's sake, whilst he represents the on-looking crowd as filled with emotion, depicts her father veiled. Equity would add her voice, for, as regards *natural* features, solely, as Kuyper quite truly avers, myriads of unoffending persons have suffered a like death, numbers of them with even more savage accompaniments. Moreover, indiscriminate encouragement of such portrayal gives every chance to unworthy and wicked craftsmen possessed of skill to gain enduring credit for advancing forsooth the interests of Christ: e.g. the painter of the most famous "Thorn-crowned Head", Reni, was a noted evil-liver. At the close of the Kaiser War the Bryce Commission awarded the palm for German atrocities to the Bavarians. Yet it was to Bavaria that thousands of British and American

non-Romanists had travelled in 1910 to gain spiritual edification from the Ober-Ammergau Passion Play. Our Free Church Touring Guild had issued an elaborate "guide" which, *inter alia*, testified to the villagers' holiness, and enthusiasts, later, made guesses at how many millions our tourists spent, which must have since been repaid with interest in U-boats and V-bombs. Again, pathos is simply sentimental pity and pity is beset with a patronising quality—that is its "pleasure" side: can we venture on espousing any such attitude towards God Incarnate? There is indeed a modern French-born devotion based on the Garden Agony, the "Holy Hour", the object of which, Abbé Bricout's treatise states, is to "console the Saviour"! But for Christ and His disciples, on the contrary, the past Calvary sorrow has been, like a safely-delivered mother's anguish, turned into joy (John xvi. 20, 21; Heb. xii. 2). In their now passing providential trials He "sympathises" (Heb. iv. 15, Gk.) indeed—never they with Him.

Archbishop Porter truly adds that the early Christians "dwelt upon our Lord's glorified life more" than moderns do. Exceptions, however, soon emerged. In the *Transitus Mariae*, a composition of the fourth century, which was the fount of Mariolatry, Mary keeps on tearfully visiting His sepulchre day after day, as though He had never risen. But then what greatly matters the Resurrection to any who have, much like the fox with the hundred life-saving devices in the fable, numberless supplements, as we have seen, to eke out the vague efficacy seemingly accruing in their view from the Death on Calvary? It is very different with those believers in the sin-bearing Christ, to whom it is indispensable as the Father's certificate of the all-sufficiency as regards merit and satisfaction of those unique "sufferings of His soul", which they recognise as having constituted the "soul of His sufferings", and which infinitely transcend any attempt at human pathos.

VIII

The *animal* groundwork of the complex love sentiment, viz. "tenderness", "*tender emotion*", is liable to be appraised by some as tantamount to the whole, even in the case of Christian spiritual love for God. Christmas is being turned nowadays into a festival of babyhood, and Christ treated as a spiritual Peter Pan, contemplated at that season as though infancy was

His perpetuated condition. A recent Bishop of London gibbers: "The only means by which God could win the love of our human race was by coming down as a little child." Considering that psychology adjudges this "tender emotion" to be akin to or identical with a little girl's feeling for her doll, such a tendency is plainly calculated to undermine all proper sense of our Lord's Divine sovereignty and authority. Others, less superficially sentimental, estimate the sincerity and genuineness of any godly love by the degree in which "tender emotion" manifests itself as forming the dominant part. Scripture affords no support to such an idea: for one thing, of the two verbs for "love" noticed above, *philein*, the normally more emotional, is never used of human love to God in heaven. This groundwork element, as an animal component, is affected and conditioned by casual states of mind and body. "It is as variable as the weather, and not uncommonly judged of ourselves more favourably on a bright summer's day than in winter gloom" (John Newton). "That which is born of the flesh is—flesh", said the Lord Jesus (John iii. 6). Godly love cannot be gauged by thrills and throbs. Scripture does apprise us of the imperative need of knowledge to be blended with our love. Paul prays that his converts' love may increase in knowledge and discernment (Phil. i. 9, R.V.). Through lack of it it was that Peter, gripping (Greek) his Lord, remonstrated with Him in deprecation of the predicted Passion (Matt. xvi. 22). And likewise with respect to faith. Thomas was ready to die with Christ, yet could later doubt His definite promise (John xi. 16; xx. 25); and similarly the embalming women of whom it has been aptly said, however touching was their action, that Christ prefers to be believed rather than beloved. To-day the conventional addresses to children far more persistently urge them to love Christ than to trust Him. The familiar addressing of Him in fondling terms in hymns—"ditties of embrace" is Heber's indignant epithet—is out of line with God's Word as well.

IX

By what *standard* are we to gauge the sincerity and vitality of the Christian love of God? God Incarnate has answered the question. "If ye love Me, ye will cherish all these directions of Mine" (John xiv. 15). The prescribed version of His words

conveys an unduly frigid, Spartan, exacting impression: "keep my commandments." The verb, *iērein*, is not the same as "perform", "execute". It means to foster and harbour a steady interest in a thing (or person), wherein action if it arises is evoked by that disposition. Mary had "treasured" the box of unguent (xii. 7). Christ prays the Father to "keep" His disciples, as Himself had hitherto done (xvii. 12). And His directions or instructions, *entolai*, signify nothing masterful or incongenial. His Father's "commandings" to Himself are expressed by the same term (noun and verb)—as are, normally, also God's (explicitly benignant, Deut. vi. 24; x. 13) "commands" to His people, under both Old and New Covenants. (Some other term is used when e.g. demons are dictated to.) "My", also, is couched with an emphasis, to convey that the instructions delivered have been in complete accord with His gracious nature and mission. And the R.V. "ye will", instead of the imperative, points to the inevitability of loyalty as an outcome of true love to Him: it has not to be consciously super-added. "Loyalty" (deriving from *legalis*) is the word that foots the bill, being a blend of love and law.

What is it that so renders this loyalty, this combined feeling and willing and doing, on the part of true Christian believers, inevitable and assured, however sadly it falls short of what it should be? It is the constraining influence of Christ's love for them unto death, brought home to and wrought upon their hearts by the Almighty Spirit of God, which impels them to live henceforward not for themselves but for Him who for their sakes died and rose again—to live for righteousness because He bore their sins in His body on the tree—to glorify God with their body because they were thus, by the gracious counsel and action of the Divine Trinity, bought at that price—to live soberly, righteously, and godly here below, renouncing worldly lusts and zealous in well-doing, cherishing all the while the blessed hope of their Saviour's reappearing, because He gave Himself for their redemption (2 Cor. v. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 1 Cor. vi. 20; Tit. ii. 12-14). This is the grand N.T. consummation of the O.T. "sacrifice of thanksgiving" (Rom. xii. 1). This comes of the faith which worketh through love, whose watchword is "for His sake"—which, far from undermining, as might superficially be calculated, unfailingly stabilises God's eternal law (Gal. v. 6; Rom. iii. 31).

This loyalty to God in Christ is far from being some tame, dull dutifulness or conscientiousness. Duty, that which is "due", is a debt we keep listlessly discharging. Of conscience, as Whately observed, whilst the violation of it does indeed give pain and uneasiness, it can hardly be said that its satisfying calls forth any actual zest. But one we love and revere we are naturally disposed to imitate. And the four gospels furnish a portrait of the incarnate Son of God, exhibiting His ways and manners, His feelings, His graces. Yes, Christ there possesses and exercises the attributes of God, as equally God has ever possessed and exercised those attributes of Christ. The loyalty of the Lord's people accordingly is hearty and spontaneous. Nor is it left to themselves to conjure it up of their own ability. By His Spirit, God Omnipotent inscribes, so to say, His will on theirs, and attunes their hearts to seek and serve Him (Heb. viii. 10; 1 Kings viii. 58).

Not in too externalist or technical a manner must this loyalty be exercised, as though it were exhausted in such duties as churchgoing and almsgiving. In the Gospels "with all thy mind" has something of a preponderance over "with all thy strength". It is in mind, in consciousness, that man surpasses the lower animals. The obligation rests upon us to inform or instruct our faith continuously and to express and confess it. Yea, in the everyday workshop of our thinking and reflecting, in our avocations, our companionships, our conversations, our verdicts, our intentions, plans, decisions, we are to be animated and dominated with this practical loyalty. Now when one allows, with the demoniac lad's father in the Gospels, that, whereas the call is made on us for a perfectly unswerving *faith* in the Lord, all of us, believing sinners, prove in varying degree defaulters, the admission meets with the readiest approval and assent. Let then no one be discomposed when he finds that, if the same duplicate statement be made respecting loyalty to Him, it is almost certain to be regarded as a plea and apology for a callous and calculated antinomianism. Our Saviour has, as Man, accomplished this perfection of love for God on our behalf: so there can be peace in the soul despite the regrettable imperfection of love on our part, if by a true, though likewise imperfect, faith we are identified with that Saviour.

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