

STRAIGHTWAY

And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him [Mark 1:18].

CHRISTIAN PURITIES FELLOWSHIP

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“Christ’s First Coming: The Fulfillment of the Law”

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One of the great realities of the First Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh was His fulfilling of the Law and becoming its end. This fulfilling of the Law—its significance and how it affects us as Christians—has often been misunderstood. It is our desire in this issue of *Straightway* to view this most important truth in the light of the greatest of the commandments given to us by our Saviour while He was on earth.

The Purpose of the Giving of the Law

Though we will be carefully

viewing the Great Commandment of the Law, we must first observe the purpose of the Law and commandments of God. The Law was given four times in the Pentateuch: the first time it was orally given by God (Exodus 20); the second time it was written down (Exodus 32); it was rewritten by God after Moses had broken the written set (Exodus 34); finally, it was given orally by Moses to the second generation (Deuteronomy 5).

There was a design behind the giving of the Law and its commandments. What were these specific purposes for the

This edition includes two more articles

“Thou Shalt Love the Lord Thy God—Deuteronomy 6:5”

“Thou Shalt Love the Lord Thy God With All Thy Soul, Mind, and Strength”

appointment of the Law? The first and foremost intent was *to reveal the holiness of God*. We must remember that the Children of Israel had just come out of living in Egypt for several centuries; thus coming out of the darkness of that land, they had no true conception of God. Within their brief pilgrimage from Egypt to Mount Sinai, they had shown their disregard of God's authority and law. Therefore, they needed to first learn His absolute righteousness and infinite holiness. Without this understanding, His very mercy would be abused.

Likewise in our own lives, God must reveal Himself in His righteousness and purity as well as in His love. We carefully see this in the many words of Job concerning his trial in the light of his righteousness. Job believed he had a right to question God for permitting this trial to come to his life. In chapter 38 God finally

informs Job that there are many things he does not know that God knows. And when God declared the vast difference between Himself and Job, Job immediately saw this and abhorred himself in the light of God.

God also came to reveal the truth of Himself to Isaiah, who, recognizing his uncleanness, fell at His feet and cried out for purity. So must God come to every soul and reveal Himself—Who He is and what He is—before that soul can rightly understand sin or holiness. The simplest faith will ever be the most reverent.

In Ecclesiastes 12:13 we read the words of Solomon after some twenty years away from God: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." This is the whole purpose of our life: we must fear God and keep his commandments. This becomes the whole duty of man in his living. We must worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire as declared in Hebrews 12:28b, 29.

Another design and purpose of the Law was *to reveal to man the perfect standard of living or conduct*. God gave this marvelous embodiment of all the essential principles of righteousness and virtue. The Law begins with a revelation of God Himself as the supreme object of worship (Exod. 20:3). Next, it teaches the

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method of worship (20:4–6) and then the spirit of worship (20:7); these words are followed by the time of worship (20:8–11). After this first section dealing with God and our living before Him, the second section declares man's relative duties: it first begins with the family, the root of society (20:12); next, it touches our obligation to human life (20:13); it also addresses the need of social purity (20:14), the rights of property (20:15), and reputation (20:16); it finally closes in the tenth commandment with the very spring of action and character—our desires and motives, demanding for them absolute righteousness and purity (20:17). What we read in this chapter of Exodus is a miracle of ethics given by God.

The Law was designed and *given to reveal sin and lead the individual to Christ, as well as to the crisis and process need of sanctification*. Paul declares in Romans 7:7, “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” He states in Romans 3:20, “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” In Exodus 20:20 Moses said to the people, “Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.” But God knew His people would break the Law; He never expected them to be

saved by their own obedience to it. The Law was given also for them to see through its demands their helpless and lost condition. It was given with the same purpose for us so that we would be driven to accept the atonement and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ as presented in Galatians 3:24: “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

The Law must come to every soul in order to reveal self and to convict of sin: “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God” (Rom. 3:19). It is very clear in the New Testament that Christ will have mercy upon all who believe. Perhaps the story of a poor, dying slave will help us to see the purpose of the Law for us. When this slave lay dying, his master came to see him and took him gently by the hand. The slave kissed his master's hand and said, “Blessings on this hand.”

“Why, Sam,” the master replied, “how can you say that? That hand never did you anything but harm; it has beaten and bruised you a hundred times; how can you bless it?”

“Yes, blessing on that hand,” the slave replied. “It was that which drove me for comfort to my precious Jesus; He soothed my sorrows, and made my heart so glad that I can only

say blessings on the hand of hard, old master for driving me to Christ.”

So the law is a hard, old master; it can only condemn and smite. But it drives us to the cross and to our precious Saviour, and thus we should only bless that Law, too.

The Law not only shows us our guilt and drives us to Christ for our salvation, but also, at a later stage in our experience, it reveals to us ourselves and our utter sinfulness of nature. This revelation of our nature drives us to Him for sanctification. The first operation of the Law is to convict the sinner and lead him to Christ for pardon and justification by faith (Romans 3). But there must come another working of that Law. The soul must see its inherent wickedness and discover “that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing” (Rom. 7:18). By seeing this, the soul should receive Christ in His fullness for its inner purity and life. This operation of the law is described in Romans 6 and 7.

Like Israel leaving Egypt, for a while the redeemed soul continues on in joy and confidence. Then suddenly the sky becomes overcast. Arriving at Sinai, it hears the voice of the Law. The Christian soul may respond as the Children of Israel did in Exodus 19:8:

And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

But the soul soon finds that within, it is neither able nor willing to obey the Lord’s words. Inevitably, the life fails in spiritual living; it submits to sin and despair, and falls under condemnation. How does this lead us to sanctification? This particular condemnation (Rom. 7:24) is the very root to lead the desperate soul to sanctification. This working of Christ brings us to realizing our own helplessness. It causes us to come to the end of self. And when discouraged and defeated with the soul’s vain endeavors and its broken vows and purposes, it cries in despair, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:24). Only at this time does the soul find the same blessed Friend Who set it free from guilt in the new birth now standing by its side and offering His indwelling life and power to save from self and the sin principle within. The cry, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord,” brings the blessed assurance in this hope for deliverance (Rom. 7:25).

The Law is the soul’s schoolmaster to lead it to both Christ’s saving and sanctifying power. For Christ has paid the *full* penalty; one self is dead; another self is alive through Christ in its walk in the new resurrection life, not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

The Place of the Law Under the Gospel

Through Christ we are redeemed from the curse of the Law, for it is

recorded in Galatians 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Yes, He took the curse of the Law. The person who broke the Law has now been executed for his own sin solely through his substitute, Christ. The Law has no more demands upon him. Christ has kept the Law for us; He kept the Law's precepts and thus puts the believer in the position of one who has obeyed the commandments. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4).

Because this is true, Christ has re-enacted the Law in His own precepts and commandments and in His own example and life, where we find the true and perfect rule of our Christian life. It is not that the Law is abolished, but it is raised and re-enacted with greater fullness, sweetness, and spirituality. It is like the second edition of a book, containing important additions and taking the place of the former one. The words of Christ or His commands (as He calls them in Matthew 7:24) become the Christian's final law. "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock." The Law of Christ is therefore more complete, more comprehensive, more searching, and reaches a higher standard than the Law of Moses.

Christ made it clear that the "first commandment" or the first words are, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment" (Mark 12:30). Christ took this commandment to be His own for us and then gave a second commandment: "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

The Law in the Heart

This new commandment or Law is not upon a tablet of stone; the Holy Spirit writes this new law upon our hearts and disposes and enables us to keep it. He does this by revealing in us and uniting to us the very person of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who becomes our indwelling righteousness. He so lives in us His own pure and perfect life of love and obedience as we receive Him and yield to His voice and will. Consequently, the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, the anniversary of the giving of the Law! This providential timing suggests to us that He would henceforth be to every believer the very substance of the Law and the power to perform it. Note Jeremiah 31:33:

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.

Yes, the law would be placed in their minds and hearts. This is how the Spirit sanctifies us. According to Romans 8:2, “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” When He enters the life and controls it, the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us as we live according to the Spirit and not according to the sinful nature.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Rom. 8:3, 4).

Christ has become for us, holiness: “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30).

All this was beautifully expressed and set forth in the second written covenant of the Law, “And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth” (Exod. 34:6). The second written tablets of the Law were enshrined in the Ark of the Covenant and thus kept and carried in their midst. Truly in type and shadow, that Ark was Christ. Christ keeps for us the divine Law, and then entering and abiding in us, He keeps it also in us as our life and righteousness.

Conclusion

We must now see that Christ has re-edited the Law, and His words become that which I am to keep and obey. And if I love Him I will obey *His* commandments. His words now become the Law for the life of the believer as He, the One Who has kept the Law perfectly, lives within the heart. He is the Ark where the Law is preserved and kept forever. He is the Covenant and the Covenant keeper for me. He now brings to me the greatest of the commandments: “And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deut. 6:5). This truth is found in the *second* giving of the Law by Moses; Christ becomes the *second* giving of the Law to us through His words and heart.

May the Lord bless this continued unfolding truth for this issue of *Straightway*. [S]

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“Thou Shalt Love the Lord Thy God”

Deuteronomy 6:5

Dr. H. T. Spence

Deuteronomy 6:4, 5 declares, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” This command is an important message for our lives. This call is very personal; it is not a generic call to our families or churches, although we all need to take heed to this statement. The command is for *me* to love the Lord *my* God. Such a personal command has not been seen before in Scripture. This last book of the Pentateuch, a transitional book of Moses for the second generation, reveals something that had not been seen before. The parents of the previous generation failed because they did not love God; thus they were disobedient and were *not* a people with faith and belief. The first generation thought constantly of returning to Egypt; their heart was back there (Acts 7:39b). There was no love for God; there was no love to do His will or to obey His word and ways. The first generation never came to a true love for God.

Carefully reading the Book of Deuteronomy, we find that one of the key purposes of the book is the second giving of the Law (Deuteronomy 5). It represents a crucial transitional burden from the precious heart of Moses in the

final days of his life. In Hebrew the name of this book is *Had de Borim* or “The Words,” particularly the last words of this dear emancipator to the next generation that would enter the Promised Land. His words were to a new generation, one that was very young in coming out of Egypt. Having been birthed in the wilderness during the forty years of wandering (a number were under 20 years old when the exodus took place), this generation now had come into their prime. Moses will speak to them of the Law from a different perspective. This generation was in a transition to a new possession; they were to give up the wilderness for Canaan. They were also in a transition to a new experience and a new life; they were going from tents to houses, a settled habitation instead of wandering, and a change of diet from the manna to the milk, corn, and wine of Canaan.

A New Revelation of God

Moses gave a new revelation of God: it was the revelation of His love towards them. From Genesis to Numbers the love of God was never spoken of—either of God’s love for them or that they were to love God. But here in Deuteronomy we have the words: “Because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed”

(4:37; see also 7:7, 8; 10:15; 23:5). This was an important truth to help them keep God's commandments.

We also read in this book of the *second chance* given by God. Before the new generation is committed to Joshua's charge, Moses, at God's command, rehearses the Law to them (chapter 5). Then in 10:12, 13 he gives the basic requirement:

And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul. To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

This is what God *now* requires of them for the coming days: obedience, loving obedience, flowing from the grateful consciousness of a precious relationship with God. The word *obedience* occurs some fifty times in this book and is a keynote of almost every chapter. Obedience is truly the end of the Law. Perhaps we may think God's Word is too hard to keep or obey, or too far off, or too high to reach. Note Deuteronomy 30:11–14:

For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

Paul quotes from this passage in Romans 10:6–10 as a hope to the Jews. God's commands are not impossible; the key is for us to love the Lord!

“To Love the Lord!”—what does this Hebrew word *love* mean? Love is that in which a man delights or which he earnestly desires. It implies a vehement inclination of the mind, and at the same time a tenderness and fullness of affection. It includes cherishing and protecting. There is a problem with this hope, however—not that it is impossible to love God, but that which is within the human heart tends to fight against a full love for God. We know this love is initially shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost according to Romans 5:5. But God must bring about a *change* in my heart to keep this first and great commandment. Yea, He must give me a new heart.

To Love the Lord Thy God

But we are told in Deuteronomy 6:5 that we are to love the LORD *Thy* God. I must first come to know *my* God before I can love Him. Yet, who is *my* God? We read in the Scriptures that He is called the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. He is also called the God of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; we read that Christ cried out on the cross, “My God, My God!” But who is *my* God? My God is He to Whom I give my life, my desires, my decisions, and my love.

Note Matthew 22:35–37:

Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

In Mark 12:28–34 we read that this individual was a scribe (sometimes the term *lawyer* and *scribe* are used interchangeably). The question in Mark 12:28 is, “Which is the first commandment of all?” Jesus responded:

The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

This event is also given in Luke 10:25–28; however, here the question to the Lord is, “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” The Lord answered the question with a question: “What is written in the law?

how readest thou?” The lawyer’s response was, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.” Jesus responded by saying, “Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.”

In each of these presentations, the command is to love the Lord *thy* God. Whatever controls our lives—whatever is the preeminent principle—that will be our love. Is the true and living God *my* God? Does my life give evidences to that acknowledgment? Or is the world *my* god? Are possessions *my* god? Do I love myself as *my* god? Dear reader, who is *your* God?

In Deuteronomy 6:5 Moses tells this second generation that each must love the Lord *his* God. When the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, they commenced the song with “The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is *my* God, and I will prepare him an habitation, *my* father’s God, and I will exalt him” (emphasis added). God was their father’s God, and He must be their God as well. Yes, God must be my personal God, and I must love Him. I must love Him for all He has done for me; He deserves my love.

Love rises in Deuteronomy 6 after the Law is addressed in chapter 5; for love is to be the motivation for keeping God’s Law. A life of true

love must be constructed upon the model of God's Law. God is the source of all authority; He must be in the central place of my heart; He must be the lawgiver of my living. He must be loved! But to what degree? The burden of these articles concerns to what degree am I to love Him affectionately, desiringly, passionately, cherishingly, and protectively.

To Love Him with All Thine Heart

Deuteronomy 6:5 calls upon us to love God, but we must love Him with all the powers of our being and with all the energy of these powers. It is surprising that the body is not mentioned within this command. It is not the physical aspect that God is addressing. Through the body love can be expressed with an embrace, a kiss, a cherishing, etc. But God is a Spirit; we must worship Him in spirit and truth. Thus we are called to love Him with the immaterial part of our being. Though Romans 12:1 calls upon us to give our bodies "a living sacrifice," holy and acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service, we are to love God with all that is within us. This is not unusual. For if we love someone, we do so with the immaterial part of our being. We can speak about the love of a wife for her husband or a husband for his wife, the love for parents, or for others. We can even love a person who is not present with us. We may even say, "I love you with all my heart." But

what does this mean? The command to love the Lord thy God begins with loving Him with the *heart*. Why is this first? What is the heart that is presented here?

According to the Bible, there are actually two hearts identified with an individual. There is the natural heart that pumps blood throughout the entire body. But there is also a spiritual heart that is part of the inward man; it is literal but part of the spiritual reality of a human being. According to Proverbs 4:23, all of the issues of life flow from this spiritual heart.

The physical heart beats approximately 100,000 times a day and about 3 billion times in a lifetime. This physical heart pumps about 6 quarts of blood continuously throughout the body, beating an average of 60–80 times a minute. Over the course of a day, these 100,000 beats shuttle 2,000 gallons of oxygen-rich blood many times through the 60,000 miles of branching blood vessels and capillaries that link together the cells of our organs and body parts.

This blood-filled muscle called the heart has become the universal symbol of love. The Greeks believed the heart was the seat of the spirit; the Chinese associated it with the center for happiness; and the Egyptians thought the emotions and intellect arose from the heart. Heart irregularities can include mur-

murs and arrhythmias. All of our emotions affect this heart in some way, either as a detriment or for the good of the individual. Deep sadness is a detriment to the heart, and laughter can affect the heart in a good way. A tragic circumstance can “break a heart” and can cause one to swoon. A traumatic event, the death of a loved one, can lead to a form of heightened risk for heart attack. Such trauma triggers the release of stress hormones into the bloodstream that temporarily stun the heart with chest pains and shortness of breath, mimicking a heart attack. In under a minute your heart can pump blood to every cell in your body.

On the other hand, there is a spiritual heart that is as truly real as the physical. It is the seat, the fountain from which all the issues of life flow; it is the fountain of our desires. It is where God wants to reside; it is where He wants to rule our lives. It is what He wants to conquer, for the heart is the throne where self abides. This context of heart in the Bible is never used for an animal, while the words “soulish” or even “spirit” may be. The heart is where self-consciousness resides and operates; the heart is where the soul is at home with itself. For this reason, men of “courage” are called “men of the heart”; similarly, the Lord is said to speak “in his heart” (Gen. 8:21). God is represented in the Scriptures as searching the heart and trying the reins. The heart is that

part of man that must be changed; for it is uncircumcised, hardened, wicked, perverse, godless, deceitful, and desperately wicked. Such a heart defiles the whole man; it is where the sin principle—the Adamic pollution—is located.

And yet it is the heart that God calls. The heart is where believing in Jesus Christ takes place. The heart is where the law of God is written in conscience. The heart is what grace can renew!

God is able through the power of the Holy Spirit and the cross-provision of His Son to remove the stony heart of the Christian. He can cause the heart to be fixed (settled) in the principles of His Word and filled with reverential fear for the Lord. Yes, it is with the heart man believeth (Rom. 10:9). The apostles prayed to God as the One Who knew the hearts of all men; therefore in Acts 1:24, He knew the one to take Judas’s place. In Acts 15:8 Peter reiterates that God knows the hearts of all men. Again, this is referring to the spiritual heart of the inward man. It is in this heart that the Holy Spirit and Christ dwell. It is in this heart that God’s love is poured forth by the Holy Ghost (Rom. 5:5). The earnest of the Spirit is given in the heart. It is truly this heart—this innermost, hidden, deepest part—that is the very center of all that man is. This is where, in the wicked, his greatest and deepest thoughts of iniquity reside (Gen. 6:5; 8:21).

Conclusion

Each time we read of the great commandment, both in the Old Testament and New Testament, the heart always takes first place—Deuteronomy 6:5, Matthew 22:37, Mark 12:30, and Luke 10:27. The greatest commandment is not any mechanical set of rules or a comparison of the commandments with one another. The greatest commandment is a principle—*thou shalt love*. Because selfishness and pride are a great part of the curse of sin, Christians are called upon to love. *The highest form of love must have the highest object*, and that object is God Himself. The Jews carried this commandment (Deuteronomy 6:4, 5) written on a piece of parchment and placed in phylacteries; God demands that we carry this commandment in our hearts.

My heart is where I live; the heart is where my motives reside; it is where my affections, desires, and ambitions reside; and it is the seat of my will. God calls us to love Him with all the heart! We must not believe this to be an impossible commandment, for God will help us to obey this command through the power of His Word and the grace of His Son. Yea, His own love within produces love. We will even read in Deuteronomy 30:6, “And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that

thou mayest live.” He commands such a circumcision in Deuteronomy 10:16, “Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.” This will also be declared by Paul in Romans 2:29: “But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” We believe this circumcision of heart is the work of sanctification found in the great atonement and redemptive work of Christ.

To love God is the first of all commandments. And “we love Him, because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19). Certainly the Love of God must dwell in all the parts of our complex nature, as we will observe in our next article. Loving God is a foretaste of heaven—*the joy of heaven is to love God perfectly*. [S]

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“Thou Shalt Love the Lord Thy God With All Thy Soul, Mind, and Strength”

Dr. H. T. Spence

In his spiritual walk with God, the Christian should come to understand eight unique men unfolded in the Bible. We give them in four couplets:

The *Old Man*, the sin principle
The *New Man*, Jesus Christ

The *Natural Man*, the natural human life

The *Spiritual Man*, the spirit within man

The *Carnal Man* lives the Christian life through the power of the flesh.

The *Spiritual Man* lives the Christian life controlled by the Holy Spirit.

The *Inward Man*, the inner aspects of man

The *Outward Man*, the physical aspects of man

Although a careful study of all of these eight men in their biblical contexts is needed to understand the deeper workings of grace, this article only addresses these last two men.

Every human being has an *inward man* that includes the soul, the spirit heart, the mind, the will, and the self. This inward or inner man is part of the entirety of man as it relates to his *immaterial* aspect. The mystery of life is baffling especially when considering the immaterial part of man.

Genesis 2 explains just what makes a living person. From a biological perspective, proof of life is judged by heart and brain activity. However, this view is incomplete. From the biblical perspective, proof of life must address the soul within the body. As long as the soul remains in the body, life continues—the body is preserved and its structure renewed. But once that soul leaves the body, the body is dead. Therefore, the soul is an integral part of life within the body while still very distinct from the body.

First Peter 3:4 mentions the “hidden man of the heart,” the internal man, referring to the soul. This man is what men often draw from in their pursuit of life—the driving power, the positive power, the visionary power, etc. These all come from that inward man, that invisible part of man. Second Corinthians 4:16 states, “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.” While the outward man is always in the process of perishing, the inward man is renewed, especially to a Christian.

It is in the inward man that the Holy Spirit does His renewing and saving work. Ephesians 3:16 declares, “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory,

to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.” This inner man or inward man is not the *New Man*, for the inward man may still be corrupt, subject to vanity, and alienated from the life of God. The inner or inward man is the entirety of the invisible part of man yet made up of distinctive parts. It is man’s higher nature, intellectual, moral, and spiritual; it is the spirit of man. Those departed from this life are sometimes mentioned as *souls* and sometimes as *spirits* (Gen. 35:18; 1 Kings 17:21; Matt. 27:50). God is revealed as spirit and soul (Isa. 42:1; Jer. 9:9; Heb. 10:38; John 4:24).

Loving God with All Our Soul

The love of God must dwell in all parts of our complex human nature. We have observed the imperative need of loving God with all of our heart, the first aspect of the inward man’s love for God. But how does a Christian love God with all his soul? In Genesis 2:7 we read, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man *became* a living soul” (emphasis added). The soul in theology is understood more as the living powers or the soulish life. Soul relates to the animation of life. What is the way we love God?

Let us carefully observe the unfolding of this living of the soulish life through the words of the apostle Paul. In Acts 26:5 Paul said of his

life before his conversion that he “lived a Pharisee.” This was his form of life. Romans 1:17 declares, “The just shall live by faith.” In Romans 6:2 the apostle asserts, “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” In verse 10 Paul then says, “For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.” Christ’s living was living unto God. In Romans 8 we are called upon to no longer live the Christian life in the power of the flesh. Rather, the Spirit should be controlling our living.

Continuing this unfolding, Romans 14:8 states, “For whether we live, we live unto the Lord.” Note Paul’s insight in 2 Corinthians 13:4:

For though he [Jesus Christ] was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

In Galatians 2:20 the words are striking:

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

In Philippians 1:21 there is the emphatic statement: “For to me to live is Christ.” Paul’s words in Titus 2:12 declare, “Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” Peter will also add words

revealing the soulish life: “But live according to God in the spirit” (1 Pet. 4:6). And John will tell us, “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him” (1 John 4:9).

We are to love God by living for Him through our powers of desire with the intent of obedience unto Him. If we love Him, we will keep His commandments. And we must love Him with our soul: by our “living powers” of motive, intent, conscience, and will—always for Him.

To Love God with All Our Mind

But the great commandment continues to call us to love God with all our mind. The mind is dedicated to thought, knowledge, imagination, and understanding. But we must carefully note the difference between the *brain* and the *mind*. The brain is a physical part of the outward man; the mind is the immaterial part of the inward man. The mind has always been a major battleground for the Christian; it is the place within man that the Devil seeks to control in order to lay hold of the heart of man. It is a mercy from the Lord that He has appointed the mind to be private and not capable of being publicly read. Not even the Devil can read our minds. Nevertheless, God can (Ps. 139:1–4, 23, 24). Even though the Devil cannot read the

mind, he still can project thoughts that Paul calls “the fiery darts of the wicked” (Eph. 6:16). God, the Devil, and the world all want to control our thoughts, because if the thought life can be controlled, it can lead to the heart.

“As he [man] thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Prov. 23:7). According to 2 Corinthians 4:4, the Devil is ever endeavoring to blind the minds of the human race from seeing the gospel of Christ. He attempts to blind men through various sights and sounds, through the media, through music of a generation, through contemporary philosophies, through the powers and manipulations of false education and religion, and even through creating a bad environment in which we live. When Satan has dominion over the thoughts of the mind, he has control over the heart and the will of that individual.

Note Paul’s words in Ephesians 2:2, 3:

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

This fleshly, worldly life was our love before becoming a Christian—not only the lust of the flesh but also the lust of the mind.

Nevertheless, God's amazing grace and the wonderful work of redemption are to destroy the works of such thoughts of darkness. In the place of the world and the Devil, God gives us His Word and Spirit to enable us to love Him with all our minds. This change initially began with His sending godly sorrow that worked repentance unto salvation. It is God's deep desire to control the thoughts of the Christian. But we must remember that the Devil can still work on the thinking of a Christian by projecting thoughts of fear, doubts, discouragement, oppression, and even depression. He can send thoughts of temptations to sin and leave God. Yes, even as a Christian, the Great Commandment calls upon us to not only bring our thoughts under the dominion of God's Word and Spirit but also to love Him with all of our minds. This is why it is imperative to constantly control and guard what we think.

Note Peter's admonition in 1 Peter 1:13: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Yes, we must gird up the loins of the mind. There is also the need of Romans 12:2, of ever "renewing" (present tense) the mind. There is also the command of Philippians 2:5 for the mind of Christ to be in us; we must think as He thought about life, about God,

and those thoughts must come to an honorable humiliation in our living of life, even unto death, to the glory of the Father. Second Corinthians 10:3–6 presents the key to a victorious life of right thinking:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalleth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience [even in our thinking], when your obedience is fulfilled.

We must also remember that according to Romans 8:6, 7, "to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Yes, we must be careful, prayerful, and disciplined about our thought lives, for we are to love God with *all* our minds. We must take every thought through the litmus test of Philippians 4:8:

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

We cannot even afford to have passive minds that wander and are not girded up or disciplined. For after a while it will be difficult to rein in such a thought life to a Christian mindset that immediately arrests bad thinking. And we must remember, according to James 1:8, that a double-minded man is unstable in *all* his ways. Oh, the unstable lives of many Christians. Such instability is the product of double mindedness. While trying to think spiritually at times, much of the time their mind is in the world, on the flesh, or in just plain sin. Such a mind is strongly condemned by God. The great commandment *cannot* be fulfilled with such a mind.

As we continue to grow in the grace of Christ and in His Word, we must learn to love God with *all* of our minds. We must learn to control our minds, to learn how to dismiss any dead thought, anything that is not a contributing factor to a walk with God. Yes, we must learn to think on those things under the protective provision of Philippians 4:8. We must learn to never permit to lodge in the mind any doubt or thought that weakens our faith in God. Loving God is to love His Word, and loving His Word will feed a love to think on that Word. This is meditation. What we love we tend to think about; therefore, God must be the One upon Whom we must think! Oh, may we love Him with all our minds.

To Love God with All Our Strength

In Mark 12:28–34 a lawyer (scribe) desired to hear what Christ had to say about this important question, “Which is the first commandment of all?” Many no doubt thought that the first or the greatest commandment in the Law related to offerings and sacrifices. So much is said in Leviticus about these gifts to God because the right worship of God consisted in the due offering of these. But in Mark 12:32, 33, after the Lord had given His response to the question, the scribe himself responded:

Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

Jesus commended him for his response. *For the measure of our love to God is to love God without measure.* For the immense goodness of God deserves all the love that we can possibly give to Him. God must be the supreme object of our love.

Thus it becomes clearly evident that all of the Law is fulfilled in one word—love. There is a different preposition in the presentations of Matthew and Mark. In Matthew 22:37 it is the Greek preposition *en*, and could read to love God *in* all the heart, soul, and mind. But in Mark 12:30 it is the Greek preposition *ex*,

which carries the meaning of to love God *with, from, or out of* the heart, soul, and mind. These verses cover every aspect of loving.

When the great commandment is quoted in Mark 12, the word *strength* is added. Yes, it is also out of the fountain of our strength that we are to love Him. The Greek word for strength is *ischus*, meaning “to have or to hold, denoting ability, or force, or strength.” We see this word used in 1 Peter 4:11, “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.” In Ephesians 1:19 and 6:10, this word is used of the strength of God bestowed upon believers. The phrase “the power of His might” indicates strength afforded by power. In 2 Thessalonians 1:9 “the glory of His power” signifies the visible expression of the inherent personal power of the Lord Jesus. But here in Mark 12 and in Luke 10:27, strength describes the full extent of the power wherewith we are to love God. But how are we to personally view this? What about your abilities and strength? How do you use them and to whom and for whom do you use them?

At the beginning of life, we basically are conscious only of our own desires and happiness. We play and eat and live for our own selves. In our teenage years we become more conscious of the world, what it can offer, and the hopes and aspirations

from it for ourselves. Our early adult life becomes so involved in occupation, the making of money to secure possessions; our abilities and strength are often consumed in that which brings us our desires.

Nevertheless, we must come to know the will of God for our lives, what we are to do with our existence, our abilities, our talents, and all of our energies from day to day. The apostle Paul came to this for his own life as expressed in Colossians 1:28, 29:

Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

This passage is more intense in the original Greek explaining that Paul’s strengths and energies were expended for Christ. He further stated in Romans 12:1 that the body (everything it represents) is to be placed on the altar of sacrifice with a heart of love. Our loving God with our abilities becomes the workings of Christ in us. As true Christians, we cannot be lazy in our lives for Christ; we must labor and strive. Study is certainly needed in a life for Christ. According to Ecclesiastes 12:12, because of abilities poured out, “much study is a weariness of the flesh.” But according to 2 Timothy 2:15, we must do it for Christ’s sake: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth

not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Our loving God with our strength is expressed in a variety of ways. In Ezra 2:69 we read of the people giving according to their ability. In Daniel 1:4 those taken in the captivity had the ability to stand in the service of the king. But to what will we give our allegiance and strength? Abilities are given by God (Matt. 25:15), but how are they used by us? Will these abilities be used in loving God and His will? Sometimes our strength is in the form of tangible things. In Acts 11:29 we read, “Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea.” But we previously mentioned in 1 Peter 4:11, we are to minister “as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” God has given us the strength, the ability of living; we must give it back to Him and thus love Him with that strength or that ability.

Conclusion

In this issue of *Straightway*, we have observed that this great commandment is the call for the uniting of all the inward powers of our being: the heart, the soul, the mind, and the strength. Psalm 103:1, 2 cries out, “Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul,

and forget not all his benefits.” This is to be a singular, superlative love to “thy God.” All that we are must be united in order to love Him. All our love, in and of itself, is too little to bestow on Him, and thus our powers must unite. The first and greatest commandment for obedience is to come from the *spring* of obedience—*love* for God.

There is, however, something that must be understood about loving God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. God permits me to love other objects and at the same time to love God with all the heart. Some things I am *not* to love: the world, the flesh, the Devil, wickedness, and sin. Some things I am permitted to love. I am permitted as a husband to love my wife, even as Christ loved the church. I am to love the brethren out of a fervent heart. In Psalm 26:8 David stated, “LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.” In Proverbs 17:17, “A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.” God permits me to love these things or persons. God even noted that Abraham loved his son Isaac (Gen. 22:2). Abraham loved Sarah; Isaac loved Rebekah. Yet we read that Solomon loved many wives and how this became a snare to him. My loves can be a blessing or a detriment to me and my walk with God.

There is another love that Jesus said was *like* unto the first. It is

not the same or equal to the first, but *like* the first: “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” We must find out what it means to love our neighbor as ourselves. There can be a corrupt view and there can be a noble view of this second commandment. When Christ re-edited the Law, He took all of the Law and narrowed it down to two law-governing principles. In Matthew 22:40 we read, “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

How complicated is it to live for God as a Christian? Well, love is the crucial key: love is to be found in the heart, soul, mind, strength, and out of them. Note Romans 13:8–10:

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Paul wrote to Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:5, “Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 12:31 that he would show us “a more excellent way.” Then we are carefully led into chapter 13, a classic chapter of sanctification,

of perfect love. Similarly, the truth of the Love Slave is presented in Exodus 21 only *after* the Law given in chapter 20.

The Law given in the Old Testament is now re-edited by Christ (Matt. 5:20–22, 27, 28, 31–34), and His sayings become our Law to keep. In John 15:10, 12 we are told, “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. . . . This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.” It is the provision of sanctification within Christ’s great atonement that brings a person into this all-consuming love: “And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them” (John 17:26). This love is to be “perfected” (1 John 2:5; 4:12, 18). Sanctification is the inward work within the heart, the soul, the mind, and the abilities to bring us to the hope of fulfilling this commandment. It is one thing to state that the *things* mentioned in Romans 8:35–39 will never separate me from the love of God, but can we equally say that these *things* will not separate me from loving God. Christ provided spiritual circumcision, an act of redemption for my heart in order for me to love God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength (Deut. 30:6). Thank God for the hope of intimately knowing this commandment as a real part of the Christian life.

In these days one of the greatest perversions of truth that has pervaded the institutional church is the distorted view of “the love of God.” Perhaps it is part of the subtle ploy of the Devil to keep us away from the real truth of our deep need of love *for* God and a deep love for the true saints of God. May we come to know this greatest commandment: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.” S

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**Second Semester of
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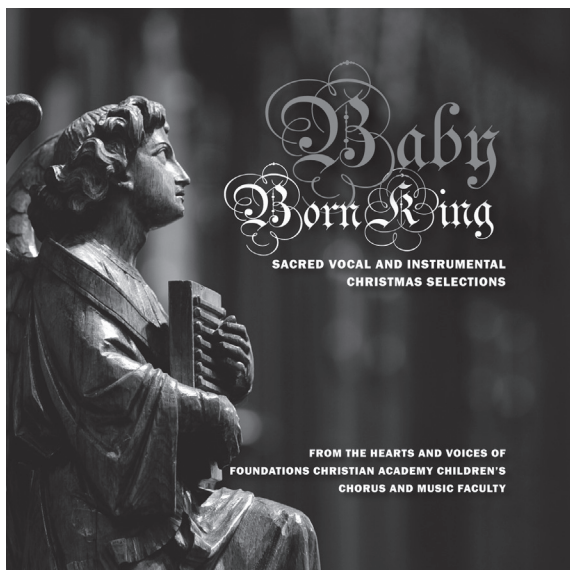
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