

Ten Commandments

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THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

And God spake all these words saying: I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other Gods before my face. (Exodus 20:1-3)

The Book of Exodus tells how the Children of Israel had been led forth from slavery in Egypt, and by various trials and temptations were prepared to receive the Divine laws of life and salvation. These laws were given by the voice of God, speaking from Mount Sinai. And the Lord added; If ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye will be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people. (Exodus 19:5) As it was with the representative race of Israel, so is it with each man. Obedience to the Divine law is the means to his regeneration. By that obedience he gains spiritual life, and becomes part of heaven-a peculiar treasure unto the Lord.

The laws of the Decalogue-the Ten Commandments-contain all truth concerning the relation of man to God, and of God to man. It is for this reason that the commandments are called a covenant, or eternal agreement. If man will obey them in his life, then all the promises of the Lord will be fulfilled for him, and he shall receive eternal life, and be conjoined with the Lord.

The Israelites also pictured the spiritual history of the race. Men had become slaves to appearances. They had neglected and perverted spiritual truth until it was lost to them, and, with it, they lost their freedom. Spiritually, men were in bondage. They served in the land of Egypt, which represents external reasonings. They were lost in the endless maze of scientifics, because they neglected spiritual truth, which alone reveals the order and harmony within nature.

From this mental bondage the Lord led man forth to re-establish with them a knowledge of spiritual life and principles. Thus it is said: I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

We are taught that the Ten Commandments were given to restore spiritual freedom. Yet we know that the moral principles they teach were known to all people. No nation could survive whose laws did not include them. But they were known from necessity. They were enforced solely for civic reasons. These laws were matters of necessity to protect their interests and the welfare of the state. They could be forsaken with impunity, if the community was not damaged by such action. So to accomplish the Divine purpose the Commandments were given with a great miracle evidenced to all the Israelites, that they might be obeyed as articles of religion at all times, and from the heart, not as before, calculatingly, selfishly, to gain the advantages of citizenship and peaceful commerce-to be abandoned whenever disobedience did not run counter to national policy.

That this is still the common attitude is evident. The commandments against killing, covetousness, stealing and adultery, were flagrantly broken by the many acts of violence committed during the recent war. Those men who obeyed the commandments as a spiritual duty, and from love for the Lord, obeyed them during the war also. The others, when they were away from their homes, saw little reason to restrain themselves. In the protection of being one of many in uniform, in a foreign land, they broke the commandments repeatedly, with little fear of reprisal.

Thus, although these laws are known to all people who have any civilization, if they are not written in the heart and do not rule in the conscience, they are not obeyed, but are merely enforced, to break forth in a horrible form whenever the enforcing agency becomes weak. If we look at them apart from religion, they are only laws of convenience to preserve that which people desire more than the individual liberties which they forbid. Therefore, as national laws, it is thought that there is no merit in keeping them, nor sin in breaking them, as long as civil order is not affected. And so spiritual freedom could not be preserved by the general knowledge of these principles common to all people, for then there was no spiritual aspect to them.

But, by the fact that the Lord gave them, and commanded that they be obeyed in heart and mind, they became spiritual laws. Men were taught to obey them in the true sense - not just for their country and their rights - but for the rights of all mankind. From that time forth they could be seen as spiritual principles, to be obeyed, not for self-interest, but because the Lord ordered it. No longer were men able to put them aside as of no consequence when their nation was not involved. They were morally responsible to God for every offense against the law. Spiritual freedom was re-established, for men could choose between their own desires and spiritual law. And they knew that spiritual responsibility rested upon their own shoulders. They were to love the neighbor by being just to him according to these laws for the sake of the Lord. From that time forth, this moral code based upon the Lords will has been the standard, as it is represented by Him: 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 and great commandment; and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. In these two great commandments the others are re-affirmed, for, first, there must be a complete acceptance of the Lord, then, from obedience to Him, justice is practiced toward the neighbor. Which is to say that the laws of the Ten Commandments are to be obeyed and applied to all the people because the Lord commands it. So also the Lord said: He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me.

The commandments are of the utmost importance to everyone.

We often hear that they are for the children and for the simple. It is said that intelligent people do not break them. Others say that they are out of date; they claim that there can be no standard of right and wrong, and that our own intelligence and inclination is to dictate our course of life. How foolish are these ideas. The Ten Commandments are, indeed, for the children and for the simple. But, pre-eminently, they are for the intelligent that they may grow wise. Our whole civilization refutes those who say the average adult is not tempted in these matters. Covetousness is more often the rule than the exception. We envy or covet all the comforts and conveniences our neighbors possess and which we lack. Merchants, in their advertising, appeal to this trait of our nature. Advertising sometimes make unnecessary things so desirable that some are willing to sacrifice necessities to get that which they covet; stealing is still common, even in its grossest form, and in a more subtle form it invades the whole business-world. Marriage is no longer considered sacred. Atheism and materialism are frequently encountered. False oaths and false witnessing are common. These facts are borne out by the news reports. The Ten Commandments are broken by many people. Nor are they only broken by others. Every one of us breaks them many times in their more interior forms. And yet we are taught that we can progress in wisdom of life and in regeneration only by obedience to them.

The first law is the most important, for it is the basis upon which all the rest become spiritual and enduring, rather than mere civil rules to preserve the nations. Upon its acceptance morality becomes true and unselfish service to the neighbor; without it, the same moral laws become matters of selfish acceptance for as long as they serve our purpose. And we feel free to break them when we can avoid detection. Therefore the Divine origin of these laws is clearly and forcibly stated, together with the first Commandment: And God spake all these words, saying: I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before My face. Most people are quite convinced that this law is seldom broken. Yet no single law is broken more often than this. Every affection and desire that has power with us is as a God which we serve for the moment. For we must remember that worship is of life. That principle and power which rules our life is the object of our worship, for every deed looks to it as an end. Men are often led to do things for the sake of ambition or reward. At that time and by that deed they worship ambition or reward as their God.

Our idolatry is far more interior than that of olden times. It is clearly defined in the Arcana Coelestia, when we read: idolatry consists not only in worshiping idols and graven images, and other gods, but also in worshiping external things without their internal - those who are in the love of self and of the world are in internal idolatry, for they worship themselves and the world and perform holy ceremonies for the sake of self-adoration and gain; that is for self as an end, not for the Lord's church and kingdom as an end, and thus not for the Lord. (4825)

A man worships what he loves, and if he loves money or pleasure or honor above all things, then these are the gods he worships, and these loves are called internal idols, since he constantly looks to them in everything that he does. But so far as a man loves the things of the church which the Lord has taught, the Lord is the center of his thought, and so far he does not worship idols.

Because man interiorly breaks one or more of the commandments many times in his lifetime, the churches of Christendom have fallen into the habit of making the general confession that all men are sinners having no merit or good of their own. Yet this general confession does not remove any evil habit or desire from our hearts. To see that we often break even the very first of the Commandments, and the others also, at least in their more interior forms, can convince us of our tendencies toward every evil; but to admit the general tendency does not alter its effects.

Such a confession is ineffective. Instead of that, or together with it, we are to center our attention on one particular phase of evil with us. We are to see that it is evil and say that it is evil. We are to detest it in ourselves, and shun it as a sin opposing the presence of God in our hearts. By this clear sight we begin to keep the first Commandment as well as all others. For by it we see a false God and seek to put it away. It is true, we may break the others, and even this first one many times while fighting to conquer that evil which is clearly seen; but if our fight is genuine, these other lapses would be from habit and blindness not pre-meditated or intentional - and therefore not attributed to us. We are responsible only for those evils we see, and understand to be evil, and yet still desire and do.

With this interior fight, we are, of course, to obey the Commandments as literally recorded. And we are to obey them from the acknowledgment that it is the will of the Lord that we do so. But we are to begin real obedience to them as we see the interior evils they warn against, and fight them one by one as they are revealed to us in our lives. If we thus seek to shun evils, we are strengthened by the Lord, and our lives are gradually remade by the truth accepted from the Word. Every time we shun an act

inspired by selfish ambition or greed, we put away a false god from the face of the Lord, and in our lives of useful daily work we will worship the Lord alone, who leads us forth from the bondage of evil to the happiness and freedom of truth. Amen.

Lessons: Exodus 20; Matthew 5:17-48; Doctrine of Life 53.

THIRD LESSON: Doctrine of Life 53-55.

THE DECALOGUE TEACHES WHAT EVILS ARE SINS.

What nation throughout the whole world does not know that it is evil to steal, to commit adultery, to commit murder, and to bear false witness? If nations did not know these things, and by laws prohibit such evils, it would be all over with them; for a society, commonwealth, or kingdom without these laws would perish. Who can suppose that the Israelitish nation was, beyond all others, so stupid as not to know that these things are evil? One may therefore wonder why those laws, universally well-known throughout the world, were so miraculously promulgated from Mount Sinai by Jehovah Himself. But listen. They were thus miraculously promulgated, in order that men might know that those laws are not only civil and moral laws, but also spiritual laws; and that to act contrary to them is not only to do evil against the citizen and against society, but is also a sin against God. Those laws, therefore, by their promulgation from Mount Sinai by Jehovah, were made laws of religion; for it is evident that whatever Jehovah God commands, He commands in order that it may be a matter of religion, and that it ought to be done for His sake, and for mans sake, that he may be saved.

Those laws, because they were the first-fruits of the Word, and thence the first-fruits of the Church which was about to be established by the Lord with the Israelitish nation; and because they were, in a brief summary, the complex of all things of religion, by means of which there is effected conjunction of the Lord with man, and of man with the Lord, were, therefore, so holy that nothing could be more holy.

That they were most holy, may appear from the fact that Jehovah Himself, that is, the Lord, descended upon Mount Sinai in fire, and with angels, and from thence promulgated them by word of mouth; and that for three days the people prepared themselves to see and hear; that the mountain was fenced about, lest any one should approach and die; that neither the priests nor the elders were to come near, but Moses only; that those laws were written by the finger of God on two tables of stone; that Moses face shone when he brought them down the second time from the mountain; that they were afterwards deposited in the ark, and the ark in the inmost of the tabernacle; and that over the ark was placed the mercy-seat, and above this were placed cherubim of gold; that this was the most holy thing of their Church, and was called the Holy of Holies; that outside the vail, within which was this Holy of Holies, were arranged the things which represented the holy things of heaven and of the Church, which were the candlestick with the seven sconces of gold, the golden altar of incense, and the table overlaid with gold on which was the bread of faces, with the curtains of byssus linen, crimson, and scarlet round about. The holiness of the whole tabernacle was from no other source but the Law which was in the ark. (Life 53-55)

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS FROM EXODUS

And God spake all these words, saying:

I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Thou shalt have no other gods before my face. Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto a thousand generations of them that love me and keep my commandments.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him innocent that taketh His name in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy beast, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may belong upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbors.

(Liturgy, 1939 edition, page 181)

SEVEN QUESTIONS ON THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

1. What is a means to a mans regeneration?
2. What are the Ten Commandments called?
3. Why were the Ten Commandments given?
4. What made the Ten Commandments spiritual laws?
5. What does idolatry consist in?
6. What kind of a confession of sins is ineffective?
7. From what acknowledgment should we obey the Commandments?

Lesson 11-K Exodus 20

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him innocent that taketh His name in vain. (Exodus 20:7)

The importance of this commandment is emphasized many times in the Word. We repeat it in a similar form every day, in the prayer when we say: Hallowed be Thy Name. This is the same, for if the Lords name is hallowed, or kept holy, it cannot be taken in vain, or be profaned by light use. In the Gospel of Matthew it is written: But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. (12:36)

The reason for the emphasis on this commandment is manifest, if we consider that the Lords name is all that by which He Is known. In the spiritual sense, a name signifies the quality, for, essentially, it is the quality that distinguishes one thing, or one person, from another, and this is represented by the name. The qualities by which the Lord is known to us are infinite, even as He is infinite. But we may classify those by which we know Him according to His proper names used in the Word, such as Lord, God, Jesus, and Christ, and the Word, containing infinite truth and good. He is all truth and doctrine in the church from the Word, just as He is all that is genuine in the church and its worship, and in every good and innocent state with men.

Not to take the Lords name in vain means to refrain from mixing what is pure, holy and innocent, with impure, vain, empty and profane things. Thus the Lord taught: Give not that which Is holy unto the dogs. We are not to mix and profane the holy things of the Word and of the church with empty and vain desires of our sensual and corporeal life. We must not use them in an impure way to gain power over others, or to gain a false advantage, or for hypocritical pretense.

True reverence, which is the spiritual basis for obeying this commandment, arises from love for the Lord in our heart and mind. From this love we observe external order, and avoid those words and acts which would dishonor Him. However, that internal cannot be established immediately. With the regenerating man the order, at first, is just the opposite. We first see what course we should follow from the teachings of the Word. We then establish that order in externals, and the Lord helps us to overcome our internal evils and to establish a genuine internal love in their place. Thus we must first learn to keep the Lords name holy In our speech, and then learn to think of the Lord from this same reverence, and, as we do this, the Lord Himself can remove our evil and selfish loves, and endow us with the inmost quality of His name.

We are taught that the proper names of the Lord are to be kept holy because they are full of Divine meaning.

The power of the Lords name is infinite. In the Word it is said that anything asked in His name is granted, and that all who believe on His name are saved. Since this name is so holy, interiorly, it is not to be profaned even in externals. The lightest and most common form of profaning the names of the Divine is to use them in light and empty conversation. Men often say that they do not mean anything by using His name in that way. They thus think that this excuses them from responsibility. But that is part of what is forbidden by the second commandment. To use the Lords name in that way without any

meaning is exactly what is meant by using it in vain. From such empty usage we can establish a habit with ourselves, and with those who hear us, which is removed only with great difficulty. Within such a meaningless use of the Lords name there is something of denial of His Divine power and presence, and something of mockery of the Word, and the simple innocent obedience to its teachings with which we had been endowed in childhood.

There is a very real danger in external profanation such as this. It opens a way in us for influx from the hells of profanation. It gives them a foothold, and, once admitted, they constantly influence us to profane more deeply.

The next step of external profanation is to use the Lords name in anger to curse another. Such a curse is vain even in its very words, for the Lord loves all men and wills their salvation. He condemns no one. The evil cast themselves into hell. They reject the Lords salvation, and condemn themselves. Therefore any wish of evil upon another, and any condemnation of him, is from hell. And it is the more severe as it rises from deeper hatred. In the spiritual world the law is that any wish of evil upon another returns upon the one who wished it. This is also the law as to the spirit of man, even while he lives in this world. When we use oaths to condemn another, we open our minds to the influx of hatred and revenge from the hells. We cannot do spiritual harm to the one we hate, but we do poison our own spiritual life. This is the meaning of the Lords words that we should love our enemies. Evil punishes itself on the plane of mans spirit. We are not to judge anothers spiritual state. We are not to punish another from hatred. If a punishment is to be just, it must look to the correction of the evil, it must be motivated by the love of furthering the possibility of that mans salvation. Hatred, more than any other evil, cuts off heavenly life. And the ultimate of this hatred is the angry condemnation of another, with the use of the Lords name.

Another abuse is to try to establish the truth of a statement by a solemn oath. So we often hear such a statement as this: As God is my witness, or, By God I will do it, if its the last thing I do. Such oaths are all vain. Truth can stand on its own, It does not need an oath to strengthen it. Therefore the Lord said: Sware not at all. Swearing to the truth of a thing is usually either a sign of sudden anger, or of the falsity of the thing sworn to.

The more uncertain the man, or the more false the testimony, the more he feels that it must be strengthened by an oath. The worst aspect of that evil is that he confirms himself in his falsehood by this oath. He hardens himself to it, identifying his honor and self-respect with his ability to uphold his falsehood. And this can go so far that he persuades himself that he is right, and he cannot be swayed from his position by any means.

The spiritual man, or one who is trying to regenerate, will avoid such oaths. He knows that truth has all power with those who love it. Therefore there is no need to bolster it by oaths. If it is true, it will stand. If it is not true, it should fail. In this way the person is not identified with anything except the love of truth, and he is free to accept new truths, and to reject whatever was false in former views, without dishonor or distrust.

The Lords name is especially the Word, for from the Word alone is there knowledge of Him. To keep the Word holy is to treat the book of the Word with respect and care. We must especially avoid joking about the names and stories of the Word, for it contains infinite truth. When it is profaned we close

our minds to that heavenly influx which gives us enlightenment, when the Word is read reverently. We have all experienced how a joke from the Word can destroy a sphere of holiness, when that portion of the Word is read in worship. And we know the New Church, which has been given the internal sense of the Word, should be especially careful to avoid any profanation of its letter, for it is the basis and containant of the spiritual sense.

A still more interior form of profanation of the Lords name is when the truth is known but is not lived. By thought about the truth the heavens are present, but if we do not live according to the truth we have accepted, our evil and selfish loves remain and pervert and profane the truth as soon as it enters into the interior thought.

Within ourselves the Lords name is those states of innocence, called remains, with which every man is endowed by the Lord after birth in this world. They are not mans, but are the Lords with him. Without these remains, no man could be saved. In so far as we observe the commandments in external life, particularly the commandment not to use the Lords name profanely, the remains implanted within us are drawn forth into our adult life. They are the inspiration to seek more truths from the Word to guide our lives. Under their influence every good and truth we can receive becomes part of our character to continue our preparation for heaven.

We can protect these states of innocence when we shun all profanation as a sin against God. Then, in so far as we shun profanation, the Lord flows into our inmost being, with the Divine of His love and wisdom, which He gives man to feel in himself as his own. And this the Lord does through the Divine Human in which He can be received by men. The Lords name then is that quality of spiritual life with which every man is endowed during his progress in regeneration.

So in the Lords Prayer we ask that this name, or this spiritual quality may be given to us in everything of our lives. And we pray thus, not from our selfish natural life, but from those truths of the Word already received and made our own. These truths are the Lords with us. They form our knowledge of Him, and thus make up His name, the name by which we know Him. As we learn more of the spiritual truths and goods taught in the Heavenly Doctrine, we will come to see the Lord ever more clearly in the Divine use of all things in heaven and earth. We will see the Lord in His Divine Human, ruling our lives, governing the world of nature, providing for the eternal welfare of all mankind. This is the new name by which the Lord may be known in the New Church. This is the new name which the Lord will write upon those who look to Him in the Divine truths which form the Word of His Second Coming. As He said in the Book of Revelation: Upon him that overcometh will I write the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which cometh down from heaven from My God, and I will write upon him My new name. (Revelation 3:12)

Lessons: Matthew 12:30-37; Apocalypse Explained 815:12, 13.

To believe in His name has the same signification as to believe in Him, since the Lords name signifies every state of faith and love by which He is to be worshiped, and by which He saves man. This is signified by His name, because in the spiritual world names that are given to persons are always in accord with what their affection and life are, and in consequence what each one is is known from his name alone. So when any ones name is pronounced, and the quality that is meant by the name is loved, that one becomes present, and the two are united as companions and brethren. The quality of

the Lord is everything of faith and love by which He saves man, for that quality is the essence that goes forth from Him; therefore. when that quality is thought of by man the Lord becomes present with him, and when it is loved the Lord is conjoined to him. Thus it is that those who believe in His name have eternal life. This shows how necessary it is that man should know the quality of faith and love, that is, the Lords name; also how necessary it is to love that quality, which comes by doing those things that the Lord has commanded. The names Jesus and Christ involve the same quality, since JESUS means salvation, and CHRIST (or MESSIAH) Divine truth, which is everything of faith and love as to knowledges, doctrine, and life. When, therefore, these names are mentioned the quality they signify must be thought of and the life be brought into harmony with it. This is what is meant by the words of the Lord in Matthew XVIII:19, 20...There is, indeed, a presence of the Lord with all and a love towards all; and yet man can be led and be saved by the Lord only in the measure of his reception of the Lord by faith in Him and love to Him. (@AE 815[12])

SIX QUESTIONS ON THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

1. What does this Commandment mean?
2. From what does true reverence arise?
3. What is said of the power of the Lords name?
4. What evil, more than any other, cuts off heavenly life?
5. What, especially, is the Lords name, and why?
6. What are remains?

Lesson 12 - K Matthew 12:30-37

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy beast, nor thy sojourner that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made seventh lay; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. (Exodus 20:8-11)

Usually the third commandment is taught merely in relation to external worship. There is so much to think about as to its external application, that we are apt to pass over the interior message. Externally it teaches that we are to give six days to our ordinary affairs and business, and one day to the teachings of the church and to worship. This was the leading idea of the Sabbath observance of the Jews, and it helped to preserve the days representative holiness. At that time the heavens could be conjoined with earth only by strict literal obedience to the Divine commandments. The people had little knowledge of why the commandments were holy, and what was represented, but they obeyed because the Lord commanded obedience. By that simple obedience the heavens could be present.

The observance of a Sabbath day holy to the Lord had its origin in the Ancient Church, after the harmony and order of life of the Most Ancients had been destroyed. Their worship and doctrine became purely representative picturing the truths of religion revealed by the Lord. The observance of the Sabbath represented the presence of the Lord who was to come to redeem mankind. For this reason the Sabbath was sanctified and set apart, on which no work was to be done. It became a day to be feared a day in which men must obey the various prohibitions that their obedience might appease the Lords anger. The Sabbath became a day of slavish observance to minute laws which brought death to those who broke them; a day of misery, instead of a day of worship and instruction and a time of joy and recreation.

The Lord, while He was on earth, abrogated the Sabbath as to representative worship and made it a day of instruction in the doctrine of faith and love. (@AC 10360) He aid this by revealing its nature and purpose, for He asked, is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life or to kill? (Mark 3:4) He therefore healed the sick on that day, and walked through the fields instructing His disciples. He also taught: The Sabbath was made for men and not man for the Sabbath. And He added, Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath. (Mark 2:27, 28)

The Sabbath as it had been observed was abolished because it merely represented the Lord to come.

When the Lord had come, such a representation was no longer needed. This was brought out in the early church. Thus Paul wrote: Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of the Sabbath days; for these are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. (Colossians 3:16) The representatives of Jewish ritual and worship came to an end when the Lord revealed Himself to men.

It was on this account that the Christian Church established their worship on Sunday - the first day of the week. For on this day the Lord fully revealed His Divinity when He rose from the tomb, as it is written: And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher, at the rising of the sun. (Mark 16:2) This, the day on which the Divine work of redemption was finished the

day on which all former prophecies and representatives were fulfilled - became the Christian day of worship.

Some have reasoned that the Lord did not specifically name Sunday as the new Sabbath, so we must continue as before and observe the seventh day to really obey the third commandment. Such objection is quite external. We have authority to make the change. The Sabbath was observed on various days even with the Jews. The essential then as now, is that it be a day of worship. Therefore holy days were called Sabbaths no matter what their place in the week. At the institution of the feast of ingathering it is said; On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the earth, ye shall keep the feast of Jehovah seven days; on the first day is a Sabbath, and on the eighth day is a Sabbath. (Leviticus 23:39) In the Arcana Coelestia these Sabbaths are said to represent the conjunction of truth with good and the eighth day was also called a Sabbath because it also signifies the beginning of a new state. (@AC 9296) Thus the essential of a Sabbath was present in the union of good and truth and in the new state begun by this conjunction. Culminating on Easter Day, the Lord fulfilled the representation of the Sabbath. He began a new state of the world, the state of genuine worship and instruction which begins individual regeneration. To make that beginning is to accept and worship the Lord. This is represented by our worship on the first day of the week. When we completely accept the truth in life, our worship becomes genuine. The essential of the Sabbath is present with us, when we look to the Divine Human of the glorified Lord. He is revealed to us as He was to the disciples on the first day of the week when He rose again fully glorified. In this the Divine work was completed, and on that day God rested. This completion was the seventh day, but to the world it was the first day, for it was the beginning of a new church.

Spiritual things are not bounded by days and weeks, times and seasons. However, it is necessary that we do set aside a special day for worship and instruction in spiritual things, or else we would not come into the seal life of religion. A constant internal keeping of the Sabbath is possible only with the regenerate who do not live from their evil proprium. They are in the Sabbath state which is heaven.

But they could not have reached that state, if they had not earlier learned to obey the precept, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

The Sabbath itself signifies rest and peace. It is the rest which comes from knowing the truth, and living it from love. That is the marriage of good and truth. The whole purpose of mans life is that he may come into this marriage into rest from the conflict between the Divine Order and his own disorder. A measure of peace is ours as soon as we accept the truth we need. It established confidence. We know that hardships lie ahead, but we also know that by following the truth, we can be guided beyond them to spiritual victory. There is a great measure of peace and security in that knowledge. Thus there is a Sabbath of rest, in receiving Divine instruction to serve as our guide.

There is also worship in such a Sabbath, for there is acknowledgment of truth - a desire to live it - and thankfulness for it. These are the essentials of worship. In acknowledging the truth we humble ourselves, giving thanks for our new understanding, and praise to Him who leads us by it.

The Lord in His Divine Human is the inmost of the Sabbath, for He is the complete and Divine union of good and truth - of love and wisdom - and thus He is complete rest from temptation which is perfect peace. Only as we accept Him in our minds and hearts can He give us genuine peace. We do receive

Him by learning and living the truth of the Word. That is why we set aside the Sabbath for a day of instruction. By instruction in the truth we immediately receive something of His peace and rest. After learning to live and to will it we are given more, until we are led to a state of regeneration in which there is true peace and rest from our labors. That the Lord is this rest He taught when He said: Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28) And also, These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. (John 16:33) Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. (John 14:27) And we receive His rest and peace when the good of life and the truth of faith are conjoined in us. That conjunction is effected by the Lord after we have labored as of ourselves to accept and to live the truth He has given us.

All the conditions for the complete observance and blessings of the Sabbath are contained in the internal meaning of the words of the third commandment. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but - the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy beast, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

To remember the Sabbath is to have as the inmost purpose of life to regenerate. By the six days of labor are meant our struggles to overcome the evil in our life.

The seventh day is a victory in temptation. Then the truths we have used in our battles are given to us to have as our own. In that state we fully acknowledge the Lord to be the victor over our evils. By not working on that day is meant that no longer do our evils assail us, to be fought as of ourselves. Henceforth we are to live from the Lords truth, trusting completely to His wisdom and love. In that trust and confidence there is no conflict. The others mentioned in the commandment who are also to abstain from work on that day represent the various degrees of mans life. The son is the internal truth of the understanding. The daughter is the internal affection of his will. The manservant and maidservant are the truth and good of his natural life which have served him during the combats of regeneration. The beast signifies external affections, and the stranger or sojourner means those knowledges stored in his mind, but not yet made part of his life. All those are brought into order by the Lord during temptations, so that on the Sabbath day there is rest from combat - from mans labor to live the truth on all planes of his life.

But it is the Lord who fights for man in his battles against evils and not the man alone as it appears. So it is said: in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. As in the Genesis account of creation, this refers to the regeneration of man. The six days are the period of combats in temptation. While the man labors during those six days, the Lord inmost within forms a heaven, an earth, and the seas. Heaven is his internal man formed from the truth he is making his own by daily use. The earth is the external man remade to ultimate these truths to bring forth the fruits of his use. The seas are all those things of natural and sensual life which must be reordered so that they may serve the spiritual man. These things are made in man while he works as from himself, for if man will but open the door by his effort to obey, the Lord will inflow to effect the real transformation. Thus man cooperates with the Lord, and there is a conjunction of the Lord with

man, and of man with the Lord. This is the blessing meant by And the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.

We remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy when we cooperate with the Lord to bring the Sabbath-state into our lives; when we learn the truth and intend to live it. When we seek, by our labors, to effect the heavenly marriage within our lives. We know that it is the Lord who does this, but He can do it for us only as we ourselves labor to bring it about.

Therefore our Sundays are to be days of worship and instruction, of physical rest and recreation, of friendship and joy. We are to keep the Sabbath inmosty - to reflect upon the path we have traveled, to receive strength and guidance on the journey that lies ahead. But to keep the Sabbath day essentially means to learn the truth, to live the truth, and to form our lives upon it. Every day will then be a remembrance of the Sabbath, and the Lord will bless our days with good things and give us everlasting peace. Amen.

Lessons: Mark 2; True Christian Religion 301

THIRD LESSON: The True Christian Religion 301-303

REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, THAT THOU KEEP IT HOLY: SIX DAYS THOU SHALT LABOR AND DO ALL THY WORK; BUT THE SEVENTH DAY IS A SABBATH TO JEHOVAH THY GOD.

That this is the third commandment, may be seen, Exodus 20:8, 9, 10; and Deuteronomy 5:12, 13. By this in the natural sense, which is the sense of the letter, is meant, that six days are for man and his labors, and the seventh for the Lord, and for mans rest from Him. Sabbath, in the original tongue, signifies rest. The Sabbath, among the sons of Israel, was the sanctity of sanctities, because it represented the Lord; the six days, His labors and combats with the hells; and the seventh, His victory over them, and thus rest; and because that day was representative of the close of the whole redemption of the Lord, therefore it was holiness itself. But when the Lord came into the world, and thence the representations of Him ceased, that day became a day of instruction in Divine things, and thus also a day of rest from labors, and of meditation on such things as are of salvation and eternal life; as also a day of love towards the neighbor. That it became a day of instruction in Divine things, is manifest from this, that the Lord on that day taught in the temple and synagogues, Mark 6:2; Luke 4:16, 31, 32; 13:10; and that He said to the man who was healed, Take up thy bed and walk; and to the Pharisees, That it was lawful for the disciples on the Sabbath day to gather the ears of corn and to eat, Matthew 12:1-9; Mark 2:23 to the end; Luke 6:1-6; John 5:9-19; by which particulars, in the spiritual sense, is signified, to be instructed in doctrinals. That that day became also a day of love towards the neighbor, is evident from those things which the Lord did and taught on the day of the Sabbath, Matthew 12:1-14; Mark 3:6 to 9; Luke 6:6-12; 13:10-18; 14:1-7; John 5:9-19; 7:22,23; 9:14,16. From these and the former passages, it is manifest why the Lord said, that He is Lord also of the Sabbath, Matthew 12:8; Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5; and because He said this it follows that that day was representative of Him.

By this commandment, in the spiritual sense, is signified the reformation and regeneration of man by the Lord; by the six days of labor, and combat against the flesh and its concupiscences, and, at the same time, against the evils and falsities which are with him from hell; and by the seventh day, is signified his conjunction with the Lord, and thereby regeneration.

In the celestial sense, by this commandment, is meant conjunction with the Lord, and then peace, because protection from hell; for by the Sabbath, is signified rest, and in this highest sense, peace; wherefore the Lord is called the Prince of Peace; and also He calls Himself Peace. (@TCR 301-303)

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS FROM DEUTERONOMY

Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep and do them.

I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Thou shalt have no other gods before my face. Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto a thousand generations of them that love me and keep my commandments.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him innocent that taketh His name in vain.

Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.

Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors wife.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house, his field, or his man-servant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or anything that is thy neighbors.

(Liturgy, 1939 edition, page 182)

SEVEN QUESTIONS ON THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

1. In what church did the observance of a Sabbath day holy to the Lord have its origin?
2. What change in respect to the Sabbath day did the Lord make while He was on earth?
3. Why was the Sabbath day changed in the Christian Church from the seventh to the first day of the week?
4. What does the Sabbath itself signify or mean?
5. How do we receive something of the Lords rest and peace?
6. What is the inmost meaning of remembering the Sabbath day?
7. Who fights for man in his battles against evils?

Lesson 13 - K Mark 2

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be prolonged upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. (Exodus 20:12)

The Ten Commandments inwardly contain all the truths of the Word, expressed in simplest form. They list all the hereditary evils which tempt man, and command that they be shunned. And we are taught that if man will shun these ten collective evils, the Lord can then remove the tangled web of particular evils that reside within them. The laws were given in the order in which they must be interiorly accepted to change man from being a form of evil loves to become a heavenly character.

The first commandment states the fundamental of all true religion. We must worship the one true God in all things of our lives as He reveals Himself to us in His Word. By shunning all other gods, the false motives and evil intentions which seek to rule us, we truly acknowledge the Lord. This acknowledgment is the fulfillment of the first commandment. It is the first of worship. Without this essential acknowledgment all other truths become falsities, for they would deny their source. Therefore the command to shun all other gods is the first of the ten laws.

The second commandment is next in importance. To avoid taking the name of the Lord in vain means to avoid profanation. The Word is the sole means by which we can learn the truth to do it. If we, who have the Word to use, should reject its holiness by joking about it, or holding it in contempt, we, to some degree, close the way to heaven. If we inwardly reject and profane the Word after having seen its real holiness, and, at the same time, continue to live its teachings externally to hide our real nature, then the only pathway to heaven would be closed to us by our own evil choice. Therefore the command to shun profanation of the Word is the second law of the Decalogue.

The third law, to remember the Sabbath day, is the command to use the Word to build a new life from it. We are to labor six days, that is, throughout the trials of temptation, to live the truth as from our own power. Then the Lord gives us rest from our labors. We find that He has worked for us, inmosty within our efforts. And the Sabbath of rest from combats, and of enjoyment of the use we love, is possible because of His work. Therefore it is said to be holy to Him, and also that He blessed and hallowed it. This commandment is positive in form. We are to keep the Sabbath. After shunning the worship of all false gods, and shunning profanation of the Word, we are able to keep the Sabbath, for the real Sabbath of rest, during temptation and after it, is our trust in the Lord's truth. We keep the Sabbath when we keep the truth in our hearts, and obey it.

The fourth commandment is also positive in form. Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be prolonged upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. These words seem to have little spiritual content, yet the commandments were given in the order of their importance to the process of individual regeneration. This law is the fourth in the order of their interior reception.

Like the rest of the Word, this commandment has three distinct senses or planes of application: the natural plane which teaches exactly what the letter of the law says, plus a more impersonal or more general application; secondly, it has a spiritual meaning; and, finally, a most interior or celestial application.

In the natural sense this precept teaches that our parents our father and mother - are to be personally honored by us. This should be acknowledged by every one. But there is a rational and an irrational interpretation of it. In childhood there is a distinction between the use, and the person who performs it. So children are to honor their parents most literally. They are to obey them from love and respect. But in adult life there should be a more rational understanding of this law. We can truly honor our parents to the degree they perform the use of parenthood. Even evil parents care for the material needs of their children. They love their children from self-love, because they are their own, and they reflect themselves. A good parent loves his children from this common love also, but, in addition, he loves them because they are to become a form of use in the Lord's kingdom. Wise parents, from this love, care for a child's spiritual welfare as well as his natural welfare. This is shown in the sacrament of baptism, which is the first step in caring for a child's spiritual welfare. In adult life parents are to be honored for the uses they have performed for their children, and not because of blood-ties alone. If they have not cared for their spiritual welfare then those who did this for the child are to be honored in their place. Therefore, in the natural sense, the parents we are to honor include not only father and mother, but also teachers and priests, and, most generally, the country itself, which has endowed all its children with natural and spiritual advantages, and freedom to perform their use according to their abilities.

The Jews broke this commandment by their traditional interpretation, as the Lord said to the Pharisees, They had complained that the disciples had transgressed the traditions of the elders when they ate with unwashed hands. The Lord replies: Why do ye also transgress the commandments of God with your traditions? For God commanded saying, Honor thy father and mother, and he that curseth father or mother let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honor not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandments of God of none effect by your traditions. (Matthew 15:3-6)

The gift here referred to was an offering to the temple as a means of salvation. The Pharisees were enriched by this, and so they sought to encourage it, even though it deprived some parents of a refuge with their children in their old age. Because the priestly class of Israel had thus perverted their doctrines for worldly gain, their church was brought to an end, and a new church was established in its place.

The spiritual sense of this commandment teaches the real use of parenthood - that of preparing men for their eternal place in heaven. That use is Divine, and is done only by the Lord Himself, although He operates through natural parents, teachers, and friends. Yet it is not through these persons as individuals, but through the church, that is through the truths of the church as they are received by men. And so, in this more interior understanding, we are to honor God and the church as our spiritual parents. That knowledge is evidenced when, to the Lord's words that they were the sons of the devil, they answered: We have one Father, even God. (John 8:41)

But the Christian Church also was brought to an end. Like the Jewish Church it came to the desolation of the age because it taught the traditions of men, although these denied the commandments of the Lord. Among others, they perverted the spiritual meaning of the fourth commandment. They denied the Divine fatherhood of God, because they divided the Godhead into three persons, thus destroying

any understanding and spiritual acceptance of a personal God. The Lord Jesus Christ became but the human aspect of an invisible God, the Son born from eternity. The mother function of the church was perverted when the church adopted the doctrine of salvation by faith alone. The church is a spiritual mother because she reforms and remolds man by her doctrinal truths, so that, as to his spirit, he may be born again. But by the doctrine of salvation by faith this real function of the church was denied. According to that doctrine man needs no gradual remolding and reforming according to the truth - he is born again as soon as he receives faith in the Son of God as his personal Savior. The church's function is thus destroyed.

But the inmost sense of this commandment is broken most often. In that sense by Father is meant the Lord Jesus Christ in His Divine Humanity, and by mother, the communion of saints. Both the fundamental truths involved in these names have been lost and perverted in the church.

The Lord is not considered our Heavenly Father, the Creator. He is thought to be one of the three persons in the Godhead, and to Him is attributed the work of redemption, while to God the Father is given the work of creation, and to the Holy Spirit the work of sanctification. So it is common in the churches of the world to pray to the Father in the name of the Son. Yet the Lord taught that He was the only God, that He was the Father, that the Father was in Him as our soul is in the body, and that no one could see the Father except in Him, just as no one can see the soul of another except through the body that covers it.

These things the Lord taught when He said: I and My Father are one. (John 10:30) He that seeth Me, seeth Him that sent Me. I am the way, the truth, and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me. If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also; and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him. Philip saith... Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus said unto him, Have 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, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that speak unto you speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. (John 14:8-10)

By the communion of saints is commonly understood the entire group of holy saints of the Catholic and High Episcopal churches. Others think that it is the one hundred and forty and four thousand of the book of Revelation, who sang praises to the Lamb. But the Writings teach that the communion of saints is the universal church of the Lord, which is made up of all good people, not matter what their faith or doctrine, who believe in one God, and in a life of obedience to His teachings. They may be of different religions on this earth, but when they come to the spiritual world, they readily accept the truth, and are numbered among those in heaven. All good people are of the church, for that which is good with them is from the Lord, who alone is good. And because they love that which is good with them, they truly worship the Lord. The very center, the heart and lungs which vitalize and purify this universal church, is the church where the Word is known and read. From this, genuine truth goes forth, freeing man from bondage to superstition, and gradually establishing genuine worship even in externals.

This idea of the communion of saints, our celestial mother, was also perverted by the former church. In the pride of their own intelligence they made salvation depend upon membership in their particular organization with the real church, which can be known to the Lord alone.

The true church - the Lords Bride - is the Holy City, New Jerusalem. It is the Divine Doctrine from God, received by men. The Lord is not united with the falsities in mans mind, but with the truths there. So, although a man may be a member of an organization of the New Church, he is not truly a citizen of the Holy City - of the internal church - until every evil of his mind has been subdued. For it is written, There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie. Only that part of man which had been reformed by the truth of the church is of it. The rest of him must still be cleansed.

Thus we can truly keep the fourth commandment only if we honor our spiritual father and mother. We must acknowledge in heart and mind that the Lord Jesus Christ is the one God of heaven and earth, our Divine Father; and that the church which is from Him is the mother which will reform our lives in her womb of Divine truth, so that by victory over temptation we may be born again of the fire of Divine good, and of the Holy Spirit of Divine truth.

When we can truly see and acknowledge these things, then, on every other plane, this commandment will be kept, for we will thank our Heavenly Father for providing all the kind and loving friends, parents, teachers, and companions, who have served the Lord by preparing us for our eternal place.

Lessons: Matthew 15:1-14; True Christian Religion 305-307.

HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER, THAT THY DAYS BE PROLONGED, AND THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH THEE UPON THE EARTH.

This commandment is so read, Exodus 10:12; Deuteronomy 5:16. By honoring thy father and thy mother in the natural sense, which is the sense of the letter, is meant, to honor parents, to obey them, to be grateful to them for benefits, which are, that they feed and clothe their children, and introduce them into the world, that they may act in it as civil and moral persons; and also into heaven, by the precepts of religion; thus they consult for their temporal prosperity, and also for their eternal felicity; and they do all these things from the love in which they are from the Lord, whose office they perform. In a respective sense, is meant, the honor of guardians from wards, if the parents are dead. In a wider sense, by this commandment, is meant, to honor the king and magistrates, since they provide things necessary for all in common, which parents do in particular. In the widest sense, by this commandment, is meant, that men should love their country, because this nourishes them and protects them; wherefore country (patria) is called from father (pater). But honors should be paid by parents to their country, king and magistrates, and implanted by them in their children.

In the spiritual sense, by honoring father and mother, is meant, to adore and love God and the church. In this sense by father, is meant God, who is the Father of all; and by mother the church. Infants and angels in the heavens know no other father and no other mother, since they are born there anew of the Lord by the church; wherefore the Lord says, Call no one your father on the earth; for one is your Father. who is in the heavens, Matthew 13:9. These things were said for infants and angels in heaven, but not for infants and men on earth. The Lord teaches the same in the common prayer of Christian churches: Our Father, who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. That by mother, in the spiritual sense, is meant the church, is, because, as a mother on the earth feeds her children with natural food, so the church feeds them with spiritual food; wherefore, also, the church is everywhere in the Word called mother. (@TCR 305-6)

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT AS UNFOLDED IN APOCALYPSE EXPLAINED

Those who honor father and mother have heaven and the happiness there, because in heaven no other father but the Lord is known, for all there have been generated anew from Him, and in heaven by mother the church is meant, and in general the kingdom of the Lord. It is clear that those who worship the Lord and seek His kingdom will have life in heaven, also that many of those who honor father and mother in the world do not live there long. (@AE 304[43])

This commandment was given because honor to parents represented and thus signified love to the Lord and love towards the church, for father in the heavenly sense, that is, the Heavenly Father, is the Lord; and mother in the heavenly sense, that is, the heavenly mother, is the Church. Honor signifies good of love; and length of days, which such will have, signifies the happiness of eternal life. So is this commandment understood in heaven, where no father but the Lord is known, and no mother but the kingdom of the Lord, which is also the Church. For the Lord gives life from Himself, and through the Church He gives nourishment. That in the heavenly sense no father in the world can be mentioned, the Lord teaches in Matthew: Call no man your father on earth; for one is your father who is in heaven (23:9). (@AE 966)

As Divine truth united to Divine good goes forth from the Lord as a sun, and by this heaven and the world were made (John 1:1, 3, 10), it follows that it is from this that all things in heaven and in the world have reference to good and truth and to their conjunction in bringing forth something. These ten commandments contain all things of Divine good and all things of Divine truth, and there is also in them a conjunction of these. But this conjunction is hidden; for it is like the conjunction of love to the Lord and love towards the neighbor, Divine good belonging to love to the Lord and Divine truth to love towards the neighbor; for when a man lives according to Divine truth, that is, loves his neighbor, the Lord flows in with Divine good and conjoins Himself. For this reason there were two tables on which these ten commandments were written and they were called a covenant, which signifies conjunction; and afterwards they were placed in the ark, not one beside the other, but one above the other, for a testimony of the conjunction between the Lord and man. Upon one table the commandments of love to the Lord were written, and upon the other table the commandments of love towards the neighbor. The commandments of love to the Lord are the first three, and the commandments of love towards the neighbor are the last six; and the fourth commandment, which is Honor thy father and thy mother, is the mediating commandment, for in it father means the Father in the heavens, and mother means the Church (@AE 1026)

A SHORT PAPER ON THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

Write below a short paper on some of the meanings of the Fourth Commandment.

Lesson 14 - K Matthew 15:1-14

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

THE EVIL OF HATRED

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be liable to the judgment. But say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be liable to the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca shall be liable to the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be liable to the hell of fire. (Matthew 5:21, 22)

The commandment Thou shalt not kill, was known from Most Ancient times. The Jews had established penalties to meet the various offenses against it, It was to these penalties that the Lord referred. But He taught that the evil of murder included much more than the mere external act. He taught that as much spiritual harm was done by willing to do evil to the neighbor, as by the deed itself. He divided this internal form of breaking the commandment, Thou shalt not kill, into three degrees to be angry with thy brother without a cause, to say to thy brother, raca, and to say to thy brother, thou fool.

Our text reveals a more interior aspect of the fifth commandment, yet it has puzzled many people. Part of the reason lies in a faulty translation, another difficulty is the word raca, which is not translated; and part is the failure to understand the punishments indicated for the various evils. Therefore, before we can understand the internal sense, we must first establish the genuine sense of the letter, to serve as a basis for a deeper understanding.

The first spiritual-moral application given by the Lord, is that rash anger makes one liable to the judgment. Raca is interpreted without a cause in the English Bible but the Greek word means rashly, vainly, or thoughtlessly. It applies to unjust anger, rising without thought, inspired by a false cause. It is really lack of self-control. It is to permit our natural feelings to overthrow our common sense.

The penalty for such an individual breach of the law is to be liable to the judgment. This refers to the first court of the Jews, a court of twenty -three magistrates who heard and judged in cases of murder and other capital crimes. Their decisions could be appealed to the higher court, so they were considered the lightest of the courts of judgment.

To say to thy brother, raca was to make one liable to the council. Raca is an Aramaic word which means vain, empty, utterly worthless and vile. To the Jews this expression signified an utter contempt of one for another, which exceeds anger. It was the most virulent form of heaping abuse upon another. By it was signified that such a man was without any good. This charge is said to make man liable to the council.

The council was the much dreaded sanhedrin. It was the highest court of the Jews, and it had power of condemning to death. It was this court that condemned the Lord.

The most grievous of these internal offenses against the law is to say to ones brother, thou fool. This is liable to the punishment of the hell of fire. Whereas raca means the absence of good, and implies that man is therefore worthless, to pronounce a man a fool, here means that he has deliberately chosen to do evil, knowing that it is evil. The word translated fool means one who rebels. Thus it is not absence of good, but the actual rebellion against God, which is the denial of good, and the deliberate choice of evil.

To make such a charge against a man is a very serious offense, for it seeks to destroy not only his body, but also his reputation - his ability to perform uses among men. It is a malicious charge, and if not made to expose an evil person, or to serve the public welfare, it is punishable by the hell of fire.

The hell of fire, or gehenna, refers in the natural sense to the valley of the son of Hinnom, in Hebrew Ghi Hinom, translated in Greek, gehenna. In that valley idolatrous Jews worshiped Molech called passing through the fire. It was condemned from earliest times, and in the code of Moses there are specific laws condemning it and giving the punishment for disobedience. Because of these abominable practices in that valley it typified hell, the place of damnation, to the Jews.

From these explanations we can see more clearly the natural meaning of our text: Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be liable to the judgment. But say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be liable to the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother Raca, shall be liable to the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be liable to the hell of fire. The Lord used this natural imagery to show that to be angry unjustly, is to act from evil, which is to temporarily desire the death of another. To condemn another of worthlessness, intentionally, is to cherish a cold distrust continually, which is more hurtful than rash but momentary anger; for such contempt poisons the mind, and holds it in evils. But the most severe judgment is given to him who not only grows angry, but abides in this anger and distrust of another, and accuses him of evil - of being a rebel against God, thus publicly defaming him. This is burning hatred. It is the very essence of hell, and it should be shunned by everyone lest its flames should consume the spirit and drive man ever deeper into hell.

The three punishments are images of spiritual penalties. To permit our natural, evil desires to rule our understanding and to dominate our wills, which they do in rash anger, is to pervert our lives to some extent. It is the acceptance of disorder by neglect, rather than by deliberate choice. Nevertheless, even though this is a sin of omission, it is the acceptance of evil, and is thereby punished by the least grievous of the hells. If man persists in ignoring his duty to control his natural affections of evil, he will make a place for himself in hell, though it be the least malignant one.

If man permits his evil desires and his unjust anger to remain in him to gradually poison his mind, then he chooses a lower hell. He then permits his understanding to be warped so that he fails to see any good in the one who has roused his anger. This is cold intellectual contempt for another. If man persists in this, refusing to see any possibilities of good in another, then he is in danger of choosing a lower hell. Each man is born to the performance of some use. This is of the Divine Providence. If man refuses to acknowledge that the Lord can turn another to the performance of use - if his human judgment condemns another as completely worthless - he is denying the providence of God. He thus shuts off the light of reason from truth, and opens his mind to the persuasions of falsity from hell. Because he has permitted the hell of falsity to rule him, he establishes that hell as his choice in the future life.

The worst punishment is reserved for those who go beyond sudden fits of anger, and beyond cold intellectual contempt which resides in the understanding. It is the lot of those who actively hate another, who desire to destroy him, even as to his daily life and work. Such a hatred drives them to accuse the other of rebelling against all that is good, to choose evil. It accuses the other of a complete lack of charity and use and of acting from evil motives, seeking to despoil his neighbors. If such a

charge can be foisted upon another, even though he is innocent, it will destroy his opportunity to perform his use among his neighbors, and will make him an outcast from society. To deprive another of his reputation maliciously, is to breathe in the burning flames of hell, to delight in them, and to choose them for ones eternal habitation.

The spiritual sense of this teaching becomes visible, if we remove our thought from persons, and substitute in their place charity. We know that every man is born into the world for the sake of heaven. He accepts heaven, if he in his daily life becomes a living form of charity. We are also taught that every man becomes a form of charity if he does his work - the work of his office, function, or employment, faithfully, justly, and sincerely. We are also instructed that we are to love another for the use he performs, that is, not for external reasons, but for internal. We are to love all men for their uses, either real or potential; and our anger is to be directed against evil and falsity which would interfere with use. This is true not only of others, but of ourselves. We are to love our use and hate those proprial things in us which interfere with its full perfection. Anger against evil is a just anger. If we have it, we seek to serve the welfare of another; therefore inmosty within such anger there is life and love - it is the exact opposite of thoughtless anger which seeks to destroy the object of its wrath.

Before regeneration men are in all evils from heredity. These are not accepted and made our own until they are seen clearly from the truth, and are still retained.

But from this heredity we are self-centered. From infancy until regeneration is begun, we love those who serve us - who amuse us, flatter us, or teach or provide for us. And just as naturally we dislike those who do not do those things. If our friends in this natural sense should fail to do these things we become angry with them. This is that rash or unjust anger spoken of in the text. When our friends correct their attitude toward us, they are readily accepted again into our good graces. However, if they remain in the attitude which unjustly offended us, our temporary anger may turn to contempt. We overlook them, and consider them beneath our notice. If their criticisms are just, and especially if they influence others, our contempt is further enflamed until we breathe hatred and revenge against them. All these things are possible only because, before regeneration, we are self-centered, desiring others to serve our desires whether they are just or not. Our attitude toward others at that time-is determined by their attitude toward us. If they help us to get our way; we love them. ii they do not further our desires, they are disliked to varying degrees; but if they seek to change our loves by criticism or censure, they are hated.

Also in oneself the truth is the means by which everyone is led to. see his self-centered state, and the evils which further its presence. This truth is what is really hated, for it seems to actually destroy all the pleasures which had made life worthwhile. So our evil natures seek to preserve themselves against truth. It is because of this that the Lord said: Except ye lose your life for My sake, ye shall not see life. If we do not love the self-love born of evil which we inherit, n~ cannot be brought into heaven.

So it is that unjust anger is the expression of our unregenerate proprium which hates ail things, and all persons who seek to turn it from its evil affection for self. That anger is directed to the person who crosses its desires. It becomes contempt for one who will not serve it because of the truth which he accepts, and it becomes active hatred against one who seeks to change its way of life. Thus the internal sense of this text is shown to be the various degrees of enmity against charity, which culminates in the third and most fearful state of seeking to destroy charity itself, as it is with men.

But because evil looks to persons, rather than to the abstract qualities, anger, contempt, and open hatred are expressed against those persons who are in charity from living the truth, rather than against the truth itself. Yet, if the man becomes depraved enough to see and realize his evil state, and yet wills to remain in it, he also comes into the open hatred of the truth itself. In this state he destroys the Lords presence with him, and glorifies himself. That insanity is the inmost source of the inflowing spheres of selfishness, love of dominion, and murder. Because all evil and falsity seeks to overthrow heaven, and especially the Lord and all that is from Him with men, the devil - the personification of all the hells - is called, A murderer from the beginning. (John 8:44)

From these things we can see the various degrees of murder. On the natural plane it is to seek the death of the body of another, or to seek his bodily harm. More interiorly it is to be angry with another, even to the degree that we seek to destroy his civic life - his opportunity to perform his use among men. Yet more interiorly, in the spiritual sense, it is hatred of charity, and of the truths by which charity is established, and by which our selfish proprial life is subdued. And inmosty, or in the celestial sense, it is to hate and to seek to overthrow the Lord and His kingdom.

Because everyone is in hatred before regeneration, it rests with us all to examine ourselves to discover the things of hatred in us. that we may shun them as sins against God. Only as this is done can heavenly love, the opposite of hatred, inflow into us from the Lard.

In self examination, if we are willing to see our evils - especially that of hatred and if we pray that the Lord will reveal this to us, we will be shown how it is present in our lives. Then with the Lords help we may begin the work of regeneration, As the evil of hatred is put away, we interiorly obey the command, Thou shalt not kill, and in the place of the hatreds and enmities thus removed, heavenly love, charity, and mercy inflow. From these heavenly gifts we can serve the Lord in our daily life - indeed the charity we thus practice is internal worship, and the thoughts, affections and deeds of our life become suitable gifts to offer on the altar of the Lords temple. To offer such a gift is possible only with those who shun the evil of hatred, as is said in the verses following our text: Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar , and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

The altar of the Lord means true worship in life. To offer our gift there is to live our daily life in charity. Yet we are warned not to offer our gift, if our brother hath aught against us. We are not to make a pretense of charity while we make no effort to free our heart of ill thoughts, of contempt for others in our understanding, and of the hatred of ill will. First we must be reconciled to our brother. We must shun those evils of hatred, and then we will be able to offer our gift; for then it will be acceptable, then it is the genuine life of charity. The Lord will receive such a gift, and in return will bestow upon us the bounteous blessings of heavenly life, that we might remain in their enjoyment for evermore. Amen.

Lessons: Matthew 5:13-24; True Christian Religion 309-312.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL.

By this commandment, Thou shalt not kill, in the natural sense is meant, not to kill a man, and not to

inflict on him any wound of which he may die, and also not to mutilate his body; and moreover not to bring any deadly evil upon his name and fame, since fame and life with many go hand in hand. In a wider natural sense, by murders, are meant enmity, hatred, and revenge, which breathe death; for murder lies concealed within them, like fire in wood under ashes; infernal fire is nothing else; wherefore one is said to be inflamed with hatred and to burn with revenge. These are murders in intention, but not in act; and if the fear of the law, and of retaliation and revenge, were taken from them, they would burst forth into act; especially if there be treachery or ferocity in the intention. That hatred is murder, is evident from these words of the Lord; Ye have heard, that it was said by the ancients, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be liable to the judgment. But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother rashly, shall be liable to the fire of hell, Matthew 5:21-22. The reason is, because all that is of the intention, is also of the will, and thus in itself of the deed.

In the spiritual sense, by murders, are meant all methods of killing and destroying the souls of men, which are various and manifold; as to turn them away from God, religion, and Divine worship, by injecting scandals against them, and by advising such things as create aversion and also abhorrence. Such are all the devils and satans in hell, with whom the violators and prostitutes of the sanctities of the church, in this world, are conjoined. Those who destroy souls by falses, are meant by the king of the abyss, called Abaddon or Apollyon, that is, the destroyer, in Revelation 9; and in the prophetic Word by the slain as in these passages; Jehovah God said, Feed the sheep, of the slaughter, which their possessors have slain, Zechariah 11:4-5, 7. We have been slain all the day, we have been accounted as a flock for the slaughter, Psalms 44:22. Jacob shall cause those who are to come to take root; is he slain, according to the slaughter of those slain by him? Isaiah 27:6-7. The thief cometh not, but that he may steal and kill the sheep; I have come that they may have life and abundance, John 10:10. Thence it is, that the devil is called a murderer from the beginning, John 8:44.

In the celestial sense, by killing, is meant, to be angry, rashly, with the Lord, to hate Him, and to wish to blot out His name. These are they concerning whom it is said, that they crucify Him; which also they would do, in like manner as did the Jews, if He should come into the world, as He did before. this is meant by the Lamb standing as it were slain, Revelation 5:6; 13:8; and by one crucified, Revelation 11:8, Hebrews 6:6; Galatians 3:1. (@TCR 309-312)

SEVEN QUESTIONS ON THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

1. When the Lord was on earth, what other meanings did He give to this Commandment?
2. If a man persists in leaving his natural affections of evil uncontrolled, where is he making a place for himself?
3. When does a man choose a lower hell?
4. For whom is the worst punishment for breaking this Commandment reserved?
5. Why is every man born into the world?
6. What kind of evils is a man born with?
7. What does the altar of the Lord stand for or mean?

Lesson 15 - K Matthew 5:13-24

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)

All revelation has direct teachings about chastity. The teachings of the Old and New Testaments, and of the Writings, beautifully modify each other, and show how each revelation was added to complete and explain the former one. The Old Testament gives the direct command, Thou shalt not commit adultery. This was understood only as a command against physical unfaithfulness and impurity. The Lord on earth taught a more interior application. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. (Matthew 5:27) This teaching builds a spiritual morality with those who obey it. The rational reason for obedience is given in the Heavenly Doctrine, where we read: in proportion as anyone shuns adulteries of every kind as sine, in the same proportion he loves chastity. (Charity 74)

Now the New Church is to build a new morality based on spiritual rational principles. But in the world standards of morality are man-made. The ideal of marriage has little of religion in it. Only in literature do we find the ideal of eternal devotion and everlasting love. The churches teach that marriage comes to an end at the death of one of the partners.

Because the former church looks upon marriage only as an answer to the civil problems of this world, men obey its precepts in a merely natural way. Divorce and separations are lightly entered into. The common opinion of the day, and the teachings of philosophers agree that marriage is but a civilized form of adultery, legalized and limited. the natural mind there is no difference except that as a civil contract and social responsibility.

Few look upon the delight of adultery as the very presence of hell with man, or on delight of marriage as heaven with him. They reason that marriage is for the sake of procreation, and to curb carnal lust. The former Christian Church taught this natural idea of marriage from the first. Paul called it a permission because of mans weakness, but he said the ideal is complete celibacy. In The First Epistle to the Corinthians he wrote: To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. (7:2) Also, I say therefore to the unmarried and widows. It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn (7:8, 9) The reasons for his advocating celibacy are explained in this way: He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. (7:32, 33)

These things have formed the religious thought about marriage. It is no wonder that men accustomed to such reasoning find it hard to understand the teaching of the New Church that the chastity of marriage makes one with religion and with heaven, and that the lasciviousness of adultery makes one with atheism, naturalism, and hell. And we are told that in the Christian world there are so few who understand or will to believe these things, that they may be compared with doves in a wild wilderness.

Each church comes to its end when the heavenly marriage of good and truth, the source of conjugal love, is destroyed. When spiritual good and truth are devastated, adultery is no longer considered a sin

against religion. Religion itself is then divorced from daily life, and consists of external forms. The common idea then held is that religion is good and useful for children and the simple, and helps to preserve order in society, but the intelligent use it only to preserve an honorable appearance before the world. Such is the ruling state of the world today. The abomination of desolation predicted by Daniel is here. So the Writings teach: Love truly conjugal is at this day so rare that it is not known what it is, and scarce that it is, and it is rare in the Christian world because few there approach the Lord. (@CL 69)

We are also told that the angels of heaven grieve over this condition of the Christian world, yet they entertain hope that conjugal love will be revived by the God of heaven, who is the Lord, because they know that it can be revived. (@CL 81)

We can see that marriage is heaven, and adultery is hell, if we will look to their origins. The origin of conjugal love is the love of the Lord for the church, from which is the marriage of the Lord and the church, and a conjunction with every man in whom the church is. That individual conjunction with the Lord is the union of good and truth in man, which is called the heavenly marriage. True conjugal love exists between two married partners who are in such a love of the Lord, and in conjunction with Him.

Adulterous love is from the marriage of evil and falsity in man and this is the essence of hell. From this it can be seen that marriage and adultery are as opposite as heaven and hell.

The commandment Thou shalt not commit adultery does not only apply to adults and married couples. It has an application to every age. To infants and children it means the preservation of innocence, charity, and courtesy. To adolescents it commands chivalry and respect, and the acceptance of parental guidance, and the cultivation of a wholesome idealism for protection from invading temptations. Young men and women preserve this commandment by applying their religious principles in their social contacts, and by study and prayer that they may be prepared for true marriage. To married couples it means the studied effort to be united with one another on every plane of life - acting from the same motives of good - shunning every temptation which could bring harm to their relationship.

All are to do these things from a proper motive, shunning evil in act and intention.

There is a deeper understanding of what is involved in adultery. In the doctrine of life we read: The natural man does not know that to commit adultery also means to adulterate the goods of the Word, and to falsify its truths, and still less that it means to deny the Lords Divinity and profane the Word. Hence he does not know that adultery is so great an evil that it may be called diabolism itself; for he who is in natural adultery is also in spiritual adultery, and the converse. (Life 74)

To one who has a knowledge of the truth, the denial of the Lords Divinity is inmost adultery. It destroys the marriage of the Lord with the church, for this depends upon the acknowledgment of the sole Divinity of the Lord and upon the holiness of His Word.

To adulterate the goods of the Word is to do them for an evil and selfish purpose. Then they are not wedded to their Divine use to serve the neighbor. They are perverted and forced to serve our own evil will. Truths are falsified when they are used to confirm what is false and evil. This is the case with the

false doctrine of salvation by faith alone, without the works of the law. That dogma is supported by truths from the Word, yet these truths are wrenched from their context, and their spiritual purity is violated.

We can better understand these abstract examples, if we understand the true nature of marriage. True marriage is a conjunction of spirit, mind and body, so that in all of life two partners will and act as one. Those who desire such a union work to establish complete harmony on all these planes. Those who will not consider the higher planes, and are merely externally conjoined, do violence to spiritual marriage. The effort must be to seek conjunction as to every plane of life, or marriage ceases to be holy, and becomes instead a mere legalized adultery. In this same way, in the analogy, the doctrines we draw from the Word are to be in harmony with the entire Word, with its purpose and spirit, or we likewise shall do violence to the Word within our understanding. We must not confirm our false ideas, but draw the pure heavenly doctrine from the Word into our minds, that we may unite it to a life of obedience. Knowledge of the truth, and obedience to it form the heavenly marriage in our minds. Because we are to confirm our doctrines from the letter and spirit of the entire Word, and not from our faulty opinions, the Lord said: He that is not with Me is against Me. (Matthew 12:30) We cannot accept part of the Word, and reject the rest. The Word is a unit, and we must accept it all, or none. We are not to cling to our preconceived ideas, and confirm them from the Word, for this would be spiritual adultery, Thus again the Lord Said: 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)

Obscene and lascivious thoughts and speech also break the natural sense of this commandment. They destroy chastity. The Lord taught that such thoughts and evil desires were an offense against this law. He taught this in the sermon on the mount, when He said: Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery, but say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. (Matthew 5:27, 28)

The spiritual and natural relationship of abuses against this precept are further taught where we read: He who is in natural adultery is also in spiritual adultery, and the converse. We can understand this, if we see that he who perverts the uses of marriage falsifies the truths of the Word which teach the order of marriage, and reveal its uses. He would also deny the holiness and Divinity of the Word, for if he truly acknowledged it, he would not act contrary to its teachings. Therefore, one who is in spiritual adultery is also in natural adultery because they are in relation to each other as cause and effect. If a man wills evil, even if he does not actually do it, he is guilty of it, for it lives in his desire, intention, and will. Thus we are taught that, if man abstains from adulteries on account of moral or civil laws, or for any other reason whatsoever than that they are sins against God, he does not remove them, but merely hides them from the world.

Many experiences related by Swedenborg show that they who deny the Lord's Divinity and who reject the holiness of the Word, also falsify truths and adulterate goods. They also hold adulteries as nothing, and are easily carried into them. Much is said in the Writings concerning the general character of the Christian world, as in the following passages from the Arcana Coelestia, and the Spiritual Diary:

Adulteries are accounted as nothing in the kingdoms where the church exists. (@AC 8904) At this day (the hell of adulterers) is growing, especially from those who are from the so-called Christian world,

and who have had all the delight of their life in adulteries. (@AC 824) In Christendom at this day adultery is general. The reason is that they do not make the doctrine of faith a matter of life, and thus are spiritual adulterers. (@SD 5832)

This state of the world is disclosed in many other ways. The marriages of convenience, and the easy and accepted marriage and re-marriage of public favorites are considered almost as normal. Their escapades are glorified and envied. Many trade on evil notoriety to become leading attractions on the stage, screen and radio. Much that is offered on the stage and screen panders to the internal love of adultery which seeps through our modern world. They advertise and offer their plays as most revealing, daring, or vicariously thrilling, and salve their conscience by adding, for adults only.

The internal sin of adultery which exists in the minds of men in every unclean thought and desire,--in every perversion of a truth, in favor of an evil life - in every sacrifice of good to the attainment of worldly glory and fame - must be seen and shunned, for if these sins are not shunned in spirit they cannot be shunned externally.

Thus it is written: He who is in natural adultery is also in spiritual adultery, and the converse.

A man may appear to live a chaste life from many things, while he is altogether unchaste. For to lust in the will, is a spiritual deed, and cannot be removed except by the Lord after repentance. So we are taught in the True Christian Religion that Abstinence from a thing does not make one chaste, but to abstain from willing to do, when he can do, because it is a sin, does make one chaste. (316) If man abstains from adulteries from any natural or moral law, and not at the same time from a spiritual law, he is inwardly an adulterer. Hence no man can know what the chastity of marriage is, unless he shuns as a sin against God the lasciviousness into which he is born and to which he continually inclines. To do this he must look to the Lord, and pray to be delivered from the spiritual adultery in which he is. One may live a chaste life externally and yet in the sight of the Lord and of heaven be an adulterer. This is emphasized in the teaching that in proportion as anyone shuns adulteries of every kind as sins, in the same proportion he loves chastity.

But in considering all of the commandments and teachings of the Word we must use careful judgment. For it is a human fault to see these teachings in application to others, rather than to ourselves. We must be especially careful not to judge as the world judges. Our duty is to examine our own lives, that we may purify our own motives. That we cannot judge the motives of others is evident from the Writings. There we learn that what the world would consider adultery, under certain conditions may be a direct means of preserving the possibilities of conjugal love. So to others we must extend charity of judgment. But to ourselves we must be ever watchful lest we apply the laws of permission when they do not apply. If we guard against these two faults, we will place ourselves under the Lords guidance, that He may direct our spiritual development.

Genuine obedience to the commandment Thou shalt not commit adultery, is the basis for eternal blessedness and joy. Its quality with man determines his spiritual lot. The Lord revealed to Swedenborg the heavenly happiness and beauty of such a life of obedience. Thus at one time an angel of the highest heaven led him among those in such a life, and he said: These wives, who now seem like young virgins, were in the world infirm old women; and their husbands who now seem in the spring of youth, were in the world decrepit old men; and all of them were restored to this prime of their age because they

mutually loved each other, and from religion shunned adulteries as enormous sins. No horrid delights of adultery. No one knows the blessed delights of conjugal love unless he rejects the horrid delights of adultery. (@CL 137)

To follow the Lord, and to progress in spiritual wisdom and love, we must shun adulteries on every plane, in will, thought and deed. From this we will be brought into the order and love of heaven, and receive the eternal blessings of conjugal love. Amen.

Lessons: Genesis 2:18-25; John 8:1-11; Life 74, 75.

SO FAR AS ANY ONE SHUNS ADULTERIES OF EVERY KIND, AS SINS, SO FAR HE LOVES CHASTITY.

By committing adultery, in the sixth precept of the Decalogue, in the natural sense, Is meant not only to commit whoredom, but also to do obscene acts, to speak lascivious words, and to think filthy thoughts. But In the spiritual sense by committing adultery is meant to adulterate the goods of the Word, and to falsify its truths. And in the supreme sense, by committing adultery Is meant to deny the Lords Divine, and to profane the Word. These are adulteries of every kind. The natural man may know from rational lumen, that by committing adultery is also meant to do obscene acts, to speak lascivious words, and to think filthy thoughts; but he does not know, that by committing adultery is also meant to adulterate the goods of the Word, and to falsify its truths; and still less that it means to deny the Lords Divine, and to profane the Word. Hence he does not know that adultery is so great an evil that it may be called devilishness itself; for whoever is in natural adultery is also in spiritual adultery, and contrariwise. That this is so, will be demonstrated in a special little work on Marriage. But they who do not regard adulteries as sins, in faith and life are at the same time in adulteries of every kind.

That so far as any one shuns adultery, so far he loves marriage, or what is the same, so far as any one shuns the lasciviousness of adultery, so far he loves the chastity of marriage, is because the lasciviousness of adultery and the chastity of marriage are two opposites; wherefore, so far as a man is not in the one, so far he is in the other. (Life 74, 75)

SEVEN QUESTIONS ON THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

1. On what subject does all revelation contain direct teaching?
2. Upon what principles is the New Church to build a new morality?
3. Does this Commandment apply only to adults or to people of all ages?
4. What is the spiritual meaning of this Commandment?
5. How do we adulterate the goods of the Word?
6. What is the basis for eternal blessedness and joy?
7. In how far does anyone love chastity?

Lesson 16 Genesis 2:18-25

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt not steal. (Exodus 20:15)

True obedience to this commandment effects obedience to all others. Of course it is said of all the commandments that, if we will obey but one of them sincerely, we will keep them all. The reason is that if we will to be led by the Lord, and try to obey Him, any disobedience would not be from purpose, but would be an unconscious violation. We can see this most clearly in particular commands, as in the first precept, Thou shalt have no other gods before My face. The other gods are all loves and motives arising from selfishness - not from His truth. Our conscious effort would be to avoid selfishness in all its forms, and if that were avoided, we would not covet for ourselves the glory and power of God, nor the goods and welfare of our neighbors. Therefore it is plain that we would keep all the commandments by truly keeping that one.

Thus also in the second commandment, Not to take the Lords name in vain is not to act contrary to His teachings. It is to love the Lord as to all His attributes which make up His name. If we keep His name in this way, we cannot break His commandments, for He taught: if ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments. It is the same with the other commandments. If we analyze them, we will find that each one enfolds all the others within it, when it is viewed interiorly.

We can see this very clearly in the precept: Thou shalt not steal. If we truly obeyed this commandment we could not serve our selfish loves and desires to make them false gods. That would steal from the Lord the honor and homage due Him alone. We would not take the Lords name in vain by acting hypocritically, or by profaning His Word. That would steal His qualities to mask our evil intentions. Nor would we break the Sabbath. That would be breaking an obligation or duty, and insofar as we take to our selfish desires what we owe to another, so far we steal from him. To honor our father and mother, means to render them their due, which applies to both natural and spiritual parents. Inasmuch as we do not give them recognition and honor we steal from them that which should be theirs.

Thus also to kill is to steal away anothers life. To commit adultery is to steal anothers wife, and to deprive her of chastity, and also to remove it from ones self. To bear false witness steals anothers reputation. To covet is to desire to steal, and as this desire is in the will, it is a spiritual act. Covetousness also destroys the peace of mind of others, who from it fear the loss of their possessions. It thus steals away the peace, well-being, and happiness of the neighbor.

From all this we can clearly see that if we will obey the precept, Thou shalt not steal in all its forms, we would not break any of the commandments.

But that can be said of all the precepts, that if we keep one from the heart, and the intention of the will, we keep all, for each one involves all the others.

Why then are there ten separate commandments? If all are contained in the first one, why is it necessary to warn us about the others? The reasons are that these ten are the most general ways in which we are tempted to disobey the Lord. By naming each one separately, we are able to see them as they are, and direct our attention to them in our lives, that we may also beware of their insidious and

subtle attraction. By learning their applications on more interior planes we can more nearly approach the Lord in love and humility. All are given that man may be able by their means to remove his evils. The Lord can give man all happiness and joy, and every blessing, if man will but remove the evil in himself which blocks its reception. The Lord showed the commandments to be one in essence and purpose in the great commandment, to which He added a second to clarify His meaning. Thus He said: The Lord thy God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength. This is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matthew 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-31)

From these we see that all order, love and use is present in the commandment to love the Lord in heart, soul, mind, and strength. But we can express love to the Lord only by serving the neighbor in mutual love and justice. Thus also these two commandments are phases of one, and together they express in simplest form the whole duty of man - the living essentials of the ten commandments.

Although we may see that the commandments are one in essence, we cannot obey them from this general sight and acknowledgment. We are not able to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength except by obedience to His truth. Therefore the truth must be seen in relation to life. We approach the Lord by obeying the commandments. And we can obey them only as we see their application to our own lives. We must learn what is involved in the various precepts to see how they are to be obeyed, if we truly wish to be led by the Lord.

The seventh commandment, Thou shalt not steal, is but little understood or obeyed in the world today, even on the natural plane. Even external stealing and thievery are quite common. But more interiorly on this natural plane men are almost encouraged to break it. Common business principles often lead to its violation. It is common practice for an employer to hire men for the least possible wage to get his work done. In times of stress, when work is scarce, many employers have taken advantage of the situation to lower wages. They know that their employees need the work, and must accept the reduced wage. The principle involved in such business practices is not that the employee receive a fair wage for the amount of work he does, but rather that the employer make the greatest profit from the labors of his men.

That principle is too frequently applied. Unjust and excessive profits are often made from the labors of others.

The Old and New Testaments contain many teachings concerning this. So in Jeremiah's prophecies we read: Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbors service without wages, and giveth him not for his work. (22:13) And in Luke we are taught; The laborer is worthy of his hire. (10:7) The wisdom of the ancients is gathered in the proverbs of Solomon, among which is this one pertinent to our subject: The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death. The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them, because they refuse to do judgment. (Proverbs 21:6, 7) The early church received instruction on this subject from the first fathers, and so in The Epistle to the Romans Paul wrote: Render unto all their dues. (13:7)

But on the other hand, employees also break this seventh commandment quite as often as do their

employers. With many workers the ideal is to get the largest financial return for the least amount of work. And it is a matter of fact that all shirking of our work is stealing from the employer the time we have contracted to give him in return for his wage.

Because of these two conditions, employer and employee are often in a state of armed truce - the worker holding the threat of strike to protect him from unfair practices, and the employer holding the threat of dismissal over those who will not otherwise perform their work efficiently or well. In this way justice is approximated. Not the justice of the Golden Rule, but that of mutual distrust, which seeks the smallest opening on either side to take selfish advantage of the others weakness to thus legally steal their just returns.

But the violations of this commandment are many more than these. In the most external or natural sense not to steal means not to rob another and defraud him of his natural wealth and possessions. It forbids all impostures and illegitimate gains, all unjust usuries, and exactions of penalties. And also it applies to using fraud in paying taxes and duties, and in discharging debts.

Workers who seek to avoid doing their work faithfully and to the best of their ability steal from their employers. And also an employer who deals with his men unjustly and with sharp practices steals their just recompense from them.. Merchants who misrepresent their merchandise, or who practice deceit in weights and measures, and who render a false account, steal from their customers.

Judges who give their judgment for friendship or reward or because of relationship or for any other reason than to serve justice, are stealing from the rights of the people, and also from the Lord in the ultimate applications of Divine justice.

Therefore, in its widest natural sense, the seventh commandment forbids all unjust and dishonest practices, whether in private or public affairs.

The spiritual and celestial senses of this commandment, rest firmly upon the sense of the letter. They may be seen by applying the commandment on more interior planes. That spiritual sense is summarized in the True Christian Religion: To steal means to deprive others of the truths of their faith, which is done by means of falsities and heresies. Priests who minister solely for gain or from a lust for honor, and teach what they see or might see from the Word to be untrue, are spiritual thieves, since they take away from the people the means of salvation, which are the truths of faith. Such are called thieves in the Word. (318)

This is easily seen. Just as depriving others of natural possessions is stealing, so also is it stealing on the more interior plane to take away anothers faith in God and to destroy the truths of his religion, unless this is done by giving new and genuine truths in their stead. We steal from their spiritual storehouses when we use falsely the truths of the Word they accept. This is done when quotations are torn from their context and used to lead to and confirm a false conclusion. It is interesting to note that priests are responsible not only for the purity of the truth they know, but also for the truth they should have gotten from the Word. This same principle applies to everyone. If we should ignore our duty to progress in our calling, whatever that may be, we would be stealing from the common uses of all mankind.

In the celestial sense thieves are those who wish to claim for themselves, or for others, the Divine power of the Lord, and who claim His merit and righteousness. Such are said to trust only in themselves, and in their own prudence, and their worship is merely natural.

We receive a clear understanding of these deeper applications of each commandment, as we strive to obey it in our lives, with sincere humility - praying for the Lords guidance. The beginning must be to apply the se commandments on the natural and spiritual moral planes. From this shunning of ultimate evil man is led by the Lord, and his whole life is brought into willing service to Him. Thus we learn that as far as man shuns evils as sins, so far he does goods, and these goods are from the Lord, and not from his own evil proprium, for they are done in obedience to the Lords commandments, thus as an agent of the Lord and not of self. (@AE 975)

As an example of this we are shown how the seventh commandment applies to various uses in the world. Of those who manage the properties of others we read: if they secretly ... and by fraud deprive their ... masters of their goods, they have no religion, and thus no conscience, for they hold the Divine law respecting theft in contempt and make it of no account.

And although they frequent temples, devoutly listen to preachings, observe the sacrament of the Supper, pray morning and evening, and talk piously from the Word, yet nothing from heaven flows in and is present in their worship, piety or discourse, because their interiors are full of theft, plundering, robbery and injustice; and so long as these are within, the way into them from heaven is closed; consequently all the works they do are evil. (@AE 977)

In this one example we are shown that all who willingly disobey one commandment and form their lives upon this disobedience, close heaven until they repent and change their ways. But those who are faithful and sincere in their work, form their lives on good, so that quotation continues: But the managers of property who shun unlawful theft, have religion, and thus also conscience; and all the works they do are good, for they act from sincerity for the sake of sincerity, and from justice for the sake of justice, and furthermore they are content with their own, and are cheerful in mind and glad in heart whenever it happens that they have refrained from fraud; and after death they are welcomed by the angels and are received by them as brothers, and are presented with goods even to abundance. But the opposite is true of evil managers; these after death are cast out of societies, and afterwards seek alms, and finally are sent into the caverns of robbers, to labor there. (@AE 977)

We are taught that stealing is a most insidious evil. Once accepted its power grows on man until the deceit and cunning, and the covetous lust for the goods of others fills the heart, and turns the mind continually to plans for defrauding the neighbor. From this it is that we are to live orderly lives, seeking the happiness and well-being which richly blesses a life of use. And though wealth may be given us in thus serving our use, we are not to place our hearts in riches, but rather to strive always to become more perfect in our work.

The man who lives thus, using the talents given him by the Lord, serves Him faithfully throughout life on earth, and when this life is over he will enter into his eternal use, greeted by the commendation: Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. (Matthew 25:21) Amen.

Lessons: Psalm 62; Matthew 19:13-30; Apocalypse Explained 1028, or True Christian Religion 317-319; or Life 80-83.

Third Lesson: @AE 1028; Life 80-82.

It is said by some that he who sins against one commandment of the decalogue sins also against the rest, thus that he who is guilty of one is guilty of all. It shall be told how far this is in harmony with the truth.

When a man transgresses one commandment, assuring himself that it is not a sin, thus offending without fear of God, because he has thus rejected the fear of God he does not fear to transgress the rest of the commandments, although he may not do this in act.

For example, when one does not regard frauds and illicit gains, which in themselves are thefts, as sine, neither does he regard as a sin adultery with the wife of another, hating a man even to murder, lying about him, coveting his house and other things belonging to him; for when he rejects from his heart in any one commandment the fear of God he denies that anything is a sin; consequently he is in communion with those who in like manner transgress the other commandments. He is like an infernal spirit who is in a hell of thieves; witness, yet he is in communion with such, and can be persuaded by them to believe that such things are not evils, and can be led to do them. For he who becomes an infernal spirit through the transgression of one commandment, no longer believes it to be a sin to do anything against God or anything against the neighbor.

But the opposite is true of those who abstain from the evil forbidden in one commandment, and who shun and afterwards turn away from it as a sin against God. Because such fear God, they come into communion with angels of heaven, and are led by the Lord to abstain from the evils forbidden in the other commandments and to shun them, and finally to turn away from them as sins; and if perchance they have sinned against them, yet they repent and thus by degrees are withdrawn from them. (@AE 1028)

SO FAR AS ANY ONE SHUNS THEFTS OF EVERY KIND, AS SINS, SO FAR HE LOVES SINCERITY.

By stealing, in the natural sense, is meant not only to commit theft and robbery, but also to defraud, and under any pretense to take away from another his goods. But by stealing, in the spiritual sense, is meant to deprive another of the truths of his faith, and of the goods of his charity. In the supreme sense, by stealing is meant to take away from the Lord that which is His, and to attribute it to ones self, and thus to arrogate righteousness and merit as ones own. These are thefts of every kind; and they also make one, as do adulteries of every kind, and murders of every kind, spoken of above. That they make one, is because one kind is in the other.

The evil of theft enters more deeply into a man than any other evil, because it is conjoined with cunning and deceit; and cunning and deceit insinuate themselves even into the spiritual mind of man wherein is his thought with the understanding.

The reason why, so far as any one shuns theft as sin, so far he loves sincerity, is, because theft is also fraud, and fraud and sincerity are two opposites; wherefore, so far as any one is not in fraud, he is in sincerity. (Life 80-82)

A SHORT PAPER ON THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

Write below a short paper on some of the meanings of the seventh commandment.

Lesson 17 - K Matthew 19:13-30

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. (Exodus 20:16)

This commandment in literal translation reads: Thou shalt not answer against thy neighbor the witness of a lie. The essential evil it forbids is contained in the words against thy neighbor. We are not to harm the neighbor maliciously. Lying implies serving evil and falsity. There are evasions of truth, and even direct untruths that we do not consider lying, because there is no intent to harm, and there is the intention and ability to do good. Stories of the imagination, written to amuse, may assume the appearance of truth, but everyone is expected to know that they are imaginary. Polite phrases are often murmured without thought either as to their truth or falsity. Again, the intent is merely to obey the polite forms of social life, which add to the graciousness of living, without harming anyone. These things are not lies in the sense of this commandment. But what is forbidden is all direct untruth, insinuation, or deception which is intended to work the neighbor harm, or which can work harm even without the intent. Such lying is of hell, and can only serve the forces of evil.

Thus, to bear false witness against the neighbor is to accuse him of evil, falsely, with the intent to convict him before others. Such is all vain swearing, misrepresentation in business, or perjury in court. Such also is all slander and evil gossip which can harm the reputation of another - especially that which would harm his use in society. In the True Christian Religion we are told, in the widest natural sense are meant all unfaithfulness and evil purposes against anyone, from various origins, as from enmity, hatred, revenge, envy, or rivalry, and so forth, for these evils conceal within them the testifying of what is false. (322) The spiritual sense is a deeper application of this. It is to abuse the truths of faith, to teach that they are false, and that falsities are true, with the clear knowledge that it is not so. And this has application to the Lord and the Word, thus destroying truth itself with ones self, and with others. (@TCR 323)

The force of this commandment is emphasized, if we think for a moment of what is meant by the term neighbor. It is not the people living near us, nor merely the members of the same church or community. The neighbor is the use which is performed by others. Each man is the neighbor according to his faithfulness in the performance of his use. Therefore it is the use that is to be loved, and the person according to the degree that he is faithful and earnest in its performance. To lie against the neighbor therefore means to destroy the uses of another, by malicious misrepresentation, insinuation, or slanderous gossip. And this is closely related to the interior meaning of the commandment, thou shalt not kill, for to destroy the use of another or to destroy his character in the eyes of others so that he can no longer perform his uses for them, is to destroy his spiritual purpose in life.

The Word and the writings of the ancients which are included in the Bible together with the Sacred Books, are full of references to deceit and lying. These laws give a rich insight into the insidious nature of that evil. In the laws of Moses there is the commandment: Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people. (Leviticus 19:16) And the reason is given in the Proverbs, for it is said: that A tale-bearer revealeth secrets, but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter. (11:13) And its result is pointed out. He that repeateth a matter separateth friends. (Proverbs 17:9) Gossip and slander, even that which is termed innocent gossip, if there is the slightest degree of malice in it, open the path of influx from hell, and establish a seed of distrust, fear, and evil delight and hatred in a group

that would otherwise be united in a specific use. Such would be the case even in a church society, united on the highest plane of use, if such a tendency were not carefully controlled from the law of charity.

There are many other very pointed teachings in the Word, and in the Proverbs. So the gossip and slanderer is warned in the 101st Psalm: Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I cut off; him that hath an high look and a proud heart, will not I suffer. And in the Proverbs we read: A fool is he that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander. We are also taught that one who encourages such malicious gossip by being a ready listener actually enters into the evil, for if it were discouraged by lack of attention or reproof, it would cease. Thus we read: Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out; so where there is no talebearer the strife ceaseth. (Proverbs 26:20)

In the New Church we are to have a more interior view of how we are to obey the Lords commandments. We are taught in the Writings that sins of omission are as bad as the actual commission of evil, wherever we could and should know better. Many interior evils cannot be seen until we have made real progress in our spiritual regeneration. But on the other hand, every New Church man is expected to know the fundamental applications of the Ten Commandments on every plane of life. We can discover their meaning so easily, for they are treated in great fullness in many of the Writings, in a way clear and easy to grasp. In the Arcana Coelestia, in the work on the True Christian Religion, in the Apocalypse Explained, and in the Doctrine of Life, they are treated very fully in their series. As these are the most fundamental of all spiritual laws, it is important for each one to try to understand them more interiorly by reading at least one of these expositions of their vital nature.

This principle of being responsible for our acts and thoughts, if we could know better, applies directly to our obedience to this eighth commandment. We are apt to excuse our tendencies to gossip, particularly as we seldom intend to do harm, or to act from any feeling of hatred or malice.

It has been pointed out many times that what we do in ignorance is excused, but the evil that is done despite our ignorance, becomes part of us, and it cannot be removed until we see and condemn it in our lives, and repent of it. Only by that work of repentance does it become inactive, and is it relegated to the externals of our character, so that it can no longer afflict us. In the New Church these internal truths have been revealed by which we can, if we will, discover our interior motives from which we speak and act. So we read: It is the part of a wise man to know the ends which are in him. (@AE 379[6]) And we are told that these can be discovered, if we will only attend to the delight that he perceives in himself from praise and self-glory, and to that which he perceives from use, separate from himself. (Ibid.)

In its application to idle conversation and its motives, it has been said: in our conversations we are for the most part acting from natural affections, but within these there are interior affections and loves which are good or evil. It is our duty from time to time, when we are alone, to examine these interior affections, and discover their character. After an evening of conversation let men examine what they have said, and what they have not said, and try to discover to what purpose they have spoken, and by what delights they have been moved. If we speak of the faults and evils of our brother with apparently no active intention of harming him, but also with no active intention of doing him good, we may know that the interior affection by which we were moved was not from heaven. Those in heaven do not

regard the evil, but excuse and mitigate it. It is evil spirits who continually recall to man past and present evils, and then condemn him on account of them. This does not mean that we are to excuse evil. Evil is to be condemned at all times. But it does mean that we are permitted to see evil in the neighbor, not to condemn him, but in order that, having seen it objectively in others ... we may see and shun any tendency toward that same evil in our own heart. The spiritual law is that man is essentially a form of use and that it is this use or good that must be loved in the man and not the man apart from it. It is use then that is to be loved, and it is use that is to be protected, for it is not the mans but the Lords. (Rev. Elmo C. Acton in a Sermon)

The real origin of the delight of recalling the evils of our neighbor is hatred. It is the duty of the spiritual man to see this origin in himself, that he may shun it. It is not always easy to see this in ourselves, but we are given indications that we can understand, if we seek them out. What gives us delight in speaking of the faults of others? Is it not that we are somewhat flattered by the comparison? There is much of the Pharisee in all of us, so that we are apt to say or think, God, thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, and adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. (Luke 18:11, 12) We are very apt to hide our own shortcomings by overemphasizing, and by constantly recalling the shortcomings of others. We build up ourselves by tearing down others. This tendency is from love of self, and love of the world. If allowed to continue, it would destroy the very presence and possibility of charity with us.

For charity is the Lords love for the whole human race, and in man it is the love of everything good and true in all men, everywhere; and a willingness to forgive their shortcomings, and a desire to look to their good works and to their performance of their use. That spirit of charity is the very opposite to the hatred which inmosty inspires slander, and idle destructive gossip. Thus we read in the Writings:

Since hatred is infernal fire, it is evident that it must be removed before love, which is heavenly fire, can flow in, and through life from itself vivify man; and that infernal fire is never removed unless man knows whence hatred is and what hatred is, and afterwards turns and flees from it. Every man from heredity is in hatred against the neighbor; for all men are born into love of self and the world; wherefore he receives hatred and from hatred burns against all who do not make one with him and favor him, especially those who obstruct his concupiscences (and desires); for no one can love self above all and at the same time love the neighbor; because no one can serve two masters at the same time. (@AE 1016)

He who from the heart does evil to another, evil from hell flows in from all sides into his heart and excites it; and on this occasion the affection of self-love is increased at the same time, and with it the delight of hatred and revenge against those who do not submit themselves; the reason for this is because the evil of self-love is in hell a universally reigning principle, and flows in continually according to the degree in which it is expressed to another. (@AC 9048)

But love toward the neighbor continually guards lest it do any harm to another, and as it goes forth, so heavenly loves inflow and bless the man, for love consists in this, that its own is anothers and that it feels the others joy as a joy in itself. (@DLW 47)

Let us then guard our conversation that we may obey this commandment on every plane of our life. Then we can do or say nothing that will harm genuine charity. In that way we will shut off the influx

from hell, and open the way to heaven. And if we should say anything that harms another, let us see and acknowledge it, and then repent of it. Only in this way can the hurt done to the neighbor and to charity, be healed. And may we ever pray in all humility: Let the speech of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

Lessons: Luke 18:1-14; Apocalypse Explained 1019, 1020; True Christian Religion 321-324.

Second Lesson: Apocalypse Explained 1019, 1020; True Christian Religion 321-324.

The eighth commandment of the decalogue, Thou shalt not bear false witness, shall now be explained. To bear false witness signified in the sense nearest to the letter to lie about the neighbor by accusing him falsely. But in the internal sense it signifies to call what is just unjust, and what is unjust just, and to confirm this by means of falsities; while in the inmost sense it signifies to falsify the truth and good of the Word, and on the other hand to prove a falsity of doctrine to be true by confirming it by means of fallacies, appearances, fabrications, knowledges falsely applied, sophistries and the like. The confirmations themselves and the consequent persuasions are false witnesses, for they are false attestations. From this it can be seen that what is here meant is not only false witness before a judge, but even a judge himself who in perverting right makes what is just unjust, and what is unjust just, for he as well as the witness himself acts the part of a false witness. The same is true of every man who makes what is straight to appear crooked, and what is crooked to appear straight; likewise any ecclesiastical leader who falsifies the truth of the Word and perverts its good. In a word, every falsification of truth, spiritual, moral, and civil, which is done from an evil heart, is false witness.

When a man abstains from false testimonies understood in a moral and spiritual sense and shuns and turns away from them as sins, a love of truth and a love of justice flow in from the Lord through heaven. And when, in consequence, the man loves truth and loves justice he loves the Lord, for the Lord is truth itself and justice itself. And when a man loves truth and justice it may be said that truth and justice love him, because the Lord loves him; and as a consequence his utterances become utterances of truth, and his works become works of justice. (@AE 1019, 1020)

THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR.

By bearing false witness against the neighbor, or testifying falsely, in the natural sense, is first of all meant, to act as a false witness before a judge, or before others not in a court of justice, against any one who is rashly accused of any evil, and to assert this by the name of God or any thing holy, or by himself, and such things of himself as are of the reputation of anyones name.

By this commandment, in a wider natural sense, are meant lies of every kind, and politic hypocrisies, which look to a bad end; and also to traduce and defame the neighbor, so that his honor, name and fame, on which the character of the whole man depends, are injured. In the widest natural sense are meant unfaithfulness, stratagems, and evil purposes against anyone, from various origins, as from enmity, hatred, revenge, envy, rivalry, etc.; for these evils conceal within them the testifying of what is false.

In the spiritual sense, by testifying falsely, is meant, to persuade that the false of faith is the true of faith, and that the evil of life is the good of life, and the reverse; but to do this and that from purpose,

and not from ignorance, thus to do them after one knows what is true and good, but not before; for the Lord says, If ye were blind, ye would not have sin; but now ye say, that we see; therefore your sin remaineth, John 9:41. This false is meant in the Word by a lie, and the purpose by deceit, in these passages: We make a league with death, and with hell we make a vision; we have placed our trust in a lie, and have been hid in falsity, Isaiah 28:15. They are people of rebellion, lying children; they are not willing to hear the law of Jehovah, 30:9. From the prophet even to the priest, every one maketh a lie, Jeremiah 8:10. The inhabitants speak a lie, and as to the tongue, deceit is in their mouth, Micah 6:12. Thou wilt destroy those who speak a lie; Jehovah abhors a man of deceit, Psalms 5:6. They have taught their tongue to speak a lie; their habitation is in the midst of deceit, Jeremiah 9:15. Because by a lie, is meant the false, therefore the Lord says, that the devil speaketh a lie from his own, John 8:14. A lie signifies what is false, and false-speaking, also, in these passages: Jeremiah 9:4; 13:14, 32; Ezekiel 13:15-19; Hosea 7:1; Nahum 3:1; Psalms 120:2, 3.

In the celestial sense, by testifying falsely, is meant to blaspheme the Lord and the Word, and thus to reject the Truth itself from the church; for the Lord is Truth itself, and also the Word. On the other hand, by testifying, in this sense, is meant, to speak the truth; and by testimony, truth itself. Thence also it is, that the decalogue is called the testimony, Exodus 24:16, 21, 22; 30:7, 8; 32:15,16; 40:20; Leviticus 16:13; Numbers 17:19, 22, 25. And because the Lord is the Truth itself, He says concerning Himself, that He testifies. That the Lord is Truth itself, John 14:6; Revelation 3. And that He testifies and is witness of Himself, John 3:11; 8:13-19; 15:26; 18:37, 38.

Those who speak falses from deceit or purpose, and pronounce them with a pretended sound of spiritual affection, and especially if they intermingle truths from the Word, which they thus falsify, were called by the ancients, enchanter; concerning whom, see Apocalypse Revealed, 462; and also pythons and serpents of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. These falsifiers, liars and deceivers may be likened to those who speak courteously and kindly with enemies, and, while they are speaking, hold behind them a dagger, with which they kill them. And they may be compared to those who tinge their swords with poison, and thus attack their enemies; and to those who mingle wolfs-bane with water, and virulent poison with wine and sweetmeats. They may be compared, also, to handsome and alluring harlots, infected with a malignant disease; and also to shrubs full of prickles, which, applied to the nostrils, hurt the smelling fibrils; as also to sweetened poison; and also to dung, which, being dried in the time of autumn, spreads a fragrant odor. Such are in the Word described by leopards; see Apocalypse Revealed, 572. (@TCR 321-324)

A SHORT PAPER ON THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

Write below a short paper on some of the meanings of the Eighth Commandment.

Lesson 18-K Luke 18:1-14

THE NINTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbors. (Exodus 20:17)

The last two commandments forbid internal evils. Coveting is an evil of the will. It can be seen by others only after it has progressed into speech or act. Indeed, without the teachings of the Word, man is not conscious of his lusts or concupiscence, so Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans said: I had not known what lust is, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. (Romans 7:7) We know that what man believes, that to him is true, and what he loves, that to him is good, Therefore, while he remains in his lusts, he feels them to be good, and greatly desirable. He can only see that they are evil and desire to shun them from the Word.

Covetousness is the lust for evil. It is the desire to commit evils, and in our imagination they are done. Because coveting includes all the evils forbidden by the other commandments, these last two are a summary of all ten. To lust for the neighbors house is to desire his worldly possessions, and this is love of the world. To desire his wife, his servants, and the beasts that serve him, is to lust for dominion over his every affection and love. It is the desire to rule all things of his life, and to make them serve ones self instead of him.

We are taught that there are two universal loves of hell, and they are exactly opposite to the universal heavenly loves. In heaven the two loves which rule are love to the Lord and love toward the neighbor. These two make a one interiorly, for we love and acknowledge the Lord as the source of all good and truth; and we love the neighbor to the degree that he receives of good and truth from the Lord. And we serve the Lord by performing uses to the neighbor. Therefore the two great commandments show that these loves are the living spirit and purpose of all the commandments. To love the Lord with all our heart and soul, and to love the neighbor as ourselves, form the unselfish love of use and service which make heaven.

In hell the two universal loves are also similar to each other. They are to covet the possessions of all worldly and sensual pleasures by selfishly possessing all the things that give those pleasures; and to covet all power over others so that their affections and loves may be made to give us pleasure. These loves are commonly termed love of the world, and love of self. Both are entirely selfish, but the first is a selfish love for material things. The ultimate degree of this love is represented by the miser who loves his gold as a material possession, for itself alone, and not for its use. His delight is a delight of hell. It is purely material and from that love he covets the worldly possessions of others to further satisfy his unnatural and utterly selfish craving.

Love of self is termed a corporeal love. It is the selfish desire to exact service and honor from everyone. It is to love self only - to desire our own welfare even at the expense of others, and it desires the welfare of others only for the sake of their service to us. Such a love of self is termed the love of dominion also, for it seeks to elevate self to the place of God, to order and arrange all others in relation to their ability and willingness to serve us. All who will not thus serve such a man are cursed, and would be destroyed if he had the power to do it.

These two lusts of evil - the lust for worldly possessions, and the lust for power over others - are forbidden in many places in the Word. They are the most interior form of all the perversions forbidden by the ten commandments.

The ninth commandment reads: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house. To covet is to will from an evil love, and house refers to the complex of all the good which a man has. So in the next commandment by wife is meant the sum total of all his truths, and by the particulars which follow - the servants and cattle - are signified the affections of these truths. So the ninth commandment is a command not to lust after the spiritual or natural goods of another, which make up his house. Envy of another for his possessions is a common form of coveting. In its more insidious and subtle forms it is the overmastering desire to excel others in all that we are and do, so that we may displace another before the world, without regard to justice or to the approval of the Lord and of heaven.

Such covetousness often rules the imaginations of men, and it is fanned into burning flame whenever their plans fail to materialize. Their and seeks to reestablish their imagination tries to heal their wounded pride vain imaginings in which they play the hero. This is more common than many suppose. Is it not a common experience to think of what we should have said, after it is too late to say it? How many times do we not go over a situation in our own minds, and recall every detail with the thought, I should have said this, or done that? Thus the mind makes up in the imagination what we lacked on the occasion itself. While undoubtedly this may perform a real use in many cases, it is most often a defense mechanism which merely bolsters our pride in self.

Of such an inner form of envy and disappointment the apostle James said: If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. (James 3:14, 16)

As to the more material envying, which covets the natural goods and advantages of another, the Lord Himself spoke many times. Thus in Luke He said: Take heed and beware of covetousness; for a mans life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. (12:15) And also speaking of how truth is implanted in the hearts of men. He showed that with many the Word does not bear fruit in life, for the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the Word, and it becometh unfruitful. (Mark 4:19) The positive teachings of the Lord were gathered together and summed up in the writings of Timothy, who said: Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. (I Timothy 6:6-8)

As the ninth commandment forbids us to love the things of the world, so the tenth forbids us to practice the love of self. For the love of self is the most insidious of all evils. We are born with a strong heredity to it, and it develops quickly, until it forms our very life. It is the proprium from which we act until gradually we are born again as to our spirit. Then we leave that unselfish love, and in its place we cultivate those loves which make heaven - love to the Lord and love toward the neighbor. Because love of self is the internal life of all unregenerate men, it is the source of all the evils they think and do. It will assume many external appearances. It is hypocrisy itself, for it hides its real purpose so that it might gain the goods of others, or that it might gain control over them. So it was with the Pharisees who externally lived a life of exemplary piety and holiness. By their piety they gained a dominant voice in the rule of the Jews. They had great power. Yet of them the Lord said: Woe unto you, scribes

and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. (Matthew 23:25, 26)

The love of self includes every evil forbidden in the ten commandments. So the Lord said: That which cometh out of the man that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. (Mark 7:20-23)

Love of self breathes nothing but death and destruction against all who oppose it. It seeks to overthrow the very power of God, that the man might be served in His place. To such great lengths does this insane love of self go. Therefore the Lord taught: He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. (John 12:25) The life here referred to is mans natural loves which make up his proprium.

And the central love from which the others have their rise is the love of self. Therefore, unless man hates this love, and loses its life, he cannot receive the heavenly love and blessing of eternal happiness. In the Epistle of John it is said: For all that Is In the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. (I John 2:16,17)

As we study the more interior applications of the ten commandments it becomes increasingly clear that the evils there forbidden have taken deep root in the very environment in which we live. We have accepted and lived civil and moral teachings which fundamentally oppose them. Therefore it appears increasingly difficult to obey the commandment in our daily life. To act from a selfish motive breaks the very first of the commandments. By that act we worship a false God. To become angry without a cause breaks the commandment against killing. To gossip or lie breaks the commandment against bearing false witness; and so with each one. Such difficulties seem insurmountable. But the Lord has revealed that it is not difficult to live the life which leads to heaven. It is in fact easier to live such a life than to become a slave to evil and hypocrisy. Thus in the work on Heaven and Hell it is said:

That it is not so difficult to live the life of heaven as some believe can now be seen from this, that when anything presents itself to a man that he knows to be dishonest and unjust, but to which his mind is borne, it is simply necessary for him to think that it ought not to be done because it is opposed to the Divine precepts. (533)

If we will but establish such a habit, we may be gradually conjoined to heaven. Nor is it necessary to accomplish this that we withdraw from our normal lives, to put on a pietistic habit of life, for the teaching continues:

The life that leads to heaven is not a life withdrawn from the world, but a life in the world; and a life of piety separated from a life of charity does not lead to heaven, but one of charity does. And the life of charity consists in acting honestly and justly in every employment and business and work, from an interior, that is, from a heavenly motive (or origin). And this motive (or origin) is in that life whenever man acts honestly and justly because doing so is in accord with the Divine laws. Such a life is not

difficult, but the life of piety separate from charity is difficult. (@HH 533)

We need not pretend to be what we are not. In fact, we must not put on hypocritical piety. All that is necessary, is that we see from the Word what a good life is, and try to live such a life. In that desire we strive to obey the commandments. And we are taught further: When man has made a beginning the Lord quickens all that is good in him, and causes him not only to see evils to be evils, but also to refrain from willing them, and finally to turn away from them. (@HH 533)

From this we see -that the Lord is constantly present, strengthening man, and guarding him from temptations too great for him to stand. Only by the acceptance of the Lords proffered help, and by the effort to obey the commandments, can man find peace, happiness, and contentment. And these gifts are eternally offered.

Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden light. (Matthew 11:28-30) Amen.

Lessons: Exodus 20:1-21; Luke 12:1-21; Apocalypse Explained 1021-1022; or True Christian Religion 326-327.

APOCALYPSE EXPLAINED 1021, 1022

The ninth commandment, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house, is now to be treated of. There are two loves from which all lusts spring and flow perpetually like streams from their fountains. These loves are called love of the world and love of self. Lust is a love continually desiring, for what a man loves, that he continually longs for. But lusts belong to the love of evil, while desires and affections belong to the love of good. Now because love of the world and love of self are the fountains of all lusts, and all evil lusts are forbidden in these last two commandments, it follows that the ninth commandment forbids the lusts that flow from love of the world, and the tenth commandment the lusts that flow from love of self. Not to covet a neighbors house means not to covet his goods, which in general are possessions or wealth, and not to appropriate them to one is self by evil arts. This lust belongs to love of the world.

Thou shalt not covet (or try to get possession of) thy neighbors wife, his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox or his ass. These are lusts after what is mans own, because the wife, manservant, maid-servant, ox, and ass, are within his home, and the things within a mans home mean in the spiritual internal sense the things that are his own that is, the wife means affection for spiritual truth and good, manservant and maidservant, affection for rational truth and good serving the spiritual, and ox and ass affection for natural good and truth.

These signify in the Word such affections; but because coveting and trying to get possession of these affections means to wish and eagerly desire to subject a man to ones own authority or bidding, it follows that lusting after these affections means the lusts of the love of self, that is, of the love of ruling, for thus does one make the things belonging to a companion to be his own.

From this it can now be seen that the lust of the ninth commandment is a lust of the love of the world, and that the lusts of this commandment are lusts of the love of self. For, as has been said before, all

lusts are of love for it is love that covets; and as there are two evil loves to which all lusts have reference , namely, love of the world and love of self, it follows that the lust of the ninth commandment has reference to the love of the world, and the lust of this commandment to love of self, especially to the love of ruling.

SEVEN QUESTIONS ON THE NINTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS

1. What kind of evils do the last two Commandments forbid?
2. What is covetousness?
3. What are the two universal loves of hell?
4. What does the Ninth Commandment mean?
5. What does the Tenth Commandment mean?
6. Is it really difficult to live the life of heaven?
7. Is the life that leads to heaven a life withdrawn from the world?

Lesson 19 - K Luke 12:1-21