

Sermons on the Ten Commandments (vol 2)

By Alfred Acton 1914-1918

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Written for the New Church
Soldiers of the Great War
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THE FAITH OF THE NEW CHURCH

There is One God, and the Lord, the Savior, Jesus Christ, is that God.

The Sacred Scripture is the Word of God.

Man is saved by shunning evils as sins against God.

The Lord has made His Second Coming by revealing the internal sense of the Word in the Writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg.

On this revelation is to be established the New Church signified in the Revelation by the New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven.

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XVII. HONORING FATHER AND MOTHER.

Exodus 21:1-15

Luke 15, 4-24.

@HH 277

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)

In the three commandments which have thus far occupied our attention. the subject is the Lord and our duty to Him. We are to worship Him alone, that is, there is to be no other ruler of our will and action. This is the most holy, because the most universal of all the commandments, entering into all the things of our actions and thoughts. Then we are to hallow the Lord's name, that is, we are to hold His Word, and, in general, all that concerns instruction from Him, we are to hold this in holiness, both internal and external; in internal respect by reading the Word with a view to amendment of life; in external respect by showing due reverence and respect to all things that pertain to Divine worship. This is a second universal; it is not so universal, and hence not so holy, as the first commandment, because it is qualified by obedience to the first commandment. Yet it is a great universal of human life, for on our attitude to the Word depends our life, and in that attitude is shown our worship of the Lord. The third commandment is a third and lesser universal. This commandment teaches that we are to look forward to the Sabbath day; i. e., the spiritual life, and also life in heaven, as the good and inspirer of the six days of the week. But our idea of heaven, our idea of the spiritual life, depends on whether and how much we have gone to the Word, and this depends on our acknowledgment of the Lord.

These three commandments, therefore, respect our attitude to the Lord.

It is true that any understanding of them also involves our duty to the neighbor; but, and this is the essential point, the essence of these three commandments is, that in all our actions to each other, we are to be guided by our duty to the Lord, that is, by obedience to the first three commandments.

The fourth commandment, which we are now considering, is an intermediate commandment. The commandments that follow, all regard our duty to the neighbor. It is true that they must be obeyed from a spirit that is obedient also to the first three commandments; nevertheless, in themselves, the last six commandments regard our duty to the neighbor. But the fourth commandment looks both backwards and forwards. On the one hand, the Father is the Lord and the Mother is the Church, and the honoring of these involves that this commandment is to be classed among the commands relating to God. On the other hand, however, the natural father and mother, both in a wide and in a restricted sense, are meant, and our honoring of these involves the following commandments, namely, those that regard our duty to the neighbor. The commandment is, therefore, an intermediate commandment wherein what precedes and what follows are united together. And this intermediate character of the commandment will appear still more as we enter into its inner meaning.

The Laws of God are given for both angels and men; or, what is the same thing, they are given to teach, and to ask obedience, from not only the natural man, but also the spiritual man. In the natural sense

these laws prescribe what man shall do in the body, and in his daily life in the world; but in the internal sense they teach him what he shall do in the spirit, or in the spiritual world, or what is the same thing, in the thought and desire of his spirit, which is not seen by the world. In the internal sense they are also for the angels, and we are told that when man reads the commandments on earth, and still more when he loves and obeys them, angels come into greater light and joy. This is the reason why the Word has an internal sense, — in order that it may be suited to the seeds of angels and men, of the spirit as well as of the body.

In the natural sense this commandment regards our earthly parents, or those who stand in the place of them. We are commanded to honor them in order that our days may be prolonged. The Israelites understood by this that they were to honor their actual parents, and also the aged in general, for in ancient times the aged were called father, a custom that has been handed down in some languages and dialects where the word for an old man is the same as the word for a father or grandfather. Thus in England, in the Lancashire dialect, the word for an old woman is Gamma, which means grandmother, and the word for an old man, or of one in authority, is gaffer, which means grandfather. The Israelites supposed that if they paid this honor to their fathers, their days in the land of Canaan would be long and peaceful. In a wider sense, by the father and mother they understood Abraham and Sarah, or Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their three wives; and that if they honored them by patterning their life accordingly, then the Lord would remain with them, and would make the time of the sojourn of their race in the land of Canaan a long one. This also is true; for if the Israelites had remained faithful they might still have been in the land of Canaan; it was their evils, their rebellions, that brought all their misfortunes upon them.

But with us, to honor the father and mother should have no such natural limitation. It is, indeed, true that if we honor our earthly parents we will spend a happy childhood and one that is profitable; but merely this, is not what is meant by the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. It is the land that the Lord giveth that is meant, and not merely the house and land whereon we may happen to be. For, while it is true that the Lord has given this land, yet He has not in any particular sense given it to us individually.

The land that the Lord gives is the land on which we stand as to our spirits; that is, it is the firm foundations on which our spiritual life is based, and this is the natural mind.

The Lord seeks to form within us a natural mind that shall be a firm foundation to all our spiritual progress. The beginning of this mind is formed in infancy and childhood, when innocence and obedience is established. But when a child comes to the age at which he begins to exercise something of freedom of action, then he is to honor his father and mother if his life in this land which the Lord has given, is to be prolonged. And verily this is the case. If, when children grow beyond the first stages of infancy, that is, beyond the age of seven or eight, they are not obedient to their parents, do not honor them, then, indeed, much of the early gifts of childhood are in danger of being lost; nor will they again be acquired except by most arduous struggles and temptations.

It is, therefore, important that parents should teach, and children should learn, to honor the parent, to obey him, and to show gratitude for all that he has done. For we owe all to our parents. They have clothed us, they have cared for us when we could not care for ourselves. They have educated us, and made us able to perform uses in the world. They have instructed us in the principles of religion, and

thus have given us the means of entering into the heavenly life. It is for this that they are to be honored.

And yet how little honor is often paid to parents. Sometimes it is the fault of the parent; for evil and selfishness can never be honored: but more often is it the fault of the child. Gratitude is a rare, thing, and such is the power of the love of self, that it blinds our eyes to what we have received from others, to what we owe to others, but holds them wide awake to what others owe to us.

To you, whose parents or guardians have guided your life that, when under your own guidance you may place yourselves under the care of the Lord,—to you, this command comes with force. For you have much for which to honor your parents; and, if you search yourselves, you will find that the only obstacle that has ever acted to prevent this honoring, has been our own love of self.

Seek then to honor your parents; for in this way the land that the Lord has thus far given you, the ground that you have thus far acquired as a promise of heaven, will be held for you, will be enriched and made more fruitful, and your days will be prolonged thereon for ever.

XIX. LOVE OF CHURCH AND COUNTRY.

Matthew 6:21-29.

@TCR 407.

@CL 406-7.

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)

This commandment has a wider application, even in the natural sense than that which we have already pointed out, namely, the honoring of the natural parents. They are, indeed, to be honored, and this because they have provided for our needs, and have thus prepared us to become citizens of the world and also citizens of heaven. If you reflect upon this the reason why they are to be honored, you will see the body, but to the uses that they have done for us. Of course, children will not and cannot see this, so that their honor of the parents is an honor of the person; but, as children begin to arrive at the age where something of thought commences, then they are to honor their parents from gratitude for things done for them which are more than the mere food and clothing. How then of those parents who have not done these uses for their children? I answer that as children come to the age of rationality they cannot honor such parents; they may, indeed, be grateful for certain things done for them by such parents; and it is of the Divine Providence that there is with all men a natural or animal love for their children, called *storge*, which leads all but the most abandoned to care for their children, at any rate so far as their bodily welfare is concerned. But there are parents who care not at all for the spiritual, or even for the moral needs of their children, and I repeat that as the children come to the age of rationality they cannot honor such parents.

But though this is true, they can honor the things which parents should do for their children; and thus can honor those who have been to them in the place of parents, as regards these things; that is to say, those who have led them so that they are fitted for the combats against evil. Hence the commandment includes not only the honor of parents, but also the honoring of teachers, and of friends who have guided their young life in the way of morality and virtue.

There is also an even wider application, namely, to the country as the parent, which has provided that government and that law which have enabled the child to be nourished, both naturally and spiritually. The same would apply here as in the case of parents, namely, that if the country has not done this, then it cannot be honored, though it can still be loved in the sense that there is a desire for its improvement.

As *storge* is innate in parents, so love of country is innate in all men. But this is a natural love, that is, it is a love of the natural kind, an instinctive love. It is also a blind love, for it loves the country simply because it is one's own, and not for its spiritual or natural good. When the country turns against a man who is in this love, then he begins to hate his country, and to seek its injury.

It is different with the spiritual love of country. To spiritually honor or love,—for to honor and to love are the same thing,—is to love it for its care, for the welfare of its citizens; and if it does not have this care, then to love and desire that it shall have it. In all these cases, whether, by parents, we mean, the

father and mother, or the teacher and guide, or the country, it is the use they do that is to be honored and not the mere person. If it is the mere person that is honored, then the honor is built upon a weak foundation; for when the person acts against one's supposed interests, the honor is apt to be changed to hate. But if the honoring is on account of the use performed, then a consideration of that use will preserve the honor against the attacks of self-love.

It is because the country is the father and mother that we have in so many languages the words fatherland and mother country, as indicating the land of one's birth and training. It is called the fatherland because of its laws which mould the country, and the administration of which, and the conditions obtaining under which, have so much to do in the forming of our minds. It is called the mother country because it is that place where are officials and an administration by whose agency, as by a womb, the laws are brought into effect to be of use to the citizen. Who does not see how greatly his mind and the form thereof owes to the country wherein he is born and educated? It is, of course, primarily owing to his religious training, but this is possible only according to the laws and order of the civil country. Think how different it would have been the form of your external or natural mind had you been brought up in another than a democratic country? And here again I must repeat, that the honor and love of our country must be based on a recognition of its real use to the formation of the spiritual life. If the country does not have that, it cannot be honored, and it may even be that a true love of it will appear in the form of efforts to fundamentally revolutionize its government.

To love the country for its use, or to honor the country by seeking to guide it in the performance of true uses on the civil plane, is really to honor the use itself. And when men do this then truly their days are prolonged upon the land which the Lord has given them. That land is the mental benefits they have derived from the laws and government of their country, whether native or adopted. It is the law of freedom, as based upon the ten commandments, the law that preserves the individual freedom and yet which punishes acts and speech against the spirit of the commandments,—it is these that form the mind, and it is these that are the land given by the Lord,—the natural mind which is prepared to bring fruit when sown by the seed of Divine truth.

For when a child's mind has been trained in the sphere of the rule of law and order and freedom, such a mind is in a free state and also in a state of external order, that is, a state in which it sees that order is to be preserved. In such a state the mind is in a position to see and acknowledge spiritual truths, and it is in this sense that it is the land given by the Lord, the land where the Sower can go forth to sow, and where the seed can spring up and bring forth fruit some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold and some a hundred-fold.

It is because of this signification of land that we have in common speech the expression that a good training gives one a good basis or foundation for one's future life; that the groundwork has been laid, and other similar expressions.

But, as I said, it is the religious training that is the most important factor in giving man this ground or land upon which his future life is to be built up. And because of this, it is the Church that is the mother in the spiritual or genuine sense. The Church, indeed, is as a mother to children and to adults. It is a mother to children because by means of ministers and teachers, by means of instruction given to parents, it cares for the implantation in the child's mind of those principles and habits which are the foundation of the future life. It is the mother of adults because it serves as a conserver of the Divine

Truth, it provides for the existence of a priesthood, of worship; it provides for the preservation of the Word and for its spread; it provides for the preaching of the Word and for its exposition, and for many other things without which there would be no spiritual life in man.

The Church provides these things for man, but the Church cannot really teach man. It is the Lord alone who teaches. The Church provides for the preservation and preaching of the Word; and by her offices the truths of the Word are; conveyed to the memory of man, and he is also encouraged to obey them, and his affections are excited for them. But, after all, this does not constitute real reception of the Divine truth. It is the Lord alone who can cause man to see that truth, and the Lord does this so far as man is willing that He shall do it, and shows this willingness by obedience to the commandments.

The Church provides in mans memory and also in the habits and affections of his external mind, the ground, which, like a womb, can, if the man wishes to cultivate it, bring forth the fruits of the seed of truth which is from the Lord alone. Hence it is that the Lord is called the Father, and the Church the Mother. Both are to be loved and honored if man would retain the land that the Lord has given him.

To honor the Lord is to obey Him; and to obey Him is to acknowledge Him in the heart as the one God whose laws are to rule us in our intentions as well as in our deeds in our private thoughts as well as in our speech.

To honor the Church is to love her because of her spiritual uses, and this, interiorly, means to honor and love those uses themselves. Hence this honoring consists in reading the Word, in observing acts of piety, in daily prayer and in keeping the conscience pure. To the natural man the honor of the Church is the love of His Church because it is his; to the spiritual man it is the love of the Church because it is the Lord's. The natural man loves his Church only so far as such love may prolong his days in the land of self interest, which he has built up for himself; the spiritual man loves it in order that his days may be prolonged upon the land which the Lord his God has given him. The one's life is built upon sand, the others is built upon a Rock, and that Rock is the knowledge of the Lord and love of Him.

XX. LOVE OF COUNTRY.

Ps 14,

Matthew 10:28-42.

@HH 393, or

@TCR 414.

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)

In two previous discourses on this text we have considered it as an intermediate commandment uniting the love of God with charity to the neighbor; as a command to love and honor the natural parents because of the uses they have performed to our natural and spiritual life; as an exhortation to love our country and to be faithful and obedient citizens; and, finally, as a spiritual law that so far as we love the Church which is the Divine means for the salvation of men, so far our days are prolonged upon the land which the Lord has given, that is, in the state of heaven.

These senses in which the text may be taken,—the natural, the moral, and the spiritual,—are all involved in each. We do not, nor can, truly honor our parents. We cannot truly love the country, we cannot truly love the Church, unless we love the Lord, and to love the Lord is to be willing to learn of Him and obey His commandments. His commandments concern all these duties, and we cannot do one of such duties in obedience to the Lord's commands without at the same time being in the spirit of obedience in regard to the others. Thus, whether our parents, our country or our Church is the object of our love, we may know the real quality of that love,—whether it is for the sake of self, or from the desire to obey the truth,—by seeing what our state of mind is in regard to obedience to the Lord's commandments, especially where such obedience requires the removal from deed or intention of that which our natural concupiscence desires.

At a time like the present, when most of you who will read this discourse are engaged in the active service of your country to protect her from assault, it is the love of country which especially comes before the mind in the contemplation of this commandment, and it is to this love, therefore, that I would now direct your attention, in this summing up of the law of the fourth commandment.

We are told in the Writings that the country is to be loved. Not as a man loves himself, but more than himself, and that this is a law inscribed on human hearts, from which comes the saying on the lips of every upright man that if the destruction of the country is threatened by an enemy it is fine to die for her, and, for a soldier, glorious to shed his blood for her; and this is said, because thus much must the country be loved.

To be willing to die for the country is, in its essence, to be willing to give up one's life for the sake of the good of others, that others may live in peace and prosperity. In the present war this is manifest to a degree more than in any war that has ever been waged. For in this war, it is plain to all that the end which our country has in view is not merely its own protection, or the safeguarding of its own rights

among the nations. Not! It appeals to some higher and nobler love; for, as has been declared again and again, the end and object of our entry into this war is to unite with other nations for the good of the human race, for the peace and prosperity not only of our own people, but of the people of all lands. This is the end and purpose that has been proclaimed by those in authority, and the proclamation cannot but inspire the heart, and fortify the courage to endure whatever of hardship may come to be borne for the sake of our country; and, as important as the rest, it should be an incentive to all the citizens to observe a state of cheerful obedience to those authorities who are in charge of the prosecution of this noble purpose.

Love of the country is in itself a heavenly virtue, and we are told that he who on earth truly loves his country that is, who is willing to sacrifice himself for his country, even though, on earth, he had little or no knowledge of religion, yet in the other world is equally self-sacrificing to the heavenly country which is the Lord's kingdom; and that when from the lips of angels he learns the laws of this heavenly kingdom he is equally willing to lay down his life in their cause.

In the spiritual world there is no death such as is on this earth; in that world a man does not lay down his life so that he is no longer seen by those whom he has loved. Nevertheless there also, there is a laying down of life for the sake of others,—not the life of the body, nor the life of the soul; not the life of self-consciousness the loss of which in the spiritual world would mean the ceasing of existence. No! the life that the true soldier there lays down, is the life of evil loves. This is the life that is meant by the Lord when He says. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospels the same shall save it (Mark 8:35). To lose one's life for the Lord's sake and for the sake of the Gospel, is to give up one's love because it is contrary to the Divine law as revealed to us in the Word. This is the essence of all genuine love of country, without which love of country is only an appearance, within which is the love of self.

That love of country may be an appearance concealing the love of self, is manifest from common observation. For with some who are willing to fight for their country, the motive may be the love of self-glory, a mere animal love of adventure, shame, and many other motives. Merely to be in the army of a country is not in itself a sign of love of country. It may or may not be such a sign.

How then shall we tell? The answer is given by the Lord in the words just quoted. He is in the love of country who is willing to lose his life for My sake and the Gospels. In other words, he is in genuine love of the country,—he truly honors his father and his mother,—who is willing to lay down his life, that is, his love, for the sake of that country where the Lord is King and whose laws are the Gospel.

While we are still on earth, we are, as to our spirits in the spiritual world, and in that spiritual world we are ill the midst between heaven and hell. We are not conscious of this fact; but if we reflect we can see in ourselves the evidences of it. The chief of these evidences which will command our attention is the fact that we are constantly called upon to serve one of two opposite loves. If we are in the pride of boasting, or the love of domineering, or the evil of hatred or jealousy, or lasciviousness, we are always aware of the fact that there are laws which forbid the cherishing of such evils with their consequent thoughts and imaginations. Laws, I mean, not of the land, for these forbid only evil deeds, but laws which are addressed to the spirit; which speak to man in his own private thoughts; laws; obedience to which, is in the command of the man himself alone.

The fact of there being such laws, and of those laws being opposed to the desires which look merely to the enjoyment of self,--this fact in itself is a sign that as to our spirit, we are in the midst between two standards, of two countries, as it were, each with its own laws and ideals. The one country is hell, the other is heaven. The laws of the one country regard only the elevation of self, and they command the doing of good to others - the neighbor, the country, the Church,--only when thereby some advantage is brought to oneself. The laws of the other country command that a man be willing to lay down his own life that another may live; that is, command that we forego, shun as evil, all those thoughts and intentions and deeds which, while appearing delightful to us, while appearing to promise the delights of life, and to nourish and support that delight. yet are seen to be of injury to the neighbor. If, for instance, a man from delight contemplates thoughts of adultery or other like evil, and he then thinks that the law of heaven commands that he fight against this love because it inflicts injury upon others, and from this thought puts away from him the intention to commit the deed,--

such a man truly loves the Lord's country more than his own life; such a man is willing to lay down his life for the sake of his country,--in order that others may live in peace and prosperity.

Here we see the commandment, Honor thy father and thy mother, as the great intermediate commandment that unites the three former commandments which relate to our duty to God, to the six commandments that follow, which relate to our duty to our neighbor.

This is the true love of country, and as this love animates the defenders of a country so will its victory make not only for natural peace, but also for spiritual prosperity. All of us have many evils. In the sight of God not one, not even the highest of angels is pure. In all our thoughts and deeds there is ever something of self, of evil. Our patriotism also contains the love of glory, ambition, and other affections, within which is something of self-love. But no matter. The Lord looks at intentions, and he who is in the desire and the effort to serve the country truly and faithfully, is regarded by the Lord not from his weaknesses, but from his will. But let us keep in mind, that no one truly loves the country unless he loves his neighbor; and that no one loves the neighbor unless he is willing to lay down the life of evil loves rather than injure his neighbor. And he who loseth his soul, or life for this reason, the same shall find it; for to give up the life or love of self is to receive from the Lord the life of love to God and love to the neighbor,--a life which is the life of heaven.

XXI. THOU SHALT NOT KILL.

Numbers 35:15, 34.

Matth. V. 21-26.

@CL 365-6.

Thou shalt not kill. (Exodus 20:13)

This commandment is the first that directly concerns mans duty to his fellow-men in general. The first three commandments concern his duty to God, namely, that he should worship the Lord, should hallow His name, and should observe the Sabbath day, that is, should at times lit up his mind to thought concerning God and religion. The fourth commandment, indeed, concerns mans duty to his parents, but by parents are manifestly meant the Lord and the Church, and in a more restricted sense the country; these are to be honored if the land which the Lord wills to give us is to be prolonged in our possession.

These four commandments are a preliminary to the remaining commandments which concern directly our life in the world and our duties and obligations there. And the four commandments concerning our duty to God are given, first, because unless man worships God, he cannot keep the commandments respecting his duty to men. The laws of the Word are addressed to the spirit of man and hence to his bodily actions; for the Word is addressed to man as a spiritual being who will live for eternity, and its end and purpose is the formation of his eternal life, that is, the life which endures after the death of the body. It is well known, moreover, that an evil man can do good deeds, and, indeed, frequently does such deeds, and also lives a good moral life; but the evil do this from various evil loves, such as the love of reputation, of success in the world, of praise, or of an easy life. It is manifest also that unless the love of self be actually removed by shunning evils because they are sins, the mere doing of good deeds does not remove that love;

it still remains within, where it is as a fire constantly inciting to evil thoughts, to anger, impatience, jealousy, lust, and similar imaginations of the heart.

The Word therefore is directed to removing the evils from the spirit of man, and thence from his deeds; for the end of the Divine Love is the salvation of men. With those who reject this end, that is, who do not obey the commands of the Word as spiritual laws, the law itself still operates; they remove themselves from its beneficent purpose; they cannot remove themselves from its operation. Therefore the laws of Divine truth become, to the evil, laws of punishment, the object of which is not to injure, but to restrain from injuring others.

This truth concerning the Law of the Divine Truth, that its end is to save man and give him heavenly happiness by removing evil from the heart and intention; but that where this end is rejected, its operation is to restrain him from injuring others - this truth is a universal law which must enter into the consideration of the commandment now before us.

The words, Thou shalt not kill, refer specifically to killing the body of men. The Israelites so understood

the commandment, and indeed appear to have made no further application of it. But that the Israelites did not understand it as an absolute prohibition against the taking of human life; and also, that it was not so intended, is clear from the fact that their Divinely given laws commanded the punishment of death for certain specified offences. This punishment was especially directed for the crime of premeditated murder. Murder that was accidental, or unpremeditated, could be atoned for by a fine, and for the protection of the killer against private revenge cities of refuge were established whereto he could go, and where he would be protected while enquiry was made into the nature of his offence. But for deliberate murder death was the only penalty. It is clear, therefore, that the commandment against killing was not an absolute law against the taking of human life.

The distinction between homicide and murder was well known to the Israelites, and the whole of their laws respecting the taking of human life are founded on this distinction. Consequently there was with them, as in the Christian world, a fear of committing murder because of the extreme penalty. But merely to fear murder because of this, is not really to remove the love of murder,--a love which springs from hatred of the neighbor. I do not mean that every one who hates his neighbor is actually conscious of the desire to kill him,--though this is frequently the case; no! our whole training is such that few would contemplate actual murder. But it is clear that where the neighbor is hated there is a satisfaction in his injury, misfortune, and even death.

The Israelites, more or less, observed the external law with regard to premeditated murder, but they did not shun the internal evils that lead to murder. Hence when the Lord w-as on earth, they sought a pretext to kill Him, and this from fear of His power over the multitude, and because of His exposures of their own hypocrisy. Viewed merely from the external law they considered the crucifixion of Jesus as a legal punishment, because, as they said, it was done under the law; but viewed from the internal law, it was a crime because it was done, not from the law, but from self; not from justice, or the desire to protect, but from hatred and the desire to destroy.

Because in the Israelitish church the real spirit of the law had thus been lost, therefore the Lord Himself again laid down the law and at the same time revealed its spirit. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; but I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment (Matthew 5:21-2). Here the lord shows that the law is not primarily directed against the external taking of human life, but against the spirit of hatred, or of anger without a cause. It is as though he has said He that hateth his brother without a cause is already guilty of murder in his heart.

The Word must be read according to doctrine, for without this guide it could not be understood.

And so we must read this law of Murder in the light of the doctrine thus given by the Lord,--a doctrine, however, which is also revealed in the Old Testament, and which animates the distinction between murder and manslaughter.

In the light of this doctrine the words. Thou shalt not kill, may be read: Thou shalt not kill, but only the law given by God: or, Human life is not to be taken by the self-will of man, though it may be forfeited by offences against the law of God. This is plain, for the Lord Himself says that he who is angry against his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment, that is, of the judgment against murder which was death.

It is man who is not to kill, and this, because what man does from himself springs from evil. The case is different when man acts from the law, and especially when he acts from the desire to protect his country. This is readily seen in various ways. Thus a judge who from the desire of protecting his country and upbuilding its laws which have as their end the defence of the citizens from injury at the hands of the evil,—such a judge when he sentences to death is not acting against this commandment, because it is not He who kills, but it is the law of Divine Truth which while striving to bless all men, yet with those who will not receive it, acts as a restraint in order to protect the good. But a judge who sentences to death from hatred is at heart a murderer, even if his murder be under the guise of law. So a soldier who kills the enemy in order to protect his country is not acting against the commandment; because it is not He who kills, that is, he has no desire to take life, no hatred of the personal enemy; but what kills is the law which requires that the innocent be protected. In both these cases it is clear that the crime of killing depends on whether it is the man who kills, or whether it is the operation of the law of Divine Truth protecting men.

Thou shalt not commit murder. Man is not to be in the spirit of hatred, of the desire to do injury to the neighbor; but he is to love his neighbor as himself; to love to protect his neighbor; to fear to injure his neighbor.

Such love and such fear sometimes also demand that he shall protect the neighbor against assault and injury. The judge does this in his administration of the law; and if this is not of avail, then must come the soldier to stand on the ultimate plane of defence of the neighbor, and to repel, even with the weapons of war, him who would injure. To do less than this, is indeed to murder; for one who is not willing to protect his neighbor against injury when such protection is in his power, is a party to the injury. He will not punish or kill the enemy, but he suffers the enemy to kill his neighbor.

Here is the spirit of the law: We are commanded not to hate the neighbor; not to will him injury from ourselves, or our own self love: but to desire to protect, to do him good to act with him, not from self-love, but from a spirit which fights against self-love; to be willing, if necessary, to sacrifice life itself in protection of him.

The judge, or the soldier who is in this love has no hatred against the enemy. His inspiration is not hatred, but the desire to protect his neighbor. In the trial or the battle he is zealous and eager, but not cruel and bloodthirsty; and after the battle when the enemy is vanquished he does not bear him malice, but treats him with justice.

And here let us again bear in mind that the neighbor who is to be loved and protected is not only the individual, but the country, the Church and the Lord. We must be unwilling to do injury to these, and zealous to shun what would injure them.

XXII. SELF LOVE.

Isaiah 12, 12-22.

Matth. Vi, 19-34.

@TCR 493, or

@HH 360.

Thou shalt not kill. (Exodus 20:13)

In the previous discourse on these words I dwelt on their meaning as being that man is not to kill; that where, on the civil plane killing is necessary, it is to be done not from the spirit of mans desires, but from the law of Divine Truth which resists all that would destroy the end of the Divine Love, that is, the salvation of man. On the natural plane the command is, not that there shall be no killing, but that man shall not kill, that is, that he shall not kill from any private motive of envy, jealousy, avarice, self-love, etc. A striking confirmation of this is seen in the nineteenth chapter of Exodus, immediately preceding the giving of the ten commandments; for we there read that any one who touched the border of the mount shall surely be put to death and shall surely be stoned or shot through (Exodus 19:12-31). And in the chapter following the commandments, we read, he that smiteth a man so that he die, shall be surely put to death (Exodus 21:12); and the same punishment was prescribed for other crimes (Exodus 21:15-17,29). But this punishment of death, while necessarily inflicted by means of men, was given not from the impulse of hate and revenge, but from the justice of the Divine Law, which wills the safety and protection of all.

There are many instances in the Word where a command is given in this way, namely, that Man shall not do some thing, but yet that the thing is to be done from God. Thus we read in Matthew, Judge not that ye be not judged; yet it is manifest that these words cannot be taken to mean that man shall form no judgments.

That would be ridiculous, for we must form judgments all the time; God gives us reason in order that we may use it; in fact, the very act of shunning evils is an exercise of the judgment. But the command means that man is not to judge; not man, but the Divine Truth is to make the judgment. In other words our judgments of others must not be made from self-love or self-interest, but from the justice of Divine law. And therefore in one of the Gospels the Divine teaching is given, Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment(John 7, 24).

Again the lord says, Resist not evil; but it is quite clear that if we read these words in the light of doctrine we shall see that their true meaning is that man shall not resist evil from himself, that is, from self-love, or jealousy, or revenge, etc. But still evil must be resisted, for not to resist evil would be to allow the evil to inflict all manner of injury on the good. The Lord Himself resisted evil when He made a scourge of small cords and drove out of the temple all them which were making the house of God a house of merchandise (John 2, 15-6). Nay, more than this, the supreme Divine resistance to evil consists in the Lord's coming down upon the earth in order that He might fight against the hells which were breathing the destruction of man.

The Lord is Love itself, and His love is the love of making others happy outside Himself. This love is the only, and the all sufficient cause of the creation of the universe. Divine Love is the cause of creation because Divine Love wills to give itself to others; and in order that this might be possible, it created men capable of receiving the Divine Love.

But in order that we may feel anything as our own there must be the appearance that it actually is our own; that we can do what we like with it. Moreover in order to enjoy a thing it must appear to be our own and at our own disposal. The Lord's love is such that it wills man to receive that love and feel it as the delight of love and of life in himself. This, however, would not be possible unless the man felt as if he lived in and from himself; for without this appearance the man would be an automaton. But God created man in the image of God;

that is, he created him with the full appearance that he lives from himself; we seem to live from ourselves, because we cannot see life inflowing into us; and in this seeming we are images of God who really does live from Himself because He is life itself.

Now man is created with this appearance of living from himself in order that he may freely acknowledge that he lives from God, and thus learn to obey the Divine Commandments. These commands are nothing less than the laws which the Lord has given, and which man is to observe. In order to receive the end and object of Divine Love, which is that man shall be happy. Not happiness is possible, that is, no eternal or genuine happiness, where there is the love of self: and, therefore, the Lord wills that we shall shun the love of self and obey the law of the Divine Truth.

As I have said, for this purpose we are born with the appearance that we live from ourselves. This appearance is the basis of self-love. Self-love is not in itself an evil love; it is, indeed, given to man in order that it may be a servant in the acknowledgment of God,—that he may love to keep his body clean, strong, and healthy. In order that he may be fitted to do his uses. Self-love arises from the appearance that we live from ourselves, and this appearance is given us in order that we may be free to acknowledge the Lord.

But self-love is abused when it is used merely for the gratification of one's own desires. and without regard to justice. Such self-love is in the desire of destroying the happiness of others whenever another's happiness conflicts or appears to conflict with its own. Thus the man who is in self-love, if he is at table, thinks only of satisfying his own appetite and is indifferent as to his duty to his neighbor at the table. Of course, it is natural for men to wish to satisfy their appetites; but the difference is that in the one case the love of self and the consciousness of one's own individuality and needs is subordinate to the acknowledged truth that the Lord from His Love commands us to love the neighbor; while in the other case the love of self regards only itself and is careless as to the happiness of others.

The illustration is a homely one, yet it will suffice, for in essence it embodies and illustrates the universal truth that self-love is either a master seeking life and happiness only for itself and willing to deprive others of life and happiness rather than sacrifice itself; or it is a servant held subordinate to the acknowledgment that the Lord wills life and happiness to all, and that this will must not be opposed by man.

The love of self was given to man that he might be an image of God; that he might love God as of

himself; that he might be able as of himself to see truth, to acknowledge it and to obey. We have the love of self by virtue of our five senses which give to us sensations which we recognize as our own, and among which we can choose those which we will cherish and those which we will reject as being to our hurt. It is the sum total of these sensations thus under our disposal that makes up our individuality, our character. By virtue of this faculty of sensation and choice we are also able to receive truth or falsity and to choose between them. It is for this reason that the Lord says in the Psalms, O taste and see that the lord is good, i. e., we are to learn concerning the Lord and see for ourselves that His laws are the laws of heaven.

Thus the love of self, as given to man in creation, was the means whereby he could receive light from the Lord, and could become an image of God not only in living as if from himself, but also in freely acknowledging that all life comes from the Lord alone. Hence the love of self is called in the Word, Lucifer, or light-bearer. But when the love of self lives for itself alone, it no longer co-operates with the Lord's will to give life and happiness to all, but it strives to appropriate all life and happiness to itself, allowing it to others only so far as thereby it can feed its own delights. Man is then in darkness respecting God and denies Him and is disobedient to His commandments. Lucifer then becomes the Prince of Darkness. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the morning (Isaiah 14:12).

It is the love of self perverted that is meant by the devil;

for that there is no personal devil disputing his authority with the Almighty God is manifest to human reason. It is this love of self that is the serpent that tempted Adam and Eve so that instead of having dominion over the beasts and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth (Genesis i, 26) they suffered the serpent to have dominion over them,--not satisfied with being images of God who acknowledged His commands, they desired to obey only the commands of their own will; it is this love of self that is the Lucifer that has thus fallen; it is this love of self that is the master which we serve if we do not obey the Lord's commandments.

From the Lord proceeds continually a sphere of love to the human race; a sphere which would give life and heaven to all, and which, in order that it may thus give, exhorts men to receive life by obedience to the commandments from religion. But from the Devil, i. e., from the love of self, as master, or from the hells which are made up of lovers of self. proceeds a sphere of destruction; a sphere that is perpetually in the effort to deprive men of heavenly happiness,--as will be quite manifest if we reflect that evil looks to its own gratification and is careless as to the good of others. The devil, therefore, is in the perpetual effort to destroy that life which the Lord is perpetually willing to give. Hence he is called by the Lord a murderer from the beginning (John 8, 44)

This love of self is with every man, as a Divine gift; nor can it ever be taken away from him. But it rests with him whether by it he will serve the Lord or the Devil,--God or Mammon. If he holds this love subordinate to the laws of religion, then he co-operates with the Lord's will that men shall receive life; but if this love rules him, then he makes one with those whose love is to destroy and kill. This is the universal truth contained in the command, Thou shalt not kill.

XXIII. SPIRITUAL MURDER.

Psalms 1.

John 8, 31-59.

@HH 564.

Thou shalt not kill. (Exodus 20:13)

Our last thought in the consideration of the spiritual sense of these words was that from the Lord proceeds a sphere for the creation and preservation of the whole of creation, while from the devil or hell proceeds a sphere for the destruction of the Lord's end in creation, namely, a heaven from the human race; and in consequence of this, the devil is called a murderer from the beginning. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When we speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father of it (John 7, 44).

In these words is described the nature of the love of self, that love which was given to man in order that he might as of himself acknowledge God. But, how is it fallen from heaven! Instead of being used as a servant for the promotion of a healthy and rational mind, we are inclined to use it for the sake of self, that is, for the sake of gratification of what is pleasing to ourselves without much regard to the interests of others.

This is the love that the Lord says is now a murderer from the beginning, and a liar in whom the truth is not. It is a murder because it is opposed to the end of creation, namely, the giving of heaven and happiness to others. Men can receive the blessings of the Divine Love only so far as they receive the Lord's love, and this they cannot receive except so far as they obey the commandments by which His love seeks to operate.

The end of the commands is that man may become all image of God, and thus that lie shall love others. On the other hand, the essence of the love of self is that others shall love oneself. The love of self is a contractive force, the Lord's love is an expansive force; the Lord's love is a force perpetually giving; the love of self is a force perpetually taking away; the Lord's love is a creative force, the love of self is a destructive force. The love of self is in the effort of receiving delights from others,--this is the prime thing, and the giving of delights to others is entirely secondary. Hence in the love of self is contained inmosty the effort to destroy the Lord's life, because this is in the effort to give to others, to give heavenly happiness and not the delights of the love of self. The love of self, therefore, being perpetually opposed to the influx and operation of the Lord's love, is called a murderer from the beginning, that is from the beginning when Cain from jealousy killed his brother Abel, and thus introduced into the world the ultimate deed of self-love.

The devil is also a liar and the father of lies, because the love of self promises happiness to man and yet it can bestow no happiness. The love of self is like the serpent who promised that Adam and Eve would become as God knowing good and evil; he indeed, spoke the truth, for by the Fall men did learn evil; but he did not speak all the truth; and therein consisted his life. For he did not say that they would be

punished, or would be cast out of the Garden of Eden to suffer and work in the sweat of their brow. The love of self is a liar, because only by lies can it succeed in seducing man. We can see this plainly in our own life, if we reflect that the love of self, or the devil, when we are in temptation always holds out to us how great will be our pleasure if only we yield to his suggestions; he does not tell us about the punishment that will follow, or about the loss of the loves of heaven. No, for if he told these things he could not hope to succeed in leading us.

It is the Lord in the Divine Word that teaches us the truth about the fruits of the love of self. The Lord in His Word tells the Divine Truth, and this because the truth alone makes man free, free to receive the Lord and enter into the end for which the world was created, namely, the angelic heaven. But the devil is a liar from the beginning, because he wishes to destroy the end of creation, and this can he done only by lies and deceit.

We have dwelt on this point, in order to gather together in one the various aspects in which the command against killing can be viewed. The applications of the command are many, and they apply to the deeds of the body, the thoughts of the understanding, and the loves of the will; but whatever the application it has relation to the work of the devil which is to kill, to destroy, the end of creation. This sphere of destruction, of murder, is the sphere of hell.

Hence all men who are in evil are inmost in the desire to destroy the Lord. Of course, they would not acknowledge this; and yet reason can see that it is true; for they are in the will to destroy the Lord's End, to prevent the accomplishment of that End, to destroy the presence of the Lord among men; and the Lord says, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these ye have done it unto me.

Hence the inmost of the commandment. Thou shalt not kill, is that man is not to be in the will to destroy the Lord; that is, he is to shun all that offers an obstacle to the establishment of the Lord's kingdom upon earth. And it is well here to remember that whenever a man is in the exercise of evil, whether in thought or in deed from the thought, he is engaged in a war against God, and is interiorly, nay, inmost, one with those who are murders from the beginning. Because they wish to destroy the Lord's work.

The commandment then necessarily also means that man is not to deprive others of the truths of faith;

for this is to spiritually kill them, that is, spiritually deprive them of the life of heaven. All men who are in evil are interiorly in this effort to spiritually kill. Again, they would deny this: and again reason can see plainly that the fact is so. For the sphere and action of evil is to remove from others all thoughts of good and innocence, and to put in their place the thought of self. This also experience shows, for the effect of evil is always to harden and corrupt, never to soften and make more useful or lovely. This destruction of the souls of others is spiritual murder, or murder in the spiritual sense.

And, finally, we come to the natural sense which concerns the killing of the body, and in a wider view, the depriving others of reputation and visiting them with vindictiveness and the spirit of hatred and revenge. We have already shown that the mere depriving of natural life is not in itself an act against the commandment; and this truth can now be more plainly seen, in the light of the universal principle that, essentially considered, murder is opposition to the Lord's End in creation. To shun this evil, then, involves also the willing-ness to fight in defence of all that comes from the Lord. On the civil plane it

involves the willingness to fight, nay, even to lay down one's life, in defence of justice to others; on the moral plane it involves the willingness to shun evil deeds that bring harm to the neighbor and to the country and the church, which are neighbors in a higher sense. On the spiritual plane it involves the willingness to fight, and to suffer hardship for the defence of the good and truth that has been implanted in the mind by the Lord,—a willingness to shun evils because they are deadly to the soul, and are the enemies of the Lord's End to give heaven to man; it involves also a fear to injure the faith, and the innocence of others; and thus the treatment of all things pertaining to the religious faith in a becoming and holy manner. But in the celestial sense the commandment involves the fear to be an enemy of the Lord and His End in creation; only in the regenerate is this sense an active factor in the shunning of evils, that is, with the regenerate only is it actively present in the mind as a cause of the fear of evil.

But every man who shuns evil as sin against God, on whatever plane he shuns it, is interiorly in the fear to oppose the Ends of the Divine Love; for he is interiorly in the love of obedience to the commandment, Thou shalt not kill.

XXIV. PERMISSIONS IN THE ISRAELITISH CHURCH.

Deuteronomy 32:22-30,34.

Matth. V. 27-32.

@TCR 316, or

@HH 379.

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

This law constitutes the universal law of marriage, which is, that under no circumstances is the marriage covenant to be defiled. To Christians the law has a wide application; but to the Israelitish church its application was limited to the act of a man with the wife of another or with a betrothed virgin, and also to the act of rape,--the punishment for which offences was death. By these acts only was the law deemed to be broken. But there were in the Israelitish church many disorders destructive of the conjugal, as to which the Law was either silent,--as in the case of polygamy - or for which it imposed only light punishments. These, however, were merely permissions; for throughout the Old Testament there is nothing that implies their approval, still less the teaching of them.

The Israelites were a polygamic nation; but polygamy was never prescribed to them by the Law, nor does that Law anywhere approve of it. The most that can be said is that its existence was recognized, and that certain laws were given for its regulation. Polygamy did not originate in the Law, but was an institution carried over from idolatry.

The first reference to polygamy that occurs in the Old Testament is found in Genesis 4:19, where we read that Lamech took unto him two wives. This chapter describes the murder of Abel by Cain, and it continues with a table of the latter's descendants, of whom Lamech was the last. By Cain, however, is not meant a single man, but a state of life, namely, the state of faith without charity;

and, in the historical sense, that nation or church which was in such a state. We say, nation or church, because in ancient times the nation and the church were one and the same, the church being a matter of the whole nation. By Cain and his descendants, therefore, is meant those nations or churches which descended from the primitive Adamic Church after the crime committed on Abel; i. e., after the separation of faith from charity. it was in these nations, or, at any rate, in the last of them, and not in the laws of God, that polygamy originated.

Because the churches descended from Cain were thus perverted it was necessary that a new beginning be made in the Adamic Church. And, therefore, to Adam and Eve was born a third son, who was called Seth, because he was given instead of Abel whom Cain slew (Genesis 4, 25). From Seth was descended the church or nation called Noah,--a nation which, when the flood of evils descended to destroy the Adamic Church, was preserved as the nucleus of a new church. This nation had evidently preserved the spirit of obedience to God. It is also clear that it had preserved the institution of monogamy, for this

is involved in the fact that Noahs wife and the three wives of his [three] sons, entered into the ark (Gen. Vii, 13)

After Noah with whom a new church was established, comes a long line of nations or churches ending in tire nation of Terah the fattier of Abram. It is quite clear that this nation was a perverted and idolatrous offspring of the Ancient Church. The account of Abrams temptation to sacrifice his son, Isaac, shows that Abram was accustomed to the ideas of human sacrifices as a part of the worship of his God; for a nine cannot be tempted except to that to which he is inclined or accustomed. Again, the fact that Rachel, when leaving her home, which was the nation from which Abram had come, took with her her fathers images or idols (Genesis 31, 19), plainly indicates that this nation was in idolatry.

It was from this idolatrous or corrupt descendant of the Noatic Church that the practice of polygamy and concubinage was imported into the Israelitish church. That concubinage and polygamy was practiced in the tribe or nation of Abram, is evident from the fact that Sarah herself gave her handmaid as a concubine to Abram;

and that Abram took other concubines while Sarah was still living with him (Genesis 25, 6). The same is also true of the other patriarchs. All were polygamists and saw nothing inconsistent between polygamy and the worship of their God.

Yet in all the words God spake to them, there is not a single one which supports polygamy; nay, the implication would rather point the other way.

But while no part of the Laws given to the Israelites specifically either condemned or supported polygamy, the Law which had been given to the primitive Adamic Church still remained,—the law that a man shall leave father and mother and cleave to his [one] wife. In the perverted remains of the Ancient Church this primitive law was neglected, and polygamy and concubinage took its place; and it was from this remnant and not from the Word of God, that polygamy entered into the Israelitish Church.

Nor were polygamy and concubinage the only enemies to conjugal love: for it needs but a cursory glance at the history of the descendants of Abram, to convince us that they were addicted to all manner of whorish practices; and such practices must necessarily have grown among them during the servitude in Egypt.

The Israelitish church was not a genuine church; it was but the shell of a church, and faithfulness to its forms and ceremonies was enforced by punishments and miracles. The reason lies in the character of the people in that they ever refused to give any internal or real obedience to the Lord's words, i. e., to the spirit of His laws. Nevertheless it was necessary that there be somewhere on earth, at least the form of a church; and this, in order that the knowledge of the Lord might be preserved until such time as a genuine church could be raised up. To this representative church the genuine law of conjugal love as it was in the beginning could not be revealed, nor could its observance be enforced,—for internal things cannot be forced.

But in its place a law was given which could be enforced; and which yet could represent the heavenly law of conjugal love. This Law was the command, Thou shalt not commit adultery. Nothing is here said

about polygamy or concubinage, nor about fornication. The people might put away their wives for certain causes,—though in doing this they were obliged to go through legal forms; they might have more than one wife; but under no circumstances were they to commit adultery; the punishment was death, and there was no reprieve.

Thus was the law of marriage preserved, as alone it could be preserved among such a people. But that this was not the law from the beginning is openly taught by the Lord who said, Moses, because of the hardness of your heart suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so (Matthew 19:8). And the same applies also to the law as to adultery. The Israelites had been permitted to observe it in a narrow restricted sense, and this observance was enforced upon them. But when a new and genuine church was to be established, the Law was given anew, and also the true meaning thereof. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you. Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart (Matthew 5:27-28). In these words the truth contained in the former law, but which the Israelites because of the hardness of their hearts had refused. is now openly revealed; the truth, namely, that the destruction of conjugal love. Which is also the destruction of the church with man, consists not merely in the breaking of the letter of the law as to adultery, but in all manner of lasciviousness cherished in the heart.

Here is the law for the establishment of an internal church; the law given by the mouth of the Lord. Its observance cannot be enforced by threats or miracles. It is spoken to the spirit of man; and for the observance of it, or the non-observance, he alone is responsible. None but the man himself may know whether or not he obeys it. His the burden and the fight; but his also the prize.

For with the giving of this law, is also given the responsibility of conjugal love being again established upon the earth. But the prize is gained only so far as the law is observed, the law that, To shun adultery is to shun adulterous and impure lusts in the heart,—the thought and intention; and thence to abstain from all deeds and speech that spring from and foment the fires of evil lusts.

This is the first, and the most general lesson of the commandment; and, as this new law was given that an internal church might succeed the merely representative church, so it now comes to us, in order that an internal chastity,—chastity of the spirit or intention,—may be implanted within that formal chastity which consists merely in the speech and the deed.

XXV. POWER IN ULTIMATES.

Psalms 119, 9-16.

Revelation 21, 1-8.

@HH 472.

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

In the preceding discourse on these words we spoke of the Israelitish understanding of them and on the new revelation concerning them which was given by the Lord for the Christian Church. The Israelites for the most part understood them as prohibiting merely certain specified acts of the body, the Lord taught that they concerned the action of the spirit which is the real man. This, indeed, is the universal teaching that enters into and makes a genuine church; for a church is formed from the spirits of men and not from their bodies; and it is in this sense only that the church can be said to be heaven on earth.

Religion is a matter of eternal life, and therefore a matter that concerns the formation of man as an eternal being. It concerns therefore, as I have said, not the actions of the body considered in themselves, but the actions of the spirit, of the man himself,--and the actions of the body only so far as they spring from and ultimate the actions of the spirit.

This is the reason why, in the establishment of a genuine church in place of the Israelitish, which had been merely a representative church, the first teachings of the Lord were that obedience to the commandments is not a matter of bodily actions, but of the thought and will of the spirit. We say the thought and will, because these are the actions of the spirit; what is done in the body from the spirit is simply the revelation, the unfolding, the manifestation of the actions done by the spirit. The thought of man is actually the speech of the spirit. This can be readily seen in ourselves, for our thought is plainly speech with ourselves;

and whether we utter the thought or not it is still the speech of our mind. So likewise the will is the action of the spirit, or, rather, it is the inspirer of the spirit's operations,--just as the desire for food is the inspirer of the muscular act of eating. This also we can see in our selves; for the actions done by the spirit are nothing but the carrying out of its desires. These actions of the spirit are carried on in the imagination; for in the imagination the spirit of man does all those things which satisfy or strive to satisfy the desires of his will.

The first thing, therefore, of the spiritual life is to obey the commandments in the spirit: that is, we are not to do in our spirit, the evils there forbidden. And the Lord defines this particular evil of adultery as being the lusting after a woman. The commandment not to commit adultery means, therefore, not to cherish that lust which leads to the external act of adultery and obscenity.

You will note here that it is the act, the deed, that is forbidden. Man is not to commit this deed. The real meaning is, of course, that he is not to commit it in his spirit; but still it is the committing that is forbidden. The reason is because man cannot of himself remove evil desires. He is hereditarily prone

to evil, and when incitements come from the world and the body, these desires are excited, and we feel their presence within us as an urging to evil deeds of the body. We do not have to learn to will evilly; the disposition to evil is often hereditary, and it needs but the incitement from without for this disposition to manifest itself before our thought as an evil will. Indeed, we frequently see it within ourselves as an inciter to deeds of the body which our thought from education condemns and which seem to be injurious to life and reputation. Nor is it possible for us of ourselves to remove this will; to do so would be removing or destroying our own selves.

But the true nature of the will can be examined by man, and he can form his judgment concerning it as he chooses. There is a wonderful separation between the will and the understanding; and this separation is made possible, by reason of the connection between the understanding and the external sense.

By means of the senses we can form our ideas and judgments; and the senses, because they are opened to the fixed things of the world, can receive truths revealed in ultimate form by the Lord.

It is in the light of truths that the understanding can see and judge as to the nature of the will. But still the will, as it is in itself, cannot be seen; it is seen only in its actions or operations, i. e., in the actions which it carries on in the spirit; and these actions are manifested in our thoughts and imaginations. By examining the thought and imagination man can see the quality of his will as it is set forth in operation. We say he must examine his thought also, because man has two thoughts; the one is the thought from the evil will, a thought in which the will speaks out its purposes; the other a thought from the light of truth. From this latter thought he can examine the nature of the former, and can thus see the will that inspires the former.

It is in this way, and in this way only, that man can see the nature of his will. He cannot see it in the actions of his body, except in a very limited degree; for an evil and selfish will may and often does lead a man to act uprightly and chastely in the body, for fear of the loss of reputation, etc. But in the thought and imagination man can see what his will is in the effort to do. It is here then, i. e., in the thought and imagination, that man must obey the commandment, it is of the will that it is said, Thou shalt not commit adultery, and it is the part of every man to see that this command is obeyed. He is not to allow his will to do this evil, that is, to think fondly and favorably concerning it, and to do it in the inner world of imagination.

Thou shalt not commit adultery means, therefore, that man is to shun the imagination of lascivious things; to shun those scenes of imagination in which the will has its own way, works its own desires, and uses others as the vile slaves of its own lusts. The will must not be allowed to commit these deeds. They are evil deeds, they are destructive of the life and happiness of others;

they are deeds in which the will regards itself and its own gratification alone and despises all others except as they serve itself.

And here is the wonder of the Lord's mercy. We cannot remove or purify our will; but we are given the ability to judge of its operations; we are given the light of truth whereby to form just judgment; and we are given the power to say No! to the will,—to say Thou shalt not! And as man does this so the Lord enters into him and forms a new will, the presence of which will gradually be more and more felt by

the man in the fact that he begins to perceive delight in good and a horror at evil, and especially at the evil of adultery.

The mode in which the new will is formed by the Lord as man shuns the evils of the old will, is a matter of wonderful provision, on which we cannot now dwell. Suffice it to say that if man holds his mind in the form of truth, i. e., if he holds his mind to think of the truth, and refuses to let it be used as the scene of evil thoughts and filthy imaginations, then this mind is strengthened in the form of truth, the Lord enters in, and His presence is felt as the perception that the new mind is becoming the mans own, his new will and understanding.

But while the real resistance to evil is in the spirit, this alone is not enough. The spirit is continually incited by the body and the senses. Man must, therefore, also shun evils in the body; but he must do this as a part and parcel of his shunning the evils of the spirit. If this be not his motive, then the evil will is still committing forbidden deeds.

This is why it is so important for us to keep the speech and conduct pure; and especially important is this in regard to the evil of lasciviousness. To keep the speech pure is to refrain from all manner of speech that may serve as fuel and incitement to lusts of the will; and to keep the conduct pure is to shun all deeds which have the like effect. There is here involved also that a man shall shun as evil because inciters of the evil will, all associations and scenes whose suggestions are lascivious. And if because of his uses in the world, or because of his need of recreation,--for frequently lascivious suggestions are subtly or grossly interwoven in many forms of recreation offered in the world,--

if because of these necessities the lascivious comes before his mind, let him bear in thought and carry out in the action of his mind the commandment, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

XXVI. CONJUGIAL LOVE AND LOVE OF THE SEX.

Genesis i, 26-31.

Mark x, 1-9.

@HH 368-9.

or

@CL 56.

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

We have hitherto been considering the natural sense of this commandment, that is, its sense as applied to the actual deeds of the spirit and body,— its sense as manifested in the effects of lascivious love. We wish now to speak of the nature and origin of that love itself, for with this is the purely spiritual sense of the Divine Word concerned. The natural sense concerns speech and deeds, and also the thoughts and intentions that manifest themselves as speech and deeds; but the spiritual sense concerns the interior loves, the interior formation of the mind, which produces our inclinations and thoughts. If we love to do a thing, there must be some reason why we love to do this thing rather than any other; and this reason must have its existence in some actual form of our mind. What then is the interior cause of the love of adultery?

This love does not originate in love of the sex. Animals have the love of the sex, and yet mild and gentle animals, and such as perform good uses do not have lasciviousness, even in appearance, and even the most apparently lascivious of animals are yet not lascivious in any human sense, but act merely from their instinct.

The love of the sex is given to man by God and at first creation; it cannot therefore be the origin of evil. That it was given to man by God is involved in the book of Creation where we read concerning Adam and Eve: And God blessed them and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it (Genesis i, 28).

Love of the sex was given to man in order that the earth might be replenished, that is, that it might be filled with inhabitants from whom could be formed an angelic heaven. The formation of a heaven from the human race was and is the sole end of creation; and the birth of men on earth is the necessary means to this end; for without men, exercising liberty and rationality and thus choosing for themselves the heavenly life, (or its opposite), there could be no heaven of angels. Angels created such could not satisfy the Divine End of creation; for angels created such would not be human, but would be merely automata carrying out a will not their own.

It is necessary therefore that men be born on earth; and for this purpose it is necessary that man have love of the sex. According to the importance of the use such is the delight that is attached to the

performance of that use. This is true not only of spiritual things, that is, it is true not only in the sense that according as we perform an exalted use so we receive the happiness of use; but it is true even of the body itself. Every use that the body performs is attended with the delight of that use; and this delight is given both as an incentive that the use may be performed and also as the reward of use. Moreover the higher the use the greater the delight. Thus we have the delight of eating, of smelling, of seeing, etc.; nay, there is not a single function that the body performs that does not have its delight. Moreover, the higher the use the greater the delight. Now the use of propagating the human race is the highest of all natural uses; hence to the performance of this use the Lord has given the greatest of natural delight,—the delights of the love of the sex. God has given this love to man in order that he might replenish the earth, and also subdue it, that is, that he might fill the earth with inhabitants who would make the earth a means to a life of usefulness and thus a heaven on earth. And in giving man this love it is said that God blessed him.

The love of the sex therefore is a blessing to man; we know also that when this love is abused it brings upon man disease, misery, and many tragic fates.

When this love is conjoined to friendship, to the fear to injure the neighbor, to the love of God, it becomes a blessing. But when conjoined to selfishness, hatred of the neighbor, contempt for the laws of God, it becomes a curse both to the man himself, to his victims, and to the whole of society which is thus corrupted.

The love of the sex therefore is not the source of either conjugal love or adulterous love. It is a love which we have in common with animals; it is implanted in the body for the sake of an exalted else. But if it is filled with evil loves of the spirit it becomes filthy and defiled; while if it is filled with heavenly love it becomes pure and chaste. This is important to remember if we would realize that the deeds of the body considered in themselves are neither good nor evil, but that they receive their quality from the spirit from which they spring.

When God blessed Adam and Eve and said to them that they should be fruitful and replenish the earth and subdue it, the command in the natural sense was that by means of marriage human souls should be procreated. But in the spiritual sense by earth is meant the church, or heaven on earth, and in this sense the command involves that by marriage, or conjugal love, the natural mind was to be filled with treasures or knowledges drawn from the world, and that these were to be made subservient to the spiritual mind; it is by this replenishing of the earth and subduing it that man is blessed. The blessing comes by fruitful marriage; and marriage makes one with regeneration.

The difference between man and woman is not merely an external one. Man is a man and woman a woman from their inmosts to the externals. They are different in loves, and they were so created in order that by the conjunction of these two loves into one the earth may be filled and subdued, that is, man may be made an image of heaven. Man was created into the love of growing wise; woman into the love of wisdom. This does not mean that every man is in the love of growing truly wise, or every woman in the love of true wisdom. But every man is born into the love of acquisition.

The lowest, most general, and first manifestation of this love is the desire of going out into the world in order to perform forensic uses, to acquire wealth and fame, to acquire the means of supporting a home; and the ultimate corporeal form of this love is the human seed which, as it were, acquires life

from heaven in order that it may be used for the building of a new being. This love of acquisition may be merely the love of acquiring riches, or the love of acquiring intellectual riches, or the love of acquiring the truths of religion; but in all cases the masculine love is the love of acquisition.

Woman is born into the love of wisdom itself, not into the love of acquiring wisdom. The ultimate, most general, and first manifestation of this love is love not to acquire the means for supporting a home, but to use the means provided in order that a true and happy home may be built up; and the ultimate corporeal form of this love is the form of woman which is formed not for the forming of seed but for the reception of seed, the cherishing of it and the bringing it forth into a form of use and beauty.

Man inmostly is a form of the love of growing wise; woman is inmostly a form of wisdom. It is from this that men are aggressive, pugnacious, not perceptive of the niceties of life, its proprieties, but keenly alive to their rights as dictated by the laws of truth; while women are inmostly perceptive of the niceties of life, of its beauties and proprieties.

Man, being from inmosts a form of the love of growing wise, is in the faculty of investigation, seeing and acquiring truths; woman, being inmostly a form of wisdom is in the natural perception of what is good, or in the love of the truths acquired. It is the part of true wisdom not merely to acquire truths, but also to love them. Woman is a form of wisdom, and because wisdom is truly beautiful, therefore woman is a form of beauty. But her mind, which is to be formed by herself, is not a form of wisdom except so far as her love is conjoined with the love of acquiring wisdom. Man is in the love of acquiring wisdom, but his mind does not become wise except so far as his love is conjoined with the love of wisdom.

Hence regeneration makes one with the conjugal union of man and woman, husband and wife.

Both the love of acquiring truth and the love of truth acquired are necessary before man can become an image of Him who is wisdom itself. And it pleased the Lord that these two loves, by which man might be conjoined with God and thereby be blessed, should be two separate forms, man and woman, in order that by their conjunction man may receive the blessings of conjugal love, which, inmostly considered, is the love of the truths of wisdom acquired from God. Thus they were created two in order that they might become one, who would replenish the earth not only with natural offspring, but with that offspring of heavenly truth and affection without which a home, a society, cannot be blessed.

We shall further pursue this theme in our next discourse, and for the present content ourselves with pointing out the general lesson: There is no regeneration without the love of wisdom; mere intelligence is of no spiritual value. Woman alone is a form of wisdom, and if man would receive the love of wisdom he must receive it from woman. She alone is the dispenser of this gift from the Lord. Hence to be wise the young man should cultivate and cherish a respect for woman as the beauty and adornment of life, and should pray to the Lord that he may be united in chaste and holy marriage with one, that with her he may be blessed, and earth be made the seminary of heaven.

XXVII. ORIGIN OF CONJUGIAL LOVE.

Psalms 119, 33-40.

Matthew 7, 21-9.

@HH 370

or

@CL 49.

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

The Lord's End in creating men was that they should receive from Him and thus be in the love that He ever gives. God wills to give to others, that is, to give them to feel love as in themselves, to feel His love as in themselves; and His love is the love of doing uses. Therefore man was created a form able to receive the Lord's Love, and also able not to receive it, for otherwise he would be no man, no image of God.

In order that man may be able actually to receive God, he must have two loves, the love of learning how to receive - the love of learning concerning God; and the love of the things learned. Merely to learn concerning God without any affection for the thing learned would be useless. Therefore every man has not only the love of learning, but also the love of the thing he has acquired by this love. Without this, indeed, he could have no desire to learn, no ambition. What would lead the student to study, unless he looked forward to the delight of entering into the use for which he is preparing?

These two loves can be shown in a very ultimate illustration. We all have a natural desire to go finding things out; thus even as little infants our earliest desires are to put things into our mouth in order to examine them. But when once we have tasted a thing we have also the love,--or the dislike,--of the thing tasted; that is, we like it, and therefore take it again, or we dislike it and therefore reject it.

It is these two loves,--

the love of learning and the love of the thing learned, that are necessary for the conjunction of man and God. But it will be noted that in the illustration we have given,--or speaking more generally, in any one individual,--the love of the thing learned is the same as the love of self. To love to learn, (even if it be to learn about God), and then to be delighted with one's learning, is in itself nothing but conceit. And yet, if man is to be regenerated there must be the union of these two loves,--the love of learning and the love of the thing learned.

In order then that the conjunction of these two loves may not be the love of self,--in order that man may be conjoined with the Lord and not be in the love of himself, it therefore pleased the Lord that man should be created male and female, and that the male should be created internally a form of the love of growing wise, and the female internally a form of the love of wisdom; and He also provided that between these two there should be a mutual attraction,--the love of the sex, which is as it were the

ultimate of the desire to reunite two loves which from the beginning and in God were One.

It is with spiritual creation as it is with natural. It pleased the Lord that natural procreation should be carried on not by the operation of a similar sex, but by the conjunction of two. For in this way the performance of the highest of natural uses is attended with the highest of natural delights; and in this way also the act of procreation. becomes an act in which each wills to give himself wholly to the other,--but this represents the Lord's love which is the cause of creation.

Man then is created inmost a form of the love of growing wise, woman inmost a form of the love of wisdom; and where these two inmost loves are conjoined there is the greatest delight, and the greatest spiritual fruitfulness.

But in addition to their inmost love. both man and woman have the love of self,--the love of themselves, which is the love of whatever they make their own. With man this love of self becomes the conceit of his own intelligence; the love of the things he has acquired from the love of growing wise;

or it may be simply the love of riches, or the love of wealth, or the love of power. With woman it becomes the love of her own beauty, the love of domination over men by her beauty; instead of the love of the things which wisdom teaches, there is the love of herself, and the desire, not that she be guided by the teachings of truth, but that the teachings of truth, and the teachers of truth, be subjected to the influence of her power.

In man the love of his wisdom becomes the love of himself; in woman the love of growing wise becomes the love of self, for it is the conjunction of the love of wisdom with something that is self-acquired.

And yet we again repent, the conjunction of these two loves is necessary to regeneration; and it is for this reason that man and woman were created. But that these two may be united there must be the removal of the love of self. Thus it is provided by the Lord that as man shuns the love of self, so he is affected by the sphere of the other sex. When man shuns the love of self,--shuns the conceit of his own intelligence, shuns dwelling on his own merits, and instead strives to do his duty, his mind is then in the activity of this love of growing wise and this love seeks its mate in the love of wisdom. If he shuns the love of himself it cannot find in himself its mate. Still the desire of uniting itself with the love of wisdom is there; and it is this desire that is the origin of conjugal love.

The love of the sex is, as we have said, with every man, and in itself it is merely an animal love: but with man, when he shuns the love of himself and cultivates the love of growing wise, that is, of growing in his use, that love is changed into conjugal love. For conjugal love, in itself, is the union or marriage of the love of growing wise with the love of wisdom; when there is this union. or the desire for this union, in the internal man, then this internal marriage is implanted within the love of the sex, clothes itself with that love, purifies it, and manifests itself in it as the love of one of the sex, and conjugal love.

The opposite of this internal marriage is the union of the love of growing wise,--

or with a woman, or the love of wisdom,--with the love of self; or, to put it in more simple language, the conjunction of the goods and truths, the knowledges and affections that have been acquired from the

Word, with the love of self. This is the internal sin that is forbidden in the commandment, Thou shalt not commit adultery. For this sin consists in uniting the things of the Lord in adulterous union with the things of mans evil proprium. And the union is an actual one in the vessels of mans mind; for there is an actual intermingling of the two; within is the love of self; without are the things from the Word, learned in adult life and in childhood; and the former conjoins itself with the other, using it not for the purpose of legitimate offspring, not for the purpose of bringing forth deeds of good and speech of truth that shall be of use to the neighbor; no! not for these purposes, but in order that the love of self may find its gratification and its protection.

When this infernal union flows into the love of the sex, it changes the animal love of the sex into infernal love of the sex. which is the love of adultery in its external manifestation.

Thus conjugal love and adulterous love are peculiar to man. They are the manifestations in love of the sex, of the marriage that takes place in the spirit,—a marriage that is not possible with animals.

We have said that when man shuns the love of self, which is the love of spiritual adultery, he comes into conjugal love. The reason is because his inmost love, which is the love of growing wise, must unite itself with the love of wisdom; and if the love of self is shunned, it gives to the man an inmost conatus to unite himself with one woman who is a form of the love of his wisdom.

But regeneration proceeds not alone from internals, but from internals and externals at the same time. It is therefore necessary, not only that man shun the love of self, but also the externals of that love. The sphere of external adultery attacks through the body, the sphere of internal adultery with which it unites itself attacks the spirit. Both must be resisted. The one resistance consists in shunning the love of self;

the other in curbing the love of the sex, in keeping it under the rule of the rational man, and in praying to the Lord that one may enter into chaste conjugal love.

If there is the desire to be united to the love of wisdom in the union of conjugal love, that desire will manifest itself in respect to women,—who are indeed the form of the love of wisdom,—in the shunning of every desire to injure them. whether in their body or in the defiling of their state of mind. And the great ultimate of this, the very basis of all effort to shun the love of self. is to shun wandering lusts as the very pest of hell, and to pray to the Lord for a lovely companionship with one who shall be the Only One, the wife of the heart. This prayer and its realization in chaste marriage is the prize and the reward of all wile internally and externally obey the commandment, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

XXVIII. DIVINE PROVIDENCE IN MARRIAGE.

Genesis 2, 18-25.

Matthew x, 24-36.

@CL 44 (middle).

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

The end of creation is conjunction of man with the Lord in order that the Lord may give to man of His Divine Love to be felt in the man as the love and wisdom of heaven. This conjunction is not possible unless, with man, the love of growing wise is conjoined with its companion love, the love of wisdom; and not fully except this conjunction have its fullness and ultimate in the marriage of one man who is a form of the love of growing wise with one wife who is a form of the love of that wisdom.

It is this conjunction, and hence this marriage, that the devil, that is, the love of self, wills to destroy; for this he destroys the end of creation, destroys heaven with man, destroys, that is, kills man's soul by depriving it of reception of the Lord's love and of reciprocation to that love. And therefore the Lord says, Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matthew x, 28), by which words are meant that man is not to fear the various things that bring unhappiness and disappointment to the external man, but is to fear the love of self which destroys the very end of creation.

It is to the love of self, that is, to the devil, that the commandments are addressed. But they are addressed to the devil speaking to man and persuading him; for the love of self which was created to be a servant to man that it might bring him the various means whereby he may be built up into a temple of God,—this love of self is excited by the devil to rebel, to build a temple for itself and not for God, to make the neighbor a servant to self, and not to love the neighbor.

And for this reason, it is in the perpetual effort to mingle itself with, to profane, to adulterate, all the goods and truths of the Word in order that it may use them for the increase of itself. This is the devil striving to kill both soul and body, striving to kill the end of creation, striving to kill the Lord in man. And therefore the command as to adultery follows immediately after the command not to kill.

The love of self in man is the love of his own intelligence and of power and dominion directly. This may manifest itself as the conceit of self intelligence, or as pride in one's own achievements, or even as pride in mere bodily prowess. In woman the love of self is the love of her own beauty or attractiveness and of power and dominion over men thereby. This love it is that is in the effort to commit adultery in a spiritual sense; and to this love the command is given, Thou shalt not. The man may identify himself with the love of self, or he can rise above it and, from the Lord, can say to it, Thou shalt not commit adultery. If he does this then he shuns the love of self, and seeks to cultivate the virtues of modesty and obedience to God. This shunning consists in the effort to learn from the Word and obey its teachings.

When man does this, heaven begins to be present with him, and from this presence there is inspired in him the desire of uniting his love of growing wise with the love of wisdom; that is, he comes into the

spiritual desire of receiving the love of wisdom, which is the love of obedience. He is not aware of this desire, except in the sense that he feels within himself a desire to love and live according to the commandments of God. Yet within his spirit, this desire is the actual desire of the love of growing wise to unite itself to the love of wisdom.

When this spiritual desire flows into the love of the sex it there becomes the desire to unite itself with one of the other sex. To the man himself this is perceived at first only as the desire to shun the evils of adultery and lasciviousness. But it is more than this.

For every love of growing wise there is a particular love of that wisdom, for every man there is created a woman whose love of wisdom is such that when it receives the wisdom of that man it can recognize it as its own and can conjoin itself with it. When with the man and with the woman the love of self is shunned,--that love which would commit adultery with the holy things of the Church,--then the desire in the spirit of each to conjoin its own love with its mate gives a perception, when they meet each other, that they are each the others, that they are for each other. The desire in the spirit for the marriage of the love of growing wise with the love of wisdom becomes in the body the desire for chaste marriage, a desire to be united to one; and it also inspires a perception as to the one with whom it can be united. Thus does the beginning of the marriage of good and truth in the spirit flow into the love of the sex and there manifest its presence as the beginning of conjugal love.

This perception of which we have spoken is felt by the man as falling in love. But it must be noted that a man may fall in love from other than heavenly sources. Love may be felt merely from the love of the sex,--in which case it is merely the animal desire to seek its satisfaction and delight in what is pleasing to it. It may spring from a merely natural desire to have a home and peace therein,--in which case it is merely natural, because from causes that exist only in the body. The falling in love of which we speak, however, can exist only with those who are in the beginning of the marriage of good and truth in the spirit, that is, with those with whom, in the spirit, there is a genuine desire to unite their love of growing wise with the love of wisdom. And we are told that with all such the Lord gives a perception of love when they meet the one with whom they can be united. But there can be no such perception with those whose desires are inspired by the love of self - a love which, flowing into the love of the sex, defiles that love and makes it adulterous, makes it merely the means for the insane delights of self-love.

With those who have died as infants this true falling in love has no hindrance.

In the spiritual world those who have died as infants, after they have grown up, and when they first meet her with whom they can be conjoined in conjugal love, at once feel as from an inner dictate, that she is the only one of their choice. And the feeling is mutual. And so, after a due time they speak to each other and become husband and wife. Their marriage has its origin in the spirit and, like the spirit, their love is eternal.

But on earth there are many things that obscure our gaze. An apparent obstacle to this perception of love may be the limited extent of a man's acquaintances with those of the other sex, or it may be differences in wealth and rank, and so forth. But these are in fact only apparent obstacles. For, among the new things now revealed by the Lord in order that conjugal love may once more exist on earth, is this, namely, that with those who from youth have shunned wandering lusts there is provided a lovely

companionship with one with whom they can be united in the bonds of conjugal love.

Falling in love is a thing which is only to a small extent within mans control. He can check the feeling or encourage it; but the feeling itself comes as it were spontaneously. It is indeed a necessary consequence of the love of the sex. But what is in mans power, is to see whether this falling in love conies merely from the love of the sex, or whether he may hope that it has its origin in the desire of the spirit for the marriage of good and truth. In other words, he can see whether he is in the effort to shun evils as sins, and especially the evil of adultery and its kindred sins; to shun in his love of the sex whatever is of lasciviousness. And if he is in this desire to live the life of heaven, if he prays to the Lord that he may live this life, and that he may be strengthened to shun the evil and adulterous spheres that breathe destruction to this life, then he may hope with confidence that the Lord will lead him to her with whom his soul can be united;

and that his falling in love is the leading of the Divine Providence which wills that the love of growing wise shall be united to the love of wisdom in order that the two loves, the man and the woman, the husband and the wife, thus united, may be one man with whom the Lord can conjoin Himself to bestow upon him the blessings of heaven.

XXIX. THE MARRIAGE OF THE LORD AND THE CHURCH.

Is. 62.

John 3, 14-21.

@HH 371-2.

Or

@CL 62-3.

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

In previous discourses I have, by implication at least, referred to the inmost sense of these words as being the marriage of the Lord and the Church. This marriage is the conjunction of man with the Lord whereby heaven can be present with man, and thus the end of creation realized. It is this marriage, or End of creation, that is in no way to be violated. Thou shalt not kill, i. e., man is not to destroy the Lord's presence with man; and therefore the command follows, Thou shalt not commit adultery, that is, man is not to profane the things of the Lord by mingling them with the things of his own self love.

The marriage of the Lord and the Church is effected when man receives and obeys the truths of the Lord; for then these truths form vessels in his mind which are receptive of the Divine Love; that is, they receive the Divine Love which vivifies them and makes them as it were to live as if of themselves. When this is done then the man feels in himself the love of truth. It is the same in the interiors of the mind as it is in the body. In the body, if man contracts certain habits, life flowing from the soul into the forms of the external mind thus acquired give to those forms to live as it were of themselves, and hence the man comes to actually love those habits. Hence the common saying. Habit is second nature. If man will come into the habit of obeying the Lord as to the intentions of his will and the thoughts therefrom, this habit also will become second nature;

for such a mind receives, reciprocates, and delights in the presence of the Divine Good from the Lord. But evil habits may be formed; man may accustom himself to violate the truths of the Word; he may receive them into the outer court of his memory and there use them for vile purposes of deceit and hypocrisy. In this case, also, the Lord's life flows into the vessels of the mind; but those evil vessels do not receive; they are open to stimulations from the world and the flesh, but as it were shut themselves tight at the presence of the Divine Good. The Divine Life does indeed flow into them and gives them to live as it were from themselves; but they feel its presence only as the consciousness of living as of themselves. But they do not receive the Divine Will to give them heaven; hence with such men the Divine Life is said to flow in, as it were, through chinks and crannies.

This also can be illustrated by the habits of the body; for when evil habits are contracted the soul gives to the forms thus induced, to live as if of themselves; but, because they are evil habits and contrary to the order of the soul, they are in reality destructive of the happiness and health of the body. They seek

their stimulus and delight only from the world, and if this fails they come into weariness and dullness.

In reality the marriage of the Lord and the Church is not the conjunction of man with the Lord; for man, of himself, since he is merely a dead receptacle of life, cannot be conjoined to the Divine. The conjunction is effected not with the man as man, but with the Divine received by the man. This Divine is the Divine Human, or the Son of God who came into the world to be the Saviour. Hence we are told in the Writings that, inmosty considered, the marriage of the Lord and the Church is the Union of the Father and the Son.

By the Father, or Jehovah, is meant the Infinite Divine, which is good itself and truth itself, from whom comes creation and to whom belongs the end of creation. But in order that this end might be realized it was necessary that the infinite he revealed to man, and this could not be effected except by the taking on of a human form comprehensible to man.

It therefore pleased the Father that he should take upon Himself a Human by which he might appear to men, to be received by them and thus received to give them of His love. Before the Advent this Human was assumed from angels and the prophets; but by His advent into the world the Lord took, by birth and life in the world, a Human of His own, whereby He could speak to man and teach him directly. The teachings of this Human, that is, of the Lord in His own Divine Human, are contained in the New Testament, and far more fully in the Revelation now given to the New Church. These teachings are the Lord Himself present with man to save him, to give him, the end of creation. And if man receives them and obeys, they are the Lord Himself present with that man, guiding him, forming him into a vessel receptive of the Divine Love. Thus it is the Lord with man, the Lord in His Divine Human, the Son of God, that is conjoined to the Divine, and not anything of the mans own.

When the Lord was on earth He took to Himself the things that come through the senses; these He received into His mind, just as is the case with every man. But the difference with the Lord was that His soul was Divine, because He was born of the Father. Hence with Him was inmosty the Divine Good and the Divine Truth. This was his soul, his heredity from the Father; for He was the Father come into the world that He might manifest His presence. As the Lord received from the world the things that come through the senses, this Divine Heredity became more and more manifest; even as with man, whose hereditary evil becomes more manifest according as he becomes instructed. From this Divine Heredity, thus from His own proper power, the Lord rejected all the falses which were poured into His mind by evil spirits and evil men, until the vessels of His mind became the very Divine Truth itself amid the very Divine Good itself; until, in a word, the Divine Good and Truth, which before had been manifested to man only through the agency of spirits, now appeared in its fullness, made manifest even to the natural man.

This rejection of all falses from the mind, whereby the Lord formed His mind at first a vessel receiving the Divine, and then, when the combat with the hells was finished, made the vessels themselves Divine,—this is what is meant by the union of the Father and the Son; and it is this union alone that makes conjunction of the Lord and man possible. This is the reason why the Lord so often teaches that there is no salvation, that is, no conjunction with the Divine except for those who receive Him and obey Him, i. e., who receive Him in His Divine Human, who is the Lord Jesus Christ.

By obedience to the Lord in His Divine Human, in which alone He can be visible to man, the Lord is

actually received by man,--is actually present with him; and it is with the Lord in His Divine Human thus actually received that the infinite can unite itself. I and the Father are One, says the Lord; and again, Lie who hath seen Me hath seen the Father; by which words are meant that the Lord in His Divine Human is the Father now made manifest to save, and that the Father is the Son as the Teacher and Saviour. Hence, so far as man receives the Son, that is, receives the Lord in His Divine Human, so far he receives Him who is One with the Father. But if he does not receive the Son, then there is nothing in him whereby he can be conjoined to God; Hence the Lord says: He that believeth in the Son hath eternal life; but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life but the wrath of God remaineth upon him (John 3, 6). Hence also the Lord says. And I, I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me (John 12, 32), by which words is meant that by His glorification, that is, His union with the Father, the Lord also lifts up, elevates, conjoins with the Father, all who believe in Him. This also is what is meant by the words, No one cometh to the Father except by Me (John 14, 6).

The marriage of the Lord and the Church, therefore, is inmost the union of the Father and the Son, or the union of the Divine with the Divine Human. This marriage is effected in man when he acknowledges the Lord and obeys Him.

But that man may receive the Lord there must be in him a conjunction between the love of growing wise and the love of wisdom;

the man must not only learn of the Lord but must will to obey Him. This conjunction is not the marriage of the Lord and the church, but it corresponds to this marriage; it is the effect produced in man in the degree that the Lord is present with him forming him into a church. It is this marriage of love and wisdom, of good and truth in man, that is the origin of conjugal love,--without which no conjugal love can exist; but conjugal love itself corresponds to the marriage of the Lord and the church.

In the inmost sense therefore, the commandment, Thou shalt not commit adultery, means that man is not to violate the marriage of the Lord and the Church, that is, lie is not to attempt to kill, to crucify the Lord who presents Himself in His Divine Human as the Redeemer and Saviour. To shun this, to shun rejection of the Lord and His Word is the inmost obedience to the commandment; it is also the inmost means by which man can be delivered from the snares of lasciviousness. And to acknowledge the Lord as the Saviour is the inmost effort that man can make for the reception of conjugal love. In this acknowledgment is the marriage of good and truth,--a marriage which is the Lord's presence with man, and which, flowing into the love of the sex, becomes the origin of conjugal love. This love springs from the Lord alone, and when it is this love that unites husband and wife, their union can never be broken. Whom God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

XXX. MARRIAGE AND ADULTERY.

Psalms xlvii.

Revelation 21, 9-27.

@HH 373-4.

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

In the following discourse I wish to sum up the many truths which are involved in the Commandment, and which have formed the subjects of several preceding sermons.

In its inmost sense, this command, like the whole of the Word, treats of the Lord, and His advent into the world. By His advent the Lord took to Himself a Human which He glorified and thus united to the Father. What is involved in this statement is that by birth into the world the Lord assumed a body similar to the bodies of other men. The inmost or soul of this body, however, was not like that of other men, for it was Divine; it was the Divine of the Father, the Creator of the world. Before the advent God had revealed Himself through the instrumentality of angels whom He had filled with His presence; but when this means failed to reach the understanding of man, God came upon the earth according to the way of order, and took a Human for Himself. The inmost of this human,—that which in us corresponds to our hereditary nature,—was Divine. But the human itself, as assumed from Mary, was like the human of other men, and was in like manner to grow and be educated. By His life in the world the Lord made this human Divine Human which was one with the Father, and by this Divine Human He became present with men and is now able to teach and lead men. The glorification of this Human is the union of the Father and the Son, and it is this union that is supremely involved in the commandment under consideration. The command is a command not to violate this union; not that any man can really violate it,—this is impossible.

But every one who is in evils of the will is inmost in the effort to violate it; and this effort is manifested in the denial of the Lord as God.

This union of the Father and Son in the Lord Jesus Christ is, in man, the marriage of the Lord and the Church. This marriage is effected when man learns the truths of the Church and, from acknowledgment of the Lord, obeys them. When he does this, the Lord is present with him; for he receives the words of God and makes these as it were his own. And when the Lord is thus present in the mind of man, then there is present with him also the union of the Father and the Son. He who seeth Me seeth the Father, is the teaching of the Lord; and I and the Father are one; and, again, come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, in all which words the Lord teaches that if He is approached and loved, then man receives the whole Divine. This reception is manifested in Him, as the affection of truth, and the love of obedience to it. This is what makes the Church with each man, a Church which is the bride and wife of the Lamb.

But that man may be formed into such a church it is necessary that there be with him two loves, namely, the love of acquiring truths, and the love of obeying the same. These two loves were, therefore, given to man by creation; but they were not created in a single man, but were created in two distinct

forms, man and woman, and this, in order that their conjunction may bring to man the highest and inmost of human delights, and that thus the formation of the Church with man may also give to him conjugal love with its blessedness, peace, and friendship. This is what is involved in the words: God made man in His own image, in the image of God made He HIM, male and female made He them.

Man and woman are the forms of the two loves which must be united if the Lord is to be received and the Church formed. These two loves are the love of growing wise and the love of wisdom; or, what is the same thing, the love of acquiring truths. and the love of the truths acquired.

And because these two loves are inmost in the effort for conjunction, therefore, in the ultimates of man and woman this effort manifests itself as the love of the sex.

But in order that the man and the woman may receive the love of the other sex, and conjoin this love to his own, it is necessary that each of them shun the love of self. For the love of self is in the perpetual effort to destroy the Lord's work, and to prevent the formation of the Church in man. For this purpose the love of self is in the effort to unite itself with the truths of the man, and by this unholy union to use these truths for evil ends. But when man shuns the love of self, which he does when from the heart he obeys the Lord's words, he becomes receptive of the love of wisdom. It is this love of wisdom that is then united with the truths that have been learned, and this union is what is meant by the marriage of good and truth. The man learns truths from the Word, and when he obeys them, there is insinuated into him from the Lord the love of those truths; this love is what is called good.

The marriage of good and truth in man is what corresponds to the marriage of the Lord and the Church; for it is effected just in the degree that the Lord is received into the heart; the Lord's presence in the heart produces this corresponding effect which is called the marriage of good and truth.

The love of the sex also corresponds to the marriage of the Lord and the Church; for this love also is a correspondent from the Lord. But the love of the sex is an animal love; it is implanted in the body, and not in the mind, and, moreover, it is common to men and animals. The truly human love, which is peculiar to man, is that love which is formed in the rational mind, and this love is the marriage of good and truth. When this marriage is effected, it flows into love of the sex, and begins to rule that love, to curb it, and to change it from merely animal love of the sex, to the human love of one of the sex, which is conjugal love. Therefore conjugal love can exist only in the Church where the Lord is known and loved.

But the fact that conjugal love can exist only in the Church, involves also that in the church only can its opposite exist, which is the love of adultery. For when men are in the infernal marriage of the love of self with the things of the church, this love also flows into the love of the sex. But instead of elevation, or inverting that love, it perverts it and makes it the infernal love of the sex, which is the love of adultery and of all manner of lasciviousness. This truth is plainly manifested in the history of nations. For adulterous practices are the greatest where there is the direct light of the Word, as in the case of the so-called Christian world; or where there is the indirect light derived from the Word, as in the case of Roman and Greek civilization. It is true that in heathen tribes lascivious practices obtain, but these are rather the acts of animal men than the perversions of human minds; and they can exist in heathen tribes and yet the men of such tribes be not necessarily evil in heart. But in the so-called Christian world it is, that adultery and lasciviousness have received the greatest cultivation, and have

manifested themselves in the most utterly depraved practices. Where else will you find so much filthy and impure talk? where else, the impure thoughts of marriage, which yet is professed to be the very fruit of Christianity? Where else will you find the filthy thought and speech, the filthy deeds. the divorce, the adulteries, and the nameless and unnatural evils, which make man worse than the brutes?

All these conditions in the Christian world are but the effects of the infernal marriage of the evil will, the love of self, with the truths of the Word which are thus adulterated and perverted,--the effects of this marriage as it flows into the love of the sex. And so great, so widespread is this union and its internal offspring or effects, that there is, perhaps, no temptation, for the young man especially, so great as the temptation to lasciviousness in imagination, speech, and deed,--to that ultimate, whether in act or in thought, in which is concentrated the opposite to the marriage of good and truth.

But there is this consolation, namely, that this ultimate furnishes the ultimate ground on which the young man can fight the battle for the marriage of good and truth; can fight the devil, the love of self, with the prayer that the Lord will give to him the love of truth. And as he fights and resists, so this love is actually given and conjoins itself with the truths that he has learned from the Word. Then this conjunction or marriage flowing into the love of the sex will there become the origin of a new, a human, a heavenly love, love truly conjugal.

And as this battle is fought, the mans mind becomes open to the reception of the love of wisdom, the love of obeying the truths that he has learned. This love of wisdom is, in form, woman, and the opening of the mind to its preparation for the reception of the love of one woman with whom there can be conjoined union. For as man shuns evils as sins, and especially the evil of adultery and lasciviousness, so he is prepared by the Lord for marriage with one and so he is gradually led to meet that one with whom he can conjoin his life, that together they may be one in the sight of the Lord,--one Church, and one man.

It is the marriage of the Lord and the Church, this marriage of good and truth, this marriage of man and woman in the union of conjugal love, that is the prize given to him who obeys the commandment, Thou shalt not commit adultery; for in this act of ultimate obedience is contained the end of His creation, which is conjugal love, by which the earth is replenished and heaven enriched with those loves and wisdoms and happinesses that are given by the Lord as the fruits of Love truly conjugal.

XXXI. THEFT.

Psalms 15,

Matthew 6, 19-24.

@HH 531.

Thou shalt not steal. (Exodus 20:15)

The natural sense of this commandment is obvious, namely, that it forbids man to deprive others of what belongs to them. There are many ways of stealing, and all of them are included in the commandment. First, we have that actual theft which is punished by the laws; similar to this in the no less prevalent crime committed by merchants who, by various pretences, cheat their customers by false weights or measures, by misrepresenting their goods, or by other means whereby they aim to take the money or goods of another without giving adequate value therefor. Those also steal who do not perform their work faithfully and sincerely. A workman who is lazy at his work, or who faithfully does the work only when under observation, or under the stress of fear, is guilty of theft because he is in the desire and purpose of taking from his employer wages for which he gives no adequate return, and this is the essence of all theft. A judge who judges unjustly because of favoritism or bribery, is a thief in a greater degree, because he not only deprives the citizen of his just rights, but he also deprives the country of trust in its judges, and thus steals from the country its credit and reputation.

All these kinds of theft have one common origin in the love of the world, springing from the love of self. This we see very clearly in children who, the desire of satisfying their appetite, sometimes fall into this evil of stealing. They steal merely in order to satisfy their craving for something of the world, whether it be in the way of eating or of amusement, which shall satisfy their love of themselves and their own comfort.

Most such children, as they grow older, learn to desist from such actual stealing; for it is not only opposed to the laws and punishable by law, but it also threatens them with disgrace, with loss of reputation, and thus with loss of those comforts which they prize. Yet the shunning of the evil of theft for this reason only, does not remove the cause of the evil; it does not remove the love of the world springing from the love of self. The love still remains; only its manifestation is changed. And because most men in their Christian world at this day, do not shun evils as sins, but merely abstain from them because of training, habit, or other external reasons, and thus do not shun the evil of stealing because they fear to disobey the laws of God, or to do injury to their neighbor, therefore the evil of stealing, taking the word in a broad sense, is one of the most prevalent of all evils. Even actual literal stealing, the work of thieves and robbers, is not at all uncommon; and very common, indeed, is petty stealing of things by those who would not steal money. But what we particularly refer to as the prevalent evil of the day, is the fraudulent practices that are so widespread in the business and social world. That these are widespread, and well nigh universal, is known to every one who has even a slight experience of the world; and it is testified to by the many and sometimes elaborate precautions which civilized man finds it necessary to take in order to protect his money or goods. The unfaithful workman, the dishonest tradesman, the floater of fraudulent stocks, the lying advertisements,—who is not familiar

with these? who does not take more or less precaution against being their victims! Nay, the very desire to get rich quickly, to obtain riches without any thought as to the value of the services given,—this very desire, which is the love to which the dishonest offer their bait, is itself a testimony as to the universality of the evil of stealing

Stealing is in its essence the desire to deprive others of their goods. Its true nature is shown by its opposite, which is the desire to do good to the neighbor, to be of service to him. The honest man is in the effort to give, that is, to give of his talent and abilities for the good of others.

He does, indeed, receive pay for this, but the mere pay is not the incentive of work with him; for without the means of subsistence he would not be able to be of service to others. But the pay is not the principal object of his work. It may appear to be the object, and this even to himself; but the difference between him and the man who regards the pay only, is that the one is in the effort to give just work in return for his pay, whereas the other will do this only so far as circumstances oblige him. The end of the one is to do service, and his pay is the means of continuing in his work; the end of the other is to get pay in order that he may satisfy his own pleasures.

If we regard this, the essence of stealing, in its true light, it will become plain that all manner of gambling also comes under the head of stealing; for the essence of gambling is to obtain from others for the purpose of satisfying one's own desires, and without any intention or desire of performing service to that other. This is not regarded as stealing by man, for the evil of gambling is extremely widespread, and nevertheless the love that prompts the desire to get and not to give. And it is because this is the animating love in gambling, therefore, that vice is so often, nay, except where restrained by codes of honor, is almost always associated with deceit and fraud and cheating. Not that every one who gambles is a wicked man, for this is not the case, since some gamble because of habit or example; but that gambling is an act of taking from others without return, and this act is the ultimate of the love of self and not of the love of others. This is the reason why those who begin with gambling so often fall into the practice of fraud and deceit in regard to the neighbor, and into openly criminal practices.

The commandment, therefore, in its wide literal sense, is a command to man not so much that he shall shun the act of stealing, as that he shall shun the love of the world springing from the love of self.

If we do this, and so far as we do this, we receive and cherish in our heart the love of being useful to others, which manifests itself is the desire to do whatever work lies before us in a faithful and just manner; and then, of course, we shun all acts of theft or fraud. But a man may shun actual theft and fraud, and yet remain in the love of theft: indeed, all do remain in this love, who do not shun the love of the world. For the love of the world is in the constant effort to obtain everything that will satisfy its appetites.

This leads us to a more interior view of the commandment, thou shalt not steal.

Every man is born into the world in order that he may come into the love of heaven which is the love of God; but he is not born into this love. On the contrary, he is born into the love of the world. This is manifest, for as the mind becomes formed it experiences and finds delight in the various things that are brought to it from the world; thus it is formed into an image of the world, and is in its delight when receiving agreeable things from the world. This mind, thus formed, is the natural mind, because it ends

and desires are all centered in the natural world. Man has also a spiritual mind, but this cannot be opened with him except so far as he learns from the Word and the truths of the Church. It is from these only that he begins to know that there are other things than the things of the world; to know of the Lord and of the spiritual world; and thus to know of his duty to the neighbor. And not only can man know these things, but he is also gifted with the ability of living according to them; that is, of living according to the laws of a world above the world before his senses. When he does thus begin to obey the laws of God, there at once arises in him a conflict between the natural mind, and the spiritual mind now being opened. The natural mind is ever in the desire for its own pleasures, and, on the other hand, is in the effort to use the knowledge even of religion, for the protection and promotion of those pleasures. But the spiritual mind, or the man from his spiritual mind, is in the effort to subordinate the natural mind to the laws of heaven, which bid him to seek not his own good, but the good of others; not his own pleasure, but usefulness to others.

If the spiritual man prevails, the man is truly a sincere man,--sincere in his love of the neighbor, sincere in his doing of his work, sincere in his desire to be a good and useful member of society. If the natural man prevail, the man is in essence a thief and a robber. He is in the effort to secure enjoyment and profit for himself, but not to give to others, except so far as his giving pleases himself.

The natural man may be compared with a sponge which absorbs all, but gives nothing. In all things he is thinking of himself, his own pleasures, his own comfort and ease. He is a faithless member of society, constantly wishing to take, and never wishing to give. But the spiritual man may be compared with the sun, which, with its heat and light, is in the effort to be of service to others; to give, but not to receive. And, even as the sun is rewarded by the sight of a beautiful and bounteous nature, so the spiritual man receives his reward.

The conflict between these two men or minds is a conflict which all must enter; and upon each individual himself alone depends the outcome of the conflict. Many circumstances will arise in the course of life when we may be perplexed as to our course when we may hesitate as to what is our duty. In all such circumstances, let each one keep before his eyes this rule given in the Writings: Only abstain from evils because they are sins and look to the LORD, and the LORD, will teach and lead you.

XXXII. THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

Psalms cxxxix.

Revelation v, 1-6.

@CL 528, or

@HH 302.

Thou shalt not steal. (Exodus 20:15)

In treating of this commandment I have hitherto dwelt on its proximate meaning, as being the evil of depriving others of their just belongings; and I also spoke of the great prevalence of this evil in the Christian world. Indeed, as to this the same may be said of all the commandments that are especially directed to the evils committed by one man against another. Murder, adultery, theft, and lying, or hatred, lust, covetousness are the universals under which come the multitude of evils and crimes in the Christian world; for there is not an evil, either of the body or of the mind, that does not come under one of these universal heads.

In themselves these evils are all of the body and external mind. Hatred with its effect of murder, lust with its crimes of adultery, seduction, and other evils not to be mentioned, theft with its cruel despoiling, and lying, which, as being deception with the intent to injure, underlies all these evils,—all these are in themselves affections or lusts of the body or external mind,—by which I mean the mind that is formed by the senses and which looks to the world for its satisfactions and delights.

Hatred springs forth when the delights of the body, or the ambitions of the mind are opposed. Adultery springs from the urging of the lusts of the flesh. Theft has its nearest origin in the desire to satisfy the pleasures of the senses, or the worldly aspirations of the mind.

Lying is nothing but the offspring of the desire to deceive the neighbor in order to render secure the possession of the delights of the body and external mind, or for the protection of self from evils and discomforts which affect the body or mind.

But all these evils have a deeper origin; for but a little reflection is needed to show that man has two minds, an interior and an exterior, or a natural mind and a spiritual. Our natural mind we have in common with the brutes. It is this mind that is gradually opened and formed by influx from the world through the senses. Thus as we learn that a thing is pleasant to the taste we acquire a mental desire to obtain such thing; or, what is the same thing, we form in ourselves a mind or an organic form, which is harmoniously affected, or is satisfied when the body receives such things through its mouth. And the same applies to all the other senses. That this mind is one with the animal mind is evident. For animals live only for ends which exist in the world, or, in other words, their desires are satisfied from the world alone.

But man has also a rational mind. This is very palpably evident in the case of the insane. In such persons the natural or animal mind continues with all its desires. Thus the insane have hatred, theft,

and the lusts of the flesh. But the rational mind is, as it were, absent. The same thing may also be seen in somnambulists in whom the rational mind is asleep, while the natural mind is more or less fully awake. It is also evident in some who are spiritually insane, and thus in every man when he comes into the state of spiritual insanity. Who does not know that when passion overcomes as the rational mind dies, as it were, and no longer has control over our actions? That we then do things which our own rational will afterwards condemns? that we are then like the brute animal led solely by the desires of the external or animal mind? But even more convincingly is the existence of the two minds shown in the regenerate man.

For it is the rational or internal mind, open to heaven and governed by the truths of heaven, that then rules his external mind and body, and the result is seen by all in the actions of that man which are not animal or from passions of the external mind, but are rational, truly human and humane.

But the rational or human mind may also be filled with evil. This is evident from the fact that human evils differ from animal evils in that in the former there is a rational thought, so called, which excuses and defends the evils, and that moreover plots and plans from design for the increase of the evil and the defence of the man who has wrought it. None of these things are present in animals who act simply from their instincts or the passions of their mind as excited by the allurements that come through the senses.

There are some men who are little more than animals, in that they have little human thought, and act simply from the passions and the desires of the external mind. Still even such men are capable of human thought. If their state is due to entire ignorance and lack of instruction, as is the case with some heathen who are without the knowledge of God, and also with some in the Christian world who have been brought up in such surroundings that they have received little or no instruction, then they are instructed in the spiritual world, and are thus reformed.

But with most men the existence of a merely animal life from which they live, actuated merely by the passions of the external mind, or their state whenever they come into such a life, is due not to ignorance, but to their having used their rational mind to excuse and confirm the evils to which they are prone because in them they find delight. The origin of human evil, and thus of the evil that condemns man, is not the body with its appetites. If this were so, no man could be saved, for all have a body and the appetites thereof; and moreover it is God Himself who has given these to man.

But the origin of evil, the origin of human evil, which alone condemns man, is the rational mind, that mind in which he can think, in which he can receive instruction, can reflect on it, can receive or reject, or twist and pervert it.

All human evils, therefore, have their origin in the human mind, or in that mind which man alone has, and which is entirely absent from the brutes. It is because of this that blame can attach only to man. It cannot be predicated of animals, for they act merely from instinct. And thus while we can speak of evil as respects animals, that is, can speak of evil animals; we cannot predicate wickedness or sin of animals, but only of man.

In this truth will be found the understanding of many things that are said in the Writings with respect to the imputation of evil to man. The general teaching is that no evil is imputed to man, that is,

becomes a part of his own proper mind, unless, and so far as, it is confirmed by his human thought. Evils that are the result of the passions of the external man and concerning which the man has not been instructed, or which, for the time, are so overwhelming that they put to sleep the rational mind, are not imputed to man if afterwards he condemns them and uses the means to shun them. Herein we have the underlying principle of the second Part of Conjugal Love, where the teaching is that the evil of fornication, while always an evil, may yet not be an evil of sin. The same principle applies also to the other evils of the Decalogue, but not to so great an extent, because these other evils are not so frequently or so fully the effects of the mere lusts of the flesh.

In what I have said I wish to introduce the subject of the origin of the evil of theft. This subject itself must be left to my next discourse, but we can now take this lesson from what has been presented, namely, that the origin of evil, of human evil, is in the rational mind; that it is there the enemy is to be sought out, fought and expelled, that to fight it in the body is of no avail if its secret places are still allowed wherein it may lurk.

In short, that to become rational men, to become true New Church men, to become Men, to become Human and Angelic, we must search the thoughts of the mind, must pray to the Lord, Search me, O Lord, and know my heart, and follow the prayer by searching our own heart in the light that the Lord has given us, for thus it is that the Lord searches our heart while we are yet on earth.

XXXII. WHO IS THE DEVIL?

Isaiah 14:1-23.

Matthew 4:1-11.

@HH 311.

Thou shalt not steal. (Exodus 20:15)

The origin of all evil is the body and the world; but their seat, the place where evils become sins against God and man, is the human mind. As was shown in our last preceding sermon, evil comes from the desires and appetites of the body, and from the allurements and ambitions of the world. But these in themselves are not evils. This will be plain if we reflect that it is God Himself who has given to man the appetites of the body, and who has made the lovely and desirable things of the world, even as it was God who made the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which, as we read, was good for food and pleasant to the eyes (Gen. iii. 6). But as God commanded that the fruit of this tree was not to be eaten, so He commands man that he shall not take the delights of the world and the loves of the body into his mind so as to rule that mind. It is right that we shall enjoy the senses of the body: indeed, enjoyment is given to the senses because of their use, and because use has its reward, therefore the uses of the senses is always accompanied with delight. This is so manifest that it needs no argument; for who does not know that the delights of the sense and the body are exalted exactly according to the nobleness of the use they perform. So likewise God has given us the beauties of the world in order that these may stimulate the senses to their uses, in order that they may furnish uses to man, and enable him to have a sound and happy body and external mind as the ultimate of a truly human mind. But though God from very creation gave these things to man. He also commanded man that he should not allow these loves of the body and the world to enter into, form, and dominate his internal man;

in other words, should not be led by the body and the world, but by the truth revealed by the Lord. It is this prohibition that is meant by the command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; for eating signifies receiving into the very life and appropriating as one's own.

The origin of evil is therefore the world. But the cause of the things of the body and the world becoming evil, is the voice of the serpent and the listening of the woman. By the serpent is meant the devil, and by the listening and obedience of the woman is meant the exercise of the freedom of choice that is given to every man.

The serpent was also created by God; but he was created to be ruled over by Adam, and not to address him, and still less to direct him (Genesis 1:28). This is also the case with the devil. The devil also was created by God; he was even created as an angel of light. But he was not created to direct and rule man, but to serve him. When he commenced to rule man and man obeyed, then began the origin of evil in the human mind, and that rebellion against God which is so often referred to in the Word as the combats between heaven and the devil or the dragon.

But let us see what strictly is meant by the devil. According to the common notion the devil was an individual angel in the highest heaven, to whom was given domination over the heavens; and that this

angel rebelled in the hope of getting control over the universe in the place of God; that failing in this rebellion, he was cast out of heaven to the lower earth, and that in the last judgment he will be finally cast into hell bound in chains: that in the meantime he exercises his delights by tormenting in the most cruel ways all whom he can induce to enter under his yoke.

Apart from the fact that a doctrine such as this is utterly puerile and nonsensical, it has little basis even in the appearances of the letter of the Word, and none at all in the human reason. There is no angel created from the beginning, for all spirits and angels were first men.

If this were not so, then truly Gods love to all would not be manifested, for there would be a favored class of beings created to enjoy without any effort of their own the delights of heaven; and a lower class on whom it is enjoined that they shall labor on earth in the labors of temptation before they can enter into heaven. Again, if angels could be created such, to enter into the delights of heaven, why was it necessary to create man in the body? Or, if it was necessary to create man in the body in order that he might be free to exercise his free will and may thus as of himself choose and enter into the delights of heaven, how is it possible that an angel shall be created such immediately?

Yet there is a certain truth in the common notion about the devil and his creation, but this will be understood only if by the devil we understand the loves and delights of the body and the world. These loves were given to man by God, and supreme over them was given the Love of Self. In itself the love of self is not an evil love, because it was given man by God. It is from this love that we have the delights of the appetites, the desires of keeping the body clean and healthy, the love of exercising its functions; and, indeed, without these loves it would never be possible for man to live a healthy life and still less to form a sound mind in a sound body. Of what use would food be to us, if we did have the delights of appetite? or the beauties of the world, if we did not have the delights of sight? or how would man be led to propagate his kind if there were not the conjugal delight, which, on account of its use, is the delight of delights?

The devil, therefore, is the love of self; and under him are placed the five great regions or provinces which are called the five senses. He is to rule these in order that they may be of service to the man, and convey to him the things of the world to become in the mans mind the basis for the formation of the kingdom of heaven. But man, in file exercise of his freedom, began to be ruled by the love of self or the devil. Instead of holding the things which were brought to him by the love of self as things which are to serve the higher or human mind, he began to record these things as desirable in and for themselves:

and thus began to allow them, and therefore the devil, to direct and dominate his life. Take, for instance, the delights of eating. These are rood delights, but they become evil when they dominate the human mind. for then instead of human of service, they, become the master. So with the conjugal delight, which is given man not only on account of its high use in propagating the human race, but also because of its use in conjoining two human souls in eternal onion. This delight with its so excellent use is, as it were an angel of light if it is used for the service of heaven; but when it becomes the master it is the very devil of darkness and tormentas we know so well from the miseries and tragedies daily enacted in the world.

It is by this inversion of order, by this entrance of the devil, or of the love of self into the human mind as its ruler, that is, into the internal or rational human mind to which it was given that it should have

dominion over all things of the world, and should not, like the brutes, be led by the world,—it is by this inversion of order that human evil entered into the human mind and from this into the world. And when this was done, and so far as it was done the higher opening of the mind which is towards heaven was closed, and like the way to the Tree of Life, was guarded by cherubs with a waving flamy sword. And it can be opened only by man looking to the Lord, who now, because the way to heaven is closed, has come on earth that he might appear to the eyes of man and thus by that way of the senses which still remains open. For now by revelation we can see the Lord and His Divine Truth even with the eyes of the body, and hearing and obeying, can be healed of the sores inflicted by the devil, and be rescued from his power. This, indeed, is what is: meant by the seed of the woman trampling on the head of the serpent who hath bruised His heel, that is, bruised or corrupted men who are in the ultimate world which is, as it were, the heel or lowest part of that Grand Man which is made up of the whole created universe, and of which the Lord is the soul.

It is by listening to the voice of Divine Revelation, as given in the Scriptures, and to the New Church in the Writings of the Church,—it is by this, and this only, that Christian can be healed of the wound inflicted by the devil: can learn to subject the loves of the body and the world and reduce them to their servitude; can become again an image of God, and enter again into the Paradise of heaven. To do this is the labor of temptation, the labor for which we are born on earth, that after death we may enter into the heavenly fruits of this labor.

How art thou fallen from heaven. O Lucifer (Light-bearer), son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to the ground, to the sides of the pit (Isiah 14:12-15).

XXXIV. SPIRITUAL THEFT.

Jeremiah 7:1-16.

John x, 1-13.

@HH 10.

Thou shalt not steal. (Exodus 20:15)

The origin of all evil is the world and the body, but it does not become the evil of sin except in the human mind; or, in their words, it does not become sin until it opposes and overcomes something heavenly in the human mind. Sin cannot exist in animals, nor can it exist with men except in the degree that they are in truth. This, as we have before observed, is what is meant by the circumstance that the serpent was created by God and that this creation was not the cause of sin, that cause being the speech of the serpent to the firstborn and the hearkening of the latter.

All sin, therefore, is in itself the opposition to heaven, the endeavor to overthrow the things of heaven; and the scene of this opposition is solely the human mind. These things of heaven are in reality the goods of heaven, or heavenly affections. But goods are not seen as they are in themselves. A man cannot see the good in himself or in others except as it appears in his own thought or in another's speech actions. This is the same thing as saying that good appears only in truth, or as truth. It is when we turn out thought to a thing that we can see how we are affected by the thought. If the thought, or the truth or falsity presented to our mind, affects us with delight we can see the quality of the love that is thus delighted. This indeed is the only way in which we can see the nature of our love, namely, by examining the nature of our delight when thinking and imagining one thing or another.

In the human mind the things of the world and body, that is, the devil, are in the effort to attack and destroy the goods of heaven.

They do this by means of persuasions which assail the principles of religion that have been implanted, that is, by questioning, twisting, and perverting the truths that a man has. Not though the assault is apparently on truth, it is in reality on good. This we can see in ourselves which we reflect: from the struggle between good and evil, which appears in our mind as a conversation between one who is persuading and one who is resisting, we can see that the resistance is from some affection that has already been implanted in the mind. It may be that this affection is simply the remains of loves implanted in childhood, or it may be affection that has been confirmed in later life, but in either case the thing that is really assailed and really supplies the power of resistance is same good that has been received from heaven. Without good received from heaven and made welcome in the thought there could be no temptation and, consequently, no evil. For evil is nothing but an attack on good.

This leads us to the consideration of the spiritual meaning of the command not to steal. When men steal on earth, the desire of stealing is implanted in their spirit, and the more they steal the stronger becomes the desire. Indeed, we are told in the Writings that the delight of stealing is such that when a man has indulged in it several times he comes into such a state that nothing is so dear to him as things which lie has stolen from another. In stealing and its delight is contained indifference as to the peace,

happiness, and prosperity of another, and within this is concealed the desire to deprive others of their happiness and secure it for themselves.

When such men so to the other world they take this delight with them. But in the other world there is no stealing such as we have on earth. The things which spirits have are gifts from the Lord and cannot be taken away from them by others. But thieves in the other world are in the perpetual desire to take away the goods of others, and they are in the perpetual phantasy that they can actually do this.

Thus we have an account of an evil spirit stealthily abstracting some gold from a heavenly spirit. He imagined that he had secured and concealed this gold; but when the light of heaven shone upon him he saw that the gold was still in the possession of the good spirit, and that what he had was nothing but a heap of dross.

Evil spirits do not steal in the ultimate sense or the word, though they are in the phantasy that they do,—and this because they still think they are in the material world with its material treasures. The reason why they are in this phantasy is because they are in the perpetual effort to deprive others of the things of heaven, that is, of the goods and truths received from the Lord, and to appropriate these to themselves. Something of this can be seen in jealousy, for jealousy is a species of spiritual theft. Jealousy frequently envies another the possession of spiritual gifts, such as uprightness, honesty, intelligence; and thus envying, it rejoices if these gifts are taken away, or the man deprived of them. This is all ultimate picture in this world of the sphere of thieves in the spiritual world. That sphere is the effort to deprive the good of every thought and affection that they have received from the Lord.

It is this sphere of evil spirits that, flowing into men on earth, inspires to the ultimate net of stealing. It may be that the man does not actually steal; for we soon learn, in the school of experience, to avoid those ultimate evils that bring disgrace. But whether the sphere of spiritual theft is actually ultimated or not, the sphere itself operates on the man and endeavors to find reception in his mind. We are surrounded by spirits and we can no more be dead to their influence than the ear can be dead to the sounds around it. But just as a man can harden his mind against the things that he hears, some can turn away from the spheres of evil spirits,—but only by an active effort.

The effect of the sphere of spiritual thieves is seen in our mind in the desire to secure happiness for ourselves and indifference to the happiness of the neighbor. Interiorly contained in this, though if we do not reflect, we do not see it, is the effort to deprive others of spiritual happiness and secure this for ourselves:

and inmost within this is the effort to take all things away from the Lord and attribute them to ourselves.

It is this that is contained in the delight of stealing; it is this from the hells that inspires this delight. And if a man would interiorly resist this evil, he should pay attention not merely to the physical act of stealing,—to resist the desire to this act is comparatively easy,—but to his attitude to the neighbor. A very little reflection will show us how subject we are to the influence of those evil ones who inspire delight of depriving others of their spiritual goods; for we can see our proneness to this ultimate itself, as it were, in constant jealousy of others, and the many effects of this jealousy; also in indifference to the effect of our speech and conduct on others, as, for instance, when we inspire in others the spirit of

criticism and envy. So prevalent is the sphere of spiritual theft that we need to be constantly on guard against it.

Evils are resisted as they appear before the minds eye, and thus ultimately, would, therefore, conclude with these ultimate suggestions. Don't covet the possessions of others whether physical or mental. Think less of the faults of others and more of your own; dwelling on the faults of others prepares the mind for the reception of the spirit which would deprive others of spiritual treasures. Think more of the virtues of others and less of your own. Be constantly watchful that you do not injure the innocence of others or their affection for the things of religion. And, finally, don't be conceited, for your virtues are merely the gifts received by birth, virtues, are gifts from the Lord, which are given, as it were, to you only so far as you obey His commandments. To Him then they should be attributed and not to yourself.

XXXV. LYING AND DECEIT.

Psalms 119, 129-136.

John 3, 1-21.

@HH 280.

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

The commandments that respect the dealings of man with his neighbor may be divided into two classes; the one where the specific evils of murder, adultery, theft, and lying are forbidden, and the other where man is forbidden to covet these evils. that is, to cherish in his heart the desire to do them.

The commandment not to bear false witness is the last of the first class, and as the last commandment of this class it embraces the three commandments that precede, presenting them all in one summary view. For bearing false witness, or lying, is the universal evil that is directly involved in murder, adultery, and theft. The first of the series is that man shall not kill, that is, shall not destroy, whether in himself or in others, the end for which the Lord created man, namely, that a heaven may be formed. The second is that man shall not commit adultery, that is, shall not destroy the marriage of good and truth, which is done when within the truths in his mind he cherishes evil loves; and so shall not injure his neighbor as to his wife and home; for it is by these acts that man kills or destroys the end of creation. Then comes the command not to steal, by which is meant that man shall not attribute to himself anything that belongs to the Lord, and so shall ascribe to the Lord all truth which points to the right way of living, and shall not ascribe to himself the right to direct his conduct according to his own evil desires; for this is the way in which the marriage of good and truth is violated, and thus the end of creation killed or destroyed. Last of the series we have the commandment not to bear false witness, which differs from the preceding because it is directly involved in each of them, and this even as to the ultimate act of lying.

Lying is universal to all evils; for no man can commit an evil but what he at once commences to deceive. First he deceives himself, or, in his own heart, he bears false witness to the truth, persuading himself in favor of the evil that he has done or intends to do, and justifying it either because of some injury that has been done to him, or because he promises never to do the same evil again, or for one of many other false reasons which the love of the evil readily suggests to his mind. Thus he bears false witness in his heart, saying that to be true which is not true, and that to be good which is not good. Like the serpent who deceived Eve promising her that she would be like God, he deceives himself by promising himself happiness from evil, when yet he knows that he is disobeying the laws of God and thus doing evil. But he suppresses this truth and bears false witness.

Then comes the open lying to other men; for no evil can be done without injuring the neighbor, and, therefore, all evil carries with it the attempt to deceive the neighbor, the ultimate of which is lying to him. We all know this quite well in our own experience. Sometimes we resolve never to tell a lie, never openly to deceive; but the resolution is of little avail unless it be accompanied with the purpose to shun all evil. When evil is committed it implants in the heart the desire to protect itself from punishment,

and it breathes in the man the most intense prompting to lie and deceive.

Deceit is, therefore, the universal evil, and it is called in the Writings one of the worst of all evils. And because it is thus universal; because we are every day so prone to it; because it is the ultimate manifestation of all evil; therefore, we should be especially on our guard against it. I have spoken of the resolution which sometimes is made, never to tell a lie. This resolution is a good one, but not if its observance is confined to the words of the mouth. Resolve not to lie to others, but resolve not to deceive them in any way for the purpose of injuring them; not to lie to the truth as you know it;

and above all not to be a false witness before the Lord by appearing to be a man of the Church and yet in the heart not living according to the laws of heaven. As deceit is the father of evils, so sincerity is the father of good. To be sincere or simple means not to be double or engage in duplicity. To be sincere is to be in the heart and will what you wish to appear to be before the Lord and your neighbor. And no man can make a better resolution, or work to keep a better, than to cultivate this sincerity.

The commandment not to bear false witness in its external meaning refers to testifying falsely to the injury of another, whether in a court of law or before men outside the legal sphere. Thus it includes all manner of slander, or of the spreading of mischievous tales about the neighbor which are calculated to bring him into disrepute. The habit of slanderous gossip is most widespread. Its origin is the love of self; for this love is like a sponge which draws all things to itself but gives nothing to others. It attracts everything that flatters itself or that promises its own enjoyment, and is delighted with a soothing pleasure at all that takes away from another, unless that other is bound to itself in common interests. Thus from the love of self we have two effects which are most widespread in the whole Christian world, namely, the secret satisfaction in receiving admiration, and the delight in speaking or listening to gossip reflecting on another. In both these cases we are bearing false witness. In the one case we are testifying, or seeking to testify, that we are worthy of praise, and deserve to be esteemed; and from our conceit we begin to be puffed up, and to ascribe to ourselves what is due only to the Lord and His Divine Truth. But even as pride cometh before a fall, so with the light of day we are frequently humiliated and made to see our own real state. It is well if this exposure of our false witness makes us more humble, more sincere, less eager to receive the praise of men.

In the other case the delight is in bearing false witness against the neighbor, and within this is the delight in seeing the neighbor abused or disgraced; and within this again is the desire to center all things in ourselves.

To bear true witness, even as to the evils of the neighbor, and even when this witness will bring to the neighbor punishment for evil committed is not forbidden. Such witness is necessary to the preservation of society from the evil; and even in private life it is often necessary to expose the evils of another in order to protect the Church, society, or the fellow man. The difference between this just exposure and slander, or gossip,--even when the gossip retails the apparent truth,--is that in the one case the desire is to protect society, but in the other it is to injure the neighbor, and the delight is felt in the discomfort of another.

What is forbidden, and what we are most prone to do, is to bear witness against the neighbor from the desire of injuring him; and this, not only with the lips but also in the heart. For it is common for men to bear false witness against others in their heart, that is, in their secret thoughts. Indeed, this is always

done when ill will is cherished against another. For then we seize upon the faults of another and by constantly dwelling upon them magnify them out of all proportion, and thus delight in speaking false witness in the heart.

Let this then stand as the sum of the general meaning of this commandment: Bear no false witness to the truth in your heart when considering whether you shall or shall not pursue a certain course. Be open and sincere, and bear witness to the truth that the truth may guide your conduct. Bear no false witness against your neighbor, whether in your heart or upon your lips; but be just and strive to judge in the light of heaven and not in the sphere of dislike or hatred. And lastly, shun lying and deceit as the ultimate in which all evil strives to hide itself lest it come to the light and be reproofed. In the other world deceit is no longer possible. Evil thoughts and intentions there come to the light, and the spirits who are in them are punished until at last they learn from fear to desist. In this world it is possible for us to bring our evils to the light by listening to the true witness concerning them as it is given in the Word.

And if we speak this true witness then they can be shunned and put away not from fear of exposure and punishment, but in freedom and as of ourselves. It is thus only that men can become witnesses of the truth.

XXXVI. THE WITNESS OF A LIE.

Jer. 23, 16-27.

John 15, 1-17.

@HH 590-1.

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

Literally translated this commandment would read Thou shalt not answer against thy neighbor the witness of a lie. The obvious meaning is that words shall not go forth from a mans mouth that give false testimony to the injury of his neighbor; or, in a broader sense, that the man shall not either by word or action stand as the living of a lie against his fellowman.

An answer involves what is reciprocal; for it involves and expresses the attitude of the man who answers to him who questions. Thus when we ask, What is his answer? we mean What is his attitude to the matter in hand. So when we want the country's answer at elections, what we wish to know is whether the country has or has not accepted the candidate or proposition voted on. An answer therefore involves what is reciprocal; it involves acceptance or rejection, and thus conjunction or disjunction. It also involves the whole state of the man who answers; for in every word that proceeds from the mouth is contained the mans thought and affection,—in the words, his thought, and in the tone and spirit of the words, his affection. This is true even of hypocritical answers, for the hypocrisy of the answer is contained in their words.

To answer against the neighbor means then the state of the thought and affection towards the neighbor; for it is the inner thought and affection of a man that give the real answer as to his attitude to his neighbor; and it is these also that inspire all his words and deeds. That it is the thought and affection that answers is clear from the expression sometimes used of good men that their life was the testimony of their worth or service, that is, was the answer to the question, What was their attitude to others?

We are commanded not to answer against the neighbor the witness of a lie; that is, that our attitude to him shall not be a false attitude but a true one. A lie is that which is the opposite of the truth. And since it is the truth that the Lord alone rules and that His commands are to be obeyed, a lie is every thought and affection that is opposed to this truth. Thus all evil is a lie, because from it proceeds the persuasion that evil is good. In the garden of Eden this persuasion was the lie by which Eve was led to eat of the forbidden fruit; and it is from this that the devil is called the father of lies. Moreover we experience in our daily life that evil is ever a witness to a lie. Evil spirits who excite evils in mans heart do this in order that they may persuade the man that these evils are good, or that they will bring him pleasure or prosperity. They do this in order that the man may commit them, for evil spirits are in their delight when man actually commits evils. And it is often evident to the man himself after he has done the evil, that the persuasion was a false one, and the promise of happiness vain.

By the witness is meant the man himself; for every man is a living witness to the way in which he receives and makes use of the life that is given him by God. The mans answer is that which proceeds

from the men, that is, from his heart, and which inspires all his thoughts, and the deeds and speech of his body. The answer is not to be given by the man as a witness of a lie.

A man cannot see his real loves; he can see only what proceeds from them and inspires his thought, imagination, and action. All these, as I have said, are inspired by the love, and if they are examined carefully to see what spirit is within them, the man can see what sort of a witness he is. The spirit that is within a mans thought and deed gives the answer to the question what sort of a man is he.

This spirit very often is hidden from others, but it can always be seen with more or less clearness by the man himself; and in seeing this he will see what his real quality is, whether it is the witness of a lie, or a witness to the truth. If evil loves are within him he will see their presence in the constant persuasion they insinuate against every truth that opposes them. From a false witness nothing but false testimony can come; and from a heart which regards only its own delights, or from a heart of selfishness, can come nothing of real love to the neighbor, i. e., of real intention to be of service to him. Let a man only examine the state of his mind as shown in his thoughts and he may see for himself. that except so far as he is guided in his thoughts by principles of religion and of duty, his secret intentions and aspirations are his own happiness, and not that of others. It is important that a man shall examine his intentions as shown in his thought, for it is only thus that he can see his own quality. Otherwise he may easily persuade himself that his life is blameless, simply because he conforms to the moral standards of the world. when get within may be the love of self. This love is so far the witness of a lie, that if man does not examine himself in the light of such truth as he has, it will easily persuade him that he is blameless, and at last he will come into such a state of persuasion that he will be unable to see any evil within himself. This is the witness of a lie that is given by evil loves and evil men.

The answer given by such a witness cannot but be against the neighbor; for it is inherent in the love of self to take from others but not to give except as such giving will result in further advantage to oneself. And we can see some indication of the great prevalence of the love of self in the fact that gratitude is so rare; that if we examine ourselves, we shall see how that gratitude is not a spontaneous virtue, but must be cultivated, and that we must be on our guard, if we would only recognize the uses and good works done by our fellows, and be grateful to them. Our natural tendency is always to think of our own services, and to take delight in depreciating the services of others, or in hearing them depreciated or criticized by others,—especially if those services are in the same field as our own.

But the neighbor is more than the fellowman. The society of which we are a member and the country to which we belong are neighbors in a larger sense. And the evil man is a witness of a lie against these even more than against his fellows. A selfish heart answers nothing but a lie against the country; that is, all that proceeds from such a heart is testimony that one's own good is greater than the good of the country,—and this is a lie. The external and manifest result is what is called graft and profiteering at the expense of the country. nut the evil is greater than is indicated by these open crimes; for every man who seeks only his own good injures not only the individual neighbor but the community. That he does not graft may be due only to lack of opportunity, or to fear.

In a still larger sense the Church is the neighbor; for the Church has in view the spiritual good of man, and this is more to be loved than his natural good. Every member of the Church who is in the loves of self and does not resist them is a witness of a lie to the injury of the Church. The lie is that his love and pleasure is more important than the good of the Church; and the constant persuasion of his heart leads

him to externally neglect his uses in the Church as a living member adding to the sphere of worship on earth, and promoting the uses that look to the salvation of men. It is exceedingly common for men to prefer their own comfort to the duties of worship, or of reading the Word and prayer; and while many of them would not openly say that their own comfort is more important, yet the spirit of their thought is a perpetual witness to this lie. Herein the Church suffers in run external way; but the love of self also bears witness to the hurt of the internal Church which is the spiritual good of man. From that love proceeds a sphere of evil, and this sphere is not a thing of the imagination, but a real sphere which produces real effects. This sphere is opposed to the spiritual good of others; it is as it were a perpetual witness to the lie that natural good and the love of self is to be preferred.

This sphere thus going forth from every evil man, especially from the evil in the Church, is what attacks the souls of men, and strives to poison and kill, even as the sphere or odor of a poisonous plant is in the constant effort as it were to destroy the lives of men. Thus the answer, or sphere, going forth from the evil is the answer of the witness of a lie against his neighbor.

But in the supreme sense the Lord Himself is the neighbor. For He says, Ye are my friends if ye do what I command you (John 15, 14). The Lord is mans friend because He is nearest to Him; and it is this Friend, the lord, who is perpetually present and perpetually willing to give true happiness to man,--it is this Friend against whom in the supreme sense we are commanded not to answer the witness of a lie. The Lord is not a God afar off (Jeremiah 23:23); He is near to man and seeks to be received by man in order that He may give him life eternal. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door I will come in to him and will sup with him (Revelation 3, 20). The sphere of the love of self is a perpetual lie against this Friend. It persuades that His commands which are the commands of Love are not to be obeyed; that obedience to Him and conjunction with Him are not the source of happiness. Thus it bears witness against the end of the Lord's work of creation which is heaven from the human race; it is in the effort to destroy this use; and he who wishes to destroy a use will also to destroy Him who is that use. Such a man is a perpetual witness from whose mouth proceed lies inspired by Him who is the father of lies. For despite the vain imaginations of the evil heart it yet is an eternal truth that the Lord alone rules the universe, and that spiritual life and happiness come solely from conjunction with Him.

XXXVII. THE LUST OF EVILS.

grep -oPh "[A-Z][a-z]{1,3}\.(\s[0-9ivxlc]+)", 10-20.

Matthew 15, 1-20.

@HH 495.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house. (Exodus 20:17)

As pointed out in a previous discourse the commandment immediately preceding this, namely, the command and against false witness, is the summing up and close of the four precepts that concern mans duty to his fellow men. These precepts are, that man shall not murder, nor commit adultery, nor steal, nor bear false witness. The last involves the three preceding; for lying and deceit against the neighbor are the necessary companions of murder, adultery, and theft. He, therefore, who shuns lying and deceit, shuns also the other evils against the neighbor. The ninth and tenth commandments that now follow are also summaries of the proceeding precepts as to our duty to the neighbor. We are not only not to kill, commit adultery, or steal, but we are not to desire to deprive the neighbor of his possessions in any way whatsoever.

In the sense of the letter the commandment against false witness refers to the love of self; for everyone who loves himself is perpetually bearing false witness concerning both himself and his neighbor, against himself because he testifies to his own greatness and importance; and against his neighbor, because he is in the effort to belittle the deeds of others. It may appear that one who loves himself above all may also love his neighbor and do good to him. But it is only an appearance, for when discord arises among such lovers, then in place of love comes hatred and persecution. A lover of himself cannot but be in the effort of exalting himself above others, and thus of bearing false witness against others.

It is the love of self then that is forbidden in this commandment.

But the ninth commandment, in the sense of the letter, is specifically directed against the love of the world. that is, the love of the possession of worldly goods. If this love rules man he cannot but desire. covet, lust after, the possession of his neighbors goods. It is well known that those who are dominated by the desire of worldly riches are never satisfied; with increased possession, comes also increased desire, until at last they would covet not only the goods of their immediate neighbor, but the riches of the country, the power of the church, nay the ordering of the whole of creation that it may serve their love. Thus they covet the goods of their neighbor, his house and all that it contains: the wife who makes the home, the servants who keep it in order, the domestic animals who supply its needs, and everything that is their neighbors. And this is true whether by the neighbor we understand the fellow man, the country, the church, or the Lord Himself.

In a wider sense, however, the commandment is not against the love of the world as distinguished from the love of self but against the willing of evil. We are not only forbidden to do murder, adultery, theft, and lying, but are also forbidden to desire to do them. It is this desire that is meant by coveting the neighbors house and all that it contains. For in the lust after a mans house and home is contained

the will that breaks out into murder of the man, or the debauching of his wife, or the stealing of his goods, or the persecuting of him by false witness. We are to shun not only the actual doing of these evils but evil loves.

No man can see his own love as it is in itself; but it shows itself in his desires and lusts. Desire and lust are nothing but the efforts of the will to secure its own ends. These efforts are called proper desires when the will is good, but lusts when the will is evil. The one may be compared to a gentle flame that warms and enkindles; the other to a consuming fire that destroys.

If a man from a good love desires to be of use to the neighbor he is animated with a warm zeal and eagerness to do the work that lies before him; but if from an evil will he lusts to secure only his own happiness, his lust leads him to all manner of destructive deeds from which he is restrained only by fear of the law or of reputation.

Lust is the evil will, or evil love, manifesting itself in the understanding and there inciting the man to think and do those things which the love or will lusts after. It is this lust that is forbidden in the last two of the commandments; for if the lust is not shunned, then the mere external observance of the other commandments affects only the mans life in the world and society; it does not alter the real character of the man,—the character that will endure after he has left the world. And as the Divine commandments are given that man may be internally reformed therefore they are summed up in the words. Thou shalt not covet or lust after these evils.

No man can avoid evil entering into his thought. Evil scenes, evil pictures, evil words are met with everywhere, and through the senses they enter into the internal sight, that is, the understanding. This is from without. But the will or love enters into the understanding from within, and when it perceives these evil words or scenes it immediately manifests its presence by the lust to act them out, that is, to carry them into the deed, or, if it fears to do this, then to act them out in the imagination, and to cherish and encourage thought concerning them. If the man submits to this lust then the evil lusted after becoming a part of himself; he makes that evil his own, his will, his very self, which makes him what he shall be to all eternity. But he need not submit to this lust. He can see the lust in his understanding; can see that it incites him to do evil, and can put it away from his thought and deed. Doing this, he fights against the lust of evil, and not merely against the doing of evil.

A man can fight against the doing of evil because he fears disgrace or loss; but he can fight against the lust of evil only from religion.

It is this fight against evil lusts that is meant by shunning evils as sins against God. Thus the first commandment and the last meet together,—Thou shalt not covet or lust; and Thou shalt have no other God before me. No one can ever shun evil lusts in the thought or understanding unless he worships the Lord and obeys His precepts.

It is this shunning of evil lusts that is meant by the Lord when He says, Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly and is cast out into the draught; but those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are

what defile a man (Matthew 15, 11, 17-19). By the mouth is meant the understanding; for the mouth both takes things in from the world and speaks out the desires of the heart. So the understanding receives all sorts of impressions, pictures, words, thoughts, etc., from without by means of the senses; it is also with the understanding that the evil will pours in its lusts. What goes into the thought of man does not defile him. It does not injure a man that evil thoughts come to his mind; for these can be rejected and cast out of the mind, even as useless food is cast out from the belly into the draught. But what defiles man, what makes him an evil man, is the lust that comes from the heart, that is, from the love, into the understanding, and there excites evil deeds whether in actuality or only in intention.

Here the Lord gives the great law of regeneration. His teaching, addressed to the Pharisees who were zealous in obeying the law as to all external observances, was, that it is not enough that man shall shun evils merely in speech and deed, but that he shall see and shun the evil lusts that spring from the heart; for if these are shunned then evil speech and deed can be cast out.

The fight against evil is to be conducted in the world of the understanding, and not in the sight of men; in the light of Divine truth and not in the light of worldly thought.

And this fight is fought and won when we see the lusts of evil inspiring the thought, and put such thought away as a sin against the neighbor, and especially against the Lord who is the Supreme Neighbor. The Lord's house is the human mind. In this house He wills to dwell that it may be His. Evil lusts covet the possession of this house; if they be permitted to enter, will covet also the life of the fellow men, his wife, his possessions, his reputation. The answer must be given them, Get thee behind me Satan. Do not argue with evils lusts; do not dwell on them with the intention of shunning them later; do not think from them, persuading yourself that the thought will not lead to the deed. Evil lusts are voices of the enemy of our very life, and with them must no terms be made.

XXXVIII.

Isaiah 1, 10-20.

Matthew 15, 1-20.

@HH 495.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house. (Exodus 20:17)

I have already shown that the words, Thou shalt not covet, which close the ten commandments, give the key to the real understanding of what is meant by the preceding commandments against murder, adultery, theft, and false witness. These are to be shunned not only as deeds of the body but also and more especially as lusts inspiring the thought and imagination, and furnishing the spring and origin of evil deeds. These lusts cannot be shunned except from religion, that is, except as they are seen and acknowledged as sins against God and against the neighbor.

If lust inspire the thought to a certain deed, self interest, the fear of the loss of fame or money, will in most cases, act as a preventive to the thought breaking out into open deed. But these fears cannot lend a man to shun the evil lust in his thought. He may indeed seek to put it away from active thought because, seeing the impossibility of ultimating it, he may think that thus he will ensure his own peace of mind. This mode of putting away evil is expressed in words that occur to many men, Why go on thinking of it, when you know you cant do it; you're only making yourself unhappy. But this is not shunning the lust of evil; it is merely putting it aside from the active thought for reasons pertaining to self-interest. And when circumstances change and new opportunity arises for committing the evil, or when occasions when the lust is more strongly aroused, it again actively invades the mind and fills the thought. To put evil aside from mere self interest is not shunning it; it is merely removing it from the sight, that is, from the active thought.

The lust still remains within, even though the man himself may not be aware of it because he does not reflect on his state. This is especially illustrated in the many cases that come to notice from time to time, where men have led apparently good and upright lives even in their thought and conversation, and yet on the occasion of some great temptation have given rein to evil lusts.

Evils are really shunned only when they, or the thoughts inspired by them, are put away from religion, that is, from the recognition that they are in themselves evil and hurtful to the neighbor, society, and the church. When this is done the motive from which they are shunned remains the same whatsoever the temptation.

But no man can thus shun evil lusts unless he acknowledges God; and unless also sometimes reflects on his thoughts from intention. The first commandment enters into all, man cannot obey the last which sums them up, except from the first. It is really necessary for us to reflect on our intentions, that is, actually to think on the motives that direct our thoughts; for without this reflection it is quite natural for us to live the life of ordinary respectability that Society both demands and trains us for, and to imagine that this life of external good is really our own. Yet evils remain within the heart; they cannot be removed by putting them to sleep, for this only renders them dormant. They must be

actually seen, acknowledged and shunned. And this, as I said, can be done only after reflection.

With some this reflection will take the form of an examination of their thoughts and intentions during some specific time, as, for instance, during the day or the week. This indeed is the best way, for if one reflects on his thoughts during some given time, he will easily be able to see in some specific act or thought, the springs that incite all his actions. It is not necessary that a man shall examine every deed of his life; for if he sees the intentions in one days work or thought, he sees what is present in all. Still it is necessary to frequently examine the thoughts, for otherwise indifference can easily be induced.

The times for examination must be left to the man himself; for self-examination is a purely private and personal matter. But the times that suggest themselves as most suitable are occasions when the past life naturally comes before one, such as one's birthday; and also when spiritual thought is more active, such as when preparing for the Holy Supper, or, in general, on the Sabbath Day. Others there are who do not give much time to self-examination. Still they also shun evils if at the time they are thinking to do a certain deed they reflect on whether their intention is good or evil, and if evil, actually refrain from the deed. Such men also explore the evils with themselves and from religion put them away; but their spiritual thought is not deeply developed, and after death they usually remain in the lower heavens.

A striking thought that occurs to the mind on the consideration of this commandment against the lust of evil, is that the Israelitish Church had in the ten commandments all that was necessary to form it into a living Church. They had the truth whereby man can be delivered from evil; and this truth was frequently repeated by the Prophets. Wash you, make you clean, says Isaiah, (1:16); and the Psalms and Prophets are filled with the like teaching. But the men of that Church did not examine themselves. They were content to live as good Jews, in the same way that men now are content to live as good Christians, meaning that they observe in externals the laws of Christian society. The Jewish Church thus became, like the modern Christian Church of to-day, largely composed of men who gave little or no thought to the truths of the Word, but were concerned only in the outward observance of their religion and of the conventions of society. This is the reason why they so often fell into idolatry, and why, in the Christian world religion is so often cast aside. For when the Church is not in the heart, it is easily separated from the external thought. The Israelitish Church became more a dead Church, until finally its leaders confined religion to the making and observance of mere traditions and omitted the weightier works of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith, (Matthew 23, 23);

so that when the Lord came and taught the truth they rejected Him.

The Jewish Church had become merely external. Society was more or less respectable, for no other society could possibly endure. The rites of religion were observed; sacrifices were made; tithes were paid; there was an intense desire for freedom from the Roman yoke, that their religion might be developed to its former glory. But there was no life of religion. The life of religion must be a purely individual matter; and when this was lacking in the Jewish Church that Church was dead, howsoever much its externals were kept up. The same law operated in the Christian Church, and the same law will operate in the New Church.

Such being the state of the Jewish Church, it is not surprising that in its teachings all emphasis was laid on the deeds of the body, and little or none on the spirit that lay within. Emphasis was laid on the

shunning of the deeds of murder, adultery, theft, and false witness, but the commandment, Thou shalt not covet was ignored. And such, indeed, is largely the state of the Church to-day, when its teachings are so largely confined to external reforms, and little if anything is said to arouse a searching of the heart.

Therefore, at the beginning of His ministry, in the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's first teaching was a review of the commandments of life,—but as commandments to be observed by the spirit and not merely by the body and external mind. Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, said the Lord, and in these words He referred to the vain traditions with which the lenders had surrounded the commandments: But I say unto you, He continued; and then He taught that the real commandments concerned not deeds but intentions.

Most striking are the Lord's words concerning 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.

This teaching is immediately followed by the words, if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee.... If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee (Matthew 27-30) it is evident that these words are not to be taken literally; for what can maiming of the body contribute to the reformation of the spirit? By the eye is meant the understanding which is the internal sight; and by the hand is meant the deed; but, since the words are used in an evil sense, what is meant is falsity in the understanding and evil in the deed. By the right eye and hand is meant power, the deed; for all power is exercised by truth. But while power is exercised by means of the understanding or truth, the power itself comes from the will. Therefore, in these words the Lord taught that man is to shun the power that inspire the eye that offends; that is, that inspires the understanding to think evil and the body to do evil. This power is the lust whereby the evils of the heart excite evil thought and deed. It is these lusts that are to be cut off, and they can be cut off only as they are seen in an eye and a hand that offends; that is, as they are seen in the thought and imagination or deed to which the will by its lusts continually urges.

In this shunning of evils is the very heart of the Church. By this alone can the Lord's love be given to man; can the Church exist as a living, a spiritual Church; can the end of creation, which is heaven, be secured. This is the life of religion, without which a Church is not a Church. And this life is an individual matter for each one. It is so in the New Church. That Church cannot be maintained as a genuine Church, whatsoever its prosperity, unless its individual members have the life of religion. The responsibility of maintaining the New Church as the kingdom of heaven on earth, is a responsibility that rests with the individual member of the Church, and it cannot be shifted.

XXXIX. LOVING THE NEIGHBOR.

Deuteronomy 5, 1-21.

Matthew 19, 16-26.

@HH 358-9.

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, 18.)

Since the earliest days of the Christian Church there has been much dispute as to the proper divisions of the ten commandments. All are agreed that the number of the commandments is ten, for they are called by Moses the ten words: And the Lord declared unto you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, even ten words, which He wrote upon two tablets of stone, (Deuteronomy 4:13). The dispute has been as to how the division into ten words is to be made. As indicated by the Masoretic signs printed in the Hebrew Bible, the whole of the commandment respecting the worship of God forms one commandment. The second commandment forbids the taking of His name in vain; the third, concerns the Sabbath; the fourth, the honoring of parents; the fifth to the eighth, murder, adultery, theft, and lying; and then, that the number ten may be completed, the commandments as to coveting are distinguished into two,—Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house, and Thou shalt not covet his wife, etc. This is the division observed by the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches.

The Talmud, however, which is the ancient Jewish commentary on the Hebrew Scriptures, divides the first commandment into two,—making Thou shalt have no other gods before me the first commandment, and Thou shalt not make to thee any graven image, etc., the second.

Then, to complete the number ten, the two commandments against coveting are united into one; in which connection it may be noted that in the account of the Ten words, as given in Deuteronomy, these two are contained in a single verse, and their order is changed to read. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors wife; nor shalt thou desire thy neighbors house, his field, or his manservant, etc. (Deuteronomy 5:21) This is the division observed by the Greek Church and by all the Reformed churches except the Lutheran.

Throughout the Writings of the New Church the division observed is the same as that of the Hebrew text, and which is observed by the Lutheran and Roman Catholic Churches. This indeed seems to be the most natural division; for the commandment to have no other Gods, and the commandment not to make graven images, are but one commandment, and to divide them into two is somewhat artificial. Certainly it would seem to be more natural to divide into two the commandments against coveting, making the first that against coveting the neighbors house and land, and the second that against coveting all that makes the home a place of peace and enjoyment. This does not, it is true, seem to be the division as given in Deuteronomy, but we are dwelling with the commandments as originally given from Sinai, and not with the account of them as subsequently related to the Israelites by Moses. That in this latter account, some change is made, is from a cause in the internal sense; but it is not necessary to enter into this at the present time.

The numbering of the commandments is however, not a matter of salvation. The essential thing is the commandments themselves and obedience to them; and inasmuch as the essence of this obedience, which is, not to covet the evils forbidden, is contained in the ninth and tenth commandments, I shall here treat of these two together.

In a former discourse I have already shown their natural sense in a general way. Let us now look more particularly into this sense. This sense is that we are not to desire in any way to deprive a man of his house and home, whether by actually depriving him of it or by destroying it, or by ruining his peace and happiness in the possession of it.

Then follows the command not to desire in any way to injure the neighbors wife; for it is the wife who is the centre of the home and who indeed makes the home. Without the wife, that is, without conjugal love, a house is not and cannot be a home. Specifically this refers to injuring the neighbor by adultery with his wife, or by unchaste words or conduct or by any other act which tends to defile or injure the love between husband and wife. In a more extended sense it refers to the injury brought on conjugal love, and thus on wives who are forms of conjugal love, by all who do not shun the lust of adultery. From the adulterous spirit proceeds a sphere which is in the effort to destroy conjugal love. And however the lover of adultery may guard his speech and actions, yet there is in them a secret force which continually endeavors to break out into words and deeds that actually injure the innocence and love of wives, and thus the home of the neighbor.

We may here refer to another way in which the neighbors home is injured, namely, by injuring his children. The social standards of this day do not indeed permit the actual seizure of the neighbors children, still there are many ways in which men at this day injure the children of their neighbor. The exploitation of child labor, for many centuries a dark stain on Christian civilization, is a notable instance. Children of tender years are made to work for long hours with utter disregard to the cultivation of their mind, or to the growth of those thoughts and affections which distinguish man from the brutes. And so widespread is this evil that it can be checked only by civil statutes and their strict enforcement. But this phase of the evil is one that can be seen in merely natural light, and, therefore, for many years it has been the subject of civil agitation and enactment, even by those who have no religion.

We touch upon the evil more deeply when we reflect on how prone we are, by reason of self conceit and ill will, to injure children in their affections to their parents and to those having charge of their welfare, who are parents in a wider sense;

in their love of their home; and above all, in their tender affections for the things of religion, and their childish love of the Lord. Adults should ever be on their guard against thus injuring or desiring to injure, their neighbors children in this way. This evil is very prevalent in the Christian world, and is committed by many who would utterly denounce the exploitation of child labor. One may indeed think that he has no wish to injure children; and yet, just as the sphere of adultery proceeding from the spirit of a man, is a sphere that is always in the effort to injure and defile conjugal love in women and wives, so the love of self and the desire to secure the satisfaction of that love, is in the perpetual effort to injure that spirit in children which gives honor and love to their parents, and teachers. While those who are in self love may not be conscious of this effort or desire, yet if they will reflect they will see its actual presence in their thought. It is this desire that leads men to insinuate into the mind of the young,

though often in carefully veiled ways, doubts concerning their parents or those having just authority over them. a weakening of those affections and confidences which in children are such precious remains for the building up of a truly spiritual life. As to us, who have passed out of the state of childhood, and, looking back, can realize the precious gifts to be received in that state,—it behooves us to be careful not to injure the affections of the young or weaken their obedience to their parents and to the Lord as He appears to them.

We are also not to covet the servants of the neighbor. This means that we are not to be jealous of the neighbor if he has good and efficient servants whether in his home or business; for jealousy is interiorly a desire to take from the neighbor that which gives him delight or comfort. The command also includes the forbidding of any action calculated to injure the faithfulness or loyalty of men and women to their employers. This does not, however, mean that where conditions of employment are unjust no means must be taken to better them.

If this were wrong, then would it have been wrong to agitate against slavery, or to take part in the work of exposing and reforming the many abuses of employment at the present day. But the spirit of these movements is not to injure the neighbor, but to do good to him; and what is forbidden in the commandment is the desire to injure the neighbor.

Lastly we are forbidden to covet the neighbors ox or ass or anything that is the neighbors, that is, not to desire to deprive him of any of his earthly goods. This does not mean that we are not to desire to deprive a man of ill-gotten or unjust possessions, for to deprive him of these, when done in the spirit of justice and not of hate, is really the ultimate of a desire that he shall repent; it is interiorly a desire for the mans good, even though it may appear to the man as persecution and anger. But we are not to be in the desire to bring injury and loss to the man from the spirit of self love or covetousness.

The love of self is always the covetousness to get for oneself and not to give, except so far as it will benefit self. It is this love that leads, whether actually or only in intention, to murder, adultery, theft, and false witness; in a word, to all those acts which deprive the neighbor of his home and possessions. And, therefore, the second part of the Decalogue ends with the command not to covet anything that is thy neighbors. This command embraces all mans duties to his fellow man expressed in the preceding commandments; and these commandments were all summed up by the Lord and stated anew when He said. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

XL. THE LORD, THE NEIGHBOR.

1Kings 8, 22-34.

Matthew 7, 21-3rd.

@CL 128-9.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors wife. (Exodus 20:17)

By the neighbor in the supreme sense is meant the Lord; for the Lord is the nearest to the regenerate man. The Lord is omnipresent; thus he is present with every man and is perpetually in the will to be received by every man in order that he may give heavenly affections and thus eternal happiness. But though the Lord is thus present with all men. His presence is not manifested to the man except so far as the man himself opens his mind to receive the Lord. If we might use a lowly illustration, the Lord's universal presence with all can be compared with the universal presence around our earth of the magnetic current. Although that current is present in its flow from the south pole to the north, yet its presence does not become apparent to us until we have an instrument, such as the magnet, to receive the magnetic flow and thus actually manifest its presence. So must the human mind be prepared to receive the lord, before His presence is manifested to our view. This is what the Lord teaches when He says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with Me, (Revelation 3, 20). By hearing the Lord's voice and opening the door is meant reading the Word and living according to it.

When man thus opens the door to the Lord the Lord is then his neighbor, or nearest one. In spiritual things there is no space, and therefore, in spiritual things near does not refer to spatial distance. In the spiritual world, and thus in the human mind, that is nearest which is dearest, that is to say, which is most prized by the love.

This idea is also incorporated in our common speech, as when we speak of those who are nearest and dearest to us, or of a thing being near to our heart, or far from the thought; by which expression we indicate what is dearest to our love.

The Lord is nearest to a man, or is his neighbor (nearby one) when he dwells in mans mind as the ruler of that mind. The thing that is then nearest and dearest to the man is to obey the Lord; and that which is farthest away from his will, that is, from himself, is to gratify his own selfish loves. The opposite is the case with the evil; for he regards himself and the gratification of his own pleasures and ambitions as the thing nearest to his heart. To serve the fellow man, and still more to serve the country is subordinate to this, that is, it is farther removed from his heart; and furtherest of all, is the kingdom of heaven and the Lord. These, indeed, are so far removed that they rarely ever come before the sight of his mind; that is, he rarely if ever thinks of them as worthy of receiving service and obedience.

The Lord then is the Neighbor whose house and all things therein are not to be coveted by man. By the house is meant the human mind; for the mind that is truly human is built solely by the Lord as man obeys His commands and looks to Him for help. Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it, (Psalms 127, 1); that is, a mind that is built up or formed without any idea of religion, and

without the life of religion, is a house that is built in vain, a house that will not stand when temptation assails. Therefore, the Lord compares the man who hears His sayings and does them to a man who built his house upon a rock; but he who hears the Divine sayings but does them not, to a man who built his house upon the sand. When storms come the one house stood firm, the other fell.

The first formation of the human mind is effected by the Lord alone, for it is effected while man is as yet a helpless infant. During the state of infancy the Lord implants in every man states of innocence and peace, and though, as the child grows up, these states seem to leave him, yet they are still concealed within, and can be revived.

This we can experience in ourselves when we reflect on the days of our childhood; for then the states of early innocence return. It is this implanting of states of innocence that is the first building of the human mind, the house, by the Lord, and it is this house that we are not to covet; that is, we are not to desire to possess it in order to fill it with merely human things.

As we come to adult years we find that we have begun to fill this house of our mind with merely worldly things. I do not mean with worldly knowledges and experiences, for it is useful and necessary that the mind be furnished with these things. But what I mean is we have begun to fill it with things that do not belong to the Master of the house, things, that the commandment comes to us, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house. We are not to desire to hold in our mind evil thoughts and lusts; for these are in the effort to seize the house from the Neighbor and to take possession of it as the home of the devil their master. No man can serve two masters; either he will acknowledge the Master of the house who is his Neighbor, or he will covet possession of the house for his own evil loves.

By the neighbors wife, is meant the Church for the Church is the wife and bride of the Lord. Hence the New Church, which is the New Jerusalem as distinguished from the old Jerusalem where was the centre of the Jewish Church, the New Church is spoken of in the word as coming down from heaven as a bride prepared for her husband, (Revelation 21, 2). The Church is signified by a wife because it is by the Church that the Lord makes mans mind, and thus the man himself, into a true house or home where the Lord dwells with him, and sups with him and the with the Lord. Properly speaking, the Church is not a body of men, but it is the truths that are taught from the Word. Men merely constitute the Church, but it is doctrine from the Word that truly makes the Church.

Hence a Church is a genuine Church just so far as it is in true doctrine from the Word.

It is the doctrine of the Word, or the truths drawn from the Word and taught by the Church,--it is these that prepare the house for the reception of the Lord. These doctrines are the voice of the Lord, and he who hears them and obeys them in his life, is the one who opens the door to receive the Lord who is knocking. Even as a wife prepares the home for the reception of her husband, in order that they may dwell together there in conjugal love, so the Church,--the truths drawn from the Word, the voice of the Lord, prepares the human mind, opens the door of that mind, to receive the Lord Himself as the master of the house.

We are not to covet the neighbors wife, that is, we are to acknowledge that the Church is the Lord's and not mans; that it is established among men of the sake of leading man to the Lord, and not for the furtherance of the lusts and ambitions of evil men. A man covets the wife of his Neighbor to defile her,

when he uses the truths of the Church, not for the amendment of his own life, but as a cover to hide his evils. Many would say they do not do this evil thing, when yet they are doing it every day. They are not conscious of it, simply because they do not examine themselves and reflect on what they find. Where evils are not shunned they remain in the love and will. They are not removed merely by not doing them, for this only covers them over so that they do not appear to the sight; and they may indeed be so covered over by an external goodness of life as to be hidden even from the man himself who is in them. Still they are within the heart, and will remain there, secretly influencing the mans every thought and action, until they are seen as sins against God, and then shunned as hurtful to the soul.

But in the memory and external mind are present the truths of the Church, and this even when evil loves reside within. It is these truths that are the Lord's wife and brine, and that we are not to covet. We are to honor them as the Neighbors wife who is to be the adornment of the Neighbors house.

They are to be conjoined with the Master of the House and are not to be coveted or defiled. Every man who does not actually shun evils as sins actually covets this wife; he desires, not that she be conjoined to the Lord, but that she serve his evil purpose. Where evil resides in the heart, it seizes upon all the things in the memory and external mind in order to make them serve its own ends; and especially does it seize upon the truths of the Church, that thus it may gain respect and praise from others. Thus it defiles these truths and fills them with its own evil lusts; it covets the Neighbors wife.

But they who obey the commandment and do not covet their Neighbors wife; who actually shun this lust; they truly believe that the Church is the Lord's bride and wife and is to enter into the house to be conjoined with her Husband. Therefore, they shun evil lusts in thought and deed, which would defile this wife, which would take her from the Lord's house and conjoin her in adulterous union with the love of self which is the devil.

Such then is the supreme meaning of these words, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house nor his wife. The words are Divine words, and, therefore, contain spiritual and celestial truths which deal with the interior operations of the human mind. But the whole of this supreme sense is present in the ultimate or natural senses, and if man obeys this from the heart, that is, if he actually shuns the desire to defraud his fellow man, to deprive him of his house and wife, then truly he worships the Lord as the Master of the house, and the Church as the Lord's wife, and His alone.

XLI. THE SERVANTS OF THE NEIGHBOR.

Psalms 51, 1-10.

Matthew 19, 13-22.

@HH 430.

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, 18.)

In my last talk I showed that the neighbor is the Lord, the house, the human mind, and the wife, the church which alone makes the mind a house or temple of the Lord. What now follows concerns the lower things in the house, the servants and the cattle. These also refer to the things in the human mind which contribute to making it a house of God; but they refer to the lower things that have their seat in the external or natural mind. The wife occupies the inmost or highest part of the house, but the servants occupy the outer or lower parts, and the cattle the court outside the house.

That the servants and cattle refer to the things in the lower region of the human mind is more clearly brought out in the second recital of the commandments as given in Deuteronomy, where we read Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbors house, his field, nor his manservant, etc. Here before the servants and the cattle is put the field, by which is meant the outer region of the human mind; for it is in the field that the house is first built, and it is from the food grown in the field that this house is afterwards sustained.

The mind is divided in general into an internal and an eternal. The external consists of, or is formed by, those thoughts and affections that are received from the world of nature through the senses;

hence it is called the natural mind. But the internal mind consists, or is formed by, spiritual loves and perceptions that are insinuated from heaven, according as man lives the life of religion. But let us examine what is meant by the mind being formed of thoughts and affections.

At birth man does not have a mind, but only the faculty of receiving a mind; just as he does not have sensual impressions, but only the faculty of receiving such impressions. The seat of the mind is present at birth; the new-born baby also has a human soul which gives it the faculty of forming a human mind in the organ of the mind which is the brain. But no mind is actually formed until the senses are opened. The opening of the senses, however, does not add any substance to the brain; but by it states or forms are induced on the organ of the brain, and the soul gives man the ability to feel these states or forms as his own affections and thoughts. Thus a child sees, hears, tastes, smells many things, and it gradually forms a liking for one and a dislike for another, according as the impressions it has received agree with its hereditary tastes. This is the first formation of the mind, the first forming of that organ that is given to man that it may be opened to receive the Lord.

The mind first formed is, however, a merely sensual and corporeal mind. That is, its forms are merely images of the things that have been experienced by the senses; and its first affections and thoughts are directed to the external delights of the senses. But as the child grows, new forms, or new states or

impressions begin to enter. For it begins to learn as to what is right and wrong, and these lessons introduce into the growing mind a higher state, from which the child begins to have some judgment as to the sensual things that delight or displease him. The mind is also further formed by the study of the sciences, and also of the teachings of the church, and especially by the training received from parents and teachers. New and more interior states are thus induced on the organ of the mind, and from these states the child and young person begins to experience affections and thoughts for many things

for the doctrines of his church, for his parents, teachers, and friends, for morality and uprightness, and so forth. In other words he begins to form a mind of his own with thoughts and affections that lie recognizes as his own.

But although these affections may concern the things of the church, they are still affections of the natural mind; for they have been received from the world through the senses, whether by one's own experience, by the teaching of parents and teachers, or by the reading of books.

With the entrance into adult life a change begins to take place, or rather a change may take place. For then the young man may, if he chooses, reflect upon the state of his mind and its delights, and examine these latter in the light of what he has learned from the Word; he may then also correct those states in the light of the Word, that is, shun all delights and imaginations that are not in harmony with the Word. As he does this a new state, a new form is induced upon the mind. This form is one which the Lord can interiorly build up and strengthen, and into which He can inflow. The Lord's influx into this new form is perceived or felt by the man as new affections and new thoughts - affections and thoughts that have not come from the world through the senses, but that have been insinuated by the Lord according as the ground in the natural mind has been prepared. It is these thoughts and affections that are meant by the spiritual mind.

An adult, however, may grow up without any formation of a spiritual mind. Such are they who give no thought to religion or to spiritual things, but cherish only thoughts, affections, ambitions that concern the world and the hotly. Their mind remains purely natural, and is occupied only with the images of the world and the senses.

The thoughts and affections of the spiritual mind are what are meant by the neighbors wife, for it is they that make the house into a mansion where the Lord may abide.

The servants and the cattle are the affections and thoughts of the natural mind, which are as servants whose use is the continual support of the house as the home of the husband and wife. By the manservant and the maidservant are meant the affections of spiritual good and truth, and by the ox and ass the affections of natural good and truth.

By the affections of spiritual goods and truths in the natural mind are meant the affections for the things of the church and religion that are implanted in the mind by education, reading and study; also the love of observing the duties taught by religion. These affections are of the natural mind because they have been formed in man from without, that is, by education. But they are the servants that are to serve the mistress of the house, in order that the house may be well ordered, that is, that the mind may be richly furnished. It is these that man is not to covet. He is not to desire to turn them to other service.

These spiritual affections in the natural affections are implanted in all of us in our early years; but as years go on they will become weaker and at last almost dead and forgotten, unless they be devoted to the Masters service. To covet them is to wish to use them for one's own service, and this is done when we use the affections for the spiritual life which we have received, and the knowledges that have been given us, for any other purpose than to be the servants of the spiritual mind to be formed by the Lord. We also covet them when we injure these spiritual thoughts and affections in others.

The ox and the ass, different from the servants, reside not in the house, but in the court of the house; and their use is not directly to minister to the mistress of the house, but to work in the field, to till the ground and to carry its produce that this may afterwards be used in the house. By outside the house is meant the memory, for this is, as it were, outside the human mind. Into it we receive all manner of things, good and bad; and from it we select what we desire for the nourishment and delight of our real mind. The ox and the ass, therefore, are the affections of these natural things;

affections, namely, for all natural knowledges, and delights of the world and of the senses of the body. These also are not to be coveted; that is, we are not to desire to take them from the service of the Master and use them for our own service. All our studies, all our experience, all our learning, and our love of these things, is to be regarded as the beast of labor and burden that is to serve for the building up and sustaining of a truly spiritual mind.

Knowledges of the world, and external delights are necessary, but they are not to be coveted for the service of ourselves, that is, of the love of self and the world. Their true use is that thus the mind may be opened, and that they may furnish it with ever new material; their abuse is when they are used for our own selfish purposes.

We readily see this in the larger society of our church; for we all recognize that our children are to be educated in the natural sciences, and that in this education we must constantly keep in view the true use of the sciences. We see also in the world at this day, that the things that cultivate the natural mind are not regarded as servants of the Neighbor, but are prized and desired, and lusted after for their use to worldly ambition. Thus the neighbors servants and cattle are coveted. Let us also see it in our own individual life, that we may hold all our thoughts and affections,--even the most lowly as not for our own enrichment, but for the service of the Lord.

XLII. THE KEEPING OF THE COMMANDMENTS.

Psalms 130.

Mark 12, 28-34.

@HH 472.

We have now concluded our discourses on the Ten Commandments, but before leaving this subject I would like to add some general remarks on the Commandments as a whole, and especially as to the keeping of them.

As I have many times pointed out, the Ten Commandments are divided into two parts, the first prescribing mans duty to God and the last his duty to his neighbor. It should be observed, however, that these two parts are so mutually dependent on each other that neither one can have place in the heart without the other. Man cannot acknowledge God, nor hallow His name, nor worship Him, unless he shuns the evils forbidden in the latter part of the Commandments; and, on the other hand, he cannot shun these evils unless he acknowledges God.

Here we have the reason why the Commandments respecting our duty to the neighbor are put in the negative form, Thou shalt not kill, commit adultery, steal or bear false witness, nor even lust after these evils, that is, nor covet the neighbors possessions in any way. The word not implies that we are naturally inclined to do the things which are thus forbidden; and the obedience to this not involves the acknowledgment of the One who commands, as the Ruler whose Word is to direct our life.

Thus man must not do these evils, no covet to do them, because they are forbidden by God. To keep the Commandments from any other motive is not really keeping them, but is only acting from human prudence and the lessons of experience. There is no acknowledgment of any outside Power which is to be obeyed, but only the recognition that to do these evils is not profitable. Thus there is no recognition that the evils are not to be done, but they are not to be done at the time, or so as to be seen by men. Hence the desire to do the evils, that is, the desire to satisfy the love of self, remains in the heart; nor can it ever be removed except by the acknowledgment that evils are to be shunned because they are sins against God. This is what is meant by the last Commandments which forbid the lusting after evil, that is, forbid cherishing the delight of evil in the thought, simply because it is evil and a sin against God. Therefore to shun evils is to acknowledge God, to hallow His name and to worship Him.

The Commandments thus observe a circle, as it were. They commence with the commands to acknowledge God; they then forbid certain evils; and, finally, they forbid the lusting after these evils. Thus they return to the first, since no one can shun the lust of evil except so far as he acknowledges God and the Word. To shun evils is to love God; and not to shun evils is not to love God, but interiorly to hate Him and turn away from Him.

Therefore in the New Testament, where the Commandments are given in a summary form, they are not put in the negative form, but in the positive. Thou SHALT love the Lord thy God and Thou SHALT

love thy neighbor as thyself. But to love the Lord and the neighbor is to obey the Commandments. This the Lord openly teaches when He says, If ye love me keep my Commandments (John 14, 15); and again. If a man love me he will keep my words (v. 23), that is, the ten words. When given in a summary form, the Commandments are that a man shall love the Lord and his neighbor; but when given in detail, that is, when given in fuller form, they are that he is not to have other Gods, not to do evils to his neighbor, and not to lust after this - for not to do these things is to love the Lord and the neighbor

It is well for us to dwell on this thought. We have all been brought up in a land where the laws are based on the Ten Commandments;

we have been also brought up in the New Church and it has become almost second nature with us to believe in the Lord and His Word. For this reason it requires a special effort, as it were, for us to realize that unless we shun evils as sins we do not acknowledge the Lord nor love the Church. To shun evils actually, that is, to remove them from the minds desire when they come before us - this also is loving the Lord and the neighbor. There is no other way in which the love of the Lord and the neighbor can be received or manifested.

Another thought that comes to the mind, as suggested by the above, is that when man keeps one of the Commandments he keeps all. The question is often asked, Can a man keep all the Commandments? and the usual answer is that he cannot. The answer is a true one if the question means, can a man be guiltless in respect to every one of the Commandments, or even in respect to any single one of them. For who can say that he never breaks the Commandments? But the answer is not really true if by it is meant that, therefore, man is unable to keep the Commandments. The Commandments are given in order that they may be obeyed, and the very giving of them is in itself a proof that man can obey them. The answer given by the Writings of the New Church is that he who from intention shuns one of the evils forbidden in the Decalogue because it is forbidden by God, thereby shuns them all.

The Lord does not look at mans deeds, but at his intentions, that is, at the deeds of his heart. If, therefore, we shun one evil, and do this because it is a sin against God, then the intention to obey the Lord is what is regarded in heaven. By being regarded in heaven or by the Lord is not meant any arbitrary judgment; what is meant is, that the intentions of man are what interiorly form his mind, build up that mind, make its character, and when the light of heaven shines upon that man - and it shines on every man after death - it then reveals or sees only his true character. This is what is meant when it is said that the Lord judges man according to his intentions, and that intentions are what are imputed to man.

But, of course, intentions alone without their basis in actual deeds cannot endure, they are like a house which is built on a shaky and shifting foundation. Intentions, if they really are intentions, must be followed by deeds. It is in deeds that they are confirmed, strengthened, and become a part of the organic structure of the man, or, as we say, his real character. Therefore, it is said that if a man keeps one of the Commandments from the intention of shunning the evil there forbidden because it is a sin against God, then he keeps all the Commandments; he is in the intention to keep all the Commandments, and even though he fail at times and come into despair, still the Lord looks not at his failures, but at his intentions, that is, at his real character, his real desire and purpose.

This is a subject that involves the whole essence of religion in the daily life. Let a man search out some

evil in himself, some evil thought and desire; let him confess before the Lord that this is a sin; and then, when this evil desire excites his thoughts and actions, let him say to himself I will not do this, and I will not dwell upon it in my thought with delight, because it is a sin against God., and an evil to the neighbor. If he then actually shuns the evil in thought and deed, he is truly and sincerely in the love of obeying, of keeping all the Commandments, and thus of loving the Lord with all his heart and the neighbor as himself.

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