

of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts thereof" (Gal. 5:19-24). "For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17). *From the scriptures cited above, it will be noted that the teaching of Jesus covers every sin in the category and condones none.* (Teachers, you should take special pains to familiarize your pupils with the teaching of Jesus in respect to the vices and sins listed above, in order that they may be trained to distinguish between right and wrong as *God sees right and wrong*; and thus be prepared to live in harmony with God's purpose and plan for the human race, and to gain "the crown of righteousness" which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall bestow upon His people in the great Day of Judgment (2 Tim. 4:8). It is fundamental that Christian people everywhere should learn to follow the New Testament standard strictly, in distinguishing between right and wrong, and not conscience, reason, experience, etc.).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY-SIX

55. List the vices, sins, and deficiencies condemned by the New Testament Code.

Lesson Seventy-seven

THE TEACHING OF JESUS: ITS SIMPLICITY AND SPIRITUALITY

Scripture Reading: John 6:27-65.

Scriptures to Memorize: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the

words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life" (John 6:63).

56. Q. What is a third outstanding characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection?

A. A third outstanding characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection, is its simplicity.

1. *It inculcates principles of life and conduct, rather than imposes rules or laws.* Jesus does not say, "Thou shalt not;" but rather, *Be this or that, and thou art blessed* (Matt. 5:3-10); or, *Do this or that, and thou shalt live.* Luke 10:27, 28—"And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he [Jesus] said unto him, Thou hast answered right: *this do, and thou shalt live.*"

2. *It sets up ideals for men to strive to attain, and thus appeals to them to voluntarily overcome the worst by cultivating the best that is in human character.* (1) *It proposes righteousness as the fundamental ideal of life and living* (and not *peace*, as some would have it). Righteousness is doing right; and as God alone has the prerogative of defining right, and of distinguishing right from wrong, it follows that *true righteousness is doing the will of the heavenly Father.* Note the example of Jesus in this respect. Matt. 3:15—"Suffer it now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." John 4:34—"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." Matt. 5:6—"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." How many Christians of our day and age actually *hunger and thirst to know and to do the will of God?* (2) *It portrays the ideal spiritual man as one who is at all times humble* (Matt. 5:3—"blessed are the poor in spirit"); *consciously penitent* (Matt. 5:4—"blessed are they that mourn"); *lacking self-pride* (Matt. 5:5—"blessed are the meek"); *desirous of knowing and doing God's will* (Matt. 5:6—"blessed are they that hunger and thirst after

righteousness"); kind and *merciful* (Matt. 5:7—"blessed are the merciful"); *pure in heart* (Matt. 5:8—"blessed are the pure in heart"); *seeking the ways of peace* (Matt. 5:9—"blessed are the peacemakers"); *consecrated* to God's will and *courageous* in doing it (Matt. 5:10—"blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake"). *The virtues enumerated here are so plain and simple that a child can understand them.*

3. *It furnishes a pattern for men to follow*, in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, who exemplifies its ideals fully and perfectly in His life. In Him, precept and principle and example are perfectly blended. He gave not only a perfect teaching, but also a perfect example of what He taught. He is the Perfect Exemplar of the religion which He revealed and established.

4. *It offers man the help of the Holy Spirit in his efforts to attain its ideals.* Luke 11:13—"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Rom. 5:5—"the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us." Rom. 14:17—"the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

5. *It sums up all human obligations in the two-fold command of love to God and our fellow-men.* Matt. 22:36-40, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law? And he said unto them, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets." Cf. Deut. 6:5, Levit. 19:18.

6. *It makes true morality the necessary and natural expression of true religion.* John 14:23—"If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

John 14:15—"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." John 8:31, 32—"If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." 1 Cor. 7:19—"Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God." Matt. 5:48—"Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Let us never forget that perfection (moral, spiritual, and substantial) is the ultimate ideal and goal of the Christian religion for every believer. We enter the church here as babes in Christ (1 Cor. 3:1, 1 Pet. 2:2); thereafter the Christian life is a constant growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3:18), and in the holiness without which no man shall see the Lord (Heb. 12:14). In short, we grow toward perfection in this life, constantly; we shall attain it in the next, in the redemption of our bodies, *i. e.*, in the putting on of immortality. See Rom. 7:7-25, particularly vv. 24, 25—"Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Cf. Rom. 8:18-25, particularly v. 23—"Ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." 1 Cor. 15:57—"thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

57. Q. What is a fourth characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection?

A. A fourth characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection, is its spirituality.

1. *It reveals the fundamental and sublime truth that God is, as to nature, essentially Spirit.* It follows therefore that all fellowship and intercourse with Him must be of a spiritual nature and on a spiritual plane. John 4:24—"God is a Spirit." (1) The unregenerate sinner must, in order to participate in the privileges and blessings of the New Covenant, be born anew, born of water and the Spirit

(John 3:3-5). John 3:6—"that which is born of the flesh is flesh." (*i. e.*, fleshly); "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (*i. e.*, spiritual, spiritually-minded, spiritually-discerning, etc.). (2) Jesus Himself tells us that they who worship God must worship Him in "spirit and truth" (John 4:24). True worship is, in other words, the communion of the human spirit with the Divine Spirit, on the terms and appointments specified in the Word of truth. John 6:63—"It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the word that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life." Hence the folly of substituting form, ritual and ceremony (holy water, burning of incense, counting of beads, veneration of images, ceremonials, processions, feasts, etc.) for true spiritual worship (faith, penitence, confession, baptism, prayer, mediation, Bible reading, the assembly of the saints, the Lord's Supper, etc.).

2. *It refuses to accept as sufficient, mere external conformity to right precepts and principles, but demands purity and consecration of heart.* In other words, it recognizes only that obedience which flows out of faith and love in the human heart. Matt. 5:8—"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." John 14:23—"If a man love me, he will keep my word." John 14:15—"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." Rom. 6:17, 18—"But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye become obedient from the heart to that pattern of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness." Heb. 11:6—"without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." Heb. 10:22—"let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith," etc. 2 Tim. 2:22—"but flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." "The superficiality of heathen morals is well illustrated by the

treatment of the corpse of a priest in Siam: the body is covered with gold leaf, and then is left to rot and shine. Heathenism divorces religion from ethics. External and ceremonial observances take the place of purity of heart. The Sermon on the Mount on the other hand pronounces blessing only upon inward states of the soul" (Strong, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 177-178). The teaching of Jesus repudiates all mere externalism, form and pretense. Cf. Matt. 7: 16-20, Gal. 5: 22-26, etc.

3. *It judges the actions of men by the motives from which they spring.* See Matt. 5: 27-30, John 8: 1-11. Heb. 4: 12—"For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." Men are prone to judge one another by one another's actions, but the Divine Judge looks beyond the outward act, to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart which shall have prompted it. 1 Sam. 16: 7—"For Jehovah seeth not as a man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart." Luke 16: 15—"Ye are they that justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knoweth your hearts." See the story of the rich young ruler, in Matt. 19: 16-22.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY-SEVEN

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