

## 1. Recap: Man's Ultimate Ends

The word "hierarchy" originates from the Greek *hierarches*, and this in turn from *hieros*, "sacred," and *archos*, "leader" or "ruler," from *archein*, "to rule." The term is used (1) to specify an ascending series of orders of holy beings, as the *celestial hierarchy* ("the angelic orders collectively"); (2) to designate a series of ecclesiastics "disposed organically in ranks and orders, each subordinate to the one above it," and (3) "a series of objects or items divided or classified in ranks or orders, as in natural science or logic."<sup>1</sup> With reference to the Totality of Being, as used here, the meaning of the word embraces especially the first and last of these definitions, that is, it takes in all ascending orders and ranks of being, both physical and spiritual, including both the "natural" and "supernatural."

We have emphasized previously, under various headings, that *man is a creature*. Individually or as a race he has nothing to do with his being in the world, and very little to do with the time or manner of his going out of it; and while he is in it, he is absolutely dependent on Nature and Nature's God for the air that he breathes, the water he drinks, the food he eats, and even the very ground he walks on. No amount of self-pride or self-assertiveness on his part can substantially alter these facts, now or ever.

*Man is a creature*. Neither as an individual nor as a race is he self-sufficient. Moreover, the unfailing criterion of a truly wise man is his own constant recognition of his creaturehood, in all his dealings with God and with his fellow-men. Humility, as St. Augustine was wont to reiterate, is the most essential condition to the acquirement of wisdom. This is a lesson which our age needs desperately to learn.

Again, as a creature, man—every man, every human being—his his own proper ultimate end, the end to which he is ordered by the Creator Himself, the purpose for which He put him in the world. What is the proper ultimate end of man? There can be but one genuinely satisfactory answer to this question, namely, man's ultimate intrinsic end is *union with God*. His ultimate extrinsic end is, of course, God's own glory. This universe of ours is neither heliocentric, geocentric, nor anthropocentric: it is *theocentric*. God Himself is the source and end of all things. His glory is the proper extrinsic end of His whole creation. Any other end would be unworthy of both the Creator and His

1. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, Second Edition, s.v.

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creatures. But the ultimate *intrinsic* end of every human being is union with God. This fact is not to be wondered at, therefore, that basic in all systems of faith and practice which have emerged from the religious consciousness of humankind is the concept and hope of ultimate union with the Divine. No matter how divergent these systems may be as to the means and methods by which this union is to be achieved, the fact remains that they uniformly envision union with God as the ultimate goal of individual human attainment.

In Scripture this union with God is described as seeing God "face to face." "For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known" (1 Cor. 13:12). "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:2-3). Such an ultimate oneness with God will surely consist of the complete union of the human mind with the divine Mind in knowledge, and the complete union of the human will with the divine Will in love, together with the accompanying illumination that such union can never be broken, that it is indeed everlasting. This is the Vision of God. This is Beatitude. This is the Life Everlasting. I am unable to conceive of eternity as merely stretched-out time, so to speak; I must think of it rather as illumination,—illumination that embraces the sense of unending duration, and that will bring to the saint the certainty of his own inalienable possession of God. For, in the final analysis of the case, *Heaven is where God is, and Hell is where God is not.*

To such an ultimate intrinsic end every human being has been ordered by the Creator Himself. The only alternative view is that of the utter purposelessness and consequent futility of all existence; the view that

The world rolls round for ever like a mill,  
It grinds out death and life and good and ill;  
It has no purpose, heart, or mind or will.

Unfortunately for man this is the view which has permeated all too generally the literature of the past half-century; this despite the fact that it is a view which finds little support in human observation, experience or science.

To such an ultimate end, moreover, man has been disposed

by the Divine implanting within him of a will that seeks only a good in its every activity. The human will was never known to seek complete ultimate evil. Even when it pursues an evil, it does so for the purpose of gaining what the individual conceives to be an ultimate good; the saint who gives his body to be burned does so only because he regards the temporary evil as a stepping-stone to ultimate bliss. Man errs only when he mistakes and misuses *apparent* goods for *real* goods. Ignorance of his proper end, and of the proper means of attaining it, has always been, is yet, and probably always will be, the prime source of man's faults and follies. As Jesus Himself states expressly: "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" (John 8:31-32). (Cf. Matt. 7:24-28; 6:19-22, 6:33; Rom. 2:4-11).

Herein, too, consists the real meaning of "good" and "evil," and of "right" and "wrong." Those acts of a human being are naturally *good* which perfect his character in virtue; those are *bad* which tend to destroy his character and standing as a man. Similarly, those acts of a man are *right* which tend to lead him toward the attainment of his natural and proper ultimate end; and those are *wrong* which lead him in the opposite direction, or which tend to prevent his attainment of his proper ultimate end. *Goodness* has reference to the perfection of the human character in virtue; *rightness*, to the directionality of his activity and life.

Now it follows that, since man's proper ultimate end is union with God, in preparation for such an end he must be justified, purified, and sanctified, for the simple reason that a holy God can have no concord with impurity of heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). Indeed, in the very nature of things, only the pure in heart could ever hope to apprehend, to know, to realize the possession of, God. This, I repeat, has to be true because it is in accord with the very nature of things. The "nature of things," moreover, is determined by the Will of God who is all-consistent; His will is the constitution of the universe both physical and moral. Hence it follows inevitably that the God who, in creation, determined man's proper ultimate end and ordered him to the attainment of it, must have, by the same edict of His Divine Will, in the light of His Divine Intelligence, determined and ordered the necessary means to his attainment of that end. For our God, the God of the Bible, is a purposeful God. And being

omniscient, He knows how perfectly to adapt proper means to their respective ends. He Himself tells us: "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure . . . yea, I have spoken, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed, I will also do it" (Isa. 46:9-11).

On the principle then of the perfect adaptation of means to ends, always characteristic of the activity of our Creator, it follows that the one essential prerequisite of the individual man's attainment of his proper ultimate ends must be *the life with the Holy Spirit*. Such a life is indispensable to the acquirement of that holiness, which is *wholeness*, "without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). Only by the life with the Holy Spirit can the creature "put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Eph. 4:24). Only by the life with the Holy Spirit can men become in fact "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust" (2 Pet. 1:4). Only by the life with the indwelling Spirit of God can men be made "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. 1:12). There is no other way. "For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17). How exceedingly important, then, that we frail mortals understand what the life with the Holy Spirit is and how it may be engendered within us, in order that we may live it and experience its joys, and attain its crowning recompense—Beatitude!

Finally, the beginning of this life with the Holy Spirit must be in *union with Christ*, that process which in Scripture, viewed from the standpoint of the new principle of spiritual life which is implanted in the natural heart, is described as *regeneration*. This new increment of power implanted in the human heart by the Spirit, in conversion, is the living Word of God, the Seed of spiritual life, in short, the Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes. This Gospel or Word of God is "living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12)—a savor of life unto life to one who accepts it, but a savor of death unto death to one who rejects it (2 Cor. 2:16)—because the Holy Spirit is in it and exerts His regenerative power through it.

Luke 8:11—The seed is the word of God.—John 3:6—That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is

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spirit. John 1:12-13—But as many as received him [the Logos], to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, Rom. 1:16—For I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. 1 Cor. 4:15—For in Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel. Jas. 1:18—Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures. 1 Pet. 1:23—Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth. Phil. 2:5—Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. John 6:63, [the words of Jesus]: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life. Col. 3:16—Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. 1 John 5:12—He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life.

Again, the Scriptures teach clearly that the prerequisites of *union with Christ* are some four or five in number, as follows:

1. *The preaching and hearing of the Gospel.* This Gospel, moreover, consists of (1) three facts to be believed (namely, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ); (2) three commands to be obeyed (the commands to believe, repent, and be baptized); and (3) three great promises to be enjoyed (remission of sins, the gift or indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and eternal life). The whole Christian missionary and evangelistic enterprise is predicated upon the obvious fact that men must first hear the Word of the Gospel in order to believe; that where there is no preaching and hearing of the Gospel, no contact with the Gospel message by physical sense, certainly there is no operation of the Spirit, and consequently no conversion.

Acts 15:7—Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. Rom. 10:14, 15, 17—How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things! . . . So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. 1 Cor. 1:21—For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe. Matt. 24:14—And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come.

[The fundamental facts of the Gospel are that Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, and that He was raised up on the third day and crowned Lord of all, that is, both Lord and Christ: Lord of the Universe, and Absolute Monarch of the Kingdom of God.] 1 Cor. 15:1-4 Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the

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scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures, etc. Acts 2:32—This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Acts 2:36—Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified. [Upon these fundamental facts rests the fundamental truth of the Gospel, namely, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.] Matt. 16:16—And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. [Jesus was His name; Christ is His title. This title, *Messias* in Hebrew, *Christos* in Greek, means literally "The Anointed One." Three classes of leaders were officially anointed into office in olden times: prophets, priests, and kings. To accept Jesus as the Christ, therefore, is to accept Him as *prophet*, to whom we go for the words of eternal life; as *priest*, who intercedes for us at the Throne of Grace; and as *king*, who has all authority over our thoughts and lives. Moreover, according to this Confession, He is not only the Christ, but the Son of the living God as well. Not a son, as all human beings are, in a natural sense, but *the* Son of God in a special sense—the Only Begotten Son of God, begotten by the "overshadowing" of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.] John 3:16—For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. John 1:14—And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. Luke 1:35—And the angel answered and said unto her [Mary], The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God. Gal. 4:4-5—But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

[The commands and promises of the Gospel are clearly set forth in the following Scriptures]: Rom. 2:8—unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, etc. 2 Thess. 7:8—at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven, with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus. [Any message that is to be obeyed must have commands.] Cf. Acts 16:31—Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. Acts 2:38—Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [Here we have the promises of remission of sins and of the indwelling of the Spirit.] Rom. 5:5—the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts, through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us. 2 Cor. 1:22—God, who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. Eph. 4:30—Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption. Rom. 6:23—For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. [Thus we can readily see that the precious and exceeding great promises (2 Pet. 1:4) of the Gospel are remission of sins, the indwelling of the Spirit, and eternal life.]

2. *Faith (belief) in Christ*, or that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. The active principle of justification, regeneration, and sanctification in man, is faith actively exercised in conformity to the Will of God. For faith without works of faith is dead (James 2:17).

John 14:1 [the words of Jesus]: Believe in God, believe also in

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me. Heb. 11:6—without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him [God]; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him. Rom. 5:1—Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. John 20:30-31—Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name. Acts 8:12—But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Acts 16:31—Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and house. John 3:18—He that believeth on him is not judged; he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. John 3:36—He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

3. *Repentance toward Christ*, that is, "turning from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God" (Acts 26:18).

Luke 13:3 [the words of Jesus]: Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish. Acts 17:30—The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent. Acts 2:38—Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins. Acts 3:19—Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, etc. Acts 26:19-20—Wherefore, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but declared both to them of Damascus first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance. 2. Cor. 7:10—For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth not regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

4. *Confession of Christ*, that is, confession *with the mouth* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the *living* God. Not the Son of a dead god (of wood or stone), but the Son of the *living* and true God. The *living* Creed of the *living* Church of the *living* God is the *ever-living* Christ.

Matt. 16:16—Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. John 9:22—the Jews had agreed already, that if any man should confess him to be the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Matt. 10:32-33: Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven. Rom. 10:9-10—If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 1 John 4:15—Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God.

5. *Baptism into Christ*. The Scriptures clearly teach that union with Christ is consummated for the *penitent believer*—

and, I should add, only for the *penitent believer*—in the ordinance of Christian baptism. For this reason baptism is explicitly designated “the washing of regeneration”: “according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Savior” (Tit. 3:5-6). (Cf. also John 3:5, the words of Jesus to Nicodemus: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”) Hence, too, the whole Church of Christ or Christian Church—these are interchangeable names—is said to have been cleansed “by the washing of water with the word” (Eph. 5:26). The Apostle elsewhere makes this basic truth too clear for any possible misunderstanding. “Are ye ignorant,” says he, “that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become *united with him in the likeness of his death*, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection” (Rom. 6:4-5). That is to say, in baptism, which pictorializes the facts of the Gospel—the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ—the penitent believer literally dies to sin and arises in Christ, to walk in newness of life. Hence, asks the Apostle: “We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?” (v. 2). (Cf. also 2 Cor. 5:17—“Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.” Also Rom. 8:1—“There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.”) It is in his conforming to the *likeness* of Christ’s death and resurrection, in the ordinance of baptism, that the penitent believer is united with Him, literally betrothed to Him, the Bridegroom, whose Bride the Church is. “For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ” (Gal. 3:26-27). Language could hardly be plainer. Jesus Himself envisioned this union of the believer with Christ in baptism, in the giving of the Great Commission. He said: “Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them [*i.e.*, those who have been made disciples, believers, followers] into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them [*i.e.*, those who have been baptized into Christ, and who therefore belong to Christ and are entitled to the name Christian] to observe all things whatsoever I commanded

you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (literally, unto "the consummation of the age" or dispensation, Matt. 28:19-20). Not that the water of baptism itself washes away sin: obviously it does not. But that in baptism, as in every ordinance of God of a visible character, human faith meets Divine Grace in the appointment divinely designated; and where such a meeting takes place, the blessing connected by the Word of God with that particular appointment is always conferred upon the believer. This is *always* the case, I repeat, for the simple reason that the Word of God never fails. Now the divine blessings expressly connected by the Word of God—which is the Word revealed by the Spirit—with the ordinance of Christian baptism, for the penitent believer, are remission of sins and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Moreover, when his sins are remitted, the beginning of the union of the penitent believer with Christ is the perfectly natural result. Thus through faith in Christ, repentance toward Christ, confession of Christ, and baptism into Christ, one who has heretofore been an alien to the commonwealth of God is *betrothed to Christ* and begins his *life with the Holy Spirit*.

Cf. Rom. 5:5—the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us. 1 Cor. 3:16—Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 1 Cor. 6:19—Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God?

Thereafter the Christian life is a growth: growth "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). "For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17). It is the life of the saint who "continues stedfastly," one whose human spirit is indwelt by the Holy Spirit; one in whom this life *with the Spirit* becomes in truth the *Life of the Spirit*, as the human spirit becomes *possessed* more and more by the Spirit of God. The final recompense is Holiness, Beatitude, the *Life Everlasting*—man's natural and proper ultimate intrinsic end. (The actual consummation of the betrothal occurs at the Marriage Feast of the Lamb (the Heavenly Bridegroom), at which the actual, permanent—*eternal*—complete Union takes place. (Cf. Matt. 22:2-13; Eph. 5:22-32; 2 Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 19:7-9, 21:1-4.)