

## PART FIFTEEN:

### GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE

In this section we shall treat as briefly as possible the Biblical doctrine of foreordination. That there is such a doctrine in Scripture is evident from numerous passages. We shall examine the doctrine under the following captions:

1. *The God of the Bible is purposeful*, that is, His activity in Creation, Providence, and Redemption, is directed toward specific ends (Isa. 46:8-11, Jer. 4:28, 1 Cor. 15:20-28, Phil. 2:5-11). Hence the profound meaning of the oft-repeated term, "the living God," the God *whose essence is existence (being) and whose being is activity*: in short, He is the God who has only to will a thing to be done and it is done (Psa. 33:6, 9; Psa. 148:5; John 4:24; Matt. 16:16; Luke 7:6-10; Acts 17:24-29; Heb. 11:3).

2. *God's purpose with respect to His Creation is specifically designated His Eternal Purpose*, that is, (1) existing 'from everlasting to everlasting' (Psa. 90:2, Jer. 10:10, Isa. 9:6, John 3:16, Rev. 14:6, etc.), and (2) timeless in its origin and consummation (Exo. 3:14). This Eternal Purpose, we are told, includes the following: to send forth His Only Begotten, in the fulness of the time (Gal. 4:4; John 1:14, 3:16; John 17:5, 24), to make Atonement (Covering) for the sin of the world (Isa. 53:4, 11; John 1:29; 1 Pet. 2:21-25; 1 Cor. 15:3; Heb. 9:28), to publish the Gospel and to unite Jews and Gentiles in the one Body of Christ (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21; Eph. 2:11-22, 3:3-12; Gal. 3:26-29; 1 Cor. 12:13). The ultimate end of this Divine activity is the conquest of evil in all its forms, the segregation of Satan and his kind in Hell (Matt. 25:41; 2 Pet. 2:4; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Rev., ch. 20), and the establishment of the saints, all clothed in glory and honor and incorruption (immortality, Rom. 2:6-7), in the "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:8-13; Rev., chs. 21, 22): "that what is mortal

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may be swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. 5:4). All this is embraced in a single phrase: "to sum up all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:9-11, Phil. 2:5-11, 1 Cor. 15:20-28).

3. *This Eternal Purpose is frequently described in Scripture as the Divine "mystery."* Note the phrases, "the mystery of his will" (Eph. 1:9), "the mystery of the faith" (1 Tim. 3:9), "the mystery of Christ" (Eph. 3:4), "the mystery of the gospel" (Eph. 6:19). This is said to be the "mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal" (Rom. 16:25-27), "which hath been hid from ages and generations" (Col. 1:26-27); the mystery which "in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit" (Eph. 3:1-7), which was concealed in the testimony of the prophets of old and, in the fulness of time, was announced by those who preached the Gospel "by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven," the mystery which angels have sought to look into from age to age, and from generation to generation (1 Pet. 1:10-12, 2 Pet. 1:19-21); the mystery "which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory" (1 Cor. 2:7), "foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will" (Eph. 1:11). Contrary to a popular notion, the Bible is not a mystery; rather, its content is the *revelation* of the mystery "which hath been kept in silence through times eternal, but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:25-27; Matt. 13:34-35, 24:14, 28:18-20; Psa. 78:2).

4. *This Divine Mystery, this Eternal Purpose, necessarily includes all that God has foreordained with respect to His moral Creation, both angels and men, as follows:*

(1) *Man's nature as a spirit-body (or mind-body psychosomatic) unity.* Man was predestined, by virtue of his

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nature, to be free (within certain limits already pointed out). Cf. Gen. 2:7, 1:26-28, 2:16-17 (note: "thou mayest *freely* eat," with the sole exception of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil), Psa. 8; Psa. 148:106; Job 32:8, 33:4; Psa. 139:14, etc.

(2) *The essentials of the Plan of Redemption.* Hence, we read that *from the foundation of the world*: (a) the Son of God, our Passover, was the Lamb slain to make Atonement for sin (John 1:29, 17:5, 24; Isa. 53:7; Acts 8:32; 1 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 9:13-14; 1 Pet. 1:18-20; Rev. 5:6, 6:1; cf. Exo. 12:43-47, Num. 9:11-12, Psa. 34:20, John 19:36); (b) the elect of God are chosen *in Him* (Eph. 1:4; cf. Rom. 8:1, 2 Cor. 5:17, Gal. 3:26-28); (c) their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Rev. 13:8, 17:8); (d) His Kingdom is prepared for them, that is, for all who live and die *in Christ* (Matt. 25:34; Rev. 14:13; Luke 12:32; 1 Cor. 6:9, 15:24; Gal. 5:21, Jas. 2:5). All these matters, including also the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, and the inclusion of both alike, on the terms of the New Covenant, in the Body of Christ (Eph. 3:3-7, 2:11-22; 1 Cor. 12:13; Acts 10:44-48, 11:15-18, 15:7-11), and the twofold mission of the Church, that of preserving the truth of the Gospel and that of proclaiming it to all people (Eph. 3:8-12; 1 Tim. 3:14-15; Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:18-20, 24:14), are included in God's Eternal Purpose and hence determined from before the foundation of the world.

(3) *The privilege of adoption into the Household of the Faith* (Eph. 1:5; Gal. 4:3-7, 6:10; Rom. 8:14-17). The Spirit, through the Word, tells us what to do to be saved (Acts 16:31, 2:38; Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 6:3-7, 10:9-10; Gal. 3:27, etc.), and our spirits tell us that we have complied with these conditions ("the keys of the kingdom of heaven," Matt. 16:19); hence, God's Spirit and our spirits testify to the same fact, namely, that we are children of God by adoption. Jesus is the Only Be-

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gotten of God, God's Son by Divine begetting and birth (Luke 1:35; Matt. 16:16; John 3:16, 20:30-31; Gal 4:4; 1 John 5:9-12). This privilege of adoption, of becoming heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, sons and daughters of the Heavenly Father (2 Cor. 6:17-18), is likewise a fundamental part of God's Eternal Purpose, in order that "unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (angels, as well as men) "might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10-12, cf. Eph. 6:12).

(4) *The ultimate glorification of His saints (the Redeemed)*. Note again Rom. 8:28-30. Here the correlation of the doctrine of God's Eternal Purpose with that of foreordination is clearly set forth. Here we read that (a) all souls whom God foreknew to be of His elect, He foreordains—to what end? "To be conformed to the image of His Son," etc.; (b) all whom He so foreordained, them He also called (*i.e.*, in His Eternal Purpose); (c) whom He called, them He also justified (again, in His Eternal Purpose); (d) and whom He justified, them He also glorified (in His Eternal Purpose). To be "glorified," according to New Testament teaching, is to be clothed in "glory and honor and incorruption" (Rom. 2:7). Glorification is the ultimate redemption of the body from the consequences of sin, in the putting on of immortality (2 Tim. 1:10, 2:10; 1 Cor. 15:39-44; 2 Cor. 5:4). To be thus immortalized is to be conformed to the image of God's Son, who, as "the firstfruits of them that are asleep," the firstborn from the dead (1 Cor. 15:20, 23; Acts 26:23; 1 Cor. 15:45-49; Col. 1:18; cf. Matt. 17:1-2, John 7:39), was the first to be raised to immortality (1 Tim. 1:17, 6:13-16; 1 Cor. 15:20-26). Immortalization—the redemption of the body from mortality itself (Rom. 8:23, 2 Cor. 5:4)—is, in Christian teaching, one of the phases of eternal life (Rom. 2:7, 6:23, 8:11, 8:23; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Cor. 5:1-10; 1 Cor. 15:35-58). It should be understood that

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redemption of the body is promised only to the righteous; the Scriptures give us no information as to the kind of "body" the lost will inhabit in Hell.

*Surely we must conclude from all this Scripture teaching that Redemption (1 Thess. 5:23) is the consummating phase of God's Cosmic Plan, i.e., His Eternal Purpose; that Creation will have been fully actualized only when God's elect stand in the Judgment clothed in glory and honor and immortality.*

The practical question involved here is this: *How does God call those whom He foreknows to be His elect?* (Naturally, these are called *as individuals*; Christian doctrine knows no such thing as salvation either by proxy or *en masse*.) (a) By a direct operation of the Spirit on the sinner's "heart," *independent* of the Word? Evidently *not*. Both Scripture and experience confirm the fact that where there is no contact with the Gospel message either by reading it or by hearing it, there is no faith, no conversion, no election (Rom. 10:14-17, 1 Cor. 1:21). (b) By a special mystical operation of the Spirit on the sinner's "heart" *in addition to the Word*? Obviously *not*, for this would mean either that God is a respecter of persons (which He is not), or that He will finally save all humanity (which is equally contrary to Scripture teaching). (Cf. John 5:26-29, Matt. 25:31-46, Rom. 2:4-11, Acts 10:34-35, Rev., chs. 20, 21, 22). (c) Hence, we must conclude that God calls men individually through His Word, either as printed (stereotyped), or as proclaimed by faithful men (2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:13, 2:2; Heb. 9:15; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rom. 10:6-17); that the Spirit operates through the Word (or through by-products of the Word, such as hymns, Gospel songs, doctrinal tracts, and especially the exemplary lives of the saints, Matt. 5:16, 2 Cor. 3:1-3) in the conversion, regeneration, and sanctification of the elect (1 Pet. 1:23, 1 Cor. 4:15, Gal. 4:19). (1 Thess. 1:4-5. Here the Apostle refers to

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the *charismata* by which the Gospel was confirmed in the apostolic age (Acts 2:22, Rom. 1:11, Heb. 2:4, 1 Cor. 12:4-11), not to so-called "miraculous conversions." In the plan of God, *demonstration* always accompanies *revelation* (Exo. 4:1-9, John 11:41-42, Mark 16:20). (d) Rom. 1:16. Note that the Gospel is *the* power, not just *a* power or *one of* the powers, of God unto salvation; it is such because the Spirit operates through it (Luke 8:11, 1 Pet. 1:22-25); note also that it is God's power unto salvation to just one class: "everyone that believeth." To those who believe its facts and obey its commands (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 2:8, 10:16; 2 Thess. 1:8; 1 Pet. 3:1, 4:17), it is the power of God unto salvation, but to those who ignore it or reject it, it is the power of God unto eternal condemnation (John 5:40, Eph. 6:17, Heb. 4:12). To summarize: the called, justified, sanctified, and glorified souls (in God's Eternal Purpose) make up that company of persons who accept the Gospel call and continue steadfastly in the faith (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Pet. 1:5-8, 3:18; Jude 3; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, etc.): these are God's elect: the "whosoever wills" (Rev. 22:17, John 5:40, Matt. 23:37).

The prerequisite of ultimate Union with God in knowledge and in love, in the Hereafter, is the Life with the Spirit in the here and now (1 Cor. 3:16-17, 6:19-20; Rom. 5:5, 8:11; Eph. 1:13-14, 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:22; Rev. 7). The prerequisite of the Spiritual Life here is Union with Christ, and this, in turn is attained through faith, repentance, confession, and baptism into Christ (John 3:16, 3:5; John 20:30-31; Luke 13:3; Matt. 10:32-33; Acts 2:38, 16:31, 8:36-39, 9:18, 22:16; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:27, etc.). We repeat, for the sake of emphasis, that all persons who accept the Gospel call and commit themselves to the life that is hid with Christ in God (Col. 3:3), are predestined, ordained (disposed) to eternal life (Acts 13:48), foreordained to ultimate glorification, re-

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deemed in spirit and soul and body (1 Thess. 5:23), conformed to the image of God's Son (I John 3:1-2). This class is the company of God's elect. Foreordination or predestination in Scripture refers to the *class*, not to the *individual*, to the *plan*, not to the *man*. Let us never forget, too, that Divine election is election to responsibilities as well as to benefits and privileges.

5. Finally, We must not omit calling attention to the fact that *the processes and "laws" of the physical world are also "foreordained."* Why do men suppose that the more law that is discovered as descriptive of the processes going on in the physical realm means "the less God." As a matter of fact, the more law presupposes "the more God." Law is the expression of the will of the lawgiver: this is true of any kind or code of law. Therefore, the cosmic laws, generally designated the "laws of nature," must be the ordinations—and in a sense the foreordinations—of the Will of the Universal Lawgiver. His will is indeed the constitution of the whole Creation, both physical and mortal, that which constitutes it to be what it is. (Psa. 33:6, 9; Psa. 148:1-6; Acts 17:24-28; Acts. 14:15; Isa. 42:5; Heb. 1:1-3). Science, in its very use of the word "law," pays tribute, either wittingly or unwittingly, to the Divine Lawgiver. It must be remembered that science borrowed this word from jurisprudence, not jurisprudence from science.

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## ADDITIONAL INTERESTING COMMENTS

Human wisdom has never been able to produce anything like a satisfactory account of the origin of evil. In view of the fact that sin is transgression of the Divine law, and that only the Divine Lawgiver can give us the facts in the case, the failure of human philosophy to solve the problem is not to be wondered at. (Incidentally, it should be understood that *philosophy is of human origin*

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*strictly: it is at best but human speculation, which can, and often does, give us interesting clues to the understanding of the mystery of the cosmos and of man's life in it.)* This whole problem of evil, which is in fact the problem of *good and evil*, is not a question of *philosophy*, but of *revelation*.

H. C. Christopher, in his book, *The Remedial System*, one of the most interesting books I have ever read, and which unfortunately has long been out of print, has written of the account of the origin of evil on earth in relation to the pre-mundane rebellion of Satan and his rebel angels, as follows (RS, 45-46): "That the treatment of sin through the Remedial System has a bearing on the question of sin among angels; that the management of this great evil through an atonement, is really and truly a complete and satisfactory solution of the problem of sin in the abstract—as related to both men and angels—is the almost positive and emphatic declaration of the inspired Apostle, when speaking on this subject. Regarding the Remedial System as having an important connection with, and a bearing, in the purposes of God, on the occurrence of sin among angels, he alludes to the connection which the Atonement has with the Principalities and Powers in the heavens, in the following direct and glowing statement: 'To me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the *unsearchable riches of Christ*, and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God who created all things by Jesus Christ: *to the intent* (v. 10) *that now* unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly places [Col. 1:16] might be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord,' Eph. 3:8-11. A logical connection obtaining between the eruption of sin in the heavens, and the Remedial System in this world, and

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the latter following the former in the order of time, it is fair to presume that the occurrence of sin among angels was the logical cause of the purpose to establish a Remedial System for men, and this the necessary cause of the creation of the world with all that belongs to it, both celestial and terrestrial; for, without man, the Remedial System could have no existence, and without the material and organic worlds man could not exist. There is, therefore, a logical and necessary connection between the occurrence of sin among angels and the creation of the material and organic worlds."

Again, with reference to this connection between the apostasy of angels and the Remedial System, Christopher has written: "The reason for this connection has its foundation in the fact that the occurrence of sin and the terrible disaster which it brought on angels, gave rise to a problem the importance, grandeur, and magnitude of which have no parallel in the domain of God, which problem, finding no possible solution among angels, made absolutely necessary the creation of another order of spirit-beings whose nature and condition under sin would allow a Remedial System, and afford the necessary data for the solution of the problem. The nature of this new order of spirit-beings allied them, on one side of their being, to the angels among whom sin had originated, and on the other, to the material and organic worlds of which they were, as to their organism, a part, and out of which arose their peculiar condition under sin. It was essentially necessary that they should be so closely allied to angels as to be *virtually* the same as to their *spirit*, in order that every circumstance and condition necessary to the solution might be present, so that the solution, effected through the new order of beings, might be regarded as a true and satisfactory determination of the question as it pertained to angels. It was equally necessary, on the other hand, that the new order of beings should differ from angels in such

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respect as to permit the necessary conditions to exist, on which should be grounded the possibility of a Remedial System. This difference is found in the peculiarities of their being, which connect them with the material and organic worlds, and constitute them a new order of beings. This difference is seen to exist in the fact that men, after the first pair, are *derived beings*," that is, by the process of what is called "natural generation."

I have included these excerpts from Christopher's book for what they may be worth to the student in his study of the problem of evil. (The book itself came under my observations for just a few weeks almost fifty years ago. I have never succeeded in finding a copy since that time, and I consider myself fortunate to have preserved the excerpts presented above—C.C.)

To say the least, Christopher's argument is intriguing. We might well ask: If the essential principle of love is sacrifice, as indeed it must be, then just where, when and how could ineffable Divine Love have been demonstrated fully *other than in a world of lost sinners*? And how could it have been demonstrated more effectively than it was demonstrated by the Supreme Sacrifice of God's Only Begotten, on the Cross of Calvary? (John 3:16-17, 1:29, 19:30; 1 John, ch. 4). It might be suggested, too, that as far as we know from Divine revelation, God had not manifested aught but His "everlasting power and divinity" (Rom. 1:20), prior to the angelic apostasy of Lucifer and his rebel host. All of these matters are, of course, facets of that profound, and indeed at its core unfathomable, "mystery of lawlessness," of which the Apostle writes in Second Thessalonians, chapter 2. The Christian must always keep in mind the fact that the secret things belong to God, that only the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever (Deut. 29:29). He understands, therefore, that he must walk by faith, until that ultimate Day of Illumination (of the Beatific Vision) when

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he shall be privileged to "know fully even as also he was fully known" (1 Cor. 13:11-12). Man must never seek to pry too deeply into the mysteries of the Divine Will (Job. 11:7, 41:1-11, 42:1-6; Rom. 11:33-36).

This final word from the pen of D. Elton Trueblood (PR, 250) is fitting at this point: "If the possibility of goodness involves choice, it also involves the possibility of evil; and, if the possibility is genuine, it will sometimes be realized. Therefore, the conditions of the occurrence of evil are identical with the conditions of the higher aspects of the moral life. It cannot be said that God directly wills sin or evil desire, because it is not *necessary* that we sin. The sin is *our* fault, not God's, though God made us so that we might sin, because otherwise the best in life could not be. . . . Here we have the abiding Christian paradox of sin. We are to blame for it, but *we* cannot heal it. God did not cause it, but He can forgive and overcome it. Heresy has come from supposing either (a) the power to cause implies the power to overcome, or (b) the power to overcome implies responsibility for sin's existence, i.e., heresy comes from any denial of the paradox." Trueblood quotes Lancelot Andrewes as saying in his private prayer:

"Two things I recognize, O Lord, in myself:

nature, which Thou hast made;

sin, which I have added:

I confess that by sin I have depraved nature;

but call to remembrance, that I am a

wind that passeth away,

and returneth not again;

for of myself I cannot return again from sin.

Take away from me that which I have made;

let that which Thou hast made remain in me."

and then comments pointedly: "Perhaps the problem is easier to solve devotionally than philosophically."

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FOR MEDITATION AND SERMONIZING

*True Morality*

We have heard so much in recent months about ethical positivism, ethical relativism, ethical nihilism, "situationist ethics," the "traditional" morality, the "new" morality, etc., that there is little wonder that confusion in regard to the moral life is world-wide. The thesis of the most radical of these systems is well expressed by Jim Casey, in Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*: "There ain't no sin, there ain't no virtue—there's just stuff people do." We suppose to discuss here the true morality—the only morality that will properly undergird social order as well as provide for ultimate attainment of the Life Everlasting.

A great many persons believe, and have long believed, that man is now in an unnatural state. Believing that he once enjoyed the personal favor of God and fellowship with Him, and that such favor and communion were lost by transgression, with the attendant consequences of sin, sickness and death over the entire earth, to the loss of those original privileges theologians have applied the term, "Fall." It has become fashionable, however, of late, to deny the facts reported by Moses in regard to man's Edenic relation with Yahweh. Again quoting from Christopher (RS, 83): "There are some men who, pretending to believe in the Bible as a revelation from God, do yet, indeed, deny many of the most important facts recorded in it. . . . They deny that man was ever in a state higher, or different from that in which we now find him; and say that the story of the Fall is a myth, and the existence of sin the creature of a superstitious imagination. Hence they do not believe that the actions of men have a *sinful* character. Crime, with these men, is only an offense against the rights of society or of individuals, not a *sin against God*. They do not, indeed, deny that the actions of men have a *moral* character. This they cannot deny.

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But *morality* with them has reference only to *men*, none whatever to *God*. In denying the *existence of sin*, they of course deny that the actions of men have a *sinful* character, however criminal the actions may be. They look upon criminal actions as no more than simple violations of moral laws, which men have wrought out and ordained for the government of men." Indeed there are many, many individuals, and even nations, in our day, who repudiate morality altogether: for *morality* they substitute *expediency*. There are many, too, who would eliminate sin from human thought and life by the employment of psychiatric and psycho-analytic devices calculated to remove the sense of guilt. And yet, if press releases are to be relied on, this is an age in which pride, ambition, greed, lust, violence, cruelty, racism, war, and every iniquity known to man, are rampant over the whole earth. Indeed the Biblical description of the state of things in the antediluvian age might well be used to picture our present world: "And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence" (Gen. 6:11; cf. Matt. 24:37-42).

As usual, the error in this kind of thinking (the "new" morality) lies in the false premise from which it originates, namely, *the meaning of morality*. Morality is described as "conformity to a prescribed rule of conduct," or "conformity to the rule of right." Who, then, has prescribed the rule of conduct for man? To whom shall we go for the rule of right? There is but one answer that will stand the test: *we must go to God*, the Source of perfect wisdom, perfect love, and perfect justice. Every rule of right that mankind has knowledge of has its source in the Will of God. This is precisely what the Apostle means when he says, "Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet'" (Rom. 7:7). *Morality*, therefore, in its highest sense, is

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*conformity to God's prescribed rule of conduct.* For many centuries, this rule of conduct existed only in tradition; later, because of the transgressions of the race, it was embodied in *negative* form in the Mosaic Code, which was especially adapted to the Dispensation in which it was first revealed (Gal. 3:19). Later, with the advent and teaching of Messiah and His Apostles, this rule of right was put in *positive* form in "the perfect law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25). Christianity is this "perfect law of liberty," "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2). Christianity came to abrogate and to supersede the law of Moses (John 1:17, Gal. 3:24-25, Col. 2:14-16, Matt. 5:17-18). (The Christian System—the New Testament—incorporates all the moral principles of the Old; hence they are binding on Christians, not because they are in the Old, but because they have been re-enacted in the New. The sole exception is the law of the Sabbath. The Sabbath was a memorial of the deliverance of ancient Israel from Egyptian bondage, and hence has no meaning for Gentiles. All Christian assemblies, from the very beginnings of the Church, are held on the Lord's Day. [Exo. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:12-15; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10; Acts 14:15, 17:24; Eph. 4:6; 1 John 5:21; Matt. 5:34; 1 Cor. 6:9-10, 6:18, 5:9; Rom. 1:26-27; 2 Cor. 12:20-21; Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5; 1 Tim. 1:9-10; Eph. 4:28, 4:25, 5:3; Col. 3:5; Luke 12:15; 1 Cor. 5:11; Rom. 13:1-10; 1 John 2:9, 3:15, 4:20. Cf. Matt, 8:5-13, Luke 7:2-10, Mark 15:39, Acts 10:, Acts 10:1-8, etc.]. Surely these passages prove that a soldier can be a Christian. I find no absolute pacifism in the Bible.) Morality is, therefore, conformity to the rule of conduct prescribed in the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, as given us in the New Testament, and includes all of man's duties to God, to his neighbor, and to himself. He who conforms to the Will of Christ is *moral*; he who does not is, to the extent that he does not, *immoral*. Jesus said "Love your enemies, and pray for

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them that persecute you" (Matt. 5:44). He who conforms to this law is moral; he who refuses to do so is immoral. Jesus commands us to be baptized (buried with Him in baptism and raised to walk in newness of life: Matt. 3:15, 28:19, John 3:3-5, Rom. 6:1-11). He who conforms to the Will of Christ in this matter, in obedience to this Divine ordinance, is moral; he who refuses to do so, is immoral. Morality is far more comprehensive than the totality of one's duties to his fellows: it comprehends our attitude toward, and our treatment of, God. (Matt. 22:34-40). A *crime* is such with respect only to man's (positive) laws; but with respect to the (natural) law of God, it is *sin* (1 John 3:4). Viewed in this light, it is an indisputable fact that man has fallen: sin and crime exist on every hand, throughout the whole world. What, then, is the distinction between *morality* and *religion*? Is there any such distinction, in reality? What is religion, after all, but conformity to the Will of God, the obedience of love for God? What is morality, in the true sense of the term, but conformity to the Will of God, the obedience of love for God? The sum total of Biblical religion is expressed in the word *obedience*, not the obedience of craven fear, not the obedience that envisions mere status (respectability) as a result, but the obedience that is rendered out of one's *pure love for God*. (John 14:15, 15:10). There will be just two classes in the Judgment: those who *have done*, and those who *have not done* God's Will as revealed in Christ Jesus (Matt. 7:24-27, Heb. 5:9, Rev. 22:14).

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### *The Death of Death*

1. *According to Biblical teaching life and death are the two Supreme Universals.* Moreover, where there is life, there is bound to be death. Gen. 3:19, 5:5, etc.; Rom. 3:23, 5:12-13, 6:23; John 8:44; Heb. 2:14-15, 9:27; Jas.

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1:13-15, etc. (Read the *Phaedo* of Plato, for the Socratic argument for survival on the ground of the doctrine of the opposites).

2. *Death as man's last and bitterest enemy.* (1) All available evidence proves that from the beginning of his existence on earth, man has been haunted by the specter of death, and especially by the fact of the inevitability of death. One cannot live this temporal life without becoming poignantly aware of its brevity (Jas. 4:14; Job 7:7; Psa. 39:4-5, 102:3, 144:4), nor can few reach the "eventide" without becoming sorely grieved by its incompleteness, the sense of more yet to be done which in fact will never be done. The brute lives out its life cycle and dies, apparently without any thought of its origin, nature, or destiny. But man finds it impossible to face the inevitable with sheer unconcern: in his experience, death is the ultimate frustration. Nor does "whistling in the dark" serve to alleviate this deep-seated "tragic sense of life," which is born of the horror of facing death. He may cultivate an outward show of bravado (chest-thumping), when in reality he is internally quaking with fear. Even men of faith—God's saints—find it difficult to avoid the sense of mystery in which death is enshrouded. (2) Literature, of course, is saturated with evidence of this deep-seated concern about man's destiny. For example, Homer, in the *Iliad* (Bk. VI) causes Glaukos to say to Diomedes on the field of battle: "Even as are the generations of leaves such are those likewise of men; the leaves that be, the wind scattereth on the earth, and the forest buddeth and putteth forth more again, when the season of spring is at hand; so of the generations of men, one putteth forth and another ceaseth" (cf. Psa. 103:15-16, 1 Pet. 1:24-25). In one of Ellery Queen's mystery stories, Dr. Dodd, a physician, states the case eloquently as follows: "I don't need watching, Mr. Queen. I'm to die and it won't be a hand that does it. Some things you can't do a

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biopsy on. With all our sulfas and atomic bombs and electronic microscopes and two-hundred-inch telescope lenses we don't begin to know the powers that fill the universe. Any more than the amoeba in that glass of water knows what's going on in this room. All we can do is wait and try not to be afraid." I repeat Simpson here (IB, 512, 513) as follows: "From the fear of death, man cannot escape. For in the depths of his soul he knows that the structure of relationships which he has erected to protect himself is fundamentally without substance. In the end it will crumble and he will be compelled to face the fact which he has always tried to deny—that he is man and not God. Man's disordered relationships and his fear of death are inextricably bound up together, the consequence of his alienation from God." (3) Cassirer writes (EOM, 83-84): "In primitive thought death is never regarded as a natural phenomenon that obeys general laws. Its occurrence is not necessary but accidental. It always depends upon individual and fortuitous causes. It is the work of witchcraft or magic or some other personal inimical influence. . . . The conception that man is mortal, by his nature and essence, seems to be entirely alien to mythical and primitive religious thought." Primitive man's magic was, of course, designed to stave off death, even when it was employed to preserve life. (4) Mythological translations, quasi-resurrections, transfigurations (metamorphoses), etc., as, for example, of Attis, Adonis, Orpheus, Mithras, Osiris, Krishna, Ganymede, Narcissus, etc., offered no promise, not even the slightest ground for hope, of the conquest of death. These were all discrete events, subject to the whims of the polytheistic gods and goddesses, and were usually ritual aspects, wholly without ethical significance, of the Cult of Fertility which flourished throughout the ancient pagan world. There is not the slightest intimation, in any of these fantastic tales, of such ideas as the resurrection and glorification of righteous

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souls, or the operation of the Holy Spirit in actualizing such ends (cf. Rom. 8:11), much less the slightest intimation of the conquest of death itself (cf. 1 Cor. 15:25-26). To try to equate the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection with these mythological fictions is sheer blasphemy. The primary design of the ancient Cult of Fertility was to enhance the fertility of the soil and so preserve man from death as long as possible. The ancient Cult of the Dead sought to achieve the same ends by necromancy, sorcery, consulting with "familiar spirits," augury, witchcraft, divination, diabolism, etc. Many of these practices were geared especially to foretelling the future. But, as someone has rightly said, "no one tries to foretell the future who doesn't have the frantic hope that somehow he can forestall it." (5) Concepts of survival in ancient pagan literature were never of the kind to engender hope or to lure human beings toward a desirable future life. Hades, Sheol, etc., were dark, dank "underworlds" in which the "shades" of departed heroes and heroines roamed about listlessly and hopelessly. (Poetic descriptions of the "underworld" in ancient writings cause one to envision in imagination the misty swamps and jungles of such an area as, for example, that of the Everglades (especially as seen by television). The Lament of Achilles (*Odyssey*, Bk. XI) eloquently portrays the hopelessness of such a future state. On greeting Odysseus, Achilles is made to say: "How didst thou dare to come down to the house of Hades, where dwell the senseless dead, the phantoms of men outworn?" Then, later, the Lament: "Do not, O noble Odysseus, speak to me of death: rather would I live on earth as the hireling of another, of a man of low estate, who had not much livelihood, than to have the rule over this whole kingdom of the departed dead." (6) What modern writers call "the tragic sense of life" has its source largely in the contemplation of the mystery of death. It is this sentiment which underlies present-day Existential-

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ism. For "theistic existentialists," life, and especially death, means the confrontation of God; for the "atheistic existentialists" it means the confrontation of nothingness. For Heidegger, contemplation of death as the absolute end was the source of *Angst* ("anxiety") which *per se* made this life of great value. For Camus, awareness of death makes us aware of being. This same general motif permeates much of modern literature. Henley who wrote the song of the Stoic had a tragic bout with tuberculosis and committed suicide. Hemingway, with all his bravado, acknowledged he could not accept conquest by death, but admitted his abject surrender to it by committing suicide. As stated heretofore, the works of present-day dramatists, novelists, and often of the poets, express little more than the object pessimism of the Cult of Futility.

3. *There is but one Faith in all the world that envisions ultimately the death of death itself: that is the Christian Faith* (Acts 6:7, 13:8, 14:22; Gal. 1:23; Jude 3, 20). (1) Human reaction to the fact of death has always taken two forms, namely, the sense of ultimate frustration, and the elemental dread of facing the unknown (that is, the inexperienced). The Bible itself recognizes this human bondage to the fear (dread) of death (Heb. 2:14-15). The patriarch Job in days of old uttered the universal cry: "If a man die, shall he live again?" (John 14:14, cf. all of ch. 14). *This question was never answered until it was answered once for all time when the stone was rolled away from the entrance to Joseph's tomb.* (2) The Resurrection of Christ is God's pledge of the resurrection and glorification of His elect (Rom. 2:7, 8:11), and the indwelling Holy Spirit is the seal of their ultimate inheritance of glory and honor and incorruption, Life Everlasting. (Rom. 8:23, 8:28-30; Acts 2:22-36, 10:39-41; 2 Cor. 1:22, 5:5; Eph. 1:11, 13-14; Eph. 4:30; Col. 1:12, 3:24; 1 Pet. 1:3-5; Rom. 1:3-4; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Cor. 15; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; John 5:28-29, etc.). (3) The resurrection of Christ was

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the outstanding theme of all apostolic preaching. The reasons are obvious: If the Resurrection occurred as an event in space and time, it follows: (a) that there is a God, a living God; (b) that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Rom. 10:9-10); (c) that the Bible is what it claims to be, God's progressive revelation to mankind of His Plan of Redemption in which He proposes "to sum up all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10); and (d) that all other so-called "religions," cults, philosophies, etc., having no empty tomb, are false, and without any Divine authentication whatsoever. *Christianity stakes everything on the historicity of the Resurrection.* (Matt. 12:39, Luke 11:29). (4) The Bible explicitly declares that God's Eternal Purpose intends nothing short of the ultimate abolition of death altogether (1 Cor. 15:26), that "what is mortal may be swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. 5:4) in the "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13).

M. M. Davis (RMNC, 140) tells of an incident which occurred while Robert Owen, the British Socialist, visited Alexander Campbell, then President of Bethany College, West Virginia, at the Campbell homestead on the College grounds, to make final arrangements for their debate that was held subsequently at Cincinnati. "While at Bethany, the two were strolling together one evening over the farm, when they came to the family burying-ground. Mr. Owen paused and said to Mr. Campbell: 'There is one advantage I have over the Christian—I am not afraid to die. Most Christians have fear in death; but if some few items of my business were settled, I should be perfectly willing to die at any moment.' Mr. Campbell replied: 'You say you have no fear in death; have you any hope in death?' After a solemn pause, Mr. Owen said, 'No.' 'Then,' continued Mr. Campbell, pointing to an ox standing near, 'you are on a level with that brute. He has fed till he is satisfied, and stands in the shade whisking off the flies, and has

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neither *fear* nor *hope* in death.' Mr. Owen, unable to meet this simple, but crushing, reply, only smiled in his confusion, and made no attempt to do it."

The Christian hope is not simply the hope of continuance in existence. It is infinitely more than this. It is the hope of seeing God face to face, the hope of unbroken fellowship with the Heavenly Father in the Life Everlasting. It is the hope that is inspired by, and will be realized through, the victory of faith (1 John 5:4).

*In Eden where everything was life, God spoke of death; in the world at large, where everything is death, God speaks of life.* In Eden God said, "in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). The Devil said, through the serpent, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4). All this talk of death in the midst of pulsating life (Gen. 2:16)! Now, when everything around us testifies of death, God says, "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life" (John 3:36). In all His recorded teaching, Jesus is represented as saying very little about death. *The theme that was repeatedly on His lips was life.* (John 14:6, 1:4, 11:25-26, 5:40, 4:14, 10:10, 6:35, 5:26, 10:17-18). The Overcomers are those who shall have "washed their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life" etc. (Rev. 22:14).

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## REVIEW QUESTIONS ON PART FIFTEEN

1. Cite Scriptures showing that God's activity is purposeful.
2. Explain what is meant by God's "Eternal Purpose," and by "the Mystery of His Will."
3. Is the Bible a mystery, or is it the revelation of the Divine Mystery? Explain.
4. Show why God's Eternal Purpose necessarily includes all that He foreordains.

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5. List those matters which God foreordains "from the foundation of the world."
6. Explain what is meant by "the privilege of adoption."
7. Explain what is meant by "conformity to the image of God's Son," and show how this is related to the Christian doctrine of immortality.
8. What is the consummating phase of the Eternal Purpose?
9. According to Scripture, does God call His elect by an operation of the Spirit (a) independent of the Word, (b) in addition to the Word, or (c) through the Word *per se* as written or proclaimed? Explain your answers.
10. What was the design of the *charismata* in the early church?
11. What is the relation between process and law in the physical world?
12. Why do we say that the processes and laws of the physical world are Divinely foreordained?
13. On what grounds do we hold that Creation and Redemption are both phases of God's Cosmic Plan?
14. Does more law in the physical world mean less God? Explain.
15. State the substance of Christopher's explanation of the logical connection between the angelic apostasy and God's Remedial System for mankind.
16. Discuss: How could God's ineffable love been demonstrated more effectively than in a world of lost sinners?
17. State Trueblood's presentation of "the Christian paradox of sin."
18. State in substance our definition of *true morality*. How is it related to religion?
19. Distinguish between a *crime* and a *sin*.
20. According to the teaching of Jesus, what two classes will there be in the Judgment?

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21. What are the two Supreme Universals of human experience?
22. How has the contemplation of death affected human thought and life generally?
23. Give examples from literature of the effect of the mystery of death on human thinking.
24. What, according to Cassirer, was primitive man's attitude toward death?
25. Show the correlation between the ancient Cult of Fertility and man's attitude toward death.
26. Show the correlation between the ancient Cult of the Dead and man's attitude toward death.
27. Show the correlation between the modern Cult of Futility and man's attitude toward death.
28. What picture has Homer given us of the Underworld?
29. What is the source of modern pessimism as expressed in the phrase, "the tragic sense of life"?
30. Show how this phrase is to be correlated with the cults of present-day Existentialism.
31. What is the only Faith that envisions ultimately the death of death itself?
32. What was Job's question in days of old? Where and when was this question answered once for all time?
33. State the full significance of the Resurrection of Christ, and show how it is related to the existence of God, to the Messiahship of Jesus, to the Divine inspiration of Scripture, and to the false religions and cults which human authority tries to substitute for the Christian Faith.
34. Why was the Resurrection the main theme of the apostolic message?
35. On what event does Christianity stake everything?
36. Explain the phrase, "that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life."
37. What does God in His Eternal Purpose design ultimately about death?

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38. What is the true Christian's attitude toward death?
39. Why, then, do we as Christians often make our funerals so pagan in character?
40. What is the Christian hope?
41. Contrast God's main theme in the Garden of Eden with His main theme in the world at large.
42. What is the outstanding theme in the teaching of Jesus? Cite Scriptures for your answer
43. What is the significance of this fact for us?
44. Why is Christianity supremely the religion of joy?